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NEGOTIATIONS OF TAIWAN'S IDENTITY AMONG GENERATIONS OF  
*LIUXUESHENG* (OVERSEAS STUDENTS) AND TAIWANESE AMERICANS

By

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## ABSTRACT

### NEGOTIATIONS OF TAIWAN'S IDENTITY AMONG GENERATIONS OF *LIUXUESHENG* (OVERSEAS STUDENTS) AND TAIWANESE AMERICANS

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This multi-locale ethnography explores conceptualizations of Taiwan's identity among generations of *liuxuesheng* (overseas students) and second-generation Taiwanese Americans, for insight into the way "homeland" is defined, represented, and remembered among diasporic populations. Original contributions are made to collective memory theory by expanding historic generation models to accommodate immigrant historicity, as well as discussions in diaspora studies of intra- and inter-generational dynamics. This research recognizes that "Taiwanese" and "Chinese" are social constructs, reified and contested. By studying the identity of a *place*, the Taiwanese/Chinese identity dichotomy in academic and popular discourse is de-centered, creating greater theoretical space to consider collective memory and historic generation formation in diaspora.

Without formal recognition in the United Nations since 1971, the people of Taiwan have come to a broad consensus to maintain the *status quo* of strategic ambiguity, an arrangement rejected by a fringe minority advocating rapid reunification with China, as well as those who call for an immediate declaration of *de jure* independence. During four decades of martial law in Taiwan (1947-1987) politically active overseas students re-defined concepts of the "homeland" from a province of China to a more Taiwan-centric identity. Competing student associations served to localize intra- and inter-generational

negotiations, with official Republic of China student associations existing alongside unsanctioned Taiwan-centric groups, and joined in the mid-1990s by second-generation Taiwanese American student associations.

Based on interviews with generations of *liuxuesheng* leaders and activists, participant-observation with student groups, a comparison of “homeland” tours, and an analysis of student association websites, this dissertation presents contrasting conceptualizations of Taiwan held among generations of *liuxuesheng* and Taiwanese Americans. “Formosan” Taiwan emphasizes Taiwan’s colonial past, and emerged from the counter-hegemonic pathos of a people long subjugated by foreign rule. Members of subsequent cohorts of *liuxuesheng*, faced with the repression of local traditions and language in Taiwan, emphasized Taiwanese cultural authenticity as the foundation of national identity. The youngest generation in the U.S. simplifies cultural nationalist discourse to create markers of Taiwanese “authenticity” in the context of multiculturalism in the U.S. “New Taiwan” emphasizes the four ethnic groups who share a common history of migration, and a future of common fate. Each of these contrasts with earlier conceptualization of Taiwan as a Japanese colony, and as a province of China. Finally, Taiwan may be the moral destination of a search for a lost heritage, roots-seeking, often with ambivalence toward the issue of national sovereignty. This research further indicates that conceptualizations of Taiwan held by generations of *liuxuesheng* were shaped by powerful events experienced in youth and young adulthood, including, for elder informants, a radical redefinition of the “homeland” once abroad. In contrast, second-generation Taiwanese Americans exploring Taiwan in terms of cultural “roots” rarely adopted anti-Chinese nationalism.

**In loving memory of my grandmother Margaret, who knew when I was a kid that I would  
become a teacher. And write in incomplete sentences.**

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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This work would not have been possible without the unwavering support and encouragement of my parents, Drew and Linda, and aunt Anne on South Mountain. Finally, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my wife, Andrea, for her patience and support. It was only through her generosity and sacrifice that this dissertation was completed.

## PREFACE

I first became involved with Taiwanese student activism in 1996 as a graduate student in the Asian Studies department at the University of Texas, Austin, after returning from a year teaching English in Tianjin, China. Because I was studying the relationship between ethnic nationalities in China and constructions of Chineseness, colleagues recommended that I consider Taiwan, where state-constructed Chinese national identity was contested by a Taiwanese independence movement. At that time I considered Taiwanese nationalism a reactionary political movement. Like others in my department, I was interested in studying the *real* China and left unexamined the assumption that the people of Taiwan were “ethnic Chinese,” living on the geographic, political, and cultural fringe of Chinese civilization. After some preliminary research I wrote an article based on a series of interviews with witnesses and survivors of a 1947 uprising in Taiwan known as the February 28<sup>th</sup> Incident, an event credited by some as the origin of “Taiwanese consciousness.” During a trip to East Lansing, Michigan to present the paper at a Taiwan studies conference, I met a high-profile Taiwanese independence activist who had taken advantage of her U.S. citizenship to further the goals of the movement beginning in the mid-1970s. After a weekend of interviews in which she described the inner workings of the independence movement, we began to make arrangement for me to conduct my Master’s thesis research on the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary commemorations of the February 28<sup>th</sup> Incident in Taiwan. Because of this research I was regularly invited to give presentations to Taiwanese groups, and over the years I’ve developed relationships with members of student organizations and independence activists across the country. The

social capital of being a white male academic with some literacy in Taiwanese society, conversational Mandarin language skills, and prior residence in Taiwan and China, helped establish my legitimacy as a researcher and build *rapprochement*. For some informants, participation in this dissertation research was part of a broad strategy of raising the U.S. public visibility of Taiwan and the independence movement. Further, I acknowledge that my presentations on Taiwanese history at student conferences may have encouraged the development of Taiwanese consciousness and historicity, topics central to this study.

Throughout my dissertation fieldwork I introduced myself as an anthropology graduate student interested in the role of Taiwanese student associations in the development of Taiwanese identity, though it was often the case that for my informants, the February 28<sup>th</sup> Incident overshadowed my actual dissertation. As a result, many of my interviews were punctuated by moving narratives of the Incident by eyewitnesses, as well as those who would relate their experiences of first learning of the event. I was told chilling descriptions of the social environment in Taiwan in the first decades of martial law, a time of political purges, assassinations, disappearances, torture, and panoptic surveillance. Knowledge of my past research interest may have increased the frequency with which narratives of the Incident were communicated. However, the significance I attribute to the Incident in this dissertation reflects not only the content of my own interviews, but also the degree to which it appears in films, novels, poetry, documentaries, art, and other social science research in Taiwan and abroad.

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Images in this dissertation are presented in color.

## KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS

1.5:	One-point-five, between 1 <sup>st</sup> and 2 <sup>nd</sup> -generation immigrants
2-28:	February 28 <sup>th</sup> Incident
ABC:	American-born Chinese
ABT:	American-born Taiwanese
CHLA:	Chinese Hand Laundry Association
CMC:	Computer-mediated communication
CSA:	Chinese student association
DPP:	Democratic Progressive Party
FAPA:	Formosan Association for Political Action
FFF:	Formosans for a Free Formosa
FOB:	Fresh off the boat (recent immigrant)
IOC:	International Olympic Committee
KMT:	<i>Koumintang</i> (Nationalist Party)
PCC:	Pacific Curling Championship
PRC:	People's Republic of China
ROC:	Republic of China
ROCSA:	Republic of China student association
ROT:	Republic of Taiwan
SAROC:	Student Association of the Republic of China
TAM:	Taiwanese Association of Madison
TASA:	Taiwanese American Student Association
TC:	Taiwanese Collegian

TECO:	Taiwanese Economic and Cultural Exchange Office
TI:	Taiwanese independence
TIM:	Taiwanese Independence Movement
TRA:	Taiwan Relations Act
TSA:	Taiwanese student association
UFI	United Formosans for Independence
WUFI:	World United Formosans for Independence

# NEGOTIATIONS OF TAIWAN'S IDENTITY AMONG GENERATIONS OF *LIUXUESHENG* (OVERSEAS STUDENTS) AND TAIWANESE AMERICANS

## INTRODUCTION

### I. Dissertation Overview

#### A. Central Topic

This research explores the ways in which Taiwan has been conceptualized among *liuxuesheng* (overseas students) from Taiwan, the “1.5” generation” who immigrated in their pre-college years, as well as second-generation Taiwanese American university students, in order to develop new understandings of the ways in which “homeland” is imagined and negotiated among diasporic populations. Though affective bonds to a homeland are often thought of as a natural part of the immigrant experience, this research proceeds from the position that “homeland” is a discursive construction informed by social relations in a specific historical context. One’s “native place” should not be thought of as a fixed, timeless, and self-evident locality to which one may someday return (or re-discover). Rather, terms such as “homeland,” “native culture,” and “roots” should be viewed as empty signifiers in spaces of contest, whether referring to nation-states, regions, cities, or neighborhoods. As Doreen Massey points out, places have no single identity, nor do they unproblematically equal community (Massey 1994:152-3). This dissertation is a historical ethnography of “Taiwan” as a place-based signifier, exploring the ways in which its meaning has been negotiated among generations of Taiwanese

living in the U.S. since WWII. Thus, in addition to making contributions to discussions in diaspora studies, this dissertation explores new approaches to collective memory research.

Taiwan is an instructive case study for such inquiry because its status as a nation-state is highly contested, widening the range of differing conceptualizations of Taiwan's identity, and raising the stakes as differing views are negotiated. Although the exiled Republic of China government on the island of Taiwan was recognized by the UN as the official ruling body of mainland China from 1947 to 1971, Taiwan is no longer considered an independent Chinese nation by the international community, nor has the state declared itself openly to be a sovereign Taiwanese nation. The lack of formal recognition in the international community and a complex colonial history have created more flexibility in the domains of national and cultural identity for individuals from Taiwan compared to most nation-states, characterized in this case by a complex relationship with China and Chineseness.

Through the course of this dissertation I identify a series of views regarding Taiwan's identity, each derived from ethnographic materials, roughly following the contours of historic generations, beginning in Chapter One with a discussion of conceptualizations of Taiwan among the earliest generation of immigrants from Taiwan in the U.S., and concluding with an analysis of the differing ways second-generation Taiwanese Americans relate to their "homeland" Taiwan in Chapter Five. The concluding chapter presents an analysis of the differing conceptualizations of Taiwan in terms of overlaps and interdependences in an effort to gain greater insight into the experience of "homeland" among extraterritorial populations.

## **B. Research Design**

I draw insights from a wide range of field sites and sources of data both grounded and virtual, including interviews with thirty-eight subjects ranging from octogenarian Taiwanese independence activists to college freshmen. University student associations and cultural programs in the U.S. were selected as field sites because they have historically been the contexts for students to experience the events that influenced their long-term socio-political views. Fieldwork included participant-observation at fifteen local and regional Taiwanese student organizations' events across the U.S., as well as participant-observation with a Taiwanese student puppet troupe and curling team. Narratives of Taiwanese American students' impressions of Taiwan are discussed through an analysis of two homeland cultural tours for second-generation immigrants. In addition, this research is nuanced by extensive work in virtual field sites, including a content analysis of 172 student association websites spanning a ten-year period (1993-2003.) Website content related to conceptualizations of Taiwan's identity included, among other indicators, graphic iconography, group mission statements, types of activities, discussion boards, and links to other websites. A research population limited to members of co-ethnic student associations and participants in cultural programs provides a uniquely structured social context: a highly localized space of continuous inter- and intra-generational interactions, in some cases spanning decades. Collectively, these ethnographic locations and sources of data provide opportunities to further elucidate the diverse ways in which a "homeland" can be conceptualized and experienced among populations in diaspora. Over the course of this dissertation, I will discuss six

conceptualizations of Taiwan's identity as represented and remembered by the generations involved in their construction and negotiation. In brief, they are:

1. A Chinese nation-state identity rendering Taiwan a province of China;
2. Formosa, a anti-colonial formulation formulated by those who experienced the transition from Japanese rule to Nationalist administration in 1945;
3. Cultural Taiwan, formulated by cultural experts interested in maintaining Taiwanese traditions as the foundation of a national consciousness;
4. Multi-cultural Taiwan, the simplified and commodified elements of Taiwanese culture selected for display at events such as international fairs on college campuses;
5. New Taiwan, a conceptualization of Taiwan based on the ethnic identity;
6. Taiwan as Greater (Cultural) China, a discourse common among scholars who emphasize the growing significance of the margins of China in the Pacific Rim economy, including Hong Kong, Singapore, and overseas Chinese around the world.

### **C. Terminology: The Complexity and Power of Names**

#### *1. "China/Chinese"*

One of the underlying discourses that circumscribe Taiwanese difference within the domain of Chinese identity revolves around the term *huaren*, a reference to Chinese culture, and Chinese civilization, what Tu Weiming (1991) and others call "cultural China." When describing the case of Taiwan, Tu points out that the "sedimentations of Taiwanese history," referring to the Dutch and Japanese colonial regimes, and more recent American influence, are "superimposed on the Chinese substratum," and have been influenced by increased interest in indigenous culture and "nativistic sentiments." When combined, Tu observes that these factors render "the claim of Taiwan's Chineseness problematic" (9-10). "Nativistic sentiments," here, refers to Taiwanese native-place (*xiangtu*) identity. For example, I asked one of informants about what he would teach his own child about his heritage:

When I was small I descended from China (I was told) my great, great grandparent came from China, so I am Chinese. But, I will tell my kids no, you



were born in Taiwan, you grew up in Taiwan, you are not *Zhongguoren*. You are Taiwan. American citizens may have immigrated from Great Britain, or Italy, and other European countries. They don't call themselves British, or Portuguese. They call themselves American, so we should call ourselves Taiwanese.

Of course I will tell them that you have Chinese heritage. . . . First I will let him know much more about Taiwan, which I myself have never studied until college. I will let him know that Taiwanese has a very long history, that a long time ago, the Portuguese were in Taiwan, and then came the Dutch and they invaded and occupied Taiwan. So Taiwanese has some Dutch heritage. And then the Japanese, who also colonized Taiwan, which is why our grandparents spoke such good Japanese. And they considered themselves part Japanese. And then later they lose the war, and here comes the Chinese. I will explain to my kids that the KMT did not want to control Taiwan well, they just sent their worst general to Taiwan. But they lost the war to the communist party, so they had to retreat to Taiwan. The Taiwan underwent a series of reforms where everyone was educated they were Chinese - but actually there were only about 20-30% mainlanders, but the others were from Japan, or aborigines, so we can say we have heritage from Japan, from Dutch, from aborigines, so with all the influences of different cultures, you should call yourself Taiwanese.

The narrative above indicates a heterogeneity and flexibility in the content of Taiwanese identity, creating a tension between nativist sentiment and pan-Chinese identity discourse. “Cultural Chinese” was explicated in a 1991 *Daedalus* issue titled “The Living Tree: The Changing Meaning of Being Chinese.” Tu articulated the widely held view that Taiwan is part of the increasingly important *periphery* of China, with Taiwanese difference as a new “center” of *hua* Chinese culture which locates Taiwanese identities such as the one narrated above within the rubric of *hua* cultural and ancestral “background” (22). The outermost periphery of *hua* Cultural China includes multiple generations of Chinese Americans, as well as non-Chinese Sinologists.

In a subsequent essay published in a special issue on Taiwan in *The China Quarterly*, Tu (1996) refers to a Harvard conference earlier that year as the context in which he first “explored the issue of ‘Taiwanese consciousness’” in discussions with

Taiwanese graduate student participants. In the article, Tu argues that Taiwanese ethnic identity is a reactionary and anti-Chinese sentiment in a newly-established, over-stimulated and “commercialized” public sphere obsessed with political correctness:

Newspaper editorials and television talk shows are the popular arenas in which these cultural battles are waged. The popularity of phone-in radio and television programmes indicate a new form of participatory democracy, unprecedented in Chinese history. However, as these are highly charged emotional issues, the push toward radicalism is strong, and the temptation for sensationalism on the part of the host, guests and audience seems irresistible (1116).

He goes on to warn of the danger this movement poses to cross-Straits relations, arguing that “indeed, cultural identity is the core problem defining Taiwan’s position in the Chinese world, East Asia, the Asia-Pacific region and the global community.” The alternative articulation *shengmin gongtongti* (community of common life) – one of the conceptualizations of Taiwan’s identity discussed in this dissertation – is viewed by Tu as a “political ploy” that is nonetheless gaining support in the public sphere (1117). Rapid liberalization and the political appropriation of spontaneous sentiment, despite the fact that “[people on Taiwan] are aware that such rhetoric is contrary to Taiwan’s self interest and, in the last analysis, a threat to its survival,” may lead to “unpredictable consequences beyond rational control” (1121). To put his statements in historical context, the people in Taiwan were facing a second round of Chinese military maneuvers in the Taiwan Strait – including live-fire missile testing off the coast of Taiwan – on the eve of the first open presidential election in Taiwanese history. Lee Teng-hui, a native Taiwanese in the KMT party, won the office.



Tu presents Taiwan as a “cultural vortex” where “Taiwanese authenticity inevitably clashes with Chinese identity” (1121).<sup>1</sup> Here, he is using the term *zhongguoren*, and though he asserts that this simply means “person of the middle kingdom,” in Taiwan it is understood to mean a person from mainland China.<sup>2</sup> He proposes that most Taiwanese independence supporters would consider themselves both *huaren*, and racially *Han* Chinese, and goes on to state: “It is likely, once the ambiguity between political affiliation and ethnic identification becomes clarified, that the majority of Taiwanese will refer to themselves as *Zhongguoren* rather than *huaren*” (1133). The implication is that eventually, if the Taiwanese people are rational, they will recognize their own self interests and become a sub-ethnic group with Chinese citizenship. I highlight Tu’s opinion that Taiwan’s national identity is spurious to contrast more nuanced alternative understandings of Taiwan’s identity expressed by informants, including a more complex relationship to the discourses of *hua* and *Han* than Tu hypothesizes.

Throughout this dissertation I point to instances where Taiwan, people in Taiwan, Taiwanese culture, immigrants from Taiwan in the U.S., and Taiwanese Americans are included within overarching narratives of China, Chinese culture, Chinese immigration, Chinese diaspora, transnational Chinese, and Chinese Americans. Although Taiwan’s history has been linked to that of China through migration from the Chinese mainland since the 16<sup>th</sup> century, I am suggesting that Taiwan should not be considered

---

<sup>1</sup> Like Tu, Chu’s (2000) central position is that identification with Taiwan is inherently a denial of Chinese identity, but Chu does not go so far as to invalidate Taiwanese nationalism out of hand. “Behind all the obsessions for a new Taiwan-centered identity, or in its most provocative form of Taiwanese independence, primarily lies the impulse to fight for a sovereignty that can guarantee an unconstrained international space, rather than a nationalist motive to cut off all cultural and racial identification with China” (307).

<sup>2</sup> The Republic of China is *Zhonghua Minguo*; the full title of the PRC - *Zhonghua Renmin Gongheguo* (central glorious people’s united country), is usually shortened to *Zhongguo*, China.

unproblematically Chinese, no more than, say, Tibet, Mongolia, or Xinjiang – regions also ruled by the People’s Republic of China with local populations periodically at odds with the central Chinese government. It is important to ask, as the title of Melissa Brown’s 2004 ethnography suggests, “Is Taiwan Chinese?”, because Taiwan-as-China is only one of a range of conceptualizations of Taiwan’s identity discussed here – some of which reject the idea entirely. This dissertation is careful to avoid conflating Taiwan and China, and to point out when others have done so, as it speaks to the unequal power relations making some conceptualizations of Taiwan’s identity more valid than others.

## 2. “Taiwanese”

The multiplicity of imaginations of Taiwan creates a dilemma in English language terminology as “Taiwanese” may be meant to refer to an economic entity in the Pacific Rim known as one of Asia’s “little dragons, a cultural tradition that would include Taiwanese puppetry, an ethnic group to be distinguished from “mainlanders,” an ethnic group that includes all residents of Taiwan – known as “New Taiwanese identity” – to be distinguished from people of Chinese citizenship, or a population meant to be distinguished from ethnic Chinese by racial and cultural markers. When speaking of elder generations in Taiwan, this dissertation will employ terminology commonly used in Taiwan to distinguish between those of Fujianese descent living on the island prior to 1945, known as *benshengren* (of this province,) while those who immigrated from China with the Chinese Nationalist government after Japanese retrocession in 1945, known as *waishengren* (from outside the province.)

Just as this dissertation seeks to avoid presuming that residents of Taiwan should be considered Chinese, it also will not consider them unproblematically “Taiwanese.”

This text will consistently use the terms “students from Taiwan,” “members of student associations,” “associations of students from Taiwan,” and the like, over “Taiwanese students” and “Taiwanese student associations” in order to avoid claiming a Taiwanese identity on behalf of all residents on, and immigrants from, *Taiwan Bendao* (Taiwan Island.)

Although the terms “Taiwanese student” and “Chinese student” will be avoided, this dissertation will refer to members of the second generation in the U.S. – children of immigrants from Taiwan – as “Taiwanese Americans.” Although the term is not universally embraced, with some preferring to be called Chinese American or America-born Chinese (ABC), the descriptor “Taiwanese” in this case refers to a geographic location from which their parents immigrated. Taiwan itself is meant to indicate a geopolitical entity, an island state approximately 100 miles across the Taiwan Strait from Fujian Province, on the southeastern coast of China, north of the Philippine islands and south of Japan, along with a collection of islands and atolls under its political control, and should not be taken to confer the legitimacy of claims of national sovereignty.

Discursive encompassment of Taiwan within Chinese meta-narratives was first identified as a problem endemic to academia by Stephen O. Murray and Keelung Hong, (1994) who composed a comprehensive exegesis of social science research conducted in Taiwan, demonstrating that practices such as translating Holo terms and names into Mandarin, downplaying *benshengren* local cultural variations while highlighting practices thought to be more Chinese, avoiding topics of *benshengren* ethnic identity, and titling monographs and articles as “Chinese” research, supported specific interests and ideologies; ultimately, Murray and Hong argue that “researchers who wanted to study

China were welcomed by a government pretending to be China” (38). They have appealed to social scientists, research institutions, and publishers that more theoretical space and ethnographic attention be provided for *benshengren* difference. The authors suggest that Sinologists’ desire for China legitimated the Nationalist government’s political, economic, and ideological monopolies, and ultimately Cold War American foreign policy. Just as I have argued that place-identity is flexible and defined through social relations, so it is important to note than “China,”

### 3. “ABC/Ts: American-Born Chinese/Taiwanese”

The distinction Murray and Hong worked to highlight in order to dispel the “invisibility” of Taiwanese culture has become less salient among younger generations, and due to increased intermarriage between *waishengren*, *benshengren*, indigenous groups and Hakka, these broad categories become problematic with each passing generation. Taking the lifting of Martial Law, legalizations of the DPP, and the election of Lee Teng-hui as a watershed period of liberalization in Taiwan, I shift terminology when referring to overseas student populations in the U.S. and no longer specify the provincial status of immigrants’ parents, but rather – when relevant – use other indicators of political orientation, such as which candidate their family supported in the 2000 presidential elections, or stated positions on the independence/unification question. The heterogeneity in background of the younger generations of overseas students is concomitant with the emergence of a wider range of issues being debated in the public sphere, where position on the independence/reunification issue may be less salient than, for example, environmental protection or liberalization of trade with China. At the time of this research, Lien (2006) reports that among Taiwanese living in the U.S., 33 per cent

said that they identified themselves most often as Taiwanese American; 38 percent preferred Chinese American.

## **II. Methods**

### **A. Student Associations and Multi-locale Ethnography**

As phrased by Gupta and Ferguson, the Internet-based fieldwork described in my dissertation moves "from spatial sites to political locations" (1997a:36). Ethnographies focusing on a single, "face-to-face" territorialized community sometimes miss the translocal relationships that define locality, and fail to appreciate the extent to which such locations are intersections of bodies in transit, transected by global processes, and appropriated by nation-states. The concept of "locality" should not be limited to a discrete place, but rather be seen as a process, a space constituted by flows of people, ideas, and power (Massey 1994). For example, efforts to establish and maintain a nation-state draw on the concept of locality to create bonds of identity among extraterritorial populations. Following Fouron and Glick-Schiller (1997), this dissertation identifies nation-state building as "a set of historical and affective processes that link disparate and heterogeneous populations together and forge their loyalty to and identification with a central government apparatus and institutional structure" (281). Because nation-state building involves multiple points of intervention in the everyday lives of those being targeted for inclusion (and exclusion), so fieldwork must be based on multiple points of investigation.

With this understanding of locality in mind, this should be considered a multi-locale ethnography, what Clifford (1997) has called "subway ethnography," involving



sporadic encounters and moments of participant-observation, textual deconstruction and Internet-based data collection. As a prime example, one of the sites of student association research is a transitory ethnographic location, a public event organized by a transient student population: an international cultural fair. On campuses across the country, students groups come together periodically and set up booths, arrange performances, and prepare samples of traditional cuisine. Alongside cultural elements, students at such events display national flags, maps locating the country in relation to other nation states, and other information about the homeland, including histories and descriptions of traditions. The students' booths often include the soft propaganda material found in government-produced tourist pamphlets, guide books, and websites. They reproduce the iconography and "invented traditions" that provide the historical and cultural underpinnings of the nation-state (Hobsbawm 1983). Joel Hinton, participant in one of the cultural tours described in Chapter Four, lamented the lack of accurate information about Taiwan in the U.S.: "Five years ago, I knew almost nothing about Taiwan except the few bits of recent history mingled with military-dictatorship- era KMT government propaganda that wormed its way into all of the American travel guides about Taiwan." Following Gellner's terminology (1983), student association displays and performances reproduce and reify the official "national culture," thereby legitimating and naturalizing the connection between the territorial "homeland" and the state among overseas populations.

The flourishing of international student groups in the 1990s should be viewed in the context of the policies of multiculturalism in the U.S., where each student group is expected to demonstrate "authentic" cultural elements. The groups are encouraged by the

university, other co-ethnics in the surrounding community, other student associations, and home nations' governments, to participate in these micro-international communities. In the case of Taiwan, students (some of whom have never visited Taiwan) are expected to demonstrate Taiwanese authenticity in the context of "Chinese culture" represented by other student associations on campus. The insights drawn from events such as these emerge from an interpretative approach to the performances, images, texts and discourses presented and omitted. *Given Taiwan's undetermined national status, I begin with the premise that associations of students from Taiwan, student networks, co-ethnic conferences, and cultural programs should be viewed as always/already embedded in competing nation-building projects, and thus sites for negotiation of Taiwan's identity.*

## **B. Websites**

In this dissertation student associations are examined in three distinct ways. First, as *grounded field sites*, student associations provide opportunities for participant-observation of localized practices, such as student association events and chapter meetings, camps for overseas students, cultural fairs, night-markets, pot-luck dinners, birthday parties, and so forth. Second, in addition to direct participant observation, local practices can be glimpsed through the medium of student association websites, a form of ethnographic voyeurism that uncovers traces of past events in photo albums, activities calendars, announcements, and so forth. Because this study builds on a synchronic and diachronic analysis of 172 websites, approaching a 100 percent sample of student associations in the U.S., organizations that emphasize Chineseness, politically neutral associations, and those that emphasize Taiwanese identity are represented. In addition to providing access to an organization's practices, this research views student association

webpages as historical relics and cyber-spatial texts. They may be deconstructed, considering elements such as imagery, informational content, design motifs, functional aspects, and institutional persona. On this level of analysis, the websites themselves are the units of analysis rather than the student associations as grounded field sites. Websites may be viewed as a component of what Appadurai has identified as a *technoscape*, where information and ideas move at high speeds across various kinds of previously impervious boundaries" (Appadurai 1996:34). In this case, website research provides historical depth to Appadurai's analytical '-scape' model, traversing not only geographic boundaries in the present, as he describes, but also using technologies to trace communications of meaning across time *and* space.

Third, in addition to local practices and cyber-texts, student associations are considered to be nodes embedded within trans-local and transnational fields, and in some cases, integral to a broad nationalist movement. Such connectivity is structured not only by synchronic networks, but also in relation to the past, connecting the present to past events through hyper-links to historical texts and narratives of the past. In the same manner that analysis of student association practices and website deconstruction are given historical depth through cyber-archaeology, so too can we learn about changes in conceptualizations of Taiwan's identity among students from Taiwan by noting changes in website content and connectivity over the life of the website. By combining these modes of analysis, this dissertation maximizes the potential of student associations as primary field sites in this research.

### **C. Madison's Puppetry and Curling**

Many of the voices recorded in this ethnography emerged from interviews during fieldwork in Madison, Wisconsin, where I conducted participant-observation with members of the Taiwanese community connected to the Taiwanese independence movement, as well as with student association members, the students in a traditional Taiwanese puppet troupe, and members of a Taiwanese curling team. This multi-generational sample permitted an analysis of changes in the meaning and salience of being from Taiwan to overseas students over time. Because students from Taiwan in Madison were faced with dual, sometimes competing, student associations, representing incongruous conceptualizations of Taiwan, this field site also provides instructive examples of the tensions between such organizations as they were experienced over the past years and decades.

Although founded by a key independence activist from the 1970s and supported by local senior-generation sponsors in the Madison Taiwanese community, the puppet troupe is presented as a politically neutral organization. Members of the troupe included students whose political leanings ranged from independence activism, studied political indifference to, strong pro-China sentiments. The troupe thus provided a cross-section of students' political and cultural perspectives, and allows a case study of the relationship between participation in a Taiwanese cultural program and the development of conceptualizations of Taiwan's identity among its members. Additionally, this study of the Madison puppet troupe and the growing popularity of Taiwanese puppetry among college students across the country allows for an analysis of the increasing importance of this specific cultural form to younger generations both in Taiwan and among students in the U.S. The practice is promoted as a modern expression of Taiwanese traditional

culture, and serves as point of entry for activists to gain access and influence among younger generations. The elder generation's conceptualization of Taiwan, identified here as Formosan Taiwan, views Taiwan's identity is that of a culturally distinct post-colonial (would-be) nation-state denied the sovereignty guaranteed by UN's commitment to self determination, a dilemma perpetuated by ongoing political pressure from mainland China. Many of the students, however, interpret Taiwanese puppetry as a non-political expression, a marker of Taiwanese cultural authenticity.

Taiwanese university students in Madison also competed internationally in curling competitions as the "Fighting Yams." This explicit expression of Taiwanese nationalism in the international arena, though not related to Taiwanese national culture *per se* as curling is not presented as an indigenous sport, was nevertheless meant to increase the visibility of Taiwan among other nation-states. While sponsors of the puppet troupe emphasized the promotion Taiwanese culture among students and worked to raise public awareness about the uniqueness of Taiwan, the Fighting Yams operated without the traditional cultural moorings generally characteristic of nationalism. They emphasized universality, rather than the particularity, of Taiwan as one nation-state among all others as indicated by membership in international bodies such as the UN and the World Health Organization, and participation in the World Olympic Games under the name "Taiwan" rather than the current "Chinese Taipei," or "Republic of China," as requested by the central government in Taiwan.

In addition to interviewing senior independence supporters and current members of the University of Wisconsin, Madison student association, fieldwork in Madison also revolved around the local Taiwanese puppet troupe. I interviewed the current and past

members, comparing their experiences with the expectations of the cultural expert who established the troupe. The Madison group was one of many he formed and trained across the country over the last decade, hoping that participation in the activities by younger overseas students and Taiwanese Americans would develop in them a commitment to promoting Taiwan's national identity based on a unique cultural tradition.

#### **D. Confidentiality, Authorship and Citation**

Following the wishes of informants, pseudonyms have been used in some cases. The identities of those who have been in leadership position in student associations are public record and have not been altered. Further, details of Internet documents have not been altered to protect privacy, but rather are reproduced in the original form to grant authorship. Unless reproduced in full, selections of materials published on publically accessible websites have been treated as open documents not subject to use permission requirements or use notification. This research operates under the assumption that authors who publish materials on the Internet have no expectation of privacy, a position toward information similar to that of a notice posted on a bulletin board or a public performance. In cases of website graphic design, authorship is granted to the organization rather than the webmaster, photographer, or any particular graphic artist involved in image production. In most cases, permanent citation references have been provided for each.

The most important data collection instrument making possible the analysis of a large number of student associations was made possible through the use of a database of archived student association websites. The Internet Archive ([www.archive.org](http://www.archive.org)) was established in 1999 when several large collections of images, texts, moving images, and

music found on the Internet were consolidated and synchronized in a virtual “Library of Alexandria” that continuously records “snapshots” of the Internet. A 501(c)(3) organization, the Internet Archive is designed to provide “permanent access for researchers, historians, and scholars to historical collections that exist in digital format.” Just as it is possible to compare first, second, and third editions of books, the Internet Archive makes it possible to view the genealogy of a website URL. Websites may be recorded, including in most cases external links referring to other websites of the same time period.

Because this analysis deals with changes of a website over time, it is important to clarify the manner in which student associations will be cited. Following the American Anthropological Association style for public Internet documents, the access date will refer to the Archive.org URL of the specific version of the student association website being referenced. Unless a specific author is indicated, authorship of the document will be attributed to the student association. The date of the document’s publication, however, will refer to the version of the site being discussed without a notation of the year in which the student association website first appeared on the Internet, or was first published on Archive.org. The website version date (including month and day) and student association URL both appear in the Archive.org URL. For example, an Archive.org reference is composed of the following parts: “<http://web.archive.org/web/>” indicates that the URL refers to the web-recording section of Archive.org. This is followed by a date and time referencing precisely when the website was recorded, “20010507113651/,” followed by the original URL: “[cmsu2.cmsu.edu/~yxc21810/csa/greeting.htm](http://cmsu2.cmsu.edu/~yxc21810/csa/greeting.htm).” A typical citation following the American Anthropological Association format will appear in this way:

Central Missouri Chinese Student Association

2001a Greetings Letter. Electronic document,

<http://web.archive.org/web/20010507113651/cmsu2.cmsu.edu/~yxc21810/csa/greeting.htm>, accessed October 14, 2007.

2001b Home Page. Electronic Document,

<http://web.archive.org/web/20010507113651/cmsu2.cmsu.edu/~yxc21810/csa/home.htm>, accessed October 14, 2007.

2005 Greetings Letter. Electronic document,

<http://web.archive.org/web/20050507113651/cmsu2.cmsu.edu/~yxc21810/csa/greeting.htm>, accessed October 14, 2007.

The References Cited section is divided into three segments: off-line published materials, websites of student associations, and essays and other writings composed by Taiwanese students and published online.

### **III. Theoretical and Historical Context**

#### **A. Nations and Diaspora**

First emerging in 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century Europe, the nation-state model of political, economic and cultural organization has been appropriated and adapted to specific geopolitical arenas to such an extent that by the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, nearly all of global human geography is claimed as the sovereign territory of a nation-state. These geo-political formations are mutually legitimizing; by formal recognition and state-level relations, borders of states and the legitimacy of regimes are institutionalized, naturalized and reproduced. When social scientists first turned their attention to the nation-state as an object of study in the mid-1980s, they suggested that the most basic assumptions about the nation are actually a complex set of political mystification. The ideal is a culturally homogenous group of subject-citizens who share a common heritage, culture, and language, and who live together within the clearly defined territorial borders of an



ancestral homeland, a timeless and essential unit of culture in the world. Once deconstructed and historicized, the nation is better understood as a political product, an “imagined community” created through print media (Anderson 1983), the narrations of universal education (Gellner 1983; Bhabha 1990), invented traditions, and official national culture (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983) which includes the standardization of a particular dialect into a national language (Gellner 1983). Bits and scraps of local traditions, oral histories, and a selection of symbols and practices of ethnic cultures are pulled into an ongoing process of iconization to become national representations (Herzfeld 1997). Thus the nation is never quite “accomplished”; it is always incomplete, improvised and contingent (Bhabha 1990a). Although, as Smith (1986) points out, there is often “pre-national” ancestral, geographic, linguistic, and cultural continuity over time, it must be recognized that these are also socio-political goals maintained and formalized to create disciplined national citizens.

Just as nation-states are meant to have clearly defined geographic, cultural, and economic boundaries, so national identity is meant to be totalizing, superseding all other aspects of communal identification. The “identity” of a nation-state, for example, is shaped through *narration* of a history that includes a formal name, a population bound by a shared culture living in their ancestral homeland, sharing common past tragedies and a common future fate. Such narratives should not be mistaken for objective histories, as the production of history is a crucial element in the creation and perpetuation of a specific national identity that lends legitimacy and authority to the ruling regime. The development and dissemination of a national past, discourses that would give a sense of continuity, mask what Homi K. Bhabha described as “the impossible unity of the nation”

(1990b:1). To maintain a sense of coherence, in common terms, national narratives are “multi-media,” illuminated with highly symbolic graphic elements such as flags, a score of anthems and folk songs, styles of architecture, and a literary tradition. A nation’s identity may be packaged and marketed for internal and external consumption through a tourism industry, and embodied by generations of veterans who’ve worn the nation’s uniform.

The modern totalizing nation-state model, however, is currently being revised to account for some of the changes characteristic of late modernity. Inexpensive transportation and technological advances such as computer-mediated communication (CMC) have allowed for greater mobility of people, products and information across the territorial boundaries of nation-states. The technological advances which enable “post-Fordist” de-centralized production are said to create a kind of “time-space compression” (Harvey 1989). This allows media and markets to move beyond the bounds of discrete nations to create a “global culture” where subject positions are increasingly fragmented and fluid (Appadurai 1996). From this perspective, cultural authenticity and depth is lost, and grounded local discourses of national identity are being co-opted by the processes of global capital (Jameson 1984; Miyoshi 1993; Ohmae 1995).

Dirlik (1999), however, notes that globalization tends to produce regionalization, and forges unpredictable links between the two levels of organization. Thus, it is critical to "reconsider relations between places, between places and trans-place or supra-place organizational forms, and, finally, across national boundaries, to imagine alternative possibilities in the reorganization of spaces" (50). Such flexibility in the relationship between space and place runs askew of the traditional model of the nation-state, which is

dependent on the idea of a traditional “homeland.” As we shall see, informants articulated a wide range of conceptualizations of Taiwan, ranging from an interest in ancestral villages to contemplating Taiwan in terms of globalization and Pacific Rim economic and political relations. Such conceptualizations do not form in a vacuum, but are shaped by family and friends, media representations, and oftentimes the cultural knowledge acquired through “reethnicization” in the context of state-sponsored culturalist projects in the U.S. (Louie 2004b:34). Describing the experiences of U.S.-born Chinese Americans who lack “authentic” Chinese cultural knowledge, Louie (2004b) points out the irony that those in her study are “on the one hand seen as perpetual foreigners or as too ‘Asian,’ and on the other hand as not Asian enough in a U.S. society that celebrates symbolic diversity and parades ethnicity” (25). This creates pressure to discover ethnic roots in order to be an authentic cultural minority in American.

### **B. Locating Taiwan in History**

In the case of Taiwan, the potential unraveling of the nation-state is particularly complex because of its historical and contemporary cultural and political indeterminacy. Taiwan has been identified as part of “greater China,” “residual China,” the “Chinese diaspora,” and “cultural China.” Ong (1999) locates Taiwan on the fringes of China’s graduated sovereignty, a concept that describes the varying degrees of political control the People’s Republic of China (PRC) can exert over different economic regions, zones and markets within its national borders. Taiwanese-ness then becomes part of a Chinese “third culture.” Taiwan’s status is interpreted as a “novel social arrangement” produced by globalization (Nonini and Ong 1997:11), a notion that resonates with Appadurai’s description of a “postnation” with diasporic populations making up a “global ethnoscape”

(1996:52). To some Taiwanese nationalists, creating a more clearly defined and less permeable “hardened” (Duara 1995) Taiwanese national identity conflicts with the notions of Taiwan as a location of “flexible” citizenship of Chinese modernity (Ong 1993).

The Taiwanese independence movement has historically been grounded in opposition to an established nation-state claiming to represent all of China. Thus, Taiwan is China in microcosm. Nationalists have constructed counter-histories which de-center hegemonic Chinese nationalist discourses established by the Republic of China (ROC) government beginning in 1945, when rule of Taiwan was transferred from Japanese to ROC control, as well as claims to Taiwan made by the People’s Republic of China on the mainland. The governments on both sides of the Taiwan Strait shared the overarching framework of Taiwan as China, that Taiwan should be understood as a province of China. Such is the historical gravity faced by the independence activist under martial law, working to create a compelling national narration which claims the island as a “native place,” without the advantages of control over public education curriculum, mass media, national holidays, and all the others myriad ways China is inscribed onto the surfaces of everyday life of those in Taiwan.

In the case of Taiwan’s counter-hegemonic identity, the period of transition from Japanese rule (1945) to the time when the Republic of China was wholly relegated to Taiwan (1949) is a pivotal historical moment in what would become the widely understood (though highly contested) notion of Taiwan’s identity as an independent nation-state. The central event in that period – the focal point that provided the powerful narrative elements for a counter-hegemonic Taiwanese nationalism – was the February

28<sup>th</sup> Incident in 1947, commonly referred to as 2-28. As will be detailed below, and explicated throughout this dissertation, the February 28th Incident made Taiwanese history *knowable*, not simply through its sufficiency as a historical cause – the impact it had on those who witnessed the event itself – but also through a complex and ongoing process of interpretation, iconization, and deployment, what Jameson (1981) has called the “absent cause” of narratological agency. The event’s long-lasting significance – spanning three generations – highlights the dynamic relationship between what we think of as the “facts” of history, and the process of their construction. The issue for the social scientist, then, becomes not so much a true account of the past, but rather a treatment of the past *and its accounting*, searching for strands of power and interest revealed by exploring the “irreducible distinction and yet . . . equally irreducible overlap between what happened and that which is said to have happened” (Trouillot 1995:2). Bhabha has called this a kind of “double-time” that circumscribes national identity:

The people are not simply historical events or parts of a patriotic body politic. They are also a complex rhetorical strategy of social reference where the claim to be representative provokes a crisis within the process of signification and discursive address. We then have a contested cultural territory where the people must be brought into a double-time; the people are the historical “objects” of a nationalist pedagogy, giving the discourse an authority that is based on the pre-given or constituted historical origin or event; the people are also the “subjects” of a process of signification that must erase any prior or ordinary presence of the nation-people to demonstrate the prodigious, living principle of the people as that continual living process by which the national life is redeemed and signified as a repeating and productive process. The scraps, patches, and rags of daily life must be repeatedly turned into the signs of a national culture, while the very act of the narrative performance interpolates a growing circle of national subjects (1990b:297).

This improvisation, however, is masked as it becomes national pedagogy or oppositional narratives. Among extraterritorial populations such as those involved in my

research, the medium of formal education is largely unavailable, leaving conceptualizations of Taiwan more piecemeal, tentative, flexible, contextual and highly contestable in terms of what elements of the past should be selected to index a national History. In this chapter I will consider the genre of the national narratives and counter-narratives in terms of their localized construction, modification, and contestation, shifting attention from seemingly permanent things to “the processes whereby permanence and thingness are achieved” (Herzfeld 1997:57). It is a shift from studying the cultural object – whether an event or a national identity – to studying the process of its historical and rhetorical construction.

Transnational processes have required social scientists to develop and nuance the generation-based assimilation models of immigration and to account for a range of new (or newly recognized) factors (Portes 1997), including immigrant mobility, cultural hybridity, transnational professions and lifestyles, and the continuing participation in the political and social affairs of sending countries (Basch et al. 1994; Glick Schiller 1999; Lowe 1996; Ong 1999; Mahler 1998). Transmigrants can be an important part of national economies and influence national policies in both the receiving and sending state. As Anderson (2000a) has pointed out in reference to Taiwan, electronic media and migration have caused “a virulent new form of nationalism” that does not depend on being located in the “home country” (13).

Fluidity and mobility, however, do not mean a lack of *desire* for a fixed and coherent national identity, or an association with a specific geographical territory. Sometimes the strongest, most coherent discourses and symbols of national identity are constructed outside of the nation proper by immigrants, dissidents, and exiles (Malkii

1997a). Gupta and Ferguson explain that "as places and localities become ever more blurred and indeterminate, ideas of culturally and ethnically distinct places become perhaps even more salient" (1997a:39). Rather than losing one's sense of ethnic identity, displacement may be strengthening immigrants' sense of a "homeland" (Schein 1997; Massey 1994). However, case studies have suggested that such radical departures of the modernist view of national identity, and the status of the nation-state, may only apply to a small number of cases. This dissertation is particularly interested in the ways in which these multivalent processes change conceptualizations of a nation's identity – in this case, Taiwan – among populations living beyond the geographical boundaries of the nation-state, specifically, how conceptualizations of the "homeland" are created and communicated within and between generations of overseas students.

Rather than a population of hyper-mobile "deterritorialized" subjects, the informants and historical figures described in this ethnography would be more appropriately called "extraterritorial" (Goldring 1998). "Extraterritoriality" suggests that although populations may live beyond its geographic borders, the homeland continues to have some degree of salience. Distance in space can be mediated by temporal continuity and the simultaneity of collective memory and shared culture. For a state to gain and maintain the loyalties of immigrant groups to a national imagined community – in order to nationalize them – the state must be able to effectively communicate discourses of affinity grounded in a shared traditions and a common past narrated in such a way that is both convincing and meaningful.

With economic globalization and the concomitant development of complex transnational ties between extraterritorial populations and sending countries, a new set of

questions emerge regarding attitudes toward national identity among extraterritorial populations. As a working definition to approach this issue, I draw on Basch et al. (1994) who have defined “transnationalism” as:

The processes by which immigrants forge and sustain multi-stranded social relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement . . . social fields that cross geographic, cultural, and political borders. . . . Transmigrants take actions, make decisions, and develop subjectivities and identities embedded in networks of relationships that connect them simultaneously to two or more nation-states (7).

The phenomenon raises the question of why, given the new pressures of life as an immigrant in a foreign nation-state, populations continue to be engaged in nation-building projects in their countries of origin. Ong (1993) points out that in Asia, and China in particular, transnational ties have very much shaped cultural production, identity discourses, and shifts in state policies, which have strengthened rather than weakened the nation-state. It is not uncommon for nation-building projects to be primarily extraterritorial, with the homeland a moral rather than geographic location (Malkii 1997a). Though focused on the heterogeneous and contradictory imaginations of a place, this dissertation research is situated in a theoretical approach generally used to discuss national identity construction in general. It represents an effort to understand one aspect of how these ties of affinity are communicated, reproduced, and politicized among would-be national subjects living beyond the territorial bounds of the nation-state. As a place, a geo-conceptual location, homeland-as-nation is only one of a range of conceptualizations of homeland. In this case, Taiwan’s identity is negotiated beyond the national register, for example, by those for whom Taiwan is a location of nostalgic reflection on the Japanese era, an unresolved political project focused on sovereignty, the point of origin for a minority group in the U.S., or the destination of second-generation



immigrants searching for their cultural heritage. The “search for roots” concept itself must be understood as a recent phenomenon, part of U.S. discourses of multiculturalism, where minority groups are expected to represent their “native culture” in highly symbolic practices and performances.

The unresolved question of the ultimate fate of Taiwan continues to inform negotiations of identity by university students from Taiwan in the U.S., and second-generation Taiwanese American youth. With education reforms and the removal of reunification from the official Nationalist platform, the public sphere is open to debates over the ultimate future of Taiwan, and an individual’s relationship to Chineseness is one of self-exploration rather than indoctrination. A 2003 study of public opinion regarding the issues of reunification and independence showed that 79 percent of the population preferred maintaining the status quo, including:

Status quo now, decision later; status quo now, unification later; status quo now, independence later; and status quo forever. . . . approximately one-third (34.3 percent) of these respondents supporting "status quo now, decision later." Those supporting independence or unification as soon as possible accounted for only 7.2 and 2.0 percent, respectively, a result consistent with past polls (ROC Government Information Office 2004).

China has used its position on the UN Security Council to block Taiwan’s membership in the World Health Organization and other international bodies, including compelling the International Olympic Committee to require that Taiwan compete in the Olympics Games as “Chinese Taipei.” This assertion of sovereignty over Taiwan is strengthened by the U.S. adherence to the “One China” principle as outlined in the 1972 Shanghai Communiqué signed by President Richard Nixon, and re-affirmed by each

succeeding presidential administration (United States Information Service 1972).<sup>3</sup>

Conversely, the Taiwan Relations Act (TRA), enacted by U.S. Congress in 1979, commits the U.S. to defend Taiwan if China takes unprovoked military action, and to “provide Taiwan with arms of a defensive character” (United States Code 1979).<sup>4</sup> China has responded by taking the position that *not* moving toward reunification in a timely manner is in itself provocative and justifies military action according to legal provisions.

Claims of sovereignty over Taiwan made by an increasingly militarized mainland subvert assertions of Taiwan’s national identity in the international community; the rights of self determination guaranteed to the people of Taiwan in the United Nations Charter (United Nations 1945) have not been asserted due to China’s veto power. They could effectively block all decisions by the UN Security Council over the issue. With the 2006 election of Ma Ying-jeou of the Nationalist party as President, and the downfall of former President Chen Shui-bian amid serious charges of using Taiwanese independence organizations for the purposes of embezzlement and money laundering, popular support for normalization of trade and travel with the PRC has dramatically increased. This complex relationship between the PRC on the mainland and the ROC on Taiwan has figured prominently in the historical development and discursive parameters of Taiwan’s identity held among people from Taiwan since the Japanese surrender and initial Nationalist military occupation of Taiwan in 1945, both in Taiwan and abroad.

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<sup>3</sup> The Act specifies that “the United States acknowledges that all Chinese on either side of the Taiwan Strait maintain there is but one China and that Taiwan is a part of China” (United States Information Service 1972). Ironically, the document is dated February 28<sup>th</sup>, 1972, the 23<sup>rd</sup> anniversary of the 2-28 Incident.

<sup>4</sup> The Act specifies that “any effort to determine the future of Taiwan by other than peaceful means, [will be considered] a threat to the peace and security of the Western Pacific area and of grave concern to the United States.” The TRA also reserves the right for the U.S. to “resist any resort to force or other forms of coercion that would jeopardize the security, or the social or economic system, of the people on Taiwan” (United States Code 1979).

### **C. Taiwan's National Identity in the U.S.**

From the mid-1950s, exiles in Japan and elsewhere, as well as graduate students from Taiwan in the U.S., began to play key roles in the formulation and dissemination of the narratives of Taiwan's national identity (Meisner 1963; Shu 1973; Mendel 1973; Shu Wei-der 2002). Students from Taiwan in the U.S. prior to the 1987 lifting of martial law in Taiwan were able to view their home from a critical distance and, if they chose, explore the factual and interpretative discrepancies in the Sinocentric pedagogy of their youth with alternative perspectives supported by oral and textual accounts revealing details of the violence and corruption of the Nationalist government in Taiwan. They had the opportunity to discuss with other students from Taiwan alternative national imaginations. The vast majority of these students remained in the U.S. (Chen 2002).

I will be addressing the tensions, contradictions, and dynamics between differing conceptualizations of Taiwan's identity among overseas students from Taiwan living in the U.S. over the last four decades, beginning with the clandestine Taiwanese independence organizations in the mid-1950s. Student associations, networks, and cultural programs, because they are the context of negotiations of identity, have been targeted by competing interests as locations of intervention. They are seen as potential sources of support for specific agendas, often dealing with the balance of power between unificationists and Taiwanese nationalists (Kaplan 1992; Liao 1997; Wang 1999).

Immigrants from Taiwan and second-generation Taiwanese American independence advocates in the U.S. work to help shape the future of Taiwan by heightening awareness of the Taiwan-China issue in the U.S., to gain political support and apply pressure to change U.S. foreign policy, and introduce "Taiwanese culture" to

the general public. In conjunction with Taiwanese independence supporters in Taiwan, they have created programs for students from Taiwan to promote and inform the students' understandings of Taiwan's identity, with one of the primary objectives being to create more support for the Taiwanese nationalist cause. These cultural events, lectures, camps, and tours are also shaped by the demands and desires of overseas students and Taiwanese Americans, as they explore Asian/Chinese/Taiwanese "roots" with others in their generation.

For many overseas students, Taiwan-centric student associations were the locations of first exposure to counter-hegemonic historical narratives, information, and ideologies that revealed the incomplete and often fraudulent nature of the Sinocentric ROC nationalist pedagogy instituted by the Nationalist government. Because experiences in early adulthood shape the consciousness of historic generations, and student associations were a commonly experienced organizing factor in the everyday lives of overseas students, the associations themselves become locations to study negotiations of Taiwan's identity among overseas students from Taiwan and their second generation progeny among transient subjects during identity-forming periods in their lives.

The biographical sketches in the 2004 Republic of China Government Information Office's annual "Who's Who" in Taiwan will show that overseas independence supporters were instrumental in driving the democratic reform process forward, and continue to play key roles in the governance of Taiwanese affairs, working alongside those who had belonged to competing student association in the U.S. It has been noted that student associations have been targeted as locations of intervention and

potential sources of support for specific agendas by competing interests, often between unificationists and Taiwanese nationalists (Kaplan 1992; Liao 1997; Wang 1999). The degree to which overseas Taiwanese independence supporters impacted democratic reform is not a question directly addressed in this dissertation. The perception by some activists in the U.S. that current university students will have an impact on Taiwan's status in the international community, however, is an important factor as it speaks to the motivations behind the actions of agents and agencies in this research. Overseas students who return from abroad with advanced degrees have historically held prominent positions in Taiwanese society, in both public and private sectors. Others who elect to stay in the U.S. often continue to be actively involved in Taiwanese political affairs and attempt to shape U.S. foreign policy, whether for maintaining the *status quo*, promoting Taiwanese self-determination, or pressing for eventual reunification with China. Given the currency of the perception of eventual influence, conferences, camps, and cultural programs designed for second-generation Taiwanese American university students searching for "roots" are always/already engaged in multiple nation-building projects, given the context of Taiwan's undetermined national status, and are contexts for negotiations of Taiwan's identity.

#### D. Research on the Political Orientation of Taiwanese Student-Immigrants

In the late 1960s there was an influx of graduate students from Taiwan studying at Purdue University, Kansas State University in Manhattan, Kansas, University of Wisconsin, Madison, University of Oklahoma, Norman, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, and Michigan State University, East Lansing, and a scattering of other affordable research institutions with a demand for graduate students in mathematics, engineering

and other scientific fields. University faculty from Taiwan, some of whom sympathized with the independence movement, recruited students – often the best and brightest from National Taiwan University – to study as graduate students and research assistants. Although many people from Taiwan in the U.S. were careful to avoid participating in political activities, and most would agree that people from Taiwan were both racially (*Han*) and culturally (*hua*) Chinese, a significant portion of the overseas population expressed dissatisfaction with the Nationalist government.

My dissertation research contributes to a sparse collection of work in English dealing with the attitudes of Taiwanese in the U.S. during the period of martial law in Taiwan. Douglas Mendel (1973), a political scientist, conducted an extensive study of students, teachers, and businessmen from Taiwan between 1963 and 1968, with over 600 interviews on topics related to Taiwanese independence, democratic reform, attitudes toward the KMT, and future career plans. His work carried legitimacy among supporters of Taiwanese independence due in part to a series of presentations and papers Mendel gave during the research period. He found that about 20 percent could be considered “politically active,” indicated by their participation in a range of activities from open protests to participation in discussion and study groups categorized as illegal by the Nationalist government. His research showed that the majority of Taiwanese active only in social organizations were nonetheless “sympathetic” to the Taiwanese independence cause (161). Mendel’s research provides a sense of how widespread the dissatisfaction with the Nationalist government was at that time, and provides a baseline percentage of potential activists among the overseas student population.

Shu Yuang Chang (1973) continued this line of questioning, publishing “China or Taiwan? The Political Crisis of the Chinese Intellectual” in the journal *Amerasia*. Shu administered a survey instrument to professionals and students from Taiwan through mail in 1970 which revealed wide-spread anti-Chiang, pro-democracy sentiment. Among her findings, 17 percent of respondents listed “escape” as reason for leaving Taiwan. This figure resonates with Mendel’s data in terms of the percentage of those in the U.S. who were strongly opposed to Nationalist rule. From a different perspective, by focusing his research on a sample of early overseas student supporters, Shu Wei-der’s 1998 study relied exclusively on in-depth life-histories of a limited number of individuals selected through pre-existing relationships with activists. He found that his informants were aware of each others’ activities and backgrounds, but struggled to initiate collective, translocal action. Instead, they focused on local recruitment of incoming generations of Overseas students. These studies collectively provide insight into the situation and mentality of overseas students from Taiwan in the mid-1960s.

A more contemporary study that resonates with my own research may be found in the work of Ma Ai-hsuan (1999), who investigated the social dynamics among students from Taiwan in the U.S. by describing the residence decision-making processes of graduate students from Taiwan and China. Despite taking a narrow, political view regarding Taiwan’s identity in particular, categorizing the distinction as a difference of ideology, Ma was careful to make distinctions between those who *self-identified* as Taiwanese, Chinese from Taiwan, and Chinese from China. Moreover, she saw student associations and their e-mail list-serves as field sites, and analyzed student association activities and e-mail discussions as data sets, a research approach similar to my own.

## **IV. Chapter Summaries**

### **A. Chapter One: Formosan American**

Chapter One provides a description of the historical context for the first generation of *liuxuesheng* in the U.S., beginning with an analysis of one of the pivotal events in Taiwan history: the February 28<sup>th</sup> Incident. The impact of the event continues to be felt – particularly among the most senior generation of the research population – and has in large part shaped the relationship between *liuxuesheng* in the U.S. and the Nationalist government. Chapter One also presents a brief history of relations between Chinese nationalist government and populations from China and Taiwan in the U.S., and the establishment of the first overseas independence organizations. Further, this chapter presents the basic structure that would characterize student association dynamics on campuses in the U.S. for four decades – that of dual student associations, one official and another unofficial, the latter being viewed as seditious by the Nationalist government. In this regard, the organizations often represent divergent views of Taiwan's identity.

The first conceptualization of Taiwan's identity discussed is grounded in the experience of the Japanese era generation: Taiwan as Formosa, island of the colonized. The issue of Taiwan's identity faced by those with a living memory of the Japanese colonial era was framed broadly, with an awareness of Taiwan's place in global geopolitics. Many of this generation fled Taiwan to watch from abroad the island be transformed into a province in the Republic of China. Moreover, the province would come to represent all of China after 1949, further marginalizing conceptualizations of Taiwan as a discrete space with a history of its own. This generation's emphasis on defining Taiwan would be geared toward maintaining the political and historical



existence of Taiwan facing the risk of invisibility and erasure through the machinations of Cold War geopolitics. As an example of this formulation of Taiwan's identity, the chapter concludes with a description of a 1976 student presentation of Taiwan at a community multicultural event. The segment includes an analysis of the content – both textual and graphic – as well as an interview with the creators of the presentation.

## **B. Chapter Two: Taiwanese Puppetry and Curling**

This chapter presents a general description of the Madison field site to illustrate examples of intergenerational negotiations centered on differing imaginations of Taiwan's identity. As a location of early unofficial student associations, Madison is part of the history of the construction and promotion of Formosan versions of Taiwan's identity that challenge official Chinese nationalist narratives that would identify Taiwan as a province of China, as well as a conceptualization of Taiwan as a culture apart from China and Chineseness. Differing in emphasis from Formosan Taiwanese discourse, the cultural nationalists believe that Taiwan's unique heritage should earn the population the right to be recognized in the international community as a people with the right to self-determination. Drawing on the cultural repertoire of cultural nationalists, more recent generations have negotiated Taiwan's identity in a very different context, the movement in the U.S. to recognize and celebrate cultural difference. "Multicultural Taiwan," then, distinguishes Taiwanese traditions from mainstream American culture, while at the same time negotiating distinctions between Taiwanese and Chinese culture, all in the context of being a racialized minority in the U.S. The politics of recognition at the center of multiculturalism, however, masks alternative modes of identification such as class and gender. Further, multicultural Taiwan creates disjunctures between earlier Formosan

discourse, causing Formosan-era nationalists to encourage “a-political” expressions of Taiwanese culture. The local student association inherits the mobilizing mission of early Formosan independence activists, but view the purpose of celebrating Taiwanese culture from very different perspectives.

I detail the historical and contemporary significance of Taiwanese puppetry and discuss the intent and motives of the cultural experts and sponsors supporting the group. The plot and significance of each of three scripts are considered, as well as the differing ways in which troupe members frame their participation, not only in terms of the practice of puppetry, but also the attitudes toward Taiwan’s identity in the context of a cultural club that performs on campus and in the community, representing Taiwan.

The chapter concludes with a discussion of the way Taiwan’s identity is presented in the international community by a Madison-based curling team. The effort to present the island-state in the international Olympic Games and elsewhere as “Taiwan,” rather than the Republic of China, or the mandated “Chinese Taipei,” does not draw on the tropes of cultural authenticity, but rather on the more straightforward logic of self-determination as fair play, portraying China as “bad losers,” and by doing so operating more closely to the anti-colonialist orientation of the Formosan Americans. The conceptualization of Taiwan’s identity based on international recognition is illustrated in the philosophy presented by the Fighting Yams curling team, whose effort to raise awareness of Taiwan’s awkward place in the international community is not dependent on references to Taiwanese culture. Indeed, it is the novelty of “Asian on Ice” that the team members are capitalizing on to attract attention to Taiwan’s identity as a nation-state not afforded appropriate rights in the international community

### C. Chapter Three: Liuxuesheng Historic Generation

From a description of inter-generational relationships on the local level and in the international community as viewed through the Madison field site, the dissertation moves on to a more general discussion of *historic generations*, the *index events* that define and inform them, and the *memory groups* through which these localized process of *mnemonic socialization* take place. Some moments in the stream of history that mark a generation continue to be salient in the course of future events as they are experienced vicariously and reinterpreted by subsequent generations. Such index events become the subject matter of inter-generational negotiations of Taiwan's identity. Moving forward in time from the 1947 February 28<sup>th</sup> Incident presented in Chapter One, this chapter outlines a series of subsequent generation-shaping events through the 1990-1992 Wild Lily demonstrations.

A shift becomes apparent beginning in the mid-1980s when the dominant articulation of Taiwan's identity in the public sphere was focused on discourses of democracy, sovereignty, human rights and self-determination. This is associated with political liberalization and the end of many of policies that had marginalized Taiwanese cultural practices. However, although such discourses of democracy and self-determination take strong hold in Taiwan in what has been identified as "civic nationalism," notions of Taiwanese cultural authenticity continued to be prominent in Taiwanese independence discourse in the U.S. as described in Chapter Four through an analysis of practices of student associations across the country. Rather than marginalization by the government, however, Chapter Three suggests that it is the marginalization of the diasporic condition, and the ongoing contact with other student

associations that continues the salience of conceptualizations of Taiwan's identity based on cultural authenticity, a topic that will be explored in greater detail in Chapter Four.

#### **D. Chapter Four: [www.tsa.edu](http://www.tsa.edu)**

After discussing the experiences of the first generation of overseas Taiwanese and the establishment of dual student associations in Chapter One, and examining several examples of inter-generational negotiations of Taiwan's identity in Chapter Two, Chapter Three introduced a broad outline of the events shaping subsequent generations' conceptualizations of Taiwan's identity. Chapter Four will examine student association websites to further nuance and distinguish varying conceptualizations of Taiwan's identity among overseas students, particularly as they are interpreted (or ignored) by younger generations.

Student associations' practices, and the websites themselves through which traces of their activities may be found, are telling in a number of ways, including the strategies used by students to differentiate Taiwan from China at multi-cultural events, and the nature of the iconography included on the website. Student association websites are viewed as a symbol-laden texts which reveal (whether explicitly or implicitly) the groups' position regarding Taiwan's identity. The cyber-ethnographic research methods underpinning the website analysis provides opportunities to discuss questions about the advantages and limitations of working with/on/through the Internet, the subject of a rapidly growing and exciting body of academic literature.

An analysis of website content related to Taiwan's past provides a picture of how the authors view past events, the meanings attributed to them, and the degrees of salience afforded them. In this case, the chapter will describe a key event in Taiwanese history

not presented in the generational model found in Chapter Three. The 1995-1996 Taiwan Strait “missile crisis” and 1996 presidential elections in Taiwan were powerful events for some in this generation, and will be explicated as they were presented on-line by the generation who experienced them in diaspora,

Evidence presented in Chapter Four also indicates that post-1996 websites were increasingly syncretic, as the sharp distinction between conceptualizations of Taiwan’s identity were less pronounced among incoming overseas students, reflecting the more inclusive “New Taiwanese” identity in Taiwanese public discourse.

#### **E. Chapter Five: Second Generation Taiwanese Americans**

The first conceptualization of Taiwan presented in this dissertation – that of the post-war generation leaving home, and then struggling to define their homeland from abroad, appears in reverse or in negative with second-generation Taiwanese Americans who are searching to define Taiwan, and distinguish it from cultural China, in terms of their roots, the “main stem” of ethnic identity. Should they consider their “homeland” to be China or Taiwan? This question was posed to early immigrants to the U.S. when asked to choose to identify with China – as represented by the Nationalist government on Taiwan – or Taiwanese locality as their home.

Early cohorts of the second-generation Taiwanese Americans – following the pattern of their parents and grandparents – founded the first Taiwanese American student associations and networks across the country, especially in the top-tier universities and colleges, which were strongly focused on Taiwan. Subsequent generations of leadership in these organizations shifted the focus to emphasize their experiences in the U.S. as Asian immigrants, following the pattern of *liuxuesheng*, as well as a general shift in

Asian American politics. Taiwan as distant homeland – imagined roots – characterized this generation, though the political valence of that conceptualization differs widely within the generation, as will be revealed in the ethnographic materials presented in Chapter Five. Materials for analysis include content from a broad range of organizations, programs, website archives, Internet-based networks, discussion boards, and forums involving second-generation Taiwanese Americans, student association mission statements, autobiographical essays, discussions about Taiwan's identity in publications and graphic designs embedded in the web pages themselves. Two contrasting cultural tour programs are also considered in terms of their itineraries, stated objectives and missions, underlying themes, and the personal narratives of students participating in the programs. The analysis highlights one of the ways in which Taiwanese Americans are located within competing nation-building projects, as well as discusses the negotiations that take place between those agendas and the expectations and desires of the students themselves.

## **F. Chapter Six: Discussion**

Chapter Six explores the implications of this research as it is situated at the juncture of two areas of literature. First, in terms of our understanding of historic generations and how they are shaped, past research has failed to explore the highly localized and multi-dimensional ways in which index events are experienced. In addition to direct, autobiographical memories and formal histories, individuals experience the past vicariously, through face-to-face narrations, secondary texts, films, Internet sources, and myriad other mediums. This dissertation describes some of the ways in which mnemonic

socialization occurs, how memory groups are created and maintained across multiple generations through the communication of index events.

The second body of literature this research addresses deals with the various ways in which extraterritorial populations experience “homeland.” Specifically, this dissertation provides insight into multiple generations’ conceptualizations of Taiwan’s identity, particularly in the context of overarching discourses of Chineseness. Chapter Six discusses the conceptualizations of Taiwan’s identity outlined in previous chapters, and then puts these two areas of investigation in dialogue, making a contribution to each, developing new understandings of the ways index events influence the formation of historic generations of extraterritorial populations, and how those populations (re)define the “homeland.” Finally, I address some of the advantages and pitfalls of Internet-based research methods.

## CHAPTER 1: FORMOSAN AMERICAN

Jan Huygen Van Linschoten stood in the crow's nest of a Portuguese war ship bobbing like a cast iron tub in the turbulent Pacific. The Dutch navigator scanned the horizon for hints of the cutter's position in the cobalt marble seas. The year was 1590 and the warm South Pacific sun and air had bleached his normally alabaster skin red and taut. His ship raced with the wind to the aft and cut like a knife through a deep blue crystal. Through his glass he spied to the west the green peaks of a tropical island, which grew on the horizon to the starboard side. **"Ilha Formosa, Ilha Formosa!!"** The navigator hailed to the crew. . . .

Almost four hundred years later, I was born on November 5<sup>th</sup>, 1966 in the Women's Hospital, the old wing of St. Luke's Hospital in Manhattan, New York. My birth certificate read, *to Father Poppet Jui-Chang Yu and Mother Charlene Chao-Ying Yeh of Formosa*. Born at 5:33 am, I was their third Formosan American child. I was born a Formosan American, a race constantly in transition, a race possibly earmarked for extinction.

- Autobiography of James Yu, *Formosan American: From Pirates to Taiwan Semiconductor* (2003:52-53).

### I. The Post-War Generation and the Origin of Taiwanese History

#### A. Taiwan's Identity in a historical Context

In this chapter I will establish the historical context in which the question underlying James Yu's observation, that Formosan Americans may be "a race possibly earmarked for extinction." When reframed in the discussion of Taiwan's identity, the "Formosan" identity of Taiwan presents the possibility that Taiwan was at the time of his father's escape was considered by residents to be a discrete political and cultural entity threatened by erasure, reduced to a province of a Chinese nation as represented by the Nationalist party under Chiang Kai-shek. The island *Taiwan bendao* has been on the margins of global and regional powers for four centuries, having been ruled, or occupied, at different times by the Dutch, Portuguese, Ming loyalists, and the Manchu Qing dynasty. In Chinese history the island was intermittently discarded as non-Chinese,

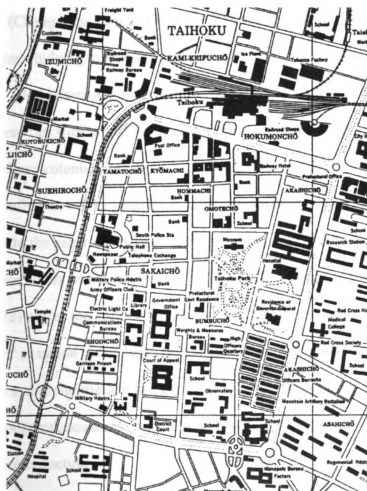


ruled, and declared “off limits” to Chinese subjects. In 1684 Taiwan was declared a prefecture by Kangxi emperor under the administration of Fujian province, and was granted full province status in 1885. Ten years later, as a concession to Japan at the end of the Sino-Japanese War, the Qing relinquished full rights of sovereignty over Taiwan to Japan “in perpetuity” (Taiwan Documents Project 2007). Led by the local Chinese elite seeking self-determination, the Democratic Republic of Taiwan was established in 1895, in the months between the departure of Qing Mandarins and the arrival of Japanese troops. They framed their desire for independence from Japanese and Chinese rule in terms of national sovereignty, and sent a Declaration of Independence to Western governments hoping to gain the rights claimed by modern European-style nation-states. Although the 1895 defeat by the Japanese has been marked by historians as giving rise to nationalist sentiments in China, it would not be until the 1920s that a sense of Taiwan’s national identity began to be expressed by people on Taiwan (Chang Mau-kuei 2003).

As their first colony, the Japanese adapted Western colonial economic and social structures. Taiwan, identified as *Takasago Koku* (Highland Nation,) was surveyed, measured, and appraised. Ethnographic studies were conducted among the indigenous peoples (after a protracted resistance movement), and gradual economic restructuring began. The island was to become the agricultural counterpart to industrial Japan. The colonial project was more than economic; rather than simply exploit the resources and labor of the colony (the Japanese colonial strategy in Korea,) the Japanese were interested in bringing to Taiwan selected aspects of Japanese culture. They encouraged colonial subjects on Taiwan to adopt Japanese family names, dress, customs, and Shinto religion. The colonial administration developed an extensive education system in Japanese, and

brought the most promising students to Japan, from the periphery to the metropole, for advanced training. As the Second World War escalated in the Pacific, these assimilative policies were stepped up to insure loyalty during the Japanese occupation of China. The people on Taiwan were to become *Kominka*, "the emperor's people" (Gold 1986; Su 1986). By 1945, Taiwan had become more than an agricultural colony. It was developing into a promising industrial center supporting the Japanese advance into Southeast Asia. Note in Figure 1 that the Qing era city walls and corner towers gates became streets and traffic roundabouts under the Japanese.

Figure 1: Taihoku (Taipei) in 1943



From 1914 to 1918 there was a movement in Japan to assimilate the people of Taiwan into the Japanese body politic after a period of re-education and civilization. The high degree to which people on Taiwan tolerated Japanese colonial rule and adopted Japanese culture indicated what Chang Mau-kuei calls a “collective identity crisis” (2003:30 ) While still considering themselves *Han* Chinese, a racial category, their history had diverged from that of mainland China since the 1911 Republican Revolution and the tumultuous, competing nationalist movements that followed. As Japan transitioned from an empire to a modern nation-state, they promoted a conceptualization of the people on Taiwan as Japanese second-class citizens of minority *Han* Chinese descent (Chang Mau-kuei 2003). In 1920 there were some 400 Taiwanese of a new generation studying in Japan, a population that increased to 2,000 by the end of the decade. This generation of Japanese-educated Taiwanese elite saw that they had commonalities with other colonized people in the world, and began to think of Taiwan in terms of anti-colonial liberation and self-determination. This set of progressive ideas had lasting influence on the generation’s conceptualization of Taiwan, and was in sharp contrast to the general lack of education and provincial outlook of the rank-and-file Chinese soldiers who came to Taiwan after the Japanese surrender. Chang Mau-kuei (2003:32) makes the argument that there was an understanding of the Taiwanese “people” or nation under Japanese colonial rule. The terms “Taiwan” and “Taiwanese” became stable signifiers in literature and common usage to represent the people as a social, political, economic, and cultural body, as a location of identification, and a base for collective action.

It is important to note, however, that Japanese-era notions of Taiwan's identity were in relation to Japan, and were not a denial of Chineseness, *per se*. The people of Taiwan were caught between a Chinese racial heritage and Japanese cultural citizenship, what Chang Mao-kuei calls an "ethno-national 'sandwich'." Taiwanese people "could not feel comfortable being Chinese, because they were cut off from China, and were despised for having Chinese roots. On the other hand, they could not be Japanese either, for they were treated as unqualified colonial subjects pressed into assimilation" (2003:33). Scholars of Taiwanese social history generally agree that during the five decades of Japanese colonial rule, a group identity and worldview developed among the people of Taiwan, particularly in relation to the Japanese, that did not carry a strong anti-Chinese sentiment (Kerr 1965; Gates 1981; Lai et al. 1991). As I noted in the Introduction, the February 28<sup>th</sup> Incident is cited as the origin of the anti-Chinese, pro-independence Taiwanese nationalist movement. The most senior informants in this research have first-hand experiences with the Japanese education system and the establishment of the Nationalist government's rule in Taiwan.

Though violent events occurred, the 2-28 Incident being pivotal, the solidification of the KMT hegemonic order in Taiwan was achieved not through coercive forces, but from a long-term strategy centered on a Chinese Nationalist pedagogy, Mandarin language policy, and discourses of the superiority of Chinese high culture, with the school-age Taiwanese as the ultimate locus of KMT power. A seventy-three year old woman explained her experience this way:

In my family, my first language, in my family, was Holo. The other one, my mother's, was Hakka. In school it was Japanese. We never learned Mandarin. We never knew it was supposed to be our language until our new elementary school [after 1945]. Then, all of a sudden, the teachers said, 'Oh no, no, no, no...

you are Chinese, so you are supposed to speak Chinese Mandarin,’ so we had to learn that. And the teachers started telling you, ‘What you are speaking is a barbarian language,’ or ‘low class,’ or ‘country folks.’ . . . They were using words like *tsaobei lang*, but the way they were saying it was terrible. *Tsaobei lang* in Taiwanese actually doesn’t mean anything bad – just country folks – ‘grass-land people.’

What’s wrong with that? But the way they mean it was ‘those hillbillies,’ so that was a shock, it meant that I was second-class, so I have to learn, to catch up, to be equal. It was a very humiliating. At that time, I didn’t even know I was being humiliated. I just knew that I had to work hard to be worthy of [them]. It was like it was my fault to be born a Taiwanese, and it is because of their kindness that they are trying to teach us something better. I was so easy to fool Taiwanese, because we trusted our new government. So we tried so hard to catch up, to be good Chinese.

Taiwan’s national identity emerged from a sense that KMT rule was not only oppressive but *foreign*. The Japan-educated elite were able to raise their discourse to the level of national sovereignty. Over the following decades, drawing on Western models of the modern nation state learned in Japan, an oppositional Taiwanese national identity would take on additional meaning from issues including indigenous rights, environmental protection, gender equality, and labor empowerment in Taiwan, with Taiwanese self-determination as an ultimate political horizon.

Taiwan’s national identity, however, was never fully articulated in the public sphere in Taiwan under the authoritarian Nationalist government. Before the gradual “Taiwanization” of public education after the lifting of martial law in 1987, the official histories in Taiwan had been Sinocentric, presenting China, not Taiwan, as the national homeland, and Mandarin Chinese as the national language (*guoyu*) rather than the commonly spoken Holo and Japanese. The Chinese nationalization of Taiwan under the KMT simultaneously appropriated and marginalized local identities. The nationalists silenced the collective memory of their violent ascent to power and limited public

discourse through coercion and fear in order to create a Chinese national subject whose personal subjectivity is deeply embedded in state-produced discourses of national identity.

Upon defeat in WWII, the Japanese formally relinquished control of the island to Nationalist government forces led by General Chen Yi on October 25, 1945. By establishing a permanent regime in Taiwan, Chiang Kai-Shek abrogated a series of international agreements that guaranteed Taiwan UN trusteeship and self determination upon Japanese surrender. The 1941 Atlantic Charter, to which the ROC was a signatory, agreed that in the course of the war, signing countries should “seek no aggrandizement, territorial or other” (North Atlantic Treaty Organization 1941). The Charter also stated that they “declare to see no territorial changes that do not accord with the freely expressed wishes of the people concerned.” Finally, the document protected “the right of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they will live,” and to see that the “sovereign rights and self-government restored to those who have been forcibly deprived of them.”

The 1943 Cairo Conference of President Roosevelt, Premier Churchill, and Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek, usually cited as the legal agreement granting the ROC sovereignty over Taiwan, stated only that Taiwan should be renounced by Japan. The 1945 Yalta (Crimea) Conference Protocol stated that “territories detached from the enemy as a result of the present war” should be granted the trusteeship of “World Organizations” (United States Department of State 1950:23). Later that year, the United Nations confirmed the Yalta Protocol by granting trusteeship to “territories which may be detached from enemy states as a result of the Second World War” (United Nations 2003).

However, for Taiwan, self-determination was superseded by the necessities of Cold War geo-politics.

Many people on the island in 1945 considered the retrocession a "return to the motherland." The first Nationalists to arrive in Taiwan were received as liberators, but the relationship quickly soured as the Nationalist government established its policies and practices. The period between Taiwan's retrocession to China and February 1947 was marked by a general collapse of order as the rule of law established under the Japanese decayed to something like a military occupation by the Nationalist government. In January 1947, it was announced by Chiang Kai-shek in Nanjing that the newly ratified constitution of the Republic of China would not apply to Taiwan. The building tensions erupted in February when a small dispute over a case of an abusive Monopoly Bureau agent in Taipei erupted into widespread protests.

In response, the Nationalist government troops sent from the mainland killed between 10,000 to 28,000 *benshengren* in the first weeks on March, including most of the intellectual elite and local leaders (Kerr 1965; Su 1986; Lai et al. 1991). This incident is generally recognized as the origins of the anti-Chinese, pro-independence movement. Part of the Chinese Nationalists' claim to Taiwan rested on ethnic continuity, but because *Han* has been conceived of in both cultural and racial terms, the Nationalist government took the position that after 50 years of exposure to the Japanese, the cultural "Chineseness" of *benshengren* was tainted (Su 1986). Those on Taiwan would need to be re-Sinified. Just as the Japanese had removed the Qing dynasty walls around Taipei to make room for Taihoku, the capital city of a model colony, so the Nationalist

government dismantled Shinto shrines and re-naming streets to create a Chinese capital, China in microcosm.

The Republic of China on Taiwan, which gained an additional identity as “Free China” throughout the Cold War, implemented a series of policies intended to instill Chinese national identity and suppress local traditions, language, and collective memory. Discourses of Taiwan’s identity and narratives of local counter-history were slow to develop in Taiwan because of state repression. State surveillance, control of information, and harsh punishments limited the degree to which alternative national constructions could be formulated and articulated. With absolute control over pedagogy and mass media during four decades of martial law, as well as mandatory military service after graduation, the Nationalist government’s Chinese identity project proved effective. Under these conditions, early articulations of Taiwanese nationalism were not voiced by those in Taiwan, but instead emerged in Japan and the U.S. among exiles and overseas students.

For this generation, Taiwan’s identity crisis was not a threat to Taiwanese traditions. The cultural aspect of Taiwan’s identity would emerge in national discourse in later generations. James Yu’s conceptualization of Taiwan’s identity was that of Formosa, emphasizing its colonial legacy and independence from narratives of the Chinese *nation-state* that emerged at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. A Formosan American would become extinct not because of a decline in immigration from Taiwan, but rather from an erasure of the consciousness of “Formosa, island of the colonized” altogether. To further explore this particular conceptualization of Taiwan’s identity, the pivotal moment in Formosan history – the February 28<sup>th</sup> Incident – should be explicated, both in



terms of the actual events as they unfolded, but also the process of its narrative construction, its eventual immigration to the U.S. as an element of the Formosan independence nationalist narrative, and ultimately its function as an access point for second-generation Taiwanese Americans to begin to understand the history of their Taiwanese “homeland.”

### **B. The February 28th Incident in History**

During the half century of Japanese colonization of Taiwan (1895–1945,) when Taiwan was known as Takasago Koku, the island underwent a thorough modernization project. The Japanese civilian administration had established a stable rule of law, provided comprehensive public education, introduced local-level democratic institutions, and trained intellectual elite at universities in both Taiwan and Japan (Gold 1986:44). Further, influenced by the liberal political philosophy current in 1910s and 1920s Japan, home-rule organizations were established by Taiwanese advocating greater rights and political voice within the Japanese empire (Chen I-te 1972). These developments were held in stark contrast to the first decades of Nationalist rule. Although the Chinese forces were at first greeted warmly, and there was a general sentiment that Taiwan was returning to the “motherland” China, as Su (1986) and Chen I-te (1972) have shown, an alternative ideological perspective would soon develop, interpreting their rule as yet another colonial regime: *recolonization* rather than *decolonization*. In many ways, both practical and symbolic, the Nationalists were unable to distance themselves from the Japanese who ruled before them. They moved into Japanese residences, filled the most important administrative posts, replaced the Japanese police force, and nationalized the largest industries previously owned by the Japanese. Portraits of the Japanese emperor

were replaced with pictures of Sun Yat-sen and Chiang Kai-shek as the new objects of daily state-worship.

Leading up to the February 28<sup>th</sup> Incident, Lai et al. estimate that around 17 percent of Taiwan's GDP was nationalized and disposed of, and as many as 36 thousand Taiwanese were forced out of public sector jobs (1991:170). Mandarin Chinese, which very few Taiwanese spoke, was declared the national language (*guoyu*) replacing Japanese, the language of the educated under the previous colonial administration. Social order in all sectors was strained, outbursts of violence between government agents and local residents were increasing, and public health risks including cholera appeared on the island for the first time in decades.

The uprising began as an isolated event on a Taipei street corner and escalated to encompass the broad divide between *waishengren* and *benshengren*. On February 27<sup>th</sup>, 1947, Taipei Monopoly Bureau agents assaulted and robbed an elderly street peddler for selling untaxed cigarettes. A bystander was shot and killed as the agents fled the crowd that had gathered. A group of Taiwanese marched to the police station and demanded that the shooter be handed over. When they were refused, a petition was drafted overnight asking for the execution of the agent responsible for the shooting death, and for reforms in the monopoly laws. The petition was taken to the Monopoly Bureau, where no one would emerge to receive it. When the growing crowd marched on the Governor General's headquarters to present the petition, several Taiwanese were killed when they were fired upon from the roof of the building (Kerr 1965:254-300).

A general uprising in all the major cities ensued once these events were broadcast island-wide from the commandeered Taipei radio station. Rioters attacked and looted

Monopoly Bureau buildings and other government offices, causing most officials and soldiers to hide in their homes or retreat to military bases on the outskirts of cities. In the following days, Taiwanese students organized to serve as police to keep order in the cities, and on March 9, settlement committees of Taiwanese elites met with the KMT leadership to negotiate major political reforms. As Kerr describes it, "Once a formal Settlement Committee was established, the spontaneous outbursts of anger gave way to a new public mood and a rather remarkable show of public cooperation with Formosan leaders who, for nearly a week, formed the effective government" (1965:270).

On March 10, a major KMT military force from China landed in northern and southern ports, strafing the docks with gunfire before disembarking. Nationalist administrators had been negotiating in bad faith, aware that the troops requested from Chiang Kai-shek were on their way. In the weeks that followed, troops specifically targeted for execution the settlement committees' members, as well as the student police force, teachers, lawyers, newspaper editors, and other educated Taiwanese and landed elite (Kerr 1965:299-300). Resistance to the Nationalist regime was driven underground, or overseas, primarily to Hong Kong and Japan.

The February 28<sup>th</sup> Incident narrative is particularly well-suited for nationalist interpretations because it includes anti-colonial elements, identifies the Nationalist government as a military occupation, and allows for a sharp distinction to be imagined between residents of Taiwan and recently-arrived mainland Chinese with congruent ethnic, linguistic, and political dimensions. Because the escalation of the war effort in Taiwan in the last years of the war and the transition between regimes had created such a sharp contrast, and the February 28<sup>th</sup> Incident was such a traumatic event in many

people's memories, this generation with a living memory of the period of transition between colonial regimes, and the first decade that followed as the Nationalists established their rule, is sharply defined when compared to subsequent generations of Taiwanese who grew up in a more stable – albeit authoritarian – social environment. Rigger (2006) identifies Lee Teng-hui as the iconic figure of this historic generation, which I am identifying as the Formosan generation. Rigger suggests that his university years at Kyoto Imperial University had a profound influence on his sense of Taiwan's identity, despite nearly fifty years' service in the Nationalist government. After his presidency, Lee became an outspoken supporter of Taiwanese independence. His political identity, Rigger suggests, was formed when he was part of the Japanese empire, creating ambivalence toward Chinese identity, despite the Chinese nationalist discourse of his party (35-36).

In terms of historical depth, my analysis of historic generations is tethered to the living memory of the most senior informants in my research. The eldest strata includes those born before 1931, and are defined primarily by their common experience with the Japanese education system before the end of WWII, their exposure to the events surrounding the February 28<sup>th</sup> Incident in 1947, and the establishment of the Nationalist government. Some had studied in Japan, Europe, or the U.S. for higher education prior to the war. Local elite under the Japanese were among those who had represented the Taiwanese people in negotiations with the Nationalist government in the turbulent first years of their occupation. Other informants had been members of the groups of college and high school students who formed patrols to restore and maintain order in the months after the February 28<sup>th</sup> Incident. They were in a position to compare the Japanese rule and

the newly arrived Chinese government, and they had biographical memories of the purges and fear tactics involved in establishing Nationalist rule, a period in the 1950s and 1960s that would come to be known as the White Terror.

Leading up to the February 28<sup>th</sup> Incident, the Japanese colonial rule was the most immediate comparison available for the residents of Taiwan, and the newly-arrived residents had not yet achieved the same level of administrative efficiency of their Japanese predecessors. Andrew Chang, who was 6 years old in 1945, articulated a sentiment widely held among the senior informants in this research:

The reason I sound so pro-Japanese was probably a reaction because the Chinese took over, so maybe because of the disappointment and frustration I became disillusioned and nostalgic. People started to become nostalgic. They were very clean, with no corruption at all. When the Chinese came, the local people referred to the change – the Chinese were pig, and the Japanese were dogs. What do the pigs stand for? Dirty, greedy... and the Japanese? Fierce and loyal. My parents had very close Japanese friends. . . .

When they were deported at the end it was really sad. A lot of them had never seen Japan proper. They were born and raised in Taiwan. It was their native place. Mainlanders came to Taiwan as captors and never made Taiwan their home.

Indeed, the long-term sustainable operation of Taiwan was not the central goal of the KMT on Taiwan. It was viewed instead as an expendable resource to be exploited as needed in the war on the mainland. Many of the elder Taiwanese whom I interviewed shared a positive view of the Japanese colonial administration.

The discursive perpetuation of Chinese nationalism and “civil war” were the only tools available to the Nationalist government to legitimate their continued monopoly of power. They possessed neither the land nor the people of China, Coronil’s (1997) two “bodies” of a nation. However, they controlled the army, police, state apparatus and a well-trained work force on Taiwan. Urban spaces were re-ordered with place-names

evoking a motherland with few *benshengren* had ever seen. It was an entirely new way to conceptualize Taiwan's identity, supported by impressive symbols of national legitimacy. The National Palace in Taipei, for example, held the cultural treasures of China, an unparalleled collection of artifacts taken from the Forbidden City when the Nationalist leaders were forced to withdraw from Beijing. The Nationalist legislative body convened in Taipei with representatives from each province in China. Julian Shay, born in 1939, recalls the way Taiwan was imagined before the state apparatus and Sinocentric education system was in place:

My great, great, great grandfather came to Taiwan and made Taiwan his home. He married a native. He became Taiwanese because he loved the island as his home. He knew he would die there. My great, great, great grandmother was native people. That line was native. They were here a long time. That should be combined together, and I am not Chinese anymore. Most people had this way of thinking before, but not so many anymore. That is because of the brainwashing. That is the only way to say it. I want to go to Taiwan and de-program people. In China, this kind of propaganda they do pretty good. They lie one time, two times, three times, ten thousand times – now everybody in China thinks pretty good that Taiwanese are Chinese, that Taiwan is part of China, that Taiwanese are Chinese.

The ROC was further supported by the “encompassment” of Cold War policies which, with the support of the China Lobby in Washington DC, created the chimera of “Free China” on Taiwan.<sup>5</sup> In this conceptualization of Taiwan's identity, the Taiwanese were only due the political rights of a Chinese province, rights that were to be suspended until the successful conclusion of the anti-Communist civil war.

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<sup>5</sup> During the two decades after Japan's surrender in 1945 - a piece of the past in Taiwan overshadowed by the memory of the February 28th Incident and the White Terror - the United States transferred more than 4 billion US\$ in foreign aid to the Nationalist government (Gold 1986). Based on the consumer price index, \$4b. in 1955 was worth about \$30b in 2005 dollars.

The February 28th Incident was minimized or absent from official histories. However, Taussig (1992) has argued that state terrorism itself can generate a kind of “unforgetability” of powerful events, a pattern consistent with the February 28<sup>th</sup> Incident collective memory. With the government’s efforts toward erasure, which included forbidding its discussion in public, minimizing and distorting the event in history texts, and so forth, the people of Taiwan –*benshengren* and *waishengren* alike – were presented with what Bhabha calls “the obligation to forget” which is inherent in nationalist discourse. In order to conceive and remember the nation, subjects must “forget to remember . . . the violence involved in establishing the nation’s writ” (1990b:310). Further, the “invisibility of Taiwan” perpetuated by the Nationalist and U.S. foreign policies was also reproduced in Western and local social science discourse, an increasingly important arena as political struggles moved toward the language and tropes of identity (Murray and Hong 1994). From the perspective of the Formosan Taiwanese, the internationally recognized identity of Taiwan shifted from *Takasogo Koku* to Taiwan Province, home to the entire Republic of China military and administrative apparatus, Free China.

### **C. Autobiographical and Vicarious Memory of 2-28**

In an interview at my host’s home in Madison, Mrs. Wen, reflecting on the transition between the Japanese and Nationalist administrations, pointed out the irony of the origin of the distinction between Chinese and Taiwanese. Mainlander soldiers and officials did not view Taiwan as part of China. They were considered to be polluted with Japanese ideas. Their own “Chinese arrogance” created the problems they faced in the

early years of nationalist rule in Taiwan. Without such state-ordered violence, a non-Chinese identity may have never emerged:

When the Chinese troops went to Shanghai, Nanking, or other Chinese cities, they went to recover part of China. When they came to Taiwan, however, they came to occupy, not to recover Taiwan. They never thought of Taiwan as part of China, though other countries had that idea. Only the Taiwanese thought of Taiwan as part of China. This was very strange. The differences between the Chinese and Taiwanese built up the conflicts between the two. Chinese officials thought of themselves as occupation forces, having the power to seize anything they wanted.

If the 2-28 Incident had not occurred, the Taiwanese would not have the urge to seek independence. During Japanese occupation prior to the incident, the Taiwanese viewed themselves as Chinese. Because of the 2-28 Incident and the ensuing White Terror, the Taiwanese realized that they are not Chinese, by all factors - cultural, social, economical, and political. Even the Chinese did not recognize Taiwan as part of China.

Because of the 2-28 Incident, the Taiwanese also recognized that according to international law, Taiwan is not a legal entity of China. The recognition of these differences would not have been brought up for public debate, nor would the Taiwanese have the urge to seek independence had it not been for the 2-28 Incident. Therefore, it is fair to say that the Taiwan Independence movement has been heavily influenced by the 2-28 Incident.

Without the 2-28 Incident, the Taiwanese would not have any motivation to seek independence, even at the urging of Japan or the US. The victims of 2-28 did not die for nothing. Their deaths brought the Taiwanese to the realization that they are not Chinese, and that they should seek independence.

Mrs. Wen draws the connection between 2-28 and the desire for independence, to establish a non-Chinese and non-Japanese state. Ironically, prior to the take-over, she notes that Taiwanese people considered Taiwan as part of China – a conceptualization of Taiwan which would ultimately be promoted in formal education – while people in the Nationalist government at the time of retrocession *did not* see Taiwan as part of China. Pre-occupation conceptualizations of Taiwan among Chinese from the mainland associated Taiwan more closely with Japan. What I am calling the Formosan identity emerges in the interstices between these two configurations.



However, the link Mrs. Wen makes between a denial of Chineseness and support for Taiwanese independence is not universally embraced, and was not the central narrative for early Taiwanese independence activists. Members of the generation who experienced the event first-hand and were able to escape Taiwan in the aftermath, though few in number, founded the first Formosan independence organizations, first in Japan, then in the U.S. in the 1950s, and developed the core ideology of Formosan nationalism. They would influence *liuxuesheng* who began to arrive in the U.S. for graduate study in the 1960s and throughout the 1970s, individuals who had been raised during the White Terror and received a comprehensive Chinese Nationalist education, and often had little or no knowledge of the February 28<sup>th</sup> Incident.

One of the key historical texts commonly referenced by informants was Su Bing's 1962 tome *400 Years of Taiwanese History* (1986). The book, first published in Japanese, armed the first generation of opposition leaders with a History of Taiwan, a Marxist critique that focused on waves of colonial occupation and hegemonic rule, beginning with the Dutch, and concluding with the Nationalists. This analysis provided a narrative of the birth of Taiwanese national consciousness, including graphic accounts of the February 28<sup>th</sup> Incident and other incidents of state violence. For Su Bing, Taiwanese nationalism is seen as both revolutionary in the Marxist sense, and a natural product of the link between the people and the land. Su details a number of historical records that indicate Qing ambivalence toward the island, and outlines how key contradictions established under the Dutch were deepened as the population of the island grew, its extant material base increased in value, and exploitative relationships widened the gap

between the rulers and the ruled. Thus, the Taiwanese people and Taiwanese society “never became one with China,” and animosity only increased.

Su Bing describes an ethno-genesis as time passed based on a shared ecological and cultural environment, an identity that overcame *Han* “tribal” characteristics. In this analysis, the awareness of the Taiwanese being a separate ethnic group from *Han* Chinese emerged prior to the nation-state, contrary to the cases of a Taiwanese nation being “invented” by a state. Su describes the birth of a nation, including a strong geographical image near the heart of the conceptualization of Taiwan Su is promoting:

Year in and year out, the natural climate and social customs of Taiwan exerted their subtle influence. This process, step by step, overcame the attitudes and ways of thinking of the Han immigrants from the mainland. The natural climate of Taiwan made them change to an island people and an island society. In other words, the Taiwanese people and Taiwanese society, in the course of more than 200 years of colonial rule by the same Han tribe . . . separated themselves from the Chinese mainland society. This was a decisive developmental phase in growing and becoming the unique ‘Taiwan Nation’ (1986: 23).

Peng Ming-min, a well-respected independence activist and scholar, also published widely on the topic throughout the 1960s, including his influential 1964 essay “Declaration of Formosan Self-Salvation.” He made the argument that Taiwanese culture, though seemingly similar to Chinese, was different in spirit. Peng suggested that Taiwanese history has always been about a quest for freedom and self-determination, and that early settlers built a culture of independence. These differences had been suppressed so Taiwanese would not develop their own identity. He also spelled out the legal arguments in international treaties. Peng’s 1972 biography, *A Taste of Freedom: Memoirs of a Formosan Independence Leader* provides a first-hand narration of the February 28<sup>th</sup> Incident, as well as a powerful description of his experiences as a political prisoner and fugitive.

Pursued by the Nationalist government, Peng was assisted by Amnesty International to escape to Sweden, and returned to the U.S. with a visa to teach at Michigan University until 1990. In 1986 he was the opposition Democratic Progressive Party's presidential candidate (Wang 1999:185-6). Peng framed activism and resistance in terms of a long struggle against colonial oppression, not simply power politics between the opposition and the Nationalist government:

The movement for Formosan self-determination has not been conceived as a political party movement, but has grown out of universal protest against the exploitation experienced by one and all since 1945. As an organization it has become a symbol of the aspirations of the great majority of Formosans since the tragic experience of February and March, 1947. That experience destroyed popular trust in the continental Chinese and revived the old antagonisms of the 18th and 19th centuries (1972:255).

This narrative locates the origin of the Taiwanese opposition identity in an ongoing struggle against Chinese economic exploitation. It is not a reference to ethnicity or identity, but indicative of counter-hegemonic and class-based conceptualizations of Taiwan's identity. Both Su Bing and Peng Ming-min frame the present relationship between Taiwan and the Chinese as class-based exploitation. However, while Su Bing identified a pre-national ethnic group identity that served as the foundation of a nation-state – albeit overdetermined by class relations, Peng located the class oppression in the context of prior relationships with China, without essentializing the Taiwanese character. The February 28<sup>th</sup> Incident reinforced class consciousness in both cases, but made no reference to culture, unique heritage, genetic familiarity, or pre-national identity.

The most frequently referenced source of information dealing with the February 28<sup>th</sup> Incident among overseas students was George Kerr's *Formosa Betrayed* (1965), which tells a compelling story of the Incident based on his own and others' eye-witness

accounts. Kerr estimates that between 10,000 and 20,000 *benshengren* were killed.

Several informants related that people were afraid to check the book out of the library, and when they did so, they used chop-sticks to turn the pages to avoid being identified through fingerprinting.

Mrs. Wen described a violent shift toward a more critical subjectivity after her encounter with the text:

All the way during your growing-up years you never questioned your inferiority and that supposedly they were superior to you. It was just drilled into you. And look at how easy it was for them – that job. As kids we came into them as white boards, and they wrote such dirty things on us. I think that is why later on, when I learned the truth, I was so angry. The anger – it is so difficult to describe. Even today I can't tell you that feeling of being so betrayed, of being... it was almost like you just realized that you had been raped, all over, all the time, and you didn't even know, and they were telling you that it was good for you, until that day when you realized that you were so violated. I was in the United States already, and I already had 4-A, and I went to the library and I got hold of a book by George Kerr – *Formosa Betrayed* – and I started reading. That was the book, the one book in my life where I cried over almost every page. It shattered everything.

For many Taiwanese studying overseas, where more information was available in the form of texts and media reports, witnesses were more open to discuss the event, learning of the February 28<sup>th</sup> Incident had a powerful “eye-opening” impact, often leading to disillusionment and anger with the Nationalist government and their Chinese nationalist agenda. Although shifts in subjectivity were highly individualized, there were commonalities in the way Taiwan was re-conceptualized due to widely shared experience in Taiwan, ROC, as well as common elements of recovered history, first among them, the February 28<sup>th</sup> Incident.

When the Nationalist government brought Chinese nationalism to Taiwan, they chose to marginalize what they considered to be non-Chinese social elements such as the

Holo language, certain local traditions (including glove puppetry, as will be discussed in Chapter Two,) and the collective memory of the Nationalist government's violent rise to power in Taiwan. These disjunctures between KMT Chinese nationalism and Taiwanese local culture, practices, and memory produced what Werbner calls "unfinished narratives":

Popular history in which the past is perceived to be unfinished, festering in the present - these are narratives which motivate people to call again and again for a public resolution to their predicament. Subjected to buried memory, people do not so much forget as recognize - and often ever more forcefully - that they have not been allowed to remember. Though not always obviously or immediately, such situations are potentially explosive, when people feel compelled to unbury the memory and reject their past submission (1998:9).

While the trauma of the event was very present in this sense, in the following generations of Taiwanese, its impact, influence, and meaning became more complex. Some witnesses saw it as their obligation to inform their children about the events, and encourage them to resist the Nationalist government, while others passed it on as a quiet but urgent warning to stay away from politics. Most, however, did not speak of the February 28<sup>th</sup> Incident for decades. For example, Frank came to the U.S. in 1971 as a chemistry graduate student at an Ivy League school, and, like most Taiwanese of that era, chose not to return to Taiwan after receiving his advanced degree. He is now a university faculty member and serves as the advisor for the campus Taiwanese student association. His experience was one of fear and caution:

Q. Before you came to the states, were you politically active at all?

A. No. Well, at that time, you still were not allowed to... well, it was dangerous to be involved in politics. We got a lot of warning from parents, relatives, things like that: 'just study - don't get involved in politics.' And our town was very, very tiny. Under martial law - we called it the 'White Terror.' People disappeared; no one knows what is going on. There are a lot of stories, and I think that probably most of them are true. So that is why they warned us, every

day warned us: 'don't get involved in politics, it is dangerous, you might disappear.' And then you don't talk about politics because Chiang Ching-kuo<sup>6</sup> has some system, installed some system. You don't know if your parents would report you, or your friends would report you. So you don't express any kind of political thinking, or your own opinion. You might end up in jail.

Q. Were your parents involved, or do they remember the 2-28 Incident?

A. They remember it. And they saw, they saw... my parents are not political active, but they saw people disappeared, shot, be put in jail. And those people – they knew those people who were shot or jailed. They were respected people in society. This is why they say don't get involved in politics.

Q. Did they talk about that event in particular?

A. No.

Q. When did you first find out about the February 28<sup>th</sup> Incident?

A. Since I come here, and I had a – almost like a mentor. He was Lai Yi-yan; he was my brother's friend. So he invited me to his house for Christmas dinner, and he began to re-educate me, so I began to express these things. I got to know about Taiwanese history, and I became very, very angry about what was going on. And you know, and therefore, after that, I became very involved – became an activist.

Yeah, I think I got the story from my mentor, so I had that advantage. The other people didn't have that so they had other opinions. But once I got involved, I really got very active. You can appreciate that I did not get very much money from the scholarship. They would pay me about \$300 a month, and I put half of my money to publish a magazine [laughs] an underground magazine.

The conceptualization of Taiwan as Formosa, island of oppositional anti-colonial history, may be characterized as a nation whose current state was seen as an occupying force presenting a sharply contrasting national narrative. The Formosan identity of Taiwan, however, first developed during the Japanese era, became widely shared only after the events in February and March 1947. As it was articulated abroad, the narrative

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<sup>6</sup> Chiang Kai-shek's son, "CCK" was in charge of all secret security operations in Taiwan until he ascended to the presidency upon his father's death in 1975. A complex historical figure, CCK is both notorious for his strong-arm state terror operations, and lauded for his reform policies leading to the "Taiwanization" of the KMT party in the 1980s, a party which had been dominated by Mainlander Chinese since 1949.

of Taiwan was based not only on a historical anti-colonial legacy, but also the antagonistic relationship with Nationalist government agents experienced by some *liuxuesheng* while overseas, the experience of being alienated from homes and families, and of being an immigrant minority in the U.S.

## **II. Extraterritorial ROC**

### **A. Disciplining Non-student *Huaqiao***

Although this dissertation presents a critique of discourses that categorize people from Taiwan in the U.S. as a new wave of Chinese immigration, there are clear historical continuities between Chinese Americans and overseas students from Taiwan. Those of Fujianese descent, for example, could be considered Chinese immigrants whose ancestors lived in diaspora for several centuries prior to immigration to the U.S. *Waishengren* may be represented – and often self-identify – as Chinese immigrants to the U.S. for whom Taiwan was a way-station. For *liuxuesheng*, however, a more specific and immediate historical link is forged in the context of Nationalist policies toward overseas Chinese, *huaqiao*, which in their view included all individuals who came to the U.S. – whether from the mainland, or from Taiwan after 1945, or diaspora, regardless of their place of birth.

Overseas Chinese have been integral to Chinese nation-state building for over a century. Beginning in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, Chinese from the mainland began immigrating to the U.S., predominantly from Taishan in the Southeast coastal area, to work on railroad construction and mining in California. Most were unskilled peasants who faced harsh working conditions, discrimination, and ethnic violence. Anti-Chinese

sentiment culminated in the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act which disallowed Chinese from becoming U.S. citizens and prohibited further Chinese immigration, permanently separating male immigrants from their families in China. Further anti-Chinese immigration laws continued to prohibit Chinese coming to the U.S. until President Roosevelt lifted the restrictions in 1943. Immigrants from Taishan established the first Chinatowns in the U.S. and their descendents continue to populate the Chinatowns of San Francisco, New York, and elsewhere.

Systematic repression of Chinese populations in the U.S. over whom the Nationalist government claimed sovereignty began more than a decade before the first overseas students from Taiwan arrived. Most notably, historian Renqiu Yu's well-documented account of the Chinese Hand Laundry Association (CHLA) in New York (1992) provides insight into the ways in which the early Nationalist government was operating in the U.S. among Chinese Americans. In the 1940s members of the CHLA were openly resisting the KMT using arguments based on U.S.-type democratic principles. Through this mobilization they saw themselves as agents for progress and change in China instead of just monetary donors. Yu shows that when the Nationalist government was relegated to Taiwan in 1949 the conservative merchant elite in the Chinese American community re-affirmed its long-time support of the Nationalist government on Taiwan, which greatly increased pressure on the CHLA and other groups and individuals who had spoken out against the corruption of the Nationalist government. They endured FBI harassment, lost membership, and the leaders' families in China were labeled and persecuted as families of capitalists.



Distressed by the anti-democratic practices of the KMT, the CHLA ultimately chose to support the Chinese Communist Party, and were opposed by members of the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent association, who collaborated with agents from the Nationalist government, FBI and CIA, and used intimidation tactics and surveillance to silence opposition. The political relationships between China, Taiwan and the U.S. since the Korean War have been deeply felt within Chinese American communities, and by the early 1950s, membership in the CHLA had fallen from several thousands to 200. The CIA was able to enhance its collaboration with the KMT from the mid-1950s, particularly with Ray Cline as CIA Station Chief in Taiwan from 1958 to 1962, who had cultivated a close relationship with Chiang Kai-shek and others in the Nationalist government leadership. For example, it was KMT officials who asked policy makers in Washington to use the terms "Red China," "Communist China," and "Free China." As Kaplan explains, "by the mid-1950s, the KMT controlled American Chinatowns in a way never before possible. By virtue of its anti-Communist witch-hunts, the United States had effectively ceded control of an American immigrant community to a foreign power. . . . The China lobby had come of age" (1992:114-5). Based on parallel anti-Communist agendas, the CIA trained and supplied Nationalist government intelligence agents at bases in the Ryukyu Islands, some of whom returned to the U.S. to spy on Chinese immigrants, and ultimately students born in Taiwan studying in the U.S. from the mid-1960s. Nationalist-FBI collaboration, which would eventually shift to surveillance and intimidation of overseas students coming from Taiwan, began in the late 1960s under Herbert Hoover (Mendel 1973:160).

The complex relationship between the ROC government officials and Taiwanese youth who began to stream to the U.S. beginning in the mid-1960s was an extension of the Republic of China authoritarian state's efforts to maintain control of its citizens who live overseas. Collaboration with U.S. intelligence agencies re-enforced the external legitimacy of ROC in the U.S. *Liuxuesheng* were never quite away from home, though many were physically separated from family and friends for many years. Thus, the Nationalist government maintained control over the lives of extraterritorial populations in the U.S. through coercion and surveillance, essentially extending the power of the authoritarian state to include populations living within the geographic boundaries of another sovereign nation-state. The construction of place-based identities employing the metaphors of roots and native soil does not necessarily take place within the borders of the "homeland" being constructed. Rather, they are often produced by extraterritorial populations (Glick-Schiller and Fouron 1998). In this case, for several decades the Taiwanese independence movement was active primarily in Japan and the U.S. One of their goals was to produce the narratives and symbols of a Taiwanese nation state, including a national History, a flag, a national language, a conceptualization of a geographically specific ancestral homeland.

#### **B. Formosan Exiles in the U.S.**

In the weeks and months after the February 28<sup>th</sup> Incident many of the surviving intellectual and political elite from Taiwan, now formally identified as the Republic of China, escaped to Japan and Hong Kong where they set up a number of opposition and

proxy government organizations.<sup>7</sup> Formosans for a Free Formosa (FFF) was the first Taiwanese independence organization in the U.S., founded in 1955 by three key activists who would eventually gather about twenty people from elite universities in Taiwan to the U.S. for graduate school. FFF produced fliers and targeted other students from Taiwan for recruitment to become Taiwanese independence supporters on campuses across the U.S.<sup>8</sup> In 1957 the FFF was disbanded when they were asked by the FBI to register as a proxy government organization, a move which would make public the names of the membership.

When the first post-WWII graduate students from Taiwan began to arrive in the U.S., Nationalist government agents kept close surveillance of all student activities, and unofficial organizations were deemed illegal. Trained agents were sent from Taiwan to act as liaisons between student informants and the nearest consular office, a security network of surveillance aggressive enough that officials in the U.S. were concerned. Cohen (1991) notes that Michael Glennon's study for the Senate Foreign Relations Committee regarding the Nationalist government agents' activities in the U.S. reported that KMT agents "have conducted extended harassment, intimidation, and surveillance of the United States residents here on American soil." The surveillance was tolerated by the FBI, however, because the U.S. was concerned about pro-Communist activities among *liuxuesheng* on campuses, and the conceptualization of Taiwan as a Formosan nation-

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<sup>7</sup> The brothers Thomas and Joshua Liao were key elder figures; both had been raised in the Japanese era, and had advanced degrees from schools in the U.S. Thomas Liao had an MA from the University of Michigan and a Ph.D. from Ohio State University. Joshua had an MA from the University of Wisconsin in Madison, and a Ph.D. from the University of Chicago. This is the pre-WWII beginning of a pattern of opposition student mobilization at academic institutions in the U.S., and in particular several Midwest schools. Like Peng and Su, they argued that the Taiwanese people were a distinct ethnic group, yet did not rule out the possibility of re-unifying with a democratic China, an ideological position which was ultimately rejected by the Taiwanese independence opposition movement being established in the U.S.

<sup>8</sup> There were approximately 2,500 Taiwanese in 1955, 4,500 in 1960, 6,800 in 1965, and 12,000 in 1970.

state was antithetical to the U.S. position that Taiwan – the Republic of China – was the sole legitimate government of China.

To avoid putting themselves, their visas, and their families in Taiwan at risk, they re-organized the next year in the more clandestine incarnation the United Formosans for Independence (UFI), and began publishing the English-language *Ilha Formosa* (Mendel 1973; Shu Wei-der 1998). The same year, Li Thian-hok (1958), published an article in *Foreign Affairs* critical of the One-China policy, warning of the awkward position the U.S. military will be in if armed conflict were to break out between China and Taiwan. He also pointed out the economic impact if China were to gain control of the Taiwan Strait. The arguments were practical and compelling. They represented a main discourse in Formosan Taiwanese advocacy. However, beneath the discourse of global geo-political exigencies lay a subtext – discernable to those from Taiwan – which emphasized a counter-hegemonic collective memory: the new organization held its first open press conference explaining their purpose and goals in 1961, coinciding with the 14<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the February 28<sup>th</sup> Incident. At that time, participants in the organization's demonstrations wore masks so that the Nationalist government and FBI agents (who would compare notes and photographs) could not identify them (Kaplan 1992).

In 1963 ROC Vice President Chen Cheng visited Washington DC, drawing a large protest which received national publicity. Similarly, a UFI demonstration outside the ROC embassy on February 29<sup>th</sup>, 1964, also received national and international media coverage. The next year, a key figure in the Taiwanese independence movement in Japan defected, joining the KMT in order to free his nephew from prison, and regain his vast family wealth and property, effectively shifting the center of the Formosan independence

movement from Japan to the U.S., thereby producing a greater sense of urgency and responsibility among supporters in the U.S. In June 1965, Peng Ming-min published the “Manifesto to Save Taiwan” in the *New York Times* while the U.S. government was debating whether to admit the PRC into the UN. In October, the core Formosan independence students from the student groups, and UFI members from Philadelphia organized the “Formosan Unity Leadership Congress” in Madison, with representatives from the Ontario-based Committee for Human Rights in Formosa, and other groups in the U.S. and Japan (Shu Wei-der 1998), with Douglas Mendel as the Keynote speaker. This meeting led to the formation of United Formosans in America for Independence.

The thirty original members of this organization became the core of the Formosan independence movement in the U.S. for the next two decades, and many continued to hold important positions during the period of this research. At that time they began publishing the bi-lingual *Formosagram*, and within five years the consolidation of groups from U.S., Japan, Europe and Canada resulted in the formation of World United Formosans for Independence (WUFI) in 1970. Most WUFI members in the U.S. were *liuxuesheng* immigrants who began to use the increasing number of unofficial student associations as locations for networking and mobilization.

Graduate students from Taiwan in the U.S. prior to the 1987 lifting of martial law were able to view their home from a critical distance and explore the factual and interpretative discrepancies in the Sinocentric Nationalist pedagogy of their youth, comparing official ROC narratives with alternative perspectives given in oral and textual accounts. They had access to details of the historical and ongoing violence and corruption of the Nationalist government in Taiwan. Some met privately to discuss the

“Taiwan question,” explore Taiwanese culture and history, discuss alternative national imaginations. They worked to develop strategies to effect political reform in Taiwan, and influence public perceptions of the Nationalist government as an authoritarian regime rather than “Free China”:

Just being a Taiwanese descendent, I care about Taiwan’s future. And then, when you are not in Taiwan, you see it more clearly because you are dealing with the whole world and you analyze Taiwan based on your knowledge. When you are in Taiwan, you are only thinking about China. You never really consider on a global scale does China have the power to do it? Consider the international community. It is not that we are talking big here; we are just talking realistically to help Taiwan. Otherwise, we all have good jobs, good life here. Why would we want to spend time on a grass-roots campaign? We spend money, you know? We spend our energy, and we spend time to educate – why would we do that if not for our love for Taiwan?

The inter-generational relationships seen in Madison from the 1960s to the present research could be found on campuses across the country. Recollections in interviews with the first waves of *liuxuesheng* still resonated with the optimism and fear felt in their first months and years in the U.S. They described not only the challenges of overseas graduate studies, and oftentimes the deeply troubling loss of one’s cultural and political moorings, but also the anxiety engendered by the fear of surveillance and retribution by the Nationalist government. Informants spoke over yellowed photographs and memorabilia of political resistance: a white mask worn at a protest to avoid being recognized by Nationalist government security agents operating in the U.S., a form used by “professional students” – a euphemism for campus informants – to report seditious activity, a “Blacklist” notice in the form of a cancelled visa signaling the loss of freedom to return to Taiwan, and worn copies of counter-historical texts in English, *hanji* and Japanese that challenge the Nationalist government’s claim to sovereignty. These are mnemonic traces and artifacts infused with nostalgia, alienation, romantic notions of

revolution, and visceral resentment toward the KMT. As these experiences were shared by cohorts spanning generations, the affective bonds to Taiwanese-ness among Taiwanese student-immigrants deepened, and a conceptualization of Taiwan not ruled by the Nationalist government began to coalesce among *liuxuesheng*.

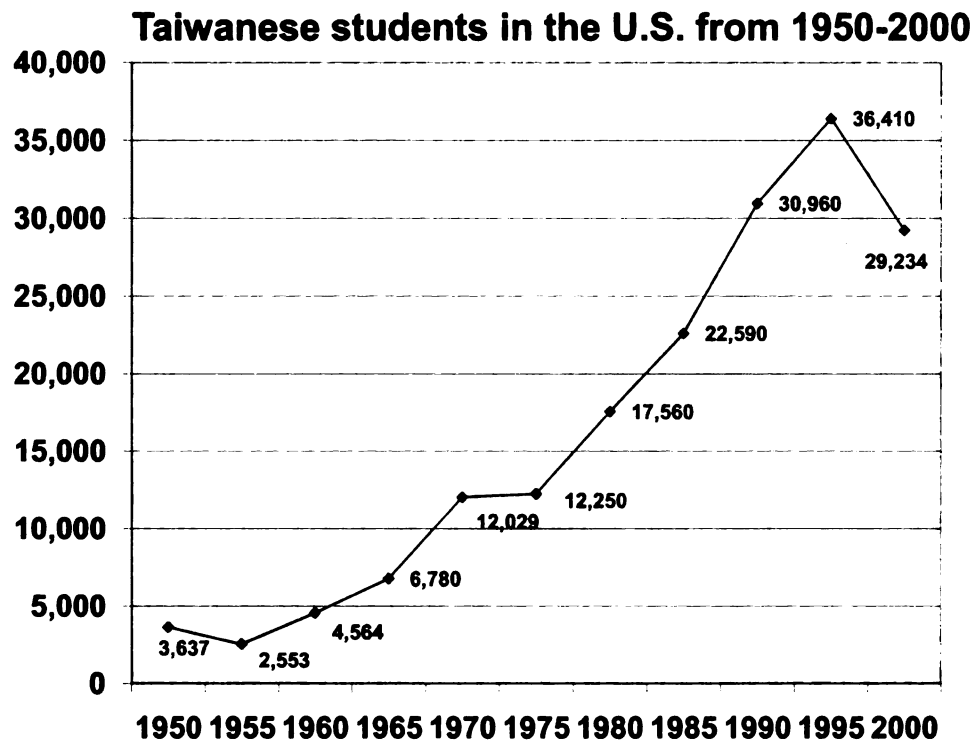
### **III. *Liuxuesheng* on American Campuses**

#### **A. Relations with the Nationalist Government**

Until public U.S.-based Taiwanese advocacy and lobbying organizations were established in the 1980s, activists worked primarily through secondary organizations such as student associations and community groups (Meisner 1963; Shu 1973; Mendel 1973; Shu Wei-der 1998). Few early independence supporters were professional political agents; most were students in the technical sciences with no experience in political organization, clandestine mobilization, or the production of nationalist discourse. Nevertheless, by 1969, a coterie of activists traveled the country identifying and contacting Taiwan-centric student associations and independent organizations, creating both translocal and transnational opposition mobilization networks.

Many overseas students applied to American schools because of their English language abilities, and universities were eager to accept talented people, especially those trained in math, science, and technology who could help fight in the Cold War against the Soviet Union and “Red China.” Drawing from Arrigo (2005), Figure 2 indicates that the number of individuals from Taiwan coming to the U.S. for graduate studies increased steadily throughout the four decades of martial law in Taiwan.

Figure 2: *Liuxuesheng* in the U.S. from 1950 to 2000



Of the 16,825 students that came to the U.S. between 1960 and 1969, only 561 returned to Taiwan (Chen 2002). Many students enjoyed the greater freedoms and opportunities available in the U.S. Some stayed in hopes of a better future for their children, and others stayed specifically to work for the independence movement. Concomitantly, during the mid 1960s, the surveillance and harassment by Nationalist government agents in the U.S. were greatly expanded. Kaplan (1992) explains that they used the same tactics Chiang Kai-shek had been employing to generate the loyalty of the population of Taiwan, “a heavy dose of indoctrination, a huge net of informants and spies, and pervasive fear and intimidation” (150).

Students were required to attend a training session organized by the Overseas Work Commission focused on the dangers of the Taiwanese independence movement, as



well as the “United Front” propaganda of China under Chairman Mao. They were also informed of names of people to avoid. The Nationalist government agents were particularly interested in recruiting *benshengren* informants because the independence movement spoke Holo. Student informants infiltrated Bible classes, student associations, and social clubs, while Political Warfare Academy graduates acted as liaisons between student-informants and the consulates. Students were offered cash, cheap airfare, career advantages, and scholarships as incentives to inform on their classmates. Nationalist government agents distributed forms that asked details about overseas Chinese populations, with a rubric to rate each person as either “patriotic,” “neutral,” “pro-communist,” or “Pro Taiwanese independence.” The forms also requested that five individuals be chosen for more detailed observation and analysis. Photos, tape recordings, and publications were expected. These were processed in the U.S. and sent to the Garrison Command in Taiwan to be added to collected letters, taped phone calls, and other accumulated information about overseas students. The students were expected to complete these forms with “black information,” so they often fabricated information acting on personal vendettas, and engaged in sexual and financial blackmail (Kaplan 1992:151-2).

Compared to Taiwan, however, university campuses in the U.S. provided more opportunities for independence supporters to compete for the hearts and minds of overseas students, and to contest the official Chinese Nationalist narratives. Early activists were limited in their ability to recruit supporters, however, as distrust among activists and limited financial resources made extended networks of opposition groups difficult to create and maintain. By participating in activities deemed illegal by the

Nationalist government, students could lose their government scholarships, and face future career advancement difficulties in Taiwan, or exile to the U.S. Being placed on the “Black List” meant that return visas would not be approved, which could separate overseas students from their families for years, even decades.

Jeff, who came to the U.S. for graduate work in 1967, was contacted by the clandestine independence organization WUFI shortly after his arrival. Their efforts were geared toward recruiting (de-programming, as Jeff called it) *liuxuesheng* on campuses across the country, as well as raising the profile of Taiwan’s state among the general public:

Q. How did you first get involved in Taiwanese independence activism?

A. In New York, before February 28th, a WUFI member he send me an ad. He wanted me to place the ad in the campus news paper. So, you know there was such a massacre, and we remember. This February '68. Yeah, okay, so see what happened: I put the ad to the newspaper... Then I met a girl from Taiwan, and the girl said “Oh what is this?” “Well this is an ad.” And then, “Oh what is the ad?” She started to write down the words. “Oh, and what is your name?” And so forth and everything.

Q. Was she a pretty girl?

A. Very pretty, with a smiling face, but I think something was wrong.

Q. Because she liked you?

A. Well [laughs] you know, somehow you have that instinct, so later I asked people and they told me “Oh, she graduated from the warfare academy, you know?” That’s the KMT watchdog military school; they watch the military people! So now she’s on duty in the US.

Q. Her job is to watch the military?

A. But at that academy, after they graduate, they would be in KMT military units, and their job was to watch everybody...

Q. Right, so they’re like the police of the military.

A. Yeah, yeah. But it was a different kind of police – though police. So I knew I was in trouble. I knew I was in trouble.

Q. So she saw the ad...

A. Yeah, she saw the ad. She was actually a spy, you know, spying on people on campus. So, you know, I was in exile for twenty-four years.

Activists from this era created and promulgated alternative narratives of events in Taiwan based on face-to-face eye-witness testimonies, and texts written by foreign observers. Exposure to these sources of information informed and galvanized an ethnic identity and political ideology among overseas students of Taiwan-as-Formosa, island of the colonized. Some would return to become key actors in opposition politics when it emerged as a political force in 1979, and again in the mid 1980s (Shu Wei-der 1998). The romanticized narrative often associated with exiles returning to lead the democratic opposition against the corruption and oppression of Nationalist government, however, has been interrupted by the arrest and prosecution of former opposition activists – including past President Chen Shui-bian – on corruption charges involving money laundering through overseas Taiwanese independence organizations. The interpretation of Taiwanese independence movement as a reactionary movement focusing on ethnic identity and nativist sentiment is growing as public sentiment in Taiwan – now an open democracy – continues to shift toward normalizing relations with China. Increasingly the most vocal supporters of Taiwanese independence are senior generation activists living overseas whose interest in Taiwan's future may be grounded in émigré nostalgia and a distraction from their position as a racialized immigrant minority.

## **B. Dual Student Associations and Alternative National Imaginations**

In response to authoritarian rule in Taiwan, from the mid-1950s Taiwanese graduate students in the U.S. developed an anti-government political orientation, with some individuals playing key roles in efforts to push for political reform in Taiwan and gain official international recognition of Taiwan as a sovereign state, conceptualized here as Formosa. On major university campuses across the U.S., the Nationalist government established student associations in the early 1960s to provide support for overseas graduate students from Taiwan. Most students were required to go through an orientation prior to leaving Taiwan. They would pledge their loyalty to the ROC, and were encouraged to join the KMT party. Students were also warned that they may be contacted by Taiwanese student agitators once in U.S. and were instructed to report any contact to the local party official. This was also an opportunity for the government to make arrangements with certain students to act as Nationalist government spies. It was common for students who were planning to go overseas to be contacted by the sponsor of the official student organization prior to their departure, and students were required to make contact with the advisor upon arrival.

Group advisors were most often *waishengren* with direct ties to embassies or representative office. Because the U.S. government did not recognize the PRC as the legitimate government of China, the officially sanctioned groups were able to adopt the name “Chinese” (rather than “Taiwanese”) in student association titles, a pattern discussed in greater detail in Chapter Four. The use of “Taiwan” or “Formosa” in organization titles in the U.S. was uncommon as it could be interpreted as indicative of anti-government sentiment among its members. It would draw unwanted attention to the group.

With the start of the Korean War, the U.S. began sending billions of dollars in foreign aid to the Nationalist government as part of its efforts to contain Communism. U.S. educational funding promoted an American curriculum and provided English-language college textbooks. However, economic aid simultaneously encouraged an export-based industrial economy that limited opportunities for more highly trained and skilled individuals in Taiwan. As a result, by the early 1960s there were a sizable number of college-educated people with few positions commensurate with their level of training. At that time, the Ministry of Education in Taipei began promoting study abroad as a means of controlling possible unrest (Shu 1973; Appleton 1970). Shu (1973) reports that a high-ranking Ministry official admitted: "We purposely encourage our brain to drain and we are content with this so-called severe phenomenon. The Kuomintang rule could not contain such potential intellectual elements, particularly those dissident ones, in this small island, not only socially and economically but also militarily and politically" (64).

Through the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s, political opposition activities both in the U.S. and in Taiwan increased steadily. Alternative Taiwan-centric student associations were founded on campuses across the country. Typically, the official organization would hold social events, while the others would sponsor seminars and activities related to Taiwanese culture and politics. As will be discussed in Chapter Four, with each successive wave of students from Taiwan, these politically-oriented organizations were able to increase their support base, hold more activities, and create regional and national networks.

One early activist reminisced that in his first semester at Kansas State, he agreed to participate in a campus-wide international culture activity. The students represented

Taiwan by performing indigenous groups' dances in traditional costumes. The local Nationalist government monitors sent letters to overseas students warning them to not participate, but he did not take it seriously. "What could be so threatening about an Ami farmer's dance?", he asked himself. From the perspective of Taiwan-as-Formosa, the indigenous groups in Taiwan were an integral part of the anti-colonial struggle. Because of his participation, the Nationalist government agents identified him as a dissident engaged in a political protest. The older students who invited him to participate were seeking support for their nascent nationalist movement. They made available reading materials banned in Taiwan which detailed the history of the Nationalist government's rise to power and early rule in Taiwan, and introduced him to sympathetic faculty and members of the local Taiwanese community.

Because most overseas students from Taiwanese participated in student association during their years of study, these organizations have historically been recognized by various interests as a space in which to compete for the loyalties and commitments of the most influential of the next generation. Indeed, for many Taiwanese international students, "Taiwan-centric" student associations were the locations of first exposure to counter-hegemonic historical narratives, information, and ideologies undermining the Sinocentric pedagogy of the Nationalist government. For many, encountering alternative, contradictory conceptualizations of Taiwan manifested through inter-organizational dynamics was a memorable experience, often associated with the excitement of self-discovery; as well as anger toward the Nationalist government for what they considered to be a thorough, duplicitous "brainwashing." Informants described

experiencing shame at being duped, sorrow for silenced tragedies, and the ossification of personal commitment to advancing political reform in Taiwan.

### **C. Taiwan as Formosa, Island of the Colonized**

The first generation of Formosan independence activists and supporters experienced the Japanese colonial government, the establishment of Chinese Nationalist rule, and educational reform. They had lobbied for UN protection after the Japanese surrender, just as their predecessors one half century prior had sent declarations of independence to Western governments for protection against Japanese colonization. These appeals described Taiwanese as an ethnic group, but not an essentialized and timeless racial community; rather, “Formosans” were conceptualized in early opposition literature a population long subjugated by foreign powers. Narratives of ethnic identity were grounded in the common experience of colonization. The idea of a Taiwanese race based on biology and genetics would only be promoted in Taiwanese national discourse in the 1980s. The key issue for the Formosan activist was self-determination, the rights of the people living on Taiwan to determine their own future.

This conceptualization of Taiwan as a nation formed by the common experience of repeated colonization, with no need to justify the right to self-determination other than on the postcolonial position, continued to be evident in the following decades. Indeed, the Portuguese title “Formosa” itself is a reference to that colonial past, one which contrasts with “Chinese occupation”, but makes no claim to national legitimacy based on a shared culture. Commenting on the title of Kerr’s 1965 *Formosa Betrayed*. Tu Wei-ming (1996) has observed (with some derision) that the term “Formosa” indicates a greater distance from China than the title “Taiwan”:

The celebrated case of Formosa Betrayed clearly indicates that Taiwan independence movements, more fashionably labeled as struggles for Formosan independence, had already gathered in the 1950s. Although their activities, concentrated in Japan and the United States, were primarily political protests against the KMT, the 'I am Formosan' self-identification often carried with it the implication: therefore I am not Chinese'"(52).

This dissertation research, however, finds that the rejection of Chineseness is overstated by critics of the independence movement. Contrary to Tu, James Yu's (2003) use of the word "race," and Peng's (1972) use of the word "tribe" are not characterized as an identity of Taiwan as the land of the non-Chinese Formosan. The denial of Chineseness in Formosan discourse was limited to the political rule of the ROC and PRC, based not an essentialized racial identity, but rather on the violation of a colonized people's right to self-determination.

The younger generation who followed the Japanese era dissidents to Japan and the U.S. as *liuxuesheng*, however, lacked a global sense of Taiwan in world history, but instead were impacted more directly through the imposed silences of local history and culture in Taiwan under the Nationalist government. Their challenge would introduce an additional aspect and develop a unique definition of Taiwan: not Formosa, but rather cultural Taiwan, a people united by a unique cultural tradition, rather than merely the inherent rights of self-determination based on anti-colonial liberation. The introduction of James Yu opening this chapter hints of this transition from anti-colonial to inherited ethnicity. The concept of "Formosa", meaning Taiwan's identity as a post-colonial population seeking the rights of sovereignty from the Nationalist government without rejecting the influence of Chinese culture, was being joined by a more ethnocentric formulation, one which drew on the tropes of cultural authenticity.



In this chapter I have outlined the historical context of the emergence of a conceptualization of Taiwan as Formosa, an island with a deep colonial past characterized by a complex relationship with China and Chineseness. The generation who witnessed the transition between Japanese and Chinese nationalist rule were deeply influenced by the events, particularly the February 28<sup>th</sup> Incident. In the U.S., Formosa-era activists drew upon biographical memories and historical texts to develop a Formosan discourse of Taiwanese independence. I have also described the circumstances liuxuesheng found themselves in upon arrival on campuses in the U.S. Dual student represented competing national imaginations based on incommensurate conceptualizations of Taiwan.

In the next chapter, Formosan Taiwan will be juxtaposed with alternative conceptualizations of Taiwan among younger generations. Two areas in particular will be explored: the meanings and significances attributed to traditional Taiwanese puppetry among a group of liuxuesheng, 1.5, and second-generation Taiwanese Americans, and the goals of a Taiwanese sports team with Olympic ambitions. While the world-class athletes perform in order to raise visibility of Taiwan in the international arena, the puppeteers are performing as Asian/Chinese/Taiwanese in the context of U.S. multiculturalism, a regime that “aestheticizes” ethnic difference and removes Asian immigrants from history (Lowe 1996:9). As representatives of a racialized minority, the students are expected to demonstrate cultural authenticity (Louie 2004b); puppetry is their primary symbolic practice. I argue that there are clear points of disjuncture between imaginations of Taiwan as Formosa, and U.S.-based conceptualizations of “multicultural Taiwan.”

## **CHAPTER TWO: TAIWANESE PUPPETRY AND CURLING**

### **I. Situating the Field**

#### **A. History of Madison Student Associations**

As one of the campuses that developed a clear challenge to official government-sponsored student associations in the mid 1960s, Madison is an instructive field site in which to explore some of the everyday practices that reveal how differing conceptualizations of Taiwan's identity are expressed through overseas student associations across multiple generations. As described in the previous chapter, over the last three decades many college campuses with sizable populations of students and faculty from Taiwan hosted two student associations. One were government-approved groups, sometimes titled Republic of China Student Association, or simply Chinese Student Association, that functioned as a resource for new students as well as an informal extension of the Nationalist government, including as an instrument of surveillance of overseas students' activities. Alternative associations, the second type, began to emerge in the late 1960s and 1970s; they focused on Taiwan-related issues, sponsoring seminars and talks related to Taiwanese culture and politics. With each successive wave of overseas students from Taiwan, the Taiwan-centric organizations were able to increase their membership, hold more activities, and sometimes form regional and national networks for concerted political action and the sharing of resources and information.

Contrasting student organizations and social networks in Madison, in effect, raised the issue of Taiwan's identity among entering students; dichotomously aligned groups, representing and being informed by dichotomously aligned national narratives,

created a space for negotiations of Taiwan's identity unlike anything possible in Taiwan at that time. Madison saw a unique proliferation of such groups, including the Taiwan Research Club, Taiwan Discussion Club, Taiwanese Student Club, and Taiwan Lake-side Club, established by Taiwan-born overseas students in the 1960s and 1970s. This trend heightened Nationalist security efforts in the community, which included recruiting students to become informants responsible for monitoring the activities of overseas students who showed signs of questioning the Sinocentric Nationalist order. In Madison, the earliest officially recognized campus organization for students from Taiwan was the Student Association of the Republic of China (SAROC), established in the early 1950s, a time when Taiwan-born scholars and students in the U.S. were few. Supported by the ROC offices in Chicago, the function of SAROC was to serve as the primary social network for all students and scholars from Taiwan.<sup>9</sup> The Chicago consulate office coordinated pre-immigration orientations especially for students preparing to study in Madison, warning the students that the campus was a hot-bed of anti-government sentiment. Informants coming to Madison as recently as the early 1990s reported going through a required orientation in Taiwan where organizers warned them to avoid the political activities of the unofficial student association.

Early Taiwan-centric student organizations' meetings often included *liuxuesheng* immigrants from the community, and the primary community organization, the Taiwanese Association Madison (TAM), served as a pro-Taiwan social organization for students when they were unable to maintain a registered Taiwan-centric student association. In the late 1960s the Taiwanese organizations in Madison were meeting

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<sup>9</sup> When students from China returned to university campuses in the late 1970s, the PRC established equivalent groups, usually titled "Chinese Students and Scholars Association."

sometimes as often as several times a week to “criticize, theorize, and organize,” as one activist put it, relying primarily on prior relationships and references from friends and relatives in Taiwan to assess who should be trusted and whom to avoid. By the mid-1970s, there was almost no overlap in activities or active membership between the Taiwan-centric student association and SAROC, a pattern which was still evident at the time of the current fieldwork.<sup>10</sup> Beginning in the 1980s, however, fewer and fewer students coming to study in Madison were interested in maintaining a Taiwan-centric student association to provide an alternative to SAROC-sponsored events and social networks. One informant called it a “lull in Taiwanese consciousness” among arriving overseas students. A decade had passed before a new Taiwanese student organization was registered with the university in 1996.

In a broader historical context, other factors contributing to an increased interest by overseas students to organize a TSA include the 1995 live-fire missile tests off the coast of Taiwan, and the Chinese naval exercises on the eve of the 1996 presidential elections in Taiwan. As will be discussed in Chapter Three, these events had a significant impact among overseas students in the U.S., and once again sparked Taiwanese nationalist sentiment among overseas students as well as second-generation Taiwanese American on campuses in the U.S. A shift was taking place, however, as the target of protest was not the Nationalist government, but the PRC.

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<sup>10</sup> Because SAROC includes all students from Taiwan to their membership list, whether they attend meetings or not, “membership” here refers to being a member of the community associated with a student organization. Yeh (1989) discussed similar examples of parallel Taiwanese organizations in his research, finding that while some membership overlap exists between multiple student associations, in these cases individuals are inactive in one or the other, a member in name only.

The TSA took as its original mission “to care about Taiwanese affairs, promote Taiwanese culture and raise Taiwan’s international status.” In 2001, the TSA voted to add the goal “to assist new overseas students adjust to life in America,” thereby paralleling the primary purpose of SAROC. Unlike the government-sponsored organization, the TSA had a formal membership list and charged annual dues. At the time of this research the TSA active membership e-mail list included 48 names, and thirty dues-paying students attended at least one TSA event per semester, with a core dozen attending monthly meetings and social functions on a regular basis. Although in 2003 there were 207 entries in the organizational directory, the list includes TSA alumni in the community reaching back to the mid 1960s. The list is used as a phone book for the overseas student community, an indication of how deeply the TSA legacy is embedded in the Taiwanese overseas student community in Madison. Members of TAM continued to provide financial support and play an active role in many TSA activities, but students described what they called ideological conflicts; they felt that older Taiwanese in the community were placing too much emphasis on political issues rather than social activities such as men’s basketball, ski trips, picnics, and pot-luck dinners.

Given the indeterminacy of Taiwan’s position in the international community, many independence supporters do not separate the expression of Taiwanese culture from the political statement it makes. This perspective however, did not resonate with many of the youngest *liuxuesheng*, members of the 1.5 generation who came to the U.S. before college, and second-generation Taiwanese Americans in Madison. They preferred to distinguish between the identity question – exploring their Chinese and Taiwanese cultural “roots,” – and their position on the reunification/independence issue. In the

framework established in this dissertation, the younger generations were negotiating distinctions between conceptualizations of Taiwan as a “homeland,” a heritage (which does not exclude the accommodation of things Chinese,) and Taiwan as a nation-state.

## **B. Madison as a Field Site**

In fall 2001 I saw the TSA Puppet Team from the University of Wisconsin-Madison perform at the Michigan State University Global Festival, an event showcasing cultures from around the world as represented by members of international student organizations. The Taiwanese puppet troupe regularly performed at university cultural events, public schools, and community events in Madison and other universities in the Midwest. Preceding the plays, puppeteers would present a narrative and PowerPoint slideshow emphasizing that Taiwanese culture is unique, not simply a local variation of Chinese culture. At the Michigan State event, the puppet troupe was the only participating organization that did not use their home country’s formal name. In their promotional literature and presentations, the puppet troupe uses “Taiwan,” rather than the “Republic of China,” and the ROC flag does not appear. In Figure 3 the troupe displays Taiwanese glove puppets and related information at an open house event in Madison.

**Figure 3: TSA Taiwanese Puppet Troupe in Madison**



I introduced myself to the puppeteers, described my academic background in Taiwanese culture and history, and expressed my interest in conducting future dissertation research on conceptualizations of Taiwan's identity among overseas students in the U.S. In January I was invited by Gabriel, the president of the TSA and troupe coordinator, to Madison to give a February 28<sup>th</sup> Incident commemorative presentation to mark the 55<sup>th</sup> anniversary. I would be part of program that included poetry readings, songs, and the recollections of three witnesses to the events. My presentation was well received and the program was viewed as a success, with about fifty students and members of the community in attendance. I was able to extend my stay for several days as the guest of a Taiwanese family who introduced me to a close-knit community of Taiwanese professionals, academics and retirees, many of whom had advanced degrees in medicine and engineering from the University of Wisconsin, Madison, and other major research institutions in the Midwest.

Overseas students and community members who were aware that I was in the process of designing my dissertation research on Taiwan's identity encouraged me to conduct fieldwork in Madison. My host and others offered to allow me to be a guest in their homes, to grant interviews, give access to historical materials, and recommend me to other Taiwanese supporters living in nearby communities and around the nation. Based on the assumption that I was sympathetic to the Taiwanese independence movement, they would vouch for my "TI-mindedness" (support for Taiwanese independence) to those who would be hesitant to speak with a stranger – particularly an

Anglo-American, in English – about their personal experiences and political activities.<sup>11</sup> Because my master’s thesis research in 1997 analyzed the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary commemorations of the February 28<sup>th</sup> Incident, an event closely associated with the emergence of conceptualizations of Taiwan’s identity and the independence movement, my research gained greater legitimacy among overseas students who experienced the Incident itself, and its silencing during the nearly four decades of martial law in Taiwan. By affirming the historical gravity and ongoing significance of 2-28, evinced (and reproduced) by the commemorative talk I presented, I was reinforcing the credibility of my dissertation research among the subject population, and creating opportunities to develop *rapprochement* with key informants, though alliance may be a more accurate description of the relationship.

Most of the Taiwanese overseas students with whom I worked in Madison belonged to one or more of the five national Taiwanese organizations with chapters and representatives in Madison. The Formosan Association of Public Affairs (FAPA), headquartered in Washington, DC, is the most active Taiwanese public relations and governmental lobbying organization in the U.S., with a nation-wide network of supporters and organizers. I was able to attend meetings and conduct interviews with members, many of whom had served the organization in state and national leadership positions in the past. Graduate students in Madison who belong to the national student activist network Taiwanese Collegian (TC) also played key leadership roles in the TSA and had a major impact on its direction and agenda at several points in its history. Local

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<sup>11</sup> The English abbreviation “TI” has currency among many Taiwanese activists, and is expanded to terms such as “TI-minded” and “TI-leaning” to describe support for Taiwanese independence. Its usage parallels the Mandarin “tai-du,” a contraction for “Taiwan duli” (Taiwanese independence.) The KMT popularized a “Tai-du” homophone by replacing du (獨) with du (毒), meaning poison.



members of TC included UW-Madison on the itinerary of traveling guest speakers, encouraged participation in cultural events, and collaborated with an activist cultural expert to establish the puppet troupe with whom I worked. Other Taiwanese organizations with active chapters include the World United Formosans for Independence (WUFI) described in the previous chapter, and the North American Taiwanese Women's Association, both of which were founded in Madison.

Most non-student Taiwanese in this study belonged to the Taiwanese Association of Madison, and provided financial support for TSA activities, as well as organized events with the local FAPA chapter, and the Taiwanese Economic and Cultural Office (TECO) in Chicago. Although Taiwanese Association of Madison has an open membership policy and is officially non-political, most members supported Chen Shui-bian in the 2000 presidential elections agree with the principle of self-determination for Taiwan. Because this dissertation explores the relationship between past events and conceptualizations of Taiwan, Madison was an instructive field site due to its historical centrality in the development of Taiwanese nationalist activism, and because subsequent students from Taiwan continued to negotiate the issues of Taiwan's identity through interactions with multiple generations of their *liuxuesheng* immigrant predecessors.

### **C. Gateway Informants**

During my visits to Madison I lived with Uncle Chang and his wife Dun-Mei in a comfortable suburban home, borrowing the rooms in the upper floor that had been converted to guest space since their youngest of three daughters moved away to college in 1999. Most mornings, Uncle Chang and I would eat soft tofu with soy before dawn and go mall-walking at a nearby up-scale shopping center. During my stays in Madison,

Uncle Chang and Dun Mei would help arrange interviews with other Taiwanese in the community, particularly senior Formosa generation activists. We discussed their youth under the KMT, undergraduate years, military training, their involvement in student associations, the overseas student experience, identity-shaping events, Formosan activism, perspectives on discourses of Taiwanese and Chinese identity, the machinations of the current Taiwanese independence movement, and local politics in the Taiwanese community.

Dun Mei worked fulltime for the city of Madison, and Uncle Chang was retired from a career in electrical engineering in 1999 at the age of 68. As a second source of income, he had become a ginseng merchant, collaborating with two Taiwanese ginseng growers in the area. His temperature-controlled basement was crowded with drying bins, piles of roots divided by size and qualities, shipping boxes, and leftover campaign materials from Chen Shui-bian's successful presidential bid in 2000. Wisconsin ginseng is considered to be of particularly high quality, and is desired in the US market. The special characteristics of Wisconsin ginseng so appreciated by his Chinese customers come from founding plants tended in the mountains of Taiwan by generations of families who have kept the secret maps of the locations of the root sources.

According to Uncle Chang, the special characteristics of Wisconsin ginseng appreciated by his customers come from the historical lineage of the plant with roots in Taiwan, rather than the Wisconsin soil and climate. Holding up a freshly washed root the size of a baking potato, he explained that

this is wild ginseng from the mountains in Taiwan. The locations of the roots are kept secret in families, from one generation to the next generation. Most of the ginseng plant is hidden underground. Fathers take their sons through the forest to the secret locations of the source roots. The source roots have been cultivated for

centuries, and they have become especially Taiwanese, more potent and sweeter than Chinese ginseng. Chinese ginseng not as strong because the Chinese people do not love the earth the way Taiwanese people love Taiwan.

Uncle Chang describes Taiwan's identity through the metaphor of native soil, homeland. It is the timeless intimacy and knowledge of the land by Taiwanese, the very "root" of nationalism that makes Uncle Chang's ginseng of such high quality. As he explains this, he enjoys the irony, and leaves the impression that his ginseng trade is a small revolution. He donates the profits to FAPA and WUFI as a small contribution to the cause of Taiwanese independence. Referring to his Chinese customers who are aware that the ginseng is originally from Taiwan, Uncle Chang reflects disparagingly that "even when they know, they still buy it, because it is so good. They don't agree with it, but they give money to TI anyway, just because they want this kind of ginseng. That is a Chinese mind."

In other conversations, he described Chinese people as greedy, dishonest, militant, close-minded, xenophobic and provincial. These negative characteristics were extended to the Nationalist government, and *waishengren* in Taiwan. These shortcomings were not associated with Chinese people as a race, but rather the product of a Sinocentric education in general. In this regard, a "Chinese mind" could be cultivated in *benshengren*. The root of the mindset stemmed from; indeed, one of the criticisms senior generations of activists made of subsequent generations of independence supporters was that their thinking is contaminated with a "Chinese mentality" because they were raised in Chinese schools. Corruption among independence supporters and opposition political figures in Taiwan is presented as being wholly new to Taiwan, arriving with the KMT Chinese nationalist culture in 1945. Elder Taiwanese reflecting on the Japanese colonial

era often claimed (erroneously) that Taiwanese (and, according to some, Japanese) language had no word for “corruption,” or “bribe” before the KMT arrived.

Dun Mei, at the same time, brushes Uncle Chang’s ginseng revolution aside as hyperbole, telling him that his monthly pledges to FAPA were not having much impact. She jokes that he is still stuck in “the old WUFI mindset,” when “every little thing mattered, every dollar mattered, everything was like a battle.” She is referring to the first two decades of their residence in the U.S., from 1968 when they arrived as graduate students under surveillance by Nationalist government security agents, to about 1986-1987, when the Democratic Progressive Party put forward Dr. Peng Ming-min as a candidate in the presidential election and the KMT lifted Martial Law. Monthly pledge aside, the Chang family has consistently provided financial support for local activities of the student groups and non-student voluntary organizations in the area, hosted events in their home and volunteered their time to help manage events in the community and on campus.

My primary point of access to younger generations of students in Madison was facilitated by another couple in Madison whose experiences were influenced by senior supporters in the area, but whose time was devoted to encouraging younger generations of overseas students, one-point-fives, and second generation Taiwanese Americans to be interested in Taiwanese culture. The Taiwanese traditional glove puppetry troupe rehearsed and stored their stage and puppets alongside the Taiwanese curling team equipment in the home and garage of two of the founding members of both the troupe and the curling team, Li-Lin and Hiro. Their home, a Queen Anne in a neighborhood of turn-of-the-century homes near campus, was a meeting place for troupe and team outings,

birthday parties, pot-luck dinners, and sometimes TSA meetings. Li-Lin, Hiro and I were about the same age (mid-thirties) and at similar places in our academic careers. We would sit visiting over drinks in the living room, or in better weather on their back patio, after the troupe members had returned to their apartments and dorms. Through their familiarity with the TSA, puppet troupe, curling team, and the Taiwanese community, they were crucial to my understanding the history and complexity of the Taiwanese *liuxuesheng* immigrant community. Like the elder generation of supporters, Li-Lin and Hiro helped facilitate this research with the philosophy that the more the general public knows about Taiwan, the better.

They had made a priority of encouraging TSA members to take pride in Taiwanese culture and “get excited about being Taiwanese.” During their time with the students, they would try to discuss aspects of Taiwanese history and contemporary issues facing Taiwan. Li-Lin, for her part, saw a lack of historical perspective as a major problem:

They don't always know where they fit in the big picture. If they haven't already, they are going to figure out soon that being Taiwanese is a little more complicated than they thought, and that earlier generations were afraid to even say, 'I am Taiwanese, not Chinese,' because he would be punished by the government. Most students and professors at U-W from China believe that Taiwan should be a part of China, and that Taiwanese culture is just local Chinese culture. If they choose to care about it, great, and they can help preserve Taiwanese culture and work to become a member of the UN. But we have to show them how things got to be the way they are today, the ROC, KMT, DPP, PRC.

Uncle Chang and Dun-Mei, Li-Lin and Hiro mediate Articulations of Taiwan's identity discourse across multiple generations. Li-Lin and Hiro were raised during the waning years of martial law in Taiwan and relate to the experiences of more senior supporters in the community, having experienced of a Sinocentric pedagogy promoted by

an authoritarian regime. However, unlike their elders, they were more tolerant of the ambivalence toward the ambiguity of Taiwan's national identity shown by those who were exposed to more Taiwan-centric pedagogy and experienced a politically reformed and economically vibrant, pluralistic Taiwan. Li-Lin and Hiro were often asked to negotiate inter-generational conflicts, particularly in situations that involved public representations of Taiwan, as described in the next segment.

## **II. Performing Culture: Scripts and Subtexts**

### **A. Puppetry Past and Present**

*Liuxuesheng* in Madison formed a traditional puppet troupe in 1997 with instruction and support from a senior Taiwanese independence activist, Professor Alan Chen, director of the Taiwanese Cultural Foundation in Chicago. Alan would travel to universities throughout the country giving *liuxuesheng* and second-generation Taiwanese Americans intensive “crash courses” in Taiwanese puppetry, stage building, scripts, and troupe promotion. He also facilitated access to puppets, by loan, gift and purchase. He has written contemporary Taiwanese puppet plays and directs professional troupes in the U.S. and Taiwan. A trained performer and director, Alan began his career in Japan studying under Akira Kurosawa. He creates pre-recorded “karaoke-style” performances that include the spoken narratives, sound effects and music, allowing him to concentrate on puppet technique and performance with the students.

I worked with three generations of Taiwanese and Taiwanese Americans involved with the puppet troupe in order to explore some of the ways different generations viewed Taiwan, Taiwanese culture, China and Chinese culture. During my time with the puppet

troupe I went to rehearsals, troupe social activities, performances on campus and in the Madison community. On three occasions I was able to travel with the troupe to other universities in the region, each time drawing on my Madison connections to facilitate meetings with older generations of Taiwanese student-immigrants from the area, and making new connections with other Taiwanese in the community. As noted at the beginning of this chapter, student cultural performances by international students representing their home country have become ubiquitous on campuses and in communities.

A member of Taiwanese Collegian studying at the University of Wisconsin, Madison first invited Alan to help establish a puppet troupe from among members of the TSA. She arranged for him to give a speech about the significance of Taiwanese puppetry and to provide a demonstration. Alan would eventually host ten students in his home for training in the art form, and offer advice about how to begin and sustain a student troupe. Alan makes a point to explain to the younger puppeteers the complex heritage of Taiwanese glove puppetry, and the ways it has been used to both support and undermine powerful regimes over the last century.

The puppet troupe membership in the 2003-2004 school year included two undergraduates born in the U.S., three in the one-point-five generation, another three *liuxuesheng* undergraduates, and two *liuxuesheng* graduate students. Although three of the puppeteers are not members of the TSA, the puppet shows are the main activity of the organization. Puppet troupe performances were 11 of the 25 planned TSA activities for the 2002-2003 school year, 6 of 13 events in 2002-2001, and during the 2000-2001 school year puppet shows accounted for 16 of the 37 TSA events.

Alan would explain in his presentations and writings that the glove puppetry tradition was first developed in the Ming dynasty (1368-1644) and came to Taiwan from Fujian in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Known in Taiwanese as *pò-tē-hì*, (Mandarin: *bùdàixì*), the craft did not last beyond the Qing dynasty on the mainland. The original stories were based on Chinese classic literature such as the Journey to the West (*xiyouji*) and serial tales such as “Romance of the Three Kingdoms (*sanguo yanji*) and marital genre – “the Water Margin” (*shuihu zhuan*). The Japanese did not impose strong restrictions on Taiwanese local culture in general, but puppet troupes were censured for anti-Japanese parody. Instead, they were expected to perform new stories supportive of the colonial rule and the empire, and steer clear of the Chinese classic stories; Alan makes the case that it was Chinese – not Taiwanese – nationalist sentiment that the Japanese were most concerned about in Taiwan. Similar to the Japanese sponsoring pro-government performances, the Nationalist government, in essence, nationalized Taiwanese glove puppetry troupes to promote anti-communist and anti-Russian themes. The puppeteers used Mandarin Chinese instead of Holo, and the puppets wore contemporary clothing. The Nationalist government had derided and suppressed folk traditions on the mainland as well, seeing them as a waste of resources that could otherwise be put into the war and nation-building project. Even before the decline of local public activities that came with urbanization and technological development in Taiwan, the Nationalist government was actively discouraging large-scale public activities. For example, the 1952 “Frugality Policy” outlawed the largest festivals and restricted the amount of money that could be spent on smaller local festivals and public occasions. Hand glove puppetry suffered as a result; troupes were fewer, smaller, and less professional.



Although it was very popular when first televised in 1970, glove puppetry programming was dropped in 1976 shortly after the government required that all television programming be in Mandarin.<sup>12</sup> However, over the course of the 1970s and 1980s, performances were increasingly common in local events, festivals and weddings, and began to appear as part of political opposition rallies. Though the craft was originally a Ming dynasty import, in the context of anti-Nationalist activities, incorporating puppetry was a way to emphasize local Taiwanese tradition, as opposed to the Beijing opera tradition promoted by the Nationalist government. Puppetry afforded a way to indirectly criticize the government through the scripts, plot lines, and character mannerisms.

Alan compared Taiwanese puppetry Western film genre in the U.S. in order to explain his central principle in defining Taiwanese authenticity. Westerns are great films because their “down-to-Earth style is truly reflective of America’s past.” Taiwanese artistic expression, he argues, must take as its subject Taiwan, a position reminiscent of the nativist literary movement (*xiangtu wenxue*) begun in the late 1920s. Under circumstances of increased authoritarian rule on the part of the Japanese, discourses of nascent Taiwanese identity were preserved and reproduced through an underground literary genre that celebrated things Taiwanese. The nativist literary movement would eventually become the central organ of expression for democratic opposition in the late 1970s.

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<sup>12</sup> In 1995 a cable television channel was dedicated to a new, high-tech, high-action version of glove puppetry; in this new form, it became a sensation in the urban Taipei youth culture. They use a hybridized language of mostly Taiwanese with Mandarin mixed in. It has spread in popularity to the U.S. and Japan, and is featured in popular films based on the martial fantasy genre.

His concern at this point deals with the degree to which the art form can deviate from its “traditional” form before it no longer authentic Taiwanese culture. In the context of university student associations in the U.S., Alan has selected which aspects of Taiwanese glove puppetry will be markers of authenticity, and which elements will literally be “lost in translation.” Alan poses the question:

Why can't we have theater that focuses on the true Taiwanese past? . . . What I tell people as I travel and speak is that when they have to choose as their artistic material, ...concentrate in Taiwan. You do not have to be political. But everything... you are born in Taiwan, you are from Taiwan. Taiwan has a lot of raw materials waiting to be used. Anything: drama, movies, literature, poem, music, everything. Whatever you need you can find it in Taiwan. You don't have to go out. . . .

Although Alan emphasizes that puppetry does not have to be political, one of the foundational assumptions of this research is that, because of Taiwan's indeterminate state in the international community, and because *liuxuesheng* have historically shaped the future of the China-Taiwan-U.S. relations, all student association activities are political locations. It follows that student association activities, from soccer tournaments to indigenous dances, have a political valence.

Similar to Li-lin, Alan is speaking of maintaining Taiwanese identity among students in the U.S., including forging links to Taiwanese heritage through traditional stories. Alan's satire is not addressing Chinese culture *per se*, but promotes Taiwanese culture in the context of Taiwan's identity being re-defined by Chiang Kai-shek:

The KMT was not so happy. I promoted Taiwanese culture, and some of my plays were critical of the KMT. I have one play called "Statue": In the park, there is a statue. It is Chiang Kai-shek statue. They asked for a lot of money to erect the statue but they couldn't make it because everybody along the way took a bite of the funds, so they didn't have enough money. All the corruption. Without

the money they cannot make a real statue. So the higher-ranked government [official] was coming to have an opening... They finally came up with a solution. “Why don't we get somebody and paint him like a statue and stand there and hopefully it won't be for long.”

I was thinking this was political satire. And I can do it just like a skilled playwright. I let them play this kind of play. Everybody was so happy. I don't have any slogan, I don't condemn Chiang Kai-shek, I don't condemn KMT, but everybody knows I am criticizing the KMT.

Although Alan never used Chiang Kai-shek's name, the actors used makeup and costume design to appear like Chiang. “The campus spies hated me, and reported me. I love these plays, and I did it better than anybody. That is when I found out I was black-listed.” Nevertheless, in 1987 Alan Chen returned to Taiwan with the World Taiwanese Congress *en masse* to commemorate the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the February 28<sup>th</sup> Incident, and demonstrate the strength of the overseas Taiwanese independence movement. He recalls that during the week-long event,

. . . they had a humorous puppet show that parodied the Nationalist government. Right there in front of the Chiang Kai Shek Memorial. There is power in humor. They were doing this in the U.S. too in the 1980s. They would pick a funny political situation, and use particular accents and body language and make people laugh. This is a misuse of the puppet, but it is ok. They don't know anything about the culture, but that is not their fault. They were educated by the Nationalist government; they never teach you anything about Taiwan.

Developing a different conceptualization of Taiwan's local tradition, the Nationalist government began to incorporate puppetry into their programs in the early 1990s, “to preserve Chinese culture,” with nationally televised Art Heritage Awards (Bosco 1994:400). The first puppetry exhibit of the Cultural Gallery in the National Concert Hall in Taipei, sponsored by a Cultural Planning division of the executive branch in 1992, was billed as “an Exhibit on Traditional Chinese Glove Puppetry,” and meant to “attract the public to search for its roots and come to know of Chinese Traditional folk

culture” (Wu 1995:111). KMT candidate James Soong used puppetry in his successful bid for Taiwan province governor in 1994, the first time the post was democratically elected. In 1996 then president Lee Teng-hui, the first *benshengren* to lead the KMT party, had a renowned puppet master designated a “National Treasure,” and Taipei Mayor Ma Ying-jeou – a *waishengren* leader of the KMT party – represented himself as Shih Yen-wen, a popular puppet character, in promotional materials.

The significance and political valence of glove puppetry in Taiwan had become a highly contested field, a practice integrated in two differing, but not entirely contradictory conceptualizations of Taiwan’s identity: a local practice that sets Taiwan apart from mainland China with the potential to be used as a form of critique of the Nationalist government, and an example of Chinese culture in Taiwan, emphasizing the Chinese identity of Taiwan. Indeed, glove puppetry from this perspective, because it is no longer practices in China, presents Taiwanese local traditions as more authentic example of *Chinese* culture than can be found on the mainland.

Alan Chen admitted that at first other Taiwanese independence supporters were ambivalent about his cultural approach. Although he was criticized for limiting his commitment to the opposition movement to (merely) producing pro-Taiwan glove puppetry theater in the 1970s, his work gained credibility over time. Alan recalled, “people in Taiwan and here in the U.S. who are interested in activism like my work. They like it now. People did not take culture seriously at first.” He answered critics who said that working with culture was too slow an approach by reminding them of the Communist rise to power on the mainland; the cultural movement in Shanghai served as the foundation from which they were able to strengthen their military power and take

over China. Alan further suggests that in the current political arena, culture is not emphasized as much as in the past, which may work against the Taiwanese independence movement.

To tell you the truth, the DPP has no cultural policy at all. That is understandable. But they have no policy - what to do with culture. I understand why it is still only political. They don't have the energy to pay attention to culture, but this is a very serious situation because usually if you want to do things right, you have to lay the cultural foundation first.

Alan lamented that as the opposition grew stronger and the DPP party gained power, they marginalized some of the constituent elements of the opposition movement, including the Leftists, environmentalists, women's rights activists, farmers' unions, indigenous groups' empowerment, as well as "cultural nationalists" of the Formosa generation like himself. Again building the cultural allusion on top of a geographical identity, he expresses a concern that "New Chinese culture is invading Taiwan step by step. [The students] still don't know what Taiwanese culture is." He continues by describing a concern that without understanding the struggles over defining Taiwan – whether a Japanese colony, an occupied state known as the Republic of China, or a democracy – the students will lose sight of the need for self-determination. The key to maintaining this value in them is simple:

With the KMT, and now the People's party - they don't have the time or money or energy to think about the culture. So all of the young people are confused. All the people understand - because of their experience of their life. They have seen Japanese, they have seen KMT, and now they are facing this chaotic situation. They are in their twenties, early thirties; they don't know about anything the Japanese, the White Terror era, the KMT, but the [DPP], they can't give them anything kind of cultural education, so that is a problem.

And here in the Taiwanese community, in the U.S., there are very few people like me. . . . You have to adjust your cultural concepts. I have a simple slogan, something I have had for myself, the concept I tell them, the first thing I tell them: Taiwanese culture is not Chinese culture.

The issue of whether Taiwanese culture is Chinese culture raised by Alan was a central theme of Taiwan's identity discourse among key informants in Madison as well, and perspectives varied widely among those interviewed, ranging from establishing racial divisions based on genetic analysis, to ambivalence toward discussions of "identity" in any regard. Younger generations in particular, who cannot be as easily categorized in the *benshengren/waishengren* dichotomy as more senior generations, approached Taiwanese puppetry with a broad range of motivations that are no longer limited to the questions regarding cultural authenticity as a support of Taiwan's identity as a sovereign nation-state based on a distinct culture.

### **B. The Presentation**

The puppet troupe assembled the eight-foot tall stage from steel pipe, paned plywood and drapery in about twenty minutes, speaking English and Mandarin, as elementary school teachers visited with Gabriel about arrangements. Suzy, who came to the U.S. before her third birthday, would listen to the Mandarin discourse around her and use English to interject with an opinion or question. Others in the troupe would usually respond to her in Mandarin, which she understood well. The other puppeteers easily accommodated her preference for spoken English.

As the students pull on black sweatshirts and arm socks, the puppet stage stands open without props, exposing a backdrop of blue sky and white clouds. The front stage drape is crossed by a banner title written in *hanji*, with a translation on a second, lower banner reading "Taiwan Student Association Puppet Team." The program begins with a 10-minute PowerPoint presentation of information about Taiwan and puppetry narrated by one of the puppeteers, who will ask audience members a few quiz questions for small

prizes at the end of the presentation. This is followed by one or two puppet plays, each lasting about twenty minutes. During intermissions and after the performance, puppeteers come forward to allow others to play with the puppets. A description of the dramas, Alan's intent with each, and students' interpretations and perspectives, will provide insight into differences between generations as they approach Taiwan's identity.

In the opening presentation, the puppeteers present Taiwanese culture as having been influenced not only by China, but also the Malayo-Polynesian groups indigenous to Taiwan, the Japanese, Dutch and Portuguese. Alan Chen makes the argument to puppeteers in Madison and elsewhere that with a distinct culture, language, and territorial homeland, Taiwan should be recognized as a sovereign nation in the international community based on the principle of self-determination, and hopes that they are able to communicate that message to their audiences. For some puppeteers, participation is a self-conscious political act, a performance within a long tradition of resistance and opposition inflected with the notions of a Taiwanese nation-state. They promote puppetry as a way to educate Taiwanese about Taiwanese culture, and to draw them into participating in other TSA events, some of which focus on Taiwanese culture, history and politics. While there is a general consensus among puppeteers that the troupe is operating with the intent to raise awareness of Taiwanese culture, for some students, this is an element of a broader political agenda to influence U.S. foreign policy. In this regard, the brief PowerPoint slide-show program presented by the students is the key instrument for delivering multiple messages based on contrasting conceptualizations of Taiwan's identity.





They describe the history and styles of Taiwanese puppetry, accompanied by maps to locate Taiwan in the world. They show how far away Taiwan is from Madison, and mention that it takes half a day to fly there. They point out that Taiwan looks like a yam, a sweet potato you can buy in the supermarket, and that although Taiwan is only one fourth the size of Wisconsin, 24 million people live there. The yam reference itself has a political and cultural valence which may or may not be pointed out by the narrator, that the yam is an apt metaphor for admirable aspects of Taiwan's character, as will be described in greater detail below. They describe the sub-tropical weather, snow-capped mountains for good skiing, and featured aspects of Taiwanese cuisine such as bubble tea, a "unique part of Taiwanese culture." The historical context outlining the colonial legacy of Taiwan emphasizes the distinctiveness of the art form, distancing Taiwanese puppetry from Chinese culture:

Throughout 400 years of history, Taiwan has been ruled by the Dutch, Spanish, Chinese and Japanese. Although Chinese culture has exerted a considerable influence on local traditions, Japanese and Western cultures have as well. There are also some uniquely Taiwanese aspects of local culture, such as opera, puppetry, folk music, literature and film.

Although they stress the unique aspects of Taiwanese culture, several of the slides feature the indigenous groups of Taiwan. During this segment one of the male troupe members sometimes displays a colorful shirt in the style of the Bunun indigenous group in Taiwan. The captions of the first set of slides read:

- 'People of Taiwan.' Aboriginal women from the Ami tribe pose with their traditional festival finery during the tribe's harvest festival.
- 'People of Taiwan.' Colorfully dressed aboriginal women from the Bunun tribe of Nantou in central Taiwan pose in their festival finery.
- 'People of Taiwan' Middle school students perform a lab experiment in chemistry class. Science is emphasized in school in Taiwan
- 'People of Taiwan.' (an image of street food vendors in a night market)

The next segment is composed of images and information about the natural beauty and geographical characteristics of Taiwan. This is followed by images of the Taipei skyline, the elevated train system, and pictures of hand puppets with the caption that glove puppetry “was introduced to Taiwan in the Ch’ing dynasty (end of 19<sup>th</sup> century) from southeast China.” The presentation is narrated with varying degrees of enthusiasm, emphasis and detail depending on the troupe member speaking. Those who more strongly identify with the cultural nationalist imagination of Taiwan promoted by Alan Chen, including Gabriel and Hiro, emphasize the unique aspects of Taiwanese culture, while others with less interest in the political issues surrounding the independence movement emphasize the distinctions between types of Taiwanese puppetry and the natural beauty of the island.

Although the political message in the presentation is overt, if mediated by students’ varying degrees of enthusiasm in impressing the central message to the larger public, the scripts themselves require more deconstruction and interpretation to tease out their political dimension. In this segment I discuss the three scripts being performed or prepared for performance during the time of my fieldwork. The scripts in their entirety are included as appendices 1 and 2.

### **C. “Millionaire Chou**

In “Millionaire Chou,” the play being performed in Figure 4, the fall of the principle character stems from his departure from the rural immigrant culture after gaining wealth without effort. For Alan and others in his generation, greed and arrogance are Chinese characteristics, while fairness and tenacity in the face of hardship are associated with Taiwanese people.

The first narrator is a disembodied female voice on the pre-recorded soundtrack:

Hundreds of years ago, many suffering people emigrated from southern China to Taiwan. At that time, Taiwan was a new and unexplored frontier. The immigrants hoped to prosper in this new place. Today, I am going to tell you a story about Millionaire Chou, how he lost all his money through his own fault.

**Figure 4: Puppeteers Performing in Milwaukee Cultural Festival**



The first character is God of the Earth, a bald man with a long, white wispy beard dressed in a regal white robe. He narrates that hundreds of years ago, Mr. Chou “could not find a job in his hometown,” so the impoverished Chou couple “crossed the Taiwan Straits to reach Taiwan, and start a new life.” They saved money through hard work and were eventually able to open a small store, which survived because the Chou couple was honest, fair, and a “little stingy.”

Mr. Chou stands in front his store front and complains to his wife that because she has not given him a son, he must work extra hard to ensure their well-being in their old

age. It is Mrs. Chou who tells the audience how badly they had hoped to have a son, “to carry on the family name,” but after ten years, they are still without a son. She prays to the gods to bless them with a son, and weeps slowly off stage right, while white mist begins rising from stage left, the vapor of a chunk of dry ice in a cup of water held by one of the puppeteers, as the white-robed God of the Earth move to stage center. God of Earth reports to God of Heaven that the crying he hears is that of Mr. Chou’s wife who is upset because they do not have a son. Because it is her immutable destiny to live without a son, God of Heaven decides to compensate the Chou couple with wealth.

Mr. Chou became the wealthiest man in Taipei. His clothes have been changed from a patchy rough robe to red embroidered in gold (Figure 5), the moment when, according to Alan, Taiwanese humility is replaced by Chinese elitism, here represented by Mr. Chou’s new red and gold raiment, the traditional colors of Chinese officials.

**Figure 5: Fisherman and Mr. Chou Discuss the Almost Supernatural Eel.**



Mr. Chou is convinced by a fisherman to pay him to catch a very large, old eel, one that could improve his health and extend his life. When the fisherman returns with the live eel, God of Earth arrives claiming to be a man who lives nearby whose counsel is trusted by others. He begs Mr. Chou not to kill the eel because it is hundreds of years old and has magical powers; it is “almost a supernatural being.” Mr. Chou agrees to spare the eel, but once the God of Earth leaves, he buys the eel to eat.

Eel complains to God of Heaven of the injustice of being killed because of one man’s greed, and God of Earth reports that in addition, Mr. Chou broke his promise not to eat the eel. God of Heaven decides to take back the wealth granted to Mr. Chou by returning Eel to earth as Mr. Chou’s son, Dai Zhang, to ruin his wealth in whatever way pleases him. The narrator explains that as a young man, Dai Zhang lives an extravagant lifestyle and wastes much of his parents’ wealth. When a tropical storm destroys all of Millionaire Chou’s trading ships, Eel reveals himself to Millionaire Chou and explains why he wrought his downfall. The narrator explains that people continue to be greedy and selfish, but by behaving in this way, you run the risk of losing everything.

In the opening lines of the drama, China is associated with suffering while Taiwanese is a land opportunity. Alan explains to the students that the greedy, arrogant, disrespectful Millionaire Chou and the expression of his son through the eel incarnate represent China on multiple levels: as the corrupt Nationalist government on Taiwan, and contemporary rapidly militarizing China across the Taiwan Strait, and a disparaging stereotype of the Chinese mentality and character. In describing the plot to me, and often in their public appearances, puppeteers emphasized the basic moral aspect: that greed and arrogance will lead to your downfall, rather than the broader historical context.

#### D. “Grand Aunt Tiger”

The anti-Chinese message is communicated more directly in the “Grand Aunt Tiger” script, but like “Millionaire Chou,” it would be easy to miss if Alan did not explain the deeper significance. On one occasion, Gabriel hinted to the audience before the performance that there is a hidden message about Taiwanese history, the layers of meaning described by Alan in his training sessions and speaking engagements, but Gabe did not elaborate after the performance.

**Figure 6: Grandaunt Tiger after the Performance**



The story itself parallels elements of the Brothers Grimm version of Little Red Riding Hood. Two children, Akim and Akiu, are warned by their mother that when she leaves they should be certain to lock the door and not let anyone in, especially the tiger, (Figure 6) who likes to eat children. Ominous background music and roaring precede a

tiger entering from stage right, who announces, “I am the most powerful tiger in the whole world.” The tiger, who can change shape, becomes an elderly lady, famished for her favorite food, children. She talks her way into the children’s home posing as an elderly relative, even though their mother warned them against strangers. After Grandaunt Tiger eats the sister, Akiu, brother Akim escapes through the window and is chased up a tree. He explains to Grandaunt Tiger that he is willing to come down and be eaten, but because he is so hungry, if she eats him now, he will become a hungry ghost and forever haunt her. And he is too thin to be a good meal. He convinces her to bring him a kettle of boiling peanut oil, ostensibly so that he can cook birds and be plump when he climbs from the tree to be eaten. Akim pours the oil down Grandaunt Tiger’s throat, causing her to transmute into her original tiger form and die, wailing in a cloud of dry ice mist. “Remember this important lesson: never let a stranger into your home,” the show soundtrack concludes, with Taiwanese music played on traditional instruments in the background.

Alan Chen noted that the story itself is over a hundred years old, and was widely recognized; “everybody heard that story, ‘hungry hungry tiger.’ Your grandmother or your mother would tell you that story. Why? Because this story is a kind of educational story.” Mind your parents, come inside before dark, stay away from strangers, or be eaten by the tiger. However, Alan confers additional layers of meaning to the story:

This one also had something to say about China. Because Taiwan has no Tiger. But why does Taiwan have a Tiger story? Only China has a tiger. So this tiger must come from China. This evil tiger can transform itself into a human shape, cheat the Taiwanese people, and eat them. I can not get away from this kind of ideology. But a story like this, if I didn't tell you the ideological idea behind it, you don't know. Only after I tell you, you might. So this is my way.

In this respect, there are two audiences for each play. For the viewing public, the plays are representative of authentic Taiwanese culture, and suit the expectations of non-Taiwanese as an appropriate expression of Asian culture. They raise public awareness of Taiwan as having a tradition independent of China. Perhaps greater awareness of Taiwan's identity as a cultural tradition independent of China will ultimately effect change in popular attitudes toward the Taiwanese independence question. The second audience, however, are the puppeteers themselves. Unlike the general audience, the puppeteers are made aware of the Taiwan-centric themes in the scripts and appreciate the conceptualization of Taiwan's identity being presented.

#### **E. "Dr. George Leslie MacKay"**

Another of Alan Chen's scripts chronicles the life of George Leslie MacKay, a missionary of the Canada Presbyterian Church who in 1872 moved to the Tamsui area of northern Taiwan, then a mainly unexplored frontier region to Europeans. He was given the epithet "black beard barbarian" by the lowland indigenous groups and Hoklo in the area. He was eventually accepted into local society due in part to his skills as a dentist and his choice to learn the local language. He married an indigenous woman and over the course of his lifetime established churches, schools and clinics throughout northern Taiwan. Notably, MacKay met with the Japanese Governor-General Maresuki Nogi in 1895 on behalf of the people of Taiwan after Japanese colonial rule was established.

"Yes, there are Japanese in the play," Alan pointed out. Because the original puppetry tradition is from Southern China, the stories and costumes have maintained the Chinese forms. Alan's plan to "modernize" the craft involved re-shaping the faces of the puppets themselves so that they look more Taiwanese than the commercially available



puppets manufactured in China. This involved sending them back to Taiwan to have a craftsman raise cheekbones, darken skin color, and alter other features according to Alan's instructions. The changes are meant to represent, if not reflect, the mixed heritage between *Han* and the Malayo-Polynesian indigenous groups on the island. He also used Taiwanese stories and altered clothing to reflect Taiwanese origin rather than Ming period costumes. Another aspect of Alan's modernization model includes the characters themselves. In traditional theater, he pointed out, they only include *Han* Chinese:

Only Holo. Holo and Hakka. They don't separate them, they are all Taiwanese. In other words, they are *Han*, they are both *Han* people. There are no aboriginal people, there are no Japanese, there are no Caucasians. But in real life, actually all of these kinds of people, these kinds of people were already there. In the 17th century the Dutch were already there. But they are not in the traditional theater. . . . And this was in Taiwanese puppet theater for more than one hundred years. They could not break through this tradition, so I try to do that. That is what I am doing.

Although the scripts most often performed by student groups are only 20 minutes long, Alan had written extended script that could last as long as 40 minutes, depending on the audience. The performances include Japanese and Caucasian characters, as well as puppets in indigenous clothing hunting wild game. "Starting from this play," Alan remarked, "I am going into the construction story of Taiwan. You know how I was talking about all the plays about opposition? Well now it is time to go into the positive side of the story."

### **III. Representing the Motherland**

#### **A. The Fighting Yams**

This segment of the dissertation takes the Fighting Yams curling team as a point of departure to discuss Taiwanese state identity and the "international community" in the

context of international sports competitions. Whereas the political orientation of Taiwanese puppetry is grounded in the idea of a Taiwanese cultural tradition, curling is not indigenous to Taiwan, and carries none of the legitimizing potential of discourses of cultural authenticity; indeed the team is counting on the *novelty* of “Asians on ice,” as one team member put it, the comedic quality conveyed in team iconography (Figure 7), to draw attention to the team in regional, national and international competitions. This conceptualization of Taiwan sharply contrasts with the cultural identity represented by Taiwanese puppetry. The playful nature of the Fighting Yams has more in common with Taiwan as Formosa, as it focuses Taiwan’s position in the international community, emphasizes the contrast between the open fairness of the Olympic Movement and Chinese domination, irrespective of cultural distinctiveness.

Figure 7: Fighting Yams Curling Team Logo



Curling, invented in Scotland in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, involves sliding 42-lbs polished granite stones down sheets of ice. The “curl” is the spin given to the stone when it is released. Two of the four-person team sweep the ice in front of the stone to affect the stone’s rate of deceleration. Curling is increasingly popular in Canada and the U.S., especially in the Northern States. It has been an official Olympic sport since 1998. Although a Taiwanese curling team seems improbable, other Asian nations such as South Korea and Japan have entered teams in international competitions. Belarus and Taiwan are late additions; China is also developing a team which will compete with Taiwan. Indeed, one of the early driving forces behind the Taiwanese curling team in Madison was the possibility of beating China to the Olympic Games. The team website includes a narration of their inception:

On a cold winter night sometime after 98' Nagano winter Olympics, Forrest (Yu-Feng Lin), Li-Lin (Cheng), and I were sipping one of those nice and smooth Wisconsin microbrewery beer and talking about doing something cool for our beloved country, Taiwan. . . . We all had one sport in our mind: Curling. Yes, the “funny” looking sport invented by golf-loving and whisky-sipping Scots! We were not sure whether we could master this cool sport, but we were quite confident that we would enjoy the finesse and the strategies of the game; and it could be an excellent sport to promote in Taiwan. Deep down, I think we also want to show others how we can fulfill our "Taiwanese Dream"! Once the goal was set, next task was to find a name for our team. Actually, naming was pretty easy. We decided to call us “Fighting Yams”.

*Liuxuesheng* established the Taiwanese Curling Club in 1998, taking the Fighting Yams as their team name. In 2001, they competed in the 11<sup>th</sup> Pacific Curling Championships (PCC) in Konju, South Korea, and returned in 2002 in New Zealand. In 2003, they competed in the Asian Winter Olympics, and the 13<sup>th</sup> Pacific Curling Championships, both of which were held in Aomori, Japan. Team members were proud to compete in the Asian Games, even though it is not linked to the Olympic Games,



because they were allowed to use the name “Taiwan” as their country of origin. In the more prestigious Olympic Games, however, team members would be competing on the national team as “Chinese Taipei.”

台湾 カーリング女子

鄭麗伶さん (38)



テレビでちりり いま夢中

Figure 8: Li-lin Curling for Taiwan in the 2003 Asian Games

Part of their inspiration to compete internationally (Figure 8) came from the story of the Jamaican bobsleigh team popularized in the movie *Cool Runnings* (1993).<sup>13</sup> The Jamaican team first participated in the Calgary Olympics Winter Games in 1988, and though the team performed poorly at that time, in the 1992 games the four-person team ranked 14<sup>th</sup>, placing ahead of the French, Russian, Italian, and U.S. teams. The

<sup>13</sup> The first two *hanji* characters in the upper left corner of Figure 8 are read “Taiwan”.

*liuxuesheng* in Madison appreciated that the Jamaican team was excelling at a non-indigenous sport, a counter-intuitive combination of a tropical country and ice sports. Moreover, they were in the beginning an obscure team which despite obstacles achieved success and earned respect. In addition to representing Taiwan in local, regional, national, and international competitions, the name of the team, the Fighting Yams, carries its own meaning in discursive domain of Taiwan's identity. Characteristics of the plant, its living environment, and its place in the Taiwanese diets are encoded in narratives of the Taiwanese nation, the Taiwanese people, Taiwanese culture and Taiwanese in diaspora.

The example most germane to this research comes from early Internet-based Taiwanese activism, what contributors called the Taiwanese "webolution". In 1995 two *liuxuesheng* established the Yam Workshop, a server on the Internet created as an alternative to the government-controlled Internet server in Taiwan. Although Yam.com is now a mainstream commercial website, it was originally an information-sharing resource of the opposition movement (Yam Taiwan 1996). They described the Nationalist government control of access to the Internet a form of "information apartheid," and for two years operated a non-profit organization to facilitate a social reform movement in Taiwan.

The *CyberGarden of Yams* (YamWeb 1996a) hosted a regularly-updated on-line publication of essays and information on a wide range of progressive movements in Taiwan, and in the context of the growth of the use of the Internet as a space for identity-based community-building and political mobilization in the 1990s.

Several of the meanings of the yam icon were described on the CyberGarden of Yams website (2002) in these terms:

"Yam", as a linguistic entity, denotes a kind of naturally grown food. But, for Taiwanese, it means more than that. Geographically, the Formosa have a similar shape as yams. As a kind of food, it was part of major source of sustenance for Taiwanese. In addition, yam can grow and proliferate in many sterile lands. Strength of sustainability and the will to struggle with harsh livings not only identify with the history of Taiwanese, but also become part of the nature of Taiwanese. "Yam" is the same term, of identity and of aspiration, as "Taiwanese".

The title of another page on the site, "Taiwan, Our Beautiful Motherland," includes the following unattributed poem: Mother is the river and the creek; Mother is the ocean, the deep blue sea; Mother is the highest mountain peak; Name of my Mother, Taiwan it shall be; Mother is my Conscience; Mother is my Justice; Mother is the Spring for you and me."

Pei-chi Chung's research on alternative media culture in Taiwan (2002) explains the meaning the founders associated with the yam, including its ability to spread its roots, similar to the way information moves through the Internet, and its ability to thrive "even in bad soil," a metaphor representing the difficulties faced by the first use of Internet technology as a form of political resistance. Chung notes that the "yam has long been considered a totem that reflects the oppositional tradition of the Taiwanese spirit. Thus, Yam revealed [the founders'] determination to build a historical database that was different from what the KMT had created for the Taiwanese public" (98-9). The oppositional tradition Chung is referring to is based on the dichotomy between Chinese and Taiwanese beginning with the Nationalist government occupation in 1945. In this form, *benshengren* were represented by the yam, while the taro symbolized *waishengren*. Although use of the taro as a sign in Taiwanese popular has declined, the yam continues

to be present in the popular imagination. The similarity in shape between the plant and the island is the most obvious and familiar connotation; however, the yam icon carries layers of meanings in discourses of Taiwan's identity. As one essayist in the CyberGarden explained, "the yam can grow and proliferate in many sterile lands. Strength of sustainability and the will to struggle with harsh livings not only identify with the history of Taiwanese, but also become part of the nature of Taiwanese."

Finally, as Hiro points, out, yams are a part of the Taiwanese diet:

In truth, we eat a lot of yams as side dishes and dessert in Taiwan; its like the potato in Western society. Furthermore, the shape of the island is precisely like a yam. . . . Hence we often refer to our country as 'Country of Yams' and ourselves as the 'Children of Yams'.

## **B. Chinese Taipei**

While Taiwan has no official standing in the UN,<sup>14</sup> they do compete in the Olympic Games under the name "Chinese Taipei," a concession to the PRC. With 203 national Olympic committees, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) has more members than any other international organization, including the UN with 192 member nations. The Olympic Games are the most widely experienced moment when the "international community" actually *happens*, when representatives of each nation-state interact with each other as athletes, coaches, audiences, spectators, family, media agents and friends from nations around the world. In those moments, the international community is Olympic in public imaginations shared by citizens of all participating nations-states.

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<sup>14</sup> Indigenous groups from Taiwan, however, are permitted to participate in UN conferences dealing with indigenous issues.



Here, the nation-state is embodied and displayed, with flags, national colors and national flavors, while commentators weave information and images of the sport, the athletes, and their homeland. This has the effect of reifying each participating nation-state in the public imagination, and marginalizing geo-political entities not represented. In the case of Taiwan, competing as “Chinese Taipei,” no less than “Republic of China,” reinforces the perception that Taiwan’s identity is Chinese and the concomitant ideas of cultural and racial affinity. Participation in the Olympic Games means inclusion in an imagined international community, but one without the tangible benefits of participation in the UN, World Health Organization and other international bodies that determine the distribution of wealth and resources in the world. The Olympic Games are unique in that they provide each nation-state an opportunity to publicly claim the legitimacy of national sovereignty, to be recognized as a full member of the international community. Participation also confers authority to the ruling state to the extent that athletes are welcomed as emissaries of a legitimate government.



**Figure 9:** “Chinese Taipei” Skating Union Logo in English while *hanji* reads “ROC”.

The standardization of sports regulations can be seen as an extension of the laws regulating the relationships between nation-states, particularly the inviolability of territorial boundaries, diplomatic relations, rules of fair trade and military engagement. The awkward requisite use of Chinese Taipei rather than Taiwan (Figure 9) is easily

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interpreted as a violation of the Olympic spirit of fair play, with equal and unfettered rights of participation. The same rules governing nation-states' mutual recognition of sovereignty, and athletes on the field, should apply to each team equally. Given the high visibility and popular interest of the Olympic Games, and the deeply-ingrained notions of nation-state that are associated with the Games, raising awareness of Chinese hegemony over Taiwan's identity in the international community is more evident to populations around the world during the Olympic Games than their ongoing absence in the UN general assembly.

Drawing from the mission of the United Nations, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) proposes that participation in sports is a human right (2004):

[The Olympic spirit] requires mutual understanding with a spirit of friendship, solidarity and fair play. . . . Any form of discrimination with regard to a country or a person on grounds of race, religion, politics, gender or otherwise is incompatible with belonging to the Olympic Movement.

Each nation narrates its involvement in the international community of sports as a source of national pride, claiming the accomplishment of individual athletes for the state. The official history of the Chinese Olympic Committee's participation in the context of the struggle for legitimacy between the ROC and PRC spans a century. They trace the organization of national sports to 1910, in the early years of Chinese nationalism. China joined the IOC in 1922, and again after the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1954. However, the PRC narrative omits that in the years intervening, 1949 and 1954, the Chinese National Olympic Committee was sponsored by the ROC government in exile on Taiwan. Although the IOC voted to invite teams from China and Taiwan to the 1952 Helsinki Games, the ROC teams withdrew in protest when the PRC agreed to send

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teams. Four years later, when the IOC invited the teams from Taiwan to attend the Melbourne Games, the PRC boycotted the competitions, calling the IOC's move to invite teams from both sides of the Taiwan strait a "two Chinas' plot." Between June and August of 1958, China left 15 other international federations.

In 1959, the IOC officially revised the title of the team from Taiwan to "Republic of China Olympic Committee." Although the IOC would have considered using the title "Taiwan Olympic Committee," the Chiang government on Taiwan and U.S. policy makers preferred that the name reflect the position that the ROC on Taiwan was the legitimate government of China. Upon being reinstated in 1975, the PRC influenced the IOC to disallow Taiwan from participating in the 1976 Montreal Games under any name that had "China" in it. Taiwan's "China" delegation withdrew one day before the games began. After years of discussion, the arrangement that was agreed upon in response to this impasse was to use the title "Chinese Olympic Committee" to represent the PRC, and "Chinese Taipei Olympic Committee" to represent Taiwan (Chinese Olympic Committee 2004).

International sports became the historical expression of an imagined community where nations, embodied by the competitors themselves, recognize one another, and are meant to be recognized as equal agents on a shared playing field. In one germane case, the sport was table tennis. During the 1971 World Table Tennis Championship, held in Japan, the U.S. table tennis team and a small group of journalists visited the PRC, the first Americans to do so since the fall of the ROC in 1949. They initiated what became known as "ping pong diplomacy" which would ultimately lead to President Richard Nixon's historic trip to China in 1972 and the normalization of U.S.-PRC relations. The

UN voted to recognize the People's Republic of China as the representative government of China in 1972.

One Fighting Yams team member reflected on the problem of not being able to use the title Taiwan in Olympic Games in this way:

I just think it is crazy. And embarrassing. I mean, these athletes train their entire lives to represent their motherland to the world, for the international community to say, 'hey – Taiwanese people are strong, graceful, fast – what a great country!', and then to see that they are actually just another Chinese team. Chinese Taipei.

They claim our gold! When [the Chinese] count how many medals they won at the end, they include ours. I don't think that's right. We are all losers when that happens, when we can't be 'Taiwan' – it is more than just a name. It is *our* name. We are Taiwanese, not Chinese; we are Taiwan, not China, and the Olympics is one of the few chances when we have the opportunity to show the whole world we exist.

The objectives envisioned by team members resemble the practice-oriented approach associated with the puppet troupe. Hiro explained the philosophy of the Fighting Yams in these terms:

We just wanted to show our love for Taiwan, to do something for Taiwan. Are we making a difference? Yes. First, right here, we get the kids [undergraduate and graduate students] together to have fun. The more often Taiwanese kids hang out together, the more significant their connection to Taiwan becomes, even if their only connection is knowing other Taiwanese. That is Taiwanese consciousness. Second, out there, we are quietly shouting "Hey, here we are! We are Taiwan, we compete, we exist, we are not China. Hey, doesn't Chinese Taipei sound strange?!"

It is subtle, but slowly these things build up in American consciousness, Taiwan is a country. And they have a curling team.

Third, me and Li-lin know about Taiwanese history and culture, and we talk about things when we get together after a match, or whenever. The kids think it is kind of funny sometimes, that we keep mentioning things, but other times we have good discussions, and people who came just for fun start to learn more about Taiwan, about their roots.

The curling team and the puppet troupe are locations where students are encouraged to conceptualize Taiwan's identity, framed as a negation of China in name and heritage, as well as geological elements such as "roots," and yams. Further, the groups serve as elements in a broad-based publicity campaign to raise awareness of the PRC's seemingly unsportsmanlike domination over Taiwan. In this regard, they are also contexts for intergenerational transmission of ideas, from ideology to historical trivia. Unlike the cultural nationalist ideology of the puppet troupe, the curling team competes in international games in a non-indigenous sport while representing Taiwan as an autonomous political entity, one nation-state among all others, fielding athletes who, by right of participation, embody Taiwanese *du jure* sovereignty in the international community of the Olympic Movement, where fair play and equal access are deeply ingrained. Participating students and sponsors however, differ in their relationships to these broad goals, and the relative salience of Taiwanese national and cultural identity.

### **C. Salience of Taiwan's Identity among Curlers and Puppeteers**

The wide range of experiences in the spaces between Taiwan and the U.S. defy categorization. Being raised in Taiwan does not necessarily indicate a greater interest in things Taiwanese, and the experience of being raised in the U.S. does not produced a homogenized Taiwanese American subject position. Most immigrants fall somewhere between the ontological categories used to describe diaspora youth. For example, Amy has no first-hand memories of Taiwan, and calls herself ABC – American-born Chinese – though she spent her first six months in Taiwan. She is fluent in Mandarin, but only after studying for three years in college and participating in a summer emersion program. When I asked her about the acronym ABT – American-born Taiwanese – adopted by

some of the other puppeteers in Madison, she was casual about the ABT/ABC distinction, and expressed ambivalence toward the identity project. As she explained her perspective on ABC, she indicated that only indigenous groups could legitimately call themselves “Taiwanese”. Amy explains,

I have come across the ABT people. I don’t know what to think about that. I just try not to think about it; I still have to give it more thought, and I have not come up with any solutions. I feel like – if you go back, we are all from China, unless you are *Taiwanese* Taiwanese, I mean native Taiwanese. So I don’t know. I have personal biases when it comes to that, but at the same time I don’t. It is kind of weird. As far as I am concerned, it’s like, *suibian* – whatever. I don’t feel real touchy about it either way.<sup>15</sup>

Although she had some unanswered questions about Taiwanese and Chinese identity, the distinction was not as meaningful to her as a more general dichotomy between American culture and China in a broad, historical sense, including Taiwan, Beijing, and Hong Kong, even the Chinatowns of San Francisco and New York. When we met she had recently returned from a year-long culture and language program in Taiwan. “I just felt like that was something I needed to do for myself,” she explained, “in terms of finding someplace I belong, and to come to terms with identity. I knew it was there, and I felt like it was important to me, and I thought that the only way was language – to get past that barrier.” Mandarin was the medium through which Amy explored her identity, both Taiwanese and Chinese. She compared her relationship to Taiwan to that of her two cousins:

They can speak Taiwanese and Chinese, and they have all these newspaper clippings about Taiwan and China on the walls. It is definitely different. . . . When we would go and visit them, there was a gap. A different perspective and experience from growing up here. My mom was just limited when she got here. She did go to college in Taiwan, and majored in Chinese and English, but when she got here she didn’t find anything to work with that – nothing professional.

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<sup>15</sup> *Sui bian* (casual) here, means an indifferent “whatever.”



Although her uncle was recruited to the U.S. by 3M to work in advanced electrical engineering, Amy's parents arrived as part of a growing number of non-student skilled professionals and others immigrating in the 1980s, facilitated by loosened emigration restrictions in Taiwan, increasingly affordable international travel, and support networks created by relatives already living in the U.S. Amy, like many of my informants, described receiving strong advice from parents and grandparents to avoid all political activities, sage counsel from elders who were raised under an authoritarian regime. In the case of Amy's immediate family, who work in a local food manufacturing plant, the focus was also on practical concerns such as learning English and keeping employment. Amy describes her family members' ambivalence toward Taiwan after immigration in these terms:

I would have to say that my parents, and my aunt and uncle – they came here and the wanted to forget. Not forget, but just not deal with Taiwan. Some people come here and they want to preserve what they had. My family wanted to come here and move on. I don't know the details, but I don't think they came here just because they had the opportunity. I think they came here because they wanted to escape. They wanted to get away. But I don't know the details – I know there are things they haven't told me about. My parents wanted to escape. My mom is happy here – doesn't want to go back. After my grandmother passed away, there was nothing for her there.

When Amy was first involved in the puppet troupe she spoke English most of the time. Her younger sister, who was born in the U.S., has better Holo skills because she went to Taiwan and lived with her grandmother when she was younger, though she is not as comfortable with Mandarin as Amy. The puppet troupe was Amy's first exposure to Taiwanese culture, and the idea of promoting Taiwan through puppet performance was appealing. "I was definitely able to experience more than puppetry . . . Just being around

[other *liuxuesheng*], at the extra events, and being able to talk to them – especially Li-lin and Hiro.” Hiro would ask her opinion on China-Taiwan relations, something Amy had never been encouraged to consider before. It would be her year in Taiwan, however, that would cause her to consider the more general questions of cultural identity.

It was odd because it took me going across the ocean to realize just how American I am, and to realize that, even though my family was Taiwan, I still didn’t know a lot about the culture.

Basically, it has been a quest to figure out where I belong between American and Taiwan, my identity, where I want to fit. And I went there thinking, ‘maybe this is a place I can identify with.’ Once I was there I was feeling like I was still kind of different, that I can’t completely assimilate into this culture, because there were some things I couldn’t quite fit with.

Q. Did those experiences in Taiwan change your idea about what you wanted to do with your major?

It did, and I didn’t realize it except in an unconscious way. When I got back from Taiwan... You know that drive and motivation, before, I was like, on the Chinese track, studying it, and hopefully working with it academically. I came back and that changed. I felt like – I am still trying to figure it out. I feel like maybe what I wanted out of studying Chinese has been fulfilled, and I want to move on to something else.

I want to say that what happened after Taiwan – it isn’t that it isn’t important to me, but learning about Taiwan is not a priority as it was before. I was really into it, and I wanted to learn as much as I could, and now it is like I can do other things – still figuring it out, but not such a big deal. So puppet troupe, it is sort of like a way to get to know other people from Taiwan, but it isn’t exactly the means for me to learn about Taiwan anymore.

Richard’s parents, like Amy’s, emigrated to the U.S. from Taiwan in 1982. But unlike Amy’s blue-collar background, Richard’s father was employed by Lucent Technologies as an electrical engineer. Further differentiating the two puppeteers, whereas Amy grew up as one of only a few Asians in her high school, Richard was raised in the Chicago suburbs around Lucent headquarters, surrounded by the children of other

Lucent employees from Taiwan. Like Gabriel and Julie, Richard would return to Taiwan with his parents periodically, in Richard's case, once every two years, usually for the summer. Like many second generation Taiwanese Americans visiting Taiwan, his strongest impressions are of problems with traffic, sanitation, bad food and pollution. Some of his friends were "parachute kids," children of Taiwanese parents who spend much or most of their time in Taiwan and elsewhere, or in constant travel, whom Ong (1999) calls "astronauts," referring to hyper-mobile residents of Hong Kong. In the case of one friend, "his parents basically dropped him off in the Chicago area, enrolled him in an academy, a boarding school, and that was his high school career. He enjoyed it there. He is in the typical suburbs, so there isn't much trouble he can get in."

Richard's parents speak Holo as their first language, but used Mandarin around the house throughout his childhood, ensuring that Mandarin was Richard's first language; he learned English in pre-school and has no discernable accent. His parents decided on Mandarin over Holo because it was the more widely spoken of the two. Rather than language, what first drew Richard's attention to the issue of Taiwan's identity came in the context of a Chinese classmate's derision:

Back in High school, I remember this kid. His parents were from the Mainland. Unless you were really academically outstanding, he kind of looked down on Taiwanese people. Snobby looks, blow you off, give you a hard time here and there. I just ignored him. That was the first time that I realized I was Taiwanese in that sense, in terms of Chinese.

It is strange because people in Chicago know about Taiwan, but people here in Madison think well, isn't Taiwan a part of China? It is just a little island, right? It bothers me. It is a big international issue.

I tell people I am Taiwanese American. ABT, for fun. Unless if a Chinese person asks me, I don't want to stir up any political issues so I just tell them, 'I am Chinese. My parents are from Taiwan.' I don't want to tick anyone off with the

whole Taiwan/China thing, so I say my parents are from Taiwan; I was born here and raised here all my life.

Although members of the puppet troupe had a wide range of language skills, none suggested that it was a problem. Amy's older sister Suzy, also active in the troupe, speaks very little Mandarin and no Holo. Gabriel distinguished between the differing language expectations of the TSA and puppet troupe,

Suzy is Taiwanese American, so she doesn't feel so comfortable in the TSA with all the Taiwanese. In the puppet troupe there are people who can speak very good English. The puppeteers are really friendly too, so she stays in that group.

Conversations moved between the three languages, one more often than the others depending on who was present. Although the students in the troupe did not find it problematic, the students' language competencies were scrutinized by elder student-immigrants, who expressed concern that the younger generations are losing access to authentic Taiwanese culture as their language skills decline, even while participating in the puppet troupe. In a more general sense, English-language Taiwanese student puppetry is viewed and experienced as a political act, and among others a politically neutral distraction; able to be represented as authentic Taiwanese culture, or be devalued as a spurious art form, a caricature of a national treasure.

Fluency in Mandarin may play a key part in a future in international business for Richard. His formal language training began in kindergarten, attending Mandarin language school on Saturday mornings. Immigrant parents from Taiwan would volunteer to teach the kids reading and writing, together with a few Cantonese speakers, bi-racial and adopted children. His mother spent additional time after school during the week tutoring him in reading and writing. He sees his language skills as one of his greatest accomplishments, considering he was born in the U.S. According to Richard, this was

one of the primary motivations for being involved with the TSA, and for avoiding Asian-American student groups. With the TSA he can learn about Taiwanese traditional art forms and maintain his Mandarin at the same time. “If I am speaking English, I’d rather be playing basketball. If we can speak Chinese, I’ll play with puppets. With the cultural part, and the language, I kill two birds with one stone.”

Born in Taiwan, Julie moved to South Africa when she was five years old, and came to the US for high school. Now, as a freshman at UW, Madison, she would fall into the 1.5 generation of Taiwanese, Taiwanese who come to the U.S. before college after spending childhood in Taiwan. She came to the U.S. five years younger than Gabriel; who would be called “FOB” (fresh off the boat.) However, her relationship to Taiwan was limited to spending intermittent periods of time – typically several weeks in the summer to see grandparents – in Taiwan in her youth. She uses the terms ABC to describe the Taiwanese who were born in the U.S., and says that she doesn’t mind being called (and sometimes refers to herself as) Chinese, depending on the context. In the interview she spoke of herself and others in the puppet troupe using the terms Chinese and Taiwanese interchangeable, and made the comparison between real “Taiwanese” and Native Americans. She became involved in the puppet troupe to access “typical” Taiwanese cultural practices of others in her generation who grew up in Taiwan:

It looked fun. I saw it when I was a little kid, in Taiwan, and here – it just looks like it could be something to do that isn’t school. It is like a club in Taiwan – in school, you are supposed to join lots of clubs and be really active. Well, I didn’t get to do that, so this is a chance for me to do that.

She does not feel the need to make a distinct difference between cultures of Taiwan and China. She also pointed out that she was a business law major and wants to

have the opportunity to work in China. One of the factors for her to consider is the limits placed on her career by her inability to speak Taiwanese. Rather than politics, her main interest in Taiwan is based on consumption and popular culture, and seeing her family. She said of her most recent trip to Taiwan over winter break, she said that “it is a lot of fun – so much to do. Like KTV. Over here, the mall closes at nine o’clock. In Taiwan it is all night. So much to do – everything is open. Night markets, shopping, Karaoke, just a great place!” Malkii (1997) notes that in discussions of borders and interstitial zones, it is important to be aware that what is not always bodies in motion, but rather a “‘cultural displacement’ of people, things, and cultural products” (53). On this most recent trip, visiting Taiwan was more akin to a shopping vacation than a “search for roots.”

All of Julie’s friends are Asian, and many of them are, in her words, ABCs like herself. She emphasized to me that she has a few friends from Beijing. Julie said that she would probably marry an Asian person because in terms of “Asian American culture,” they “just get it.” Julie’s closest friends are people she knows from her time in South Africa who now live in countries around the world. Her roommate like Fox TV while she watches MTV’s Real World on her computer as uses real-time Internet messaging to keep up with her friends.<sup>16</sup>

Whereas Gabriel, who came to the U.S. for college from Singapore when he was twenty-two, self-consciously developed a strong sense of Taiwan’s identity in his first years in Madison, Julie had ambivalent feelings about the identity question, and does not

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<sup>16</sup> She mentioned IM as her platform, which stands instant messaging, originally a trademark of Microsoft. At the time of this writing (August 2009), most real-time Internet-based communications take place on Facebook, Twitter, text mail, and others, supported on a wide range of platforms.

make strong distinctions between Taiwanese and Chinese culture. Nor is she personally invested in taking action to further particular political goals for Taiwan. Julie, for her part, finds the pre-performance presentation about Taiwan unnecessary and a distraction from the puppetry. She enjoys the company the puppet troupe offers, but is skeptical of its broader political significance and indifferent to the political agenda that the troupe was supposedly contributing to.

She sees the TSA as very pro-DPP, and politically active, her family is for James Soong and she has no interest in politics. In fact, she sees the independence movement (and the activists) as radical and dangerous. She doesn't understand why people would fly back to vote since "their lives are here, and their vote doesn't matter anyway, and it is so expensive to return!" When she was raised in South Africa, she didn't feel Taiwanese, only South African. She would expect that if you are born in the U.S., you should just feel American. She is impressed with Amy – a "real Taiwanese American" – because she is active in the TSA and went to Taiwan to "find her roots."

By one measure, she belongs to what has been described as the one-point-five generation: Traveling to Taiwan for brief visits, or a summer, during childhood was a common experience reflecting transnational patterns of return among second-generation immigrants. This is also the case of Gabriel, who was raised in Singapore. In her demographic research model, Lien (2005) distinguished between ABCs and FOBs based on place of socialization. Compared to the Chinese Americans whose families may have been in the U.S. for three or more generations, most U.S.-born Taiwanese Americans are second-generation immigrants, some with school-age children. Many of the students' cultural tours' writings described having visited Taiwan during childhood, and

remembering only that it was loud and dirty. Some remember grandparents speaking a foreign language, while others picked up a little Holo ability over the summer. These individuals do not fit neatly into categorical schemes. While the 1.5 demographic applies from the perspective of Julie's arrival in the U.S., her route was more circuitous, mediated by her experiences in a third nation-state, South Africa.

Hiro refers to his own mixed heritage, a Japanese father and Taiwanese mother, to illustrate the constructed nature of identity. "I could pass for Japanese. In fact, some people will not allow me to be otherwise. Sure, I am half Japanese, but I grew up in Taiwan and all of my memories are from Taiwan, and I claim Taiwanese culture as my own." He emphasizes that it should not be important what kind of identity other people impose on a person, but rather how that person self-identifies. He finds racial essentialism and narrow cultural definitions of Taiwanese "authenticity" problematic, and illustrated his by relating an experience with a Taiwanese octogenarian raised in the Japanese education system. He told Hiro that because his father, rather than his mother, was Japanese, Hiro is racially Japanese according to Japanese custom, but in Taiwan, he would be known as Taiwanese because of his mother. Hiro believed that drawing racial categories based on arbitrary inheritance laws and blood-lines was meaningless. Upon first glance, he is commonly identified by others as Japanese, but he has developed strong affective ties to Taiwan, not Japan, and chooses to call himself Taiwanese:

Just look at Gabe. Here he is, the president of the TSA, a puppeteer, and he would be on the curling team if he had the time. Even though his parents are Taiwanese, because he was born and raised in Singapore, he didn't know too much about Taiwanese culture before he came to college. He can't speak Holo, and his Mandarin sounds like a mainlander. But he loves Taiwan! How can anyone say to him that he is not a real Taiwanese? If this is the identity he wants to develop, he should be encouraged, not discouraged. You are going to close off Taiwan from Taiwanese Americans if you go that way.



Hiro's personal reflections and observations of Gabe are representative of one perspective of identity and relationship to Taiwan, based on personal affective ties and cultural familiarity that can be learned and cultivated. These ties are based on effective communication of narratives of collective memory and history, meanings of culture-specific symbol systems, icons of identity that produce what Anderson (1983) has called an "imagined community," a sense of connectedness between heterogeneous populations not likely to ever meet in person, yet nevertheless believing themselves to share in common cultural values, traditions, loyalties and responsibilities to the "community," whether envisioned as a nation-state – the national identity – or a community of common heritage and future, a conceptualization of Taiwan that is wholly contained by the discourses of the Taiwanese nation-state. Gabriel, ten years Hiro's junior, was another degree removed from Taiwan; although Hiro has a rich living memory of Taiwan underpinning his conceptualization of Taiwan, Gabriel has developed an appreciation of Taiwan based on brief visits and encounters with Taiwanese activists in the U.S. Hiro describes the issue in these terms:

Whether [the elder activists in the Madison community] want to admit it or not, the future of Taiwan depends on the passion of Taiwanese in the U.S. This is what we are trying to do with our puppetry and curling. We want to let Taiwanese here feel good about being Taiwanese, and show the public what Taiwan is all about, and impress the idea on students, the public, and the global village that Taiwan is not China. Taiwan is our motherland.

Though cultural experts have criticized Alan Chen for promoting English-language "karaoke-style" puppetry as an authentic expression of Taiwanese, Hiro takes the position that, like it or not, these are effective strategies to further the goals of Taiwanese self-determination. For Hiro, cultivating an affective bond with Taiwan-as-

homeland is enough, but others' conceptualizations of Taiwan establish narrower definitions of who may or may not identify themselves as Taiwanese, defined not by blood, but rather through the cultivation of specific markers of identity. "I know these hard-core types," referring to some of the elder members of the Taiwanese community in Madison, "who say I can't be 'true' Taiwanese because I don't speak Holo. Well that kind of attitude is turning off the younger generations, cutting them off from exploring their roots."

Freed from the constraints of Taiwan's national identity, figures such as "roots" and "homeland" are flexible, compelling metaphors touching on desires for stability, permanence, historical depth and sense of collective belonging in an increasingly unstable and alienating world. Gupta and Ferguson observe that "as places and localities become ever more blurred and indeterminate, ideas of culturally and ethnically distinct places become perhaps even more salient" (1997c:39). For some students, Taiwanese puppetry was an avenue for self exploration, for seeking a cultural heritage they felt to be lacking in their lives. Others were participating in the troupe for personal enjoyment, and were ambivalent about political agendas, discourses of cultural authenticity and the sharp distinctions some puppeteers make between Taiwanese and Chinese cultural forms. Gabriel, while supporting the Taiwanese public relations campaign strategy in the U.S., concedes that they may have very little impact, but despite a weak sense of efficacy in the short-term, he fully embraced the approach to cultural performance in general, and puppetry in particular. Like Alan, Gabriel saw the future of Taiwan linked to the salience of Taiwan's identity among future Taiwanese stake-holders, both in Taiwan and in the

U.S., given that an increasing percentage of students from Taiwan in higher education in the U.S. are returning to Taiwan for employment.

A second perspective Gabriel expressed, also a key component to early mobilization strategies, was an acknowledgement that the future of Taiwan was to a great extent determined by U.S. foreign policy, which is to some extent shaped by public opinion and media relations. Creating an awareness and appreciation in the minds of non-Taiwanese in the U.S. of Taiwan's national identity could also be critical in future political contingencies. With these ends in mind, Gabriel presents a seemingly politically neutral program whose goals are to educate Americans about Taiwan, and get *liuxuesheng* and second-generation Taiwanese Americans interested in Taiwanese culture:

How many people can we reach? How many will remember? We don't know, but we are doing something. What if, fifty years down the road, Taiwan has become a part of China, and the real Taiwan is lost, you will have to look at your life and say I did nothing to help Taiwan, to teach people about what is special about Taiwan, and so I never tried to make a difference. This is the way we are trying, at this point in our lives.

It is most important to try, even though you are not too sure what it will lead to. If we can get students interested in Taiwan, then after they return, maybe they will continue to look for ways to help Taiwan, could they join a political party and do grassroots, become politicians? I don't know, but the first step is to get people interested.

Taiwan's identity is not created in the practice of Taiwanese puppetry as an isolated act, but rather it is given its political and cultural significances through discourse that occur through participation in the puppet troupe. The development of Taiwanese national identity – a Taiwanese subjectivity inflected with the will to realize a Taiwanese nation-state – is, for Gabriel, Hiro and Alan a circuitous process that takes place in

everyday life in and around participation in the puppet troupe. Gabriel described the process in these terms:

The puppet troupe brings people together. It doesn't really change your idea about doing something about Taiwan. It just brings people together to do something fun – for people to have fun. After you bring people together, the sharing of ideas, teaching the younger generations of people about Taiwan can take place. For puppeteers, you have to be interested in Taiwanese culture to learn more about it. If you want, you could just perform and not bother with the deeper tradition behind it. But when people get together, it just happens, it is what we end up talking about, and learning about – just because we are doing it.

Cleo [second generation Taiwanese American got involved in the puppet troupe first, and then learn more about what our TSA does, and want to learn more about Taiwanese issues, so they join the TSA. It is the puppet troupe where you can recruit more members into the TSA. People do that for fun, then, if it seems like they want to do more for Taiwan, they can come join the TSA. I can also refer to FAPA, or [Taiwanese Collegian]. This is one of the things the puppet troupe is trying to do.

They might continue to be involved, or at least vote for better candidates, or presidents. Before I was involved in this I never really listened to what the candidates had to say, or what the issues under discussion were about. After I got to know more about the issues, and as I got older, I pay a lot more attention. I don't think all Taiwanese are doing that, and I think it is important for them to care about these things – what the candidates are saying, and vote for a good president. So as far as the puppet troupe, and this TSA, it isn't important that they go into politics, or run for office, something that is direct like that, but they will know more and make better decisions for Taiwan, and they will teach their children more about Taiwan, and help them learn to love their country. I think this is good enough.

The ultimate political horizon of the puppet troupe, as conceived by Gabriel and more senior activists, is two-fold: first, to develop an affective bond with Taiwan among the puppeteers, Taiwan defined as the location of their roots. Second, to raise public awareness of a non-Chinese identity of Taiwan. It is not a rejection of all things Chinese, but rather an effort to emphasize the distinction between the places: “we exist.”

As an example, I asked Amy about her participation in the troupe as to whether or not there was a “big picture” aspect:

Yeah, I was definitely able to experience more than puppetry. Just being around them – and extra events, and being able to talk to them – especially Li-lin and Hiro – talking to them. Hiro would ask me about china-Taiwan relations, and my opinion about it. I had never really thought about it before. And in their conversations I would overhear, I would feel dumb because I didn't really know that much. But you learn a lot from interactions and hanging out with other kids.

Li-lin, Gabriel and Hiro mediate the sometimes strained relationships between senior generation Formosan and cultural nationalists, and a younger generation characterized by heterogeneity of experiences and relations with Taiwan. They navigate the inter-generational waters, by, for example, Hiro apologizing to Uncle Chang on behalf of a senior chemistry major for making a “Chinese New Year” flier. They have been able to spark discussion and interest in Taiwanese puppetry, and learning about Taiwan, the circumstances for intra-generational transmission of knowledge. The institutional framework within which these interactions take place is an official student group and a major research institution.

#### **D. Discussion: Multicultural Taiwan across Generations**

Chapter One described the circumstances leading to contrasting student associations on university campuses in the U.S. beginning in the 1950s, and the origin of an identity of Taiwan as Formosa, a nation based on a history of anti-colonial struggle. Formosan identity articulated and institutionalized through a series of organizations and publications, was grounded in discourses of democracy, human rights, self-determination, and other Western tropes commonly deployed to legitimize nation-states. This extraterritorial objective involved redefining space to include, or more precisely to be constituted by, social relations beyond the bounds of the “homeland.” As Massey (1994) points out, asserting that all social relations have a spatial form in their realization, means

that places must be looked at in terms of their wider social context. It is not enough to view changes in an area as having a wider context (global capital, national policy, local problems,) but "it is also that the very formation of the identity of a place - its social structure, its political character, its 'local' culture - is also a product of interactions. The 'character of an area' is no more the product of an internalized history than are the recent fortunes of its manufacturing industry. The global is in the local in the very process of the formulation of the local" (120).

Nationalist government agents attempted to extend their authoritarian rule over Taiwan into Chinatowns and onto campuses in the U.S., creating an environment where *liuxuesheng* were exposed to radically divergent conceptualizations of Taiwan's identity, institutionalized by competing student associations. The campus of the University of Wisconsin, Madison, the focus of Chapter Two, was a hotbed for the development of Formosan nationalism, with several key organizations being founded by overseas student and early immigrants from Taiwan, many of whom continue to live in the area. At the time of this dissertation fieldwork, the campus continued to host two student associations – each carrying the legacy of dichotomous conceptualizations of Taiwan's identity, through primarily mediated through senior generations of immigrants from Taiwan living in the community.

The Taiwanese puppet troupe when viewed from the perspective of the founder represents a project to instill a sense of Taiwanese cultural authenticity among younger generations, differing from Formosan identity as it emphasizes Taiwanese local tradition as the foundation to Taiwan's identity as a nation-state. *Cultural nationalism* requires creating a recognizable and easily communicated set of markers drawn from local

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traditions, and to distinguish *cultural Taiwan* from Chinese culture. The puppeteers, however, negotiate the meaning of Taiwanese puppetry based on their own experiences as *liuxuesheng*, one-point-fives and Taiwanese Americans. Most viewed puppetry as a recreational activity, an access point to Taiwanese tradition without the political overtones of cultural nationalism woven into the scripts and presentation. Other contexts more immediate than Taiwanese sovereignty issues influence their interpretations of Taiwanese culture. While senior generations of Formosan internationalists and cultural nationalists were focused on political objectives in Taiwan, students in younger generations were facing other pressures and expectations related to their relationship with “mainstream society.” For those born in the U.S. particularly, Taiwanese Americans are put in a position to represent a culture they may know little about.

Andrea Louie’s (2000,2003,2004b) work with Chinese American youth is instructive in understanding the context of being a racialized minority, where the students are “on the one hand seen as perpetual foreigners or as too ‘Asian,’ and on the other hand as not Asian enough in a U.S. society that celebrates symbolic diversity and parades ethnicity. Thus, they feel compelled to demonstrate Chinese cultural competence and cultural authenticity, even in asserting their ‘Americanness’” (25). In this case study, cultural experts like Alan Chen provide the materials and skills to meet the expectations of other students, the public at large, the university, and the state. Taiwanese cultural nationalist may, if they choose, help younger generations construct *multicultural Taiwan*. While cultural nationalists imagine Taiwan as a self-evident land with a culture than emerges from the native soil, a timeless tradition, the challenge of representing



multicultural Taiwan lies primarily with distinguishing Taiwan from China at campus international fairs and other public events.

The Fighting Yams, however, draw on all conceptualizations. They operate in the international community to highlight the control the PRC exerts over Taiwan, something which might be perceived as incongruous with the theme of the Olympic Movement. In this regard, the Fighting Yams are reminiscent of the Formosan identity of Taiwan, an outward-looking conceptualization seeking international recognition based on Western discourses of self-determination, human rights, and democracy. On the other hand, the Fighting Yams and puppet troupe are contexts in which Li-lin and Hiro can discuss a wide range of aspects of topics related to Taiwan, including folk culture, Holo language, biographical experiences from their youth, and contemporary politics. Finally, they help the puppet troupe by hosting meetings and rehearsals, and storing equipment in their home. In this regard, they are participating in the reproduction of multicultural Taiwan.

In the next chapter, a broad outline of events shaping the political views of multiple generations of overseas students will be presented. Chapter One focused on the powerful impact of the February 28<sup>th</sup> Incident in shaping the conceptualization of Taiwan as Formosa among the most senior generation in this study. This discussion will be continued in Chapter Three, which will deal with similarly powerful events shaping overseas students' conceptualizations of Taiwan's identity, including the ongoing impact through student association website – the focus of Chapter Four – and the ways in which second-generation Taiwanese Americans negotiate conceptualizations of Taiwan's identity presented by elder generations, the topic of Chapter Five.



## **CHAPTER THREE: LIUXUESHENG HISTORIC GENERATIONS**

### **I. Analytical Framework**

#### **A. Memory, History and Generations**

Intergenerational dynamics among the overseas student immigrant community in Madison such as those described in Chapter Two occurred as local manifestations of broad historical processes and trends that shaped overseas students' conceptualizations of Taiwan contemporaneously on campuses across the U.S. Multicultural community and campus festivals, commemorations of the February 28<sup>th</sup> Incident, pot-luck dinners, Taiwanese puppetry performance, lunar new year celebrations, and "night markets", are common features on student association multicultural calendars, a topic this dissertation revisits in Chapter Five. And, as with Madison, such events often involve negotiations between the conflicting goals of Formosans, cultural nationalists, and the students, whose time is further taxed by family obligations, schoolwork, and participation in other groups, including Asian American Pacific Islander associations, Chinese diaspora groups (which include Chinese from Hong Kong, Singapore, the PRC and elsewhere.) Multicultural events are seen by senior generations as points of intervention, opportunities to shape the way younger generations think about Taiwan and things Taiwanese. When events of "historical significance" to Taiwan have taken place, the intra- and inter-generational relationships established through student association activities have been key locations of collective memory formation. In this chapter I will focus on the ways in which collective experiences of (re)memorable events shape conceptualizations of Taiwan within specific age cohorts or historic generations.

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The analytical strategy being developed is grounded in the concepts of historic generations, age spans defined by a collective consciousness or identity shaped by commonly experienced and memorable events, often of a dramatic and traumatic nature (Mannheim 1952). Event-specific generations are not evenly spaced across time, but rather follow the contours of living memory. Further, research testing tested Mannheim's theories (Schuman and Scott 1989, Lang et al. 1993) show that the years of adolescence and early adulthood are the most influential time for the formation of political identities. To further nuance this research, I highlight that a historic generation is not a homogeneous subject position; instead, there are discernable patterns of widely experienced differences, often yielding directly opposing interpretations and reactions to specific events within given age cohorts. There are a wide range of conceptualizations of Taiwan's identity. Such heterogeneity is possible because generations do not experience history, individuals do. Individuals personally experience history as a generation, but we witness and encounter representations of historical events in highly localized settings where intersubjective remembering – mnemonic socialization – takes place. Moving from a macro-level analysis of historic generations to a micro-level analysis of how generation-specific subjectivities are actually formed to more localized moments of remembering and interpreting, such as face-to-face encounters between witnesses and audiences at student association events, individuals reading historical texts, the screening of historical films, and other ways in which individuals encounter the past.

Maurice Halbwachs is credited with the first scholarly attempt to understand “collective memory,” and identified “memory groups” – face-to-face social segments that in some way collectively remember – to nuance to the work of his mentor Émile

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Durkheim, whose works he felt focused on overly broad demographic categories without addressing everyday life experiences between moments of collective effervescence (Coser 1992). In his approach to collective memory, Halbwachs proposed that “social classes, families, associations, corporations, armies, and trade unions all have distinctive memories that their members have constructed, often over long periods of time” (Coser 1992:22). This dissertation research focused on the development of extraterritorial conceptualizations of Taiwan’s identity by taking student associations as the primary memory group.

Student associations are well-suited for explorations of cultural memory formation because, following Halbwachs’ formulation, they are a context that provided a continuity of inter- and intra-generation interaction due to overlapping cohorts and continuous interaction with co-ethnics on faculty and in the community, as well as contact with organizations whose missions involve working directly with student groups to encourage students to be interested in things Taiwanese. Student associations have broad participation among overseas students during a time in their lives when political identities are being formed. It is in the context of student association that *liuxuesheng* might gather to discuss events of historical significance to the “homeland,” which would include, in this case, watershed elections, natural disasters, internationally publicized internal political unrest, and precipitous regional instability. Further, in the case of Taiwan, the question of national identity was often a consideration in the decision of which (if any) student association to be most active in. Given this formulation of the process by which historic generations are formed, in the case of Taiwan, which widely experienced events have informed historic generations of *liuxuesheng*?

## **B. Index Events**

Chapter One and Two developed an understanding of the dual nature of historicity, that individuals are buffeted by the course of life events, threads in a broad historical tapestry, and at the same time they play an active role in shaping the interpretation of events, including forging collective memories from disparate biographical experiences among the memory groups of everyday life in specific local contexts. This active role is then forgotten, in order to experience the past as self-evident. It is this aspect of the construction of collective memory that exposes seemingly objective history as fragmented, transient, and to some degree contingent upon the needs of the present. According to this model, analytically useful generational descriptions of immigration from Taiwan should be possible by focusing on specific moments in time that have influenced the subjectivities of individuals in the same age cohort, revealing varying, often conflicting interpretations of the same moment in time. This plurality of possible interpretations reveals the impossibility of describing an “event” in the singular form. Further, moments of collective memory shape not only on the participants’ generation, but may also continue to impact subsequent generations in discernable ways as vicarious memories (Climo 2002). This creates a point of reference for cross-generational analysis, a stable location like an echo in history being re-interpreted with each successive generation. Identifying such events allow for an indexing of the past. *Index events*, then, are remembered moments in history whose impacts reach across generations. In the case of this research, the emergence of new conceptualizations of Taiwan may be linked to specific key events, whether experienced first-hand, or vicariously.



The index event – mediated now through moments of narration, performance and contextualization – is interpreted by each generation in distinct ways, a layering of collective memories shaped in part by the differences in the previous generations' experiences. The complexity of historic generations reflects both the specific circumstances of event itself, as well as pre-existing intra- and inter-generational social divisions which render some narratives of the past more salient than others for differing groups. In this sense, there are as many index events as there are memory groups, some of which are highly localized in effect, while others are widely experienced but in very different ways by different segments of the population. This heterogeneity and flexibility to become differentially meaningful extends over time. Meanings of index events change in salience and interpretation among groups with autobiographical memories of the event, as well as subsequent generations who experience the event as a vicarious memory, counter-history or official national History. In the next segment a series of events will be discussed that meet the general model constructed by combining Mannheim's notion of historic generations (1952), research identifying youth and young adulthood as critical times of political subjectivity formation (Schuman and Scott 1989; Lang et al. 1993), and Halbwach's concept of memory groups as presented by Coser (1992).

## **II. Historic Generations**

### **A. Japanese Era**

As an index event, the regime change from Japanese colonial administration to the Nationalist government's rule are often combined with the February 28<sup>th</sup> Incident in 1947, an event generally credited as the origin of a distinctly "Taiwanese" national

identity and collective memory. The event itself, however, is a point of narrative condensation used to reference a more general social dynamic at the time. In Chapter One, Andrew Chang described the nostalgia many people felt toward the Japanese colonial regime after the Nationalists took over. Wu Ming-chi, the sixth president of the Formosa Club in Madison and long-time member of WUFI, described the generational shift in terms of cultural differences based on the way people were socialized:

Of course under the 50 years' colonial rule by the Japanese you can argue that the Japanese shaped them into a certain kind of culture. But right after the Second World War, after the Chinese army occupied Taiwan, you can see that there was a distinct culture clash. It is very different the way Taiwanese were back then than now. Because of the 50 years' education by the Chinese it has changed a little bit, well, not a little bit, changed totally back to Chinese way of thinking.. But still I will say that the Japanese influence is still there, for people who are over middle age. . . .

Q. What is the difference between Taiwanese under Japan, and the Chinese?

A. Discipline. They are law-abiding people, and the Chinese are lawless [laughs]. On paper, they will have all the good rules . . . but in practice e, it is totally different. Let me give you one example. There are quite a few anti-Japanese scholars, particularly the writers. They were there during the Japanese occupation, and the Japanese follow the rules. If you want to picket, fine. But if you were picketing without a license, you would be in jail for 30 years. But the Chinese government are lawless. Even though the law says 30 years, it could be that you just disappear. . . . that's really the cultural difference. Unfortunately, all those cultural things from Japan are all almost disappeared now.

As noted in Chapter One, the generation influenced by Japanese education and regime change to Nationalist government rule was joined in the U.S. by students coming for graduate study beginning in the mid 1950s, and steadily increasing throughout the 1970s and 1980s. The younger generations of *liuxuesheng* were raised with a thoroughly Sinocentric education. Wu Ming-chi noted that the “DPP is KMT-educated, so a lot of their thinking process is very similar. Even if their ideology is different. That makes

them very different from the mentality of the WUFI in the U.S.” Like many in his generation, he views the younger generation’s interest in maintaining the *status quo* for Taiwan with skepticism. He notes that they are primarily interested in conducting business in China, and thus prefer to stay flexible regarding their identity, and the way they represent Taiwan to others:

This is the reason most people prefer status quo. But that cannot stand one day, it is going to be either/or – you cannot have the *status quo* forever. What do you want to choose? You have to choose. Sure, if you want to keep the status quo, but this is not forever. Sooner or later you have to make a decision whether you want to be Chinese or Taiwanese.

For Wu’s generation of activists, such ambiguity would lead to Taiwan’s demise. Although they felt very strongly about the issue of sovereignty, their resources were limited. Through the end of the 1960s most student activism in the U.S. was limited to small-scale events, short-lived local publications, low-profile university study groups, low-budget poster and letter-writing campaigns, and clandestine regional network-building. During this time, the first generation of liuxuesheng activists were recruiting younger in-coming students to become involved. The younger overseas students had no direct experiences with the Japanese era, but were influenced nonetheless through mnemonic socialization among their elder cohorts on campus. James Lu, for example, came to the U.S. in 1967. He recalls that “it was the white terror era when Chiang Kai-shek was exerting an extremely tight control over Taiwan. Everybody was very much aware that each individual was under close surveillance by the KMT spies.” His first encounter with “TI elements” came almost immediately after he arrived. He was invited to stay overnight with a couple from Taiwan:

That night, a few of their friends gathered for supper. Their conversation made me feel uneasy because much of it centered around criticizing the KMT government. They did not tell me directly how I should view the political situation in Taiwan. But during the long bus ride to Missouri, I started to wonder why that group of young Taiwanese would risk their freedom and life to talk about something that did not appear to have any direct bearing on their daily life.

After he arrived on campus, he was met by a few other students from Taiwan who invited him to dinner most evenings, and helped him build a social support network.

“The topics in the gatherings all centered around the oppression and corruption by Chiang Kai-Shek’s KMT regime,” he recalled. “I gradually realized that politics was not unrelated to my personal life. After all, if it did not have anything to do with me, why was I feeling so scared when I was only listening to those students’ hot debates?” One of his friends gave him a copy of *Formosagram*, an early Taiwanese independence newsletter. He was touched by the articles, but was also fearful enough to hide the magazine when strangers were in the apartment. Having personally only experienced the White Terror, he was inheriting the independence mission from the historic his senior by less than a decade, those who could recall the transition from Japanese rule to the Nationalist regime:

Several of us new students finally overcame the fear and started to believe that if each of us was willing to do something for our motherland and to continue to spread the TI message, there would be always hope for Taiwan. We accepted the mission handed over by our predecessors when they graduated and followed their model of preaching TI. We took care of new students. We initiated many social gatherings in which we talked about the KMT regime’s harm on Taiwan’s well-being and future as well as the desirability of an independent Taiwan.

The decade of the 1970s, when James Lu would become a key activist in the Midwest, was characterized by much more wide-spread and public dissent – both in the U.S. and Taiwan – organized by an increasing number of student-immigrant supporters

using both durable and transient trans-local networks for information sharing and collective action. This new density and intensity of opposition networking was punctuated by the Diaoyutai movement of 1971-1972,<sup>17</sup> which marked the beginning of a period of growing public unrest in Taiwan, culminating with the Chengli incident in 1977, and the Kaohsiung Incident of 1979.<sup>18</sup> After decades of near silence in the public sphere, the February 28<sup>th</sup> Incident was increasingly referenced by the opposition as well as the Nationalist government, in the former case as an opportunity to organize commemoration-protests, and in the latter as an opportunity to evoke fear in the population, such as the Lin family murders on February 28<sup>th</sup>, 1980, described in greater detail below, and again in Chapter Five in the context of second generation Taiwanese American collective memory.

#### **B. *Bao-diao* and the Collapse of Legitimacy (1971-1972)**

The *Bao-diao* movement was a response to a failure by Nationalist government to secure territorial sovereignty of a disputed region. By yielding in the face of challenges by the U.S. and China, the Nationalist government caused a widespread and complex backlash. The U.S. State Department announced on April 9, 1971, that President Nixon and Japanese Prime Minister Sato Eisaku had signed an agreement to return the uninhabited Pacific island chain known as Diaoyutai from U.S. protection to Japan, along with Okinawa and other islands, in 1972. Japan's claim to the archipelago was contested by both the ROC and PRC, and the discovery in 1969 of significant oil deposits in the region heightened the importance of what was already a matter of national pride to all

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<sup>17</sup> The Diaoyutai movement was also referred to as the *baodiao yundong*, or “protect the Diaoyutai Islands movement”.

<sup>18</sup> The Kaohsiung protest is alternatively named the Formosa Incident in English and the Meilidao Incident (*meilitao shijian*) in Mandarin.

three states. Unwilling to jeopardize its relationship with the U.S., the Nationalist government did not strongly challenge the decision; their moderate display of discontent was seen by many overseas students as inadequate, particularly when compared to the vociferous reaction of the PRC. The more demonstrable display of Chinese nationalism on the mainland robbed the Nationalist government of respect and legitimacy among both *benshengren* and *waishengren* in Taiwan as well as the U.S. This disquiet was compounded by China's ascendance in the international community as the UN recognized the PRC as the legitimate government of China in 1971, and President Nixon made his high-profile visit in 1972.

The public discussion began in the summer of 1970 when Japan issued a formal declaration of sovereignty, and President Nixon affirmed the claim. In response, students from Taiwan met in Madison and Princeton to collect funds and plan protests. In these discussions, they made comparisons to the May 4<sup>th</sup> Movement, and framed their actions as anti-colonial resistance (Chang 2003:149). The growing *Bao-diao* movement was based in the U.S. as information about the sovereignty question was limited by the KMT-controlled press in Taiwan. In April 1971, the formal U.S. State Department proclamation sparked a mass movement in the U.S., and, encouraged by overseas Taiwanese, demonstrations began to erupt among students in Taiwan. These protests were the first major public demonstration since the February 28<sup>th</sup> Incident, and indicated the beginning of a shift in Taiwanese activism from the U.S. to Taiwan.

The political orientation of the protests was complex and multi-directional. To a great extent, the early demonstrations were expressions of Chinese nationalism, with anti-Japanese, anti-American, and anti-colonial overtones. There were some students who

turned their allegiance toward the PRC government in China, primarily the children of *waishengren*, according to Taiwanese independence activist Linda Arrigo (2005). Others remained loyal to the idea that the ROC state was the legitimate government of China, but protested the weakness of the Nationalist government. Some rejected both the PRC and ROC governments as non-democratic, and advocated a democratic Greater China. Demonstrators would eventually be classified by the Nationalist government as *tongpai*, meaning unificationist, or *zuopai*, meaning leftist. As the movement developed, voices of Chinese nationalism were joined by a growing segment of overseas students in the U.S. who began to openly support Taiwanese independence for the first time. Peter Kwong observed that “the KMT faced a wholesale defection of its students in America” (Kaplan 1992:151). A new generation of Taiwanese independence supporters emerged in Taiwan in the mid and late 1970s driving calls for democracy in Taiwan into the public sphere, a social activism which eventually led to the lifting of martial law and democratic liberalization in the mid and late 1980s.

Arrigo (2005) recalls that until 1970, the overseas Taiwanese independence movement was relatively quiet, but a precipitous change occurred between 1970 and 1972, a confluence of the *Boa Diao* demonstrations, the ROC leaving the UN, the escape from Taiwan of senior independence activist Peng Ming-min, and the WUFI assassination attempt against Chiang Ching-kuo in New York.<sup>19</sup> Local Taiwanese American Associations were being founded in communities across the country as a growing number of overseas students moved into middle-class professional careers.

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<sup>19</sup> Linda Gail Arrigo was a colorful public figure at that time. She married Shi Ming-deh in order to save him from imprisonment due to his participation in opposition activities. He served as a lawyer for those arrested in the Kaohsiung Incident.

Arrigo connects the *Bao-diao* movement's rapid growth and broad counter-hegemonic discourses to the anti-Vietnam war movement and anti-colonial/Western sentiments present on campuses in the U.S. She explains that the "wave of nationalism, anti-imperialism, and Marxism set off ripples on Taiwan's intellectual scene in the following years, most notably embodied in the magazine *China Tide*" (2005:8). This association with the emerging opposition magazines is key to understanding the transitional phase of the student opposition movement as activism moved from campuses in the U.S. to campuses in Taiwan.

None of the student association websites in this study included information related to the *Bao-diao* movement, including those with Taiwan-centric historical narratives. This raises an interesting question regarding the nature of index events and collective memory. Informants pointed to the protests as a watershed moment in the opposition movement, an event that radicalized a generation. The event itself is not "memorable" insofar as it is not collectively remembered or contextualized in narratives of the past, though it clearly had a lasting impact on those directly involved, and thus shaping the historic generation of Taiwanese student-immigrants, some of whom would go on to be the leaders of the democracy movement in the mid- to late 1970s.

### **C. The Formosa Incident and the Rise of Identity Politics (1979-1980)**

The 1979 Kaohsiung Incident (also known as the Formosa or *meilidao* Incident) is actually the center of a constellation of closely-related events including the 1977 Cheng-li protests against local election fraud, as well as the Lin family murders and Formosa activists' trials in 1980. On October, 15, 1978, five new activists emerged as power players; they were 35-40 year-old *benshengren* influenced by the Formosa generation



discourses of democracy, self-determination and anti-colonialism. They agreed to bring together the scattered independence supporters and groups – in both the U.S. and Taiwan – into a coherent transnational Taiwanese independence movement, and took as their symbol the raised clenched fist, borrowed from the African American civil rights movement. Arrigo, however, suggests that in the decade leading up to these events, the overseas intellectuals were becoming less important when compared to the local Taiwanese activists:

The young Taiwanese who were to be the leaders of the democratic movement emerged from the highest institutions of learning, National Taiwan University and National Chengchih (Political) University, in the mid-1960s and established themselves in society in the early 1970s. Peng Ming-min, the professor of international law arrested in 1964 after printing a handbill on Taiwan independence, can be seen as a forerunner of this group. Appropriately, they studied law and political science, and even studied abroad. (The bright young men who studied medicine, engineering, and natural sciences went abroad and didn't come back -- now they are the Taiwan Independence Movement abroad, but so embedded in American life that little "movement" is in evidence) (2005:11).

However, many of those whom she described as being key activists in Taiwan had been graduate students in the U.S., lending credence to the idea that, while overseas student immigrants may have played a relatively minor role in the actual political progress in Taiwan in the 1970s, those who studied abroad *and returned* were key players. In addition to Peng Ming-min, whom she mentions, Yao Chia-wen and Chang Deh-ming – two key figures – studied in the San Francisco Bay area with funding from the Asia Foundation, and opened a Taiwanese legal aid center which was instrumental in gaining government protection for returning independence supporters with U.S. citizenship.

The political opposition in Taiwan began to mobilize *en masse* in public in 1979 when disparate groups crystallized into an “integrated political force around the magazine *Formosa (Meilidao)*.” This became the propaganda machine for the *Dangwai* (literally

“outside the [Nationalist] Party”) opposition leaders, “while its local distribution centers served as ‘party’ branches and its subscribers were treated as potential members” (Wu 1995:35). The movement, after staging a number of illegal demonstrations across the island, was nearly crushed by KMT forces at a march in Kaohsiung on December 10. The action brought international attention to the excesses of the Nationalist government, and was a watershed for the Taiwanese independence movement, marking a shift of Taiwanese independence activism from university campuses in the U.S. to the public sphere in Taiwan.

Activist Lin Yi-hsiung, who would later become an opposition party leader, was arrested after the Kaohsiung Incident, and during a brief prison visit in February 1980 told his wife of his torture in jail. According to Arrigo, her phone call revealing the details to a human rights worker in Japan caused the government security agencies to retaliate. On the morning of February 28<sup>th</sup>, Lin’s mother and twin daughters were murdered at home by an unknown assailant, introducing the Kaohsiung Incident and Lin family murders into the February 28th Incident collective memory among some memory groups. Lin would go on to found the Tsunah tour of Taiwan for second generation Taiwanese Americans described in Chapter Five, an 11-day “cultural odyssey,” that emphasized the unique traditions of Taiwan and highlighted the struggle for democracy in Taiwan. The tour begins with a stop at the former home of Lin – now a church – where he narrates the story of his loss.

#### **D. Democratization and Social Mobilization (1985-1987)**

The democratic liberalization in mid 1980s was a turbulent era of rapid change, uncertainty and broad social unrest. It would be several years in the wake of the 1979



Kaohsiung Incident before dissidents in Taiwan began to exert pressure in the public sphere again. Although the campus unrest in the early 1970s sparked by the *Bao-diao* movement was quelled by renewed restrictions on campus life, including control over student press and government, and monitoring student organizations, dissidents continued to pressure the KMT through the early 1980s. The most common were public commemorations of the February 28<sup>th</sup> Incident.

Taiwan's economy was thriving, bringing improvements in standards of living, increased ease of travel, and more opportunities to study and work overseas. A popular consensus around the need for democratic reform emerged with the growth of a professional middle class, and the Taiwanization of the KMT party. Issue-specific social movements flourished, oftentimes filling the streets of major cities with protesters and riot police. The "identity question" was ubiquitous in the public sphere, not only in the periodic Taiwanese independence demonstration, but also in literature and film, and in public policy as the nation-state transformed from an authoritarian party-state to a multi-party democracy.

#### **E. Wild Lilies Demonstrations in Taipei (1990)**

The democratic reforms of 1986-1987, which included the establishment of the Democratic Progressive Party and the lifting of martial law, were the culminating accomplishments of the work begun by the Formosa generation, and opened the door for younger generations to pursue further political objectives. In the March 1990 elections, Lee Teng-hui was confirmed by the National Assembly, dominated by a cadre of 670 members, most of whom had been elected in the decades prior to the KMT moving to Taiwan. This system had insured the re-election of the KMT presidential candidate in

Taiwan for five decades. Excused from the public opening ceremonies, a large contingent of “wheelchair members” had a closed-door swearing-in ceremony to avoid international embarrassment; the sight would give the impression that Taiwan was not a democracy, but rather an oligarchy of octogenarians. Around twenty National Taiwan University students sat in front of the Chiang Kai-shek Memorial protesting the National Assembly process: “Countrymen, how can we tolerate the oppression of 700 emperors?” Within a few days the small demonstration had expanded to several thousand as students from other universities in Taiwan converged in Taipei. The students organized a coordination center to manage the demonstration. It was called a “tiny Tiananmen” and “Taipei Spring” in the overseas pro-Taiwanese independence publication *Taiwan Communiqué* (April 1991:1). Their demands included dissolving the National Assembly, withdrawing the 1948 “Temporary Provisions Effective During the Period of Communist Rebellion” that preserved many of the martial law restrictions despite having formally lifted martial law four years prior, and opening a national discussion on constitutional reform. The DPP held a concurrent protest attracting an estimated 20,000 participants, after eleven DPP assembly members had been excluded from National Assembly meetings.

President Lee’s initial response to the students was viewed as dismissal as it did not address any of the four issues raised in the students’ petition. Dozens of students began a hunger strike, a move that pressured Lee to announce a commitment to hold a national conference to discuss democratic reforms after the upcoming elections, and to announce a timetable for reforms in his inauguration speech. The wild lily was selected as the icon of the movement, marked by a seven-meter lily sculpture erected by the

protesters. “The flower was chosen as a symbol because it represents purity, strength and the grass-roots aspects of the student action. The wild lily can be found only on the high mountains of Taiwan, and it blooms in the Springtime” (Taiwan Communiqué 1990:1). The student group, which had grown to as many as 10,000 over six days of peaceful protests, disbanded.

This dissertation will discuss the Chinese live-fire missile tests and the open presidential election of Lee Teng-hui (1995-1996) and the 2000 election of Chen Shui-bian as President of Taiwan as index events in the next chapter, as they are closely associated with the rise and demise of Taiwan-centric student associations. The next segment of this chapter accounts the background and perspectives of a *benshengren* family of overseas students and second-generation Taiwanese Americans who’ve played important roles in Taiwanese political and social movements. In addition to selections from interviews, a Taiwanese history display presented at a multicultural fair in 1976 is discussed in terms of index events and the nature of Taiwan’s identity being represented. The chapter concludes with a working model of historic generations of overseas students, and the index events that may have shaped their collective conceptualizations of Taiwan’s identity.

### **III. Discussion: Historic Generations and Taiwan’s Changing Identity**

#### **A. The Chng Family**

Strong Chng first came to the US in 1965 to study engineering at Kansas State, a university already viewed by the Nationalist government as a center of political student unrest. He met Joyce, his wife, the following year, when she joined the more Taiwan-

centric of the two associations of students from Taiwan on campus in her first year of graduate studies in education. Over the next three decades, Strong and Joyce would be instrumental in the overseas Taiwanese independence movement, and their two children – Tim and Rolla – would be in the vanguard of the second-generation Taiwanese American movement in the early 1990s. Joyce explained the circumstances surrounding the concentration of Taiwanese graduate students in the Midwest, and at their school in particular, in terms of financial limitations and academic opportunity, rather than their interest in opposition politics:

The tuition there was cheaper, and at that time the Taiwanese . . . needed scholarships, so that's [why] there were so many student at K. State, especially engineering. There was a Taiwanese professor there in chemical engineering, so he helped about sixteen students, all from National Taiwan University. He knew how smart there were, and how hard they worked, how they produced lots of papers, and he became very famous in the US, in the world.

Like many *liuxuesheng* who arrived in the U.S. during martial law era in Taiwan, Strong first began to learn about the excessive violence and duplicity of the Nationalist government in his first year in the U.S., a time when the Formosan independence movement was first emerging on a number of campuses in the Midwest. About a dozen student activists had gathered in secret at another school, and dispatched what they called “emissaries” to seek out current and potential supporters at universities in order to communicate the agendas established, and further develop the network among *liuxuesheng* in the Midwest. Getting to know the older students who were politically active and the encounter with the activist emissary were powerful experiences for Strong. He had just completed two years’ mandatory military service in Taiwan, and had a life-long experience with government-controlled pedagogy and media, three key elements

of what he called “Chiang Kai-shek’s brainwash system of the Chinese nationalism.” After just a few months in the U.S., he was exposed to a broad range of new information that he had not had access to in Taiwan. He described it as a dramatic and sudden transformation:

I was so curious, so surprised, so shocked, so touched; so moving that I couldn’t sleep. I was thinking day and night. It was an awakening of a sleeping soul. And now, suddenly awakened, I became a different person. Same person, same heart beating, same physiological composition, but totally different mind, thinking, actions; it was this Taiwanese identity thing. I had been awakened so I suddenly had quite different emotions, actions, everything.

Nearly forty years later, during a period in my research when I was living with Uncle Chang and Dun Mei, Strong and Joyce drove to Madison from their home in northern Wisconsin on the occasion of the annual Celebrate Madison multicultural festival to visit with old friends also in attendance, coming from other cities including Milwaukee and Chicago. They arrived in mid afternoon, Saturday, as the Madison civic center was filling up with people. Strong was a smallish man with a sunken face that became animated when he spoke. When they were younger, as graduate students in the late 1960s, their friends teased that Joyce was too beautiful for him. Today, she is close by his side as they move slowly down the row of tables reserved for the Taiwan displays. The Taiwanese Association of Madison always had a booth, a row of three tables, and they would work with the local Taiwanese students at the university on performances, including Taiwanese indigenous dances, glove puppet shows, and vocal performances. On the green table cloths were arranged a *bricolage* of material related to Taiwan, including travel brochures published by the ROC Tourist Bureau, crafts collected from the living rooms of members of the Taiwanese Association of Madison, and eight



beautifully designed and decorated glove puppets from the collection of Alan Chen.

When we returned from the Celebrate Madison event to Uncle Chang's house, Strong slipped away for a nap in the spacious guest rooms upstairs. He said that as he was recovering from this most recent bout with cancer, his "engine works fine, but there is a smaller gas tank."

The next day, I drove Strong and Joyce to their home. As we visited in the kitchen, Joyce prepared a mix of various dry seeds for tomorrow's *doujiang*, pulverizing them in an industrial-grade three-horsepower blender to soak overnight. The extra power in the expensive appliance was necessary, she explained, to shatter seeds open to release their natural healing properties, much of which is lost in more common methods of preparation. She apologized for having only simple foods like raw vegetables, fish, seed shakes, and fruit. I was comfortable in the Chng household, and intermittently tape-recorded long segments of discussions, less interviews than one continuous conversation mixing topics related to my background, their childhood memories, their grandchildren's grades in school, and the dangerous years of student activism. I believe that their openness to me arose from their appreciation for my interest in their experiences, something that few students from Taiwanese my age and younger had exhibited. In addition, I am the same age as their children, and I knew them both. In Madison I had been living in the home of a close friend of theirs. They made me feel like a friend of the family.

Strong, Joyce, Tim and Rolla were each mentioned in numerous descriptions of student activism by informants, though much of their work had been behind the scenes organization rather than as formal office holders. Speaking of her husband's understated

role in this important work, Joyce commented that, “not many people knew it was him because it was so secret. Just like when he went to Taiwan [in 1988], not many people knew that he was the first one to get back in to Taiwan to represent WUFI and openly challenge KMT in Taiwan. He was the first one. But in the recent writing of the histories here, he is not mentioned; he is not the one to get the fame.” They had tried to balance their commitment to the cause of Taiwanese independence with the responsibilities of raising a family and building a career. Considering that both of their children would go on to be leaders of the Taiwanese American student movement, I was interested in the environment in which they were raised. To what extent did their parents’ activism influence their Childhood experiences? I asked Joyce if it was difficult for the kids:

It was hard. Ever since my girl was born we were riding around every weekend organizing the Midwest conference in the early stage, early stages, start from visiting University of Illinois, the students there, always running around. And he was always going away. We were always scared because when he wasn’t home, it was just me and two kids. And sometimes we had funny phone calls at midnight, no one would say anything, and sometimes we had threats. The kids could understand what we are talking about and our home always a lot of people and we could not – you see, when the people come to the house, my duty is to cook, feed them. I cannot ask who are you and what is your name, because they are so scared.

Even the members visiting each other you are not supposed to ask them their name. Even if they stay at our house in the basement for a week, I don’t know who they are, or their names. I cannot ask. So people say ‘oh, you can really cook!’ well I have lots of practice. I had to cook for 30 people, sometimes, several days, and the kids observed so they know something is different. So that is why one time when the school asked Tim to write down his address, when we had moved to the other house, he wouldn’t do it. He was crying, and they asked why, and he told them that if he told them, the KMT would send people and come and kill our family.

Tim, commenting on the original mission of the Intercollegiate Taiwanese American Association (ITASA), acknowledged that growing up in a household

such as his, and being in contact with the children of parents also victimized by the nationalist government and campus spies, instilled in him a sense of responsibility to his family and the political causes they supported. This was contrasted with later leaders of ITASA. In the beginning, however:

It was completely political and ideological. It was all about getting political prisoners out of jail, like uncle whoever is in jail, uncle whoever is in jail... the people who came to these first key meetings were the Taiwanese American kids of these political prisoners, the WUFI kids.

Strong recalled with reticence of modesty that people years later had told him that his work had been influential in promoting people's commitment to the independence movement. He said that he would not be telling me of his influence, out of modesty, but was simply repeating what others had said. Strong had composed seminal essays, slogans, manifestos and organization mission statements which were published anonymously, or under pseudonyms:

When I came to this country I read a lot of articles, and had been awakened, with all the passion, I wrote all night about that material a lot, with full heart . . . aching about how important solidarity was, some ideology about why we want independence, why we need independence, a long essay, and published in Japan. That had a big impact, because many people later on – they passed it around the factor was actually me, because all that time, I always used a different name. No one used their real name, but all the activist knew it was me, so they asked me to go to this meeting, or communicate... anyone someone said a few years later that that article stimulated many, many activists on various campuses. So when you ask me why this happened, there are many reasons but I was one of those reasons

Similarly, Tim and Rolla, as will be described in greater detail in Chapter Five, were instrumental in recruiting others in their cohorts to establish local student associations, and were key organizers of conferences which promoted translocal political mobilization. Although they were leaders in their own school Taiwanese student

communities, their influence in terms of advice and coordination reached far beyond local contexts, and outside of formal organization positions.

Strong's return to Taiwan for the first major gathering of Taiwanese independence activists in diaspora in 1988 as the representative of the opposition movement in the U.S. was another formative moment for him, as well as for his family. "At that time, everything was scary," he said. "In Taiwan, when I entered Taipei, it was like entering a foreign land." Joyce added that he had written his first will just before his departure. The first year's theme of the two-week-long protest-conference was "to establish the dignity of Taiwanese." He said that when he got a standing ovation for five to seven minutes as a representative of the overseas independence movement, it was one of the highpoints of his life. In a characteristic humor, he joked that perhaps the ovation was because his statement was very short. There were between 20 to 30 thousand people in Chiang Kai-shek Square. However, during this moment of recognition, he had been whisked into hiding. They called his name, and all cheered, but he was hiding with the activists underground for safety. The next year, Strong and Joyce were unable to attend, but both Tim and Rolla went in their stead. The event had a powerful impact on the two teenagers as described in chapter five, a discussion of Taiwanese American activism.

#### **B. Counter-History as Displayed in 1976 and Remembered in 2004**

During one of our interviews we paged through a thick photo album of city-wide cultural events the Chng family had participated in as "Taiwan" during their years in Cincinnati, dating back to 1967. They were particularly interested to show me the panels of "Taiwan's History" from the 1976 Cincinnati city-wide I was able to see the original hand-painted boards, which were stacked in their garage. Referring to the recent

Celebrate Madison event in comparison, Joyce commented, “you can tell, we were trying to educate. Not like the night before where they just had random things without thinking,” referring to the Celebrate Madison tables of various Taiwanese crafts. Descriptions and images of “The History of Taiwan” display panels (Figure 10) reveal a Taiwan-centric perspective on the history of the island, portrayed as a series of migrations and foreign intrusions.

**Figure 10: Taiwan History Display Panels and Text**



1. THE FIRST INHABITANTS OF TAIWAN (MAYLAY POLYNESIAN STOCK)
  - i. Atayal tribal woman
  - ii. Paiwan tribal children
  - iii. Ami tribal beauty
2. MIGRATION OF THE MAINLAND SETTLERS (15-16<sup>th</sup> CENTURIES)
  - i. Route to Green Island
  - ii. New World
3. RULED BY SPANISH, DUTCH AND PORTUGUESE (16-17<sup>TH</sup> CENTURIES)
  - i. An old castle of the Dutch remains
  - ii. Dutch invasion (1624)
4. THE KINGDOM OF KOXINGA (1662-1683)
  - i. Koxinga attacks Zelandia Fort
  - ii. Dutch surrender
  - iii. Koxinga
  - iv. Chi-Kan: The Zelandia Fort today
5. ABUSIVE RULE BY MANCHU (CHING) DYNASTY (1683-1895)
  - i. Ruler: Prime Minister Li and Yar-Men (Governor's Mansion)
  - ii. Ruled: Poverty life of the Taiwanese
6. FORMOSA REPUBLIC (1895) – HER NATIONAL FLAG –
7. A COLONY OF JAPAN (1895-1945)
  - i. Kabayama – the 1<sup>st</sup> Japanese governor and his headquarter, an architecture symbolized military rule
  - ii. Japanese entered Taipei
  - iii. Leader and his base of 1915 uprising. 3000 were massacred
  - iv. Modernization
8. OCCUPIED BY CHIANG GOVERNMENT (1945-)
  - i. Feb. 28, 1947 Revolution: 20,000 Taiwanese were massacred by Chiang government
  - ii. Chiang – the President and his headquarters
  - iii. Hard working Taiwanese
9. FUTURE: SELF-DETERMINATION FOR THE PEOPLE OF TAIWAN

The Chng family, friends and members of the local student association were aware of the risks, but felt that they should take the opportunity of these types of events

to raise awareness of Taiwan among the general public, as well as encourage others from Taiwan to become more active.

We were very proud to show our ideas about the future of Taiwanese self-determination. All this was very difficult for Chinese to swallow, so they reported to Chicago's ROC office and they dispatch special people, they make mass phone call to students to not to help or participate in this festival. I know because many people received the call at the same time, they were threatened that if they went they would have difficulty going back, or your passport won't be extended, or something. They made all kinds of threats. But some courage students with Taiwanese identity – still came with masks, or they were behind the curtain cooking egg rolls. People tried to get in there and see people; people were very scared.

There were very few students who came to participate. [Other students from Taiwan] came and openly challenged the booth, condemned it, argued with the people there, they were very hostile. We told the police that at night, when we go home, you had better watch it because at night they will try to destroy the booth. They said “no problem, that will never happen”. Then, in the morning, we could see that they tried to take away parts of it. At that time it was really exciting. It was like a battle field, truly like a battle field.

The “Occupied by the Chiang Government” panel (Figure 10) contains a stylized pair of heads bearing teeth at each other across a chasm filled with circles and triangles. The left face, on black with a blue star of the KMT, represents Taiwan, and the right face framed by a red field represented the PRC. Although not immediately apparent to an observer, the geometric symbols in the space between the faces represent Taiwanese independence, referencing an ideograph Strong had popularized at that time: the character for *tai*, of Taiwan, graphically represented as a triangle over a circle, was being displayed as a symbol of defiance to the Nationalist government in Taiwan in the form of graffiti. Limited in avenues to express disagreement with the government, stenciling the triangle and circle logo onto a wall or light post was meant to let sympathizers and authorities know that there were supporters of Taiwanese independence in their midst.

Looking backward across time, the ultimate historical horizon lies with the indigenous groups in Taiwan, most often represented by women in colorful dress performing traditional dances. Taiwanese history is portrayed as a series of colonial regimes challenged by local uprisings. The display is represented as a historical record rather than a political protest, though it is both. Borrowing the genre of historical objectivity as an organizational principle to communicate alternative national imaginations – as opposed to an explicit protest demonstration – is in some ways more threatening to a regime whose foundation rests on a Sinocentric historical world-view perpetuated primarily through control over the production of History.

Looking forward, to the future, the historical horizon specified is “Self Determination for the people of Taiwan” (Figure 10). The way in which Taiwan is represented in the panels follows the central thread of the Formosan Taiwanese identity. One of the keys to differentiating conceptualizations of Taiwan relates to the way the Nationalist government is portrayed. Here, the ROC is an occupying force, a foreign power shaping the destiny of a people denied the right of self-determination. Multicultural Taiwan is not defined in relation to a foreign occupation, but rather a more abstract threat. By suppressing local traditions and language in Taiwan, the nationalist government created the conditions for a grass-roots, culture-based opposition movement. In this environment, it became increasingly important to be able to distinguish Taiwanese from Chinese culture. Following the central theoretical assumption of this dissertation, drawing such distinctions should not be thought of as recovering roots, but rather as a constructive process. Alan Chen, for example, must make the case that although the



puppets came from China, and were influenced by Chinese operatic tradition under the Japanese and Nationalist governments, they are nonetheless authentic Taiwanese culture.

### **C. Historic Generation, Index Events, and Vicarious Memory**

Generations of Taiwanese opposition activism are usually identified with a powerful event in which they play a prominent role. The event memories that shape a historic generation are powerful because they are both emotion-laden and intersubjective. Powerful external events are internalized in adolescence and early adulthood, and then shared through social remembering among peers. The historicity and generational culture that emerges is informed by the events themselves, as well as a mnemonic dialogue. However, in the case of the February 28<sup>th</sup> Incident, the collective remembering of the trauma of the events surrounding the Incident was severely limited through fear of reprisal of discussion. What discussion took place was behind closed doors, and public remembrance was outlawed. The few witnesses who moved from Taiwan to Japan and the U.S. were freer to discuss the event and share their experiences with others, both within their cohort and subsequent generations. In this regard, the historic generation that was most affected by the 2-28 Incident was not the generation with biographical memory of the event, but rather those who experienced the event as a vicarious memory.

The moment of learning of the event, however, was sometimes so powerful as to be considered an immediate, biographical experience of moral shock associated with the event, overlaid with the complex feelings evoked regarding the Chinese nation-building project into which they had so thoroughly been socialized. Although *liuxuesheng* were having similar experiences on campuses across the U.S., the “awakening” is unlike other index events insofar as it was a very personal experience. In this regard, the specific

event being vicariously remembered is less significant than the change in perspective, the shift in the way Taiwan is conceptualized. Although the February 28<sup>th</sup> Incident was frequently mentioned as the most significant event in their political orientation, there were many sources of information that would facilitate the de-mystification of the ROC and create the necessity to re-conceptualize Taiwan from a Sinocentric to a Taiwan-centric space.

The Kaohsiung Incident and related subsequent developments such as the Lin family murder and trial of the Kaohsiung Eight, had a formative impact on those in their late teens at the time, not participants but the observers who would enter universities in the early 1980s and begin to press for liberalization in campus affairs. Eventually they would provide support for the opposition *dangwai* political movement leading to the founding of the DPP in 1986 and the lifting of martial law in 1987, the crowning accomplishments of the Formosan Taiwanese generation. The events of the decade from 1977 at the Chengli Incident to the lifting of martial law shaped the subjectivities of a third generation, those involved in the Wild Lily demonstrations in 1991.

When specific events are viewed as points of reference in history, the constructed nature of history is revealed. The claim to the “true story” is often highly contested, both within and between generations. Indeed, one of the bedrocks of legitimacy for a regime is the power to construct the official historical narrative of the nation-state. In national pedagogy the official conceptualization of Taiwan is outlined, emphasizing its Chineseness. Taking this Sinocentric identity as a baseline as it was universally experienced among *liuxuesheng*, alternative views are more easily differentiated. Within living memory of the informants in this study, a series of events should be highlighted as

having shaped conceptualizations of Taiwan. Biographical and vicarious memories of these events were shared within and between generations.

Strong connected his own experiences to those of the younger Taiwanese student, and describes how moving it was:

Recently I have seen a similar pattern which touched me a lot. When I saw [the student] from Arizona State - when I read his article - this all happened in the last few months. When I had a chance to read his words and could see the same process of so-called 'awakening.' It is like the new understanding of myself some 40 years ago. That kind of experience for me at my age is very unusual, and very precious, so very, very precious.

This trip [to a WUFI recruiting and training camp] I was so low energy; I didn't even notice there was a young member like Michael Ho there. After I came back, Jolan sent me Michael's article, writing how he met *qian bei* [respectful terms for older generation], and how he was awakened because of my book – my first book, which he found in the university library, maybe at Arizona State university section on Taiwanese books. And the title of my book was "Overseas Taiwanese Dream to have an Independent Taiwan." Something like that. He was curious by reading that title, so he reached out his hand. And this traditional education about Taiwanese independence is poisonous, that concept, it immediately affected his actions, and he reached for the next book, about the Taiwanese aboriginal people. And the second time he went to the library, he just could not just take the one and read it; he immediately was drawn into the emotion, like when I was young. He just cannot stop until he finished the whole book.

That kind of description – that kind of essay – so shocked me that at the same time when I receive that I went to the doctor about the cancer, and he said "oh, you are all clean!" So that proves that love heals, that love has the power to heal.

In this case, Mike was so strongly influenced not by an immediate experience of a specific historical event, but by a narrative of another's experience learning the details of powerful historical events told to him by an eye-witness. Moreover, Strong learned of Mike's transformative experience when he published it on a Taiwanese college list-serve with the intention of encouraging others in his age cohort to learn more about Taiwan and the sacrifices of previous generations of activists

To summarize, the index events described in this dissertation include, first, the transition between Japanese and Chinese colonization, punctuated by the February 28<sup>th</sup> Incident of 1947. These events shaped the Formosan political identity among *liuxuesheng* as they established the first independence organizations in Japan and the U.S. Their political agendas were framed in the discourses of anti-colonial struggle and self-determination. This index event was followed by the White Terror, less a single event than an era when public discourse was strictly limited, including references to the February 28<sup>th</sup> Incident, creating circumstances leading to a pattern of “eye-opening” experiences in inter-generational memory groups: associations of students from Taiwan on university campuses in the U.S.

Thirdly, the *Bao-diao* (protect Diaoyutai Islands) protests, the first major broad-based political dissident mobilization among extraterritorial populations, was characterized by a range of reactions among those involved in the events, including both Taiwanese and Chinese nationalism. Dissent was in the open for the first time since the February 28<sup>th</sup> Incident. The generation inspired by the *Bao-diao* demonstrations would lead the democracy movement in the late 1970s and early 1980s, punctuated by the fourth index event included in this analysis, 1979 Kaohsiung Incident (also known as *Meilidao*, or Formosa in English), which includes the “Kaohsiung eight” trials and the Lin family murders. The mid-1980s democratic transition is the fifth index event under consideration, including the lifting of martial law, the legalization of the opposition

Democratic Progressive Party, and the emergence of a wide range of progressive reform movements.

The sixth index event informants mentioned as being significant in shaping their conceptualizations of Taiwan is commonly known as the Wild Lily movement of 1990, when a new generation of Taiwanese activists – many of whom were students or recent graduates from Taiwanese National University (and other universities, though to a lesser extent) – mobilized large-scale demonstrations to pressure Lee Teng-hui to enact constitutional reform early in his presidential tenure. Many of the Wild Lily protesters who enrolled in graduate school in the U.S. in the early 1990s would go on to organize the demonstrations in the U.S. protesting the Chinese missile tests on the eve of Taiwan's first democratic presidential election in 1996. The seventh index event concerns what has become known as the 1995 and 1996 missile crises. China conducted live-fire military maneuvers off the coast of Taiwan, including on the eve of a historic presidential election. The demonstration of military aggression sparked wide-spread protests on campuses in the U.S. and around the world, culminating in the March 22<sup>nd</sup> Vigil ("322") event co-organized by Taiwanese Collegian and WUFI, representing the convergent mobilization of three historic generations of overseas students as well as second-generation Taiwanese Americans.

And finally, the eighth index event involves the election of former political prisoner and opposition leader Chen Shui-bian to the presidency in 2000, widely viewed as the completion of democratic reform in Taiwan and resolution of the "identity problem" with the popularization of an inclusive, geographically defined "New Taiwanese" identity. The post-Chen era, however, is marked by a dramatic decline in

political engagement by Taiwanese youth. Protests in 1990 and 1996 were far less “memorable” to *liuxuesheng* than the elections themselves. With the elections of Lee Teng-Hui, a *benshengren*, in 1996, followed by the 2000 election of Chen Shui-bian of the opposition DPP party, younger generations have been less drawn to Taiwanese politics than their seniors by only a few cohorts.

While comparing names of some of the most active student leaders in the U.S. from the early to mid-1990s with Jeff Tsai, I pointed out that the Taiwanese independence movement is still active in the U.S. through the Wild Lilly cohorts in and around graduate schools. They are working to raise awareness of Taiwan among the younger *liuxuesheng* and Taiwanese Americans. I was thinking of Hiro and Li-lin, among others. It is the younger group that concerned him most. They have the same “roots,” he said, “but they do not have the same value system.” When I asked him about the causes behind this shift in the way younger generations viewed their relationship to Taiwan, he pointed out a similar pattern in the U.S.:

You know, you look at people in the United States, you see the same thing. You know people of my age – they were so concerned about social justice, social liberty – yes, there was even – what – unrest? My age, I think you know there were people on the streets protesting this, protesting that... You know I think their sense of justice and social responsibility was very strong. Now, but look at the younger generations of Americans... they don’t seem to care anything about that. They care about, you know, good jobs, a nice car...

In the chapters that follow, the events outlined above will be pointed out as they appear in the data gathered from an extensive survey of student association websites over a ten-year period. Some of the events will not appear, while others will be emphasized, even incorporated in the narrative of the groups’ origin and purpose. As index events emerge from the data, they will be discussed in relation to other perspectives within and

between generations. Applying this analytical strategy to Internet-based research allows the researcher to create historical depth while working with asynchronous field-sites. In other words, the appearance of index events will anchor the website to a fixed event in time, as well as all other interpretations of the event throughout the literature and data collected for this dissertation research.

## CHAPTER FOUR: WWW.TSA.EDU

It was a very cold night of February 23, 1996. The piercing wind shook people's body but not their heart, like the missile launched by China shaking merely the air but nothing to Taiwanese people's confidence for their first public presidential election in Taiwan. There were about twenty enthusiastic Taiwanese students and professors met together in the basement of Krannert at Purdue University for the discussion of "What can we do for Taiwan?".

- I Love Taiwan Club at Purdue University (2002).

### I. Student Association Websites as Field Sites and Texts

#### A. Diachronic and Synchronic Analysis: Ethnography and Time in Cyberspace

In this chapter I explore conceptualizations of Taiwan's identity among *liuxuesheng* through an analysis of student association websites. In the previous chapters I have described the historical index events that have to some extent shaped conceptualizations of Taiwan among generations of *liuxuesheng*, and how historical interpretations have been negotiated between generations in local settings. The scope of this analysis will now be broadened by examining a wide range of local settings across time, through the lens of student association websites, with three main purposes in mind. First, student association websites may provide insight into index events described in the previous chapter among younger generations who've experienced the events vicariously, revealing inter-generational negotiations of historical interpretation and degree of significance. Next, the content of student association websites should provide a greater understanding of inter-generational negotiations of Taiwan's identity, given that, as established in the introductory chapter, all *liuxuesheng* and Taiwanese American student associations are always/already spaces where competing national imaginations are



negotiated by extraterritorial and immigrant populations. Because student associations' web presence has become the primary mode of expression of group identity in relation to other organizations of students from Taiwan and China, as well as to other cultural student groups, the campus community and the general public, they often yield insight into the range of conceptualizations of Taiwan's identity among group members. Indeed, a website absent of content other than a schedule of upcoming social events – an increasingly common format – is itself telling of the degree to which a groups' collective understanding of Taiwan's identity need be expressed to external groups, or in any formal way. Finally, student association website research presented in this chapter yields insight into the advantages and limitations of Internet-based research methods.

Insights are drawn from both “synchronic” and “diachronic” analysis. From a synchronic approach, a single student association website may be viewed as one among scores of others on campuses across the country that collectively create a historical snapshot of a generation, say, the heterogeneous sentiments of students in the fall of 1995, as represented collectively through website content. The synchronic “snap-shot” approach will be described here as “cyber-archaeology” as it seeks to draw insights by understanding individual strata, multiple websites during a single period in time.

Although websites' graphic and textual composition are frequently updated, revised, re-made, relocated, abandoned and ultimately removed from the cyber-spatial present, few data are ever actually “removed” entirely from the Internet, but are instead incrementally displaced. Research tools allow for the recovery of previous versions of websites recorded every month or so by Internet archivists. The strata revealed by synchronic analysis can then be used to trace the changes of a single website over time, a

longitudinal approach referred to here as cyber-genealogy. This diachronic approach draws on the genre and metaphors of biography; indeed websites often contain narratives of the group's founding and other first-person collective mission statement, descriptions of key events shaping institutional identity, traces of shifts in groups' practices as found through archived events calendars and photograph albums. Changes in political and cultural orientation may be discerned from discussion board posting and revisions of mission statements.

Among the student association mission statements and group descriptions, oftentimes explicit references are made to the events outlined in the previous chapter. Notably, a spike of new organizations were founded in 1995 and 1996 that specifically mention in their mission statements the Chinese live-fire missile tests on the eve of presidential elections in Taiwan. Websites have a dynamic relationship to the collective historicity of group members insofar as they are at the same time expressions of conceptualizations of Taiwan's identity among members, as well as locations of memory through which mnemonic socialization occurs as new students join the group. Changes in website content including iconography, historical narratives, records of group events, and the like, in this respect, reveal inter- and intra-generational negotiations of Taiwan's identity.

#### **B. Titles in Academic Discourse: When is a CSA a TSA?**

The introduction to this dissertation included a discussion of the seemingly self-evident terms "Taiwanese" and "Chinese." In Chapter One, the term "Formosan" was deconstructed, revealing a specific historical and political valence, one which was adopted as a descriptor for a specific conceptualization of Taiwan's identity, and

ultimately appropriated as an analytical term in this dissertation beyond its original currency. A related issue arises in this chapter when discussing the formal names taken by student associations. Group names in themselves have historical significance as they are expressions of specific conceptualizations of Taiwan's identity, whether those of the members, or those who are able to determine the name of the group regardless of the members' preferences. Being named, categorized, by distinguishing inclusions and exclusions, inherently commits a form of violence against those who would name themselves otherwise. Because of this, the evolution of student association names is one of the elements analyzed in the web-based student association study.

This raises a fundamental questions regarding naming and hegemony: is a "TSA" a "CSA"? The recurring questions surrounding issues of Taiwan's identity became manifest in innumerable ways in everyday life among overseas students from Taiwan, including the official titles of the student associations. A student association changing its name from CSA to TSA often indicates a shift in the ways students from Taiwan represent themselves to other *liuxuesheng*, students from China, the campus community, and the broader public. The majority of student association websites revealed a change in title at some point in their institutional history, some including a narration explaining the change.

In *The Taiwanese Americans* (1998), Franklyn Ng proposes that as the population of overseas Chinese from Taiwan grew over the years, more diversity in the Chinese student population led to conflicts based on "background," In his segment dealing with student associations, his first example is a case of a "CSA" with an alternating presidency power-sharing system between "Chinese students from Hong Kong and Taiwan." The

second inter-organizational conflict Ng cites is based on “political status,” as students from Hong Kong were not interested in commemorating 10-10 day, the national day of the ROC. A third example of conflict within organizations of students from Taiwan and Hong Kong describes tension over which language to use, Mandarin, Cantonese, or English. Although he notes that some students from Taiwan objected to Mandarin because it was the *guoyu* (national language,) he does not note the significance of these students’ open rejection of the government’s Chinese nationalist discourse, nor does he include the anti-Nationalist dimension in his more general point that tensions within CSAs emerged with heterogeneity of student-immigrant “backgrounds.” The decision to categorize associations of students from Taiwan who adopt “Taiwan” or “Formosa” in their organizational title as a *Chinese* organization implies a Sinocentric conceptualization of Taiwan’s identity. Ng, himself from Hong Kong, presents the primary dichotomy in student associations being between students from Hong Kong and those from Taiwan. In his narrative of student associations, although the groups had managed to negotiate their differences, as Ng put it, “when the number of students from China increased, and some students from Taiwan favored a distinctive Taiwanese perspective in the 1980s, the structure collapsed” (1998:62). Based on the historical era he is describing, students “from China” are from The Republic of China. For Ng, Taiwan as ROC was in negotiations with Chinese from Hong Kong, over the leadership of the student association for Chinese people, meant to accommodate diasporic Chineseness, with *waishengren* representing the Nationalist Chinese Taiwan. Taiwan-centric organizations were a threat to the balance of power within the Chinese student “community.” It would be the next generation of immigrants – most of whom were

Taiwanese – who would shift the axis of discourse from intra-generational negotiations between Hong Kong and the Nationalists over which Chinese political holidays should be recognized, discussion of negotiations of language choice for movies, they are described by Ng to be between Mandarin and Cantonese. With the new generation, the language dynamic will have shifted to an issue of *guoyu* and *holo* languages, with speaking Holo being a marker of Taiwanese national or ethnic identity, generally paralleling the *benshengren-waishengren* divide for two generations.

Following the framework developed by linguistic anthropologist Kenneth Pike (1954), research operates in two distinct epistemological domains, one grounded in the subjective understandings of those being studied, and the other resting on the range of theoretical and analytical approaches employed by social scientists. What he called *emic* knowledge refers to the terminology, concepts, technologies, categories, distinctions, narratives, and other forms of meaning construction that are intrinsic to the social group being studied. Not structured by any pre-formed analytical assumptions, the goal of this epistemological approach is to understand the inner lives and worldviews of groups being studied. A commitment to *emic* understanding attempts to close the distance between researcher and subject, and place greater value on subjective experiences as articulated by the subjects themselves. This kind of knowledge provides an understanding of the subject literally “in their own terms.”

*Etic* knowledge emerges from the analyses of social groups based primarily on the concepts and assumptions of the social scientists. This approach, though not always in direct conflict with the more subjective perspective, does employ structures that, while not necessarily inaccurate, are oftentimes alien to the lives of those being studied,

creating the potential for error, analytical tautology in the determination of what kinds of knowledge are intrinsic to the subject group. In other words, there is a possibility that what is thought to be indigenous *emic* knowledge or social fact is in fact a category inappropriate for the subject group; if it is not recognized as an *etic* structure, the analytical flaw is submerged within the text itself. The subject evaporates.

This danger is particularly problematic in research dealing with questions of identity, doubly so when the subject is specifically addressing contested identity. However, disjunctures between *emic* and *etic* knowledge often provide critical insights. For example, seeking out incongruities between local and academic knowledge allows research to explore which agents and agencies determine the boundaries of naturalized *etic* categories, and how such categories are reproduced. For the purposes of this research, the descriptive terms “Taiwanese student association” and “Chinese student association” are avoided unless referring to specific organization titles. Instead, terms such as “associations of *liuxuesheng* from Taiwan,” and the like, will be used.

Websites often include narratives describing the reasoning and process whereby the formal name of the organization was revised, usually replacing “Chinese” with “Taiwanese.” For example, the Taiwanese Student Association of Indiana University (2002) highlighted the consensus and democratic process:

We are the Taiwanese Student Association, former Chinese Student Association. After series of discussions, meetings, and voting of our Constitution during the school year 1999-2000, our members finally passed the change of name.

Although no other information regarding the name change is provided, the author’s inclusion of the word “finally” suggests that there were some in the group who felt that the change was overdue, a possible indication of a divergence in opinion

(whether inter-generational, intra-generational, or both) regarding the overall understanding of Taiwan's identity among the group's membership. In the next example, the Taiwanese Student Association of the University of Massachusetts, Amherst (2003) provide a more specific explanation of the name change:

The forerunner of TSA is ROCSA (Republic of China Student Association), which was found in 1997. For the past 6 years, TSA/ROCSA has served as a cultural group for the general public while providing a home-feeling community for international students from Taiwan. Due to the fact that Republic of China, the formal name of Taiwan, is not well known, our 5th president, Ming C Kuo, and vice president, Sam Chen, decided to change the name to TSA, since Taiwan is better known than R.O.C. By the unanimous vote of over two third of our members, ROCSA became TSA in spring 2002.

In both of these cases, and in most other name change narratives as well, there is a notation that the process was open and democratic, a detail which may intentionally highlight the non-democratic nature of the previous title, and it resonated with a similar increase in name-discourse in Taiwan, particularly after the 2000 elections. New Taiwanese identity is based on the idea of four ethnic groups, each descended from immigrant groups arriving in Taiwan, now bonded by a common fate, and imagined future. To realize this conceptualization of Taiwan, many Chinese signifiers were removed, including names of companies to passports, thoroughfares, parks, and postage stamps, all replaced with names in indigenous groups' languages and Taiwanese. The "nativization," and "de-sinicization" discourse represents a contrast between the view that Taiwan should be purged of Chinese cultural influence, and the more common discourse that Taiwanese are *Han* Chinese ethnic group, one of four on Taiwan.

Concerning the relationship between Chineseness and Taiwanese ethnicity in the following narrative from the MIT Taiwanese Student Association (2001a):

In the beginning...

In 1991, Annie Chang (*Course III '94*) had the idea of starting a student group devoted to activities related to Taiwanese culture. At that time (as there is now), MIT had a number of Chinese student organizations. However, it was felt that these groups provided a different function for the student body. Annie, along with Phil Sheu '94, Mike Feng '94, and Dung Vu '94, worked out the idea of a group that centered more around cultural activities (rather than purely social ones), and to bring Taiwanese culture to the undergraduate population -- Both those whose roots lay in Taiwan and those interested in learning more about Taiwanese culture.

The Wild Lily generation students at MIT conceptualized Taiwan in a unique way, decentering the “ROC-based Sinocentric versus Taiwan-centric group” dynamic by owning, rather than rejecting, the category of “Chinese” student associations, and then emphasized the Taiwan-centric nature of the organization itself. By pointing out that MIT hosted “a number of Chinese student associations,” but then noting that none addressed Taiwanese culture, the student association was subverting and re-configuring the primary axis of student association distinctions. Locating student ROC associations in the same category as those from the PRC acknowledged the claims of sovereignty over Taiwan made by both regimes, and then extracting Taiwan from the discussion of contested sovereignty of Mainland China.

**Figure 11: Three China-Taiwan Dichotomies**

a. Hegemonic geocentric configuration:	[ROC/Taiwan] ≠ [PRC/China]
b. Syncretic configuration:	[Taiwanese/Chinese ≠ Other]
c. Taiwan-centric configuration:	[Taiwanese] ≠ [ROC/PRC]

Figure 11 details two common pairs of oppositions represented in mission statements, and a third presented by the students at MIT. The earliest version in terms of history, (a) focuses on the ROC/PRC dynamic, while the syncretic formulation (b)



indicates an ambiguity in the relationship between Chineseness and Taiwanese-ness. In formulation (c), the MIT group presents a conceptualization of Taiwan based on identification with Taiwan rather than Chinese identity regardless of place of origin.

The organization's second mission point reads: "To promote interactions between Taiwanese, Taiwanese-American, Chinese, Chinese-American, and any people with interests in Taiwanese culture." The students have presented themselves as closely related to students from China, and welcome their participation in events, while maintaining a conceptualization of Taiwan as a separate culture from that of China. Similarly, students at MIT established their organization "in the interest of the Taiwanese culture," and discuss "current issues germane to Taiwan." The origin narrative locates Taiwan within the overarching discourse of China, but positioned in opposition to Sinocentric groups of students from PRC *and* ROC.

### **C. Data Collection**

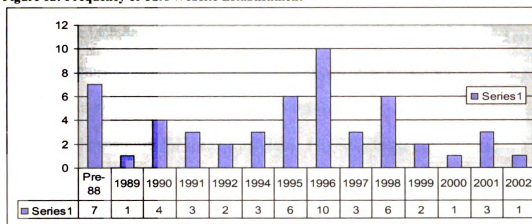
Anthropologists favor working in the present because, however disjointed and difficult to represent as it may be, it is nonetheless accessible (Des Chene 1997). She notes that "studies that investigate the past make problematic the face-to-face localized encounter central to our conceptions of the generic and unifying 'field' . . . The field may not be a place at all, but a period of time or a series of events, the study of which will take the researcher to many places" (70-1). Archival work is an ethnographic enterprise, and cyber-ethnography and archival fieldwork are ways to apprehend "cultural phenomena and political processes across both time and space" (76). Such methodologies allow explorations of the "structural principles of organization, and who speaks for whom and in what register." She further notes that the condensation of archival material into notes

is an interpretive task akin to that of writing fieldnotes” (77). The student association website study informing this dissertation should be understood as a major component of the fieldwork conducted for this research.

Student association in the U.S. grew apace with the steady increase of *liuxuesheng* in the U.S., from 22,590 in 1987 to a high of 37,580 in 1994. The rate of increase of student association websites also reflect the overall number of overseas students and second-generation Taiwanese Americans on college campuses, and the explosion of Internet capacity in the early and mid-1990s, and the rise of multicultural programs on college campuses and elsewhere. In 1992 there were more than 1 million Internet hosts and over 4 thousand news groups. In 1993, the number of hosts had doubled. By 1997 there were 19.5 million hosts and one million WWW sites. An additional factor linking early student association web-presence to the rate of expansion of the Internet involves the local production of technology, as the major U.S. electrical engineering departments were supported by faculty and graduate researchers from Taiwan. Finally, student associations increased along with a general trend of increase in popularity of co-ethnic organizations and “multiculturalism” on college campuses.

Series 1 in Figure 12 indicates the number of student associations established that year among those reporting their founding dates.

**Figure 12: Frequency of TSA Website Establishment**



The population of student association websites in this study was established by compiling lists of student associations found on individual student association websites, Taiwanese government sources and non-profit organizations, including the Taiwanese Collegian. As described above, *cyber-archaeology* involves analyzing a wide range of websites active at the same moment in history. The diachronic approach, what I am calling *cyber-genealogy*, traces the development of individual organizations over time. Cyber-genealogy added to the number of websites in the sample by including the websites of defunct organizations, and those markedly different from previous incarnations of active student associations. Compiled, this created a population of 172 student association websites.

The initial profiles of active student associations were recorded as *Microsoft Outlook* contacts, address entries in an e-mail organizing and planner program with fields such as first and last name, e-mail addresses, website URL, mailing addresses, as well as customizable fields. I originally began working in the Outlook format as part of my

involvement in the Taiwanese Collegian (TC) organization, specifically, as a member of the Research and Development committee. My primary responsibility in that position was to construct and maintain a database of all associations of *liuxuesheng* in the U.S. The database included annotations on the groups' ideological orientation based on mission statements, iconographic elements, and hyperlinks, the organizations' degree of activity, institutional political history, events calendars, and other details which could be used to build e-mail lists for specific purposes. I recorded these elements and periodically updated the database, noting specific changes over time. My work with members of TC and senior activists developed the foundational skills required for this dissertation's website research. I learned to thoroughly explore and carefully interpret website content, looking for patterns and constellations of symbolic elements.

In the next segment, elements of representative sites will be discussed in terms of the relationship between content and conceptualizations of Taiwan's identity. Although some sites explicitly present Taiwan as part of Greater China and minimize or omit references to Taiwan, and others emphasize non-Chinese elements of Taiwanese culture without mentioning China. Most sites, as will be indicated in the data and discussed in the concluding segment of the chapter, represent some degree of syncretism in their conceptualization and representation of Taiwan.

## **II. Articulations of Taiwan's Identity**

### **A. Taiwan as China**

Recall from Chapter One that the basic structure of student associations emerged as Taiwan-centric associations were established in response to ubiquitous officially

sponsored student association most often bearing the word “China” or “Chinese” in the title, rather than “Taiwan” or “Formosa.” During this dissertation research period there were twenty-five dual student association campuses in the U.S. – primarily at large research institutions and Ivy League schools – though this number continues to fluctuate as groups across the country split and merge each year.

As will be discussed in the next chapter, *liuxuesheng* student associations co-exist with groups whose members are primarily second-generation Taiwanese Americans. As a result, a handful of schools host three Taiwan-related student associations. Groups that have inherited the legacy of being the officially sponsored organizations with Sinocentric iconography and textual content continue to be the primary group on many campuses. Conceptualization of Taiwan’s identity in these cases presents Taiwan, and Taiwanese people, as representative of China and Chinese people. For example, the Central Missouri Chinese Student Association (2001) presented its mission in these terms:

Thank you for visiting Chinese Student Association (CSA) homepage. This homepage is designed for people to understand more about the Chinese culture and provide information for the new student at Central Missouri State University. I hope you'll enjoy it.

Graphic elements on the page such as the prominent ROC flag and *zhonghua minguo* (Republic of China) in *hanji*, however, clearly indicate the groups is for students from Taiwan rather than the PRC on mainland China. In a small box on the page are the *hanji* characters for Taiwan, Singapore, mainland (*da lu*,) and Hong Kong. Similarly, the Chinese Student Association of Taiwan, The Republic of China at George Mason University (2000b) notes on the homepage (which features a waving ROC flag) that their purpose is “to provide services and activities for overseas students and staff from Taiwan and to promote cultural awareness and understanding on the Chinese culture.” The

“About Taiwan” page (2000a) provides a geographic and demographic description of the Island and notes that “Taiwan not only inherits the 5000 years Chinese culture, but also has high development in economic, technology and democracy.”

## **B. Syncretism and Negotiation**

For the first ten years of operation (1991 – 2001), the MIT Association of Taiwanese Students described above maintained a position that identified student associations from the ROC in the same category as PRC – Chinese organizations – as opposed to their Taiwan-centric emphasis as presented in Figure 10: Taiwan-centric configuration: [Taiwanese]  $\neq$  [ROC/PRC]. The omission of Chinese culture from its mission and the emphasis on learning about Taiwanese culture and issues was later modified in favor of the more common seen syncretic ambiguity:

The Association of Taiwanese Students consists primarily of undergraduate students with a Taiwanese heritage or an interest in Taiwanese culture. For many of the members, ATS is a place to make friends with different homes and with different backgrounds, but share the common interest in retaining and learning about Taiwanese and Chinese traditions and cultures.

Our activities include celebrating Taiwanese and Chinese holidays, making and eating authentic Chinese and Taiwanese food, hosting study breaks, broadcasting our very own "Rhythm of Taipei" radio show, and occasional karaoke and dim-sum runs. In addition to a myriad of social and cultural activities, ATS is also very active in intramural sports sponsoring teams in volleyball, basketball, tennis, hockey, pool, and ultimate frisbee in the past. We encourage any student with an interest in Taiwanese or Chinese culture to join us at any of our events.

The autobiographical narrative of the association's inception was removed from the site, as was the association's constitution. Whereas in the original configuration, Taiwan's identity made no reference to Chinese culture, only allowing itself to be categorized as one among several Chinese student associations, the more recent

incarnation conceptualizes Taiwan as having both Chinese and Taiwanese cultural elements, as mediated through the repertoire of activities common to student associations.

#### The Chinese Student Association at Oregon State University

(2003) reveals an incremental shift from a Sinocentric description combined with Taiwan-centric language:

The Chinese Students Association at Oregon State University is a student organization formed mostly by the students from Taiwan. This organization has been established for many years and currently with 100 plus members.

Our organization hopes to help all members and Taiwanese students in making their adaptation to American life easier and also have a good study life during their stay in Corvallis, Oregon. CSA offers variety of services to newly arrived students and holds many social/cultural activities each year to promote Chinese culture and friendship among the students at OSU.

We often plan cultural events on campus to give American students the opportunity to explore Taiwanese culture and to interact with Taiwanese students. In the past year, we organized many social events such as the New Student's Welcome Party, field trips, Chinese New Year Dinner and many others.

The students themselves are identified as Taiwanese, while their culture is that of China and Taiwan. The following year (2004) the association's name was changed to the Taiwanese Student Association, the Chinese New Year celebration was changed to "lunar" New Year, and a "Taiwan Night Market" was added to the activities calendar.

The University of Oregon Chinese Student Association homepage (2005b) does not directly indicate the student demographic, but the website iconography is clear, including the ROC flag. They refer to individuals' Chinese "background" and promote an interest in Chinese culture:

To All New Students,  
Chinese Student Association (CSA) welcomes all arriving new students with Chinese background or anyone who wishes to pursue the Chinese culture. We understand the difficulties that you may face during your studies at the University of Oregon. We serve as an organization that helps students feel as if they are at

home. CSA will occasionally host events that foster opportunities for new students to meet with returning students and ask about their experiences at University of Oregon. Once again I congratulate you on your admissions and from here on, you will be a duck like us.

The “About Us” page (2005a) explicitly identifies members as Taiwanese in one line, followed by a descriptor identifying those from Taiwan as Chinese:

Chinese Student Association was established by a group of passionate students who wanted to help the new Taiwanese students feel comfortable in this new environment - Eugene, Oregon. This group of students consisted of Chinese students from both Taiwan and USA. Their goal was to share this unique culture and experience with both the Eugene community and the students at U of O. This year CSA officers hold the same belief that we can make a difference in the lives of the new Taiwanese students and the community. Every year we host a special event, which is known as China Night.

This indicates a conceptualization of Taiwan’s identity that includes Taiwan and Taiwanese people within the Chinese cultural, racial and historical domains, with Taiwan being a geographic reference, a local identity. In contrast, the Ohio University Chinese Student Association (2005) notes on a page titled “Understanding Chinese and Taiwanese Culture,” that:

After Civil War in 1949, Taiwan and China are ruled by two governments. Although the political system of both sides is different, Chinese and Taiwanese culture are similar. You also can use mandarin to communicate with Taiwanese people. There are few links below, and you can know more about Taiwanese or Chinese culture.

This element of the website was removed in 2006, when the name was changed to the Taiwanese Student Association (TWSA). The revised and pared content did not include mention Chinese culture or the historical relationship between the two countries and cultures:

The Association is currently funded by Taiwanese students, faculty and staff at Ohio University. The mission of the Association is to serve and connect



Taiwanese students at Ohio University and to improve cultural understanding among Taiwanese students and other communities with different cultures.

Representations of indigenous groups' culture is often used to represent Taiwan at multicultural events because it distinguishes the student association from any other that may be representing Chinese culture, or both Taiwanese and Chinese elements. In Figure 13, male students in Bawan dress each bear a flag: the flag of the Republic of China, paired with an unofficial Taiwanese flag. Between them a groups of Taiwanese college students build a human pyramid. The costumes were borrowed from the Alan Chen in Chicago, and the students used on-line videos to learn "indigenous-style" dances.

**Figure 13: Indigenous Dress and Contrasting Flags at TSA Events**



### **C. Non-Chinese Taiwan**

The Taiwanese Student Association at Louisiana State University (2002) has a history of radical shifts between the extremes of Taiwan-centric and Sinocentric content. The group, which will be discussed in greater detail below in the segment regarding the 1995-1996 index events, included a notation germane to the discussion at this point, distinguishing itself from other associations of students from Taiwan and China on campus. They point out that although members from the TSA and Chinese Student Association are from Taiwan, they view Taiwanese-ness in very different ways:

Ideologically, most of CSA's members regard themselves as Chinese even though they do not consider Taiwan as part of PR China. On the other hand, TSA's members support the Taiwanese independence movement and advocate the rights of Taiwanese to determine their own future. CSSA was formed by the Chinese students and professionals from PRC. Despite CSA's constitution stating that any LSU Chinese student is eligible to become a member of CSA, very few PRC students join CSA. The activities sponsored by TSA include public speeches and seminars concerning the current issues and perspectives of Taiwan, while CSA has main activities such as sports, picnics, and festival celebrations.

In 2001, the students from the Taiwan-oriented group fought vociferously for the right to display the flag of the Republic of China in the university International Cultural Center, a conflict which drew international attention (2002b). The student group from China had requested the flag not be allowed to be displayed based on the reasoning that the ROC was not formally recognized by the U.S. government. They were supported by letters from the Chinese consulate in Houston, and ultimately direct intervention from Beijing. A compromise was proposed: that they display the flag used by Taiwan in the International Olympic Games, "Chinese Taipei," an option the basis of which was described in Chapter One.

### **III. Student Associations, Index Events, and Historic Generations**

#### **A. Democratization (1986-1987)**

The Harvard Taiwan Study Club (1999) origin narrative identifies the end of the martial law era (1947 – 1987) in Taiwan as the immediate context for its formation, and couches descriptions of its activities in the terminology of democratic participation and civic responsibility. Moreover, the statement reveals that not only does it address the pertinent topics of Taiwan in the meeting's activities, but it is also focused on producing the next generation of Taiwanese leaders:

Harvard University Taiwanese Study Club was established in the end of 1987, a year when the martial law was just abolished and all kinds of social issues suddenly burst out to challenge Taiwan's future. A group of Taiwanese Harvard students thus took up the challenges. They felt the urgency to realize their possible contributions to the mother land in the future. They decided to bring their personal concern into a publish sphere so that they set up this club as a space for academic exchanges which focus on Taiwan's different problems, past, current, and future.

The text refers to a specific subject group of individuals as founders who were distinguishing themselves from another, less political organization at Harvard, that Harvard Taiwanese Cultural Society.<sup>20</sup>

Unlike other association, the activities of this club mainly includes lectures, panel discussion, and informal seminars. In the past, the topics covered Taiwan's economics, politics, history, culture, environmental issues, gender, and labor. At the present and in the future, this club will hold on its tradition based on the spirit of public forum, open up a channel for different voices, provide a place for mutual understanding and exchange, and serve as a preparation stage for people who would devote their personal career to Taiwan's future.

As an index event, the February 28<sup>th</sup> Incident commemoration indicates an interest in Taiwanese history and collective memory, but when taken as a whole, the

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<sup>20</sup> Ng (1998) discussed the Harvard Taiwanese Cultural Society, but neglected to note the existence of HTSC.

content of the page indicates a younger membership whose interests do not involve social activism in the same way the Taiwanese Study Club (2002) does:

Welcome to the TCS home page! TCS is a student organization at Harvard University dedicated to promoting the culture and heritage of Taiwan and Taiwanese-Americans. From cultural workshops teaching mua-ji<sup>21</sup> making to social events like karaoke to events such as our 2-28 Commemoration and annual Winter Festival, our goal is to enhance awareness of Taiwanese culture and provide a place for those interested in learning about Taiwan to meet and discuss their interests. This website provides details of our organization as well as serving as a gathering place for the Taiwanese community.

### **B. Missile Crisis and the Election of Lee Teng-hui (1995-1996)**

The Harvard Taiwanese Study Club was active from 1988 to 1996, when it merged with the Harvard TCS in the context of a major anti-China demonstration on March 15, 1996:

In protest of Chinese missile tests in the Taiwan Strait apparently intended to intimidate voters preparing to vote in Taiwan's first-ever popular presidential election, TCS, along with fellow Harvard Taiwanese groups HROCSC and HUTSC, holds a rally on the steps of Memorial Church to voice their support of the historic milestone in Taiwan's political history, and condemnation of China's intimidation tactics.

One week prior, on March 7<sup>th</sup>, China launched three live missiles 50 nautical miles off the coast of Taiwan in an apparent attempt to turn popular support away from Lee Teng-hui in the upcoming popular presidential election on March 23<sup>rd</sup>. On the 18<sup>th</sup> a major protest was organized in Washington, DC, on the Mall and outside the Chinese embassy, with Taiwanese Americans from all around the country and five U.S. Senators and Congressmen in attendance. Similar events took place in San Francisco, Houston, and New York. TC and WUFI collaborated on organizing an unprecedented nation-wide event on the 22<sup>nd</sup>, a candle-light vigil on the eve of Election Day. What became known

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<sup>21</sup> A specialty of Hualin (Taiwan), *nua-ji* is a type of candy made from stick rice.

as the 322 Vigil was the impetus for Taiwan-centric student associations to emerge, re-name, or reconstitute. Figure 11 indicated a significant spike in TSA establishment in 1996. A group of students at Purdue included this narrative of the events leading up to the election on their website:

It was a very cold night of February 23, 1996. The piercing wind shook people's body but not their heart, like the missile launched by China shaking merely the air but nothing to Taiwanese people's confidence for their first public presidential election in Taiwan. There were about twenty enthusiastic Taiwanese students and professors met together in the basement of Krannert at Purdue University for the discussion of "What can we do for Taiwan?".

The narrative locates the inception of the I Love Taiwan Club at Purdue University (2002) within the stream of historical events shaping the political landscape of Taiwan that would influence the political orientation of a segment of the historic generation to be wary of the Chinese government, regardless of claims for peaceful intent regarding Taiwan. The missile crises had lasting effects among the university-aged students at the time, and reinforced negative attitudes toward China among more senior historic generations involved in founding the Purdue club. However, according to past presidents and local Taiwanese immigrants involved in the I Love Taiwan Club, the leadership and members who experienced these events directly continued to push to maintain a high level of interest in Taiwanese political issues of Taiwan, while younger students were more interested in cultural activities such as those presented at a campus international festival attended by the Madison puppet troupe. In addition to featuring the puppets and performers of the Madison troupe, the Purdue club also performed a dragon dance to the beat of traditional Chinese drums. In a conversation with the club faculty advisor and a representative of TECO in Chicago how the dragon dance represented

Taiwanese culture, they lamented that the youngest generation had a loose interpretation of Taiwanese culture. If Taiwanese history was an amalgamation of different cultures' practices – including those of China – what difference does it make, the students asked, whether or not the *particular* Chinese practice itself was part of Taiwanese traditional Chinese culture brought to Taiwan by pre-Japanese era immigrants from Fujian province?

This turn in interpretation of China's influence on Taiwanese culture was problematic for cultural nationalists of older generations in the U.S., and in particular to those like Alan Chen, who took measures to have the facial features and clothing on hand puppets constructed in China remodeled to reflect the unique nature of Taiwanese traditions, including those borrowed from China in past centuries.

Purdue (2002) narrates the incident from a local perspective, describing it as part of the origin of their organization title:

From July 1995, China announced their plans of military exercise and missile test trying to threaten Taiwanese and to impact Taiwan's presidential election of March 23, 1996. The war across the strait seemed to be in hair-trigger. We can smell that the campus was filled with that intense atmosphere. Disputation regarding the missile test took over the headline news on Exponent, the campus news of Purdue. False information was spreading. China's aggression was dissembled by Chinese nationalism that tried to pick up an excuse for them to invade Taiwan. This is why we called for the meeting. We should defense the fallacy as well as the threat. We should speak out loudly that Taiwan is an independent country and is not a part of China. After long discussion, the decision had been made that we should establish a student organization for those debating; moreover, if the war were unfortunately happened, we should organize ourselves to support our motherland as well as to help Taiwanese students in Great Lafayette area.

Several titles had been proposed for the name of this organization. People eventually sympathized with the opinion of Professor Wen-Yih Sun: "Owing to the historical fallacy and political oppression, Taiwanese people were hardly to speak out their love to Taiwan in the past decades." Therefore, the organization was named "I Love Taiwan Club".

In the same semester, the Taiwanese Student Association at Louisiana State University - mentioned above in the conflict over the ROC flag – was established in January 1996, also in the context of an anti-China protests, including the 322 Vigil on the eve of the presidential elections. Subsequent events included lectures on Taiwanese indigenous issues, Taiwanese traditional musical performances, a lecture on the democracy movement presented by Linda Gail Arrigo, and a presentation on Taiwanese culture, literature and sexuality. They also participated in LSU International Expo events representing Taiwanese culture. In the first years of the organization, the website included a Taiwan-oriented history, as well as links to information about the February 28<sup>th</sup> “revolution,” and an essay by senior activist and 1996 presidential candidate Peng Ming-min. The event information as well as current events updates for Taiwan-related issues ended in 2001. The webpage stopped being updated in 2003. The revised website (2004) no longer included links to past news stories about Taiwan, or information about the flag incident.

### **C. The Politics of Political Neutrality**

Consider the State University of New York, Buffalo Taiwanese Graduate Student Association (TGSA). The group’s purposes include: “to serve all the Taiwanese Graduate students at UB as well as anyone else who cares to drop in. We receive new students then take care of them, and organize outings, sports, socials and other functions for us to get to know each other; basically acting as a focal point for the Taiwanese community here” (2002). They describe themselves in first person: “We are a closely knit group of students who love to bring the multifaceted, dynamic face of Taiwan to

UB.” According to their website they want to “provide a portrayal of Taiwanese culture in all of its diversity, and share the culture and history of Taiwan with the greater campus community.” The activities listed include a Taiwanese folk music performance and a Taiwanese film screening. The TGSA statement on political orientation is framed in terms of open impartiality, but within the text, clear signals are evident indicating a pro-Taiwanese independence position of its core membership:

Our position on Taiwan politics: As a group, we do not take a position on politics; however, healthy discussion of Taiwan affairs on campus is encouraged. Our one common interest is in presenting an accurate image of Taiwan in order to help the campus community understand Taiwan's position in the global community by providing proper historical perspective and current information. We set up talks and discussions with noted figures such as Dr. Linda, G Arrigo, protested against China's missile tests off Taiwan in the run-up to the first direct presidential election, and showed 228 Incident documentary videos.

Although the group explicitly claims political neutrality, a close examination of the context reveals a series of oppositions including a distinction between a “healthy” Taiwan-centric discourse, on the one hand, and inaccurate, inappropriate, misleading and pathological representations of Taiwan on the other. Three index events are referenced (1947, 1979, and 1996) allowing the primary narrative of Taiwan’s identity to develop without the inclusion of the 1971 *Bao-diao* movement. Although the student association was very active between late 1995 and early 1996, activity quickly declined. The website stopped being updated in January, 1998 (2006).

## **IV. Discussion**

### **A. Reading Websites**

Multi-locale ethnographies such as this one choose a series of fixed locations explored as nodes of transfer and transits (Marcus 1986). We are increasingly interested



in looking at permeability rather than bounded phenomena, pluralities rather than homogeneity, yet our notion of fieldwork has traditionally been “a sojourn of at least nine months, and preferably more than a year, in a geographically defined field site remains standard disciplinary practice” (Malkii 1997b:69). She discusses this as a “growing dissonance between research projects and research sites and methods.” Thus, studies of the past do not fit into this model insofar as the “field site” does not exist as a geographically identifiable location.

My website analysis developed from a basic understanding of Taiwanese and Chinese iconography developed from my own previous research as well as instruction from Taiwanese independence supporters who advised me on basic indicators of political orientation as part of my responsibilities as a member of the Taiwanese Collegian. In my notes about each group I would include such iconography and text to determine how to approach each organization. This database, which would eventually become the structural framework for the dissertation’s web-based student association analysis, was further nuanced during fieldwork as I took note of correlating indicators that reflected overall political orientation, such as an analysis of links, cyber-archaeology of past incarnations of websites, archived content from discussion boards, photographs of past events, and biographical narratives found in mission statements. From this work I developed a model to approach website analysis:

1. **Cyber-voyeurism:** website approached as a window into the everyday practices of the organization as viewed through the photographs, event calendars and commentary on student association events, elements included in even the sparsest website. In lieu of grounded participant-observation, this method allowed me to compare practices of scores of student associations.
2. **Cultural artifacts:** websites viewed as a space of cultural production and expression, privileging symbolic elements such as iconography, language use,

and links to other locations in cyberspace. This perspective provides insight into the political and cultural orientation of the membership, as well as insight into the changing meanings of the symbolic repertoire of identity.

3. Institutional persona: student associations understood as having a biography, sometimes involving origin narratives that locate the inception of the organization at an historically significant moment in Taiwanese history, and in other cases explicit statements of political neutrality. In this mode, the website represents the “subjectivity” of the association, thought of as both an expression of current membership, as well as a structuring context for incoming students.

Shifts in the ideological orientation of students in student associations may be indicated by a careful examination of the totality of iconographic and (hyper)textual elements on the page over time. Although no single element was sufficient, constellations of indicators provided enough data to draw tentative conclusions regarding the general conceptualization of Taiwan’s identity among group members. In terms of website interpretation in this research, iconographic elements including images of the Great Wall of China, images of the mainland, dragons, pagodas, the Forbidden City, and so forth, symbolic features not associated with Taiwan until after WWII, were not interpreted in this study as signs of pro-China sentiment among members, but instead as indicators that the members of the association were not acculturated into the community of memory that identifies these elements as problematic, and would have them removed from their web presence. In other words, in this research model, Sinocentric iconography on the web page indicated a conceptualization of Taiwan’s identity that accommodates elements of Chinese culture and history. More direct indicators of conceptualizations of Taiwan’s identity that located Taiwan within the Chinese sphere of cultural history were found in mission statements, constitutions and letters from officers to the web-public that described as one of the organizations’ purposes to promote an interest in Chinese culture,

to bring people together who want to learn more about China, and to serve the needs of Chinese students (from Taiwan) in the college community. Most often, these references were inherited from previous decades when it was inappropriate to use the name “Taiwan.” However, it also serves as an indicator that in the intervening years, no coterie of students took the initiative to institutionalize a change in orientation. I identified these as Sinocentric not because of an assumption that members necessarily supported reunification with China, but rather that there was a low degree of salience for Taiwanese cultural identity as distinguished from Chinese traditions.

Similarly, indicators of Taiwan’s identity that went beyond differentiating the organization from those of students from mainland China described above, include archives of pro-Taiwan and anti-China news articles, hyperlinks to Taiwan-centric organizations such as the Formosan Association of Public Affairs, World United Formosans for Independence, Taiwanese Collegian, the World Taiwanese Congress, and the publication *Taiwan Communiqué*. Further indicators in this vein included links to Taiwan-centric English-language texts mentioned in Chapter One, such as *Formosa Betrayed* by George Kerr (1965), *A Taste of Freedom* by Peng Ming-min (1972), Su Bing’s, *400 Years of Taiwanese History* (1986), among others. I included among these indicators links to sites that dealt with Taiwanese language, culture and history.

However, as far as references to Taiwanese history, I was careful to consider the source and content of Taiwanese history. Links to the Republic of China Governmental Information Office history of Taiwan were not considered indicative of the group’s sense of Taiwan’s identity (though Taiwanese independence supporters would argue otherwise,) but original histories were carefully examined, as some narratives emphasized

anti-colonial struggle, the lasting significance of 2-28, the authoritarian nature of the Nationalist government, the valiant efforts of leaders in the democracy movement, the role of independence activism in pushing Taiwan toward democracy, and the role of Chiang Ching-kuo – Chiang Kai-shek’s son – as head of the secret security forces during the White Terror era. Again, although ROC-centric histories cannot be taken as an indicator of Sinocentric political orientation of membership, it does indicate that students with a Taiwanese consciousness based on alternative historicity were not present in sufficient numbers to change the content of the website.

Additional indicators of Taiwan-centric orientation included using “Taiwan” or “lunar” to describe New Year celebrations, as well as similar choices such as “Taiwanese” rather than “Chinese” night market, and other circumstances where choices were made to name events. As described in Chapter One, these choices may be influenced not only by the students themselves, but also by senior faculty advisors and community sponsors. Motifs of indigenous clothing, rural life (water buffalos and yams, for example,) and the word “Formosa” emphasize the uniqueness of Taiwanese culture without references to Chinese traditions.

Use of the ROC flag on student association websites was taken to indicate Taiwan’s identity as Republic of China, not the People’s Republic of China. Organizations whose members conceptualized Taiwan outside the rubric of the ROC/PRC dichotomy, however, would display a wide range of flags, including the flag of the short-lived Democratic Republic of Taiwan in 1895. In an interesting example, the original Taiwanese independence opposition movement flag (an eight-petaled flower on a white field between green bars) has been adapted as webpage iconography of the

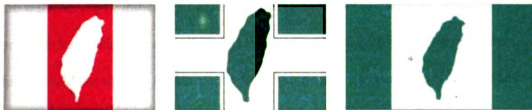
Berkeley Students for Sovereign Taiwan student club (Figure 14), a group which – as their name implies – was founded to advocate for Taiwanese national independence.

**Figure 14: Democratic Republic of Taiwan Flag Quoted in Association Iconography**



The shape of the island itself has become a more common alternative to the ROC flag, or a flag specifically used to represent Taiwanese sovereignty. However, three flags in particular have historical significance beyond indicating the island of Taiwan. Figure 15 illustrates the WUFI icon (left), the flag of the DPP (center), and an unofficial Taiwan national flag (right). These graphics were taken as explicit statements of a conceptualization of Taiwan's identity as an independent nation-state.

**Figure 15: Three Flags with Taiwan Silhouettes**



Images representing specific practices, artifacts, identifiable places and other meaning-bearing signs not wholly appropriated and immediately associated with the nation-state are also incorporated into website design to indicate conceptualizations of Taiwan's identity.

In Figure 16, for example, Taiwan is associated with tropics fruit, puppetry, indigenous groups of Malayo-Polynesian decent living on Taiwan, and rural lifestyle. This graphic is taken to represent a conceptualization of Taiwan independent of Chinese influence.

**Figure 16: The “Nativization” of Website Iconography**



Links locate websites in virtual space and help interpret some of the multivalent symbolic elements. In addition to meaning-laden images such as emblems of nation-states, site-as-artifact also allows an analysis of hyperlinks as indicators that provide clues to what is deemed important to the members, as well as what the members feel is important for external constituents. Loosening the moorings of the website to a specific geographic location and group of individuals, links locate the group web page in cyberspace, and are therefore critical to understanding the full meaning and purpose of the website. They indicate what the organization views as valuable, with whom they prefer to have relations and alliances, what information and institutions the organizations feels would (or should) be of interest to members and the general public. In terms of multi-locale and trans-local ethnography, I took the hyperlinks of student association websites to be an element constitutive of the site itself, and thus a key indicator of the organization’s overall position regarding the issue of Taiwan’s identity.

A “real world” comparison is always problematic as the dichotomy between virtual and real is a misleading one. Hyperlinks may be read in the same way the

magazines in the lobby of an organization would be as revealing as the organization's directly published materials which may not be as revealing of the organization's affiliations, leanings and ideologies. Another analogy would be the loss of sponsors of an event. The formal literature of the event may not reveal the underlying orientation evident in an analysis of the organizations supporting the group's activities.

### **B. Taiwan as the Republic of China, Taiwan as Cultural China**

Elements of Chinese culture present in Taiwan are highlighted as representative of Taiwan as China. This can take two forms. In the first, elements of Chinese culture present in Taiwan are highlighted, and in the second, Taiwan's identity is abstracted to include all of Chinese culture, whether it exists in a local form on Taiwan or not.

Some websites contained elements that presented Taiwan as a nation-state denied international recognition. These posed both the PRC and the ROC as hegemonic discourses. Whereas Taiwan's Chinese identity could be divided between its political and cultural elements, Taiwan's national identity is primarily based on historical narratives and collective memory, along with elements of local culture distinguished to some extent from Chinese cultural influence.

Few of the remaining Republic of China student association (ROCSA) websites made explicit statements regarding their origin and foundation; most were originally an extension of the Nationalist government in the U.S. In principle, historically, all students from Taiwan officially belong to the ROCSA.<sup>22</sup> The government in Taiwan provided the

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<sup>22</sup> In a similar pattern of ROC-sponsored student associations on campuses, the PRC also established organizations, most commonly named Chinese Students and Scholars Associations (CSSAs). Reflecting the PRC position that Taiwan is a "renegade province," or perhaps simply that the PRC represents all Chinese in diaspora, including those living in Taiwan, CSSAs usually define a membership which includes people from Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore, and second generation Chinese Americans. Although

organization lists and contact information regarding incoming students, and used this organization as its primary way to communicate with a given school's Taiwanese student population. For this reason, students on some campus received e-mail from two campus organizations of *liuxuesheng*, though they may be active in only one. Their original function included providing support resources for new students such as information about housing, travel, school, and so on. The moment of its foundation was not historically informed by the presence of an alternative Taiwan-centric organization.

Although many student association websites emphasized the importance of heightening public awareness of Taiwan's international status, none referenced the need to promote Chinese consciousness or identity, or awareness of Chinese issues in international affairs. Similarly, one of the most striking differences between Sino- and Taiwan-centric websites had to do with what I am calling "institutional persona," taken to mean the narrative expression of purpose that moves beyond mission statements into the genre of autobiography: "We, the people..." Although Sinocentric websites sometimes used the collective voice, as in, "the CSA is a group of students who wish to promote an interest in Chinese culture...", only Taiwan-centric sites included autobiographical origin narratives, such as the I Love Taiwan club origin narrative at the opening of this chapter. Text expressing Taiwan-centric association persona are decreasing in frequency; most included in this research were found through cyber-archaeology, and date to the mid- and late 1990s.

As the dissertation field work drew to a close, and during the subsequent period of data analysis, I was able to identify an additional trend in this vein. Although many

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ROCSAs and CSSAs claim to represent all Chinese, in practice, CSSA members are primarily from the PRC.



student association websites included an auxiliary bulletin board of some sort, either built into the site itself, or an external program such as an MSN or Yahoo group, the emerging trend was a decline in relative significance of the website itself, and an increased use of the discussion board.

### **C. Advantages and Limitations of Internet-based Research**

Although this approach yielded a wealth of qualitative data, the degree to which website information can be assumed to be representative of the general consensus of the collective is limited. Although no systematic method was employed to verify the assumption that website content reflected the current attitudes of the greater part of the student association membership, anecdotal evidence from conversations with past and current student association members indicate a series of factors that undermine that assumption. In some cases, the website was outdated, reflecting the views of a group of students who were no longer active members. This would limit the validity of correlations between specific historical events and the attitudes presented on websites. In other cases, website content was reflective of only a few students' attitudes, while most members remained indifferent to the specific content of the site. What may appear to be widely-shared beliefs about an event may in fact be the sentiments of a limited number of particularly active and vocal student association members and with influence over website content. Widespread ambivalence about an issue may not be accurately measured through website analysis alone.

Finally, as was clearly the case in this research, the assumption outlined at the beginning of this chapter – that websites are the primary mode of communicating to other student associations, incoming students, and the general public, the ways in which the

distinguish themselves from other student associations, specifically others from Taiwan and China – was increasingly problematic as many student associations abandoned the website format altogether in favor of bulletin boards, Yahoo!, MSN and Facebook groups and networks.

## **CHAPTER 5: SECOND GENERATION TAIWANESE AMERICANS**

### **I. The Second generation Taiwanese American Movement**

#### **A. WUFI Kids: Formosan Americans and the Children of the Revolution**

Beginning in the early 1990s second-generation Taiwanese Americans, many of whom had been influenced by their own parents' activism, began establishing their own networks of student associations, often coexisting with one or two organizations of *liuxuesheng* already established on campuses. In addition to Taiwanese American student associations (TASAs), the Taiwanese government and private organizations have organized cultural tour programs especially for this generation, ostensibly to add depth and meaning to students' Taiwanese and/or Chinese heritage. The first of the Taiwanese youth born in the U.S., children of the gradually increasing number of people who came to study in the U.S. from Taiwan in the 1960s and decided against returning, moved through the university system in the early 1990s, and were in their mid- to late thirties during my time in the field. Among them were children whose parents immigrated to the U.S. not as students, but rather as transnational labor migrants enabled by immigration law reforms in the U.S. and in Taiwan. Their undergraduate progeny are removed from Taiwan through their parents' exile or immigration; most have not been instrumental in developing Taiwanese national identity, but approach it as a cultural inheritance, viewing Taiwan's identity as primarily cultural and historical. Many have little or no Holo language skills, and few have spent extended periods of time in Taiwan. Few have a command of Taiwanese history beyond Lee Teng-hui, the first index event they have biographical memories of, and have been most impressed by the election of Chen Shui-bian in 2000. His arrest may have a long-lasting negative effect on the Taiwanese

independence movement, further shifting public opinion toward greater contact between Taiwan and China.

Although this was a time when Asian American studies programs were forming on campuses across the U.S., Taiwanese American discourse did not fall neatly into the broad rubric of Asian American empowerment. The contrast was on the relative significance placed on issues in the U.S. versus issues facing home countries. Glenn Omatsu (1994), for example, points to the 1968 San Francisco State strike as the beginning of the Asian American movement. For Taiwanese Americans, however, the focus has been on events and circumstances in Taiwan, their relationship with the nationalist government in the U.S., and their experiences dealing with individuals from mainland China, rather than their position as a racialized minority in the U.S. Lien (2006) reports that the 22% of the sample of Taiwanese in the U.S. who were supporters of Taiwanese independence were associated with greater dislike of PRC government, and that the 33 percent of Taiwanese who identify themselves as Taiwanese Americans were “uniquely less likely to adopt US nationality” (19). Germane to the discussion of Taiwanese Americans’ relationship with the broader Asian American politics, Lien also found that supporters of Taiwanese independence were less likely to identify as Chinese Americans, and less likely to identify as Asian Americans.

For example, turn once more to the experiences of Tim Chng, son of Strong and Joyce Chng discussed above. Born in 1971, Tim spent most of his early years among other *benshengren* professionals, and though many were political dissidents, they were by trade doctors, engineers, chemists, and successful businessmen. He remembers the people Joyce described, coming and going in his house, and that he was not allowed to

ask names. In 1988 the World Taiwanese Congress – the quasi-official political movement supported by independence activism abroad – was held in Taipei, the first time the umbrella activist organization met in Taiwan. Many Taiwanese independence activists returned to Taiwan – including Tim’s father – and at great risk, particularly because he was a representative of WUFI. Tim remembers that this was one of the most important moments in his father’s life, and it was a powerful experience to see his father’s work and sacrifices come to fruition. Although his mother said that he never complained, he nonetheless felt like his father’s sacrifices were also his own. The following year, the 1989 second World Congress meeting was held in Kaohsiung. Strong and Joyce were not able to go because they were on the Black List by this time due to their involvement with the independence movement. Tim and his sister Rolla applied for Visas independent of their parents, claiming that they were unable to write their parents’ Chinese names, which would have revealed their ineligibility due the restrictions placed on their parents. “It wasn’t lying,” Tim explained, “because my dad only had a Taiwanese name.” Tim, 18 years old at the time, and Rolla, 19, both described the event as a formative one. Tim said that he and his sister “got hooked into the whole Taiwanese movement there too. . . . The energy at the conference was really electrifying, the desire of the people for wanting to change, and all the things that as a kid growing up seeing my father working for actually starting to be realized.”

He noted the change between a Taiwan ruled “not by assassins from Szechwan province who think that Taiwanese people are sub-human,” but rather by *benshengren* – even that the troops dispatched to control the returning dissidents were predominantly *benshengren*, and would not have followed orders to move against the activists:

People are not being afraid anymore, which was all exciting. When I went back to my university I just wanted to get involved straight up, . . . and there was already a TSA association there which my father was a part of starting when he went there earlier. Unfortunately when I went to [college] I found that the Fear was still there, you know the campus spies were still there, the fear of the Taiwanese grad students was very present.

It was in April of that year that Taiwanese independence activist Cheng Nan-jung, in advance of his imminent arrest for the re-publication of a draft of a Republic of Taiwan constitution, committed self-immolation. A second activist did so during the funeral procession. Strong was deeply moved by the events, and attributes the martyrdom as having created momentum for the movement at that time, both in Taiwan and among student-immigrants in the U.S.

Tim explained that although he was very educated about the political events in Taiwan, and among the Taiwanese independence movement in the U.S., the message of groups focusing on Asian American empowerment did not resonate. "Some of us still wanted to care about Taiwan." He said that "in the 80s and early '90s, the business in Taiwan wasn't done. There were still people getting thrown in prison, torturing going on, terrible injustices, no democracy." It was not until he and his sister traveled by train across the U.S. that he first saw working-class Chinese and learned about Asian American oppression in the U.S. He describes the contradictions and disjunctures between the Taiwanese American experiences with the broader Asian American empowerment movement, which by definition included Taiwan in discourses of oppression in the U.S., though in practice there was little overlap:

So we had a view of Asian as all privileged. So someone comes and says we need to organize as Asian Americans, someone who is in touch with the whole Asian oppression history to someone who is completely uneducated about the history of oppression of the Asian, or the current Asian oppression in the sweat shops or Asian working class. I had never been to Chinatown at that point. For me it was

inconceivable that this was very urgent, while in Taiwan we saw a lot of political prisoners. I was shocked to see an Asian woman doing manual labor outside! . . .

When someone familiar with the West Coast Asian Pacific American oppression movement is coming to try to sell a Midwestern boy who every Asian person he knows through his family is an engineer or a doctor, or a professor, or if they are a business person, they were doing pretty darn well. . . . They don't seem to be lacking at all.

So I decided to just dive completely into the Taiwanese movement, and didn't really take the American movement that seriously. Which was wrong, because they are all related, right? But at the time, being a young person totally bombarded about the history of martial law in Taiwan, all these political prisoners going through the door, and growing up in the suburbs.

Although many in their generation shared similar experiences, and were shaped by the same historical contexts, including being raised by blacklisted independence supporters who shared a collective sense of fear, urgency, despair, and paranoia, one of the WUFI kids' generation's defining characteristics was a commonly experienced sense of alienation from others in their cohort. As a sub-division within their historic generation, they were bonded by teen-age experiences shared in common, but not in concert, until their early college years. In general they were in a better financial situation than their parents' generation, and unlike their parents, the WUFI kids were most active during their undergraduate years, single, with no children of their own. Moreover, they were able to take advantage of new communication technologies which could maximize the impact of a small number of geographically dispersed individuals.

## **B. Taiwanese American Student Associations**

In 1989 Tim's family moved to Philadelphia. Until then, they had only attended annual Midwest Taiwanese American Association (TAA) meetings, which were smaller and less political than the East Coast Taiwanese American Conference (TAC/EC)

meetings. Tim first began to understand the potential of young Taiwanese Americans at the 1990 TAC/EC. There were about 2 thousand adults and 1 thousand young Taiwanese Americans; of those, Tim estimates that about 250 were dedicated to Taiwanese issues, and wanted to participate in the political process. Most were college students at Ivy League schools, but some were still in high school. They realized that there were no Taiwanese *American* student associations on any of their campuses, and decided to return to their respective schools and establish Taiwanese American Student Associations (TASAs):

I remember a whole bunch of us also began to think, “well, we are not just Taiwanese now – we are Taiwanese Americans.” That was an important difference. . . . This whole notion of Asian American-ism is a new concept for us Midwesterners; anyone who was not from the West coast, or New York, you know? So at that meeting, we decided to rename [Intercollegiate Taiwanese Student Associations – ITSA] to ITASA, Intercollegiate Taiwanese *American* Student Association

When they met again at TAC/EC the following year, they decided to begin building a network organization, wrote a mission statement that stressed activism, and planned to hold a conference the following year at the University of Pennsylvania.

The impetus was in 1992, WUFI had already gone back to Taiwan, they all got thrown into jail. They went back, said “We’re back!” and had a big public relations banquet, and the KMT were like – “Oh, they are letting us capture them all at once!” And that is exactly what happened. But we had already mobilized our support: Amnesty International had them all declared “Prisoners of Conscious”. We had a letter writing campaign at the banquet table in advance. . .

It was completely political and ideological. It was all about getting political prisoners out of jail, like uncle whoever is in jail, uncle whoever is in jail. The people who came to these first key meetings were the Taiwanese American kids of these political prisoners, the WUFI kids.

One of the first of these new organizations, the Taiwanese American Student Club (TASC) at University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, was founded by Rolla Chng, who



had been to TAC/EC in 1990. They described the organization's mission in these terms: "In the spring of 1991, TASC was formed as a student organization at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign to provide Taiwanese American students with a sense of unity, identity, and support." Their objectives: "To educate and promote awareness in Taiwanese culture, heritage, history, and future; To create a bond with a sense of affinity and community within the TASC membership; To instill in the individual member a path of self-identity." They worked to spread Taiwanese consciousness among those who had not had the same kinds of experiences and social education growing up which drove the WUFI kids toward activism, and had a lasting influence on the historical generation of Taiwanese American youth. Although the mission of the organization was couched in the discourse of identity, key elements speak to the subject of this dissertation, that of the Taiwan's identity. The first objective is key: "To educate and promote awareness in Taiwanese culture, heritage, history, and future." This resonates with Li-lin and Hiro's efforts to educate members of the puppet troupe and curling team about Taiwanese history and culture. The underlying assumption is that most Taiwanese Americans' conceptualizations of Taiwan's identity lack historical and cultural content. They are tasked with defining Taiwan in such a way that it will compel members to act in the interests in Taiwan's future. It is through the process of informing conceptualization of Taiwan that a "path to self-identification" may be created.

Similarly themed Taiwanese American student associations were established at Purdue (1992), Brown (1992), University of Pennsylvania (1992), University of Michigan (1993), Yale (1993), Princeton (1994), Harvard (1995), Northwestern (1996), Stanford (1997), Cornell (1997), Berkeley (1999), MIT (2000), UCLA (2001), Wellesley

(2001), and Tufts (2003). Most were founded by the children of early Taiwanese independence supporters who were raised in households with a heightened awareness of political oppression – whether from direct experience, the experiences of family members and family friends, and narratives told by elder generations of past events. Many of these students attended Taiwanese youth camps and accompanied their parents to meetings of Taiwanese organizations, and close ties were formed among this generation's more politically conscious individuals

In the summer of 1992, Tim was an intern for the Asia Resource Center. This organization focused on social justice, had advocated against the war in Viet Nam, and had made public some of the excesses of the Nationalist government in the 1970s and 1980s. They funded Tim to travel to the six regional TAA conferences and encourage Taiwanese American youth there to form organizations, and learn about Taiwan. The parents were excited for him to arrange a program for their children, as generally the kids were bored at these kinds of conferences, and he developed a repertoire of activities and workshops. This type of networking by Tim and others had an influence on younger Taiwanese Americans whose households were less dangerous than those of the WUFI kids, but the events that had such a profound impact on them were not part of the younger Taiwanese Americans' immediate experiences. Although most observers put the two groups in a single category, there is a distinct division in generational consciousness between elder and junior members of the second generation Taiwanese Americans. The next segment will present two early Taiwan-centric Taiwanese American student associations, including comments on the ways in which they have changed over time.

### **C. Brown University**

One of the first Taiwanese American organizations – the Brown Taiwan Society (est. 1992) – described their mission in the first issue of their newsletter *The Formosan*:

**BTS ... Why are we Here?**

Last Fall, several of us Brown students got together to discuss our ideas for starting a new student organization for the purpose of encouraging dialogue about Taiwan. Though Brown already had a dozen or so Asian groups, we felt that none of them could or would address the political, economic, social, and cultural issues concerning Taiwan and its people. . . .

BTS was founded for more than just discussing political concerns or sponsoring study breaks. Rather our focus is to promote community awareness of Taiwan's rich history, society, and future, as well as other interests you may have. It doesn't matter whether you consider yourself Taiwanese, Chinese, Hakka, or 100% American. Each one of us has been influenced by Taiwan in one way or another. . . . Whether through guest speakers, conversational hours, group discussions, films, dumpling dinners, study abroad opportunities, dances, or even a GISP, we want to facilitate an exchange of ideas and opinions in hope of fostering a better understanding of what Taiwan is all about (I:1).

The group explicitly distinguishes between your self-identification ("whether you consider yourself Taiwanese, Chinese, Hakka, or 100% American") from an understanding of Taiwan. At its inception, what is most critical to the founding members is that they cultivate an understanding of Taiwan's identity, and work to effect positive change. In essence, they are proposing that members come together and discuss their conceptualization of Taiwan, "to better understand what Taiwan is all about."

In subsequent 1992 issues of *The Formosan*, BTS reprinted an LA Times (April, 25, 1992) article describing a violent police crackdown on Taiwanese reform demonstration in Taipei (I:2), and a "What's Happening in Taiwan Today?" column described six recent issues regarding Taiwan and GATT, its relationship with South Korea, economic news, and Taiwanese sports (I:3). Further, the BTS 1992 Taiwanese

Cultural Celebration described the event as an exploration of Taiwanese American identity:

Everything You Wanted to Know About Taiwanese Culture But Were Afraid to Ask.

By Alice Tseng.

Are all Taiwanese-Americans (T-A's) excited to learn about their cultural heritage? Perhaps not. After all, we live in America. Wouldn't we want to become ordinary Americans? Wouldn't we want cool parents who grill burgers instead of Chinese cabbage and take us to football games and shopping malls instead of violin lessons?

On the other hand, many of us have undeniable ties to Taiwan which make us different. Beyond appearances, we have our own cultures, traditions, and values which have had a special impact on our lives. "How can I maintain my identity as a T-A?" you ask. Instead of being sucked in by American culture, you should learn more about your Taiwanese side and preserve your identity collectively with other T-A's.

Those were just some of the many reasons for why BTS decided to sponsor the *Taiwanese Cultural Celebration* over the weekend of..." (I:4).

The event attracted over seventy students from twelve schools, primarily in the Northeast region, but students from Purdue and Stanford also attended. The conference activities included Taiwanese folk songs and stories, aboriginal and Hakka dances, and tai-chi. Taiwanese American students gathered "to share their knowledge, to discuss the purpose of Taiwanese groups, and to meet with others with similar interests."

Associations met to discuss "the purpose of Taiwanese clubs."

They broke down into small groups to share their "perspective of and exposure to Taiwanese culture." They hosted a Harvard professor recognized as a Taiwanese cultural expert knowledgeable in Taiwanese folk stories and songs who gave an introduction to the art forms. The attendees chose between four workshops teaching aspects of Taiwanese culture: "aboriginal and Hakka tea-picking dances, learning tai-chi, learning

Taiwanese folk songs, or learning Chinese drawing. In the late afternoon, the leadership and representatives of attending organizations met to discuss “the role and agenda of their respective groups.” The evening was Taiwan Night, a kind of variety show with humorous skits (a *kung fu* comedy sketch,) dancing, and a final set of KTV. The weekend ended with a traditional Taiwanese breakfast; “The food was devoured. (Since when did T-A’s begin liking pickled garlic, 1,000 year old eggs, and chili bamboo shoots? Mom and Dad would be proud!)”

At this time the BTS established a library of books and materials related to Taiwan; the organization was clearly functioning as a location for explorations of both Taiwanese identity on a subjective level, as well as Taiwan’s identity through education. According to accounts, it was a powerful experience in the lives of the people involved. Further, recall that one of the objective listed in most TASA groups’ pages deals with mutual support, and the importance of creating a community or peers with similar backgrounds and interests. As will be discussed below in the context of study tours to Taiwan (or Republic of China) often the most powerful experiences are associated with interpersonal bonding rather than roots exploration or seeking a greater understanding of Taiwan’s identity. Iris Yen ( II:2) put it this way:

Looking back on my four years at Brown, a few things stand out in my mind as especially memorable. Like hearing ‘phallo-logo-centric hegemony’ for the first time, or meeting my first-year unitmates, or working on BTS. When Sabrina Su ’94 and I first met to seriously talk about starting a “Taiwan Club,” I never imagined that it would be as big or active as it is now. BTS has been one of my most rewarding experiences. . . . You Guys have really made me feel a part of a group, and I’ll always remember that as one of the best things about BTS.

As a graduating senior, Yen would go on to write a response to a warning from a professor on campus. He had made the comment that, though he was impressed with the group, he had concerns about its staying power after the original founders leave. “What??!,” Yen wrote, “I say we should take him up on this challenge and prove him wrong! Good luck in the future, BTS

Arguably the high-point of the first generation of ITASA was the 1996 Midwest conference at Northwestern (ITASA 1996). Titled: “Voice and Vision: Talking About Today, Looking Towards Tomorrow, the program was led by a guiding committee from the classes of ’96 and ’97, born around 1974-1975, as well as a coterie of East Coast ITASA leadership. The conference theme “emphasizes the discussion of current events with a plan of action for the future. Now more than ever, we need to be aware not only of our past, but of the here and now. We also need to know in what ways we can devote our efforts to provide for the future. The 1996 DPP presidential candidate Dr. Peng Ming-Min was the keynote speaker: “Dr. Peng will come all the way from Taiwan to share his personal experiences and struggles as a Taiwanese leader. Whether you are familiar with him or not, be prepared for a man with both voice and vision.” This set the tone of the conference. Other topics in the set of political workshops include: “Current Political Issues in Taiwan,” and “Grassroots Activism.” The latter was organized by Tim and Rolla Chng and offered instruction on how to organize a “collective quest for identity”:

As Taiwanese Americans, it is imperative that we preserve our unique blend of culture and ideas. The best way to keep all this alive is to get together with those who share those same identities by forming your own group. ITASA, the Intercollegiate Taiwanese American Students Association, founded by college students, will share all the tips and secrets to how to form a successful group of your own.

Similarly, but reflective of another generation, a workshop on the Kaohsiung Incident delivered by Linda Arrigo presented a historical narrative in which the experience of biographical memory overshadow events experienced vicariously:

How did the movement for Taiwan's independent identity begin? Who was involved? What were the consequences of their actions? It all began that one fateful night in Kao Hsiung with a group of the courageous who fought for what they believed in.

A second category of workshops addressed "Second Generation Issues Among Taiwanese Americans," including a segment by three Taiwanese "non-mainstream" professionals discussing with the younger generation on the pressures placed on the second generations by parents who want their children to become doctors. A workshop also discussed Taiwanese Americans in the Asian American Movement, "Airing Dirty Laundry."

Where do we place ourselves among the historical, cultural, and political continuum of Asian/Pacific Americans? How do we understand and critique our privilege as "brain drain" children in neo-liberal America? Presently, as we watch reactionary forces in the United States strip poor, working-class Asian immigrants of their civil and human rights, what positions are we willing to take What struggles are we willing to engage? Are we even accountable? This workshop will also draw (potential) linkages between the struggles for Taiwanese independence and the current struggles on the Asian American left.

Raising the issue of how Taiwanese Americans relate to the Asian/Pacific American movement opens a new discussion regarding Taiwan's identity. It shifts emphasis away from discourse of cultural authenticity toward a class-based critique of minority relations in the U.S. The examination resonates with the Formosan identity of Taiwan insofar as it views Taiwan's position in terms of international relations, yet differs in that the second generation Taiwanese Americans is in a very different position in terms of resources, power, and privilege.

The 1996 ITASA marked a turning point in the organization. When the professor at Brown warned Iris Yen that the group may have trouble once the founding members graduate, she hoped that the incoming students would prove him wrong. By 1998, however, it was clear that there were conflicting goals and expectations among the participants in BTS, and that the original activist mission no longer reflected the views of the membership. In the farewell issue of *The Formosan* (IV:2), one graduating senior writes:

I have many great memories of being in BTS with great friends: taking trips to ITASA, performing cultural shows, and preparing for various fairs. . . . However, there is still much to be done in BTS. I hope that future classes will take our group to another level by expanding our organization from its purely social state to something more political and cultural in nature. Become more involved in the growing political and social movements within the United States that are centered around Taiwan. In addition, make efforts to keep students at Brown and in even Providence aware of our culture and the issues which are important to us and our community.

Make BTS distinct from groups like [Korean Student Association] and [Chinese Student Association] which are completely socially-oriented and have very little impact on campus. Performing humorous skits at the Asian Arts Festival is fine but isn't there much more to what Taiwan or Taiwanese-ness is all about?

The shift in political orientation from activism to social events was apparent in other TASA programs as well. As the WUFI generation moved into professional private sector jobs, the interests of new members began to shape the agendas. The orientation within ITASA reflected the shift, with elder members playing key roles in developing a program that maintained the activist mission while accommodating the interests of non-political Taiwanese American undergraduates.

#### **D. Berkeley Students for a Sovereign Taiwan**

Launched in 1998 Berkeley Students for a Sovereign Taiwan (BST) used their website as a resource for news stories, legislation related to Taiwan, as well as a range of



other information about indigenous groups in Taiwan, the plight of Tibet, attacks against the *Fa Lun Gong*, and other progressive topics (2004). The site offered a self-descriptive narration that represented themselves in the broad terms of social movement:

BST's members are grassroots activists concerned about issues pertaining to Taiwan sovereignty and democracy and come from all ethnic and racial backgrounds. BST also frequently works in collaboration with other social justice and human rights organizations such as Students for a Free Tibet and the Progressive Student Alliance.

Included among these are articles dealing with the relationship between Taiwanese and Polynesian ancestry, the discrimination against Taiwanese indigenous groups participating in the UN, Taiwan's bid for the UN, the WHO, commemoration of 2-28, and a log of a number of local and national protests and demonstrations, letter campaigns, and news conferences. Tim Chng described their formation in this way:

Students for a Sovereign Taiwan, 1996-7 I think. They decided: "we're going to do this." They established the Berkeley Students for a Sovereign Taiwan, which was formerly the Berkeley Taiwanese Student Association, primarily a social club. By their senior year, they were ready to host an ITASA conference; they had a team of hard-working Taiwanese American students who were deeply committed. And they ran it, and it was great. Then there were other groups in the Bay Area, the movement went to Southern California, then Seattle... that was when the West Coast movement got started. It started with those two girls who really worked their tails off.

That page lasted through the Spring semester from 2002 to 2003. Last updated of 2004. The Homepage banner was revised to read BST in English without mention of sovereignty, and in *hanji* the page was titled "Berkeley Taiwanese Student Association" (2005b). In addition to a new homepage design, the news stories, reports, and other documents accumulated over the first four years of activity are not included in the new website.

The clearest evidence of a shift is in the links. The site in 1999 had the following links to the Presbyterian Church of Taiwan, Taiwanese Collegian, WUFI, FAPA, websites about Taiwanese history, and environmental groups (both Taiwanese and in the US), East Timor, Tibet, Mongolia, Eastern Turkistan, and Burma. None of these are on the site except for Taiwan, Ilha Formosa, a resource page of current events and information published by *Taiwan Communiqué*: “The website for Taiwan’s history, present and future.”

There are now far fewer links, and those that deal with Taiwan deal with Taiwanese language. The history of the organization is still available on the site, as well as the activities and campaigns going back to 1998, but the archive of news stories has been removed. An example of a pattern emerging across the country, an increasing amount of communication and sharing of information had shifted to the BBS forum.

#### **E. The Webolution: CyberGarden of Yams and YamWeb**

After he graduated from Purdue in 1994, Tim passed the second generation Taiwanese American address database he had compiled to a younger group of ITASA leaders, and became less active in the organization. He remembers that Alvin, five years his junior, was unhappy with the organization after the 1990-1991 class graduated. The incoming college students for the most part were less political, a shift which Tim associated with the 1994 direct presidential election in Taiwan, a watershed in the democratization process in Taiwan. He continued touring on the Taiwanese Collegian circuit on the weekends as he worked for a consulting firm, eventually establishing YAMS network (1996), the first sustained use of the Internet for Taiwanese political activism. His location between generations, to have been so strongly influenced by the

late 1980s era democracy movement in Taiwan and among overseas supporters while in the vanguard of the Taiwanese American movement, highlighted for him the tensions between those focused on Taiwan, and slightly younger Taiwanese Americans moving into the TASAs Tim and Rolla had been instrumental in establishing.

The thing about TC is that they started talking real about issues, like the environmental issue, women's issues, indigenous rights issues, zoning issues, educational reform; these are things that valid issues that might have been better for ITASA, but the level of discourse is so beyond what the typical Taiwanese American's understanding of Taiwan would even be unable to grasp. There was a complete disconnect. When ITASA was still trying to tell Taiwanese Americans what 2-28 was, and for TC that was old, old; like – 'yeah, yeah, I was shocked by that when I was 12' – the typical TC-er, right?

There was an overlap in internet activism in the mid 1990s, with the development of YamWeb: CyberGarden of Yams, from February, 1995 to January 1996. This site was mirrored in English and Hanji, with Big5 fonts available. The site was based on "Multi-Localization Enhancement of NCSA Mosaic 2.4" and was viewable with Netscape, but not Internet Explorer.

"Yam", as a linguistic entity, denotes a kind of naturally grown food. But, for Taiwanese, it means more than that. Geographically, the Formosa have a similar shape as yams. As a kind of food, it was part of major source for Taiwanese. In addition, yam can grow and proliferate in many sterile lands. Strength of sustainability and the will to struggle with harsh livings not only identify with the history of Taiwanese, but also become part of the nature of Taiwanese. "Yam" is the same term, of identity and of aspiration, as "Taiwanese".

The main links displayed prominently on the home page were to the Taiwan Labor Front; the Frontier Foundation; Taiwan Association of University Professors; the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan; Taiwan Association for Human Rights; Institute of New Congress; Formosa Aboriginal Singing and Dancing Troupe; and other progressive

organizations related to indigenous issues, free press, and environmental protection. The site goes on to explain YamWeb's central mission:

Most of all, we sincerely invite all ethnic groups of aborigines, new immigrants and Hakkaians, and grassroots organization for ecological and environmental protection and preservation, to participate in this grand construction of a brand new public sphere. If you like to join us, please mail to us.

The June 1995 issue was titled "Webolution," with the articles such as "Grassroots in Cyberspace," "Telecommunication and Democracy," and "The Promise and Challenge of New Communications Age," expressing an optimism about the liberating potential of the Internet as a means for collective action and progressive change. YamWeb was supported by a number of academics and professionals in the electronic engineering field from the Institute of Information Science, Academia Sinica (in Taiwan), the Department of Electronics, Taiwan of Polytechnic Institute Department of Computer Science and Information Engineering, National Taiwan University.

They also credit "the Task Force of the Formosa on WWW Project at Frontier Foundation for their assistance with most of the organizations in writing up their homepages." The Formosa on WWW Project was active from 1993 to 1998, the first five years of the Internet, and a period of rapid growth, measured in periods of months, in terms of new formats for viewing pages, new scripts for web design, and so on, including Mosaic; Gopher; World Wide Web; SeedNet, the first Taiwanese Internet network; BBS in Linux; Winsock; Sun; and Chameleon. YamWeb was on-line from 1995 to 1999, with 50 issues and a total of 284 postings by 151 individuals (Rolla, 15; Rosie, 14. Tim, 12; Wan-Lin, 11; Karen Liao, 7; Lily, 6). Seventeen percent of YamWeb postings were by Rosie and Lily, Tim and Rolla, a widely distributed degree of participation, particularly compared to Taiwanese Collegian. YamWeb, established by the WUFI kids' historic

generation, was active during the period between two index events: the 1996 missile tests on the eve of the presidential election, and the 2000 election of Chen Shui-bian. The participants themselves were influenced by their exposure to (and to some degree active participation in) opposition activism in the mid- to late 1980s.

## II. Cultural Odysseys and Identity

### A. Are We There Yet?! *Xungen* and *Xiangtu*

While “roots-searching” practices among *liuxuesheng* is not an uncommon discourse, deployed by elder generations encouraging youth to learn about their own culture, as well as by second-generation Taiwanese Americans considering participating on an organized culture tour to Taiwan, “roots-searching” as a more formal trope in immigration discourse has not developed. Although programs that brought *huaqiao* to Taiwan beginning in the 1950s were specifically designed to develop a sense of Chinese authenticity in the face of modernity among overseas youth, and a literary genre developed among overseas students (*liuxuesheng wenxue*) in the 1960s (Ma 2000), the concept of “roots searching” has not been elevated to a common expression in the public sphere. In china, however, the term *xungen* is part of mainstream discourse, associated first with a movement in Chinese music in the mid-1980s promoted to stem the tide of Western music into Chinese culture.<sup>23</sup> The term began to appear in other areas of cultural production including literature as China opened to the outside world. *Xungen* discourse was adopted by the Office of Overseas Affairs in China and organizers in the U.S. as they developed a program to attract Chinese-American youth whose ancestors were from the

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<sup>23</sup> The expression *xungen* is associated with an older Chinese saying, *xungen wenzu*, meaning “searching for roots and looking for ancestors” (Louie 2000:12).

Pearl River Delta region to study their family genealogies and visit their home villages in China (Louie 2000, 2004). It was thought that after being exposed to Chinese culture and finding their “roots,” Taiwanese Americans would develop and interest in Chinese culture, and because of loyalty to homeland based on race, potentially invest capital in China (Ong 1999).

The term *xungen* and “searching for roots” discourse has yet to gain popular currency in Taiwan, as the definition of one’s native place may be highly-contested. The majority population of Fujianese descent considers their home village to be in Taiwan, the home of their eldest male progenitor from Fujian, rather than a particular village in China. For *waishengren*, attachment to their home villages on the mainland has been complicated by negative experiences while visiting. Being treated as a foreigner in China caused many *waishengren* to re-evaluate their conceptualization of homeland. Although both cultural tours to Taiwan discussed in this dissertation include exposure to the participant’s cultural heritage, they have a fundamental difference in definitions of where the “homeland” is: Taiwan, China, the U.S.?

In the context of Taiwan, the idea of *xiangtu* (native place) is more commonly discussed in Taiwan. The origin of nativist discourse may be found in the context of Japanese colonial rule. Under the Japanese local elite worked through social organizations to gain greater access to political power in Japanese society. They petitioned for the creation of a Taiwanese parliament, and founded a range of formal associations, including the Taiwan People’s Party, in order to participate in the Japanese democracy. When Japan cracked down on such political resistance and critical, there was no more room to be critical of the government, the newly-forged independence

consciousness was reproduced and informed in literature and other forms of cultural expression. They sought to create an independent Taiwan based on a collective cultural heritage. Beginning in the 1930s *xiangtu wenxue* (nativist literature) was a key the survival of Taiwanese consciousness (Wei 1995). In 1932 the Association of Research of Arts of Taiwan was established in Tokyo, and the journal *Formosa* announced its goal to “collect, compile, and study folklore, folk songs, and nativist arts, . . . to restore and create the genuine arts of the Taiwanese” (133) presaging Wu Zuoliu, author of *Orphan of Asia*, set in the context of Japanese colonial rule.

The opposition movement in the 1970s emerged in the context of a revival of *xiangtu wenxue*, with literary magazines as the main publications for Taiwan-centric discourse. The state began to institutionalize the discourse beginning in the late 1990s, when Taiwan began developing what would become known as (*xiangtu jiaoyu*) “nativist education.” In 2001 primary school kids had to take at least one local (indigenous) language. Rather than a turn away from modernity, however, *xiangtu jiaoyu* should be understood in the context of Chinese high culture brought to Taiwan with the Nationalist regime. Under Chen Shui-bian, first elected in 2000, the process of “Taiwanization” of Taiwan has stepped up. Taiwanization is often conflated with *zhonghua qu* (desinification), a whole-sale rejection of all things Chinese. A comparison of the two cultural tours discussed in this dissertation will demonstrate that these two conceptualizations of Taiwan – a repository of Chinese culture, and a native place for the Taiwanese people – are still being negotiated by the first generations of Taiwanese Americans with little or no experience with Taiwan or China. As Julie (1.5 via South Africa) from Chapter Two put it:

If I was born here I would not be a part of any Taiwanese clubs or things. I would just be American. If I was born here, like they were... Like when I was in South Africa, I felt like I was not Taiwanese, I was just South African. I kind of admire those people like them who keep those ties. . . . That is very popular in America, to go find your roots. They have programs to go back for a week, or a month in the summer – they take you around and you do things – but that isn't for me. It seems like a waste of money. . . . That is for ABCs.

## **B. Chinese American Cultural Odysseys as Nation-Building Projects**

Carefully choreographed ethnic tours designed for second generation Asian Americans, “cultural odysseys,” must be seen as artifacts informing the landscape of middle-class Asian America. They create a highly-mediated experience for participants to encounter native authenticity (Louie 2000,2003; Wong 2001; Lowe 1996). Such programs introduce students in the 1.5 generation, and U.S.-born Taiwanese Americans to the “homeland” in an effort to identify and connect with cultural “roots” lost through geographic distance and time. Essays, websites, bulletin boards and blog posts provided what Robinson (1999) calls “unsolicited narratives” describing the experience. Two such programs are considered in this dissertation, framed in the context of past research on similar programs to Mainland China.

Comparing two such programs organized by the Chinese government, one in 1972, the other in the 1990s, Louie (2003) demonstrates how in each case, participants shaped the experience through their desires and expectations in dialogue with the inherent (though differentiated) nation-building projects underlying each programs. Louie (2001; 2003), describes the contemporary Roots program with ethnographic detail based on participant-observation and interviews while the primary source used for analysis of the 1972 *Going Back* tour to mainland China was a publication created by the tour participants with essays and articles, reflections on their (re)connection with China, as it



was presented by the state and contextualized by the participants themselves according to their own life experiences. Similarly, the analysis of the Tsunah program presented in this dissertation is based primarily on essays written after the tour by participants and posted on the organization's website. The topic, "The Taiwan I Know," suggests reflection on the impact the tour had on their lives, with an unspecified expectation that the essay will resonate with the desired goal of the tour, a heightened sense of Taiwanese identity (Tsunah Foundation 2006).

In 1951, the Nationalist government began sponsoring large numbers of overseas Chinese, especially from Southeast Asia, to come to Taiwan for higher education. In a series of studies sponsored by Academia Sinica's Institute of Ethnology, the China Council of East Asian Studies, and the Harvard Yenching Institute, scholars conducted surveys and tests designed to compare Chinese tradition and modernity, as well as their relative worth compared to foreign cultures. Overseas Chinese were seen as "the carriers of Chinese culture living in non-Chinese cultural habitats" (Li 1966:215). Because of discrimination in host countries, overseas Chinese culture was more "authentic" than modernized China, referring to the Republic of China on Taiwan. Thus, upon coming "home" to the motherland for "formal Chinese education," overseas Chinese were an appropriate subject group to evaluate Chinese modernity. In addition, because they live among foreign cultures, they are also in a position to evaluate traditional Chinese values vis-à-vis "the host (native) and colonial (Western) cultures of the countries in which they live" (Li 1966:215). Subjects were chosen from freshmen and sophomores over older students because the younger students "represent a group with less 'contamination' by the current political atmosphere of the island" (Li 1966:217). The significance of this choice

in demographics has been discussed in Chapter Three as part of a more general theory regarding the most impressionable time in an individual's life course, when life-long political orientations are formed. This was a focused attempt to shape the collective understanding of Taiwan's identity as traditional China.

Established in the mid 1991 by an elder Taiwanese independence activist, the Tsunah (Chilin) Foundation culture tour program is focused on introducing students to Taiwanese history, politics, culture and language (Tsunah 2006). Contrasted with the much larger and well-known Overseas Chinese Youth Language Training and Study Tour to the Republic of China ("love boat") tour organized by the Republic of China, which focuses on Chinese culture and language, whereas the Tsunah tour is oriented toward the development of Taiwanese subjectivity. Both programs are linked to nation-building projects, though diametrically opposed in terms of specific national imaginations, including differential geography, differing relationships with Chineseness, conflicting historical narratives, ethnic markers and requisites of authenticity. Such programs are part of the transnational web of relationships involving China, Taiwan, and Asian America; moreover, because they each represent the nation-state's territory, culture, future, and past in different ways, they illuminate the existence of what Nina Glick Schiller calls a multiplicity of "overlapping transnational social fields" linking and differentiating nation-states (1998). In this case, contrasting (trans)nationalist projects share the same population and geographic space.

### **C. Overseas Chinese Youth Study Tour to the ROC**

The Study Tour, (also known as *Chien-tan*, one of two university campuses hosting the program, *mei-jia-ying*, America/Canada camp, referring to the home countries

of the majority of participants, and “Love Boat”), was begun in 1966. Originally fewer than 100 students ages 14 – 25, the size of the program grew to as many as 1,200 in the late 1980s and expanded to other campuses in Taiwan, coinciding with increased population demographics. The size of the program was scaled back through the 1990s. In 1992 a second campus program was opened in Keelung at Ocean Campus. From 1996 to 2001 Study Tour participants would divide their time between the two locations. The overall program was scaled back as the DPP cut funding for the Chinese Youth Corp, one of the organizations contributing to managing the program. In 2001 there were 800 participants, but by 2004 the program included approximately 400 second-generation Taiwanese Americans and Taiwanese Canadians going to Taiwan for a six-week crash-course in Mandarin and Chinese culture.

The participants practice Chinese calligraphy, visit museums and cultural sites, and visit recreational attractions, including the National Palace Museum, Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Hall, Fu Hsing Kang Military School, the Fine Arts Museum, Taipei Zoo, and Formosa Waterworld. The highlights in the itinerary are related to Chinese culture and Chinese politics, reinforcing the conceptualization of Taiwan’s identity as the Republic of China, at least as “Chinese” as the mainland, perhaps more so insofar as the National Palace Museum, as mentioned above, holds the collected national treasures of China. They spend most of their time in Taipei and Keelung, followed by a nine-day tour of the island. Although the amount of government subsidy of the program fee has declined over the years, the now five-week Study Tour cost a modest \$500, not including airfare. Around 1,000 students between 18 and 23 years of age are selected from among as many as thrice that number of applicants (Wong 2001).

Wong (2001) notes that in 1998 the stated purpose of the tour is to “assist overseas Chinese youth to increase their ability to use the Chinese language, to understand Chinese culture and history, and to see at first hand the achievements of the Republic of China.” Two changes in the mission statement are worth pointing out: First, the singular “Chinese culture” was expanded to the pluralistic “Chinese and Taiwanese cultures.” Next, “achievements of the Republic of China” was altered to read “the establishment and development of Taiwan, the Republic of China.” These changes, subtle as they may be, reflect the process of nativization in Taiwanese society:

A clear sense of "Asian American identity" for many North American born Chinese was nebulous at best. Many American-born Chinese who initially did not have any Chinese language skills and who refused to date a fellow Asian, came back from the tour expressing a greater appreciation of Chinese language, culture as well as a greater willingness to date within the Asian community. There were many reasons for this, but especially for those participants who came from communities without many Chinese, the Study tour provided a unique forum to share their common "Chinese North American Experience" of growing up and needing to reconcile both North American and Asian Cultures in a predominantly Caucasian society (Nationmaster 2005).

In this framework, Taiwan represents an origin nation of Asian Americans living in a Caucasian society. Such a conceptualization does not distinguish between Taiwan and China, but rather conflates them, and encourages intra-racial dating. The Tsunah, discussed in detail below, makes a clear distinction, and does not mention the dating question, or the problems facing Asian Americans living in the U.S.

The study tour serves as a liminal space between adolescence and adulthood; for many students, this is the first opportunity to spend a significant amount of social time with other second-generation Taiwanese Americans. By design, it is an opportunity to explore their national and cultural aspects of identity, and by doing so create memory groups and shape the political and cultural orientation of their historic generation. For

some Study Tour participants, this purpose was achieved. In an essay titled “A Study Tour Perspective,” Pei-ming Chou (2000) specifically references this element of the tour:

At the young and impressionable age of 18, I left the safety of Orange County in search of something grand and life-changing. I chose the infamous Chien Tan “Love Boat” Study Tour as my avenue to my first-ever adventure. . . .

She notes that for many participants, going to Taiwan was their first experience from underneath their parents’ control, and an opportunity to experience a culture “in some ways wholly different from our American culture,” and finally, “perhaps to awaken the ethnic side of our identity that had been buried for so long (i.e. use our Chinese that we refuse to use in the States). In short, the Love Boat provided the perfect environment and opportunity for profound personal growth.” Taiwan, in this description, represents adulthood: being away from parents, going to a foreign environment, and awakening a buried ethnicity. The only characteristic among those mentioned related to Taiwan specifically is the use of Mandarin, which refers to the legacy of Taiwan as China.

She continues by describing a series of negative aspects of Taiwan: “typhoons, flying cockroaches, crazy taxi drivers, and overwhelming language barriers in a foreign environment,” mitigated only by bonding with a group of strangers. Taiwan here is represented as a hostile environment, an identity repeated often among the Taiwanese American participants of the Study Tour. The Study Tour creates a bond between Chinese-Americans, she explains. Finally, Pei-ming reveals that “the best part” of the Study Tour experience “is that my adventures have never ceased since the Love Boat. Each new connection brings a new adventure and a new friend to share a hot bowl of ramen and a heart-warming conversation.”

While the Chinese consciousness aspect of the study tour mission is well known and explicit, a second social pattern has developed over the decades of the study tour which, though commonly understood, is nonetheless not part of the official mission statement. Operators of the program estimate that about 30 percent of the participants have at least one romantic and/or sexual relationship during the course of the tour, and claim that as many as 15 percent of the participants of the Study Tour begin relationships that ultimately lead to marriage (Lin 2004). Tour alumni suggested to me that 30 percent was a conservative estimate. Although there are no data to support either of these claims, it is clear that based on what the students discuss on their personal websites, group bulletin boards (some dedicated specifically to a particular bus number), reflection essays, and media interviews related to the experience, the bonds between participants are far stronger than the bonds made with Taiwan and/or China. The original mission was to establish and strengthen the relationship between overseas Chinese (from Taiwan) and the Republic of China on Taiwan. One study tour participant (Celeste 2001) described on her blog the disconnect between organizers' objectives and participants' expectations:

Welcome. This site was made to share the experiences and relive those Love Boat memories. I must admit that in the beginning I was a little homesick, but by the end, I ended up having an incredible time. . . . I miss my almost daily mango bing,<sup>24</sup> I miss the late night girl talks till 5am, I miss going to Circle K and bumping into all my friends, I miss going to the night markets practically every night, I miss partying literally till the break of dawn, and I kinda miss the culture classes (yes, I'm a dork! :-P) - Chinese dancing's awesome.

Here, another common theme is introduced: the exciting night-life of Taipei. The identity of Taiwan is rendered to become a fantastic (literally) shopping mall. The culture classes she reluctantly admits to liking are representative of Chinese high culture

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<sup>24</sup>Mango-flavored shaved ice.

rather than Taiwanese local traditions, as was the case of the Tsunah tour described below. The Study Tour participant's concluding remarks, "and now, back to home and back to reality," raises important question of how cultural odysseys are contextualized in everyday life: to what extent does participation influence the sense of Taiwanese and/or Chinese identity? The program is structured around entertainment, and cultural elements in the program do not clearly distinguish between Taiwanese and Chinese culture. One 1996 participant (Anonymous 1996) was resistant to her parents' pressure to attend, and was not looking forward to the trip. The participant's parents had commented that it would be a good opportunity to meet another Asian American of the same socio-economic status. The participant's perspective changed once the tour was underway:

Imagine my surprise when I got there and found it to be about two hundred kids my age who were all just looking to have a good time. And a good time we had. I would have to say that those seven weeks at Chien Tan mark some of the best times I've ever had; most people you'd ask would probably say the same.

Official 1997 Study Tour materials place the program in a historical context of Chinese diaspora. Using the collective voice of the participants themselves, the program participant-narrator writes:

Though the vast oceans separate the five continents, they cannot separate the millions of Chinese living across the world. We may live apart from one another, but the history, culture, language, and heritage that we all share will always hold our hearts together.

The Study Tour narrator continues in a participant's voice, noting that the program collects "Overseas Chinese Youth from all for corners of the world back to Taiwan – the beautiful island that symbolizes freedom for all Chinese people." Here, Taiwan's identity represents Free China, a geographic location to which all Chinese abroad may return to, even those who have never been to China before. The cultural

programs are designed to give “a deeper understanding of the true essence” of Chinese culture, and “bridge the gap of geography and generation.” The Tour also helps overseas Chinese youth strengthen their “cultural identity through this search for roots.”

Participants will return with “the seeds of our culture” (Cheng 1996). As pointed out above, the metaphor of “roots” is a common one. If Chinese roots are the central metaphor representing Taiwan’s identity, then “seeds” of culture would mean participants should continue to learn and teach the next generation about China, based on their experiences in Taiwan.

Students’ recollections of the Study Tour, however, emphasize other things. An essay written by a 1998 participant (Draco 1998) begins with the rhetorical question: “What is Love Boat?” The author mocks the formal title: “‘1998 Overseas Chinese Youth Language Training and Study Tour to the Republic of China.’ Yeah right! All us Boaters called it simply, ‘Loveboat.’” According to the author, although the intent is to learn Chinese language and culture, most people learn other lessons:

We sure learned so much about the culture and language considering that most of us slept through our language classes because we were so exhausted from clubbing! Seriously though, there were about 36 classes total, and I think I went to about 8. And we also learned how to act sick so we get sick leaves, and how to sit on squat toilets... how to kill 4 inch cockroaches, and how to aide our mosquito bites. Every night we would get drunk! It's not that hard, though, because the legal drinking age is 18, and the 7-11's there sell mini Kegs! Ha Ha! Love Boat was a true experience. Everyone should go on it. All you need is to be 1/4 Chinese. . . . Anyway, this Love Boat thing seriously was one of the best times of my life. To be stuck in a foreign country with 2,000 others just like you... it was fun. It was an adventure everyday. Even though the heat was unbearable and the dirtiness was disgusting, all of us complained and went through it together. Some of the friends I made on this trip are truer to me than any friends back home.

The descriptions of the urban environment in Taipei – both positive and negative elements – could be applied to many other cities in Asia and elsewhere. In an essay titled



“A More Complete Description of the Loveboat,” Alison Dakota Gee (1996) provides an interpretation of the historical background of the program, that at its inception, “the people of Taiwan” worried that “full-blooded citizens of the Middle Kingdom” were raising progeny who were “yellow on the outside and white on the inside . . . creatures [who] appeared to be Chinese until they opened their mouths and said: ‘Oh my god!!’, and were unable to speak their mother tongue.” Alison continues:

Ask these Bananas who Wong Fei-hung is and they say, "Isn't he the head waiter at Hue's Sichuan Kitchen?" And Sun Yat-Sen? "Isn't he that old guy who used to get trashed on Jim Beam outside Wong's Fluff and Fold?" Waaaaaaaaaaaaah!! . . . This would not do, the good people of Taiwan declared. And so, 28 years ago, they formed the Language Training and Study Tour to the Republic of China, a 6-weeks programme that would "assist overseas Chinese youth to increase their ability to use the Chinese language, to understand Chinese culture and history, and to see at first hand the achievements of the Republic of China". In any case, that's what the handbook says.

The perspective that the “people of Taiwan” strongly identified themselves as “citizens of the Middle Kingdom” – a translation of *zhongouren* (a person of the Middle Kingdom) inflected with the term “citizen,” a reference to legal status in a the modern nation-state, is problematic, but understandable when coming from a non-Chinese speaker. In common usage, *zhonguoren* refers to someone from mainland China, PRC. It is possible that Alison is referencing *zhonghua minguo*, a term more accurately translated “the Chinese people’s country,” and most commonly translated as Republic of China.

The reference to blood indicates the fictive kinships based on consanguinity underlying the notion of race, a discourse that precedes and supersedes the nation-state, and is at the heart of conceptualizations of Chinese diaspora. In this regard, Alison views Taiwan as part of the Middle Kingdom rather than a location in the margins and part of

the Chinese diaspora. *Benshengren*, to Alison, are Chinese by blood, regardless of any genetic admixture, whether indigenous, Japanese or otherwise. Wong Fei-hung and Sun Yat-sen are both part of the historical legacy of China introduced to Taiwan in the official pedagogy of the Republic of China. The historical, racial and nationalistic messages in the Study Tour curriculum, however, are commonly mocked as being irrelevant to the participants themselves. Instead, as Alison points out, the program has become an extended party:

Instead of an intensive language programme, it has become an intensive way for bananas to meet the object of their dreams. Instead of a way fo earnestly searching for one's past, it has become a way of groping -- in steamy Taipei nightclubs and crowded dormitories-- for one's future. Chientan has evolved into what ABCs now know simply as the Love Boat, after the hormone-raddled 1970s American TV series of the same name.

David L. Chen (1996) points out that although the language training program is available, it is not central to the experience. It is overshadowed by the freedom and excitement of urban Taipei. David asks the reader: When surrounded by “shopping centers, night markets, and delicious foods how could one want to study Chinese?” David, more than participants from wealthier families who are already equipped with some language skills – either Mandarin or Holo – because of access to international travel, was in greater need for language training. He had not been able to have close interactions with relatives abroad over the years:

Also, most Taiwanese parents assume that us kids should not be out partying and spending money like many of us do in the U.S. and Canada. My grandfather was wondering why I spent so much money, after 2000 NT almost disappeared at the end of the week. In my case, my grandfather with 7 kids needed to be frugal and save money. Because of money problems, he couldn't afford enough for my uncles and aunts to have a good education and to this day, three of my aunts and uncles still live in my grandfather's home.

David's experience was both frustrating and rewarding. He was forced to practice his language skills as he tried to navigate the cultural and generational distance between himself and his family in Taiwan. Accounts similar to David's essay were rare among the Study Tour reflection essays and notes. Although participants may well have had powerful personal experiences relating to discovering their Chinese or Taiwanese roots, developing a greater understanding of local culture, and so forth, such feelings were not include in the narratives posted on the Internet.

Wong (2001) includes in her writings a social analysis of the Study Tour as presented by Schenley Chen (Study Tour 1995) in an essay titled "A Common Thread," which begins with the questions: What is this study tour? What is this so-called and somewhat infamous 'Love Boat'?" Although the Study Tour program in its current incarnation was established in 1966, Schenley, perhaps referring to the early efforts of Chinese nationalists to exert control over Chinese in the U.S. and elsewhere, notes that "the concept of an Overseas Students Study Tour has been in existence since the early part of the twentieth century." He presents an inter-generational model of motivation to support the program. Grandparent, he suggest, consider the Tour to be "an opportunity to learn more about the Chinese culture and language," and hopefully get acquainted with "one's family and ancestry." From the perspective of his parents' generation, however, Schenley suggests that they want their children to enjoy the trip, make good friends with similar backgrounds, "and have a good and safe time." Esther, a Study Tour participant in 2005, agreed that the program gives Taiwanese in the U.S. "a chance to go back to Taiwan and learn about their culture." She follows her "culture" comment with her assessment of the inter-generational dynamics at work: "Needless to say, it is also what

all parents would like you to do when you go back - TO FIND A FUTURE

HUSBAND/WIFE who is of the same ethnic background!"

The traditions being presented as "their culture" were generic and widely recognized elements of Chinese culture, including Beijing opera, kung fu, calligraphy, Chinese knot tying, and Chinese cooking. The program planners provide a schedule to address the interests of the state, as well as multiple generations of Taiwanese immigrants. To this end, the days are divided into four six-hour segments. To suit the goals of the grandparents, the mornings are filled with classes dealing with Chinese language and high culture. The second part of the day, which included tours and outings in and around Taipei, satisfy the parents' desires that the tour be safe, structured fun, and that the participants could make friends of similar backgrounds. Wong (2001) highlights that the participants bring with them a set of expectations and anticipated experiences:

The third six-hour portion in the evening was devoted to exhausting the inexhaustible energy level of the tour group. Tour members randomly chose to attend various locales in the vibrant Taipei night-life in search of places to party, meet others, and maybe participate in other sordid extra-curricular activity. Often, the evening activity violated multiple rules of the trip such as the imposed 11:00 p.m. curfew or other such safeguards against late-night partying, but in fact these safeguards provided even more motivation for tour members to go out in the evening.

The fourth six-hour portion was for sleep. Everybody needed rest and recuperation for the day that would lie ahead. The morning would come again and the cycle would start anew.

Schenley concludes with the remark, "But who said we would need to sleep?"

capturing the prevailing sentiment of the Study Tour accounts found on the Internet (Wong 2001).

As an example, a group of five young men known (at least to themselves) as the Lychee Boys (2001) built a website dedicated to their exploits while on the Study Tour: In addition to photo galleries of the Lychee Boys in “gangsta-hip” clothes touring the sights of Taipei, the site included original artwork and essays, as well as rap poetry, lines written in the beat of a recorded pop song. A selection from the rap material communicates a complex set of observations, feeling, and experiences related to the identity of a place, yet in a genre unlike other Tour-related texts:

“This Island, Taiwan” (Chiou 2001b)

What is this island, Taiwan?  
Somehow a home away from home.  
My family roots trace back here,  
but Taiwan I've never known.  
Blood runs hot in Taiwan.  
Patience runs thin.  
We're always in a hurry...  
but we're always stuck, waiting...  
waiting...for what?

for what?

What is this island, Taiwan?  
Somehow, like a drink.  
I've seen crowded cityscapes,  
cabs, clubs, fallen statues  
of liberties... planet of the...apes?  
Comfort in filth, beauty amidst destitution.  
Roaches run in rice bowls,  
Brown bing lang smiles.  
Night markets thrive, small streets come alive.  
Harmony smells like the sewers.  
Hopes and dreams, pride and shame,  
good and bad,  
crash in a colorful mix of  
half sidra and half citron.  
I take a shot. Taiwan makes me...

buzzed.

Buzz. Sick and happy at the same time.

What is this island, Taiwan?  
Somehow like a dream.  
I've seen Immortal beach heads,  
with stoic stone smiles,  
wayward waterfalls and indignant  
rapids. Ancient forest trees  
that hummmmm.....  
no wait, those are mosquitos.  
Razor edge rock formations,  
slicing into historic veins.  
Pacific blue beaches that silently  
breathe. And mountains,  
like green crowned giants  
pulling low cloud covers over,  
to sleep.

Sleep.....sleep.

And then I wake up in a different city.

Chiou writes that his only connection to Taiwan was vicarious, through his parents, making it a “home away from home,” distanced not only by space but generation-time. His family’s “roots” could be “traced back” to Taiwan, a word choice that illuminated the awkward relationship between roots and routes, where the metaphors that we use to “ground” our identities in a specific “native place” (*xiangtu*) do not reflect our everyday life experiences, which are transected by global, regional, trans-local and transnational processes (Fortier 2000; Clifford 1997b; Massey 1994).

Although the disparate goals of parents, grandparents, organizers and agents of the state were sometimes in conflict, the priorities and expectations of the participants were well-established and understood. For most, the Study Tour was first and foremost an opportunity to bond with others in their historic generation, creating transient memory

groups and hidden populations that are made apparent only through cyber-ethnography.

In some cases the experience is deeply ingrained in the family history. Rob (2004), who began a website to keep in touch with his follow “boaters” from 2004, wrote this note as his first discussion board post:

Loveboat changed my life by introducing me to hundreds of new people and giving me a chance to make friends from around the world. Actually if it weren't for LoveBoat my parents would have never met and I would not be here now. So, for all that LoveBoat has done for me I thought I could make a friendster site for all the 2004 students to keep in touch and network with each other in the future for events like reunions, get togethers or job opportunities. Thanks for all the unforgettable memories and great times in the summer of 2004 Loveboat!!!

The most common depiction of the Study Tour emphasized the participants' experiences together, including the Taipei night-life, local annoyances (especially air quality and squat toilets,) and camp antics on the bus trips.

#### **D. Counselor OC Ben's Closing Ceremony Speech and a Loveboat Rap**

The concluding remarks of a Culture Tour counselor provide insight into the way the experienced is shaped from below, where interpersonal relations among cohorts is the central focus. Ben begins by noting how quickly the time has passed, when “just a few weeks ago you all came to us wide-eyed and frazzled from your long flights and opened yourself up to Taiwan's heat, humidity, crazy traffic as well as my <sup>3</sup>dead boring<sup>2</sup> briefings.” He let them know they that were a special group, and that the councilors have had fun “in helping you adapt to this unfamiliar environment. From showing you how to use the phone cards to telling you the locations of the nearest internet café and Shimen Ding.” Ben notes that some of the participants came to the program unable to speak “a lick of Chinese,” but by the end of the trip you can mindlessly chant <sup>3</sup>BOPO MOFO<sup>2</sup> And if you really improved you learned to say <sup>3</sup>Sae Shr Nee Du Ba Ba<sup>22</sup> [ who's your daddy?

].” Next, Ben communicates that the camp semi-officially sanctions participants to enjoy the night-life after hours: “And what we counselors will never forget is JUST HOW WELL DRESSED some of you were for bed check ALMOST as if you were going out? But we knew THAT couldn't be J.”

The ten-minute speech was filled with expressions of sentimental attachments and the sadness of saying goodbye, not only for the participants themselves, but also for the counselors. It is important to consider the last paragraphs of the text as it cogently articulates a consensus of attitudes expressed in Study Tour alumni websites. For this reason, Ben's concluding comments (1997) are quoted at length:

This is one of the special times in your life where you are WITHOUT responsibilities or worries because we counselors take it all on for you. Never again will you be able to be in such an International environment with so many cool and diverse people from around the world. You are all part of a proud history. It doesn't matter what reason you came here for - whether to see Asia, to learn Chinese or to find that! Love of your Life! However, many of you came for the promise of “Booty” Sam I right J? All joking aside, if you go into this program with a positive attitude and a desire to make friends you will find this experience as well as the friendships you make very worthwhile.

This Study tour, this Loveboat, up to this year has remained a strong program for over 30 years. As you know, Taiwan has been changing a great deal these days as has this program and it's my prayer this program continues as an integral part of the Overseas Chinese experience. And even though the program has gone through changes along with rest of the country, there is a certain universality to the Loveboat experience. Allow me to read to you these Top 10 lists from a Loveboat in the distant past:

#### TOP 10 DO's in TAIWAN

1. Do pretend you know how to speak Chinese when giving a taxi driver directions.
2. Do close your eyes when crossing the street. What you don't see can't hit you.
3. Do your best to learn the language. You will provide hours of amusement to a passerby when you order a steamed newspaper at a lunch stand.
4. Do pick up business cards wherever you go.
5. Do go to KISS. Where else can you see black performers in Taiwan?



6. Do go the Night Market. Where else can you get a Rolex for under \$20(US)?
7. Do bargain at the Night Market. You can get that same Rolex for \$10(US)!
8. Do bring lots of deodorant. Your friends will appreciate it.
9. Do wear insect repellent (red splotches on legs are quite unattractive.)
10. Do schedule a vacation for after this trip to recover.

#### TOP 10 DON'Ts in TAIWAN

1. Don't assume cars stop at red lights.
2. Don't breathe the air: Bring your own.
3. Don't walk on the sidewalks: you will cause great inconvenience to the motorists trying to park there.
4. Don't be surprised when you find footprints on the public toilet seats. Don't ask.
5. Don't be alarmed by any traffic you might see(buses climbing trees,etc) It's all done with mirrors.
6. Don't attempt to exercise while in Taipei: Take up smoking instead. It's healthier
7. Don't be surprised when a group of locals point at you, saying "Chien Tan"
8. Don't eat anything you can't at least identify as animal mineral or vegetable(it is none of the above
9. Don't drink the water. You may however, use it to remove nail polish and other enamels.
10. Don't forget to wear your nametag. NO NAMETAG, NO SERVICE.

This list comes from a Loveboat from over 10 YEARS AGO. As you can see, not much has changed. Over time here, you develop a greater appreciation for the language, culture and the people of Taiwan as well as for each other. This trip has earned a legendary reputation over the decades because it offers you something in your lives that doesn't happen very often---a sense of magic. You all come to Taiwan not knowing anyone and not knowing what to expect. You are put with a bunch of people you do not know and through eating, drinking, slumbering, and being bussed around with each other you soon establish life-long friendships. It doesn't matter where you're from, what group you belong to, or what school you go to. If you're cool and want to make friends on this Tour you do. This has been going on for over 30 years and it is my honor to do this program with you all---one last time.

Thank you for creating and funding this incredible and reputable program for over 30 000 students over the past few decades. Your program has changed more lives than you know and has become a valued tradition to many Overseas Chinese.

The narrative communicates an inter-generational historicity intra-generational memory group formation, the salience of which will vary somewhat among the

participants. However, the Study Tour is a carefully choreographed experience, both by the organizers, counselors, parents and (especially) the participants themselves. Rolla Chng agrees that the program serves specific purposes for different parties; for the parents, an opportunity for their children to meet other children of Taiwanese American professionals. The kids are there for the sex. She also pointed out the political orientation:

Loveboat. It is a kind of junket program – a lot of Taiwanese Americans found their way to Taiwan on Love Boat because it was affordable, it was cheap, and fun, and you were treated like a dignitary. Even as late as 1993 when I was riding around on a motorbike in Kaohsiung there was a bus being escorted by cop cars; there were red flags everywhere, and they were basically just driving around the city stopping traffic. That was *Chien Tan*, that was the love boat. They are driven around in these busses with escorts and red flags – they don't even have to stop for red lights. What kind of way is that to be in a country? What kind of way is that to travel? It was ridiculous. . . .

Their parents want them to meet other Taiwanese Americans, but the intentions of the government – the idea is a brainwashing junket, just like they did to academics. They bring you to Taiwan, they control your entire visit, they showed you what they wanted to show you and told you what they wanted you to hear. It is a brainwashing program to try to try to show that the KMT is running a good country. That was what that was all about.

There are sharp distinctions between the goals and objectives of the organizers of the program, those who participate, and the parents and grand-parents who encourage or discourage their participation. Classes meant to instill a sense of cultural heritage and national pride were frequently ignored or dismissed, curfews were broken, and other aspects of the program's agenda were marginalized. Some participants, however, made a connection to Chinese culture through the activities planned, and most connected to urban life in Taipei. These experiences will now be further contextualized by examining the programs and experiences of another cultural tour to Taiwan.

#### **E. The Formosan Tsunah Program**

Lin Yi-Hsiung, one of the “Kaohsiung eight” activists arrested after the Kaohsiung Incident in 1979, brings about 35 Taiwanese undergraduates or graduate students to the Chilin Center every year, a scenic compound of meeting rooms, cottages, and a small dormitory deep in the hills of Ilan County, just northeast of Taipei. As noted above, Ilan has a reputation for being very “Taiwanese,” associated with *benshengren* and indigenous groups, contrasted with “Chinese aura” of Taipei. In the 1960s, a full 60 percent of the population of Taipei was mainlander Chinese (Appleton 1970:39). Fangpei, who first came to the U.S. as an undergraduate in 1995, once commented with sarcasm, “oh, you know about Ilan? It is funny because people there are very proud of themselves – the land is so clean that it has never been touched by the KMT.” Alan Chen points to Ilan as the source for Taiwanese folk music tradition, and the Taiwanese booth at the Celebrate Madison community during my fieldwork featured a running video promoting tourism in Ilan County.

Also known as the Tsunah Center, the compound houses the Taiwanese Democratic Museum on the third floor of the main building. The first four days of the eleven-day tour are based in Ilan, the remainder of the tour is in Hua Lien, Taitung, Kaohsiung, followed by the last three nights at the YMCA in Taipei. The tour is held during the Christmas break in the U.S. school year, and costs \$700, not including airfare.

Jacob Climo (2002), writing in the context of the “symbolic transformation of American Jewish diaspora identity into Israeli national identity,” points out that analysis of personal narratives is a crucial source of insight. Social scientists should turn to “individual narratives of separation and reunification, dismemberment and re-membering, and reincorporation with the lost community” to understand inter-generational dynamics

of transnational populations. “Such re-membering,” he notes, “tends to blur surface distinctions between family and community, self and collective, past and present, and space and time” (122). With both the Study Tour and the Tsunah program, such narratives are readily available as “unsolicited narratives” of participants themselves. One part of the 2002 and 2004 Tsunah tour program involved writing a short essay upon return on the theme “The Taiwan I know.” These writings are published on the tour pages of the Tsunah Foundation website (Tsunah 2002; Tsunah 2004). I have drawn selections from these essays to convey the complex and powerful feelings of the participants, particularly as they relate to the tour’s political and cultural orientation.

Unlike the Sinocentric state-sponsored experience created by the Study Tour, the Tsunah program is steeped in the essence of Taiwanese opposition activism and embedded in discourses of Taiwan’s national identity. The founder’s life story in itself is a powerful biography of struggle and sacrifice. On February 28<sup>th</sup>, 1980, while he was being detained and interrogated by government intelligence agents in response to his involvement in the Kaohsiung Incident the prior December, the Lin family home was broken into. His mother and twin daughters were killed, and a third daughter was gravely injured. Although the police never solved the crime, the Nationalist government intelligence agents and secret police who kept their home under surveillance at all times were suspected of being the assailants, or of knowingly allowing the events to take place.

On the day of arrival in Taipei, a stop at the Lin family memorial site on the way to the center evokes the power of Lin’s biography, something that will soon be amplified by spending time with Lin himself at the Center. This mode of historicity is designed to

frame the tour experience as one of intimacy with Taiwan, and emphasizes the local, personal, traditional Taiwan. One participant (Huang 2002) described it in these terms:

The information was a lot for me to handle due to its shocking nature. Walking through the Taiwanese democratic museum and visiting the house where the massacre of the Lin family occurred was extremely moving. It was very powerful to learn about all the hardships that Taiwanese people have faced. It was also very inspiring that they had sacrificed so much for what they believed in.

The eleven-day tour strikes a balance between group recreational activities and carefully crafted education experiences. Like the Study Tour program, Tsunah participants spend recreational time in Taipei, including shopping in Snake Alley and visiting night markets, and touring the scenic countryside to national parks. The cultural elements of the two programs, however, differ in emphasis and depth. Tsunah participants visit with members of several of Taiwan's indigenous groups and discuss the groups' complex historical relationships with Japanese and Chinese governments. The tour also includes a Taiwanese opera demonstration, a trip to the 2-28 Memorial park and museum, seminars on current political and social issues, and a roundtable meeting with local Taiwanese university students.

About half of the participants indicated that they had been to Taiwan when they were younger, and generally described the associated feelings and memories in negative terms. They included: crazy cab drivers; dangerous traffic; mosquitoes; humidity and bad weather; long plane rides; "squat" toilets; stray dogs; and Western chain vendors such as McDonalds and Starbucks. Both the Study Tour participants and Tsunah participants reported encountering many of the same negative aspects of Taiwan, though in the contexts of the tour, they were re-framed as comic, quaint, signs of authenticity, and minor annoyances in adventure narratives.

Several participants described feelings of emptiness, alienation, and searching, framing the tour as an opportunity to get in touch with their Taiwanese “roots”. As anticipated, most of the texts contained explicit statements regarding the positive impact of the program on the development of Taiwanese subjectivity. Of 36 essays, one (Lin 2004) was critical of the program, arguing (correctly) that there is a pro-independence bias. He felt that the nationalist ideology leaves little room for “rational discussion.”

The scenery of Ilan specifically was mentioned in 12 essays, and like the Study Tour participants, most Tsunah students included references to the natural scenery of Taroko Gorge and other areas outside the urban centers. In addition to comments contrasting Taipei in negative terms with the rest of Taiwan, most participants also described exciting, exotic aspects of urban spaces, such as night markets, the “club scene,” KTV, stinky tofu, sex shops, betel nut girls, and squat toilets. In this context, however, as a shared experience with other Taiwanese Americans, the descriptions of urban Taipei no longer carried the negative inflection of their reminiscences of prior visits in younger years. Like the Study Tour participants’ essays described above, the negative aspects of urban life were associated with developing strong bonds with other participants sharing the experience. All of the participants mentioned developing strong bonds of friendship over the course of the program.

For many participants, this tour addressed questions regarding the nature of their parents’ strong feelings regarding Taiwan. In this regard, Taiwan’s identity was an enigma, a series of unanswered questions. Several of the essays describe part of their lack of knowledge of Taiwanese culture and history because they grew up in rural mid-America rather than areas with higher populations of Asians. They described experiences

of “finally being around people like me.” Many of the participants described the tour experience as “eye-opening,” “life-changing,” and “disorienting.” Seven participants wrote that the experiences surrounding the Tsunah tour changed their lives to such a degree that they will devote part of their lives for Taiwan, to become an activist.

Vicky Shi (2002), like Study Tour participants described above, was looking forward to shopping and taking advantage of the night life in Taipei. However, he was surprised at the richness of Taiwan beyond Taipei. Like many participants, she noted the significance of Ilan County, associating it with the “real Taiwan.” The visit to the Taiwan Democratic Movement Museum was also a powerful experience; as she put it, “it was there that I realized Taiwan had a very rich and unique history filled with much turmoil, suffering, and hope.” Seeing an aboriginal village and museum, and meeting local Bunun, reinforced the idea that other cultures besides China have had influences on Taiwanese culture. Her experiences on the tour represent the primary goals of the Tsunah program. Taiwan’s identity is defined by an association with the land, the indigenous groups, the opposition (anti-Nationalist) movement, and elements that distinguish Taiwanese culture from Chinese.

Benjamin Huang (2002), on the other hand, had fewer positive experiences than Vickie; he participated at the suggestion of his mother, and was hesitant because his last trip to Taiwan left him with memories of an “excruciating plane ride, humid weather, polluted streets, strange foods, and overpriced department stores.” He had been 16 years old. Tsunah, he hoped, would give him access to the rest of Taiwan, and as a recent college graduate he was increasingly aware of his own lack of knowledge of Taiwanese culture, language, history and current events. His mother’s two brothers were well

known in the independence movement, and his cousins attended the “Taiwanese identity camps,” but he personally did not have a clear understanding of his parents’ commitment to the independence movement, and hoped that the Tsunah trip would fill in “missing pieces.” Unlike other participants, he was able to meet his parents during the course of the trip, and after introducing them to the Taiwanese Democratic Museum, he reported that his father went through the history in the museum with more detail, drawn from his own experiences. Through the conversations, he began to understand his parents’ feelings about Taiwan. As he was writing the essay he was preparing for his next trip to Taiwan, reading more about Taiwan, and practicing his language skills. He concluded by drawing the crucial distinction emphasized throughout the cultural odyssey: “I like many American-born Taiwanese have grown up with their parents emphasizing that they are Taiwanese rather than Chinese. Until now, I have never been more proud to agree with them.”

Similar to Benjamin, Doreen Lee (2002) was raised with a heightened awareness of her “Taiwanese background” and the political implications of claiming Taiwanese heritage through her parents, despite the fact that she lives in Tennessee, “a seemingly Asian-less state.” Her middle name is “Formosan,” which she compared to being “branded Taiwanese.” She decided to take a year off after graduating college, recalling a restlessness: “I was missing something. So, I decided to do something during that year that would be new, adventurous, and allow me to do some soul-searching in the process.” Like many participants, prior to the Tsunah program, she had not been to Taiwan in a decade or more; in her case, since she was 12 years old, and previous trips were generally negative. It bothered Doreen that she had not returned as an adult, and saw the Tsunah



program as an opportunity to gain a better understanding of her parents' experiences. Rather than consider the trip a vacation, as often expressed by Loveboat participants, Doreen called it a "pilgrimage" to learn more about her parents and Taiwan, reiterating a common sentiment among Tsunah participants. After the tour, she went to her father's and mother's hometowns "and learned about my parents' lives in Taiwan by speaking to relatives. It was a very eye-opening experience in the fact that I gained a very honest and raw insight into my parents' lives for the first time." When she returned, something had changed:

It is difficult to explain, but I went to Taiwan to learn more about my roots and I think that I fulfilled a lot of what I was looking for. . . . For such a long time, my restlessness made me feel a little scattered and lost, but now, I felt that a part of me was back in place. I found faith in the fact that my Taiwanese was always intact and always in me.

Doreen indicated that she was raised in a household with a heightened awareness of Taiwanese political issues. Her parents, aware of the political leanings of the tour, strongly encouraged her to attend. Unlike most essayists, in her essay composed upon her return to the U.S., she made no mention of learning about the democracy movement, the Lin family murder narrative, or information regarding the February 28<sup>th</sup> Incident. Instead, her experience was centered on two themes: the recovery of her personal sense of Taiwanese identity through the use of Holo language, and the deepening of familial ties in the U.S. after having visited both her parents' hometowns. Although many participants felt that the tour helped them understand their parents' passion for Taiwan, only Doreen described the experience of recovering her Holo language skills and visiting her parents' hometowns. As Louie (2004) points out, "such 'identity narratives' are characteristic of identity politics of U.S. multiculturalism, in which identity is viewed as

something out there waiting to be discovered” (95-6). Or, in the case of Doreen, she discovered after her trip that her Taiwanese identity was “always intact and always in me.” However phrased, identity is experienced as an absence, and “roots” an empty signifier.

Christina Yu (2004), who had not been to Taiwan since she was eight years old, wrote that the tour opened new perspectives, not only about Taiwan, but also about other Taiwanese Americans who wanted to explore their heritage as much as she did. Like Doreen and many others, Christina associated the trip with gaining a better understanding of their parents. After the trip, she understood why her parents were involved in political issues and participated in political events, and why they are “proud to call themselves Taiwanese.” She noted that after the tour, Taiwan was no longer simply the home country where her parents were raised, as she had created “a personal connection.” She summed up by declaring that Taiwan is “an identity of who I am as a person, and I have never felt prouder to tell people that I am Taiwanese.” Her conceptualization of Taiwan changed from being little more than her parents’ homeland to a much more personal conceptualization of Taiwan. Although they seem to be inextricable bound, mutually constituting processes, the two processes – creating an identity of Taiwan, and generating a close personal bond to the conceptualization – do not always go hand-in-hand.

Steve Lin (2004), for example, had somewhat different feelings about his Taiwanese heritage from most other participants, and problematized the way that it is promoted by the Tsunah tour. He disagreed with the anti-Nationalist position, and pointed out that the tour was biased toward the DPP. He had doubts about whether Taiwanese Americans should be involved in Taiwanese affairs when they have no real

stake in the outcome; and he chooses to identify with Asian American issues instead of Taiwan. He noted that “for young people who feel so strongly about Taiwanese independence, it is mostly because of their parents.” He recognizes that many people, his parents included, assert that they are not Chinese, “despite the obvious cultural and language similarities.” He notes that they use arguments based on geography, history, linguistic differences, separate governments, and “circumstances” Their arguments stem from the fact that Taiwan is geographically separate, and has its own unique history, language, government, and circumstances “that make it quite different from that of mainland China. Some of these people will often not acknowledge that they are even ethnically Chinese or Chinese in any form except that their ancestors came from China.” He wondered if people 50 years ago had such anti-Chinese feelings – likely not, he felt. To Steve, the denial of Chineseness is “disrespectful,” and he pointed out that there are many provinces in China that have their own languages, histories, and local cultures, yet they recognize their Chineseness. Steve suggested that it would be more appropriate to say, “I am Taiwanese, but ethnically Chinese,” and that people should not be offended when they are labeled by others as Chinese.

His conceptualization of Taiwan is similar to that promoted by the Study Tour, and the mainstream discourse under the Nationalist regime. Based on his narrative, it appears that Steve has a clear conceptualization of Taiwan, based on education, personal experiences in Taiwan, and familial influences. He has given much thought to the relationship between Chineseness and Taiwaneseness, China and Taiwan. However clear a conceptualization of Taiwan he may have, however, it would be safe to conclude based on his narrative that he holds the same kind of strong passion for Taiwan as a homeland.

Gabriel, for example, who has less immediate experience with Taiwan than Steve due to his participation in Tsunah and discussions with his family, may have a more emotive bond to conceptualizations of Taiwan's identity than Steve.

Yvonne Heung (2004) summed up her experience on the Tsunah tour in one word: incredible. "All of the stories I begged my mother to tell me about my motherland," she wrote, "were finally being painted for me right in front of my eyes – all in living color, everything in motion picture." The cost of travel had prevented them from traveling to Taiwan prior to the Tsunah trip, but she was now able to afford an opportunity for her to have "a life-changing opportunity to learn about my heritage." She gained an understanding of why her parents felt so strongly about Taiwan, a place they had not returned to in twenty years.

Prior to the Tsunah tour, Eric Lin's understanding (2002) of the history surrounding the establishment of the tour, the struggle against the Nationalist government, and the Lin family specifically were closer to "an old folk tale or an ancient myth" rather than history, or a lived experience. He saw the primary purpose of the tour to bring together youth with the same historical background so that they could "unite as one and form a voice as Americans to strive for an independent Formosa." Resonant with a common theme among the participants, Eric associated the experience in inter-generational and familial terms:

By experiencing Taiwan as a true Taiwanese rather than an outsider, I realized the true sacrifice that my parents made not only in raising their children in America but the sacrifice they made in leaving behind such a beautiful country. Toward the end of the tour, I think that I speak for the group as a whole in that many of us didn't want to go home.

Unlike other participants, Michael Chen (2002) contextualizes his experience on the Tsunah program by comparing it to a wide range of other Taiwanese-centered activities, camps and culture tours he has participated in. Tsunah is different because it deals with what Michael calls the “untold truth of Taiwan’s history,” and introduces “the next generation of what the Taiwanese people went through and what they should be proud of.”

Similar to Michael, prior to participating in the program, Shinzong lee (2002) “could not comprehend why my grandparents spoke to each other in Japanese, why all the adults I met cursed the KMT or even why my parents always corrected people who called them Chinese instead of Taiwanese.” The “untold truth of Taiwan’s history,” I argue, is a conceptualization of Taiwan’s identity that incorporates not only the events and characteristics previously unknown to him, but also the sense that Taiwan’s identity is defined by its secrecy among his generation. During his return trip to New Jersey, Shinzong was visiting with a young woman also returning from a trip to Asia. When asked if he was Chinese, Shinzong reports saying, “No, actually... I’m Taiwanese,” and concludes that claiming Taiwan had become a source of pride.

### **III. Summary and Discussion**

#### **A. Heterogeneous Historicity within “Generations”**

In discussions of historic generations it is important to recognize that historic generations should not be thought of as homogeneous subject positions carried by all of a certain age. They should be thought of as constellations of identification reacting to the same occurrences in history, though in widely divergent ways. This research indicates that the “second-generation Taiwanese American population,” for example, is divided

between an early cohorts strongly influenced by their parents' activism during the mid-1980s to early 1990s, and those of the same age or slightly younger, who had little or no direct contact with the social unrest of the era. Thus, within what would generally be thought of as historic generation – in this case, cohorts of *liuxuesheng* – there are significant distinctions among the populations to such an extent that, without further elaboration, the “historic generation” model risks losing explanatory power. The nuance is to give greater attention to highly localized interactions among and between cohorts. In the case of immigrant populations, generational transmission of collective memory and shared culture may be dramatically altered, distanced by language gaps and huge distances. Organized events and activities among *liuxuesheng* are the primary contexts for historic generation formation, but they are in no way uniform, evenly distributed, or equally salient among various locales. In the case of Madison, Li-lin and Hiro acted as brokers between generations and guided the (re)conceptualization of Taiwan among several younger cohorts.

Website patterns also indicated that one student can dramatically influence the political valence and level of activity of a student association for a few years. Individuals in the groups during this time may be profoundly impacted by an event – such as a candle-light election-eve vigil – but for students who did not organize a planned event, or gather to collectively experience the media coverage of the election, the event would have less salience. The most prescient example in this research relates to the ongoing influence of the Wild Lily activists. Though few in number, a memory group dispersed in the U.S., mobilizing trans-local networks to influence others in their cohort and incoming students to devote time and resources to make positive changes in Taiwan.

They did so by moving through the pre-established networks of WUFI and TC, two organizations that continue to rely on university student groups as their grassroots infrastructure.

Concomitantly, the period associated with the WUFI kids in the U.S. overlaps two index events: the democratization of the electoral system in Taiwan (including the legalization of the DPP party and the lifting of martial law,) and the Wild Lily demonstrations in 1990. They would go on to form the first Taiwanese American student associations, and guide the missions of the groups for years to come. This research indicates a shift away from the activist missions over time, coinciding with the election of Lee Teng-hui to presidency in 1996, and even more so with the election of Chen Shui-bian of the DPP party in 2000, as well as the graduation from college and graduate school of the most active of the second-generation Taiwanese Americans. Whereas the first two index events mentioned influenced a cohort within the first wave of second-generation Taiwanese Americans to become politically active, the political reforms and milestones of the late 1990s and 2000 coincided with a shift toward disinterest in political affairs of Taiwan among both *liuxuesheng* (as noted in Chapter Three) and Taiwanese Americans.

The tension between activist missions and non-political agendas, as well as tensions between activist missions and identity-based agendas, can be seen through an analysis of website content, using both archaeological (synchronic) and genealogical (diachronic) data. Program content for ITASA meetings, for example, show a shift from an emphasis on education and activism to effect change in Taiwan, to a much more heterogeneous agenda that included career development, Chinese cultural traditions (Tai Chi, for example,) and the role of Taiwanese Americans in the broader Asian American

movement. The result is a montage of conceptualizations of Taiwan, ranging from Taiwan-as-political project to Taiwan, the geographic determinant of Asian American positionality. While the former is indicated by education, consciousness and activism, the latter does not require any specific knowledge of Taiwan or sense of Taiwanese identity. They each rest on conceptualizations of Taiwan's identity, though with divergent implications for the everyday lives of the individuals.

Decades after the original conceptualizations of Formosan Taiwan, the Fighting Yams draw on a similar notion as they attempt to raise awareness of Taiwan's disadvantaged position in the international community, not grounded in a unique culture per se, though communicating information about Taiwan to younger generations is a goal of the team organizers, but instead as a sense of fair play among nation-states, granting that all national identities are constructions, and that Taiwan should have full rights as a sovereign state, regardless of internal discussions of ethnicity, Chineseness, the authenticity of Taiwanese culture, or any other discourse other than universal human rights guaranteed in the UN Charter.

### **B. *Roots en Route***

The final stanza of the Lychee Boy's rap poem (Chiou 2005) illustrates the need to problematize the notion of roots-seeking, allowing theoretical space to consider the participants' tour – their search for Taiwanese roots – as a constituent part of the Taiwanese American experience. Rather than thinking of the participants' tour as a search for cultural authenticity, consider that the meaning of being Taiwanese American is constituted in the routes between Taiwan and the U.S., or for Jiao (2005) between Taipei and LA.



I've seen ravens and jackals preying on  
each other, more desperate than  
the street side vendors selling  
nothing.

I've seen sad, lonely souls roam  
hallways like ghosts.

Memories, pictures,  
frozen slices of time.

I've seen love, lust,  
and a whole lot of pretending.

Fakers, fighters,  
losers, lovers.

A small slice of time.

A small slice of LA.

A home away from home.

In Chiou's text the "home away from Home" in the first verse referring to an unknown place, his parents' (and therefore his own, by extension) roots. The poem is bracketed by a second reference to home, the city of Los Angeles, which for a "small slice of time" he brought with him to Taiwan: the same characters, motives, and pathologies, captured, frozen in time, brought home, and then stretched across time and space through the Internet. He was not referencing Taiwan the nation-state, but rather the urban teen tourist nightlife and interpersonal drama. He referenced scenery, both romanticized and stark, and Los Angeles, a global city. It is clear that, as Dirlik (1999) points out, globalization – including the culturalism deployed to maintain the class/ethnic relations in the U.S. – highlights the need to more closely examine the "the relationships between places, between places and trans-place or supra-place organizational forms, and, finally, across national boundaries, to imagine alternative possibilities in the reorganization of spaces" (50). As an example, consider the biographical profile Dracil

(2004) posted on the bulletin board of the inactive Berkeley Students for a Sovereign

Taiwan website:

Statistics:

928 entries, 58 images; Join Date; September 28th, 2003

Location: United States » California » Berkeley

Occupation: Student

Birthdate: August 28, 1982

Description:

Nomad

Born in Taiwan.

Raised in Thailand.

Went to an International School (American System).

In the US for college.

Global Nomad as a result (read: I don't belong anywhere).

I can read/write Chinese (I can read newspapers and novels, but don't make me write essays) and can converse in Mandarin. Can sort of understand basic Taiwanese, and I'm currently taking an intermediate level Taiwanese class. Also self-learn Cantonese for fun occasionally since a lot of friends speak Cantonese. 5 years of Japanese means some Japanese literacy, but I don't really converse in it. Can understand some Thai, but illiterate.

I'm pro-status quo for Taiwan, but will support reunification once China democratizes (and gets rid of the stupid Simplified Chinese system while they're at it). . .

Most of the e-mail addresses of her conversant are from Berkeley, alongside avatars from Japan, China, Taiwan, Hong Kong. Consider that her mobility represents a family, probably following professional opportunities. These kinds of multi-stranded and multi-generational ties are part of a larger "transnational social formation" (Guarnizo and Smith 1998) that encompasses the lives of many from Taiwan, whether as individuals they are in motion between localities, or the inhabitants of the places created through transnational mobility. This illustrates a shift in the way cohorts of extraterritorial populations relate to their "homeland," moving from essentialist notions linking identity with place to a more flexible conceptualization based on personal relationships with

family and friends which link the U.S. and Taiwan. In the case of Dracil, she has demonstrated a conceptualization of Taiwan's identity wholly in the context of the unification question. Her attitude toward being nomadic exposes the constructed nature of the "roots" metaphor and disrupts what Malkii (1997a:68) calls "root-thinking." Dracil's profile is explicitly up-rooted, an example of what Fortier described as a shift "from a culture of roots to a culture of routes and generations" (2000:88-89).

### **C. Conservatism and Activism among Taiwanese Americans**

In contrast to the WUFI kids, Omatsu (1994) describes a neo-conservative trend among Asian Americans in the early 1990s. Though not all non-political Taiwanese Americans fall into this category, he notes that many young Asian professionals are less inclined to support mass organizations, government entitlements, affirmative action, and so forth, and see the economic problems of various ethnic groups in cultural terms, rather than as structural or institutional ones. They emphasize "Asian values" such as discipline, conservatism, family, complicating the "model minority" debate. He goes on to point out that today's Asian American discourse is saturated with the views of these young professionals, and academic elites, and so does not reflect the vast majority of the community of Asian Americans, who are workers. His emphasis on both the material changes of activism (in the 1960s and today) and the changes it produces in consciousness is important insofar as it addressed how certain events may influence a generation of supporters' conceptualizations of their "homeland," and how that influence may go well beyond the immediate material changes of the event itself. As a way to analyze the inter-generational shifts in Taiwan's identity, subjectivity, Omatsu explores

the idea that “keywords” that can help identify the values and sentiments of certain eras and movements:

Keywords are terms, concepts, and ideas that emerge as themes of a period, reflecting vital concerns and changing values. For Asian Americans in the 1980s and 1990s, they keywords are ‘advocacy,’ ‘access,’ ‘legitimacy,’ ‘empowerment,’ and ‘assertiveness.’ These keywords tell us much about the shape of our community today, especially the growing role of young professionals and their aspiration in US society. In contrast, the keywords of the late 1960s and early 1970s – ‘consciousness,’ ‘theory,’ ‘ideology,’ ‘participatory democracy,’ ‘community,’ and ‘liberation’ – point to different concerns and values (1994:30).

This resonates with the distinctions made between Formosan views of Taiwan, and those of later generations who are more interested in establishing the validity of Taiwan’s cultural identity. Further cohorts would eschew the political implications of their search for Taiwanese (and/or Chinese) identity. Saito argues, and my data drawn from mission statements and interviews reflect, that this is an intergenerational process in which the later generations are influenced by the accomplishments of the former generation. In essence, the non-political Taiwanese Americans emerged from the successes of the activists’ struggles in previous decades. Omatsu notes that “today the neo-conservatives are mostly young, middle-class professionals who grew up in white suburbs apart from the poor and people of color.” Recall Tim’s description of his youth described at the beginning of this chapter. “As students, they attended elite universities. Their only experience with racism is name-calling or ‘glass ceilings’ blocking personal career advancement – and not poverty and violence” (1994:46).

While this resonates with Tim and Rolla’s description of the younger generation of second generation Taiwanese Americans, the WUFI kids as well as Li-lin and Hiro had more in common with the Asian American movement of the 1960s, though it was not in the context of empowerment and the civil rights movement, but rather due to the

specific memory groups associated with the Taiwanese independence movement, primarily their family, early groups that mobilized around issues of Taiwan's identity, and Taiwanese Collegian's emphasis on progressive issues in Taiwan and other parts of the world.

Lien (2006), for example, found that supporters of Taiwanese independence were less likely to adopt "mainstream" American values, and tended to be more progressive in terms of public and foreign policy issues. This runs counter to Omatsu's overall description of the changing political alignments of Asian Americans in general. While many Taiwanese Americans emerging from elite universities today are politically conservative, those who continue to be involved in Taiwanese independence activism have developed a sympathy for other progressive social movements. Tim notes that it is a difficult choice to make:

Being American is really complex, as in which America are you going to identify with? A privileged American, or one who identifies with the working class, or other immigrant Americans, etcetera, etcetera. So when Taiwanese American Citizens League was founded it was an identification with the White Power, and its goal was to help join that power structure, that group. One of the privileged ethnic groups that do nothing but further the power of their own group. They had a vision of citizenship, and followed the rhetoric of democracy. Part of it was like – look, we don't have to care about Taiwan anymore.

My analysis indicated that to a certain extent, the differences can be seen in the divergent programs and experiences of the two cultural tours described above. The Study Tour represented Taiwan as China, creating an ambiguity in Taiwan's identity when compared to the conceptualization promoted in the Tsunah program. Nonetheless, when discussing the Tsunah program, Rolla Chng pointed out that although it is focused on Taiwan, far more so than Loveboat, "they are still brainwashing." Traveling around the island seeing the beauty and history of Taiwan is still several degrees removed from

Taiwan; they are traveling like a tourist. As a WUFI kid, she has a slightly different perspective on the Taiwan-centrism of the Tsunah program.

At least it isn't government funded, and brainwashing you that the KMT is good, but the problem I have is how insulated it is. . . . You need an exchange program that is going to immerse you into the society. So I have this model where you would go and spend three weeks in a classroom environment; you can have professors come in and talk, but you want people from all walks of life, all the different aspects of Taiwanese life. You would have leaders of organizations and groups come in and talk about what they do, and the communities they work with. Obviously my model would be a lot more action-oriented. And then at the end of those three weeks you would choose which of those organizations you want to go shadow – for another three weeks. And the group, the exchange program would try to house you – find host families to house you in a sort of home-stay situation. These organizations are all over Taiwan, they are not just in one city.

Rolla articulates a telling difference between the WUFI kids and their approach to Taiwanese subjectivity, which is active and focused on empowerment and reform, versus younger second generation Taiwanese Americans who view the journey to Taiwan as more of an exploration into their own heritage, and the experiences of their parents. Both are (re)defining Taiwan's identity, but for most Tsunah participants, the ultimate horizon is a personal quest for roots, and inter-generational understanding of their parents' and grandparents' experiences in Taiwan, while for Rolla, Taiwan's identity is a work in progress.

## **CHAPTER SIX: DISCUSSION**

“The Waltz of Taiwanese History” There was a WUFI guy from Texas [who] presented Taiwan as a man dressed as a woman. . . . but he would go through the whole history of Taiwan, all of the different oppressors of Taiwan. They would have some guy as the Dutch, with some dialogue I didn’t understand – making fun of the cultural stereotypes, and then they had the Manchurian guy, and the Japanese guy, . . . a sexist Japanese Samurai with a stick, speaking Japanese – which the audience loved – and then of course they had Chiang Kai-shek, which was even funnier. So I spoofed off that, only it was in English. . . . I realized that all these Taiwanese American wouldn’t get any of these cultural references, so we had a narrator. We did a narration, and we took modern American music that Taiwanese Americans would dance to – dance with all the oppressors, and then at the end, the last line was: “I no longer need any of this, I am not actually a woman!” And she knees Chiang Kai-shek in the balls and walks off.

- Tim Chng

### **I. Generations and Taiwan’s Identity**

#### **A. The Chinese Nation-State and Formosa on Taiwan**

My host originally suggested that I meet Mr. Wen, a retired octogenarian from the Japanese era activist generation, and made arrangement for an afternoon visit. I was prepared with my interview instrument and recorder, expecting to conduct a one-on-one interview, but I was not surprised when a handful of other seniors arrived to join us for the interview. The Chang household frequently had visitors anyway, and Sunday tea with a young anthropologist interested in Taiwanese identity served as occasion for a group to collectively remember and reflect on past events. With Dun-Mei and Uncle Chang, Dr. Wen and his wife Whelan, and Mr. Che, the interview had become a six-way conversation in which my presence was more like participant-observation.

Their house had high ceilings and spacious living and dining rooms, seldom used. Home life took place in the kitchen, with a small dining table and a television on a

cabinet. That afternoon, however, Dun-Mei had opened the interior blinds of the living room. A dozen potted plants were lined along the bay windows, and a piano centered along the inside wall was decorated with family photos and their daughter's piano competition awards. On a side table, a wooden diorama displayed a Taiwanese village square featuring figurines of children playing, farmers with straw hats threshing grain and riding a water buffalo, and a thatched hut with a cutaway wall revealing simple wooden furniture and a woman cooking. A large tank of angelfish with lacey, billowing translucent fins stands at the far end of the living room, near the front door; in the opposite corner, a jumbled pile of A-bian campaign promotional material: boxes of tee-shirts, large and small green and white DPP flags left over from the (then) recent 2004 presidential election.<sup>25</sup>

I had come with copies of two maps of Taipei in the 1940s. Dr. Wen, a retired octogenarian Japanese-educated civil engineer, poured over the first, a birds-eye view illustrated map of Taipei, 1947, based on WWII-area US aerial photos. He was able to pin-point where his house had been, the school he attended, and the rice paddy he'd walked around to get to school every day. The map was published in 1996, leading up to the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 2-28 Incident. Dr. Wen's living memory reaches back to pre-war Taiwan under the Japanese control, a generation of colonial subjects rather than citizens of a nation.

Unlike almost all other Taiwanese students, who had studied in segregated Japanese-language classes, Dr. Wen attended the school for Japanese children due to high

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<sup>25</sup> "A-Bian" is a popular, fond nickname for Taiwanese President Chen Shui-Bian; the wah-wah's are hello-kitty-esque dolls, part of an ever-expanding line of toys, key chains, clothing, and other merchandise decorated with the A-Bian avatar, usually wearing the symbol "@" on his hat.



test scores. He took his turn in the weekly rotation of class student-monitors, and his authority was respected when he disciplined his classmates. His parents had close Japanese friends, many of whom had spent their lives in Taiwan. Dr. Wen recalled that “Japan was the foreign country to them. They were born and raised in Taiwan. It was their native place. Mainlanders came to Taiwan as captors and never made Taiwan their home.” The second map (Figure 1), a precisely drawn block-by-block grid of Taipei, 1943, with important buildings, roads, and neighborhoods marked in Romanized Japanese. “This is the city I grew up in,” he said, leaning over the map and tracing the train routes across Taihoku with his fingers. For the Japanese living in Taiwan, their conceptualization of home was based in Taiwan, as many had never visited their “native” Japan. Their Taiwanese-ness was authenticated by having been born in Taiwan.

However, the divide between Chinese and Taiwanese was clearer, moving beyond “roots” and cultural knowledge. For example, one of the ginseng farmers who worked with Uncle Chang serves as the local FAPA chapter representative, and is present at all of the Celebrate Madison activities. Her father was a mainland Chinese soldier who was never able to see Taiwan as his home, and she was in her own words “thoroughly brainwashed by the KMT” to believe that Taiwan was a location of exile. It was only after a decade of living in the U.S. that she began to question her received narratives of Chinese nationalism, in the context of her involvement with the Taiwanese Association of Madison. Uncle Chang and Dun-Mei, however, caution me that because she is *waishengren*, it was particularly difficult for her to shed her Chinese identity, and that I should look elsewhere if I wanted the story of the true Taiwanese people.

The Chang living room is a nexus between relationships of time, distance, and scale. DPP election materials in the corner highlight the transnational relationships linking the Chang household and Taiwanese “local” politics. And given the tenuous situation between Taiwan and China, local politics in Taiwan could change global power relations. A large fish tank on the right side of the front door hall, and carved statues of Confucius and Laozi indicate a syncretism that includes elements of Chinese culture, as adapted to upper-middle class suburban life in the U.S. The bucolic diorama, by contrast, represents Taiwanese authenticity in microcosm: rural, modest, and light-hearted, with a gendered division of labor. The Taiwan area at the Cincinnati cultural fair marked by the posters in Chapter Three (Figure 10) included a tent decorated as a rural home, with Joyce cooking egg-rolls in the back, matching the diorama in the Chang living room. They differ not only in scale, but also in purpose and meaning. Whereas Strong and Joyce were using elements of rural Taiwan (combined with Americanized Chinese food to meet public expectations) as an expression of resistance, in the Chang living room the diorama has become a craft object for display representing Taiwanese culture in the context of modernity and distance.

The discussion, however, focused on each individual’s relationship to the Nationalist regime. It is difficult to disarticulate Formosan Taiwan and Chinese nation-state identity, as they are defined in opposition to each other. The formal title “Republic of China” clearly marginalizes things Taiwanese by locating Taiwan as a locality below the national register. In this conceptualization, Taiwan is a province of China in 1945, the temporary refuge for the entire ROC state and military apparatus in 1949. As the capital of a nation-state, Taipei was re-ordered to represent China, including the

preservation and promotion of Chinese high culture at the expense of local Taiwanese traditions. The Republic of China took on the mantle of “Free China,” a reference to the Communist state across the Taiwan Strait. Taiwan was infused with the trappings of a modern nation-state, including a national flag, currency, a national language, “founding fathers,” a national song, and an official national narrative. In the case of Taiwan and other authoritarian states, the government controlled the production of history through public schools, the production and dissemination of information through mass media, and control over the public sphere. Taken together, the result is a *Chinese nation-state identity*. Dun-Mei explained:

They taught Chinese history, Chinese geography, Chinese culture, very little Taiwanese. Almost none. No Taiwan history at all. They restrict is from using Taiwanese at school. History? Taiwanese history started in 1945, and before that, 50 years of Japanese occupation. Before that, nothing. We were just Chinese. We believe that all the years until we got out.

Mr. Chang recalled that they were required to sing “*huanggong dalu*” (recapture mainland). At this point, several in the room began to sing the song quietly, stopping mid-way the second verse. They laughed, perhaps surprised and embarrassed at their own nostalgic feelings of an era they had been describing only moments before as a particularly difficult part of their lives. Dun-mei quietly continued, “every day; we learned all of that.” Gesturing to Uncle Chang, she said:

He had to have military training at school, and we learned *san min zhu yi* [Three Principles of the People] and all they said at that time was that one day they would go back to China. We never thought: “We were born here, we grew up here, why would we want to go back to China?”

Elder informants in this research reiterated that had the Nationalist regime not carried with them to Taiwan a non-Chinese conceptualization of Taiwan’s identity, a

compelling construction of an oppositional non-Chinese identity would not have emerged. In other words, the Nationalists, in treating the province Taiwanese as not-quite full members of the newly-established Republic of China, established the discourses that would be deployed against them. This is a key observation as it illustrates the close relationship between events and relationships in the international arena, and more localized experiences of everyday life.

The institutional structure shaped (and shaping) the dynamics between alternative conceptualizations of Taiwan's identity – Taiwan as Japan, as China, as Taiwan – is still apparent, and was an organizing principle shaping the fieldwork of this dissertation. Multiple student associations of *liuxuesheng* on university campuses, for example, were institutionalized echoes of opposing national imaginations. At the time of this research, however, the differences between groups were less dramatic: non-Taiwanese social activities versus Taiwan-centric activities; undergraduates versus graduate students; ABC/Ts versus FOBs. Distinguishing between Taiwan and China was no longer a matter of oppositional Taiwanese identity versus Nationalist Chinese identity, but rather a matter of students negotiating distinctions between their student associations from those from whose members come from the PRC. In this regard, relationships between student associations on college campuses often reflect geo-political dynamics in the international community. *Liuxuesheng* arriving on college campuses during martial law in Taiwan were faced with the opportunity to explore alternative versions of Taiwan's identity. The indeterminate status of Taiwan in the international community is reflected on the local level, as seen through student activities, iconography, narratives, and other forms of data

collected in this research, and ultimately reproduced as university students move into positions that may effect change in Taiwan's future.

### **B. Counter-Hegemony and Taiwan as Formosa**

To avoid reifying and privileging any conceptualization of Taiwan's identity over another, I chose to proceed (carefully) by using a deceptively neutral definition: a geographical location on a grid of coordinates. I originally posited that Taiwan *bendao* (island) exists beyond the domain of contested identity. Upon closer analysis, this assumption becomes problematic insofar as points on grids have no inherent meaning until they are named, which requires a name-giver, a map maker, a choice of language, and a historical relationship with the referent of the mapped locality.

Gupta and Ferguson (1997) describe how in general, representation of space rely on the idea of rupture, naturally discontinuous units, with space as a "neutral grid on which cultural difference, historical memory, and societal organization is inscribed. It is in this way that space functions as a central organizing principle in the social sciences at the same time that it disappears from analytical purview" (34). This structure misses issues related to border zones (both geographic and subjective), internal diversity, the hybridity of postcoloniality, and the "topography of power": "For if one begins with the premise that spaces have always been hierarchically interconnected, instead of naturally disconnected, then cultural and social change becomes not a matter of cultural contact and articulation but one of rethinking difference through connection"(35).

With insights from drawn from Smith and Katz (1993), this research distinguishes three domains of localization and positionality in order to better theorize the "politics of space and place." A *location* is a point on charted space (in this case, Taiwan) while

*position* indicates a relationship between two or more locations. Historically, the location currently defined as Taiwan is positioned in relation to China, Japan, the U.S., Fujian Province, and so forth, imagined as natural locations with inherent characteristics. Positions between two or more locations (often referred to as “places”) can define the conceptual space in which transnational flows occur. Locations and their positions are produced by agents and institutions, interactions and negotiations, in a single location, known in this theoretical vocabulary as a *locality*: a “two- (or more) dimensional *place*, an area within which multiple and diverse social and natural events and processes take place” (69).

Having indicated that all place-names are historically specific (rather than timeless) social constructions (rather than autochthonous) involving multiple agents over time, I focused on word choice to maintain Taiwan’s identity as a charted location. This, in an effort avoid (as much as possible) reifying contested place-names and conflicting understandings of locality associated with the *a priori tabula rossa* referents China, Taiwan, Chinese, Taiwanese, and so forth. This created greater theoretical leverage with which to explore the ways in which a “homeland” is conceptualized among diasporic populations.

In Chapter One, the concept of Formosan Taiwan was introduced to contrast with (and as a reaction to) definitions of Taiwan as a colony of Japan, a territory occupied by a foreign Chinese regime, and the conceptualization of Taiwan’s identity as a province of China. Although “Formosa” was a Portuguese expression, it was adopted as a symbol of anti-colonial struggle by early activist, and I have appropriated as an analytical term. Formosan identity of Taiwan emerged during the Japanese era and contextualized the

plight of the Formosans in terms of international power struggles, and informed mobilization discourse for decades. A senior informant recalled the way Taiwanese independence activism was thought of in the 1970s, before WUFI formally rejected the use of violence to further their cause.

Our model was the Cuban revolution, because we were an island the same as Cuba, and Chiang Kai-shek's dictatorship was the same as Cuba under the Batista regime. We saw Cuba – Castro's leadership – they had a revolutionary training camp in Mexico, and activists there trained. They wrote a book, some 80 determined revolutionaries, landed at midnight and stage a revolution. They were revealed by a spy to Batista, and a general was ready for them when they landed, so he dispatched an army, circled around. They were chased to a mountain top, and stretched their antenna and started broadcasting. Saying that the whole country was rising up, and that Havana was all on strike... In two years the Batista collapsed – escaped.

Castro sitting on a jeep, riding into Havana – that picture, how romantic a revolution is; Taiwan should be like that. So I even wrote a poem with a sentence like 'Today's Formosa, just as Cuba' – something like that, a similar romantic sense. It was published in *Taiwan Jinnian* [*Taiwan Youth*] magazine in 1965. That kind of mentality continued, sort of early UFAI ideology was strongly inclined to be Cuban revolution.

This internationalist perspective evaporated as the nationalist government gained control over the flow of information into Taiwan during the White Terror. The original “oppositional” group imagination, articulated primarily in the U.S., is based on the common local experience of political, cultural and economic subjection under the Japanese and nationalist regimes. This “Formosan” discourse was demographically and politically dominated by those of Fujianese descent, but despite an underlying tone of Fujianese authenticity, oppositional Taiwaneseanness was politically viable because it articulated with other social cleavages, especially postcoloniality and class (Taiwaner 1996).

Ma (1998) notes the complexity of subjectivity revealed in overseas Chinese student literature from Taiwan beginning in the 1960s, which always dealt with loss of Chinese roots, and alienation from American culture:

There exists an utter obliviousness to the larger cultural forces shaping this private dilemma. Three kinds of forces, like underground waters, surface and join in these texts: the Chinese tradition, the global postcolonial movement, and the minority problematic. These three magnets exert opposite pulls on immigrant subjectivities, rendering them nostalgic for China while eagerly Westernizing themselves, busily putting down roots on American soil yet apathetic to their own marginalized status" (110).

While Ma is writing of *waishengren* in the U.S., I posit that the same three forces are at work among *benshengren liuxuesheng*. Among the most senior generation there is a palpable sense of nostalgia, often with overtones of the exile disallowed from return. Formosan Taiwanese nationalists were able to draw two of the three together to shape a anti-colonial conceptualization of Taiwan's identity tethered loosely to Taiwanese traditions (deferring to Taiwanese cultural experts) and with the characteristic disinterest in their own minority status in the U.S. In the description of the theatrical performance at the opening of this chapter, Taiwan is represented as a woman being repeatedly abused by a series of colonial oppressors. When confronted by Chiang Kai-shek, Taiwan finally reveals that she is in fact a man, and capable of resisting oppression. He violently emasculates Chiang and declares his liberation. The gender ambiguity and overtones of sexual violence – though presented in a humorous way – represents an interpretation of Taiwan's history based on political violence and cultural subjugation. The indeterminacy of Taiwan in the skit resonates with contemporary analyses of geo-political entities that do not entirely conform to traditional models of nation-state formations. As Dirlik (1999) points out,



"globalism produces its own regionalizations" (49). For this reason, it is important to conceptualize the place-nation relationship "from below" (Guarnizo 1998). Dirlik further notes that "it is also necessary, to this end, to reconsider relations between places, between places and trans-place or supra-place organizational forms, and, finally, across national boundaries, to imagine alternative possibilities in the reorganization of spaces" (1999:50). The post-colonial ambiguity personified in the drama reflects the highly volatile situation as conflicting claims of sovereignty over Taiwan are negotiated.

For the most senior generations, such imagined alternatives were severely restricted under the Chinese Nationalist education system. While the Japanese education system enabled a more critical view of Chinese government, those who were younger by only a few years had a very different outlook. Dr. Wen emphasized to me that those who grew up in that system "were brainwashed by the Chinese government [and] have a much different way of thinking. For those of us who received a Japanese education, it is unthinkable being part of China. But now, the younger generation are brainwashed to think we are part of China. Dun-Mei interjects that, "well, we were all brainwashed. We think the way they taught us." Dr. Wen continued to describe the problem with identity as he saw it:

[It was difficult] especially those who stayed in Taiwan, who were never exposed to outside information. Those people in Taiwan who believe they are Chinese; once they come out and stay in the United States or Japan, they change their minds. They realize, looking back to Taiwan from the outside, they know the truth. They start to think about what Taiwan is supposed to be. The people in Taiwan may not realize that. They think only about the days they are living, how to become well-to-do. They do not realize the international position of Taiwan because to them there is no direct influence. Once you come out of the country, you realize how isolated Taiwan is, and you become more concerned about the future of Taiwan.

In terms of imagination and articulation, Formosan Taiwan emerged, characterized by an understanding of Taiwanese ethnicity based on layers of colonial subjugation and distance from the mainland. As the Nationalist party was gradually dominated by *benshengren*, and democratic reforms weakened the characterization of the KMT as an oppressive party, Formosan Taiwan became increasingly anachronistic, found more often among elder overseas activists than among the population in Taiwan (Arrigo 2005). Those at Uncle Chang's house that afternoon were describing younger cohorts who would come to the U.S. with a much narrower view, and more deeply impressed conceptualization of Taiwan as China. The Chinese nation-state imagination that denigrated Taiwanese culture and erased its history would for many *liuxuesheng* be ruptured in the first years in the U.S. Their response differed in some ways from the Formosan internationalists insofar as younger activists emphasized exploring and Taiwanese roots, including music, literature, and indigenous groups' cultures.

### **C. Cultural Nationalism and Multiculturalism**

By his second undergraduate year in college, Gabriel had performed as a puppeteer, served as the puppet troupe coordinator, and stepped into the position of TSA president after an unexpected vacancy, always with encouragement and support from Li-Lin and Hiro, as well as Alan Chen. His amenable and deferent disposition was well-suited to maintain good relations with older Taiwanese student-immigrants in Madison, as well as create trans-local relationships on an organizational level. Gabe had become adept at navigating the complex landscape of generations, political positions and legacies, dealing with issues from the past while working to promote what he saw as a more important agenda of getting students excited about Taiwan. However, due to his

circuitous route to Taiwanese identity, his Taiwaneseness was questioned among some activist. In this example, the issue involved both inter- and intra-generational negotiations.

At my invitation, Gabriel and I gave presentations at the TC conference on national trends in TSAs based on early dissertation data, Taiwanese puppetry in the U.S., and the unique aspects of Taiwanese student activities in Madison, past and present. Taiwanese Collegian was an illegal overseas organization under ROC law when it was first established in 1983. With no centralized headquarters, members of the nation-wide TC network recruited new generations of activists from within student associations, taking advantage of what Della Porta (1999) calls “indigenous networks” of pre-existing organizations. Taiwanese Collegian members promote a pro-TI agenda of activities on their individual campuses, events such as Taiwanese election rallies, China-US relations protests, participation in university-sponsored “international day” events, and commemorations of important Taiwanese historical events. At the time of this research it was the largest Taiwanese student network in the U.S., with ties to student associations on about 50 college campuses across the country. Because it was the organization’s 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary meeting, the people he met were some of the most known and respected older-generation TI activists living in the U.S.

In an autobiographical speaker profile submitted for the program booklet of the Taiwanese Collegian 2003 Summer Camp in Washington, DC, Gabriel introduced himself in this way:

I am a 21 years old Taiwanese who spent half of his life studying in Singapore. Before coming to Unites States in 2001, I knew little about Taiwan. Through the participation in the activities in UW-Madison TSA and interaction with older members, I began to know more about the cultural and history of Taiwan.

Furthermore, I develop a strong identity as a Taiwanese and wanted to make some contribution to Taiwan. I became the coordinator of our traditional Taiwanese Puppet Troupe and currently served as the President of our TSA. My goal as the president of TSA is to bring the new generation of Taiwanese like me to be interested in issues in Taiwan.

In his self-introduction at the beginning of the conference he used Mandarin to apologize for having to speak “*guoyu*” because he lacked the language skills to introduce himself using Holo, as everyone else had. He noticed a reaction when he made the comment, but did not know how much of an impression it made on people until he and I had a conversation about it later that evening. He had been taught to refer to Mandarin as *guoyu*, the “national language,” a term created by the Nationalist government to refer to Mandarin, and a reminder to some of the changes Chinese nationalism brought to Taiwan, including requirements to adopt an unknown language. When Gabriel learned from Taiwanese Collegian members that some of the “old-school activists” resented his use of the term, he pointed to his life trajectory as the source of the problem:

Look, I was born in Singapore. All the while when I was in Taiwan to visit I was taught to say *guoyu*. This was introduced by KMT to make Mandarin the official language, so they called it *guoyu* – everyone said that. Even though I was never a supporter of the KMT, I was never told I shouldn’t use the term *guoyu*. I should say *Beijing hua*. No one had ever told me.

In the Taiwanese Collegian central committee meeting, Gabriel’s reference to *guoyu* brought to the fore a much-debated issue among TC members: Should Taiwanese Collegian recruit members among one-point-fives, U.S.-born Taiwanese and others who have a limited understanding of political issues in Taiwan and the history of the TI movement in the U.S.? Although some strongly disagreed the majority felt that as an organization they would be best served remaining exclusive in membership, a group of

highly-motivated activists working with Taiwanese international students who already had a personal familiarity with Taiwan, rather than U.S.-born Taiwanese Americans and one-point-five generation students whose connections to Taiwan were more tenuous. Puppetry and curling, they reasoned, would not easily translate into political action.

Those opposed warned that limiting their recruiting efforts to only seeking committed TI-minded “ready-made” student activists will lead the organization on a path to anachronistic obscurity. As Hiro put it, “whether [elder ‘hard-core’ activists] want to admit it or not, the future of Taiwan depends on the passion of Taiwanese from the U.S. and there are more and more of them, and fewer and fewer ‘pre-cooked’ activists arriving from Taiwan.” Gabriel would not be among the students Taiwanese Collegian would target for membership, but another student in Madison was already being considered, a 35-year-old Semitic Studies graduate student Yeh Ching-an. Also described in Chapter Two, Ching-an came with a high recommendation from a college professor in Taiwan attesting to his TI-mindedness and desire to be an active participant in the overseas independence movement. He and Gabriel were acquaintances, but the Ching-an had up until then eschewed TSA activities – including puppetry – as too “social.” By 2004, near the end of this dissertation research, although Ching-an never played an active role in the local TSA, he had become one of the key figures in the Taiwanese Collegian network. Gabriel finally exhausted his efforts to be active in Taiwanese Collegian in 2005 when Ching-an began to discourage the use of English on internal Taiwanese Collegian email lists.

Multicultural Taiwan, exemplified by Alan Chen’s puppetry and a range of other practices highlighted in various contexts as markers of Taiwanese culture, emphasizes

non-Chineseness to the point that it may conflict with a more multi-ethnic articulation of Taiwan's identity. However, second-generation Taiwanese Americans are drawn to the practices of Taiwanese culture as an access point to their "roots" and a way to construct and connect with their "homeland." The message that Taiwan should be a sovereign state based on having a shared national culture, an imagined national community, however, is often lost on the younger generation. Their biographical experiences and collective generational memory are grounded in a post-democratization Taiwan, and a multicultural campus environment where groups are encouraged to explore and display their culture. Louie (2004), however, points out the "multiculturalism" depends on recognizable markers of cultural authenticity, outward signs of cultural knowledge. It relies on icons and symbols that oversimplify and essentialize ethnic minority population. As a result, some of the Chinese Americans felt unqualified to represent their "own culture."

The dual student association structure that characterized U.S. campus life for overseas students is no longer dominated by a *waishengren* / *benshengren* dichotomy; indeed, such categories are no longer useful when describing second- and third-generation overseas students. More often, the two have merged into one organization displaying a syncretic conceptualization of Taiwan's identity. Changing the names of student associations in the U.S. presaging the *xiangtu* movement in Taiwan. The syncretism on student association websites also resonates with neologism "New Taiwanese" identity, which represents Taiwan as a land of four ethnic groups, each of which represents waves of immigration to Taiwan. Taiwaner (1996), however levels the same criticism as Louie (2004) insofar as arranging the population into four ethnic groups imposes an identity regime that will overshadow other modes of alliance based on class,

or gender, for example. In the next segments a series of conceptualizations will be outlined and briefly discussed in relation to the ethnographic data informing the categorization scheme.

From discussions in Chapter One it is clear that a disjuncture existed between those interested in direct political action, including some key members of WUFI, and others like Alan Chen who felt that, in order for political advances to take hold there must be a cultural foundation. He lamented that the DPP had no such policy, and attributed this oversight to the slipping support for the party among Taiwanese youth. His early plays and literary work were designed to fill in the cultural vacuum left by 1960s activists' singular focus on political reform. It would not be until the late 1970s that the arts – particularly Taiwanese literature – were widely recognized as having an inherent political power. His more recent work with college student puppet troupes has been a continuation of that mission, with the idea that, as described in Chapter Two, some of the puppeteers may go on to become TI-minded activists. The tension between the Formosan concept of Taiwanese independence as a political goal based on international subjugation described above, and Taiwan's identity as a culturally distinct place, is illustrated in an exchange that occurred at a TC conference. TC was founded on the principles of Formosan Taiwan, and though they sponsored speakers' tours with topics dealing with Taiwanese culture, they were contextualized in the political narrative of traditions that had been suppressed by the Nationalist government. The founders of the organization and current members emphasize culture as a means to represent Taiwan as distinct as a people, a would-be nation-state alongside China. Others who were interested in learning

about Taiwanese culture for alternative reasons, such as “roots-searching, were not considered authentically Taiwanese.

Dun-mei: Part of our ancestors did come from China, so there is Chinese blood in there. But also we have the Taiwanese people who were there before the Chinese came, the *Yuanzhumin*. When you say *Yuanzhumin*, people think of a small group, but before, they were a large group who are now all mixed up with the *Han* Chinese. So I am not so sure about are Taiwanese really *Han*. Anyway, in my opinion, the people who came from Fujian to Taiwan for a new way of live brought with them something quite different from the traditional Chinese way of thinking. Maybe a lot of the Chinese people who came to Taiwan were more like working-class people who carry a different kind of thinking. Mix this with the native Taiwanese, and I think you have a more free-spirited kind of people

Dr. Wen: Taiwanese went through so many different eras. At one point, we were ruled by the Dutch, so there was a Dutch influence. And of course the Japanese had a very strong influence on Taiwanese culture. Also, if you talk to Zheng Yan-Fu in Milwaukee, you will see that racially, if you look at the DNA of the Taiwanese, it is not Chinese. They have a mixture of Pingpu part of the aborigines. Taiwanese are mostly mixed blood. So genetically, historically, culturally... I think the Taiwanese way of thinking is quite different than the Chinese way of thinking.

Also, island culture is different. At different times there are so many different people coming to Taiwan, so I think that the Taiwanese are more open to the outsiders, more receptive. All those things make Taiwanese people different from Chinese. More open than the Chinese. In fact, they closed Taiwan from China – they did not allow people to go to Taiwan, and you were not allowed to come back.

Dr. Wen: The reason they are so mixed with indigenous is because the earliest immigrants were just male. They got married to aborigines. So most Taiwanese have mixed blood, and there is such a different course of history. For example, I think the Japanese way. And when my mother gets a pain, she says, ‘ai dai!’ in Japanese. I say the same thing. The difference in the way of thinking has to do with generations too.

Mr. Chang: The *Koumindang* education is that everybody is *Han*, so they do not want to admit they are Pingpu.

This is a very clear articulation of cultural Taiwan, one that is outward-looking and flexible, as having had multiple waves of cultural influence, but at the same time, she



moves to notions of race and essentialized characteristics because of consanguine affinity. Those whose parents are *benshengren*, regardless of how many generations or nations removed, have a Taiwanese essence inside them, waiting to be discovered.

Multicultural Taiwan is widely available, including to individuals such as Gabriel (raised in Singapore,) Hiro (whose mother is from Japan,) Amy (who grew up in the U.S., and any others, including culture tour participants. Unlike Formosan Taiwan, there is no inherent call for political action, and unlike cultural Taiwan, multicultural Taiwan provides opportunities to learn about Taiwanese “roots,” and to publically represent elements of Taiwanese culture. In this case, Alan Chen encourages students to perform Taiwanese puppetry. Other iconographic elements of Taiwanese multi-culture include folk dances and songs performed by students at international fairs, foods prepared by parents at Taiwan Night Market events, Taiwanese popular culture, and bubble tea. All are considered valid elements in exploring the identity of Taiwan in the context of multiculturalism in the U.S. This differs from the previous conceptualization of Taiwan as Formosa insofar as it is not a call to action, and it does not require a deep understanding (and indignation) regarding Taiwan’s colonial past. Duara (1997) commented that “activist groups with a totalizing vision of community seek to eliminate these permeable boundaries or transform them into the hardened boundaries of a closed community (40). More syncretic views of Taiwan, one which allows for greater admixture of Chinese traditions and iconography, have emerged among a generation who came of age with a Taiwanese president and a flourishing economy, as well as second-generation Taiwanese Americans who have interest in “roots.”

#### **D. “New” Taiwan: Multi-Ethnic Island-State of Immigrants**

The tension between the Chinese nationalism of the KMT regime and the nascent Taiwanese identity among the local population resonates with Castells' (1997) contrast between identity supporting a regime and the resistance identities developed by various counter-hegemonic groups. *Legitimizing identity* is reproduced by the dominant group in society, a kind of national religion communicated in the major public communication domains, such as national pedagogy, national commemorations, the designation of national cultural treasures, characteristic cuisine, and so forth, the trappings of a nation-state and the symbolic foundation of the imagined community (Anderson 1983; Gellner 1983; Bhabha 1990; Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983).

*Resistance identity*, however, is at the heart of communities, and may be the most important in our society today. It is the source of collective opposition to authority. Resistance identities are based on identities that are already "clearly defined by history, geography, or biology, making it easier to essentialize the boundaries of resistance." It leaves open the possibility of what Castells terms "the exclusion of the excluders by the excluded . . . reversing the value while reinforcing the boundary" (9). This makes the resolution of the tension unlikely, and it must be overcome for a peaceful society.

The 1980s saw dramatic changes in Taiwanese politics. The "Taiwanization" of the Nationalist party problematized their representation as the "colonizers." The lifting of Martial Law, and the subsequent constitutional reforms of the late 1980s, meant that supporters of Taiwanese independence had access to the political system as never before. Although the related issues of reunification/independence, and Chinese identity/Taiwanese identity, continued to dominate politics, by the late-1990s, discourses of "New Taiwanese" identity, "Taiwanization" educational reform, and greater

diversification of issues in the public sphere in Taiwan, de-centered these dichotomies and undermined the validity of political mobilization on the basis of ethnicity in Taiwan proper. Taiwan as Formosa was becoming less compelling as a new national identity formulation based on citizenship, syncretic relations between four ethnic groups, and a sense of a “community of common fate” emerged in public discourse (Wang 1999). This conceptualization of Taiwan’s identity was introduced into the national education curriculum at the seventh grade level in 1998. The new text books present a kind of geo-historical national narrative, beginning with the traces of prehistoric groups, the more recent migrations of Malayo-Polynesian groups, European colonial outposts, *Han* settlers, and ultimately the arrival of the Nationalist government.

Known as “New Taiwanese” identity, the PRC is its primary Other, and the disruptive “ethnically divisive” politics of the recent past in Taiwan is considered anachronistic. In this sense, New Taiwanese identity is represented as a *development* or teleological effect, and thus historically related to, and in part constituted by, oppositional Taiwaneseeness, and emerges at the very margins of Chineseness, shifting Chinese heritage from a central organizing principle to an element, among other elements, of Taiwanese identity, a range of subject positions that cannot be completely contained under, nor completely disassociated from, the sign Chinese. More than just the insular dialogue of certain social theorists and Taiwanese activists, this new national identity formulation is part of a broad public discussion, and was introduced into the national education curriculum at the seventh grade level in 1998 (*Renshi Taiwan*:1997). Revised text books present a geo-centric national narrative, beginning with the traces of prehistoric groups, the more recent migrations of Austronesian groups, European colonial

outposts, early Chinese settlers, and ultimately the arrival of the KMT in 1945 and post-war Chinese refugees in 1949. A departure from previous China-centered texts, they present Taiwan as a key point of transit, an ancient and modern economic hub whose attentions are turned toward the Pacific Rim as much as toward the mainland. New Taiwanese are narrated as a synthesis of this multilayered history, as they present a deep history of immigration and settlement, various groups learning together to “identify with Taiwan,” and the nation as the resolution of those ethnic and historical differences. This configuration is premised on the *a priori identity* of its constituent groups, collapsing *ethnicity* (as a set of meaningful practices) and *identification* into a rigid parallelism. In this model, one’s access to Taiwaneseeness must be filtered through an ethnic identification, one of four to choose from.

Taken at face value the new national narrative maintains a position of marginalization – being on the fringes of Chinese empires, European trade routes, the Japanese sphere of domination, the margin of the Cold war itself – are incorporated as *content*, a shared collective experience for the national body, sometimes drawing on the motif of an “orphan” in literature and film (Tu 1996:1118). Several related but distinct modes of being less-than-Chinese (cultural, political, racial, and historical) converge in this imagination of Taiwanese national identity. In this sense, it is a layering of negations and oppositions, a nation expressed and constituted by its own historical marginalization and invisibilities. Tu Wei-Ming asserts that “the current Taiwanese cultural orientation opts for Taiwan as the ‘prodigal son’ of Cultural China,” his alternative to the description “Orphan of Asia,” a familiar reference to Taiwan originating in the title of a book written in Taiwan under Japanese rule in WWII (1991:26). However, Tu makes a more

problematic argument when he proposes that the Taiwanese “community of common life” articulated as new Taiwanese identity is a spurious, ideologically motivated and “artificially constructed ‘lifeboat’ mentality” (1996:10). He suggests that the increase in interest of Taiwanese to trace their indigenous heritage – usually by identifying with the now-assimilated Pingpu people – is an attempt to create an “imagined rather than a real community,” implying that Taiwanese identity lacks authenticity and credibility (21). The authenticity granted to China is implied, but impossible to mistake.

When I was small I descended from China (I was told) my great great grandparent came from China, so I am Chinese. I will tell me kids no, you were born in Taiwan, you grew up in Taiwan, you are not Zhong guo ren. You are Taiwan. American citizens may have immigrated from GB, or Italy, and other European countries. They don't call themselves British, or Portuguese. They call themselves American, so we should call ourselves Taiwanese.

Of course I will tell them that you have Chinese heritage. You are a Taiwan... how do I say that? First I will let him know much more about Taiwan, which I myself have never studies until college. I will let him know that Taiwanese has a very long history, that a long time ago, the Portuguese were in Taiwan, and then came the Dutch and they invaded and occupied Taiwan. So Taiwanese has some Dutch heritage. And then the Japanese, who also colonized Taiwan, which is why our grandparents spoke such good Taiwanese. And they considered themselves part Japanese. And then later they lose the war, and here comes the Chinese. I will explain to my kids that the KMT did not want to control Taiwan well, they just sent their worst general to Taiwan. But they lost the war to the communist party, so they had to retreat to Taiwan. The Taiwan underwent a series of reforms where everyone was educated they were Chinese - but actually there were only about 20-30% mainlanders, but the others were from Japan, or aborigines, so we can say we have heritage from Japan, from Dutch, from aborigines, so with all the influences of different cultures, you should call yourself Taiwanese.

Tu Wei-Ming asserts that *benshengren* and *waishengren* in Taiwan share in common a sufficient degree of “racial, national, religious, linguistic, [and] cultural heritage” to be seen as being of the same ethnicity (1996:18). In essence, he reveals that “ethnicity” is based on post-WWII neo-colonial language policies, and the state-centered pedagogy which narrated an uneven but undeniable connection between Taiwanese “local” culture and Chinese civilization. He is reifying Taiwan as Greater China identity while describing the evidence that it is a modern construction. From his perspective, Taiwanese independence activists drawing on discourses of Taiwanese ethnic identity are a product of an overcharged and liberalized public sphere, at the expense of Chinese cultural traditions in Taiwan (Tu 1996). While it is often that case that social scientists use such broad categorization for certain purposes of analysis, it is important to be aware that the collectivities created are products of a process of objectification, and it is critical to first question and test whether such typologies conform to the everyday lives, thoughts, experiences, and self-articulations of the people themselves. For example, Julian Shay, Formosa-generation activist, described *waishengren* as only seeing Taiwan with an “attitude of temporary residence.” Even some Taiwanese were like that, “just running away.” This, Julian explains, is why they do not get involved in American politics. He has a different view about immigration:

When I came here, I joined a church, I want to become an American. I changed my name. . . . in Chinese my name is ‘bamboo,’ so I changed it to Julian because it sound similar. Not too many people like the way I am thinking. They do not want to become American. They say, ‘I am Chinese.’ You can overhear them say ‘*Meiguoren*,’ [(American)] and he means the other guy, not me. And he has been here maybe forty years. I say I am an American. Because I am first generation immigrant, I might say I am Taiwanese American, but I think it is most clear to say I am an American.

Do a head count of all those who have come to the United States recently. Separate them – ask about their family income or his family position in society before he came to the United States. Most of those whose daddy is a rich man, maybe owns a corporation, investment in China or somewhere – that guy does not care. That guy does not have any ideas about... “What the hell, what is Chinese, what is Taiwanese – to me it means nothing. What difference does it make? Nothing. I just want the good life. I am thinking about to get in a good position with my daddy’s help.” Just his own personal future.

The narratives of hard work, resilience, humility, and frugality were common, and resonate with “Millionaire Chou’s son Daichou, who wasted his parents’ hard-earned fortune an opulent lifestyle. Dun-mei called them “peacocks.” True Taiwanese to Julian was based not only on the locality, but also the ethics that are associated with Taiwanese culture. When you size-up people from Taiwan, he emphasizes that this is an important distinction to make. A true Taiwanese from his generation “comes from a struggling family; he is the real one to study. He is totally different from that other guy.” He admits that he himself belongs to the “rich class,” but more than money, “it depends on how you up-bring your children.” He describes his friends in Taipei who bring their children up with all the money they want. The give them money instead of attention due to their busy lives: These parents:

[These parents] have no sense of responsibility. If you have a good sense of responsibility you might be more thinking about what freedom means. What democracy means. That other way is like a Chinese way, the Chinese ruling group, the *tu hui*, like the emperors. They rule by their own ideas, whatever they want. They do not care about democracy. I hope this is not contagious, like a disease to the Taiwanese in the United States. I think that in Taiwan there are politicians who think that they can do whatever I want. That is not right.

Based on interviews and website content analysis, this research suggests that these shifts in attitude were brought to the U.S. with new waves of *liuxuesheng* and immigrants, with the exception of a population of student immigrants who were strongly

influenced by the Wild Lily demonstrations. These individuals would continue activist networks such as Taiwanese Collegian and maintain the viability of Taiwan-centric student associations that emphasized ongoing involvement with Taiwanese affairs, working against a trend of syncretism among new members. The dual student association structure outlined in Chapter One is in decline, and shifting to reflect differences in cohort demographics and immigration status rather than political ideology. Although differences in conceptualizations of Taiwan's identity continue in these context, they are less frequently centered around the *Sinocentric* / Taiwan-centric dichotomy, but rather are based on where students spent their most formative years: in Taiwan, FOBs, or in the U.S. (1.5s and ABC/Ts.) This often further differentiates into associations of graduate students from Taiwan coexisting with associations of undergraduate students from Taiwan, with the latter focusing on social activities, and increasing in membership. Website analysis reflects a concomitant decline in associations' autobiographical narratives and historicity of content, and an overall shift away from the website medium in general toward the exclusive use of Internet bulletin boards and social network group sites such as Yahoo!, MSN, and, most recently, Facebook.

In an essay published in the Taiwanese Collegian English-language magazine *Taiwanese Voices* titled "Emphasizing my Taiwanese-ness: Not a Denial of Chinese influences" Henry Tan-Tenn (1998) details the ironic hidden heritage of indigenous groups in Taiwan. His central message concerns the issues of Chinese heritage in Taiwan. He suggests that there is no need to reject so thoroughly the Chinese part of their culture; it is obvious to see in the daily lives of people in Taiwan. Instead, this sentiment is against the KMT, as well as the PRC. He is referring to the oppression of



Chineseness, and proposes that Taiwanese consciousness is “grounded” in a love for the land itself. Further, he suggests that most Taiwanese are in denial about our indigenous roots.

Making a similar point, Doris Chang (1999) focuses on studies connecting Taiwanese to the indigenous tribes, both genetically and culturally, including historical research that describes how the matrilineal *Pingpu* lost their names. As the island was drawn into Chinese political and military affairs in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, the cultural capital of having pure Chinese heritage increased, leading to the proliferation of forged family lineages. She discusses “New Taiwanese;” to her, “Taiwan’s vision of statehood should include all immigrants and indigenous peoples of Taiwan who would consider the island as their home, regardless of their cultural or racial origin.”

The national identity discourse was promoted by the leadership of both major parties uniting “the four ethnic groups” (Fujianese, Hakka, indigenous groups, and Mainlanders) under the sign of “New Taiwanese.” This configuration is premised on the *a priori identity* of its constituent groups, collapsing *ethnicity* and *identification* into a rigid parallelism. In this model, one’s access to Taiwaneseness must be filtered through an ethnic identification, one of four to choose from. However, privileging the ethnic here as some absolute social content precludes other possibilities and has specific political effects. The central organizing principle of national identity, the Unity the nation seeks to narrate comes by resolving the conflict between four ethnic groups, equalized and reified under the nation state. This discourse channels the social discursive resources into a kind of blind alley, leaving little room for the nation to narrate other unities, such as between labor and capital, or along gender lines (Taiwaner 1986). It is not that these

other discourses are erased, but they are strategically removed from *national* constructions. Greater China and New Taiwanese both effect erasures and essentialization. Conceptualizations of Taiwan based on opposition to the Nationalist Republic of China discourse have historically been overdetermined by other political issues, including labor, the environment, women's rights, indigenous rights, and democratization. New Taiwanese identity, which seems to resolve a "fundamental" ethnic fissure in Taiwanese society, cannot provide the same kind of discursive terrain upon which other social contradictions might be mapped.

#### **E. Taiwan as Greater China**

In studies of transnationalism and diaspora, Taiwan, and transmigrants from Taiwan, are encompassed by discourses of overseas Chinese, Chinese diaspora, and Chinese transnationalism. By a similar logic, Taiwanese immigrants to the US and Taiwanese Americans are embedded within discourses of "new Chinese" immigration, a grouping of people from Hong Kong, Taiwan, and SE Asia marked by a high level of education, skills, and resources (Fong 1994; Wang 1995; Ng 1998; Ma 1998). Nonini and Ong (1997) have made important steps toward recasting "Chinese culture," as discursive tropes:

Each with a genealogy, each having been constantly cast in cultural terms by both Chinese and by Westerners, including academics. . . . These tropes and the discourses underlying them do not merely explain Chinese identity, networks, and economic activity; rather, such discourses and their connections to power in large part *constitute* Chinese identities and transnational projects, and are therefore in need of deconstruction and study (9).

Deconstructing the *content* of Chineseness, as they have suggested, stressing alternative modalities of being Chinese, is nevertheless highly problematic when we begin to consider the parameters established within which Taiwan may be defined.

Broadly speaking, it is possible to identify two perspectives to locate Taiwan – one fixing Taiwan as an expression of alternative Chinese modernity, the other explicitly Taiwan-centric with elements of Chineseness incorporated. These discourses have historically been heavily reliant on transnational communication and travel between Taiwan and extraterritorial populations, including the culture tours discussed in Chapter Five, and continue to be meaningful to overseas populations from Taiwan today.

Yang (1997) sees Taiwanese television as a vision of “alternative Chineseness,” representing and reproducing a “deterritorialized Chinese subjectivity.” If we take deterritorialized to mean “Chinese not in the PRC,” then we see Yang’s central assumptions about Taiwan’s Chineseness.<sup>26</sup> Although many academics have studied China through Taiwan without giving due attention to issues of Taiwan’s identity (Murray and Hong 1994), more recent analyses have identified Taiwan as a “third space,” part of an increasingly important periphery of China, a “node” in the Pacific Rim transnational socio-economic formation, a space of transit for modern Chinese diaspora, and a point of origin for hyper-mobile Asian immigration to the U.S., and cultural Chinese modernity (Tu 1991; Lowe 1996; Ng 1998; Ong 1993, 1997, 1999; Nonini and Ong 1997; Wang Ling-chi 1998). Taiwan has been identified as part of “greater China”, “residual China”, the “Chinese diaspora”, and “cultural China.” Ong (1999) locates Taiwan on the fringes of China’s graduated sovereignty, and Taiwanese-ness then becomes part of a Chinese “third culture” a “novel social arrangement” produced by globalization (Nonini and Ong 1997:11).

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<sup>26</sup> This qualification or contextualization may be referred to as “caveat identification,” meaning essentially: “I am Taiwanese, but my roots are Chinese,” or “I am Chinese, but I was born in Taiwan.”

Ma (2007) suggests that the nostalgic sentiment in Asian American subjectivity is avoided by scholars in favor of a more aggressive tone associated with struggle and empowerment in America, emphasizing “here and now” rather than “over there in the past” (xviii-xix). Lowe’s (1996) historical framework, for example, points to a history of dislocation, erasure from histories, juridical discriminations, and other structural inequalities experienced by Asian Americans. The collective memory of their exclusions, she proposes, increases skepticism of citizenship, liberal democracy, and often the nation-state and its associated hegemonic ideologies. The awkward Waltz of Taiwanese History at the opening of this chapter is an example, as its primary referent is a distant history re-enacted in the present. As a performance, the Waltz flirts with oppressors until the ultimate transformation from colonized feminine to masculine. In the performance, the gender transformation comes through struggle against the Nationalist government. However, the proposition that Asian Americans as a group are in general skeptical of the nation-state, and as a group represent a critique of the U.S. nation-building project, should be contrasted with the views of many supporters of Taiwanese independence among Taiwanese Americans. Independence discourse is grounded in metaphors of place and roots, antithetical to “third spaces,” “ungrounded Chinese alterity, and other post-national conceptualizations. The constructs of Taiwanese independence, which have been both revolutionary and conservative, always/already reify the nation-state and validate the preeminence of national sovereignty and democracy.

Wang’s research (1998) focuses on the discourses and practices surrounding transnational Taiwanese as they encounter the structures of the Global Nation Order. As

more and more Taiwanese come face to face with their (inter)national political ambiguity, (unrecognized passports, being delayed or questioned, being misrecognized as either Chinese or PRC citizens), a “traveling discourse” emerges in the Taiwanese public sphere, one that addresses these commonly-experienced “national humiliations.” Taiwan, Taiwanese people, and Taiwanese identity are contained within, and rendered invisible by, what has been called a Chinese Racial Formation (Lowe 1996). This conceptual category is overdetermined by global power struggles and flows of capital, and fragmented by competing Chinese national narrations and transnational subjectivities. Racial formations are (re)produced both institutionally and in the practices of everyday life. In Taiwan’s traveling discourse, encounters with Chineseness are coded oppressive, and a subjective distancing and dis-identification emerges, a kind of self-marginalization that creates new spaces for communal imagination (Ren 1996).

If we take the new national narrative at face value, we find that these positions of marginalization -- being on the fringes of Chinese empires, European trade routes, the Japanese sphere of domination, the margin of the Cold war itself -- are incorporated as *content*, a shared collective experience for the national body. Several related but distinct modes of being not-Chinese (culturally, politically, racially, historically) converge and become available through the discourses of Taiwanese national identity. In this sense, it is a layering of negations and oppositions, a nation expressed and constituted by its own historical marginalization and invisibilities. The Nationalists’ international alienation after the PRC entered the UN seriously undermined their legitimacy in Taiwan, including the discursive potency of Chinese nationalism. Thus in a dialectical way, this international marginalization actually *affirms* the Taiwanese national narrative, both by

decimating the Nationalist reunification-oriented Chinese nationalism, and by resonating with the story of marginalization that informs and politically orients oppositional Taiwaneseess.

Like the literature on the Chinese diaspora and Chinese transnationalism, Chinese American discourse tends to incorporate immigration from Taiwan as a Chinese phenomenon; the immigrants are a special demographic, but not beyond the Chinese immigration category. The literature misses the post-colonial subjectivities of first-generation immigrants from Taiwan, who are “a growing segment of the heterogeneous American society – the middle-class naturalized professionals and their previous ‘incarnation’ as foreign students” (Ma 2000:93). For example, Francis K. Hsu’s 1971 *The Challenge of the American Dream: The Chinese in the United States* combines Chinese Americans, Chinese from the PRC, and Chinese (and/or Taiwanese) from Taiwan into one subject population rather than take advantage of the dynamism between these identifications. In *Strangers from a Different Shore*, historian Ronald Takaki (1998) writes that Taiwan is a “second point of departure” for Chinese. Similarly, in *Chinatown No More: Taiwan Immigrants in New York*, anthropologist Hsiang-shui Chen (1992) collapses identification with Taiwan into a subject position among other groups and waves of Chinese immigration. He parenthetically comments on the distinction between Taiwanese and Chinese: “(Today, some people use ‘Chinese’ to refer only to those immigrants who have come directly from mainland China, and, for political reasons some pointedly refer to themselves as ‘Taiwanese’ (120). In this maneuver, similar to Tu’s general approach 1991; 1996), Chen reduces Taiwanese subjectivity to a political position.

Timothy Fong's research in Monterey Park, the basis of his influential book *The First Suburban Chinatown* (1994), is represented as ethnography of Chinese immigrants. Fong was interested in the social and political dynamics between new Asian immigration to the area, other recent immigrant groups, and long-time residents, including Anglo and Japanese Americans. Fong writes about the Asian and Chinese community in Monterey Park, using the terms nearly interchangeably, to represent a research population of individuals with ties to Taiwan, not mainland China, who differed significantly from previous waves of Chinese immigration.<sup>27</sup> In this text, Taiwanese in Monterey Park are representative of new Chinese immigration. In another detailed analysis of Monterey Park, Saito explores the ways in which political and social interactions inform the "constitution of ethnic and racial identities, in particular the development of panethnic identities" (1998:1). The Asian American community to Saito is framed by the temporal structure of immigration, which takes as its primary dichotomy the tension between the well-established Japanese American community and the "new Chinese immigration." Citing Lowe (1991) he brackets these stray subjectivities as aspects of heterogeneity, hybridity, and multiplicity, a move that allows his categorical model to stand uninterrogated.

Chang (1991a) shows a similar problem of sampling in describing new Taiwanese immigration to California only by era and neighborhood. She puts them in a historical lineage of Chinese people coming to California over the last century. Statistics about "Chinese Americans" and references to the "Chinese community" make no distinctions between those from Taiwan and those from China.

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<sup>27</sup> Ma (2000) notes that in Fong's *First Suburban Chinatown*, Chapter Two is entitled "Enter the Dragon: Economic Change" (xix).

“Who are the Taiwanese Americans?” The question posed in the introduction to *The Taiwanese Americans* (1998) by anthropologist Franklin Ng, opens a text which illustrates common problematic assumptions regarding the categorical and hierarchical relationship between Taiwan and China, between Taiwanese culture and Chinese culture, and between Taiwanese and Chinese identities, found in contemporary English-language academic literature. *Benshengren* subjectivity is represented as a local, provincial variant of Chineseness; Ng states that “just as the Cantonese identify with Guangdong province in Southeastern China, so the Taiwanese identify with their island home of Taiwan” (1). When Ng writes that “aside from the aborigines, the population on Taiwan is Chinese,” he misrepresents a segment of population in Taiwan who no longer self-identify as Chinese. For Ng, presumably, they are Chinese who deny their Chineseness.

Ironically, as Sybil Chen (1999) points out, the problems of *benshengren* erasure are evident in writings within Asian American Studies, which are thought to challenge and correct hegemonic and essentializing discourses. Although my research indicates a persistent, if not amplified, distinction between *benshengren* and *waishengren* among activists in the U.S., grounded in part in the collective memory of the February 28<sup>th</sup> Incident and the White Terror era, Ng’s emphasizes that for most in Taiwanese society, the distinction between *waishengren* and *benshengren* faded in significance after immigration. The result, he suggests, is a stable Taiwanese American community based on shared memories of life in Taiwan. Informants indicated to me, however, that to a great extent, *benshengren* and *waishengren* composed two communities with minimal overlap, particularly prior to democratic reforms in Taiwan and the increase in immigration from the PRC.



However, Ong (1997) picks up on a critical issue in the matter of self-narratives. She illustrates how Chinese transnationals as described above often accept the Western narrative of Chinese Capitalism and its epistemological underpinnings and use it as a space in which to maneuver, thus resisting the West's desire for single fixed national identities. Their efforts to describe one point of resistance, however, limit their ability to see another. The self-narratives of Taiwanese are silenced, absent from ethnography or neutered of their non-Chinese content. In the examples above, academic literature constructs conceptualizations of Taiwan's identity that are both Chinese, and marginalized.

## **II. Findings and Implications**

### **A. Diachronic and Synchronic Cyber-ethnography**

As pointed out in the methods segment of the introductory chapter, I agree with Des Chene (1997) in arguing that anthropologists tend to work from a synchronic perspective because, however difficult the fieldwork may be, you are still "out there" among "your people" collecting data. For my purposes, however, "out there" was often in cyberspace, or at events lasting only a few hours. Further, with the use of Internet-based tools I was able to work diachronically. For example, I was able to trace changes on a single student association website looking for changes in institutional persona. "Institutional persona" includes not only mission statements and origin narratives, but also hyperlinks, iconography, information from photographs of past events, and a wide range of additional materials.

Cyber-archaeology involves the examination of widely dispersed and disparate phenomena during a particular moment in linear time. With archival tools it was possible to learn about localized events on the eve of the 2000 presidential election in Taiwan. Using this method I was able to see not only campus-based demonstrations and candle-light vigils on a dozen campuses, but also uncover the trans-local and transnational communications shaping (seemingly) local events. In this example, a co-coordinated TC/WUFI effort managed to distribute an anti-China, pro-democracy “manifesto” as well as program plans for vigils, and tips on how to attract and manage media coverage. Thus, one of the key findings of this dissertation involves the efficacy and value of Internet-based archival research, using both synchronic and diachronic cyber-ethnography. As anthropologists, in addition to our re-consideration of “the field” and the “subject” based on insightful inquiries into the nature of place and mobility, we must also consider time a social construct rather than a standard measure. It is only through a re-conceptualization of time that we are able to explore the nature of inter- and intra-generational negotiations of “homeland” among generations of *liuxuesheng* and Taiwanese Americans.

In the case of this research, much of the fieldwork was virtual, not only multi-locale (Clifford 1997) but also multi-dimensional. Through the use of Internet-based tools such the Internet Archive the history and historicity of generations of *liuxuesheng* became apparent. Consecutive cohorts participating in a student association over more than a single generation constitute a “hidden population” (Schensul et al 1999) which is at the ethnographic moment highly “localized” and widely dispersed: localized insofar as they were involved in the reproduction of student association, shaping its institutional culture and memory, yet only in a transient way, through face-to-face inter- and intra-

generational relationships; dispersed insofar as in the ethnographic present, such a population is nearly invisible.

The authors contributing to *Anthropological Locations: Boundaries and Grounds of a Field Science* (Gupta and Ferguson, eds. 1997) challenge social scientists to reconceptualize “the field,” and fieldwork, emphasizing mobility, travel, Internet-based methods, and other innovations and corrections to anthropology’s hallmark activity: field work. All but Des Chene avoid reconceptualizing ethnographic temporality, a move which would bring anthropology to the institutional and methodological borders of history. The extensive use of Internet-based archival material situates this dissertation research in this theoretical framework; indeed, rather than an innovation in methodology, my use of the Internet Archive is akin to a Boasian approach to field work: arm-chair ethnography based on the careful interpretation of historical records (including missionaries’ descriptions, accounts of collectors of antiquities, reports from travelers, and so forth) as the basis for an anthropology dissertation. Graduate students did not to go to “the field” until they had acquired a Ph.D.

The processes that shape historic generations are always/already spaces of contest and negotiation where certain interpretations are privileged over others, particular events are deemed more re-memorable than others, some narratives are emphasized and dramatized, politicized, and others silenced, appropriated, and neutralized. To best understand the way in which the symbolic content of student association websites communicate meaning, I draw on the concept of cultural memory (Heller 2001; Schudson 1995), a term that refers to the ways in which memory is contained within cultural relics and practices, the way everyday elements of culture are overlaid and infused with

references to a specific interpretation of the past. Cultural memory, like social memory, is no less a space of contest and power struggle than culture as a more general concept (Climo 2000). The terms are more specific than “collective memory” insofar as they emphasize the socio-cultural media through which memories are constructed and communicated from one generation to the next. Cultural motifs, symbols, sayings, myths, icons, and so forth can be deployed as mnemonic devices, “*lieu de memoire*” (Nora 1989). Meanings can be drawn from such symbols and practices, and memory can be transcribed on cultural forms and bring them into the historical register. Student association websites can be considered locations of cultural memory, as are commemorations, ceremonies, celebrations, museums, performances, movies, novels and so forth. Just as individual student associations are the key inter- and intra-generational memory groups discussed in this dissertation, the nation is the preeminent mnemonic community, and the ability to shape socio-cultural memory is key to instilling a sense of Taiwan’s identity compelling enough to make sacrifices of time, and resources. Just as the past is the key to instilling and legitimating the ideology of state, so too can alternative socio-cultural memory challenge the nation-state and fuel opposition movements based on shared identity grounded in a compelling historical narrative.

In the past, Taiwan-centric student association and TASAs have served as context for the development of oppositional nationalist cultural memory, as localized instances of memory groups reproducing cultural memory. Regularly held camps and conferences where multiple generations of *liuxuesheng* interact also create sites where memory groups “happen” and are reinforced, re-negotiated and redefined. Pierre Nora (1989) has argued that it is precisely this kind of project that today constitutes social memory – no

longer a living breathing memory, but one of traces and remnants. What he calls *lieu de memoire*, “museums, archives, cemeteries, festivals, anniversaries, treaties, depositions, monuments, sanctuaries, fraternal orders” and so on come about because we no longer live in a *milieux de memoire*:

We buttress our identities upon such bastions, but if what they defended were not threatened, there would be no need to build them. Conversely, if the memory that they enclosed were to be set free they would be useless; if history did not besiege memory, deforming and transforming it, penetrating and petrifying it, there would be no *lieu de memoire*. Indeed, it is this very push and pull that produces *lieu de memoire* - monuments of history torn away from the movement of history, then returned; no longer quite life, not yet death, like shells on the shore when the sea of living memory has receded (12).

Nora links this process with a more general phenomenon with what he calls the “secularization” of modern society. Memory is sacred, history is secular. He uses the term *memory* (or *milieux de memoire*) to denote what I feel is an overly romantic notion of living breathing face-to-face recollection, based not on accuracy but imagination. His *sites of memory* (*lieu de memoire*) are the “boundary stones of another age” (12). Elements take on new meaning, some events – such as the *Bao-diao* movement – are forgotten, and new events are introduced and interpreted through narration, contextualization and other modes of representation and inter-generational communication. Indeed, as Massey points out, “generational differences serve to unify the émigré’ culture (86).

Though they may be held in different campuses from year to year, the event is nonetheless local, formalized and spatially organized: workshops, key-note speeches, cultural performances, discussion groups, leadership meetings, Taiwanese night market and talent shows. Though they may seem fleeting, a weekend a year, these are

nonetheless stable locations of cultural memory with recurring practices and themes, institutional memory, and a self-conscious interest in remembering a uniquely Taiwanese culture and past-time.

Mnemonic socialization – efforts by a community of memory to influence new members' sense of his or her place in narratives of the past – was happening in the context surrounding student associations' events such as those listed above. In some cases, it was a de-centering of Chinese nationalist discourse, replaced by alternative Taiwan-centric cultural memories as communicated in extraterritorial contexts, and sometime brought back to Taiwan. Though mnemonic socialization often happens in subtle ways, such as when you learn what to remember and what to forget through conversations among family members, friends and co-workers, popular media and public sphere discourses, at other time, it is intentional and highly structured, particularly in the case of extraterritoriality. In the case of this research, there were specific texts and historical information accessed by *liuxuesheng* which had a major, often traumatic impact on individuals, primarily the February 28<sup>th</sup> Incident, but the biographical narratives of early Japanese-era activists, historical literature, official documents, and so forth.

Liisa Malkii (1997) describes groups of memory that are only incidentally connected as "accidental communities of memory," indeterminate not because the historical events that influence them are unexpected or haphazard, but because they bring together people who might otherwise not have contact. She points out that these populations are hard for anthropologists to apprehend; it is an invisible community which evades ethnography, or even recognition. Though they have powerful effects, they are nonetheless "fragile and easily disembodied." She suggests that these populations can

also have “structural, social, political, afterlives” (92). I argue that the discovery of these materials, and the resulting radical re-definition of Taiwan, should be considered an index event itself, though without the simultaneity associated with index events as traditionally imagined shaping historic generations.

In more recent decades there has been less and less divergence between the official pedagogy in Taiwan and cultural memory in Taiwan. However, for U.S.-born Taiwanese Americans, the cultural memory of Taiwan can be powerful experience, introducing them to a mnemonic community with a tragic past of struggle and oppression which Taiwanese Americans inherit. Members of the mnemonic community – divided among a wide range of localized memory groups – seek to instill newcomers with the social identity of the group, in this case, with a sense of Taiwan’s national identity oriented toward collective action toward Taiwanese nation self-determination. For some, the identity being promoted is incomplete, the narrative is yet to be resolved, dependent on attaining Taiwanese independence, while for others, the story reached resolution with the lifting of martial law, or the election of Lee Teng-hui, or the election of the DPP candidate Chen Shui-bian to the presidency of Taiwan. Further, for some, the process of discovering their Taiwanese “roots” and coming to an understanding of the “content” of Taiwan’s identity is sufficient. This reflects the many ways Taiwan’s identity was communicated in this dissertation research by different generations, and groups within generations.

The pair of cultural tours to Taiwan for Taiwanese Americans discussed in Chapter Five illustrate the difference between the intentional development of cultural memory among a generation that would otherwise have difficulty becoming acculturated

to the Taiwanese national community of memory, as was the case with the Tsunah program, and on the other hand the introduction to the multivalent cultural memory of the Republic of China on Taiwan, whose historical and cultural elements lacked clear distinctions between the differences between Taiwanese and Chinese culture. Both were carefully staged and crafted; the ambiguities, silences and distortions were well-planned. With the challenges posed to the nation-state as a viable container of populations, cultures, economies, and discourses of shared heritage, the mnemonic community of the nation is fragmenting to reveal the underlying multiplicity and heterogeneity of the populations within the territorial bounds of a state, as well as those living beyond national borders. Nations as imagined communities are dissimilating into overlapping, sometimes clashing communities of memory that interpret cultural elements and narratives of the past below the national register, or in the form of oppositional nationalism.

The term counter-memory (Foucault 1977), the invocation of lost voices, exposes the ideological domination of public memory by a central authority, usually a state, that is part of the overall technologies of power that maintain hegemonic domination. By de-centering master narratives of the past, counter-memory can be a source of empowerment. By contrasting counter-memory with official memory, opposition groups reveal the inherently fragmented, incomplete, contextual and power-laden nature of representations of the past. But memory is a space for negotiation and contest, where no single interest can dominate the production of representations of the past. There is a kind of marketplace of collective remembrance and forgetting in which public and counter-memory compete, but mediated through the autobiographical memories of individuals



(Appadurai 1981). In other words, no single entity has the power to control the content and political orientation of social memory.

Schudson (1997) points out that the past can be considered to have three interrelated dimensions. We experience the past *personally* through biographical experiences, *socially* as it is institutionalized in official pedagogy and museums, and *culturally* as it is embedded in certain cultural expressions, narratives, symbols and cultural practices. In the case of the Kaohsiung Incident, for example, those who experienced it personally felt a mandate to push for reform, those who experienced it as part of Taiwanese History as presented in text books were less inclined to connect the incident to their own sense of Taiwan's identity or be compelled to act, while those who experienced the event as it was narrated by a survivor in a highly mediated, intentionally powerful way, developed a deeper understanding of their parents' feelings toward Taiwan, and a deeper respect for the opposition movement and sense of Taiwanese subjectivity, but not a call to action, to dedicate resources toward the goal of Taiwanese self-determination.

The decline in distance between official history as represented in text books and lived, local, collective memory, is lessening with democratization. Encountering sharp incongruence was often an earth-shattering experience because it cast students' entire lived experience in a different light, by redefining Taiwan – from ROC to Formosa. With democratization, public discourse and education more closely reflect (and commemorate) the lived experiences of the people. The violence of the state is now History, captured in the past, lessening any “moral shock” experience for the youngest generation.

According to Mannheim (1952), the “inventory experience” happens in late adolescence or early adulthood and shapes an individuals’ long-term worldview. For Mannheim, the rate of social change matters. The more rapid the change, the more likely a generational gap will appear and manifest itself. Generational differences drive history forward. This would explain the long period of time between the Japanese generation and those involved in the democracy movement in the late 1970s. According to this theory, with communication technologies and heightened mobility, it is more likely that generation-specific communities of memory will develop among dispersed populations.

However, the bridge between these generations highlights differences and congruencies between the conceptualizations of Taiwan’s identity of distinct generations, and how intertwined and reciprocal the experiences can be. By reciprocal, I mean that not only do the eye-witness accounts, narratives, and texts of prior generations have a profound and lasting impact on subsequent generations; there is also a powerful kind of feedback – both sorrowful and joyful – experienced by the older generations as they learn of both the indifferences and inspirations of the younger generations.

Climo (2002) pointed out that this kind of “vicarious memory” as told through the experiences of another is “a memory that an individual holds with great personal and emotional commitment, yet it is a memory of an event or experience that the individual has not experienced directly” (118). He suggests that much of our identity is in fact shaped by memories which are not our own, but those of others of influence in our lives, and that they become important to us as immediate experiences, transferring emotional commitments to identities across generations, in localized student association memory groups in this case.

Finally, to conclude this discussion of index events and historical generations, my findings indicate that while the key events outlined in Chapter Three – with the exception of the *Bao-diao* protests – were evident in data drawn from website analysis and interviews, the meaning of the events were radically different. Interpretations were divergent to the extent that they might not be considered the same “events” though as historical occurrences they coincided in time and space. For example, the democracy movement in the mid- to late 1980s, when activists from the U.S. and Taiwan were being violently suppressed in some cases, those who were closely involved in the events – including the WUFI kids whose parents were involved – were deeply impacted, and took on the mantle to continue struggling for further democratic reform. In the U.S. they initiated the first Taiwanese American student associations and established in their missions a commitment to activism.

Responding to the same historical period, others less immediately impacted by the turmoil saw the legalization of the DPP and the lifting of martial law as the completion of a historic journey. The impetus to collective action was undermined by the success of the opposition movement. In other words, where WUFI kids saw the beginning of a new chapter in the struggle for further democratic reform, others saw the same occurrences as indicators that the need for struggle was over.

Similarly, in 1990, when the Wild Lily protesters were pressuring the recently elected Lee Tenghui to enact constitutional reform, others saw 1990 as a watershed moment in Taiwanese history; it was a cause to celebrate, not protest, an occurrence that reduced an already awning sense of obligation to be involved in Taiwanese politics. In 1996, when WUFI and TC organized candle-light vigils in the 322 event and hardened

their commitment to protect Taiwan from military intervention from China in the future, others saw cause to celebrate at Lee's victory. Evidence in a shift in the way Taiwan was conceptualized was clear in the website data, as well as in interviews. In this light, the notion of "index event" becomes more problematic, as in many cases, those influenced by the event may be a small coterie with a large population. They can hardly represent a historic generation, while at the same time, through networking, they are able to have a major impact on their own, and incoming cohorts through controlling agendas of student associations.

### **B. Homeland in Diaspora**

Glick-Schiller and Fouron (1997) suggest that in many cases, the state has been able to "de-territorialize," thus extending its influence to extraterritorial populations. From their perspective, however, the de-territorialization of state encompasses immigrant groups within two hegemonic systems of power competing for loyalty. Goldring (1998), however, cautions that de-territorialization might be better phrased "re-territorialization," with individuals living in these circumstances considered "extraterritorial." Smith and Guarnizo: reject "deterritorialization". They use flows, (mentions) the possibility of "translocal" as a structuring elements in the flows. When *liuxuesheng* from Taiwan joined the population of Chinese already in the U.S., the Nationalist government was challenged to intent on maintain the loyalty of overseas Chinese, was challenged Integral to two powerful nation-state projects, Taiwanese independence activists were challenged to "build a unity of identity and a sense of commonality amongst people who share neither territory nor emersion in a single society" (Glick-Schiller and Fouron 1998:133). Maintaining a sense of homogenizing national culture that legitimizes the state is more

difficult due to the inherent heterogeneity of transnational social fields, causing both sending and receiving states to focus attention on extraterritorial populations to strengthen state power and perpetuate class inequality (Glick-Schiller and Fouron 1998; Goldring 1998).

Reflecting on another of Appadurai's "-scapes," this research resonates with the central question he poses: "What is the nature of locality as a lived experience in a globalized, deterritorialized world?" (Appadurai 1996:52). Though maintaining the caveat that "deterritorialization" may overstate the "unboundedness" (Basch et al. 1994) of everyday life among diasporic populations, questions remain about the inter- and intra-generational negotiations of Taiwan's identity as a locality among liuxuesheng and Taiwanese Americans. Through the course of this dissertation I have shown that Taiwan may be defined in a wide variety of ways, some mutually exclusive (authentic non-Chinese Taiwan on the one hand, and the locus of Chinese high culture and the seat of the legitimate government of China on the other.) Most, however, involved a syncretic view. For example, Taiwan as a home of a racially Chinese people who have developed uniquely Taiwanese characteristics, and Taiwan as "New Taiwan," island of waves of immigration, including (but not privileging) Chinese influence.

I concur with Massey (1994) in her argument that "what gives a place its specificity is not some long internalized history but the fact that it is constructed out of a particular constellation of social relations, meeting and weaving together at a particular locus"(154). Just as inter- and intra-generational connections among liuxuesheng are woven through the webs of transnational relations between sending and receiving countries problematizes the notion of rootedness and home, so symbols and practices are

re-shaped in the interstices between territorialized nation-states. The more prominent relationship may be between two localities, however conceived. I suggest that from many localities in the U.S., Taiwan conceived of as a locality, as defined by Smith and Katz (1993), capable of having within its discursive and social relations its many elements discourse of Taiwanese nation-state, Chinese nation-state.

Indeed, Malkii (1997a) challenges the idea of the school atlas idea of nations and cultures, one which Gellner, Hobsbaw, Gellner and Smith reify in their writings. Rather than focusing primarily on “roots,” social scientists should think in terms of “rhizomes,” networks of relationships with multiple and contextual rootedness. If, as Massey suggests, space and place are dynamic and constituted by social relations, it follows that rhizomatic connections are similarly (re)produced. Taiwan, when represented as a yam, is sometimes credited with the ability to survive without deep rootedness. Recall that the CyberGarden of Yams homepage noted that “yam can grow and proliferate in many sterile lands. Strength of sustainability and the will to struggle with harsh livings not only identify with the history of Taiwanese, but also become part of the nature of Taiwanese.” Independently, founders of YamWeb also used the metaphor of yams to represent Taiwan, noting explicitly that the plant has the ability to thrive in harsh environments. In both cases, the creative use of the Internet to further heighten awareness of Taiwan’s political situation was framed in the metaphor of rhizomes. Here, the “place” Taiwan is ‘stretched out’ across space (Massey 1994:158), which in this case includes “cyber-space.” This metaphor runs counter to a deeply-felt connection between essentialized notions of places, roots, and identity:

Motherland and fatherland, aside from their other historical connotations, suggests that each nation is a grand genealogical tree, rooted in the soil that

nourishes it. By implication, it is not possible to part of more than one tree. Such a tree evokes both temporal continuity of essence and territorial rootedness. (Malkii 1997a:57)

This is “deeply metaphysical and deeply moral, sinking ‘peoples’ and ‘cultures’ into ‘national soils’ and the ‘family of nations’ into Mother Earth” (Malkii 1997a:61). Diasporic populations and social scientists alike suffer from “root-thinking” (68). Multiple conceptualizations of Taiwan’s identity among *liuxuesheng* since 1945 have each drawn on roots metaphors, though in differing ways. The Formosan identity of Taiwan was based not on biological affinity *per se*, but rather on a shared experience of subjugation. This conceptualization of Taiwan was to a great extent a response to roots discourse propagated by the nationalist government which inseparably linked culture, race, geography and the nation-state. Among this generation, and in subsequent cohorts, cultural nationalist would borrow the discourses of “native soil,” “roots,” and local traditions to fashion a national culture, including flags, a literary genre, and counter-hegemonic historical narratives that emphasized the uniqueness of Taiwanese culture.

The cultural elements selected and refined by cultural nationalists to represent Taiwanese authenticity from abroad were shared with subsequent cohorts of *liuxuesheng* in the U.S., as well as the first generation of 1.5s and U.S.-born Taiwanese Americans. The WUFI kids, as they’ve been identified here, shared in common a Formosan perspective with their parents, differing from subsequent cohorts of second-generation Taiwanese Americans. With democratization, Taiwanization, and economic prosperity, oppositional Taiwanese identity discourses no longer resonate with the everyday lives of Taiwanese Americans. Instead, in the context of multiculturalism in the U.S., they are nonetheless expected to represent their culture to the broader public. To this end, they

turn to cultural nationalists like Alan Chen for help further simplifying “their culture” into manageable elements for the students to demonstrate, and the general public to consume. In Taiwan, the New Taiwanese discourse similarly locates Taiwanese identity within a multicultural context.

Much of the more recent articulations of Taiwan’s identity among *liuxuesheng* in the U.S. present a more syncretic view, including elements of Chinese culture, as well as appropriating indigenous groups’ cultural elements as well. This reflects shifts in the relationship between China and Taiwan and an increase in support for the *status quo* among Taiwanese in the U.S. Though cultural nationalists may feel that Taiwanese “authenticity” is fading, due primarily to the decline in use of the Holo language, younger cohorts are redefining what it means to be Taiwanese by selecting from among these disparate conceptualizations of Taiwan’s identity. For example, the Fighting Yams, because they are not focused on Taiwanese cultural authenticity, draw on a Formosan perspective of Taiwan’s identity. To a great extent, how a student from Taiwan or Taiwanese American interprets and experiences Taiwan and develops a sense of Taiwan’s identity depends on the various memory groups they have been included in. These include the family, but also, and perhaps more importantly, student associations. Within student associations, however, there are a wide range of possibilities of inter- and intra-generational influence. While the historic generation model is suitable for broad constellations of subjectivity among populations in the same social “space,” the concept must be modified in the context of diaspora populations, as they experience events that will shape their political views in highly localized contexts, such as student groups. Because Taiwanese independence activists were (and continue to be) widely dispersed



across the U.S., there were (and are) many groups without inter-generational translators such as Hiro and Li-lin, or cultural experts like Alan Chen, or student association activities based on vicarious collective memory of events such as the 2-28 Incident.

As a further modification to the historic generation model, it is important to note that it is possible to experience a powerful life-shaping moment in history based on collective remembering, even when the event is experienced as a vicarious memory. In this regard, it is not the event itself that should be understood to have the powerful effect, but also the moment of discovery, which may be a very solitary experience, yet widely experienced among a generation. A second contribution to historic generation theory is to give additional attention to the significance the past has to populations in diaspora in relations to residents of the sending state. A longing for a past among diasporic populations should not be considered something lacking, but rather as a constituent part of the overseas experience. This extends to second-generation Taiwanese Americans interested in searching for their roots – a desire expected of them as racialized immigrants in the U.S. – as seen in the analysis of two culture tours. The analysis indicates that there are multiple conceptualizations of Taiwan's identity available to this population, ranging from stressing the unique qualities of Taiwan and its history of subjugation (a combination of Formosan and cultural nationalist discourse) to Sinocentric tours that emphasize intra-generational social bonding rather than discovering roots.

### **C. Future Research**

Without the constraints of time and resources, this research would have included interviews with elder *liuxuesheng* who were not active in the Taiwanese independence movement. For example, authors in the *liuxue wenxue* (overseas literature) genre, the

focus of Ma's (1997) analysis of immigrant subjectivities, were primarily *waishengren*. In many ways they were similarly positioned as the *benshengren* independence supporters in this research, including their ambivalence toward their minority status in the U.S., and their longing for a distant Chinese "homeland," and lost Chineseness. However, exploring how/where/when "homeland" is defined and experienced among mainlander *liuxuesheng* would add depth to the current research and provide added theoretical leverage to explore lacunae in academic literature dealing with overseas student-immigrants in the U.S. and postcolonial critique so often missed in academic literature about Asian Americans.

Although the Internet-based research methods employed here drew from a broad cross-section of Taiwanese American youth and young *liuxuesheng*, omissions from this demographic include those who chose not to participate in student association activities, as well as participants on either cultural tour who chose not to post their experiences on-line. A full representation of Taiwanese American youth culture would require that these "hidden" populations be included in the sample. To this end, alternative methods than the ones used in this research would be required, including actively seeking out non-members of student associations on multiple campuses, and the use of survey instruments.

This research was able to take advantage of Internet-based data sources, including archival work examining wide-spread patterns in student association representations (cyber-archaeology), as well as focusing on a single organization over time (cyber-genealogy) to potentially detect inter- and intra-generational relationships informing conceptualizations of "homeland" among *liuxuesheng* in the U.S. Although

cyber-voyeurism, (hyper)textual analysis, and deconstruction of “unsolicited narratives” of conceptualizations of Taiwan’s identity were central to this dissertation, the medium itself – computer-mediated communication – was not treated as a specific subject. This dissertation creates a foundation for further explorations into the practices and theoretical implications of online research. Internet-based research methodology will continue to be an exciting area of exploration in the social sciences, and I plan on further developing my diachronic/synchronic, genealogical/archaeological model for website analysis. This will include rapidly emerging forms of social networking platforms such as (at the time of this dissertation’s publication) Facebook and Twitter.

This theoretical model upon which this research was based involved the constructed nature of seemingly self-evident cultural formation, including nation-states, national identities, and the meanings of historical events. Based on this research, it would be useful to add extraterritoriality as another factor that would alter the ways space can place may be conceptualized. As Malkii points out:

Physical location and physical territory, for so long the *only* grid on which cultural differences could be mapped, need to be replaced by multiple grids that enable us to see that connection and continuity – more general, the representation of territory – vary considerably by factors such as class, gender, race, and sexuality and are differentially available to those in different locations in the field of power (1997:50)

The motivations of senior activists in the U.S. who continued to be involved in Taiwanese politics were not examined in a sustained analysis, nor were gender differences considered in a systematic way. Given the critique of multiculturalism in the U.S. and New Taiwanese identity – that they place the politics of ethnic recognition above other potential lines of mobilization such as class, gender, sexuality, or otherwise, an important area of research would be to break from the proclivity to reify such

articulations of identity and examine more closely lines of power inequalities not immediately evident in the context of ethnic recognition. Even so, in the case of Taiwanese, there is ambivalence toward Asian American issues and their own position as a racialized minority in the U.S. This is yet another unasked question in the wide literature of Asian American immigration in the U.S. Thus, possible areas of future research would include a more focused inquiry into the experiences of student-immigrants from Taiwan in the U.S. as racialized immigrants in the U.S., thus making a more meaningful contribution to Asian American studies research.<sup>28</sup>

From another perspective, the ongoing involvement in the TI movement – and in particular their emphasis on traumatic events in the past (which I have attributed to an intentional strategy to recruit younger generations) might also be considered from a Freudian perspective. Senior activists who witnessed traumatic events may be working through the event as repetition and composition. As part of the process of working through the “damaged self,” a memory gains clarity through repetition. Their narratives become shadows of the events themselves, and vicarious memory across generations as index events could be thought of as inherited shadows of shadows.<sup>29</sup> Similarly, an alternative approach to historic generations may be found in medical anthropology dealing with “social suffering.” Developed in the mid-1990s, the social suffering approach also deals with intergenerational issues, and would add theoretical dynamism to my analysis on inter-generational negotiations of collective memory and trauma.

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<sup>28</sup> Andrea Louie first alerted me to this lacuna in my research, noting the added significance its inclusion would make to future writing on this topic.

<sup>29</sup> I am indebted to Sheng-mei Ma for this suggestion.

## APPENDICES

### I. Puppet Script: Millionaire Chou (Alan Chen)

Narrator:

100s of years ago many suffering immigrants traveled for south china to Taiwan at that time Taiwan was a new and unexplored frontier the immigrants came with the hope to prosper in this new place today's story is about Millionaire Chou and how he lost all his money through his own fault. When Chou was a young man he worked really hard but he could not find a job in his home town so he and his wife crossed the Taiwan straight into T. the Chou couple was very talented and willing to do any job for wages labor they worked very hard and saved money were able to open a little store.

Mr. Chou, Why haven't you closed yet, it's so late.

Yes I know. The harder I work the more money I can get for me and Mrs. Chou.

I want to buy some sugar.

Oh I sell the best sugar good quality at a fair price.

How much?

Only 20 cents

Thank you come again.

Mrs. Chou:

Dear, you've been working all day long and haven't eating anything yet. Rest a little and don't work so hard.

Mr. Chou:

Dear wife if I don't work morning and night how can this little store stay alive. If we don't work hard while we are young how will we enjoy our retirement?

Mrs. Chou:

I know, I know. I just worry about your health. I don't mind working hard and however after all these years you haven't given me a son, since we don't have a son we need to earn more money to secure our future. I'll take care of the store and you go eat.

Mr. Chou:

After I eat I'll come back.

Mrs. Chou:

It's been ten years since my husband and I have come to Taiwan. We are dedicated to our store and run our business very honestly. We work so hard, uh our life is so bitter and trouble. We work so hard to just have this little store. All these years we were hoping to have a son to carry on the family name but we have been unable to fulfill our goal. Oh dear god, people say god blesses honest people. Please bless us with a son and grant us an easier life. [Cries]

God of earth, where is that crying sound coming from?

Report to the god of heaven, the sound is from Mr. Chou wife.

Why is she crying?

Reporting, Mrs. Chou is crying because she suffers for a difficult life and desperately wishes she had a son. She can do nothing but cry.

What is this couple like?

Reporting, they are hard working and very honest in doing their business even though they are a little stingy they have never hurt anyone

Why don't they have any kids?

Reporting, it is their fate, it's the way it's suppose to be there is no way to change it

Their crying sounds so sad I cannot bear it. I control what happens in this world. This couple works so hard I should give them some reward but since they are not allowed to have a son I cannot go against their destiny. The millionaire named Lynn, who has always cheated people. I'm going to find him. I'm going to take his fortune away and give it to the Chou couple. God of heaven god...

Mr. Chou:

1...2...3...

Mrs. Chou:

Dear you have been working all day you need to rest why don't you finish planting crops tomorrow.

Mr. Chou:

No, no, no, it's almost the New Year, customers are coming. I have to hurry so I can start to put them so the shelf. You go cook first when you are done cooking call me and I will rest then.

Yes dear. ...4.... 5.... 6 hey, hey dear, come over come over hurry up hurry up.

I'm cooking.

Come here fast come here and see this

What is this?

It's gold it's gold.

I know it's gold but where did it come from.

It was under these boxes I have no idea where it came from but it's ours now there is so much gold, from now on we don't have to worry. Ha, ha, ha (laughs).

Narrator:

Taking advantage of the money Mr. Chou brought ships and began to manage a big trading business. The business was very successful and earned more money than Chou within a couple of years Chou's business all over northern Taiwan and he became the richest man in Taipei, the capital of Taiwan. From then on everyone called him Millionaire Chou.

Ah fisherman, are you here today to give me some more fish?

Yes, They asked me to come over to bring you some fresh fish, these were just caught this morning look how fresh they are, they're still jumping

My, they do look fresh, how's business?

The business is well and it's almost winter and more people buy fish because of the nutrition to keep themselves ...

Oh winter is coming, so has there been any good fish for nourishment.

Yes, eel is the best. It's tender and nutritious

Uh, eel is so yummy I want some bring some over tomorrow

....The larger the eel is the more nutritious it is actually there is a very big eel in a deep pond near by I've seen it with my own eyes find the eel in the deep of the water bucket, the length of the eel is over ten feet long and ... strangely he seems to have a spirit or some sort of magic power. He can make you live longer.

Oh, you should catch it for my

... it is very clever

If you catch it for me then I will give you lots and lots of silver

Okay, okay, I'll catch the eel for you tomorrow

After much effort the fisherman came the next day with the eel.

Millionaire Chou, Millionaire Chou, I've got the great eel come get it it's jumping.

Indeed such a huge eel is unusual in its self wow is this eel full of nutrition not only .....

Stop, stop don't kill the eel

Millionaire Chou please don't eat it

Who are you?

I live near by and am respected for my wisdom. I am here today to ask you not to kill the eel.

Why?

It has lived over several hundred years and is a very special creature. The eel possesses great magical powers and is almost a super natural being. Please let it live, if you really want to have nutriment for the winter you can easily have any other nutritious fish

Well...

Please you cannot waste all of its magical talents I know it will appreciate your good deed if you don't eat it. Surely fate will reward you

Okay since you've asked me this favor again and again I will do what you wish.

Thank you very much now I can live with my mind at ease.

Sir, are you really going to not eat this eel

Of course I will, this eel is not ordinary and it's a once in a lifetime chance to eat. If I eat this eel for nutriment and supplement I will be happy with my wife, how can I give that up. Besides I've paid you silver already

But you just promised the wise elder not to kill the eel

Uh, the elder is so ...

I didn't mean it, lets carry this eel into the kitchen I am going to eat it tonight.



Who is crying out there?

God of heaven I hope you will bring my justice I was a hundred year old eel I was living in a deep pond in northern Taiwan I had enormous magical abilities and I almost became a supernatural being. And so I didn't use my magical powers when I was alive I have never thought I'd die by a man greedy all my magical power destroyed in a moment. I am very sad.

Millionaire Chou is that poor businessman ... money I gave him.

Reporting, indeed he has.

Oh how hateful after Mr. Chou earned all that money he didn't have good intentions in his heart and didn't help the poor or something but instead killed this ... for a selfish propose

Reporting, this is not the only evil deed he did I was there when the fisherman brought the eel to Mr. Chou, I asked Millionaire Chou not to kill it. He promised to let the eel live but he did not keep his word. I hope the god of heaven will punish Millionaire Chou for this hateful behavior. Not only is Mr. Chou selfish but he also broke his promise. Okay, I declare I will take back the money I have granted him. Eel, I will use my powers to turn you into Mr. Chou's son as his son you may take...

Thank you god of heaven

I am the son of Millionaire Chou, my name is Daichou and my family is the richest in northern Taiwan. In order to punish Millionaire Chou for what he did to me, I have spent the past several years trying to spend all his money to make him poor again.

My dear son, you must be tired how is studying going?

You too dad, I got all the answers right on my math test my teacher in school said he had never had such a smart student like me

Ha, ha, ha, is that right you are my son of course you are good with numbers I'm glad you are so good at math okay go inside and rest a bit.

Dear dad I want some money.

You are asking for more money I just gave you some yesterday

I've spent it all

How did you spend the money so quickly you know it's not easy to make money the way you waste it how can I make enough in order to meet your needs.

Oh dad we are the richest family in Taiwan I could never spend all the money our family has I am your only son. If I am poor they'll laugh at me

Nonsense I have earned all my money little by little due to my hard work I cannot let you waste my money this way. No, I am not going to give you any more.

Such stinginess you think I don't know where you hide your money you won't give me some then I will go and get it myself.

Sir, sir something bad has happened it's terrible

What wrong what is this shouting about?

I just came back from the harbor and all your boats have been destroyed by a huge tropically storm everything's gone

What?!?!? It can't be this isn't true right?

Sir, it is true

Oh honey, honey, come here come here

What's wrong dear, why are you so upset?

Something's gone wrong, everything's gone wrong a giant tropically storm sank all our ships

What? How could this have happened everything has gone so smoothly all these years how could it be gone suddenly oh all my investments ... please calm down dear. This kind of think happens so unexpectedly sometime in life. Please don't be sad anymore the good thing is that we have saved some money these passed years as long as we continue to work hard we can still earn back our wealth.

I am afraid father that I have spent all the money that you have earned these years.

What?? What are you talking about?

Dear dad why don't you look carefully at who I am?

I am your son and also an eel that you kill many years ago for your nutriment because of your greediness because you did not keep your promise, the god of heaven sent me to be your son in order to punish you I have accomplished my mission and have received my justice at last. Ah

We don't have anything now [cries]

Narrator:  
So this is how Millionaire Chou became very rich in one night and lost all of his property in one day many people in Taiwan know this legend this story tells us that if we do in kind? continue to be greedy and don't keep our promises in the end we will lose everything

**II. Puppet Script: Dr. George Leslie MacKay (Alan Chen)**

**Script Outline**

- Preface  
How Dr. MacKay was related to Taiwan
- Act 1  
Learning the language from (cowboys!?) herdboys
- Act 2  
Meeting with A-Hoa
- Act 3  
(on the way to preach)  
Tooth extraction
- Act 4  
Preaching the native Taiwanese
- Act 5  
Gratitude from Taiwanese
- Act 6  
Ending
- Postscript  
The contributions and influences that Dr. MacKay had on Taiwan

Dr. George Leslie MacKay

Script  
Scenery: Tamsui – An island scene with a harbor, mountains, water, and fir-trees.

	Actions on Stage	Sounds	Puppets & Equipment
<i>Narrator: Taiwan is a democratic country where people enjoy the freedom of religions. In</i>		Peaceful, light music;	

<p><i>fact, when western religions started being introduced to Taiwan a couple of hundred years ago, those pioneer missionaries not only brought into Taiwan the religious beliefs, but also helped the early development of a modern society in this country. Among them, Dr. George Leslie MacKay had great contributions in establishing Christianity and modern western medicine in Northern Taiwan.</i></p> <p><i>Dr. MacKay was commissioned by the Canada Presbyterian Church and was first sent to China (Shantou), but he resolved to continue his trip to Taiwan. Upon his arrival, he was greatly attracted to the beautiful island and hospitality of the people. He decided to settle in Tamsui, a port city in the north and began his missionary work in 1872.</i></p>	<p>MacKay in a steamer travels across the stage from left to right</p>	<p>Birds chipping</p>	<p>MacKay Steamer</p>
<p><b>Act 1</b></p> <p>MacKay: Here I am in this beautiful island, having been led all the way from my hometown in Canada by Jesus. God! Please help me to lay the foundation of Christ's church here with all the courage and strengths from you.</p> <p>MacKay: Sir...</p> <p>Man 1: Mammamia!!! I've never seen such a weird looking man. Get away from me. Leave me alone!</p> <p>MacKay: Ma'am, please tell me...</p> <p>Woman 1: Yahhh... No, no! Don't come any closer!</p> <p>MacKay: (Sigh) What should I do? People were afraid and running away from me. How could I learn Taiwanese? How would I be able to preach?</p> <p>MacKay: Here comes a herdboy... Hello,</p>	<p>MacKay gets off the steamer from the right, walks to the center of the stage, and prays</p> <p>Man 1 walks over from the left, MacKay comes close</p> <p>Man 1 runs away, Woman 1 up from the left simultaneously</p> <p>MacKay walks toward him</p> <p>Woman 1 runs away</p>		<p>MacKay Man 1 Woman 1 Herdboy Ox?</p>

<p>kid!</p> <p>Herdboy: Are you talking to me?</p> <p>MacKay: Yes, kid.</p> <p>Herdboy: Hey, this is interesting! You look so different from us, but you can speak our language!</p> <p>MacKay: I've learned a little bit, but my Taiwanese is still poor. Kid, would you be willing to chat with me and teach me how to speak Taiwanese?</p> <p>Herdboy: Sure! I come here everyday to feed my herd. If you want to have somebody to talk to, come here and find me!</p> <p>MacKay: This is great! Thank you! Thank you so much!</p> <p><i>Narrator: Through this way, Dr. MacKay started learning Taiwanese. He was very studious and worked very hard. Within five months, he was able to preach in Taiwanese.</i></p>	<p>Herdboy comes up from the left, singing,</p> <p>MacKay and Herdboy get off the stage from the right</p>		
<p><b>Act 2</b></p> <p>MacKay: I have been here preaching for a while and I am glad to see some in the audience were really respectful and attentive. I miss one young man in particular, Giam Chheng Hoa. We have talked a lot about beliefs and religions. I pray to God to bring this intelligent and active young man to me.</p> <p>MacKay: Come in, please.</p> <p>MacKay: A-Hoa! It's so nice to see you. I was just thinking about you.</p> <p>A-Hoa: I have listened to your preach several times and had lots of discussions with you. I love the words and the hymns,</p>	<p>MacKay gets on the stage from the right</p> <p>A-Hoa comes in from the left</p>	<p>Music</p> <p>Knocking sounds</p>	<p>House MacKay A-Hoa</p>

<p>and I am convinced that the doctrines you teach are true. I have thought a great deal about these things lately, and I am determined to be a Christian and I wish to study with you more.</p> <p>MacKay: This is wonderful! Thank God for answering my prayers and let me find a young man with such gifts as to be marked out for the sacred office.</p> <p>A-Hoa: I have a lot to learn from you.</p> <p>MacKay: Well, you will study with me, and I can learn Taiwanese from you. From now on, we can study and work together to send God's wisdom and to serve more people!</p> <p>In fact, I plan to visit the tribes in the mountains. Why don't you come with me? I also practice medicine and you can assist me, so we can help people on the way. Let's go get ready for the trip!</p> <p><i>Narrator: A-Hoa became Dr. MacKay's first student and later the chief among the early native preachers. With A-Hoa's assistance, Dr. MacKay quickly expanded his missionary work. On the way of their travel, they also helped people with medical problems.</i></p>	<p>MacKay and A-Hoa are happily chatting and get off the stage from the right.</p>		
<p><b><u>Act 3</u></b></p> <p>Man 2: Oh, mine! The toothache is killing me! (Continue whining)</p> <p>MacKay: Look, A-Hoa. The man over there seems to be suffering.</p> <p>A-Hoa: Yes. Let me ask him what's bothering him.</p> <p>A-Hoa: Sir, is everything okay?</p> <p>Man 2: No, I have been having toothache for days. I can't eat nor sleep. It's really killing me.</p>	<p>Man 2 gets on the stage from the left</p> <p>MacKay and A-Hoa gets on the stage from the right</p> <p>A-Hoa comes closer to Man 2</p>		<p>MacKay A-Hoa Man 2 Suitcase?</p>

<p>MacKay: If you don't mind, open your month. I can take a look at it.</p> <p>MacKay: Well, I am afraid your tooth is seriously decayed. It's gonna be hard to ease your toothache without extraction.</p> <p>Man 2: Extraction?</p> <p>MacKay: Yes. Actually I can do that for you. A-Hoa, bring me the suitcase.</p> <p>A-Hoa: Sure!</p> <p><i>Narrator: Dr. MacKay opens the suitcase and takes out a forceps.</i></p> <p>Man 2: (trembling) What is that? It looks scary...</p> <p>MacKay: Don't' worry. I have extracted teeth for many people. Just bear with me. After I get rid of it, you will feel much better.</p> <p>Man 2: (painful sounds)</p> <p>MacKay: Okay, it's done! How do you feel?</p> <p>Man 2: Wow! How strange! I do feel much better. The killing pain is gone! Thank you, Doctor! Thank you so much!</p> <p>MacKay: Very well. Remember clean your teeth after you eat. Otherwise you will get toothache again.</p> <p>Man 2: Sure I will remember. Thank you, Doctor!</p> <p>A-Hoa: It's great to see people get healthy and happy again!</p> <p>MacKay: Yes, certainly. Okay, let's get</p>	<p>MacKay checks on Man 2</p> <p>MacKay extracts the tooth.</p> <p>Man 2 acts surprised.</p> <p>Man 2 leaves happily and gets of the stage from the left.</p> <p>MacKay and A-</p>	<p>Sound effect</p> <p>Sound effects</p>	
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on the road again before it gets dark. I think we should arrive at the tribe tomorrow.	Hoa leave the stage from the left		
<p><b><u>Act 4</u></b></p> <p><i>Narrator: The sun rises. Dr. MacKay and A-Hoa arrive at the tribe.</i></p> <p>A-Hoa: Dr. MacKay, this is so pretty!</p> <p>MacKay: Yes, isn't it!</p> <p>A-Hoa: Look, I've never seen that kind of bird....</p> <p>Man 3: Stop! Stop right there!</p> <p>Chief: Who are you two invading into my territory?</p> <p>MacKay: I am Dr. MacKay. This is A-Hoa. We are here to introduce you Christianity and tell you all the wonderful things that God do to save us.</p> <p>Chief: We are blessed by our ancestors and the spirits in the nature. We don't need to know whatever God it is.</p> <p>A-Hoa: Please give us a chance. We have some stories to share with you. We also bring some food and we will sing hymns to you.</p> <p>Chief: Alright, you two seem to be friendly. I will let you talk to my people. Follow me.</p>	<p>Put on Mountains</p> <p>MacKay and A-Hoa get on the stage from the right, walks around the mountains for once, chatting</p> <p>MacKay and A-Hoa freeze, and worry. Chief and Man 3 come out from the left</p> <p>Chief pauses to think, and say</p>	Birds chipping	Mountains MacKay A-Hoa Chief Man 3 (native)



<p><i>Narrator: Dr. MacKay and A-Hoa spend the night in the tribe. They tell the village the stories about God and his son, say prayers, and sing hymns.</i></p> <p>MacKay: Thank you so much for having us last night.</p> <p>Chief: Thank you for letting us know that there are other spiritual power in the world. Take care!</p> <p>A-Hoa: Hopefully they start believing in God.</p> <p>MacKay: I believe the gospel has brought light to their heart and gives them the strength they need in this difficult life.</p>	<p>Chief, Man 3, MacKay, and A-Hoa leave from the left.</p> <p>Chief, MacKay, and A-Hoa again get on the stage from the left.</p> <p>Chief leave from the left.</p> <p>MacKay, and A-Hoa leave the stage from the right.</p> <p>Put down the mountains</p>	<p>Birds chipping</p>	
<p><b><u>Act 5</u></b></p> <p>Man 1: Dr. MacKay is so kind and gentle. He really cares about us and teaches us important virtues.</p> <p>Woman 1: Not just that. He is really a good doctor. He cured my husband's malarial fever, and continues to check on him once in a while. I am so glad that we have him here and his clinic really helped a lot of people.</p> <p>Man 1 &amp; Woman 1: How are you, Dr. MacKay?</p> <p>MacKay: I am fine, thank you. Is there anything bothering you so you come here to the clinic?</p> <p>Woman 1: No, Doctor. We are here to visit you. It's almost New Year, so we bring you some gifts.</p> <p>MacKay: Oh, you don't have to do that.</p>	<p>Man 1 and Woman 1 get on the stage from the left.</p> <p>MacKay comes from the right</p>		<p>Clinic Man 1 Woman 1 MacKay</p>

<p>Man 1: Doctor, you have been doing so much for us. We really wish to show our appreciation. Since you treated my wife's cutting wound, she has been thinking about inviting you for a dinner with us.</p> <p>Woman 1: Yes. Dr. MacKay, please let us thank you for taking care of us.</p> <p><i>Narrator: Although practicing medicine and evangelizing Taiwanese were very difficult work at that time, Dr. MacKay endured for over 30 years. During that time, he not only pulled over 21,000 teeth, but also proclaimed the Gospel to many different people around Northern Taiwan. In fact, he established more than 60 churches and baptized thousands of believers.</i></p>	<p>Man 1 and Woman 1 escort MacKay and get off the stage from the left.</p>	<p>Music</p>	
<p><b><u>Act 6</u></b></p> <p>A-Hoa: Doctor, you haven't been feeling well these days; you really should be resting at home. I can take care of the clinic.</p> <p>MacKay: A-Hoa, as long as I have one day to live, I shall do what I do to serve God. Caring people is what my life is for. This is my mission.</p> <p>A-Hoa: Doctor, have you ever thought about retirement and returning to your hometown some day?</p> <p>MacKay: A-Hoa, I arrived at Taiwan at the age of 28, and stayed for over 30</p>	<p>A-Hoa gets on the stage from the left, opening the clinic and working.</p> <p>(5 seconds later) MacKay slowly walks on the stage from the left. A-Hoa comes over to escort him.</p> <p>MacKay starts working. A-Hoa pauses and says</p> <p>MacKay pauses to think, and says</p>		<p>Clinic MacKay A-Hoa</p>

<p>years. To me, Taiwan is my hometown. My wife and children are here, and my friends are also here. I love the beautiful island and the genuine people as well. A-Hoa, I have considered myself a Taiwanese already. In the whole wide world, I don't have any other hometown but Taiwan. After I die, I also wish to be buried here to stay with the land and people forever.</p>	<p>A-Hoa escorts MacKay, and slowly get off the stage from the right</p>	<p>Music</p>	
<p><i>Narrator: On June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1901, Dr. MacKay died of throat cancer and was buried in Tamshui. By the time, Christianity had been well established in Northern Taiwan. To honor his contributions not only to religious, but also medical development in Taiwan, the MacKay Memorial Hospital was built in 1912. Until today, the Hospital is still a highly regarded hospital and provides medical care for many people in need. Nowadays, Dr. MacKay is still living in the hearts of many Taiwanese.</i></p>			

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