

Becoming Taiwanese: Nation Building and National  
Identity Formation in Taiwan

by

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## Introduction

On January 26<sup>th</sup>, 2015, the front page of the *Taipei Times* ran an article: “Taiwanese’ Identity Hits Record Level.” According to the most recent surveys conducted by National Chengchi University, 60.6% percent of respondents considered themselves Taiwanese.<sup>1</sup> When the survey was first conducted in 1992, a mere 17.6% of people identified as Taiwanese. In just over twenty years, Taiwan had experienced a radical shift in national identity. A Taiwanese consciousness had emerged.

What accounts for this shift? How, and why, has a new Taiwanese national identity been formed? The answers to these questions tell a story of nation-state formation; of state making and nation building. What makes Taiwan’s national identity formation interesting is not just the changes that it had undergone in such a short span of time. What makes Taiwanese national identity interesting is its importance in every aspect of Taiwanese society. Political parties are divided based on national identity, not the left/right spectrum we see in America. Its international status is also bound by its national identity. Identity permeates every aspect of society – from schools to museums to politics.

Taiwan’s national identity is compromised of two aspects: how the state is defined and how the nation is defined; it comprises both an ethnic and a civic identity. Both the state and the nation in Taiwan have been defined and redefined, imagined and reimagined throughout history. These changes in the

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<sup>1</sup> Tseng Wei-chen and Chen Wei-han, “Taiwanese Identity Hits Record Level,” *Taipei Times*, January 26<sup>th</sup>, 2015, <http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/front/archives/2015/01/26/2003610092>.

state and the nation have had profound impacts on national identity. In this thesis, I set out to explore the twin processes of state formation and nation building in Taiwan.

Taiwan's status as a state is complicated, to say the least. Anthony D. Smith defines the state as comprising "a set of differentiated, autonomous and public institutions, which are territorially centralized and claim jurisdiction over a given territory."<sup>2</sup> If one follows this definition, the Republic of China (ROC) is the state. The Republic of China, commonly referred to as Taiwan (I will use the terms interchangeably throughout this thesis), has a set of institutions that enforce the rule of law, and claim jurisdiction over Taiwan and surrounding islands. However, the issue of the state is slightly more complicated than that. The Republic of China's history extends beyond its rule on Taiwan. The Republic of China was established on mainland China in 1911, with the overthrow of the Qing Dynasty government. From 1911-1949, the Republic of China was the ruling government on mainland China. In 1949, the Nationalist Party (also known as the Kuomintang or KMT), was defeated by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) in a civil war. Shortly thereafter, the CCP created the People's Republic of China, and the Nationalist Party moved the ROC to Taiwan.

Since then, the island of Taiwan has been hotly contested territory. The CCP claims it as theirs, and refuses to recognize the legitimacy of the ROC government. The KMT, on the other hand, has allowed for the evolution of

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<sup>2</sup> Anthony D. Smith, "State-Making and Nation building," in *States in History*, ed. John A. Hall (New York, NY: Basil Blackwell, 1986), 235.

how the ROC state is defined. At the beginning of their tenure in Taiwan, the KMT believed that the ROC encompassed all of Taiwan and mainland China. Beginning in the 1990s, the ROC has relinquished its claim to the mainland. This shift in desired territory reflects the central issue regarding Taiwan's civic identity – what is the ROC? Entangled in this issue are questions of unification and independence. Should Taiwan unify with China, under the guise of the ROC? Is this even possible? Should Taiwan declare independence, as the ROC? Or should Taiwan declare independence as Taiwan, and not the ROC? These are the central questions regarding Taiwan's identity as a state.

Taiwan's nation is similarly complicated. In theories of nationalism, there are two main ways of viewing the nation. Primordialist, such as Anthony D. Smith, see 'the nation' as an innate part of society. Although the nation-state is a modern phenomenon, the nation is based on an ethnic core.<sup>3</sup> Modernists, on the other hand, such as Ernest Gellner or Benedict Anderson, see nations as a product of a particular time in human history. To them, nations arise at particular moments of either economic, political, or socio/cultural change.<sup>4</sup> In the case of Taiwan, both the primordialist and modernist theories provide useful ways to think about the nation.

The question of ethnicity in Taiwan is interesting. Although 98% of the population is Han Chinese, which is generally considered to be a single ethnic group, Taiwan is usually divided into four distinct ethnic groups: the

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<sup>3</sup> Anthony D. Smith, *National Identity*, (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1991).

<sup>4</sup> For a good overview of different thinkers in nationalism, see Umut Özkırımlı, *Theories of Nationalism: A Critical Introduction*, 2nd ed (Basingstoke, Hampshire [England] ; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010).

mainlanders, the Hoklo, the Hakka, and the Aborigines. The Mainlanders (*waishengren* 外省人), which comprise roughly 14% of the population, are Han immigrants who arrived on the island after 1949, when Chiang Kai-shek and the Kuomintang was defeated on mainland China. Native Taiwanese are divided into two groups: the Hoklo and the Hakka. The Hoklo (*benshengren* 本省人) make up roughly 65-70% of the population. They are Han Chinese whose ancestors mainly emigrated from Fujian Province in the 17<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> centuries and speak the dialect Hoklo (also known as Taiwanese). The Hakka (*kejiaren* 客家人) are another Han Chinese group whose ancestors also mostly immigrated in the 17<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> centuries that are culturally and linguistically separate from the Hoklo. They represent about 10-15% of the population. Finally, slightly less than two percent of the population is Aborigines, of which there are 14 different tribes.<sup>5</sup> While 98% of the population is ethnically Chinese, since the arrival of nearly 2 million mainlanders in 1949, the divide between mainlander and native Taiwanese (encompassing Hoklo and Hakka) has been one of the most salient divides in society.

How is the nation defined in Taiwan in relation to these four ethnic groups? The answer to this has evolved throughout the course of Taiwan's history. Under Chiang Kai-shek, the nation was defined so that mainlanders were at the top of the ethnic hierarchy. Chiang Kai-shek tried to ignite primordialist sentiments of all people belonging to the Han Chinese nation. As Taiwan democratized, this changed. After democratization, by and large,

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<sup>5</sup> John F. Copper, *Taiwan: Nation-State or Province?*, 3<sup>rd</sup>. edition (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1999), 11.

the nation has an emphasize on Taiwan's multi-cultural heritage. Rather than inculcating a sense of belonging via ethnic sentiments, recent leaders have built the nation to celebrate the multi-cultural diversity of Taiwan, and with a vision of Taiwanese people separate from Chinese people. The question of ethnicity in Taiwan is best summed up as such – is there such a thing as a “Taiwanese people” with their own national identity, or are the Taiwanese simply Chinese in the same way that Shanghainese or Cantonese people are?

In this thesis I set out to explore the changes in definitions of both the state and the nation in Taiwan. I explore how different leaders have defined the state, both domestically and internationally. On the international level, the state is largely defined by the ROC's status in the international community and its relationship with the PRC. As the relationship between Taiwan and mainland China has changed and the ROC's territorial claims have shifted, the ROC state has changed. In response to changes in its status, the nation has been constantly re-imagined. I identify three key periods in Taiwan's nation building project: Sinicization, Taiwanization and De-Sinicization, and a new middle ground.

Sinicization refers to a period under Chiang Kai-shek where the state was controlled by mainland elite, who imposed a national identity that emphasized mainland China as the homeland of all Taiwanese. Throughout Chiang Kai-shek's regime on Taiwan, his main goal was to successfully recreate the ROC state and then use this new state as a base to recover the mainland. As I will discuss in the first chapter, Chiang recreated the ROC state by implementing the ROC Constitution on Taiwan. However, throughout



his time as ruler of Taiwan, martial law was imposed, hindering any real democratic development. He was a harsh and brutal dictator, who controlled almost all facets of society. During this period, the fact that mainland China was the homeland for all Taiwanese, and so Taiwanese had a duty to recover it, permeated all levels of societies. All men had to undergo mandatory military training. The National Palace Museum in Taipei was celebrated world wide for housing the largest collection of Chinese artifacts. In this thesis, I focus on the educational and language policies of the KMT regime. The KMT's educational curriculum promoted a China-centered vision of national identity. 'National' history was 5,000 years of history, 'national' geography included all of mainland China, and 'national' language classes included the study of Mandarin and Classical Chinese. The KMT's language policies expanded beyond the classroom. There was a strict imposition of Mandarin in public spaces and the media. All these policies served to create an ethnic identity in Taiwan that bound Taiwanese people with the rest of China. This was necessary to legitimize Chiang's claim to the state – he first needed a nation that extended beyond the island of Taiwan to have a state that did too.

The 1970s was a tumultuous decade for the ROC. In 1972, the United Nations de-recognized the ROC as a state, and gave its Security Council seat to the People's Republic of China. In 1975, Chiang Kai-shek died, and his son Chiang Ching-kuo became the new president. Finally, in 1978, the United States officially cut off diplomatic ties. At the same time these international challenges were occurring were domestic ones. A large opposition movement was growing stronger and stronger, calling for a redefinition of the state –

independence, rather than reunification. When Chiang Ching-kuo became president, he could no longer ignore the oppositionists. The domestic and international challenges had proved to large for the KMT to handle with simple repression. Thus, he began to implement a series of political reforms on the island that would lead to Taiwan's democratization. However, it is important to remember that Chiang Ching-kuo was still a staunch believer in the "one China" principle, and made no moves to re-define either the nation or the state. However, his regime is still important as it lay the foundation for the drastic changes that were to come.

Chiang Ching-kuo died in office in 1988, leaving Lee Teng-hui to become the next President of Taiwan. Lee Teng-hui was the first native Taiwanese leader that Taiwan had ever seen. During Lee's regime, he spearheaded many reforms that lead not only to the democratization of Taiwan, but also a whole new way of imagining the nation and state. He embarked on a Taiwanization process that re-invented the nation as a unique entity. With his reimagining on the nation came a new way to conceive of the nation as well. He believed in one China, but with two political entities on two sides of the Strait. He redefined the Republic of China territorially – just claiming Taiwan and its surrounding islands. However, he did still believe in reunification between the two sides, just under the guise of the democratic ROC. With this new way of conceiving the state came a new way of conceiving the nation. He underwent a series of reforms – namely in reforming language policies and educational systems, to reinvent the Taiwan nation. However, what spurred Lee to re-imagine both the state and the nation? Many scholars

believe that the emergence of a Taiwan consciousness during the 1980s was not a product of Lee Teng-hui and the KMT, but rather a product of native political elites in the *dangwai* and DPP. They constructed a Taiwanese consciousness that highlighted the unique history and struggles of Taiwan to construct a Taiwan nation. However, this theory alone does not explain why Lee Teng-hui, a member of the opposite political party, would adopt the DPP's agenda. I argue that Lee adopted parts of the DPP agenda due to not only his personal preference, but also because of domestic and international challenges to the KMT's legitimacy. The only way he could remain in power was to adopt a strategy of creating a "new Taiwan."

In 2000, after an election where national identity and issues of reunification and independence were the most salient, Chen Shui-bian was elected President. His election marked a turning point in Taiwan's history. For the first time since 1945, a party other than the KMT ruled Taiwan. While Chen Shui-bian was a member of the opposite political party, he had similar Taiwanization policies to Lee Teng-hui, albeit his were slightly more extreme. In chapter two, I see Chen Shui-bian as a continuation of Lee Teng-hui's policies. Chen Shui-bian's slightly more extreme nature is explained by his views of the Taiwan state. He believed that there were two countries on opposite sides of the Strait – the ROC *was* Taiwan. Earlier in his political career, he was a strong advocate of Taiwanese independence, which explains his views on the issue of reunification/independence. He continued Lee Teng-hui's policy of de-Sinification and Taiwanization to continue building a new

Taiwan nation. However, Chen's policies could not be as extreme as declaring independence, due to the threat of Mainland China.

My thesis ends with a discussion of Ma Ying-jeou, who is the current president of Taiwan. Ma's presidency has been marked by rapprochement towards mainland China. After he was sworn into office, Taiwan's relationship with China improved dramatically. This is because Ma has focused on economic interactions between the two sides of the strait; he has tried to integrate Taiwan's economy with mainland China's. His reign has largely been characterized by ignoring issues of national identity; he prefers to focus on economic issues. That being said, Ma's educational policies can be seen as re-Sinicization policies. He has reoriented textbooks to once again mainly emphasize Chinese culture over local cultures. However, he has not been able to reverse all the trends towards Taiwanization that Chen and Lee put forth. Nevertheless, Ma's policies are similar to Chiang's, Lee's and Chen's, because his construction of the nation has been used to justify his conception of the state of Taiwan as a economic partner of China.

My hope is that a study of Taiwanese state formation and nation building illuminates new light on Taiwanese national identity formation. As the case of Taiwan shows, elite driven nation building processes often do generate outcomes in national identity. But sometimes they do not, as the case of Ma Ying-jeou shows. This thesis sheds new light on why this may be, through a careful study of Taiwan's state formation and nation building since 1945.

## **Chapter One: Sinicization Under Chiang Kai-shek (1945-1975)**

For over 30 years after World War II, the island of Taiwan was renowned for its political, economic, and cultural successes. Taiwan was “Free China,” celebrated for its supposed democracy. It became one of the “Four Tigers,” admired for its astounding economic growth. Finally, Taiwan was celebrated as the keeper of traditional Chinese culture. It was the place to study Chinese history, language, and culture. The National Palace Museum housed treasures from 5,000 years of Chinese civilization, including some of the most exquisite pieces from the imperial collection. Taiwan students were taught traditional Chinese characters, unlike those in Communist China. The Republic of China (ROC) was the modern Chinese nation-state.

How did the island of Taiwan go from being a Japanese colony to becoming the Republic of China? The story of Taiwan from 1945 through the 1970s is a story of state formation and nation building. When the ROC was re-established on the island of Taiwan, the Nationalist Party (KMT) needed to build a nation and a collective identity to legitimize their authoritarian, transplanted regime. In this chapter, I examine education and language policies in Taiwan under KMT authoritarian rule. I argue that KMT education and language policies attempted to create a ethnic identity and nation that bound Taiwanese people to the rest of China. This collective ethnic identity was intended to arouse support for re-uniting Taiwan with mainland China, which was the ultimate goal of the KMT regime. The goal of unification, which

entailed using Taiwan as a base for the recovery of the mainland, was in turn a way to legitimize the KMT's authoritarian regime.

### ***Historical Context***

In 1895, the China and Japan signed the Treaty of Shimonoseki, signaling the end of the First Sino-Japanese War. In the treaty, the Qing government of China ceded Taiwan and the Penghu Islands to Japan, making Taiwan a Japanese colony. Taiwan remained a Japanese colony for fifty years, until the end of World War II. The Japanese created a rich agricultural sector and strong educational system on Taiwan, leaving the island and its inhabitants much richer, better educated, and more industrialized than the rest of China. On October 25<sup>th</sup>, 1945, Taiwan was handed back to China, now the Republic of China, governed by Chiang Kai-shek and the Nationalist Party (Kuomintang or KMT), but in the midst of a brutal civil war. Mao Zedong's Chinese Communist Party (CCP) was growing stronger, and the KMT was struggling to maintain control.

After retrocession, Chiang Kai-shek appointed Chen Yi, a KMT official who had studied in Japan and worked as Governor of Fujian province, ancestral home of most of the people on Taiwan, to become governor-general. Chiang's goal was to smoothly reintegrate Taiwan into the Republic of China, which meant erasing all traces of the Japanese colonial period. The KMT sought total control over the administration of the island. Rather than granting Taiwan provincial status, the KMT put Taiwan under military

control, a status usually associated with conquered enemy territory.<sup>1</sup> Chen's rule, known for its corruption and nepotism, quickly met with disapproval from the local populace. Government positions were exclusively held by mainland KMT elite, inflation was rampant, and the island faced a deep postwar recession. These factors combined to create a deep discontent among Taiwanese with the new regime; resentment that cumulated in February of 1947, in what is now known as the 228 Incident.<sup>2</sup>

On February 27<sup>th</sup>, 1947, a widow was illegally selling cigarettes in a park in Taipei. Two agents from the Monopoly Bureau, the bureau that controlled all alcohol, tobacco, and camphor products in Taiwan, seized her goods and cash. The woman resisted, and the agents reacted violently. An angry crowd formed. In a fit of panic, one of the agents shot and killed a bystander in order to escape the mob.<sup>3</sup> The next day, February 28, chaos ensued. Crowds in cities all over the island flooded into the streets and took control over government buildings, railroad stations, and police stations. Taiwanese mobs targeted any mainlanders they encountered, and the KMT government quickly lost control of major cities all over the island. Taiwanese activists put forward a list of demands for greater autonomy and self-rule.

At first, it seemed as if Chen Yi's government would compromise with the Taiwanese elite by granting some of their demands, but this hope was quickly lost.<sup>4</sup> Rather than reforming the government, Chen Yi and the KMT responded to the 228 Uprising with brutal repression. Chen declared martial

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<sup>1</sup> Dennis Roy, *Taiwan: A Political History* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2003), 60.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 60-67.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 67.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 69.

law and cracked down on all opposition powers.<sup>5</sup> KMT troops opened fire at random; shooting anyone on the streets. Although no one knows how many people were killed, the best estimates put the number at around 10,000 killed and 30,000 wounded.<sup>6</sup> The KMT had successfully silenced the opposition and quickly regained control.

The 228 Incident was one of the first mass displays of Taiwanese nationalism. Native Taiwanese saw a fundamental difference between themselves and the mainlanders that had come to Taiwan with the KMT. Although most Taiwanese were ethnically Han Chinese who traced their ancestry to Fujian province, the Taiwanese had been Japanese colonial subjects for the last 50 years, and spoke different languages than the mainlanders. However, the failure of the uprising and terror that followed successfully scared the Taiwanese nationalists into hiding.

The 228 Incident was an important incident in shaping today's Taiwanese identity. The 228 Incident is often pointed to as an event that, along with the Japanese colonial regime and the "White Terror" under Chiang Kai-shek (see below), has rooted a victimization consciousness in the Taiwanese identity. This victimization consciousness became a key difference between the Taiwanese identity and mainland Chinese identity. In fact, a large part of the failure of the KMT to promote a unified Chinese ethnic identity on Taiwan is due to incidents such as the 228 Incident and the "White Terror"

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<sup>5</sup> Steven Philips, "Between Assimilation and Independence: Taiwanese Political Aspirations Under Nationalist Chinese Rule, 1945-1948," in *Taiwan: A New History*, ed. Murray A. Rubinstein (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 1999), 295.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 296.



that created irreconcilable differences between native Taiwanese and mainlanders.

### ***The Establishment of the Republic of China on Taiwan***

By 1948, it was clear that the KMT was about to lose China's civil war, so they began relocating troops and officials to Taiwan, as it was one of the remaining Nationalist strongholds. On October 1<sup>st</sup>, 1949, the People's Republic of China was created, and in December of that same year, the capital of the Republic of China was officially moved to Taipei.<sup>7</sup> Never officially accepting the end of the civil war, the KMT planned to use Taiwan as a base to recover the mainland from the Communists.

The plan to use Taiwan as a base was enabled by a number of important constitutional changes. The existing ROC Constitution, comprised of 175 articles that guaranteed basic civil rights, including the freedom of speech, assembly, and equality, as well as the right to vote in elections at all levels of government, outlined a democratic republic.<sup>8</sup> However, in 1948, the National Assembly of the ROC enacted the "Temporary Provisions Effective During the Period of Communist Rebellion," which entrusted the President of the ROC with almost unlimited powers, effectively nullifying the constitution. The Temporary Provisions were to remain in place as long as the ROC was engaged in a civil war. They prevented the formation of new political parties, curtailed freedom of speech, and eliminated the two-term limit for the

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<sup>7</sup> Roy, *Taiwan: A Political History*, 81.

<sup>8</sup> The 1947 Constitution of the Republic of China, Taiwan Documents Project, <http://www.taiwandocuments.org/constitution01.htm> (accessed April 8th, 2015)

president.<sup>9</sup> Following the passage of the Temporary Provisions, Chiang Kai-shek officially instituted martial law on the island. Taiwan had turned into an authoritarian one-party state.<sup>10</sup>

The transplant of the KMT regime to Taiwan was followed by a long period of repression now referred to as the “White Terror.” The height of the White Terror was from 1949-1952, when Chiang Kai-shek’s government intimidated, arrested, or killed any individuals that presented a challenge to his regime or had alleged ties to the Communists.<sup>11</sup> The White Terror, as well as the imposition of martial law, successfully silenced any opposition to the KMT.

Pure brutality was not enough to legitimize the KMT regime. The KMT had suffered an embarrassing defeat on the mainland. They believed that a key way to regain their legitimacy, both internationally and domestically, was to make Taiwan a model nation-state. In doing so, the KMT could prove their ability to rule effectively, increasing their prestige while weakening support for the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and the People’s Republic of China it controlled. Successfully turning Taiwan into a modern nation-state entailed the political, economic, and cultural development of the island according to the principles of the Republic of China. Politically, this meant implementing the ROC Constitution on Taiwan, and instilling Sun Yat-sen’s political

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<sup>9</sup> John F. Copper, *Taiwan: Nation-State or Province?*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1999), 181.

<sup>10</sup> Peter Chen-main Wang, “A Bastion Created, A Regime Reformed, An Economy Reengineered, 1949-1970,” in *Taiwan: A New History*, ed. Murray A. Rubinstein (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 1999), 329.

<sup>11</sup> Phillips, “Between Assimilation and Independence,” 302.

ideology, the “Three Principles of the People” in citizens. Economically, it meant development and growth.

The political and economic development can best be understood as the KMT’s state-building efforts. When the KMT moved the ROC government to Taiwan, they had to consolidate their authority before they could recover the mainland. To justify these state-building efforts, the government had to create a nation as well. The nation was created largely through Taiwan’s cultural development. The cultural project of the KMT served to both preserve and promote traditional Chinese culture. But underlying these policies were campaigns that framed Taiwan as a part of China, culturally and ethnically. This way, the KMT could foster a Chinese identity among the people of Taiwan, and help them understand their destiny in uniting China once again.

### ***Political Development***

In Taiwan, the state is defined not only by the success of the Republic of China (ROC) state, but also by the ROC’s relationship with the government of the People’s Republic of China and its international status. Under Chiang Kai-shek, the ROC’s legitimacy came from implementing the ROC Constitution in Taiwan, and from its status in the international arena.

The ROC Constitution was written with all of China in mind – from Tibet to Taiwan. The Constitution created five branches (*yuan*) of government: the executive, legislative, judicial, examination, and control. In addition to the five branches of government, the Constitution created a National Assembly. The National Assembly was supposed to be an elected

body that had one delegate from each “county, municipality, or area of equivalent status” in China, with elections to be held every six years.<sup>12</sup> The National Assembly elected the President and Vice President of the ROC. They also had the power to amend the Constitution, and to vote on constitutional amendments that originated in the Legislative Yuan.<sup>13</sup> The first National Assembly election was held on the mainland in 1947, with representatives from counties throughout China. After the implementation of the Temporary Provisions, the KMT decided that all congresspersons elected in that year would serve in the assembly until the mainland was recovered.<sup>14</sup>

The National Assembly and other five branches of government described in the constitution made up the national government. The constitution also stipulated the creation of local governments. The KMT established a Taiwan provincial government that divided Taiwan into sixteen counties and five municipalities. However, for the most part, the duties of the provincial government overlapped with those of the central government. In 1950, elections at local levels were introduced. In 1954, elections for the Taiwan Provincial Assembly were opened up.<sup>15</sup> However, these elections only created a façade of democracy. KMT vote buying was rampant, and no party opposed to KMT rule was allowed to field candidates. Nevertheless, these small instances of political participation were enough for the KMT to claim to be encouraging democracy, thus fulfilling one of Sun Yat-sen’s Three

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<sup>12</sup> The 1947 Constitution of the Republic of China, Taiwan Documents Project.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.,

<sup>14</sup> Yun-han Chu and Jih-wen Lin, “Political Development in 20<sup>th</sup> Century Taiwan: State Building, Regime Transformation and the Construction of National Identity,” *The China Quarterly* 165 (2001): 114.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

Principles of the People. The KMT frequently cited the civil war as a hindrance to full democracy; democracy could not be fully implemented until the ROC ruled over all of China once again.

While the KMT was establishing the ROC on Taiwan, the civil war was still technically going on. When Chiang's exiled government first escaped to Taiwan, there was a general feeling that within a matter of time the Communist Party would take the island of Taiwan and claim the territory as their own. Even the U.S. military had pledged not to use force to defend Taiwan.<sup>16</sup> However, soon after Chiang Kai-shek fled to Taiwan, the Korean War broke out. In order to contain the Communist Threat, President Harry Truman sent the Seventh Fleet into the Taiwan Strait to defend Taiwan against the Communists. This act saved the Nationalist government on Taiwan, and marked the beginning of strong political ties between the United States and the ROC.<sup>17</sup>

From the 1950s until the 1970s, the United States, and the majority of the international community, recognized the Republic of China as the one government of China. They maintained diplomatic ties with Chiang Kai-shek's government rather than the Communist government on the mainland. The ROC even held onto the seat on the United Nations Security Council.<sup>18</sup> This recognition from the international community that the ROC was the true government of China reinforced Chiang's vision of the ROC state. Furthermore, throughout this period, Chiang considered the PRC to be a

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<sup>16</sup> Wang, "A Bastion Created," 321.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Richard C. Bush, *Untying the Knot: Making Peace in the Taiwan Strait* (Washington, D. C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2005), 19.

renegade government. As a result, there were no formal relations or contact allowed between the two sides of the strait. This lack of recognizing the PRC as a distinct entity helped Chiang lay claim to being the one true leader of China.

### ***Cultural Development***

As the political system of the Republic of China under Chiang Kai-shek makes clear, the state was defined to encompass all of China – claiming territory that spanned from Tibet to Taiwan. The ROC viewed the People’s Republic of China (PRC) established by the Communists on the mainland as a renegade regime, and did not recognize the PRC’s legitimacy as a state. According to the KMT, the ROC was the true government of China, and reunification of Taiwan and the mainland, as the ROC, should happen as soon as possible. To achieve this goal, the KMT had to convince the people of Taiwan that reunification of the entire claimed territory of the ROC was their destiny and national goal. The best way to do this was to convince the people of Taiwan that they were a part of the Chinese nation, based on a collective ethnicity and past, and the ROC was the continuation of 5,000 years of Chinese history. The KMT had to build a new, ROC nation on Taiwan. They did this through the ‘invention of tradition’, using tools such as the creation of national symbols, a state education system, and a national language.

The notion of the ‘invented tradition’ comes from the work of Marxist Historian Eric Hobsbawm. Hobsbawm sees nations as products of social engineering. A large part of the engineering of nations comes from the

‘invention of traditions’. Invented traditions are “a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behavior by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past.”<sup>19</sup> Invented traditions create a sense of belonging to a nation among citizens. According to Hobsbawm, ruling elites often use the invention of tradition as a tool to counter the threat posed by democracy. He lists three major innovations that are often used to invent traditions: primary education, the invention of public ceremonies, and the mass production of public monuments.<sup>20</sup>

The KMT nation building project in Taiwan can be illuminated in the context of Hobsbawm’s theory. A large justification for inventing the Chinese nation on Taiwan was to prevent another upsurge of Taiwanese nationalism, such as the 228 Incident, from happening. However, as history shows, Taiwan did eventually transition into a democracy. Clearly, the KMT’s nation building efforts did not succeed in its goal of countering the threat of democracy. Why did the KMT fail in creating an ethnic Chinese nation?

Here, it is useful to turn to the primordialist vision of the nations. Anthony D. Smith, a leading scholar in the primordialist vision of nations and nationality identity, argues that nation building is only successful if there already exists an ethnic foundation.<sup>21</sup> Given Smith’s theory, the KMT’s efforts should have been successful. After all, 98% of the island’s population is

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<sup>19</sup> Eric Hobsbawm, “Introduction: Inventing Traditions,” in *The Invention of Tradition*, ed. Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 1.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 270-271.

<sup>21</sup> Anthony D. Smith, “State-Making and Nation building,” in *States in History*, ed. John A. Hall (New York, NY: Basil Blackwell, 1986), 228-263.

ethnically Han Chinese. However, as the emergence of a Taiwanese consciousness in recent years has shown, the KMT's success was limited. This is partly due to the vastly different experiences of the native Taiwanese and mainlanders. For example, the 228 Incident and the White Terror created a victimization consciousness that separated native Taiwanese from mainland elite. The ethnic identity was unable to bridge the social divisions that had been created.

However, in later chapters, I argue that the opposition did not drive the changes in the Taiwanese consciousness. Instead, the shift of state definition and nation building in Taiwan was driven by the KMT, as later chapters will elaborate. I argue that the KMT was forced to change its nation building strategies because of changes in its definition of the state, instigated by international changes.

The transition to a new nation-state will be discussed in later chapters. What is important for this chapter is how Chiang Kai-shek attempted to create a Chinese nation in Taiwan that sought to legitimize his vision of the ROC state. This period is the first part of a larger trend in Taiwan where the nation is always used to justify the vision of the state. As will be elucidated, the KMT used education and language policies to foster a sense of belonging to the Chinese nation in the people of Taiwan.

### *Language*

One of the most important factors in nation building is the standardization of language – a way for citizens to unite and form an



imagined community. Almost all scholars of nations and nationalism point to the importance of language. In Taiwan, promoting Mandarin Chinese became an important tool for the legitimation of the KMT as the true rulers of China. Mandarin became both a domestic and international symbol of the ‘Chineseness’ of the KMT state on Taiwan. Furthermore, the promotion of traditional characters (vs. the simplified characters that the PRC had introduced on the mainland) became an important way the ROC was seen as the ‘true’ preserver of traditional Chinese culture.

When Taiwan was returned to China at the end of World War II, one of the most significant differences between mainland immigrants and native Taiwanese was their language. Under the Japanese colonial regime, Japanese language instruction was a core policy – the Japanese also understood the importance of language in nation building. Education was in Japanese, and the use of any other language was strongly discouraged. By 1944, 70% of Taiwanese were literate in Japanese.<sup>22</sup> However, most families continued to use Hoklo (also known as Taiwanese) or Hakka at home, so most native Taiwanese were bilingual.

Prior to the establishment of the PRC, the Republic of China government had gone through great lengths to popularize Mandarin – known as the “national language” (*guoyu* 國語) – both on the mainland and on Taiwan. In 1946, the KMT started the National Language Movement (*guoyu yundong* 國語運動). The Taiwan Provincial government created the “Taiwan

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<sup>22</sup> A-Chin Hsiau, “Language Ideology in Taiwan: The KMT’s Language Policy, the Tai-Yu Language Movement, and Ethnic Politics,” *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development* 18, no. 4 (July 1, 1997): 305.

Provincial Committee for the Promotion and Propagation of the National Language” (CPPNL).<sup>23</sup> The goals of the CPPNL were to eradicate the use of Japanese while promoting the use of Mandarin. Interestingly, in the early stages of KMT rule, the CPPNL encouraged the use of Taiwanese dialects, in particular Hoklo, which are closely related to Mandarin, so that the public would have a base for learning Mandarin.<sup>24</sup> However, in reality, discrimination against local languages continued – especially in light of the 228 Uprising. Promoting native languages had the danger of encouraging native Taiwanese solidarity, and thus risking further uprisings. On the flip side, Mandarin was a tool to encourage national unity. As a result of this, all education was conducted in Mandarin. In 1956, the KMT government forbade the speaking of anything but Mandarin in schools – severe punishments ensued if one was caught speaking another language.<sup>25</sup>

In the 1960s, the National Language Movement grew stronger. This was aided with the advent of new forms of media – particularly television and radio. In his seminal work *Imagined Communities*, Benedict Anderson argues that the conception of the nation arrived with the conception of simultaneity. When people imagine things happening at the same time and date, as he sees happening in novels and newspaper, they can imagine themselves existing and belonging to the same nation.<sup>26</sup> The same analysis can be applied to television and radio. What is noteworthy during the KMT era is that the media

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<sup>23</sup> Hsiao, “Language Ideology in Taiwan,” 306.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>25</sup> Henning Klöter, “Language Policy in the KMT and DPP Eras,” *China Perspectives*, no. 56 (December 1, 2004): 3.

<sup>26</sup> Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (London: Verso Books), 2006.

was dominated by Mandarin. Mandarin was a symbol of the Chinese nation, so television and radio programs encouraged people to imagine themselves as part of the Chinese nation.

In 1962, the first government-run TV channels on Taiwan began to operate. Non-Mandarin programs made up a mere 16% of the broadcast time. This not only increased exposure to Mandarin for individuals, but also promoted Mandarin as the official and unifying language of the nation. In 1966, Chiang Kai-shek launched the Cultural Renaissance Movement in response to Mao's Cultural Revolution. Chiang's movement was designed to promote Chinese culture throughout Taiwan and the world.<sup>27</sup> As part of the Cultural Renaissance Movement, and in response to the growing number of Taiwanese-language television shows, in 1970 the Ministry of Education (MOE) passed a six-point resolution that laid out a new plan for Mandarin education. One of the most important clauses stipulated a decrease in the number of television and radio programs in local languages.<sup>28</sup> Taiwanese language programs were only allowed to be on air for less than one hour a day. The resolution further banned the use of non-Mandarin languages by teachers, civil servants, and other personnel. Organizations, schools, office, and all public areas were also only to use Mandarin. These policies aimed at repressing the use of Taiwanese while promoting the use of Mandarin.

Enforcing Mandarin as the language of Taiwan served the dual purposes of creating a national identity and unity on the island and tying this

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<sup>27</sup> Warren Tozer, "Taiwan's 'Cultural Renaissance': A Preliminary View," *The China Quarterly* 43 (September 1970): 81–99.

<sup>28</sup> Feng-Fu Tsao, "The Language Planning Situation in Taiwan," *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development* 20, no. 4–5 (September 1, 1999): 344.

identity to the rest of China. Because Mandarin was also the ‘national language’ of the rest of the territory that the KMT claimed, using it helped imagine the nation beyond the island of Taiwan. Taiwanese languages, such as Hoklo, on the other hand, were merely local ‘dialects,’ used only in a specific region of China. By promoting Mandarin and deemphasizing local languages, Chiang Kai-shek emphasized a national identity over a local one.

Besides popularizing the use of Mandarin, the KMT were also adamant about the use of traditional Chinese characters. In the 1950s, the CCP promoted the use of simplified Chinese characters to promote literacy. However, the KMT was staunch in its desire to maintain the use of traditional characters. In doing so, the KMT legitimized the ROC as the keeper of traditional Chinese culture. This gave them international recognition as the ‘true’ rulers of China, and served to connect Taiwan with Chinese history and traditional culture.

While language planning in Taiwan proved to be quite strict, it has been the most successful of the Sinicization policies of Chiang’s regime. Today, 96.1% of Taiwan’s population is literate in Mandarin Chinese.<sup>29</sup> Traditional characters are still in use, and Mandarin is the dominant language in music, TV, and schools. The KMT did not entirely eradicate the use of native Taiwanese dialects, but the promotion of Mandarin was extremely successful. In fact, as the next two chapters will show, there has been a revival of the use of Hoklo and Hakka in recent years. While the younger generation

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<sup>29</sup> Central Intelligence Agency, “Taiwan,” World Factbook, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/tw.html> (accessed April 7th, 2015).

tends to be more comfortable in Mandarin, most members of society remain bilingual.

### *Education*

One of the key ways that states disseminate their invented traditions is through education. Education transforms people into citizens – through education people are politically socialized; they learn to identify with national symbols and what it means to be a ‘citizen’, as defined by the state. Through a state-sponsored education system the state is able to disseminate their constructed visions of national history, geography, and society. This is particularly true in the case of Taiwan. In this section, I will look at geography, history, and social science textbooks to understand how the KMT constructed a vision of the Republic of China.

Under martial law, the KMT exercised strict control over all facets of education. The Ministry of Education (MOE) was one of eight ministries under the Executive Yuan, the administrative arm of the ROC government. The Ministry of Education was in charge of not only schools, but also cultural institutions such as the National Palace Museum. One of the most important institutes under the MOE was the National Institute of Compilation and Translation (NICT). The main function of the NICT was to compile, translate, and edit academic books and textbooks.<sup>30</sup> Under martial law, all the textbooks in Taiwan were published by the NICT, which had a complete monopoly over the production of all textbooks.

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<sup>30</sup> CIA World Factbook, “Taiwan”

Members of the MOE and NICT were appointed by the state. As a result, the Director of the NICT and members of the Editorial and Reviewing Committee were consistently made up of the mainlander elite. They played a key part in shaping textbooks and school curriculums that furthered the KMT's Sinicization agenda. This Sinicizing agenda was visible through language education, which has been discussed, and history, geography, and civics classes.

The Republic of China had strong ideological ties to promoting a state-sponsored education system. Chiang Kai-shek believed that education was one of the best ways to cultivate a Chinese identity on Taiwan. His views on education were largely shaped by Sun Yat-sen and other early Republic of China thinkers. The Republic of China Constitution calls for free primary education for all students. Sun Yat-sen believed that the duty of the state was to use education to introduce his 'Three Principles of the People' to all citizens.

When the ROC government moved to Taiwan, they maintained the educational structure developed by Sun Yat-sen on the mainland, with some added features. In 1950, the Executive Yuan presented a statement to the Legislative Yuan on education. The objectives of education were "to develop the moral character of the people in the direction of cooperation and fraternity; to denounce the false doctrine of class struggle, so as to eradicate the contamination of Communism; to strengthen confidence in the final victory over Communism and Soviet imperialism; to render aid to displaced

persons in educational, cultural, and technical fields.”<sup>31</sup> The KMT’s educational agenda was closely linked to their political agenda of using Taiwan as a base to recover the mainland, hence the focus on anti-Communist teachings. Chiang Kai-shek firmly believed that one of the best ways to do this was to inculcate Taiwanese with the ‘three principles’ of nationalism, democracy, and social well-being. Chiang writes in his supplementary chapters to Sun Yat-sen’s *Three Principles of the People*,

The promotion of civic education must pay special attention to the teaching of “Chinese History” and “Chinese Geography,” for it is only through them that the student’s patriotic fervor and national pride can be really aroused, that he can be made to realize the fundamental significance of the basic virtues of loyalty, filial piety, humanity, love, honesty, justice, peace and harmony as well as those of propriety, righteousness, incorruptibility and honor, and that he can be taught to become a citizen who loves his country more than his own life.<sup>32</sup>

If Taiwanese citizens’ “patriotic fervor” could be aroused, they would support the KMT’s political agenda. However, “patriotic fervor” can only be created if a citizen believes he or she belongs to the nation. Education was an important tool in creating a national identity, as it gave a way for people to re-imagine themselves as part of the larger Chinese nation.

One of the major ways the KMT regime inculcated a sense of being ‘Chinese’ into the hearts and minds of the Taiwanese people was through ‘homeland’ education, mainly in Geography classes. Bi-yu Chang analyzes three different geography textbooks from three different curriculums – 1948, 1952, and 1962. The goals of each version of the textbook were similar. The

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<sup>31</sup> The China Handbook Editorial Board, *China Handbook 1954-55* (Taipei, Taiwan: China Publishing Co., 1954)

<sup>32</sup> Chiang Kai-shek, “National Fecundity, Social Welfare and Education,” in *San Min Chu I: The Three Principles of the People*, by Sun Yat-sen, trans. Frank W. Price (Taipei, Taiwan: China Pub. Co, 1963).

introduction states goals of “introducing the vast and beautiful land and boundless resources [of China].”<sup>33</sup> Geography lessons were not about the territory that the students actually lived in (Taiwan), instead, geography lessons covered all the territory that the ROC claimed.

The enormous span of territory claimed by the ROC is also evident by maps produced during this era. For example, editions of the annual *Republic of China Handbook* from the 1950s until as late as the early 1990s describe in detail the geography of all of mainland China. Major rivers are described, mountain ranges listed, and different provinces included.<sup>34</sup> Although the *Republic of China Handbook* was geared towards an international audience, they reflect the same geographical ideas that appeared in elementary school textbooks.

Students had classes on both domestic and world geography. Domestic geography classes covered all of China. Taiwan was studied as merely one of thirty-six provinces. Lessons also focused on mainland Chinese landmarks, the ‘wholeness’ of the ROC, and referred to the mainland as the “Fatherland.”<sup>35</sup> The geography curriculum highlights the imagination of the ROC as encompassing both China and Taiwan.

Like geography textbooks, history textbooks were mainly concerned with tying the island of Taiwan and its people to 5,000 years of Chinese history. The textbooks focused on Chinese dynastic history. In my analysis of junior high-school history textbooks published in 1965, the first four (out of

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<sup>33</sup> Bi-yu Chang, “So Close, Yet So Far Away: Imaging Chinese ‘Homeland’ In Taiwan’s Geography Education (1945-1968),” *Cultural Geographies* 18, no. 1 (2010): 5.

<sup>34</sup> Many volume of the *China Handbook/China Yearbook* were looked at

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*



six total) volumes are entirely on Chinese history. The last two teach world history. The first three volumes teach Chinese dynastic history. Taiwan's history prior to the arrival of the KMT is largely glossed over. There is no mention of the Dutch or Spanish colonial periods, and the Japanese colonial period is very briefly mentioned. The fourth volume covers the history of the Republic of China. Again, Taiwan's history is largely glossed over.

Revealingly, the fourth volume ends with a goal. The last chapter is entitled "Preparations to Fight the Communists and Recover the Nation."<sup>36</sup> Within the chapter, Taiwan is emphasized as the place that holds the future of China. The duty of Taiwan and its citizens is to recover the lost mainland and reunite all Chinese people.

This narration of history emphasizes loyalty and devotion to the KMT, as well as traditional Chinese culture. By ending the history curriculum with a future-oriented chapter, the KMT is setting themselves up as the continuation of 5000 years of Chinese history. By constantly referring to China as "our country" and its history as "our history," the KMT is training a new generation of students to see themselves as Chinese.<sup>37</sup>

Finally, schools were important for the reproduction of national symbols, such as the military, the ROC flag, Chiang Kai-shek and Sun Yat-sen, the National Anthem, and Confucius. These symbols were distinct to the Republic of China, but also emphasized the connection the Republic of China to the mainland. Confucian teachings were the foundation of the moral

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<sup>36</sup> This translation is my own.

<sup>37</sup> This translation is my own. All textbooks were published by the NICT, and accessed online at the Taiwan Textbook Library's Digital Archive, <http://dat.naer.edu.tw/eb/eindex.html>.

education curriculum.<sup>38</sup> Classrooms often contained photos and/or statues of Chiang Kai-shek and Sun Yat-sen. Each school had a military official as a disciplinary figure, and military training was included in the curriculum. Finally, the ROC flag was hoisted every morning as students listened to the National Anthem of the ROC. Students were constantly surrounded by these symbols, which helped develop a sense of belonging to the ROC state, and the Chinese nation, cultivating a Chinese national identity.<sup>39</sup>

### ***Sinicization: A Success or Not?***

While the KMT's political development and cultural policies undeniably attempted to create an ROC nation-state on the island of Taiwan, the question that we now face is how successful were they? Did Chiang Kai-shek's nation building policies translate into a formation of a Chinese national identity? Although the ROC did not actually control all the territory that it believed it should, it was a successful state on the territory that it did govern, at least at the beginning of its regime. Taiwan experienced rapid economic development under KMT rule, with its GNP per capita increasing from just \$130USD in 1960 to \$2,100USD in 1980.<sup>40</sup> In terms of the state-structure, the authoritarian regime was relatively successful in silencing the opposition, especially during the 1950s and 1960s. However, as the next chapter will

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<sup>38</sup> For more information of moral education under Chiang Kai-shek, see (Angela) Chi-Ming Lee, "Changes and Challenges for Moral Education in Taiwan," *Journal of Moral Education* 33, no. 4 (December 1, 2004): 575–95, doi:10.1080/0305724042000315635.

<sup>39</sup> For more information on the role of national symbols in education and the political socialization of elementary students in Taiwan, see Richard W. Wilson, *Learning to Be Chinese: The Political Socialization of Children in Taiwan* (Cambridge: M.I.T. Press, 1970).

<sup>40</sup> Shelley Rigger, *Politics in Taiwan: Voting for Democracy*, (New York, NY: Routledge, 1999), 68.

show, beginning in the 1970s, the KMT state-structure began to slowly fall apart. As an opposition movement grew stronger, dissidents began to have more and more influence in Taiwan society until the KMT was forced to re-structure their state.

The question of success in nation building is also complicated. Although there is no official survey data from before 1992, data from a 1992 survey shows that over 70% of Taiwanese people identified as Chinese or both Taiwanese and Chinese.<sup>41</sup> This data indicates some success on the part of the KMT. Unfortunately, there is no conclusive data on attitudes towards issues of reunification and independence under the KMT regime. Without data, it is impossible to quantify the success and failures of the KMT's nation building regime. However, if one turns to the next period in Taiwanese history, it becomes clear that the KMT ultimately failed in creating a ROC-centered, ethnic Chinese nation-state. As the next chapter will explain, from the 1970s through 1990s, the KMT was forced to reform their nation building agenda. Furthermore, when one looks at Taiwanese national identity today, it is very different from the one that the KMT put forth during the period of Sinicization. These changes came at a time when the KMT's vision of national identity was no longer sustainable, thus reform had to happen.

However, what is interesting about the reform period in Taiwan, as the next chapter explains, is that reform actually was driven by the KMT. Thus, while Chiang Kai-shek's vision of the ROC nation-state was never fully

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<sup>41</sup> Election Study Center, National Chengchi University, *Taiwanese/Chinese Identification Trend Distribution in Taiwan (1992/06~2014/12)*, (Taipei, Taiwan, 2014), <http://esc.nccu.edu.tw/course/news.php?Sn=166>.

realized, the KMT did manage to remain in power through the process of democratization. This feat deserves to be called a success.

## Chapter Two: Taiwanization and De-Sinicization (1975-2008)

Between 1992 and 2008, the percentage of people in Taiwan who identified as Taiwanese increased dramatically. In 1992, just 17.6% of the population identified themselves as Taiwanese. By 2008, this number had increased to 48.4%.<sup>1</sup> What accounts for this drastic shift in national identity? Is this identity political in nature, cultural, or both? As discussed in my introduction, national identity in Taiwan is seen in light of two main issues, which are closely interrelated. The first is related to the function of the state – should Taiwan be independent, or should it unify with China? The second part of national identity in Taiwan relates to the nation – is Taiwan fundamentally a part of the Chinese nation, or does it have a unique culture, and thus identity that is distinct from that of China? I believe that the rise in national identity in Taiwan since the 1980s is a rise in both a political identity and a cultural identity. As the number of people who identify as Taiwanese has increased, the number of people who believe in eventual unification has decreased.<sup>2</sup> What has caused this rise in political and cultural identity to occur? In this chapter, I look at the nation building policies of Chiang Ching-kuo, Lee Teng-hui, and Chen Shui-bian as a factor in the emergence of a Taiwanese consciousness.

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<sup>1</sup> Election Study Center, National Chengchi University, *Taiwanese/Chinese Identification Trend Distribution in Taiwan (1992/06~2014/12)*, (Taipei, Taiwan, 2014), <http://esc.nccu.edu.tw/course/news.php?Sn=166>.

<sup>2</sup> Election Study Center, National Chengchi University, *Taiwanese Independence vs. Unification with the Mainland Trend Distribution in Taiwan (1992/06~2014/12)*, (Taipei, Taiwan, 2014), <http://esc.nccu.edu.tw/course/news.php?Sn=167>.

Many scholars believe that the emergence of a Taiwan consciousness during the 1980s was a product of native Taiwanese opposition activists. They argue that Taiwanese political activists inspired cultural nationalism in Taiwanese intellectuals, who then advocated for these policies to be implemented into official state policy.<sup>3</sup> It was through these new state policies that people re-imagined the state and the nation. While I agree that official state policies played a key role in the reimagination of the state and the nation, this approach fails to explain why the governing elite (the KMT) would agree to implement these new policies. Why would the KMT decide to drastically change its nation building process, especially after advocating for strict Sinicization for so long? I argue that exogenous shocks – namely Taiwan’s change in the international realm – forced the KMT to abandon its goal of recovering the mainland, which in turn forced the regime to look for new sources of legitimization.

As the 1970s went on, it became increasingly clear that Taiwan and China were not going to unify any time soon. The KMT turned to implementing democratic reforms and the rule of law as a new source of legitimacy and power. These reforms cumulated in a redefinition of the ROC state as the Republic of China *on Taiwan*. When the ROC state was redefined as an entity limited to governing the island of Taiwan, the nation also had to be redefined.

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<sup>3</sup> This argument is mainly articulated in A-Chin Hsiau, *Contemporary Taiwanese Cultural Nationalism*, (New York: Routledge, 2000).

## ***Part I: The Era of Chiang Ching-kuo (1975-1988)***

### *The Crisis of the 1970s*

The 1970s was a tumultuous decade for Taiwan. The island was presented with a number of domestic and international challenges that forced the KMT to reevaluate its regime.

The first crisis Taiwan faced was a succession crisis. In 1970, Chiang Kai-shek was 83 years old, and it was still unclear who would succeed him as leader. However, KMT leaders were reluctant to discuss this issue openly as they needed to maintain political stability.<sup>4</sup> By 1972, Chiang Ching-kuo, Chiang Kai-shek's son, had become Premier of the ROC and began to take on many of his father's responsibilities, but there was still no consensus among top KMT leaders that he should be his father's successor.<sup>5</sup> At the same time, it was obvious that Chiang Kai-shek was going to die soon. This uncertainty surrounding who would become the next leader caused much anxiety within the KMT leadership, but when Chiang Kai-shek died in 1975, Chiang Ching-kuo became the new President of the ROC and head of the KMT.

In addition to this fraught succession, the ROC in the 1970s faced a crisis in its international status. In the immediate post-War period, the ROC was very successful in maintaining its international status as the true and legitimate government of all of China. Most countries in the world maintained formal diplomatic ties with the Nationalist government, and the ROC held onto China's seat on the United Nations Security Council. However, towards

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<sup>4</sup> Shelley Rigger, *Politics in Taiwan: Voting for Democracy*, (New York, NY: Routledge, 1999), 108.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

the end of the 1960s and beginning of the 1970s, this system was appearing to be more and more illogical. More countries began to recognize the legitimacy of the PRC government on mainland China. In 1971, the ROC lost its seat in the United Nations to the PRC, and through the 1970s, more countries cut diplomatic ties with the ROC government. In 1978, the United States, the ROC's main ally through the 1950s and 60s, officially derecognized the ROC as a country, and ended all formal diplomatic relations with the government on Taiwan. This was a huge blow to the KMT government and the people of Taiwan. For a long time, the KMT's goal of recovering the mainland seemed feasible due to the ROC's strong international support. However, in the span of a decade, the KMT had lost both the possibility of recovering the mainland soon and its international status and legitimacy.

With these developments, the KMT had to shift its strategy for rule. Its strict authoritarian, Sinicized regime was losing legitimacy. Furthermore, a grassroots opposition movement was arising. Members of the opposition were referred to as the *dangwai* (黨外 - literally meaning outside the party) candidates. In the 1960s, non-KMT politicians began challenging KMT politicians at lower levels of government, such as in city, county and provincial elections. In 1975, the first Nativist democratic movement magazine, *Taiwan Zhenglun* (Taiwan Political Review), was published.<sup>6</sup> The 1977 elections marked a turning point in Taiwan politics. For the first time,

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<sup>6</sup> Fu-chang Wang, "Why Bother about School Textbooks?: An Analysis of the Origin of the Disputes over *Renshi Taiwan* Textbooks in 1997," in *Cultural, Ethnic, and Political Nationalism in Contemporary Taiwan* ed. John Makeham and A-chin Hsiau (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 65.



the *dangwai* candidates won a substantial number of seats. It was becoming increasingly clear that the KMT was losing its one-party stronghold in Taiwanese politics.<sup>7</sup> The opposition was gaining more and more recognition through its dissident magazines and other political avenues. The non-party *dangwai* were gaining important ground in their fight against the KMT even though opposing political parties were still illegal at this time.

In 1978, when the United States officially derecognized the ROC government, the KMT declared a period of national crisis and suspended the planned local elections.<sup>8</sup> This further increased tensions between the KMT and opposition activists. These tensions cumulated in the Kaohsiung Incident of 1979. The *dangwai* had begun publishing an opposition magazine, *Formosa*, and organized a rally commemorating International Human Rights Day on December 10<sup>th</sup>, 1979. Violence broke out at the rally. No one was killed in the incident, but many members of the *dangwai* were arrested. The KMT had chosen to once again to crack down on its opposition.

However, unlike during the 228 Incident, this decision did not successfully silence the opposition. By 1979, the Nativist opposition to KMT rule had grown much stronger and better organized. Although they were still not an official political party, the *dangwai* activists were gaining more and more seats in local elections. After the crackdown that followed the Kaohsiung Incident, people were outraged. The public sympathized with the *dangwai* activists, and were increasingly dissatisfied with the KMT regime. In the 1980

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<sup>7</sup> Rigger, *Politics in Taiwan*, 115.

<sup>8</sup> Wang, "Why Bother About School Textbooks," 67.

legislative election, the *dangwai* won more seats than they had ever before. Although the opposition still represented a very small percentage of elected officials, the KMT was realizing that their authoritarian regime was increasingly unstable. The risk of more costly uprisings was increasing. The KMT thought that the best way for them to ensure stability and remain in power was to hasten reforms they had already tentatively begun.

### *Political Reforms*

In the 1970s and 1980s, the KMT began to bring more native Taiwanese into leadership positions in the provincial level of government and below. In 1972, Chiang Ching-kuo implemented a Taiwanization policy that increased the number of Taiwanese in prominent governmental roles. Between 1973 and 1979, Chiang Ching-kuo more than doubled the number of Taiwanese in the KMT Central Standing Committee.<sup>9</sup> By 1977, native Taiwanese made up 53% of the party rank-and-file, compared to 39% in 1969.<sup>10</sup> This helped to alleviate the perception that mainlanders dominated the KMT. By including Taiwanese into the party structure, Chiang Ching-kuo hoped to alleviate divisions between ethnic groups.

Besides indigenizing the government, Chiang Ching-kuo also expanded the Legislative Yuan to give elected lawmakers (rather than appointed ones) more influence over policy-making. However, the KMT was still winning most elections at all level of government due to its strong patron-client networks

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<sup>9</sup> Rigger, *Politics in Taiwan*, 111.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*

and vote-buying system. This in-between space of limited reform, while maintaining many of his father's authoritarian tendencies marked Chiang Ching-kuo's regime. Chiang Ching-kuo often vacillated between repression and reform, but his main strategy was to co-opt the elite. It was clear to Chiang Ching-Kuo that the KMT had to reform to prevent further uprisings and perhaps even revolution, but he did not believe that Taiwan was ready for full-fledged democracy. Democratization is only an elite-driven process when the elite believes that they can remain in power. The threat of losing power through democratization was still too large. Chiang Ching-kuo settled for a strategy of allowing limited reforms that would buy off the opposition elite, at least for the time being, but maintain the KMT's grip on the key positions in the government. This would prevent further uprisings from occurring while maintaining the KMT's power.

## ***Part II: The Lee Teng-hui Era (1988-2000)***

Shortly before his death in January of 1988, Chiang Ching-kuo implemented a final series of reforms that Lee Teng-hui, his chosen successor, would build upon. In 1987, martial law was abolished, nearly four decades after it had first been implemented. The lifting of martial law removed restrictions on freedom of the press, and the ban on forming political parties. Shortly after martial law ended, the *dangwai* activists formed the Democratic Progressive Party.

On January 13<sup>th</sup>, 1988, Chiang Ching-kuo died, and his vice-president Lee Teng-hui was sworn into the Presidency. While Chiang Ching-kuo may

have thought that his reforms would be enough to satisfy the opposition as well as the public, it soon became clear that a taste of reform left people wanting more. As a result, when Lee Teng-hui ascended to the Presidency, he was faced with many challenges and decisions on the best way to consolidate his power, as well as satisfy the ever-growing opposition party. Lee's tenure as president was marked by twin processes of democratization and Taiwanization. Because Taiwan had lost legitimacy in the international sphere, the KMT had to find new ways to legitimize their power. Lee believed that the best way to do so was to accelerate the twin processes of democratization and Taiwanization that had started under Chiang Ching-kuo. Lee's policies as president helped to redefine and re-imagine both the state and the nation in Taiwan, leading to changes in national identity.

### ***Redefining the State***

In 1991, Lee Teng-hui abolished the Temporary Provisions that had nullified the Constitution, and terminated the "Period of National Mobilization for the Suppression of the Communist Rebellion." This officially ended the Chinese Civil War<sup>11</sup> and tacitly signaled a recognition of the People's Republic of China. Up until this point, the Republic of China considered the People's Republic of China an illegitimate state that was illegally occupying ROC territory. By formally ending the war, Lee Teng-hui officially renounced Taiwan's use of force against the Mainland. This implied a recognition of the legitimacy of the People's Republic of China, which was

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<sup>11</sup> Dennis Roy, *Taiwan: A Political History* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2003), 185.

the first step in redefining the Republic of China state. This was also an important step for the future of cross-Strait relations. In Taiwan, the Republic of China state is necessarily defined in relation to Mainland China. Under Chiang Kai-shek and Chiang Ching-kuo, the ROC did not recognize the PRC as a legitimate government. To them, the ROC was the one true government of all of China and the PRC was merely a renegade regime.

When Lee became President, the ROC had suffered devastating losses in the international sphere. It had lost its seat in the United Nations, as well as the majority of its formal diplomatic relations. To survive, the KMT needed to make a number of changes. The first step was to formally end the civil war. After that, throughout Lee's regime, he had a policy that can best be summed up as the "Republic of China on Taiwan." Although Lee also believed that the ROC was the one true government of China, unlike the Chiangs he conceded that the ROC government only had authority on the island of Taiwan. Lee did not advocate for independence; he believed in reunification of the two political entities on opposite sides of the Taiwan Strait under the Republic of China and its principles of nationalism, democracy, and the people's welfare.<sup>12</sup>

Lee didn't necessarily believe that this would be possible in the short-run, so he instead he promoted policies that normalized relations between Taiwan and mainland China, and increased Taiwan's international space. In 1991, he created the National Unification Council (NUC), the Mainland Affairs Council (MAC), and the Straits Exchange Foundation (SEF). The NUC was in charge of setting broad reunification policies, the MAC was to implement

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<sup>12</sup> Lee Teng-hui's own book

these policies, and the SEF was the organization that interacted directly with the PRC.<sup>13</sup> In response to the creation of these organizations, the PRC created the Taiwan Affairs Office (TAO) and Association for Relations Across the Taiwan Strait (ARATS).<sup>14</sup> In 1992, a consensus was agreed upon that affirmed Taiwan's adherence to the "one China" principle. Both the mainland and Taiwan were part of China, but entities on the opposite sides of the strait had conflicting opinions on what "one China" meant. The PRC maintained that "one China" was the PRC government, and that Taiwan unification could occur under "one China, two systems," where Taiwan would hold a status similar to that of Hong Kong.<sup>15</sup> Meanwhile, the ROC believed that the two sides could only reunify under the Republic of China and the Three Principles of the People. In recognizing the legitimacy of the PRC government, and agreeing to improving cross-strait relations, Lee re-defined the ROC's territory, and thus the ROC state. For the first time since the KMT retreated to Taiwan, the territory that the ROC actually controlled was aligned with the territory that the ROC claimed as its own.

### *International Politics*

Now that Taiwan had lost its international status as the ruler of China, Lee had to find new ways to assert the ROC's sovereignty and legitimacy in the international community. Through greater international space, the Republic of China could emphasize its role as the Republic of China *on* Taiwan, and

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<sup>13</sup> Richard C. Bush, *Untying the Knot: Making Peace in the Taiwan Strait* (Washington, D. C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2005), 42.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 41.

maintain its distinction between the ROC and the PRC. Lee's international efforts are characterized as "pragmatic diplomacy," which included reinforcing already existing formal diplomatic ties, encouraging the development of informal diplomatic ties, and admission into international organizations.<sup>16</sup>

In 1993, the ROC government launched its first of many campaigns for Taiwan's admission to the United Nations. Lee attempted to develop informal diplomatic ties across the world using a strategy of "visit diplomacy." Beginning in 1989 with a trip to Singapore, Lee attempted to establish informal diplomatic ties with countries in Asia. This was an important tool in garnering public support domestically, but also towards improving cross-strait relations (at least in the eyes of Lee).<sup>17</sup> He began an ambitious "Go South" diplomacy to enhance economic ties with Southeast Asia, disguising diplomatic missions as 'private' events like golf trips. These diplomatic efforts allowed other nations to define the ROC and PRC as two separate entities as well.

### *Domestic Politics*

Although Lee did not believe that the ROC currently included mainland China, he did emphasize the importance of the ROC state structure. To him, the Republic of China state was defined largely by its economic and political successes. In his 1990 Inaugural Address, Lee emphasized the importance of

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<sup>16</sup> Dennis Van Vranken Hickey, *Foreign Policy Making in Taiwan: From principle to pragmatism* (New York: Routledge, 2007), 14.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*

two things in realizing the state of the ROC Constitution. The first was the implementation of political democracy; the second was the institutionalization of party politics.<sup>18</sup> These two things would go on to be part of Lee's legacy in Taiwan.

In 1991, Lee implemented a series of important constitutional reforms. First of all, as discussed above, he abolished the Temporary Provisions. In that same session, the National Assembly adopted ten amendments to the Constitution. These amendments got rid of many of the parliamentarians who had been serving since before the ROC moved to Taiwan. The amendments also called for the election of new members of the National Assembly.<sup>19</sup> This was a significant step forward in Taiwan's democratization process, as there had not been a full election of the National Assembly since 1947.<sup>20</sup>

In May of 1992, the newly elected National Assembly convened to further amend the Constitution. These amendments called for the direct election of the President and Vice President of the ROC, beginning with the 1996 election. They also further amended the various branches of government, and the system of local governments. Now, members of provincial assembly would also be directly elected.<sup>21</sup> These reforms propelled Taiwan toward full democracy, and redefined the ROC state. The Republic of

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<sup>18</sup> Lee Teng-hui, "Opening a New Era for the Chinese People: Inaugural Address by the Eighth-term President of the Republic of China, May 20, 1990" in *Creating the Future: Towards a New Era for the Chinese People* (Taipei, Taiwan: Government Information Office, 1992), 4-5.

<sup>19</sup> *The Republic of China Yearbook 1993* (Taipei, Taiwan: Government Information Office, 1993), 728.

<sup>20</sup> John F. Copper, *Taiwan: Nation-State or Province?*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1999), 97.

<sup>21</sup> *The Republic of China Yearbook 1993*, 730-731.



China had become an actual constitutional democracy, with free and fair election; democracy was no longer just a façade.

### ***Redefining the Nation***

Although Lee believed in the eventual reunification of Taiwan and China, he recognized the important role of Taiwan in the ROC nation. As a native Taiwanese born and bred in Taiwan, Lee had a connection to the island that Chiang Kai-shek and Chiang Ching-kuo lacked. As a member of the Hakka minority, Lee had strong feelings for a multicultural Taiwan. Rather than trying to build a nation that exclusively saw Taiwan in relation to mainland China, Lee's nation building policies were concerned with creating a "New Taiwanese" nation. According to Lee, the nation would be based on a "New Taiwanese consciousness, holding that Taiwan's interests should be foremost and that the people of Taiwan all share a common destiny."<sup>22</sup> Lee did not deny Taiwan's Chinese heritage. In fact, as a member of the KMT, he strongly believed in the ROC. However, in his nation building policies, he sought to create an identity that would span all ethnic groups. Lee's nation building projects can be seen as emphasizing the civic aspect of a nation, rather than an ethnic vision of the nation. The nation was no longer solely defined by its connection to an ethnic Chinese identity. Instead, the nation spanned multiple identities. Collective consciousness was now created through the Republic of China on Taiwan, and all the accomplishments it had

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<sup>22</sup> Lee Teng-hui, "Understanding Taiwan: Bridging the Perception Gap," *Foreign Affairs* 78, no. 6 (1999): pp. 9.

achieved. This view of the “New Taiwanese” nation is reflected in educational and language reforms during his era as President.

### *Educational Reforms*

The foundation for education reform in Taiwan began under Chiang Ching-kuo. In 1985, the Ministry of Education (MOE) formed a committee to create a new set of national textbooks. These textbooks were published and used from 1989 to 1995. These textbooks were revised to reflect the societal changes that Taiwan had experienced. While the textbooks focused slightly more on Taiwan, they still presented a Sino-centric vision of the nation. In 1989, a section entitled “The Discovery of Taiwan” was added to history textbooks. The chapters within this section incorporated new information on Taiwanese history – including sections on the aborigines who lived in Taiwan before the first Chinese settlement, periods of Dutch colonization, the rule of Koxinga, and the rule of the Qing dynasty.<sup>23</sup>

Textbooks published in 1989 also presented a new vision of the KMT’s rule on Taiwan. Textbooks prior to 1989 included two chapters, “The Duty of Reunification with Mainland China” and “The Greatest Government.” These chapters focused on the KMT government as the legitimate government of all of China – reinforcing Chiang Kai-shek and Chiang Ching-kuo’s vision of the state. However, after 1989, “The Duty of Reunification with Mainland China” was removed from the textbooks. Instead, chapters on “Economic

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<sup>23</sup> Ya-Chen Su, “Ideological Representations of Taiwan’s History: An Analysis of Elementary Social Studies Textbooks, 1978-1995,” *Curriculum Inquiry* 37 (2007): 220.

Development” and “Social Change” were added.<sup>24</sup> This shift in the KMT narrative in textbooks is similar to the shift that Lee Teng-hui brought. Like Lee, the textbooks highlighted the economic and political successes of the ROC state as things to be celebrated. The KMT had found legitimacy in its economic and political success on Taiwan.

Perhaps one of the most visible reforms to education that Taiwan experienced under Lee Teng-hui was the introduction of the *Getting to Know Taiwan* (*renshi Taiwan* 認識台灣) textbook series. In 1994, after receiving much political pressure, the Executive Yuan established a commission on the study of educational reform. In 1995, the Ministry published a new set of curriculum guidelines that introduced the *Getting to Know Taiwan* series.<sup>25</sup> These courses were split into three subject areas: geography, society, and history, and were to be incorporated into the 7<sup>th</sup> grade curriculum (the first year of junior high school in Taiwan).<sup>26</sup> Rather than spending two years learning about China and the last year about the world, junior high school students spent their first year learning about Taiwan, the second year about China, and the last year about the world. The introduction of *Getting to Know Taiwan* marked a huge shift in Taiwan’s educational system. For the first time, the island of Taiwan was becoming a focus of education – not just Taiwan as province in China.

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<sup>24</sup> Su, “Ideological Representations of Taiwan’s History,” 227.

<sup>25</sup> Stephane Corcuff, “History Textbooks, Identity Politics, and Ethnic Introspection in Taiwan: The June 1997 Knowing Taiwan Textbooks Controversy and the Questions It Raised on the Various Approaches to “Han” Identity,” in *History Education and National Identity in East Asia* ed. by Edward Vickers and Alisa Jones (New York: Taylor & Francis, 2005), 134.

<sup>26</sup> *Taiwan Textbook Library Digital Archive*, <http://dat.naer.edu.tw/eb/eindex.html>

It is important to note, however, that the textbooks and curriculum guidelines were still an apparatus of the state. In 1995, the Ministry of Education (MOE), the reform commission, and the National Institute for Translation and Compilation (the wing of the Ministry of Education that oversaw all textbook production) established another Commission for Editing New Junior High School Textbooks.<sup>27</sup> Lee Yuan-tse, the president of Academia Sinica, a state-sponsored research institute, headed the editorial committee. On the board were 22 other specialists and educators who were tasked with writing the three textbooks and manuals of the *Getting to Know Taiwan* series.

In 1997, just a few months before the new textbooks were to be implemented in schools around the island, controversy broke out. Leaders from both sides of the Taiwan political spectrum argued that the textbooks were biased. Li Qing-hua, a legislator from the Chinese New Party, a mainlander-based party that advocates reunification with China, argued that the textbooks promoted an agenda of Taiwanese independence.<sup>28</sup> Democratic Progressive Party leaders argued that the textbooks downplayed the importance of Taiwan. The debates surrounding the *Getting to Know Taiwan* textbooks were very bitter and public. They were also the very first of their kind, and set the stage for future debates regarding textbooks. Since the introduction of *Getting to Know Taiwan*, every other change to the school

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<sup>27</sup> Corcuff, "History Textbooks, Identity Politics, and Ethnic Introspection in Taiwan," 138.

<sup>28</sup> Fu-chang Wang, "Why Bother about School Textbooks?: An Analysis of the Origin of the Disputes over *Renshi Taiwan* Textbooks in 1997," in *Cultural, Ethnic, and Political Nationalism in Contemporary Taiwan* ed. John Makeham and A-chin Hsiau (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 73.

curriculum, particularly history, has raised enormous controversy. These debates indicate the importance of education, and narratives of history in particular, in furthering a specific vision of the Taiwanese nation.

What was the content of the new textbooks, and why were they so controversial? There were three subject areas that the textbooks covered: history, geography, and society. Prior to the curriculum reforms, as discussed in chapter 1, history textbooks had very little emphasis on Taiwan. Taiwan's history prior to the arrival of the KMT in 1945 was barely touched upon. If mentioned at all, it included a very biased and negative depiction of Taiwan's previous rulers.<sup>29</sup> However, with the introduction of the *Getting to Know Taiwan* textbooks, this changed. The textbooks covered Taiwan's history from pre-historic times to the present day, including topics that were previously omitted, such as the lives of the aborigines prior to any Chinese immigrants and the brief period of Dutch and Spanish rule. The period of Japanese colonial rule was discussed in much greater detail. Rather than focusing on Japanese aggressions towards China, the *Getting to Know Taiwan* history series focused on the political, economic, educational, and social conditions of the period. Finally, the history of the Republic of China on Taiwan was emphasized.<sup>30</sup>

These changes in the history curriculum re-wrote the state's vision of "national" history. National history now included the history of the island of

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<sup>30</sup> These findings are based on my own translations of textbook section headings. *Getting to Know Taiwan: History* (Taipei, Taiwan: National Institute for Translation and Compilation, 1998). Accessed online at the *National Textbook Library Digital Archive*, [http://textbooklibrary.naer.edu.tw/index\\_en.html](http://textbooklibrary.naer.edu.tw/index_en.html).

Taiwan – not just the history of all of mainland China. Taiwan was no longer seen as the continuation of 5,000 years of dynastic history. Rather, it was a distinct entity, with its own past and its own future trajectory.<sup>31</sup>

The geography curriculum was also limited to Taiwan. Previously, geography described all of mainland China, and Taiwan was described as situated as in the Southwest of “our country.” However, the new textbooks characterized Taiwan as Southwest of mainland China.<sup>32</sup> While this may seem like a small distinction, it is an enormously significant one. This small change in the textbook reflects a reimagining of the territory that the Republic of China covered. The rest of the geography textbook in the *Getting to Know Taiwan* curriculum focused on things such as the terrain of Taiwan, agricultural and industrial activities, climate etc.<sup>33</sup>

Finally, the society curriculum was changed in an interesting fashion. The commission decided to include interesting new units in the chapter “Diverse Culture” – “cultural assets” and the “Taiwanese spirit.” The last chapter of the textbook is about creating a “New Taiwan.” This marks a large departure from previous society classes, which focused largely on moral education. Prior to the reforms, society was about civic education, which meant instilling both Confucian values and Sun Yat-sen’s three principles into students. The class in the new *Getting to Know Taiwan* curriculum instilled

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<sup>31</sup> The last chapter of the history textbook is entitled “The Future.”

<sup>32</sup> Mei-Hui Liu, Li-Ching Hung, and Edward Vickers, “Identity Issues in Taiwan’s History Curriculum,” *History Education and National Identity in East Asia* ed. by Edward Vickers and Alisa Jones (New York: Taylor & Francis, 2005), 121.

<sup>33</sup> *Getting to Know Taiwan: Geography* (Taipei, Taiwan: National Institute for Translation and Compilation, 1998). Accessed online at the *National Textbook Library Digital Archive*, [http://textbooklibrary.naer.edu.tw/index\\_en.html](http://textbooklibrary.naer.edu.tw/index_en.html).

new values – values of the cultural diversity of Taiwan and the new democracy that Taiwan had become.<sup>34</sup>

These new textbooks represented a radical period of education reform in Taiwan. The introduction of the *Getting to Know Taiwan* curriculum is one example of Lee Teng-hui's Taiwanization policies. While the study of China was not totally eradicated from the educational curriculum, it is undeniable that Taiwan, not all of China, was being heralded as the homeland. The education system had shifted from a Sino-centric vision of the nation to a Taiwan-centric vision.

The new textbooks also re-imagined the nation of Taiwan to align with the new construction of the Taiwanese state. As the state shifted from being the Republic of China (encompassing Taiwan and all of mainland China) to the Republic of China on Taiwan, the narratives of national history, geography, and society shifted as well. *Getting to Know Taiwan* was a required part of the “Native Studies,” curriculum for all students in grade 7. Thus, in publishing these new textbooks, political elites were re-writing national history, national geography, and national society. National history was no longer just about 5,000 years of Chinese civilization. Now, it focused on the 400 years of Taiwan's past – the good and the bad. National geography was no longer all of China's 36 provinces – it was about Taiwan and its surrounding islands. Finally, society classes emphasized a “Taiwanese spirit” that is very different than learning about Confucianism. Learning about your

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<sup>34</sup> *Getting to Know Taiwan: Society* (Taipei, Taiwan: National Institute for Translation and Compilation, 1998). Accessed online at the *National Textbook Library Digital Archive*, [http://textbooklibrary.naer.edu.tw/index\\_en.html](http://textbooklibrary.naer.edu.tw/index_en.html).

country no longer meant learning about China, and how the Republic of China was the one true government of China. Now it meant learning about Taiwan, and all the accomplishments that the KMT and ROC had achieved on the island – from economic success to political success. These changes not only satisfied demands from opposition parties that wanted reform, but also helped legitimize Lee Teng-hui's regime and conception of the Taiwan state.

### *Language Reforms*

As discussed in the last chapter, one of the most successful aspects of Chiang Kai-shek's Sinicization policies was the imposition of Mandarin as the sole language of Taiwan. In the 1980s, the authoritarian approach to language policy began to fall apart. As other aspects of Taiwanese society began to reform, language policy needed to reform as well. The promotion of local languages can be seen as part of Lee Teng-hui's larger policy of Taiwanization. These new language policies, like education, re-imagined the Taiwan nation as a diverse, multi-cultural one. It emphasized locality, rather than ethnic oneness with mainland China.

When martial law ended in 1987, the media began to liberalize. TV stations began to air shows and the news in Taiwanese. Many DPP politicians also began to use Taiwanese in campaign speeches, while also running on platforms of bilingual education. In 1987, Chu Kao-chen, a prominent DPP member of the Legislative Yuan, used Hoklo to address a session. While this was considered very scandalous, it successfully pointed out the failure of the



KMT Mainlander elite to learn Taiwanese.<sup>35</sup> It provoked much discussion, and led to reforms in language policy. In 1987, the Taiwan Provincial Government's Department of Education (which is different from the Ministry of Education) relaxed rules surrounding the use of non-Mandarin languages in schools – students no longer incurred punishment for speaking languages other than Mandarin.<sup>36</sup>

Although Mandarin remains the primary language in Taiwan, the fact that the other languages are being embraced as part of Taiwan's culture is monumental. Once again, it reflects a change in how the state chooses to frame the Taiwan nation. By embracing languages other than Mandarin, the state is promoting a multi-cultural vision of Taiwan society. Furthermore, the use of Hakka, Hoklo, and various Aborigine languages makes Taiwan unique and distinct from Mainland China. This conception of the nation is in line with the conception that is put forth in history and geography textbooks.

### ***Part III: The DPP Takes Over – The Era of Chen Shui-bian (2000-2008)***

In 2000, the election of Chen Shui-bian as Taiwan's president represented Taiwan's first democratic regime change. Elected by a mere 39% of the vote, Chen Shui-bian was the first ruler of the Republic of China who was not a member of the KMT. Chen was a member of the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), known in Taiwan for its promotion of *de jure*

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<sup>35</sup> Henning Klöter, "Language Policy in the KMT and DPP Eras," *China Perspectives*, no. 56 (December 1, 2004): 5-7.

<sup>36</sup> A-Chin Hsiau, *Contemporary Taiwanese Cultural Nationalism*, (New York: Routledge, 2000), 133.

independence. However, when Chen was first elected, he announced what would come to be known as the “five nos.” He was firm that under his rule, Taiwan would not declare independence, he would not change the name of the Republic of China, he would not change the constitution to reflect the ROC and PRC as two separate states, he would not encourage a referendum on Taiwan’s status, and he would not abolish the National Unification Council or National Unification Guidelines.<sup>37</sup> Chen essentially agreed to abide by the definition of the state that Lee had set up. However, during the course of Chen’s regime, his views on the sovereignty of Taiwan became clearer. In 2002, he stated that Taiwan and the PRC were two countries on either side of the Strait.<sup>38</sup> Under his regime, bilateral discussions between the ROC and PRC halted. Although Chen never explicitly advocated for independence, his policies took Taiwanization further than it had gone during Lee’s administration. Under Chen, Taiwanization was combined with a process of de-Sinicization – removing the legacy of Chiang Kai-shek’s Sinicization policies. These de-Sinicization policies served to further emphasize the importance of Taiwan in constructing a Taiwanese nation. Through further education and language reforms, as well as a name rectification campaign, Chen continued reframing Taiwan as a nation.

### ***Education Reforms***

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<sup>37</sup> Hickey, *Foreign Policy Making in Taiwan*, 100.

<sup>38</sup> Shelley Rigger, “The Unfinished Business of Taiwan’s Democratization,” in *Dangerous Strait: The U.S. – Taiwan – China Crisis* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), 19.

The *Getting to Know Taiwan* curriculum that Lee Teng-hui implemented did not remain in place for long. In 2001, shortly after Chen Shui-bian was elected president, the MOE made further educational reforms. One of the key reforms was the alignment of the elementary and junior high school curriculums into one nine-year curriculum (elementary school is six years, and junior high school is three years in Taiwan). This change removed the *Getting to Know Taiwan* curriculum from grade 7. In its place was a new curriculum that distributed content about Taiwan across various subjects. Part of the new curriculum also made “Native Language” courses compulsory. From third grade through sixth grade, students are required to choose one homeland language (Hoklo, Hakka or various Aboriginal languages) to take for one to two hours a week. “Native Languages” ceased to be required in junior high schools, instead they are optional electives.<sup>39</sup>

The 2000s also saw the liberalization of education in Taiwan, an important step for framing Taiwan as a liberal-democratic state. Economic liberalization opened up production of textbooks to the private sector and encouraged market competition. The process of writing and compiling textbooks was separated from the assessment of textbooks, allowing non-governmental publishers to write textbooks as long as they were approved by the NICT. However, the government still publishes their own textbooks, and has final say on what is published and what is not. The MOE continues to

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<sup>39</sup> Bi-yu Chang, “From Taiwanisation to De-Sinification,” *China Perspectives*, no. 56 (December 1, 2004), <http://chinaperspectives.revues.org/438>.

publish curriculum guidelines. The role of the state in education has not been completely eradicated, but has been substantially lessened.

The continuation of the state's role in shaping education policy under Chen Shui-bian can be seen in a report issued in 2007 by the Ministry of Education. In July of 2007, the MOE lay out a plan for textbook publishers to revise over 5,000 terms in the textbooks. These changes caused large controversy, as many of them were seen as part of de-Sinicization. Ma Ying-jeou, who at the time was a presidential candidate, compared the plan to martial law.<sup>40</sup> The changes included referring to Sun Yat-sen as "Mr. Sun Yat-sen" rather than "the nation's founder Mr. Sun Yat-sen." The period of Japanese colonial rule was changed from "Japan occupied Taiwan" to "Japan administered Taiwan." References to things that were previously considered 'national', or assumed to be Chinese were amended to add "Chinese" in front. So, "in history" became "in Chinese history;" "ancient people" to "ancient Chinese people;" "national painting" to "Chinese landscape painting."<sup>41</sup> While the Minister of Education denied that these were de-Sinicization attempts, it seems clear that changes in terms were a reflection of Chen and his government's vision of Taiwan's state and history. By stripping Sun Yat-sen of the title of "Founding Father," the state was implicitly de-emphasizing the importance of the ROC. The addition of "Chinese" instead of "national" is a similar idea. National culture no longer assumes traditional Chinese culture.

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<sup>40</sup> Mo Yan-chi and Max Hirsch, "KMT Protests Textbook Changes," *Taipei Times*, July 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2007, <http://www.taipetimes.com/News/taiwan/archives/2007/07/22/2003370725/1>.

<sup>41</sup> "The Language in the New School Textbooks in Taiwan," *EastSouthWestNorth*, July 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2007, <http://www.zonaeuropa.com/200707.brief.htm#070>.

By distinguishing these things, Chen was distinguishing Taiwan from mainland China.

### ***Name Rectification Campaign***

The name rectification campaign was a policy of Chen's to de-Sinify the names of agencies, building, streets, and publications in Taiwan. Prior to 2000, many of Taiwan's official bureaus and agencies contained "China" in their names: the China Central Bank, China Printing Plant, China Central Trust, and China Central Mint were all agencies based in Taiwan. In 2003, the Executive Yuan removed "China" from the English names of all these agencies.<sup>42</sup> Prior to that, in 2002, Chen Shui-bian made the decision to add "Taiwan" onto passports issued on the island. Previously, passports were just printed with "Republic of China."<sup>43</sup> In 2003, the annual *Republic of China Yearbook* was renamed the *Taiwan Yearbook*. In 2007, Chunghwa Post Corp (Chunghwa refers to the Republic of China), the largest postal service company on the island was renamed the Taiwan Post Company.<sup>44</sup> Each act of replacing "China" with the "Taiwan" was a significant statement towards a re-definition of the Taiwan state. Chen was solidifying the fact that the Republic of China no longer claimed to be "Free China" or the one-true legitimate government of China, but that it was a sovereign nation-state in and of itself, separate from the mainland.

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<sup>42</sup> Wei-Chin Lee, "Taiwan's Cultural Reconstruction Movement: Identity Politics and Collective Action Since 2000," *Issues & Studies* 41, no. 1 (March 2005): 26.

<sup>43</sup> Duncan Hewitt, "Taiwan Passport Change Angers China," *BBC News*, January 13, 2002, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/1758230.stm>.

<sup>44</sup> "The Name-change Fever," *The China Post*, February 11<sup>th</sup>, 2007, <http://www.chinapost.com.tw/news/2007/02/11/102327/The-name-change.htm>.

De-Sinification in the name rectification campaign was not only limited to removing China from various agencies and institutions. It also was about removing the legacy of Chiang Kai-shek in various public spaces. Removing Chiang Kai-shek was not simply about redefining the Taiwan state, but it was also about redefining Taiwan's history. Many native Taiwanese activists argued that the glorification of Chiang Kai-shek in many public spaces was an inappropriate reading of Taiwan's history. Native Taiwanese activists had come of age under Chiang Kai-shek's brutal authoritarian regime, witnessing the 228 Incident and the White Terror. Under the KMT regime, any mention of these events was strictly banned. When the DPP and the Native elite came to power under Chen Shui-bian, there was a preoccupation with rewriting history. However, as Jeremy Taylor writes, "only by recognizing Chiang as a butcher and then removing hagiographic references to him in Taiwan's landscape could this new 'Taiwan history' be written."<sup>45</sup>

In re-writing Taiwan's history, these policies helped to re-imagine the Taiwan nation. This process of removing Chiang Kai-shek's legacy began under Lee Teng-hui, but accelerated under Chen Shui-bian. Under Lee Teng-hui, statues and portraits of Chiang Kai-shek that used to be omnipresent in buildings and schools were slowly removed. In 1996, the name of the road that ran directly in front of the Presidential Palace in Taipei was changed from Jieshou Road (meaning "Chiang Kai-shek's Longevity Road") to Ketagalan Boulevard.<sup>46</sup> Ketagalan is the name of the Aboriginal tribe that inhabited the

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<sup>45</sup> Jeremy E. Taylor, "QuJianghua: Disposing of and Re-appraising the Remnants of Chiang Kai-shek's Reign on Taiwan," *Journal of Contemporary History* 54, no. 1 (2010): 186.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, 188.

area where the city of Taipei now is. This not only symbolized a change in the personality cult that surrounded Chiang Kai-shek, but also symbolized an embracement of the multi-cultural aspects of Taiwan. By celebrating the aborigine tribes, the government was contesting the monolithic vision of Chinese culture that had been propagated prior to the 1990s.

In 2006, Chiang Kai-shek International Airport was officially renamed Taiwan Taoyuan International Airport.<sup>47</sup> Finally, in 2007, the most controversial name change happened. On May 19<sup>th</sup>, 2007, the Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Hall in downtown Taipei was officially renamed the National Taiwan Democracy Memorial Hall. This was significant for a number of reasons. It was a symbol in de-Sinicization and Taiwanization. While de-Sinification and Taiwanization are often equated, they are actually two different processes. De-Sinification refers to a removal of Chinese influence, while Taiwanization refers to a promotion of Taiwanese culture and influence. Renaming the Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Hall was part of a larger process of de-Sinifying and re-writing Taiwan's history. By naming it the National Taiwan Democracy Memorial Hall, the government was also celebrating Taiwan's status as a new democracy – something that set it apart from mainland China – a key aspect of Taiwan's nation building processes.

### ***Taiwanization: A Success?***

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<sup>47</sup> Jimmy Chuang, "Chiang Kai-shek' airport enters dustbin of history," *Taipei Times*, September 7<sup>th</sup>, 2006, <http://www.taipetimes.com/News/front/archives/2006/09/07/2003326501>.

Between 1975 and 2008, Taiwan changed from being an authoritarian one-party state, to a full-fledged democracy with a high degree of rule of law. Along with this transition to democracy came a new Taiwanese national identity. This new identity was implemented through a top-down approach. During this time, Taiwan's first democratically elected leaders – Lee Teng-hui and Chen Shui-bian – promoted a new vision of Taiwanese identity. Their visions of the state were translated into educational reforms, language reforms, and a name rectification campaign. These reforms all re-imagined the nation-state where Taiwan was the homeland, not China. This new vision of Taiwanese people saw Taiwanese as distinct from Chinese. Taiwan wasn't just a provincial or local identity anymore, it had become the national identity. Identity had come to encompass pride in the accomplishments of Taiwan, as well as its diverse ethnic groups.



## **Chapter Three: A New Middle Ground Under Ma Ying-jeou (2008-Present)**

In 2008, Ma Ying-jeou was elected president of the ROC , representing a return of power to the KMT as well as a return of rule by a mainlander. The most salient issue in the election was no longer national identity or questions of unification. Instead, the election focused largely on economics. Ma Ying-jeou and the rest of the KMT won in a landslide, based on a platform of improved economics, especially in relation to mainland China. The platform put forth by Ma Ying-jeou in 2008 has been implemented during his administration, and Ma's era has had important consequences for nation building in Taiwan.

Relations with the mainland had deteriorated under Chen Shui-bian and Ma's tenure as president can be seen as a rapprochement towards Mainland China. While this has mainly been exhibited in the economic sphere, it has also spilled over into the cultural and political spheres in Taiwan. Rather than seeing Taiwan as an independent entity from China, Ma Ying-jeou has framed Taiwan as part of the "Greater China" community. His nation building policies can best be understood as a middle ground between Sinicization and Taiwanization. Although his policies tend to lean more towards Sinicization than those of Lee Teng-hui or Chen Shui-bian, Ma has not completely reversed Taiwanization or rejected Taiwanese consciousness. Instead, he believes that while Taiwan is multi-cultural, its Chinese heritage is its main identity and thus should be emphasized.

Another way to look at Ma's framing of the nation is to see his policies as emphasizing both the ethnic and civic aspects of the ROC. He has two main ways of framing Taiwan as part of the larger "Greater China" community. First, Ma emphasizes the Republic of China and the ethnic Chinese nation's history, identity, culture, and symbols – as will be seen through his educational and cultural policies. Secondly, Ma has institutionalized cross-strait economic relations, with the goal of integrating Taiwan's economy into China's. These have served to legitimize Ma's vision of a new Taiwan identity. However, since 2008, the percentage of people who identify as Taiwanese has surpassed those who identify as both Taiwanese and Chinese.<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, the number of people who wish to move towards unification, either immediately or eventually, has also steadily decreased.

These developments beg the question, why have Ma Ying-jeou's policies been unsuccessful? This chapter first analyzes Ma's nation-state building attempts, explaining why Ma decided to undergo these policies and what the results have been. As has been the case in the two other phases of nation building, Ma's policies are largely a response to his vision of the Taiwan state and its relationship with mainland China. I also argue that Ma's policies have been unsuccessful because they were driven not by exogenous shocks, as Lee's shift was, but by his own personal views and his party's agenda. This has interesting implication for the role of nation building in shaping national identity.

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<sup>1</sup> Election Study Center, National Chengchi University, *Taiwanese/Chinese Identification Trend Distribution in Taiwan (1992/06~2014/12)*, (Taipei, Taiwan, 2014), <http://esc.nccu.edu.tw/course/news.php?Sn=166>.

### ***Political Developments under Ma: Improved Cross-Strait Relations***

In 2008, Ma Ying-jeou won the election for presidency based on an economic-centered campaign. For the first time, national identity was no longer the valence issue. The people of Taiwan had become disillusioned by the highly ideological, independence-minded regime of Chen Shui-bian. During the campaign season, Ma and the KMT focused on the lack of pragmatism and progress made in cross-strait relations that Chen had, especially in the economic sphere. Ma promised to institutionalize cross-strait relations to encourage integration between two sides of the strait, but to win the election, he also had to cater to the majority of Taiwanese citizens' opinions on unification.<sup>2</sup> As most Taiwanese believed in the status quo, Ma made sure to emphasize what are now known as the “three nos” throughout his campaign: no unification, no independence, and no war.<sup>3</sup> The “three nos” have continued to be a hallmark of his presidency. It was on this platform – economics first, and reducing tensions with the mainland by maintaining the status quo on questions of the nation and the state – that Ma and the KMT were able to secure victory in both the Presidential and Legislative Yuan elections of 2008.

The 2008 election set the pattern for Ma's strategy of finding a middle ground between Sinicization and Taiwanization. Although he leaned toward accommodating China, Ma was firm on not seeking unification – a very

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<sup>2</sup> Kerry Dumbaugh, *Taiwan's 2008 Presidential Election* (CRS Report No. RS22853) (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service, 2008), <https://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RS22853.pdf>.

<sup>3</sup> Baohui Zhang, “Taiwan's New Grand Strategy,” *Journal of Contemporary China* 20, no. 69 (2011): 269.

different approach to cross-strait relations than either Chiang Kai-shek or Chiang Ching-kuo's.

Ma Ying-jeou's 2008 Inaugural Address also reflects his view of Taiwan as a part of larger China. He emphasizes Taiwan's status as an ethnic Chinese nation. He spends much of his speech discussing the Republic of China, including its founding and regime on the mainland. He sees this history deeply integrated with the history of Taiwan. This view of history is driven by Ma's personal experience. As he stated in his speech, Ma was born in Hong Kong to KMT refugees. His family moved to Taiwan soon after, where Ma Ying-jeou was raised. He was educated under Chiang Kai-shek's Sinicization policies and raised by mainlander parents. Thus, Ma has a strong personal attachment to the Republic of China, a fact that sets him apart from his immediate predecessors. This personal history is reflected in his speech.

As promised in his campaign, Ma spends much of his speech discussing the importance of economic cooperation. He believes that economic relations with neighboring countries are crucial for Taiwan to better integrate itself into East Asia. However, Ma Ying-jeou does recognize Taiwan's successes. He praises Taiwan's civil society and democratic processes. He values the "Taiwan Spirit." He refers to the homeland as Taiwan, Penghu, Kinmen, and Matsu, leaving out the mainland. Thus, even in Ma's first inauguration speech, he emphasizes his middle ground position between Sinicization and Taiwanization.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Ma Ying-jeou, "2008 Inaugural Address: Taiwan's Renaissance," *China Post*, May 21, 2008, <http://www.chinapost.com.tw/taiwan/national/national-news/2008/05/21/157332/Full-text.htm>.

Another important thing that was mentioned in Ma's Inaugural Address and many subsequent speeches was his acceptance of the 1992 Consensus. The 1992 consensus reaffirmed Taiwan's adherence to the "one China" principle – that both the mainland and Taiwan are part of China – but maintains that the entities on the opposite sides of the strait had a different opinion on the meaning of "one China". The PRC maintained that "one China" was the PRC government, and that unification with Taiwan would occur under the "one country, two systems" model that was used for the return of Hong Kong and Macao to PRC control.<sup>5</sup> Meanwhile, the ROC believed that the two sides could only reunify under the Republic of China and the Three Principles of the People. Although this consensus was reached under Lee Teng-hui's presidency, both Lee's and Chen Shui-bian's administrations veered away from the 1992 Consensus. From the beginning of Ma Ying-jeou's presidency, he has reaffirmed his belief in the 1992 Consensus, and believes that Taiwan's policies should align with it.

Ma Ying-jeou quickly began normalizing cross-Strait relations after he was sworn into office. In late 2008, negotiations between Taiwan's Straits Exchange Foundation and Beijing's Association for Relations Across the Taiwan Strait (ARATS) began for the first time in almost a decade.<sup>6</sup> The benefits of the re-opened negotiations appeared quickly. On December 5<sup>th</sup>, 2008 three economic links between Taiwan and mainland China were

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<sup>5</sup> Richard C. Bush, *Untying the Knot: Making Peace in the Taiwan Strait* (Washington, D. C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2005), 41.

<sup>6</sup> Dennis V. Hickey, "Rapprochement between Taiwan and the Chinese Mainland: Implications for American Foreign Policy," *Journal of Contemporary China* 20, no. 69 (2011): 237.

established. For the first time in 50 years, direct flights, maritime shipping, and postal services were allowed between the two sides of the Taiwan Strait.<sup>7</sup> While economics cooperation had been going on since Chiang Ching-kuo opened up trade in the late 1980s, this was the first time that the trade was institutionalized. This was a huge symbolic step for Taiwan and Ma Ying-jeou. It demonstrated President Ma's desire to cooperate with Beijing on closer economic links. These direct links allowed mainland tourists to visit Taiwan for the first time, which has proved to be a dynamic boost to Taiwan's tourism industry – in 2013, nearly 4 million tourists from the mainland visited Taiwan, more than double the amount that visited in 2009.<sup>8</sup>

In 2009, Ma lifted the ban on the mainland investments in Taiwan, allowing mainland Chinese companies to invest on the island.<sup>9</sup> Another major change in cross-Strait economic links was the signing of the Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement (ECFA) between Taiwan and mainland China in 2010. The ECFA is a free trade agreement that cut tariffs on many Taiwanese products and Chinese items.<sup>10</sup> The ECFA was a very delayed institutionalization of cross-Strait economic ties. By the late 1990s, mainland China had surpassed the U.S. as Taiwan's largest trade partner. When introduced, the ECFA, like most policies in Taiwan, stirred up a raucous controversy. The KMT justified the ECFA by claiming that signing an

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<sup>7</sup> Elena Atanassova-Cornelis, "Shifting Domestic Politics and Security Policy in Japan and Taiwan: The Search for a Balancing Strategy between China and the US," *Asia-Pacific Review* 20, no. 1 (2013): 66.

<sup>8</sup> Republic of China Tourism Bureau, *Visitor Arrivals by Year*, Taipei, Taiwan, 2014. [http://admin.taiwan.net.tw/statistics/year\\_en.aspx?no=15](http://admin.taiwan.net.tw/statistics/year_en.aspx?no=15).

<sup>9</sup> Jianwei Wang, "Is the Honeymoon Over? Progress and Problems in Cross-Strait Relations," *American Foreign Policy Interests* 32, no. 3 (2010): 150.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 166.

agreement with China would allow Taiwan to sign more free trade agreements with other nations.<sup>11</sup> However, the DPP opposition feared that the ECFA was just another way for Taiwan to become more subject to China growing power. In the end, the ECFA was passed.

Under Ma, cross-strait economic interaction has nearly doubled. In 2013, \$196 billion USD worth of goods were traded between Taiwan and the mainland.<sup>12</sup> However, most of this trade has been the result of Taiwanese companies investing in China. In 2010, Taiwanese companies invested \$13.3 billion in China – a 119.8% increase from 2009<sup>13</sup> – but investments in Taiwan have dropped. Furthermore, Chinese investments in Taiwan since 2008 only represent 0.5% of what Taiwanese investments in China have been.<sup>14</sup> While there are a variety of reasons that Taiwan firms have invested more in mainland China than mainland Chinese firms have invested in Taiwan, these numbers do indicate Taiwan's increasing economic reliance on China. However, the DPP arguments that this will lead to reunification seem exaggerated. Increasing economic reliance does not mean increasing political reliance. Nevertheless, this policy still shows Ma's clear re-orientation of Taiwan into the greater China community.

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<sup>11</sup> Ko Shu-ling and Lisa Wang, "ECFA 'just the beginning': Ma," *Taipei Times*, January 22, 2010, <http://www.taipetimes.com/News/front/archives/2010/01/22/2003464111/1>.

<sup>12</sup> Austin Ramzy, "China and Taiwan Hold First Direct Talks Since '49," *The New York Times*, February 11, 2014, <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/02/12/world/asia/china-and-taiwan-hold-first-official-talks-since-civil-war.html>.

<sup>13</sup> Frank Muyard, "Taiwanese National Identity, Cross-Strait Economic Interaction, and the Integration Paradigm," in *National Identity and Economic Interest*, ed. Peter C. Y. Chow (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 177.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 178.

In 2013, Taiwan's SEF and China's ARATS signed a follow-up agreement to the ECFA. The Cross-Strait Services Trade Agreement (CCSTA) would further lower trade barriers between Taiwan and China. 80 sectors of China's economy would now be open to Taiwanese investment, and 64 sectors of Taiwan's economy to Chinese investments. These sectors were all in the service industry, including things such as hotels, tourism, printing, and medical services.<sup>15</sup> Ma and the KMT claimed that the CCSTA, like the ECFA that preceded it, would prove a huge boost to the economy, even though the state-run Chung Hua Institute for Economic Research estimated that it would only bring about a 0.025-0.034% increase in Taiwan's GDP.<sup>16</sup> Like the ECFA, the signing of the CCSTA represented a reorientation toward China, especially economically. Also like the ECFA, the signing of the CCSTA created much controversy. However, the CCSTA wasn't just signed into law by Ma Ying-jeou. The CCSTA ignited a series of student protests, now called the "Sunflower Movement."

When the CCSTA was drafted, legislators in the Legislative Yuan had agreed to a detailed review of the pact. However, on March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2014, the KMT legislators passed the pact, skipping over the promised (and constitutionally stipulated) clause-by-clause review. The next day, students began occupying the Legislature to protest the speedy passing of the pact. They argued that Ma and the KMT had violated their right to have the pact

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<sup>15</sup> Ian Rowen, "Inside Taiwan's Sunflower Movement: Twenty-Four Days in a Student-Occupied Parliament, and the Future of the Region," *The Journal of Asian Studies* 74, no. 1 (February 2015): 6.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*



reviewed.<sup>17</sup> They also reechoed sentiments of Taiwan being too closely integrated into China. It is interesting to note that Taiwanese identity is strongest among the youth in Taiwan. The students who occupied the Legislature were not only fighting for democracy and the rule of law, but also for the maintenance of a Taiwanese identity, separate from China's. In a profound moment of civic engagement and political participation, the students occupied the Legislative Yuan building for almost a month. The occupation ended when the Legislative Yuan's speaker, Wang Jin-pyng, offered a concession to the students. He offered a bill that would be approved by constitutional means and would have closer oversight over the proposed trade pact.<sup>18</sup> To date, the CCSTA has not been passed by the Legislative Yuan.

When Ma Ying-jeou took office, many people believed that closer economic integration with China would lead to closer political integration. The best example of this theory comes from the experience of the European Union.<sup>19</sup> In fact, this theory can be used to justify Ma's economic leaning towards China. After all, he does believe in eventual unification between the two sides of the Strait. However, Ma's policies have arguably created further political divides between China and Taiwan. There are a number of reasons for this. Some theories suggest that increased interaction with China and Chinese has allowed people to experience first-hand the cultural differences that exist between the two sides of the Taiwan Strait – from accents to

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<sup>17</sup> Austin Ramzy, "As Numbers Swell, Students Pledge to Continue Occupying Taiwan's Legislature," *The New York Times*, March 22, 2014, <http://sinosphere.blogs.nytimes.com>.

<sup>18</sup> Austin Ramzy, "Concession Offered, Taiwan Group to End Protest of China Trade Pact," *The New York Times*, April 7<sup>th</sup>, 2014, <http://www.nytimes.com/>.

<sup>19</sup> Frank Muyard, "Taiwanese National Identity, Cross-Strait Economic Interaction, and the Integration Paradigm," 175.

cultural norms. Another part of the story is the disconnect between economics and politics. Public opinion polls in Taiwan show extreme dissatisfaction of Ma Ying-jeou as a leader, including his economic policies. When people are asked about the economy (devoid of any mention of Ma), support rises substantially.<sup>20</sup> This indicates that in Taiwan, people are able to separate economics and politics. Nevertheless, it is important to understand how Ma believes in the link between economics and politics, and in the role that economic integration with China can play in Taiwan's identity.

### ***Education Reform***

When Ma Ying-jeou took office, part of his plan was to further reform the education system in Taiwan. In August of 2010, a two-day conference was held to discuss the future of Taiwan's education system. It was the first conference of the sort to be held in 16 years. A number of reforms in history and language education were decided upon during this conference. In September of 2010, the Ministry of Education (MOE) unveiled a new high school curriculum. In this curriculum, the class time spent teaching Chinese history increased 50%. Prior to the change, high school students spent one semester studying Taiwanese history, followed with one semester of Chinese history, and ending with two semester of world history. The reforms proposed cutting down time spent on world history and increasing time spent studying Chinese history. Now, both Chinese history and world history would be taught

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<sup>20</sup> [http://home.tvbs.com.tw/poll\\_center?&q=&qy=92&qm=0](http://home.tvbs.com.tw/poll_center?&q=&qy=92&qm=0)

for 1.5 semesters.<sup>21</sup> Furthermore, some content of the textbooks were changed. Taiwan's history was traced back further than ever – to China's Three Kingdom period. This meant that Taiwan history was taught in the context of Chinese history – it was seen through the same lens. National history no longer meant looking at things through the lens of Taiwan; Taiwan's history was once again seen through the lens of China, as it had been under Chiang Kai-shek and Chiang Ching-kuo. The MOE justified the changes by saying that students needed to “understand their own cultural roots and help create a sense of self-recognition.”<sup>22</sup> Clearly, there was a re-orientation towards a Sino-centric vision of identity.

In February of 2011, Ma unveiled another education plan that put Taiwan in the context of Greater China. It was announced that the Four Books, the canonical texts of Confucianism, would become a compulsory subject in Chinese classes for High School students.<sup>23</sup> These texts are written in Classical Chinese, which is quite different than modern, colloquial Chinese, thus increasing the amount of time that students would have to spend mastering classical Chinese, a skill that is now considered obsolete. However, the Ministry of Education did not justify re-introducing the texts to encourage improvement in language skills. Instead, the Vice Minister of Education claimed that the policy change was needed as a system of moral education. The Vice Minister of Education brought up a recent surge in social problems

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<sup>21</sup> Vincent Y. Chao, “DPP lawmakers slam ‘revisionist’ history curriculum,” *Taipei Times*, September 14<sup>th</sup>, 2010, <http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/front/archives/2010/09/14/2003482855>.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>23</sup> Chang Bing-yang, “Confucian works back on teaching curriculum,” *Taipei Times*, February 8<sup>th</sup>, 2011, <http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/editorials/archives/2011/02/20/2003496324>.

like bullying and gang violence to justify the re-introduction of the texts.<sup>24</sup> This indicates a belief in Ma's government that Taiwanese society should be governed by traditional Chinese morals. Furthermore, it imagined traditional Chinese culture as an important part of building Taiwanese society. The introduction of these texts into the high school curriculum is reminiscent of the moral education policies under Chiang Kai-shek.

In 2012, the MOE formally unveiled a new education plan that stipulated for 12 years of compulsory education, beginning in 2014. With this came a new set of curriculum guidelines for high schools textbooks. Once again, these slight changes made to the curriculum caused controversy. The MOE decided to revise textbooks for history, geography, and Chinese literature classes – generally the most controversial subjects. Critics claimed that the textbooks represented a further re-orientation from a Taiwan-centric view to a Chinese-centric view. This time, the critiques were directed at the actual content of the material – not just the changes in subjects being taught. Among some of the more controversial changes included referring to the period where Taiwan was a colony of Japan as “Japanese Colonial Rule” instead of “the Period of Japanese Administration.” The textbooks also refer to Taiwan being “returned” to China after the Sino-Japanese War, calling it the “glorious retrocession.” Many of the changes were reversals of changes that Chen's regime had made, as discussed in the last chapter.

While these may seem like insignificant changes, they once again indicate that Taiwan is fundamentally a part of China. DPP activists have

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

claimed that these changes infringe on Taiwan's sovereignty, while the KMT refers to the changes as merely reflecting historical fact. Which side is "correct" depends on one's view of Chinese and Taiwanese history, and Taiwan's place in the world. The textbooks also refer to the PRC as "mainland China," instead of just "China," indicating a difference between the two terms. The "White Terror" has been changed to the "abuse of government power." These small changes all reflect a different vision of Taiwan and Taiwan's history that Chen Shui-bian's policies had put forth. Regardless of which side is representing history more accurately, it is undeniable that Ma and his government have leaned towards seeing Taiwan as a part of China, and a more lenient vision of the KMT's authoritarian past.<sup>25</sup>

Language policies have also seen reform under Ma. In 2013, the Ministry of Education announced that native language courses would be compulsory in junior high school as early as 2016 (such courses are already compulsory in elementary schools). Currently, native language courses – which include Taiwanese, Hakka, and Aborigine languages – are optional in junior high. This was celebrated as Ma embracing Taiwan's multi-cultural heritage. However, in 2014, when the final version of new curriculum standards was released, local languages turned out to be not compulsory. While not a step backwards in embracing Taiwan's multi-cultural heritage, as native languages are still compulsory in elementary schools, it is not a step

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<sup>25</sup> Alison Hsiao, "History professors slam ministry, textbook changes," *Taipei Times*, January 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2014, <http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/taiwan/archives/2014/01/22/2003581859>.  
Loa Iok-Sin and Jack Chung, "Ministry approves new 'brainwashing' curriculum," *Taipei Times*, January 28<sup>th</sup>, 2014, <http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/front/archives/2014/01/28/2003582309>.

forward either. Ma's government still prioritizes ROC ethnic Chinese history and culture above all else.

Just in the last two months, debates over the new textbook changes have reemerged. Although the government has not announced any changes to the curriculum since 2014, the textbooks are meant to be implemented in August of this year. Thus, the DPP and student activists continue protesting, hoping to prevent the changes from occurring.<sup>26</sup>

### *Re-rectifying Names*

When Ma Ying-jeou became President, he set out to reverse some of the more controversial de-Sinicization policies of Chen Shui-bian. For example, he reversed some of the changes in names of public spaces and institutions that Chen had implemented. In 2008, the Executive Yuan changed the name of the "Taiwan Democracy Hall" back to the "Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Hall" But they maintained the name of Liberty Square, which is at the main entrance to the memorial hall. The annual *Taiwan Yearbook* also reverted to being titled the *Republic of China Yearbook*. In 2008, Ma changed the name of the largest postal service back to Chunghwa Postal Co.<sup>27</sup> However, he did not reverse all of Chen's changes. Taipei's main international airport remains Taipei Taoyuan International Airport. The presidential building still resides on Ketagalan Boulevard. Ma's policies have once again sought out a middle ground between Taiwanization and Sinicization.

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<sup>26</sup> The *Taipei Times* has been covering the events

<sup>27</sup> Yeh, three waves

## ***Conclusion***

A Taiwanese identity has risen steadily in the last 20 years, and it does not seem to be declining any time soon. As president of Taiwan, Ma Ying-jeou's Sino-centric policies are in stark contrast to public opinion polls. While he has tried to emphasize Taiwan as belonging to the greater Chinese nation, especially in economics, the percentage of people who identify as both Chinese and Taiwanese has reached its lowest point ever recorded under his reign. In fact, in 2008, the percentage of people who identify as Taiwanese surpassed the percentage of people who identified as both Taiwanese and Chinese for the first time.<sup>28</sup> There is no one underlying explanation for the simultaneous rise of Taiwanese identity and the failure of Ma to inculcate his vision of Taiwanese identity. However, a couple of issues are worth exploring.

First, Ma's shift in policies did not come at a time of political crisis, as Lee Teng-hui's did. To stay in power, Lee had to make changes. Ma, on the other hand, was not driven to change because of crises. Instead, he implemented policies simply because of his personal views as a mainlander and his party's ideology. This lack of necessity may explain the lack of success.

Secondly, as Taiwan has democratized and liberalized, more opportunities for national identity expression (separate from the state) have arisen. Under Chiang Kai-shek, almost all facets of society reflected his vision of the Taiwanese nation. There was no freedom of the press, no interaction with mainland China, and no dissident voices. As Taiwan has democratized,

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<sup>28</sup> Election Study Center, *Taiwanese/Chinese Identification Trend Distribution in Taiwan*

the opposition has become more and more vocal. In Lee, Chen, and Ma's regime, changes in things such as the textbook terms inevitably sparked controversy. This controversy allows other opinions to be heard. People no longer only have access to the state's vision of identity, which may contribute to the failure in Ma's policies in instigating change.

Regardless of Ma's success and failures, it is interesting to see how his policies differed from his predecessors. He has re-oriented Taiwan towards China, both economically and culturally.



## **Conclusion: The Future of Taiwan?**

This thesis traces the development of an elite-driven vision of Taiwanese national identity. I identify three key periods in Taiwanese national identity: Sinicization, Taiwanization, and a middle ground sought by Ma Ying-jeou.

Under Chiang Kai-shek and martial law, Taiwan was framed as a part of China. As the Republic of China began to lose its legitimacy in the international realm, they were forced to find a new source of legitimacy. I argue that the ROC found its new source of legitimacy in creating a new nation – the Taiwan nation. This process begun under Lee Teng-hui, and continued under Chen Shui-bian. During the Taiwanization process, there was a newfound emphasis on the importance of Taiwan as the homeland. As the nation democratized, a civic nationalism also developed. What's interesting about this civic nationalism is that it was grounded in the Republic of China. Thus, while some people refer to Lee and Chen's eras as De-Sinicization, I believe Taiwanization is a more accurate term. Lee and Chen did not reject *all* traces of Chiang Kai-shek's nation. Instead, they re-emphasized the focus of the nation to be Taiwan-centered, rather than China-centered.

When Ma Ying-jeou was elected as president, he sought a new middle ground between Chiang Kai-shek and Lee Teng-hui/Chen Shui-bian. Like Lee and Chen, he was unable to erase the legacies of his predecessors. After all, the concept of a "Taiwan nation" had grown immensely popular.

Furthermore, he had to orient in the context of a democratic regime. Thus, Ma's reorientation of Taiwan has come mainly in the form of economic policies. Ma has advocated for greater economic integration with China. When Ma was first elected, people believed that his policies of economic integration would lead to greater political integration between the two sides. While there has been a marked improvement in cross-strait relations, this has not led to any sort of political integration. Taiwanese identity has actually steadily *risen* under Ma. This points to the difficulty of imposing a national identity through cultural policies in a democratic regime, especially when the issue is so divided.

Where does this leave the future of Taiwan? This thesis highlights the drastic changes in state formation, nation building, and national identity that Taiwan has undergone. However, these processes are still not complete in Taiwan. Just a month ago, controversies surrounding changes in history textbooks re-arose. It seems as if every month there is a new debate in Taiwan surrounding national identity. Last month it was textbook changes. In March of 2014, it was about changes in economic policy. Identity in Taiwan remains a contentious issue, and is continuously evolving. How the government responds to issues of nation building is largely dependent on its definition of the state. The definition of the Taiwanese state, in turn, as recent years has shown, is becoming largely dependent on which political party is in power.

In 2016, Taiwan will hold its sixth democratic presidential election. Judging by the crushing defeat the KMT faced in the 2014 mid-term elections, it is likely that another change in power will happen. If a DPP candidate is

elected for president, what does this mean for the future of Taiwan's nation building and national identity? Will a DPP candidate try to change textbook terms *again*, back to what Chen Shui-bian had implemented? It seems likely. But, is this sustainable? Can Taiwan really continue vacillating between vastly different conceptions of its nationhood? These are the questions that remain to be answered. Only through a continued study of Taiwan's state formation, nation building, and national identity formation processes can we perhaps reach a conclusion as to what it means to be Taiwanese.

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