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TAIWANESE NATION-BUILDING AND THE UNIFICATION DEBATE

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ABSTRACT

This thesis explores the evolution of Taiwanese identity from the early 17th century through the present. It examines how successive foreign occupation of Taiwan influenced the development of the unique Taiwanese national and cultural identity. The project also examines how Taiwan became connected to China, and how the Chinese and the Taiwanese interpret historical events to assert their claims of sovereignty and independence. I posit that a unique national and cultural identity has developed on Taiwan between the early 17th century and the present. This identity is independent, yet strongly linked to Mainland China but its expression was often violently repressed. From 1945 through 1987 the Kuomintang (KMT), the Nationalist party that came from Mainland China occupied Taiwan under martial law. The Kuomintang ended martial law in 1987 and started to democratize Taiwan. As a result of this foreign occupation and the strong ethnic and cultural ties to Mainland China, the question concerning Taiwanese national identity is whether it is a part of China or whether it is its own nation. I argue that since 1987, the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) of Taiwan has accelerated the development of a national Taiwanese identity that is independent of China by acting as a mouthpiece for the movement. The DPP thus brought Taiwanese out of the shadows from where it was suppressed by KMT martial law, but it was ultimately unsuccessful in bringing about an accompanying desire for de jure Taiwanese independence among the majority of voters largely due to the extra-political forces of geopolitics.

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Introduction

Is Taiwan Chinese? The deceptively simple title of Melissa J. Brown's book on the impact of culture, power, and migration on changing identities in Taiwan is what prompted this research paper. There is much debate on the topic of whether Taiwan is Chinese or not. This is often referred to as the 'unification debate'. Before looking into the complexities it is important to introduce the different sides of the debate and explain the terminology.

When considering the terms 'Taiwan' and 'China' both terms have a political and geographic definition. Taiwan used to be the name for an island off the southeast coast of China close to Fujian province and thus the name for a geographic location. Nowadays however it is also synonymous with the political entity the 'Republic of China' (ROC). The Republic of China's territory includes the island of Taiwan and a small chain of outlying islands. It is separate from Mainland China. Throughout this paper the terms Taiwan and ROC will be used interchangeably.

Mainland China is officially named the People's Republic of China (PRC) which encompasses all of China. The PRC is also known simply as China, or Mainland China. While there is much debate as to whether the political entity 'China' includes Taiwan, in this paper when the term China is used it does not include Taiwan.

Further there is an ongoing conflict between the ROC and the PRC as to whether or not Taiwan is a part of China. The PRC claims that the main island of Taiwan and its outlying islands fall under PRC sovereign territory and that the ROC as a whole is a province of the PRC. The ROC has set up its government on the island of Taiwan since 1949 and it claims sovereignty over the island as well. In addition, before the ROC lost its diplomatic recognition in the United Nations in 1971, the ROC claimed (and some political factions on Taiwan still claim to this day) sovereignty over the entirety of Mainland China and posits that the ROC is the legitimate government of all of China. To avoid confusion between

the Republic of China and the People's Republic of China, the ROC is often referred to in the news and in the international arena simply as Taiwan. What is unique about the situation in Taiwan is that while Taiwanese independence has never been formally declared, the ROC on Taiwan has enjoyed de facto independence since 1949. This de facto independence has manifested itself in Taiwan having a democratically elected government, its own military and by the fact that since the nationalists fled from the Mainland to Taiwan in 1949, the PRC has had no say in Taiwanese affairs. In addition, the ROC used to be recognized in the international community as the 'real' China, as seen by their status in the United Nations. The PRC on the other hand before 1971 was not recognized by the United Nations. When diplomatic recognition switched from the ROC to the PRC, this downgraded the ROC's political status to the ambiguous status quo. In the current situation the ROC has very limited diplomatic ties and does not have embassies or consulates in most countries. Instead private companies such as the 'American Institute of Taiwan' provide diplomatic services and Taiwan does retain trade relations with many nations. Its lack of diplomatic recognition largely restricts Taiwan from engaging in a meaningful way in the international community.

There are dissenting opinions in Taiwan as to the status of the ROC. Many Taiwanese politicians argue that Taiwan already has de facto independence and that this is sufficient. Others argue that Taiwan still needs to formally declare independence. There are also politicians who argue that Taiwan is a part of China and that the Taiwanese government is the legitimate government of all of China. Still others favor the point of view that Taiwan is a PRC province that should integrate with the Mainland.

As can be seen from this very brief description, the deceptively simple question posed by Melissa Brown is not as simple as it looks. The successive colonial regimes that imposed their culture, and in some cases language and values on the Aborigine Taiwanese influenced the development of a Taiwanese identity. The many waves of Han Chinese immigration from the Mainland to the island of Taiwan greatly changed the ethnic composition of Taiwan and thus changed the very meaning of what it meant to be Taiwanese. Furthermore the increasing geopolitical importance and economic development of Taiwan all

influenced the development of a Taiwanese identity. To this day economic incentives and economic ties still have a strong impact on how Taiwanese view the unification debate.

The factor most complicating the debate of whether Taiwan is Chinese or not, is that there is no domestic consensus on this issue in Taiwan. I posit that there are so many divergent opinions on this issue within the ROC because Taiwan's national identity has been forced underground and suppressed for centuries by foreign occupation, and because of major changes to the ethnic composition of Taiwan. This has strongly influenced the development of the Taiwanese identity. Furthermore, the expression of this unique national and cultural identity has been violently repressed by both colonizers of Taiwan as well as by the Nationalist party through martial law. Nowadays the perceived military threat from Mainland China as well as strong economic ties between the PRC and the ROC still influence the expression of the Taiwanese identity. There are also other factors besides identity that can influence people's views on the issue such as money and political power. The main one focused on in this paper however is identity. Since 1987 the distinct Taiwanese cultural identity that had already been developing on Taiwan since before 1949 was given a voice as a result of efforts by the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP). The DPP became the mouthpiece for the demographic that supported the strengthening of the Taiwanese national identity and the declaration of Taiwanese de jure independence. As a result, the unification debate became more polarized since the faction supporting formal Taiwanese independence was finally given a voice. This was different compared to the period of martial law when the KMT government suppressed calls for legal independence.

When looking at the concept of identity, I have selected four categories of identity to encompass how the concept of identity is examined in this paper: ethnic, cultural, political and national identity. I used the term 'ethnic identity' to refer to how people self-identify as belonging to a group of people with a shared ancestry. In the case of Taiwan this relates to self-identification as Han Chinese, Aborigine or a mix of Han Chinese and Aborigine. The mix of Aborigine and Han Chinese ancestry is seen as some to be a unique 'Taiwanese' ethnicity, although this view is not very prevalent. Since over 98% of Taiwanese

are of Han Chinese descent, the shared Han ancestry that Taiwanese share with Mainland Chinese is a large factor linking the Taiwanese and Chinese cultural and national identities, rather than a point of contention between the two national entities.

Cultural identity refers to the habits, customs, arts, social institutions, and achievements of the Taiwanese people. While the development of a Taiwanese cultural identity was suppressed by the Japanese occupation from 1895 through 1945 and by KMT martial law from 1949 to 1987, after the lifting of martial law DPP efforts have made large strides in developing a unique Taiwanese cultural identity. These efforts have emphasized the shared experiences, habits, language, arts, social institutions and achievements of the Taiwanese people. The development of a unique Taiwanese cultural identity is related to the ‘desinicization’ of Taiwan, meaning the removal of the distinctly Chinese cultural aspects in Taiwan. A strong cultural identity is thus strongly linked to the desire for a strong national identity. ‘Desinicization’ of Taiwan does not mean that all Chinese cultural practices are removed. Some practices, such as religion were distinctly Chinese and have come from the Mainland. Examples are the practicing of Buddhism and Taoism. These practices came from the Mainland but have been largely restricted since the communist victory of the Chinese Civil War in 1949. Therefore the ‘desinicization’ of Taiwan does not refer necessarily refer to the removal of all Chinese elements of society, but instead the selective removal of certain cultural elements or practices in order to emphasize the difference in Taiwanese and Mainland Chinese culture.

Political identity refers to the activities associated with the governance of Taiwan and how the Taiwanese wish their government to function. Successive foreign occupiers of Taiwan have imposed their own form of governance on the island. However, during the Japanese occupation local elections were introduced. This limited form of democracy was important in the development of a Taiwanese political identity. Democracy and self-determination are some of the few issues that truly have bipartisan support in contemporary Taiwanese politics. The forming of a political identity in Taiwan thus refers to the

changes Taiwanese wish to see in how their political system operates, an example is for instance the passing of the Referendum Law in 2003 by the DPP.

The last facet of identity I refer to is national identity. I define the concept of national identity to refer to the desire for nationhood. In Taiwan this concept of national identity translates into the desire for de jure independence. Strongly related to a Taiwanese national identity is a Taiwanese cultural identity. The more Taiwanese people identify with a unique Taiwanese culture, the more likely they are to see Taiwan as a truly separate nation from China. Thus as the Taiwanese cultural identity gets stronger this leads to the stronger the desire for Taiwanese de jure independence. These issues are intricately connected since the unification debate and the question of Taiwanese independence is strongly linked to the cultural identity issue of whether the people of Taiwan identify as Chinese or Taiwanese. Views on this the part of the Taiwanese identity are in flux since there is no consensus as to whether the majority of Taiwanese want Taiwan to be its own sovereign nation or if it should be a part of China. It is however likely that this will remain in flux indefinitely since there is no end point in the development of any type of identity. Identity is a construct that is constantly evolving.

Looking at identity more generally however, identity is a social and cultural construct that is constantly changing. Therefore it is normal that no 'fixed' national identity has formed on Taiwan. Taiwan's national identity is however unstable in the sense that there is no consensus as to whether or not it is its own sovereign nation. This is different from other democracies such as the United States. For instance when looking at the United States, it has existed as a sovereign nation since 1776 and thus has been independent for approximately 239 years. I would argue it is safe to say that the vast majority of American citizens overtly self-identify as 'American'. While there are many people who identify as 'Chinese American', 'Japanese American' or 'Italian American' (as well as many other such classifications) the common denominator in their identity is American. This has however not developed on Taiwan. Since 1945 more and more people have started to self-identify as Taiwanese, but in 2014 just slightly over 60% of the population identified as Taiwanese. There are many factors such as the perceived

PRC military threat, the balance of political power and economic benefits, Han ancestry and shared ethnic ties and others that all impact Taiwanese people's decisions of whether Taiwan is part of China or not. This paper thus explores how the Taiwanese national identity has been influenced and how this has affected the Taiwanese views on the unification debate.

Concerning the unification debate there are three possible outcomes. The first is unification. At first, when the KMT fled from the Mainland to the island of Taiwan in 1949 and up through 1971 when Taiwan retained its seat in the United Nations, there was debate as to whether unification meant unification on Taiwanese or on PRC terms. Nowadays due to the strong military imbalance in China's favor and due to their overwhelmingly large population it is more likely that unification would be on PRC terms. For instance, as reported by the *Taipei Times* in 2010 when comparing the Chinese and Taiwanese military, the PRC has a standing army of 2.3 million soldiers, while the ROC has only 130,000. Furthermore, China has almost 7x more tanks, 5 times as many artillery weapons, more than 4 times as many fighter jets, more than 28 times the amount of bomber planes and its Navy is also more than 4 times as large. Perhaps the largest military imbalance is that the PRC has nuclear weapons. This large military imbalance makes it unlikely that independence or unification would be on ROC terms, since China has the military might to enforce its will.¹ Independence is another option. Since Taiwan has enjoyed de facto independence since 1949 and the Mainland has had no say over affairs in Taiwan, the quest for Taiwanese independence is more accurately defined as a quest for de jure independence. The third outcome is not an actual outcome; instead it is the continuation of the status quo. This means Taiwan has de facto independence but it still is not widely recognized by the international community as its own sovereign nation. The maintenance of the status quo also leaves the unification debate unresolved. It should be noted however that it is possible that the unification debate does not have one single solution, either independence or unification. Even if there was a consensus on Taiwan as to whether they want

¹ "A Brief Comparison between the Military Forces of China and Taiwan." *Taipei Times* September 23, 2011, *Taipeitimes.com*. Online (accessed on 17 March, 2015).

independence or unification now, this might change in future generations due to shifting political allegiances and economic ties and benefits.

Chapter 1 looks at Taiwan's long history of colonization. It examines how the Taiwanese Aborigine and Han Chinese ethnic groups intermixed and how Taiwan became mostly populated by ethnic Han Chinese. It thus examines the base for the shared ethnic identity between Mainland China and Taiwan. Constant foreign occupation and the subjugation of not only Taiwanese Aborigines, but also the Han Chinese that migrated there influenced the formation of the Taiwanese cultural, political and national identity before 1949. Specifically this chapter it looks at why before 1949 most inhabitants of Taiwan did not overtly self-identify as culturally Taiwanese. It starts in the early 1600s when the Dutch first occupied the island and ends in 1949 with the occupation of the Kuomintang (KMT) Nationalist party from Mainland China and the imposition of martial law. It also examines the historic basis of China's claim on Taiwan and the roots of the Taiwan-China connection.

Chapter 2 looks at the period 1949 through 1987, which can be seen as the hostile occupation and one-party rule of the KMT on Taiwan. It examines how the KMT emphasized the Han Chinese ethnic identity and tried to instill a sense of Chinese cultural, political and national identity. The chapter also explores how resentment towards KMT occupation banded the Taiwanese together and led to the desire for a cultural and political identity separate of Mainland China. Also examined is how the successful reform policies implemented by the KMT during their one-party rule led to the development of a joint Taiwanese-Chinese cultural identity.

Chapter 3 examines the democratization of Taiwan and the continuing development of a Taiwanese cultural, political and national identity. It covers the period from 1987 through 2014 and looks at how the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) spearheaded efforts effect the formal Taiwanese declaration of independence and the mobilization of Taiwanese nationalists.

Chapter 4 looks at how the history of occupation, the KMT one-party rule and the democratization of Taiwan have translated into the contemporary Taiwanese ethnic, cultural, national and

political identity. It examines through use of census data how the Taiwanese have come to view the issue of unification versus independence and if they identify as Chinese, Taiwanese or both. Moreover chapter 4 analyzes how external forces are further complicating the matter.

Overall the thesis thus provides an overview of the development of a distinct Taiwanese cultural, political and national identity from the early 1600s through 2014 and seeks to explain why a stronger Taiwanese national identity has not resulted in a stronger desire for legal Taiwanese independence.

Chapter 1

Colonization and Occupation

Many Western scholars contest the PRC claim that Taiwan is culturally and politically Chinese due to different interpretations of historic events. The issue of whether the PRC has inherited the territorial claims of the Qing dynasty is central to this issue. The PRC claims to have inherited the territorial boundaries of the Qing dynasty while other scholars and many Taiwanese nowadays contest this claim. The mass migration of ethnic Han Chinese to Taiwan over the centuries during Chinese rule in Taiwan has caused the intermixing of Taiwanese Aborigine and Han Chinese. It also led to Han Chinese being the vast majority of inhabitants on Taiwan. This resulted in a strong ethnic connection between China and Taiwan due to a shared ancestry. In addition to the PRC claim to Taiwan, centuries of foreign occupation influenced the formation of a diverse and constantly changing identity due to the imposition of different cultural practices, political systems and the violent repression of any attempts to build an independent Taiwanese nation. The most recent violent repression of Taiwanese resistance to foreign occupation was after the end of World War II when the KMT fled from the Mainland to Taiwan. Despite the shared ethnic identity, this did not mean the two groups worked well together. Cultural and political differences became clear and this led to violent conflict between the Mainlanders and the Taiwanese. Taiwanese resistance to KMT rule was fiercely repressed and martial law was imposed. This violent repression of Taiwanese resistance was not unique to KMT rule, and was one of the main reasons why the Taiwanese national and cultural identity that had formed before 1949 was forced to remain underground.

Background:

Taiwan is an island located off the coast of Fujian province in the Southeastern part of China. It has a population of slightly over 23 million and an area of approximately 14,000 square miles. Approximately 98% of its population is ethnic Han Chinese. This is one of the reasons why the Taiwanese and Chinese identities are so strongly connected. A long history of colonization dating back to the early 1600s and lasting until 1987 has influenced the development of a unique Taiwanese cultural identity. The development of a national identity on Taiwan was complicated by changes in political affiliation, ethnic identity, cultural identity, and socio-economic factors. The Taiwanese cultural identity is unique in the sense that it is in flux and contingent. Continuous subjugation and colonization by various occupying forces have driven the Taiwanese cultural practices underground. Thus the expression of Taiwanese culture has long been suppressed. The strong ethnic and cultural ties to Mainland China further add a unique dimension to the Taiwanese culture. With the migration of many Han Chinese to Taiwan there was a transfer of elements of Chinese culture. However the intermixing with local Aborigine tribes as well as the isolation and separation from Mainland China has created a culture that while having strong ties to China remains separate and unique.

The geographic entity 'Taiwan' consists of the main island of Taiwan and several outlying islands including the Penghu islands, Kinmen, Matsu and several other minor islands. Various tribes of Austro- and Malayo-Polynesian ancestry were the first to inhabit these islands starting approximately 8000 years before the 17th century.² These tribes are often referred to as 'Aborigines', meaning original inhabitants. Most tribes on Taiwan spoke different languages and were of different ethnic origins and there was no central organization. Rather these tribes existed separate from each other. These were the original inhabitants of Taiwan. John Shepherd, Associate Professor at the University of Virginia's Department of Anthropology, posits that while Chinese dynasties had engaged in maritime trade before the 13th century, Taiwan had remained largely isolated due to the perceived lack of natural resources, the strong currents in

² Robert Blust, Rengui Li, and Elizabeth Zeitoun. "Subgrouping, Circularity and Extinction: Some Issues in Austronesian Comparative Linguistics." in *Selected Papers from the Eighth International Conference on Austronesian Linguistics*. Zhong Yang Yan Jiu Yuan Yu Yan Xue Yan Jiu Suo Chou Bei Chu (Taipei, Taiwan: 1999), P.31-94

the Taiwan Straits and due to the hostile head hunting population of Aborigines. Shepherd argues that these factors made it unattractive for the Chinese to settle on Taiwan before the 13th century. It was not until the early 13th that the ethnic composition of Taiwan changed as small groups of Han Chinese started to migrate to the Penghu islands from nearby Fujian province. This was during the reign of Kublai Khan. Several centuries later, according to the Dutch who colonized the main island of Taiwan in the early 1600s, there were approximately 100,000 Aborigines living in Taiwan. Their livelihood consisted of hunting deer and growing millet and rice.³

Chinese Historic Claim on Taiwan:

The modern day Republic of China (ROC) is strongly related to Mainland China (PRC) due to the migration of Han Chinese to Taiwan and several instances of the rule of earlier Chinese states over parts of Taiwan. This connection is so strong that it is one of the major factors why there is no consensus on Taiwan if the ROC is its own sovereign nation or a part of China. These two cultures are so intimately linked that for people living in Taiwan identifying as Taiwanese or Chinese has become a complicated matter, with many identifying as both. To understand the complicated nature of the China connection to Taiwan it is important to look at the historical base of this relationship.

According to the Chinese government white paper on ‘The Taiwan Question and Reunification of China’ issued in 1993, Taiwan has been a part of China since ancient times. In antiquity the Chinese referred to Taiwan as ‘Yizhou’ (夷洲) or ‘Liuqiu’ (琉球) usually referred to as the Ryukyu Islands. The PRC’s uses this reference to Taiwan to support their claim that China has been linked to Taiwan since antiquity. The PRC also posits that during the third and seventh century A.D. many Chinese were sent to Taiwan on expeditions and that in the seventeenth century China began the development of the island of Taiwan.⁴ The PRC interprets the migration of Han Chinese to Taiwan from the third to the seventh

³ John Robert Shepherd, *Statecraft and Political Economy on the Taiwan Frontier: 1600-1800*. Stanford, CA: Stanford Univ. Press, 1993. P.7

⁴ Government of People’s Republic of China, “Document 1: PRC White Paper, “The Taiwan Question and Reunification of China,” Asian Affairs: An American Review 26 no. 2 (1999): 77-93.

century A.D. as a basis from which China developed sovereignty over Taiwan. The Chinese then began developing Taiwan during the Qing dynasty. This is the fundamental argument used by the PRC government to claim sovereignty over Taiwan. There are however differing accounts concerning the Chinese claim on Taiwan.

Western scholars such as Gary Davison provide counter arguments to the Chinese government's claim that Taiwan has belonged to the Mainland since ancient times. While Davison finds evidence supporting the claims made by the PRC concerning the timeline of Chinese contact and development on Taiwan, he does not agree that this constitutes sovereignty over Taiwan. He argues that the first credible evidence of Chinese contact with Taiwan was in 239 A.D. after the fall of the Han dynasty (206 BC–220 AD). The first contact China had with Taiwan was when the ruler of the southern Chinese kingdom of Wu sent an expeditionary force of 10,000 soldiers to explore Taiwan. The first evidence he finds of Chinese settlement on Taiwan was in the seventh century A.D. when a small group of Mainland Chinese settled in Taiwan.⁵ The first instance of people from the Mainland occupying parts of Taiwan and setting up administrative rule was under the Yuan dynasty (1271–1368). The Yuan dynasty was actually a Mongol occupying force that defeated the imperial Song Dynasty of China in the late thirteenth century. In order to win Han Chinese support, Kublai Khan, the leader of the Mongols, set up a Chinese style government modeled after the late Song Dynasty (960–1279).⁶ It was after Kublai Khan solidified his rule and established the Yuan dynasty that he set his sights on Taiwan. During the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries the Yuan dynasty conquered the Penghu Islands, a chain of islands off the west coast of Taiwan. The Yuan dynasty posted a representative on the Penghu Islands to oversee the territory and this was the first Chinese imperial claim on part of present-day Taiwan. The Han Chinese living in Mainland China however saw the Yuan rulers as barbarian invaders. Consequently, the first Chinese imperial claim on Taiwan can be disputed on the grounds that it was rather the first Mongolian imperial claim on Taiwan. This argument would also apply to the Qing dynasty (1644–1912) since the Manchus, an ethnic minority

⁵ Gary Marvin Davison. *A Short History of Taiwan: The Case for Independence*. Westport, CT: Praeger, 2003. P.3

⁶ Morris Rossabi. *The Mongols: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2012. P.423-424

from northeastern parts of China, led the Qing dynasty. This shows how early on the issue of cultural identity was already complex. The Mongols did similar things in many countries across Southeast Asia and in Korea as well. In what is now called Korea for instance, the Mongols instead of setting up their own government signed a peace treaty and set up Korea as a tributary state to the Yuan dynasty. As a result Korea was not officially part of Yuan territory, but it did pay tribute to the Yuan dynasty by providing goods such as gold, silver and agricultural produce as well as other goods. This was an important distinction since while the Yuan officially had power over Korea; it did not interfere with its daily operations. As a result the PRC would later not lay claim to these territories, and instead focus on the territories that were directly governed by the Yuan and Qing dynasties.

After the Yuan established control over the Penghu islands, there were Han Chinese from the Mainland who began settling there in the 13th century. Due to a perceived lack of natural resources in the Penghu Islands for trade, the Ming dynasty paid little attention to Taiwan or its islands throughout the 16th century. Instead it was used as an outpost mainly occupied by fishermen. The main island of Taiwan was never colonized by the Yuan dynasty; instead the Dutch first colonized it in 1624.⁷ Despite little Yuan interest in Taiwan, the PRC in their document on the “Taiwan Question” use the administrative control that the Yuan dynasty set up on the Penghu islands as evidence that Taiwan (or in this case, the Penghu Islands, which is nowadays considered part of Taiwan) was part of China since the 13th century.

Davison argues that this does not constitute sovereignty, especially since the Ming dynasty (1368-1644 A.D.) did not support settlement on Taiwan or anywhere outside of China. A statement issued by the circuit intendant of Fujian province in 1603 however clearly stated the imperial position on Chinese living abroad: “Those who reside in foreign lands have all abandoned their native places in pursuit of monetary gain: Accordingly, they are a debased form of humanity for whom our protection is

⁷ John Robert Shepherd. *Statecraft and Political Economy on the Taiwan Frontier: 1600-1800*. Stanford, CA: Stanford Univ. Press, 1993. P.7

unnecessary”.⁸ Davison thus argues that since the Ming abandoned any Chinese who emigrated this means that any settlement on Taiwan during that time can thus not be seen as a claim to sovereignty.

European Conquest of Taiwan:

European interest in Taiwan started in 1557 when the Portuguese set up a trading post in Macao. Macao is located on the southern coast of Mainland China, across from Hong Kong. It is bordered by Guangdong Province to the north and to the east and south of it is the South China Sea. On their way to Macao the Portuguese passed by Taiwan on their expeditions. They called the island ‘Ilha Formosa’ which means Beautiful Island in Portuguese. Formosa became the common name for Taiwan used by most Europeans until well into the twentieth century. While the Portuguese had no territorial designs on Taiwan, the Japanese, British, Spanish and Dutch had other plans. By this time the Yuan dynasty had ended and given way to the Ming dynasty. The Ming dynasty retained control over the Penghu Islands. After an initial failed attempt in 1604 by the Dutch to conquer the islands from the Ming dynasty, the Dutch came back in 1622 in full force. After an eight-month war with the Chinese the Dutch agreed to peace terms calling for the Dutch to give up the Penghu Islands. Instead the Dutch moved onto the main island of Taiwan without Ming objection. The Dutch established a fortification named Fort Zeelandia in the area known by the Chinese as Anping on August 26, 1624.⁹ Nowadays Anping is a district of Tainan city in the southwest of Taiwan. It is significant that there were no Ming objections to the Dutch occupying the main island of Taiwan since it shows that the Ming dynasty did not place significant value on the main island of Taiwan. It could also suggest that the Ming did not view the main island of Taiwan as part of their territory. This is likely because they had no control over the main island of Taiwan. This is another example on which the counter claim of Davison rests. The PRC nowadays uses Ming control of the Penghu islands as a base for their historic claim of sovereignty over Taiwan. Instead the government of the PRC now argues this is proof that Taiwan was a part of China during the Yuan and part of the

⁸ Mingfeng Zhou. *Taiwan Jian Shi*. Taipei Shi: Qian Wei Chu Ban She, 1994. P.6

⁹ Hsin-hui Chiu. *The Colonial 'civilizing Process' in Dutch Formosa, 1624-1662*. Leiden: Brill, 2008.

Ming dynasty, but that they had to give up control over Taiwan to the Dutch. The PRC claim rests on the basis that Penghu was part of Taiwan, and that control over Penghu meant control over all of Taiwan.

From 1624 to 1664 parts of southern Taiwan were subject to Dutch colonial rule. The Dutch claimed the entire main island of Taiwan and set up a colonial government there. They forced native tribes to swear allegiance to the Dutch, using force if necessary. The Dutch collected taxes and set up trade and agricultural ties with the Aborigine tribes. They also 'imported' labor from Mainland China for agricultural work.¹⁰ Between 1627-1642 the Spanish built a fortress in northern Taiwan and briefly contested Dutch rule of Taiwan. The Dutch however expelled the Spanish in 1642 after several military campaigns. After sustaining heavy losses to both the Dutch and the Aborigines, the Spanish changed their mind on holding Taiwan. Even after the Spanish had left Dutch colonial rule over Taiwan was still far from complete. It was restricted to small coastal settlements that were plagued by attacks from the Aborigines.¹¹ During their colonial rule of Taiwan the Dutch also faced several rebellions of Han-Chinese farmers but with the help of the Aborigines the Dutch crushed them. The Aborigines initially helped the Dutch because it offered them protection and food security. However part of swearing allegiance to the Dutch meant accepting forced education from Dutch missionaries. Many Aborigine tribes who had their own native religions resented the religious teachings, and as a result some started to turn against the Dutch.¹² This struggle between European colonists, Aborigine tribes and Han Chinese influenced the formation of a hybrid identity. The Dutch using Aborigine tribes to fight against the Han Chinese also stunted Chinese integration into Taiwan since the local tribes and Han Chinese immigrants were pitted against each other.

¹⁰ Denny Roy. *Taiwan: A Political History*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003. P.16

¹¹ Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of China (Taiwan). *Dutch and Spanish Era (1604 - 1662)*. www.taiwan.gov.tw. <http://www.taiwan.gov.tw/ct.asp?xItem=37231&CtNode=2229&mp=13>. (accessed on 04 Feb. 2015)

¹² Ralph R Covell. *Pentecost of the Hills in Taiwan: The Christian Faith among the Original Inhabitants*. Pasadena, CA: Hope Pub. House, 1998.

Renewed Chinese interest in Taiwan:

It was not until the overthrow of the Ming dynasty in 1644 that parties on the Mainland became interested in Taiwan. Zheng Chenggong and his father the Fujianese strongman Zheng Zhilong, resisted the Manchu takeover of the Ming dynasty and fought the establishment of the Qing dynasty. They and other Ming loyalists were driven off the Mainland by the Qing forces and fled first to Jinmen and Xiamen, located on the South East coast of China. Before his death however, Zheng Zhilong switched sides to support the Qing. Despite his father's change of heart, Zheng Chenggong continued to resist the Qing. In order to escape the Qing forces, Zheng Chenggong planned his takeover of Dutch controlled Taiwan.¹³ This would afford him time to regroup. Zheng Chenggong's designs for Taiwan were however not permanent settlement. He planned to use Taiwan as a base of operations from which to launch attacks on the Qing. Interestingly, Zheng like many others after him fled to Taiwan with the plan to stay only temporary. History repeated itself as later in the 20th century Chiang Kai-Shek fled to Taiwan also intending to stay only temporarily. In April of 1661 Zheng took over the Penghu Islands and later that year took over the main island of Taiwan. He ended 38 years of Dutch rule.¹⁴ Once the Dutch left, Zheng established the Kingdom of Tungning. The Qing rulers on Mainland China were eager to destroy Zheng and his family members and saw it as a necessity. This fueled their interest in Taiwan. Zheng Chenggong died of malaria in 1662 and in 1683 the Qing navy attacked the Penghu islands.

The Qing quickly took over Taiwan and installed Qing dynasty officials in a position of power. One of the side effects of Qing rule over Taiwan was increased emigration of Han Chinese from the Mainland to the main island of Taiwan. This meant more intermarriage and a larger Han population on Taiwan. As a result the interconnectedness between Mainland China and Taiwan grew.¹⁵ This was an important development in the history of Taiwan as it was the first instance where there was an active interest from the Mainland to politically rule Taiwan. This interpretation of historic events is used by the

¹³ Tonio Andrade. *How Taiwan Became Chinese: Dutch, Spanish, and Han Colonization in the Seventeenth Century*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2008. Chapter 11

¹⁴ B., I. V. K., and Jan Hendrik. Glazemaker. *Verhaal Van De Veröivering Van 't Eylant Formosa, Door De Sinesen, Op Den 5 Julii, 1661. Uyt Het Frans Vertaalt, Door I. V. K. B.* – Note only Dutch translation available. P.12

¹⁵ John F Copper. *Historical Dictionary of Taiwan: (Republic of China)*. Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2000. P.10

PRC to support their claim on Taiwan. This claim is based on the argument that while dynasties might have fallen and the mandate of heaven might have shifted, the Chinese as a ‘people’ remained committed to Taiwan.¹⁶ This claim is however contested by others who argue that the PRC is not the Qing Empire. Since the PRC is not the Qing Empire, any territorial claims made by the Qing would thus not be valid for the PRC.

The concept of the ‘Mandate of Heaven’ is important to explain the rationale behind the PRC claim to Qing territory. The mandate of heaven was a Confucian belief that emperors were granted divine authority to rule as long as they governed well.¹⁷ Thus when for instance the Ming dynasty fell and was replaced by the Qing, this was the passing of a mandate of heaven. The Ming rulers were seen as no longer ruling effectively and thus the heavens allowed them to be overthrown by the Qing. The Qing in turn was given the new mandate of heaven. The PRC uses this belief to illustrate that it is a continuation from the Qing dynasty. When the Qing dynasty fell in 1911, it lost its mandate of heaven to the Republic of China (ROC). When the ROC lost the civil war to the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) in 1949, the ROC lost its mandate of heaven and this was passed on to the PRC. As a result the PRC can be seen as a continuation of the Qing dynasty.¹⁸ This interpretation would support PRC claims of sovereignty over all Qing territory. Other scholars, such as Dr. Pamela Kyle Crossley, professor of History specializing in the Qing Empire at Dartmouth University, however disagree and see the PRC as a completely separate entity from the Qing Empire.¹⁹ Overall however, the influx of Han Chinese to Taiwan and their intermarriage was a crucial development and a major reason why the Taiwanese ethnic and cultural identities are so closely linked to those of Mainland China.

¹⁶ Government of People’s Republic of China, “Document 1: PRC White Paper, “The Taiwan Question and Reunification of China,” Asian Affairs: An American Review 26 no. 2 (1999): 77-93.

¹⁷ Yonglin Jiang. *The Mandate of Heaven and the Great Ming Code*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2011.

¹⁸ Charles Horner and Eric Brown. *A Century After the Qing: Yesterday's Empire and Today's Republics*. 2009, http://www.chinaheritagequarterly.org/features.php?searchterm=027_century.inc&issue=027 (accessed 01 April, 2015)

¹⁹ Pamela Kyle Crossley. *The Wobbling Pivot, China since 1800: An Interpretive History*. Chichester, West Sussex, U.K.: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010. P.271

Qing Rule:

The Qing court initially debated abandoning the island after it evacuated all the Chinese civilians and after it had subdued all the rebels.²⁰ Most in the Qing court initially supported this view but in the end it was decided to keep Taiwan as part of the Qing Empire. Taiwan was thought to have ample arable land as well as strategic value. The Qing's interest in Taiwan was thus mainly for its agricultural output of rice and sugar, as well as its strategic geographic location.²¹ Its annexation would mean that foreigners (mainly Westerners) would not have to set foot on the Mainland. The Qing could use Taiwan as a trading outpost to engage in trade with the West, and to force anyone wanting to trade with the Qing to do so on Taiwan. This led the Qing Emperor Kangxi in 1684 to decree that Taiwan and the Penghu Islands were officially Qing territory. Formally Taiwan was dubbed a prefecture and was part of the administration of Fujian province. It did not become a province until 1887. Since Taiwan was now officially part of the Mainland there were some who sought to immigrate to Taiwan to seek better opportunities. Those wishing to move to Taiwan however were not allowed to bring family or friends with them. The Qing wanted to use Taiwan as a place where men could do seasonal work in agriculture after which they could return home to the Mainland where their families would stay.²² Despite restrictive immigration policies, emigration to Taiwan from the Mainland continued to increase. Initially the government tried to limit this increased presence of Han Chinese on Aborigine territory because this led to conflict with the native tribes. This policy however failed. By the 1890s Taiwan's population exceeded 2.5 million and it had grown twenty fold since 1684.²³ The increased Han presence on Taiwan (in addition to causing conflict with the Aborigines) caused many of the Mainlanders to identify with the villages, temples and some of the Aborigine tribes. This was a starting point for mixing of Han Chinese and Taiwanese identities. The PRC uses this increased Han migration to Taiwan and the increased administrative control over Taiwan

²⁰ Emma Teng. *Taiwan's Imagined Geography: Chinese Colonial Travel Writing and Pictures, 1683-1895*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard U Asia Center, 2004. Print. P.34

²¹ Bernice Lee. *The Security Implications of the New Taiwan*. Oxford: Oxford University Press for the International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1999. P.14

²² Baocun Dai and Ruowei Li. *Jian Ming Tai Wan Shi = The Concise History of Taiwan: Taiwan Chinese-English Bilingual Edition*. Nan Tou Shi: Tai Wan Wen Xian Guan, 2007. P.52

²³ James Wheeler Davidson. *The Island of Formosa, past and Present. History, People, Resources, and Commercial Prospects. Tea, Camphor, Sugar, Gold, Coal, Sulphur, Economical Plants, and Other Productions*. London and New York: Macmillan &, 1903. P.561

by the Qing Empire to strengthen its claim that Taiwan has been a part of China for centuries. These historical events are however interpreted differently by other scholars who argue that these events show that Taiwan was a part of the Qing Empire, not a part of the PRC.²⁴

Taiwan did not become a province until 1887, more than two centuries after its absorption into the Qing Empire. Increased Japanese and French interests in Taiwan prompted this heightened political status. Along with this change in status from a prefecture to a province, this also meant more Qing control over the main island of Taiwan. Even though there had been much intermarriage between Han Chinese and Aborigines in earlier centuries, the increased Han migration to Taiwan during Qing rule did not see such intermingling. Instead the Han Chinese who migrated to Taiwan during the Qing dynasty set up communities separate from the Aborigine tribes. As a result of these growing communities, some of these settlements started to encroach on Aborigine territory. The Qing also started subjugating parts of the Aborigine population who were previously left to their own devices. The Aborigines did not take kindly to being subjected to Qing rule and thus were known to revolt. The Qing even had a saying for this, “every three years a small rebellion, every five years a big rebellion”.²⁵ This shows that even though by 1887 more Han Chinese were living on the island of Taiwan, the Chinese and Aborigine populations clashed.

The Qing court quickly realized that if it were to govern the new province of Taiwan effectively a larger bureaucracy was necessary. This type of formal administration was especially important because the Qing court perceived Taiwan as an uncivilized frontier and the large Aborigine population as barbarians who needed to be sinicized and civilized. The increased Qing bureaucracy formalized Qing control over Taiwan and also facilitated the imposition of the Chinese cultural and political identity on Taiwan.

In the later years of Qing rule on Taiwan the dynasty battled the British and the French in the First and Second Opium Wars that lasted from 1839-42 and from 1856 to 1860 respectively. The Qing's

²⁴ Pamela Kyle Crossley. *The Wobbling Pivot, China since 1800: An Interpretive History*. Chichester, West Sussex, U.K.: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010.

²⁵ Mingfeng Zhou. *Taiwan Jian Shi*. Taipei Shi: Qian Wei Chu Ban She, 1994. P54

loss of the Opium wars led to greater demand for trade with China by the French and British. Fearing the consequences of having foreigners establishing trading outposts on the Chinese Mainland, the Qing turned to Taiwan. A few years after the end of the second Opium War in 1863 the Qing set up a customs port off the southern coast of Taiwan, now called Kaohsiung. The use of Taiwan as a major trade port and customs hub for all trade with the West meant Taiwan became an increasingly important part of the Qing Empire. During this time Taiwan and Japan also developed significant trade ties.²⁶

A few decades after the Qing set up customs stations off the coast of the main island of Taiwan it became involved in the first Sino-Japanese War. The war started in 1894 and ended less than a year later in 1895. The war was fought over the sovereignty of Korea since Korea was a tributary state of the Qing. Japan wanted an independent Korea so that it would not pose a threat to Japan. The war was ultimately fought because the Japanese wanted increased regional influence and the Qing wanted to maintain their tributary state.²⁷ Further Japan wanted access to trade with Korea and its natural resources to fuel its rapidly expanding economy. When the Qing lost the Sino-Japanese War it signed the Treaty of Shimonoseki on April 17, 1895. This was ratified on May 8th and as per the terms of the treaty the Qing Empire ceded control of the Liaodong peninsula of Manchuria and the Penghu Islands and Taiwan to Meiji Japan. After the signing over of Taiwan to Japan many of the wealthier Taiwanese fled to the Mainland. The fact that many on Taiwan fled to the Mainland shows the strong ties that had developed between China and Taiwan during Qing rule. Many Han Chinese who fled to the Mainland were people who had been born on the Mainland and had immigrated to Taiwan. It also showed that many on Taiwan felt comfortable with making China their new home. This is likely as a result of the increased Han migration and intermarriage between Aborigines and the Han Chinese. This suggests a sense of Chinese cultural and political identity had been transferred to Taiwan during the more than two centuries of Qing rule. It however also expresses a fear of the Japanese and that Japanese rule would negatively impact their socio-economic status.

²⁶ James Wheeler Davidson. *The Island of Formosa, past and Present. History, People, Resources, and Commercial Prospects. Tea, Camphor, Sugar, Gold, Coal, Sulphur, Economical Plants, and Other Productions.* London and New York: Macmillan &, 1903. P.244

²⁷ Peter Duus. *The Rise of Modern Japan.* Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1976. P.10

It is clear that during the time of Qing rule there was a mass influx of Han Chinese to the main island of Taiwan. This accelerated the intermixing of Han Chinese and Taiwanese Aborigines and led ultimately to the fact that the vast majority of people living on Taiwan were of Han Chinese descent. This provides the base for the shared ethnic identity that exists between Mainland China and Taiwan. The Qing rule of Taiwan was also the first instance in which a cultural and political identity was transferred, at least in part, to Taiwan. There was however no wholesale transfer of cultural and political identity. Aspects of it were added to the existing cultural and political practices on Taiwan. Chinese style government was imposed and Taiwan was ultimately designated as a province of the Qing dynasty. While the Aborigines still spoke their tribal languages, the Han Chinese population spoke a Fujianese dialect of Mandarin. I argue however that the end of Qing rule on Taiwan is the end of Mainland China's claim on Taiwan.

Japanese Occupation of Taiwan:

Chaos ensued on Taiwan before the Japanese could install its government due to heavy resistance to Japanese rule. Resistance towards Japanese rule was so strong it resulted in the short-lived establishment of the Republic of Formosa, which lasted less than six months. Guerilla attacks were a problem for the first seven years of Meiji rule in Taiwan. During the initial years of occupation between 1898 and 1903 Japanese soldiers killed more than 12,000 Taiwanese resisters. In total including civilians the Japanese killed around 20,000 Taiwanese. The Japanese also killed thousands of Aborigines who resisted Japanese rule.²⁸

After several years of violent suppression, resistance to Japanese rule was largely phased out. Japan began to modernize Taiwan. Modernization included building railroads and improving infrastructure such as highways and bridges. The Japanese also addressed the health issues in Taiwan. Disease was widespread and many suffered from malaria, the bubonic plague and leprosy.²⁹ A limited policy of land reform was carried out to break up large landholders power in certain regions. This was

²⁸ Gary Marvin Davison. *A Short History of Taiwan: The Case for Independence*. Westport, CT: Praeger, 2003. P.52

²⁹ Inazo Nitobe. "Japan as a Colonizer." *The Journal of Race Development* Vol. 2, no. 4 (1912): 349.

thought to prevent any regional uprisings. Some land was kept and was given to Japanese companies who used the fertile soil for sugarcane production. The Japanese continued to focus Taiwan's economy on agricultural production. The difference was that most of Taiwan's agricultural products including sugarcane, rice and tea were now destined for the Japanese market. The Japanese also introduced a new banking system and established several banks on Taiwan. It was not until 1935 that the Japanese encouraged industrial investment. This however did not pan out due to the onset of World War II.³⁰

During the first few years of the Japanese occupation Taiwan was under a military dictatorship. This lasted until the Japanese had quelled the local resistance by force. To reduce Taiwanese resistance to their rule and in order to increase cooperation with the local Taiwanese the Japanese did enact significant political reforms over the duration of their occupation. In the initial stages of the Japanese occupation of Taiwan the island was divided up into administrative areas at the city, district and prefecture level. These administrative areas had councils that were initially appointed by the Japanese and most were Japanese. This reflected the political exclusion of the Taiwanese. Soon after resistance was quelled however the Japanese allowed the Taiwanese to hold local elections at the town and village level. This was the first introduction of democracy and democratic elections to Taiwan since this was unknown during the previous dynasties. It was the Japanese introduction of democracy that was to become a central part of the Taiwanese political identity years later. During the 1920s the Japanese continued the process of democratization on Taiwan by creating advisory councils. These were to consist of all Taiwanese and it was a way for the local people to voice their concerns to the Japanese appointed government officials. Despite the fact that appointed officials could ignore or overrule anything the Taiwanese said it still offered an outlet for the Taiwanese to voice their concerns.³¹

The Taiwanese also requested several times that they be allowed to create a parliament. Each of these requests was rejected by the Japanese due to fear of Taiwanese secession. Though restricted in their powers the fact that the Taiwanese people could elect their own officials did allow them to become used

³⁰ Kelly Olds. *The Economic History of Taiwan*, <http://eh.net/encyclopedia/the-economic-history-of-taiwan/> (accessed on 25 Feb. 2015).

³¹ Denny Roy. *Taiwan: A Political History*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003. P.36

to electing a government rather than having one being appointed for them.³² In addition to the political reforms mentioned the Japanese policies allowed for Taiwan to modernize significantly during the occupation. The Japanese for instance greatly expanded and modernized Taiwan's infrastructure. Roads and railroads were built, as were hospitals and harbors. Taiwan's agricultural practices were also modernized by the creation of irrigation systems and the improvement of urban and rural life by the set up of sewage systems and electric grids. The Japanese also improved Taiwan's banking and monetary systems and its news media. Many of these developments improved Taiwanese agricultural production and industry as well as overall quality of life. The Japanese definitely benefitted more than the Taiwanese but there was significant modernization that can be attributed to the Japanese.³³ Due to the rapid modernization Taiwan experienced as a result of the Japanese occupation scholars such as Gary Davison argue that the Taiwanese did not have the same social and cultural experiences as the Mainland Chinese and their ways diverged. This argument is used by Gary Davison to challenge the PRC's claim on Taiwan.

The de-escalation of tensions between the Japanese occupiers and the Taiwanese led over the years to an increased interest in defining the Taiwanese ethnic and cultural identity as something distinct from Japan. The Japanese occupation brought the Taiwanese citizens together. During the later years of occupation in 1921 the Taiwanese physician Jiang Weishui founded the Taiwan Cultural Association. This organization is widely credited with launching the Formosan / Taiwanese nationalist movement. This was mostly a literary movement that started the quest for a Taiwanese cultural identity and Taiwanese nationhood.³⁴ Yet similar to the resistance to Qing rule many Taiwanese were not united in supporting a certain cultural or national identity, rather they were united fighting against the Japanese occupation. The Japanese culture however also had an influence on the development of a unique Taiwanese identity. For instance, the Japanese architecture brought to Taiwan during the occupation is

³² Christian Schafferer. *The Power of the Ballot Box: Political Development and Election Campaigning in Taiwan*. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2003. P.33-34

³³ Denny Roy. *Taiwan: A Political History*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003. P.39

³⁴ 台灣文化協會. Taiwanus.net. 2003. <http://www.taiwanus.net/history/4/68.htm>. (accessed on 25 Feb. 2015).

still often found in temples and shrines, and also in the architecture of some houses. The Japanese martial arts of Judo and Kendo were also transplanted to Taiwan during the occupation. Legacies of Japanese martial arts still remain today, as there are over 30,000 people who practice Judo and over 10,000 people who practice Kendo in Taiwan. Other cultural transplants have been elements of the Japanese cuisine such as miso soup, pickled vegetables and Japanese rice grains.³⁵ Other remnants of the Japanese colonial period were the outlawing of foot binding, and an increased importance placed on education. The Japanese set up many schools and made primary school compulsory for Taiwanese and Aborigine alike. As a result primary school enrollment rates in Taiwan were the second highest in Asia, only trailing behind Japan.³⁶

Developments in China:

While the Japanese were in the process of solidifying their rule in Taiwan the Chinese Mainland saw a regime change known as the passing of the mandate of heaven. There were many factors that led to the fall of the Qing dynasty, including Qing defeat in the First and Second Opium Wars (1839–1842 and 1856–1860), as well as the failed Boxer Rebellion in 1900. Ultimately the Wuchang Uprising was the last straw and led to the establishment of the Republic of China (ROC). The Republic of China was founded by Sun Yat-sen who was also leader of the Kuomintang (KMT). The KMT was the Chinese nationalist party and Sun used the KMT to found the Republic of China based on his San Min doctrine. The San Min doctrine is also known as the ‘Three Principles of the People’. In his own words Sun describes the ‘Three Principles of the People’ as “a doctrine for the salvation of the nation ... by promoting the recognition of China as the equal of other nations; by producing political equilibrium and economic justice in the country, it will fit China for perpetual existence in the world”.³⁷ Sun’s three principles were nationalism,

³⁵ Nobue Homma. *Vestiges of Japanese Colonialism in Taiwan*. 2012. http://archive.kyotogakuen.ac.jp/~o_human/pdf/association/2012/i2012_05.pdf. (accessed on 01 April, 2015).

³⁶ Fu-san Huang. *Colonization and Modernization Under Japanese Rule (1895-1945)*.

<http://web.archive.org/web/20070317044611/http://www.gio.gov.tw/taiwan-website/5-gp/history/tw07.html>. (accessed on 01 April, 2015).

³⁷ Sun, Yat-sen, Frank W. Price, and L. T. Chen. *San Min Chu I = The Three Principles of the People*. (Shanghai: China Committee, Institute of Pacific Relations, 1927), 3.

democracy and livelihood of the people. Nationalism referred to independence from foreign powers. Sun was well versed in world history and saw self-sufficiency as prerequisites for any nation to be powerful. Democracy to Sun meant a western style democracy that included fair and competitive elections, suffrage and a representative government with a president and checks and balances on executive and legislative power. Livelihood of the people related to fulfilling the basic needs of the people. This part of his philosophy was focused on providing basic services such as healthcare and education. Sun believed that if all of these elements were present and the people of China were united behind these principles that China would once again be powerful and an equal to western nations. Sun's Three Principles of the People would later still be used by the KMT in Taiwan.

After briefly serving as the first president of the ROC Sun was replaced by Yuan Shikai, a Qing military general. Shortly after Yuan's take-over of the government he tried to create his own dynasty. This however failed due to lack of popular support.³⁸ When Yuan died in 1916 it plunged China into decades of instability caused by competing warlords. The central government was still the ROC, but it was largely ineffective in governing and different regions had different warlords who ruled, imposing their own laws. During this time period of 'warlordism' however there were many who saw that China was falling apart. To restore order Sun Yat-sen and the KMT set up their base in southern China and attempted to unite the different provinces. However the KMT was not the only party to gain support. After Chinese heard of the success of the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia in 1917 this led to the rise of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). The CCP was founded in 1921. The opposing ideological views of the KMT and the CCP on how to govern China led to the Chinese Civil War that lasted from 1927 through 1949.

While Civil War was raging on the Mainland the Asia-Pacific region became a scene for much of the fighting of World War II. Chiang Kai-shek was the leader of the KMT during this time and he was locked in a fierce struggle with both the Japanese and the CCP (led by Mao Zedong). The KMT lost much

³⁸ Jonathan D Spence. *The Search for Modern China*. New York: Norton, 1990. P.279

public support because they spent more time fighting the communists and less fighting the Japanese. The KMT was also known to be extremely corrupt. The CCP on the other hand gained widespread popularity due to its land reform policies. Peasants also celebrated them for their efforts in fighting the Japanese.³⁹ Furthermore the CCP had also on several occasions shown their willingness to work with the KMT to unite in fighting the Japanese. This resulted in the First and Second United Front both of which ended in betrayal of the Communists by the Nationalists.

End of World War II:

When the Pacific War ended so did the Japanese occupation of Taiwan. As part of the Allied coalition during World War II the ROC was given a seat at the table during the Cairo Conference. The Cairo Conference was held in 1943 in Cairo, Egypt. It was a series of meetings between U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt, British Prime Minister Winston Churchill and ROC President Chiang Kai-shek. During these meetings the three allies discussed the war against Japan and the future of Asia. China was to play a major role in preventing the resurgence of a Japanese empire. In order to guarantee ROC support the Allies agreed that the territories lost by the Qing dynasty to Japan during the First Sino-Japanese War would be returned to the ROC. These territories included Taiwan and Manchuria.⁴⁰ This returned the territory the Qing had lost to Japan after losing the first Sino-Japanese War and the signing of the Treaty of Shimonoseki.

The ROC government sent troops to Taiwan to accept Japanese surrender and deal with their demilitarization and repatriation to Japan. At the end of World War II it seemed like the KMT had the upper hand in winning the civil war. The United States recognized the KMT as the legitimate government of China and provided it with military support because the U.S. wanted to combat the spread of communism in Asia. Despite being allied with the Soviet Union to combat Nazi Germany during World War II, by war's end the communist ideology was seen as a threat to Western social, political and

³⁹ U.S. Department of State. *The Chinese Revolution of 1949 - 1945-1952 - Milestones*. <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1945-1952/chinese-rev>. (accessed on 05 Dec. 2014).

⁴⁰ U.S. Department of State. *The Cairo Conference, 1943*. <http://2001-2009.state.gov/r/pa/ho/time/wwii/107184.htm>. (accessed on 26 Feb. 2015).

economic stability. The United States and its other capitalist allies thus tried to limit communist influence worldwide fearing that irreconcilable ideological differences could lead to another global war. The KMT was thus seen as an important ally and as vital to stopping communism from spreading.

Once World War II was over the Chinese Civil War continued. After four more years of fighting, Mao Zedong and the Communists won out over the KMT and on October 1st, 1949 Mao Zedong proclaimed the establishment of the People's Republic of China (PRC). Mao Zedong was one of the hailed as the founding father of the PRC and he governed it with the title of Chairman of the CCP, not adopting other titles such as president. After suffering multiple military defeats Chiang and the KMT were forced to retreat to Taiwan. Upon arrival in Taiwan, Chiang maintained that the KMT was still the legitimate government of all of China. The KMT envisioned their retreat to Taiwan as a temporary retreat and Chiang started making plans to return to the Mainland and defeat the communists.⁴¹

Initial years of KMT Rule on Taiwan:

After the end of World War II and the Japanese occupation Taiwan's economy was in disarray. As a result of the war much of its infrastructure was destroyed. Inflation was also rampant and Taiwan's agricultural sector lay in shambles. Jobs outside of the agricultural sector were few and there was a scarcity of consumer goods. These problems were compounded by the arrival of the KMT on Taiwan and meant that it would not be an easy task for Chiang Kai-shek and his supporters to improve conditions for the Taiwanese.

Originally the Taiwanese had welcomed the 'liberation' of Taiwan from Japanese rule and many were glad to be united with their Han Chinese ethnic kinsmen. When the KMT moved to Taiwan however the Taiwanese quickly became disillusioned with the Mainlanders. For many Taiwanese the first encounter with Mainland Chinese gave many the impression that the Japanese occupiers were superior to the KMT. This disillusionment led many to see themselves as different and perhaps superior to the

⁴¹ Gary Marvin Davison. *A Short History of Taiwan: The Case for Independence*. Westport, CT: Praeger, 2003. P.xii

Mainlanders as well. The social values held by the Japanese occupiers were believed by many to be based on old Chinese beliefs. But upon seeing the Nationalists many thought these ancient values had been corrupted on the Mainland. After having experienced the efficiency and technological advances brought by the Japanese occupation many on Taiwan were struck with the backwardness of the Mainlanders. Many Taiwanese were disappointed when they found the KMT to be more corrupt and extravagant, as well as less developed than the Japanese.⁴² Some Taiwanese claimed that Taiwan was more developed than any part of the Mainland and that urban residents on Taiwan were far more 'modern' than the Mainland Chinese. This idea of cultural superiority and greater sophistication the Taiwanese felt over the Mainlanders also had to do with the differences in economic status. World War II and the long civil war had ravaged many areas of Mainland China. As a result many who fled to Taiwan were impoverished and able to take only what they could carry. This led many on Taiwan to believe that the Mainland was backwards and poor, while the effects of war were not taken into account. Since many Taiwanese felt disillusioned by the Mainlanders this emphasized the differences in cultural identities between the Mainland Chinese and the Taiwanese.⁴³

KMT supporters from the Mainland poured into Taiwan. By late 1949, between one and two million Mainland Chinese had emigrated from the Mainland to Taiwan. A large part of these recent arrivals were government officials. The ROC government had been large due to the size of Mainland China. Around 28,000 officials thus moved to Taiwan with their families and in order to reward their loyalty the KMT installed many of those officials in government posts on Taiwan. This displaced many Taiwanese who under the Japanese occupation had been allowed to participate in government service.⁴⁴ Political exclusion played a major role in creating tensions between the KMT arrivals and the Taiwanese. It also alienated many Taiwanese who started to feel that the KMT was a worse occupying force than the Japanese had been. At least the Japanese had allowed a degree of Taiwanese political participation in the

⁴² John Franklin Copper. *Taiwan: Nation-state or Province?* Boulder: Westview Press, 1990. P.34-35

⁴³ Alan Wachman. *Taiwan: National Identity and Democratization.* Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1994. P.96

⁴⁴ Ching-Ying Tien. "Review: Remembering China from Taiwan: Divided Families and Bittersweet Reunions after the Chinese Civil War." *The China Journal* No. 70, *Jstor*, Online (accessed on 25 Feb. 2015).

later years. Political exclusion thus created a rift between the Chinese and Taiwanese that emphasized differences in political affiliation.

As Denny Roy senior fellow at the East-West center suggests, when the ROC accepted control over Taiwan this did not mean Mainlanders saw the Taiwanese people as fellow Chinese. The fifty years of Japanese occupation and the modernization that Taiwan underwent as a result made many Mainlanders suspicious. Some Mainlanders saw the Taiwanese as traitors and collaborators, believing such modernization was only possible if the people collaborated willingly with their occupiers.⁴⁵ This attitude is also evident in fictional literature. In his work *Orphan of Asia* Wu Zhoulin writes about the life of Hu Taiming, a Taiwanese boy growing up in Taiwan under Japanese rule. Due to the influence of his grandfather, China and his Han Chinese ancestry fascinate Taiming. Taiming's family however also has ties to Japan. He is eventually convinced by his uncle to go to Japan for an advanced education. After his education in Japan, Taiming finds a job as a teacher in Mainland China. He is however forced to leave due to anti-Taiwanese sentiment. Upon his return to Taiwan few trust him due to his time spent in both Japan and China and he feels like "a small rudderless boat drifting between the currents of two epochs".⁴⁶ *Orphan of Asia* illustrates the identity crisis many Taiwanese felt during the Japanese occupation. After initial resistance to the Japanese many learned to cooperate with. Similarly many had ancestral roots in China and due to the conflict between China and Japan; this put them in a difficult position. This all played out against the backdrop of being Taiwanese and living on Taiwan. The result is that Taiming did not identify as Chinese, Taiwanese or Japanese and was left somewhere in between. This feeling of identity confusion was indicative of many during this time and shows the challenges for the Taiwanese in reconciling their ethnic, cultural and political identities. It also highlights the difficulties many Taiwanese faced with deciding on their national and cultural identity.

Further causes for KMT resentment of the Taiwanese was the Japanese qualities they had adopted as a result of the Japanese occupation. During their occupation the Japanese on Taiwan tried to eradicate

⁴⁵ Denny Roy. *Taiwan: A Political History*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003. P.56

⁴⁶ Zhuoliu Wu and Ioannis Mentzas. *Orphan of Asia*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2006. P.16

all traces of Chinese cultures and customs. Some examples of these policies included forcing Taiwanese to adopt Japanese names as well as Japanese habits and customs and to make Japanese the official language. The policies went as far as to have Taiwanese worship Japanese gods.⁴⁷ Because many Taiwanese had been forced to assimilate into Japanese culture many Chinese who came from the Mainland were still wary of the Japanese influence on Taiwan. One of the main reasons why many Mainlanders were so suspicious of Taiwanese was due to the Japanese treatment of the Mainlanders when they invaded Mainland China. After the Japanese had invaded the Mainland soldiers were extremely hostile to the Chinese people, including civilians. Nowhere was Japanese hostility as noticeable as when they reached Nanjing. Known as the 'Nanjing Massacre', this was the slaughtering of between 40,000 to 300,000 Chinese civilians by Japanese soldiers. There were also widespread rapes, looting and other atrocities committed by the Japanese. Before the Japanese invasion, China was a war-torn country with many people fleeing warlord violence. Some initially welcomed the Japanese and hoped they would instill order. Instead senseless killing and rape quickly changed any positive image that the Chinese might have had about the Japanese.⁴⁸ Many of the KMT believed that if the Japanese had been so brutal to the Chinese in Nanjing there had to be a reason why they were not so ruthless towards the Taiwanese. It was commonly assumed the reason was widespread cooperation by the Taiwanese. This thus set the Mainlanders and the Taiwanese at odds with each other from the start. Some Mainlanders saw Taiwanese cooperation with the Japanese as a betrayal of their ethnic kin.

When the ROC took control of Taiwan in 1945 the civil war between the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and the KMT on the Mainland raged on. One by one every province and city that was a stronghold for the KMT fell to the communists. It was not until late 1949 when the CCP defeated the last of the KMT strongholds on the Mainland that Chiang Kai-shek and the KMT retreated to Taiwan. It was thus not until 1949 that the ROC government was officially moved to Taiwan. It is important to note that in 1949 the ROC still saw its retreat to Taiwan as temporary and the KMT had its sights set on

⁴⁷ Taiwan Provincial Administration Information Hall. *Administration of Taiwan in Recent Centuries: The Ch'ing Period*, http://subtpg.tpg.gov.tw/Eng2/history/history-e-2_3.htm (accessed on 04 Feb. 2015).

⁴⁸ Zhang Lianhong. "The Nanjing Massacre: The Socio-psychological Effects." *East Asia* 18, no. 3 (2000): P.36-48.

reconquering the Mainland.

Despite not having its central government located in Taiwan the KMT did enact several changes to Taiwanese society between 1945 and 1949. Upon taking control of Taiwan in 1945 Chiang Kai-shek took control of the remnants of the Japanese government on Taiwan. The KMT advocated Sun Yat-sen's 'Three Principles of the People' and allowed local elections started under Japanese rule to continue. The first elections were scheduled for April 1946. While the KMT allowed for the election of local officials to serve on councils as the Japanese had not allow for the election of chief executives such as president and vice-president. The election of executives was not stipulated in the constitution and, since this was beneficial to the KMT, the government decided to keep it that way. They did not include provisions for the election of chief executives in their plans for a new constitution. This meant that most of the mayors and county magistrates were Mainlanders and even most lower-level government jobs went to the KMT loyalists. Mainlanders were also often paid more than their Taiwanese counterparts. This was perceived as highly unfair and corrupt by the Taiwanese and led to much animosity between the two groups.⁴⁹ Continued animosity brought out the cultural and political differences between the Taiwanese and the KMT and made it hard to focus on any common ground. This made many Taiwanese eager to develop a strong national, cultural and political identity separate of the KMT.

Reeling from their recent defeat by the communists and expulsion from the Mainland many KMT supporters had conflicting views as to why the nationalists were defeated. There was also much debate about the future of the party. Chiang Kai-shek was officially set to retire from the government in 1949 and many hoped that he would simply stay out of politics. This however did not happen and from 1945 through 1949 Chiang got rid of any internal opposition by preemptively asking several prominent KMT members to resign. Others he purged by accusing them of being soft on communism and other crimes. Chiang began to consolidate his hold on the KMT party and over the government in Taiwan. He made sure that he controlled the most important bodies of government such as the military and that he had the

⁴⁹ Gary Marvin Davison. *A Short History of Taiwan: The Case for Independence*. Westport, CT: Praeger, 2003. P.78

power to appoint officials. Chiang also became heavily involved in the writing of the new constitution.

One of the key figures involved in writing the 1947 ROC constitution was Carsun Chang, a Chinese philosopher, public intellectual and political figure who supported social democratic values. He complained about Chiang's involvement in writing the Constitution arguing: "Chiang did not understand constitutional government. While the constitution clearly outlined the duties and powers of the various branches of government, and the responsibilities and limitations on leaders running the government, Chiang only gave lip service to tutelage and democracy, and could not break away from his desire for autocratic rule".⁵⁰ In addition during the height of the Chinese Civil War Chiang was given 'Temporary Provisions Effective During the Period of Communist Rebellion'. These were emergency powers that allowed Chiang to use his own discretion concerning the constitution. He could thus decide which parts of the constitution to follow and which to ignore. To consolidate his power and hold over the KMT Chiang enshrined these emergency presidential powers into the new 1947 constitution. This gave Chiang virtually unlimited authority to do whatever he pleased.

When news arrived that the KMT was drafting a new constitution many Taiwanese became excited. Many hoped that this would be a positive turning point for the KMT government and KMT-Taiwan relations. Chief among their hopes for the new constitution was the provision allowing the Taiwanese people to elect the entire government including chief executives. The local population also hoped it would include welfare programs and statutes curbing police and government corruption. When it became known that none of these provisions were included in the new constitution it became a major point of friction between the Mainlanders and the local population. Specifically the fact that many Taiwanese could not run for office since these were appointed by the KMT was an issue. Also, fact that chief executives could not be directly elected was a further sign of political exclusion. In addition to this political exclusion the KMT government on Taiwan focused its attention on the ongoing Chinese civil war. This meant the government was largely incompetent and corrupt which soon led to economic decline

⁵⁰ Steven J Hood. *The Kuomintang and the Democratization of Taiwan*. Boulder, CO: WestviewPress, 1997. P.22

and high levels of poverty and unemployment.⁵¹ Poverty, economic decline and political exclusion amplified the already high tension between the Taiwanese and the Mainlanders. It was on February 27th 1947 that violence broke out in the form of the 2/28 Incident.⁵²

The 2/28 Incident was the violent outpouring of Taiwanese resistance against Nationalist oppression. It started when the KMT government tried to arrest a Taiwanese man but the arrest turned violent and bystanders were injured. Angered and frustrated by yet another hostile occupation force, Taiwanese across the island revolted the next day (2/28). For a brief time the Taiwanese took control of the provincial government. Neither side had expected such a rapid escalation of tensions and violence. As a result neither side was ready for any sort of sustained conflict. To buy time for reinforcements to arrive the KMT tried to make peace by feigning to accept Taiwanese demands. The party even set up committees to discuss these demands. In reality however the provincial government had already requested military reinforcements from the Mainland. When these troops arrived the Taiwanese resistance rule was crushed. Atrocities were committed by Mainland troops and around 10,000–25,000 Taiwanese had lost their lives.⁵³ Some estimates are over 30,000. The *New York Times* reported a month later when facts came in that “witnesses estimate that 10,000 Formosans were killed by the [KMT] armed forces. The killings were described as ‘completely unjustified’ in view of the nature of the demonstrations. The anti-Government demonstrations were said to have been by unarmed persons whose intentions were peaceful”.⁵⁴ The execution and jailing of many Taiwanese as well as the creation of a de facto military dictatorship bred intense hostilities between the Taiwanese and the KMT. When martial law was enacted this meant that Taiwanese were not allowed to organize in political parties or to engage in any activity thought to undermine the power of the KMT. This included activities meant to build a Taiwanese national, cultural or political identity separate from the KMT and Mainland China.

⁵¹ Stefan Fleischauer, "The 228 Incident and the Taiwan Independence Movement's Construction of a Taiwanese Identity." *China Information* Vol. 21, no. 3 (2007): P.373-401.

⁵² Christian Schafferer. *The Power of the Ballot Box: Political Development and Election Campaigning in Taiwan*. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2003. P.33-34

⁵³ Stefan Fleischauer, "The 228 Incident and the Taiwan Independence Movement's Construction of a Taiwanese Identity." *China Information* Vol. 21, no. 3 (2007): P.373-401.

⁵⁴ Tillman Durdin. "Formosa Killings Are Put at 10,000." *New York Times*, 29 March 1947, *Nytimes.com*. Online (accessed on 04 Feb, 2015)

The violence and ruthlessness with which the KMT suppressed the Taiwanese resistance set the tone for the next few decades of KMT rule that were known on the island as the ‘White Terror’.

After the 2/28 Incident Chiang feared a communist subversion of Taiwan. To prevent further local uprisings from weakening KMT authority and to counter the perceived communist threat, Chiang imposed martial law on May 19th 1949. Special government committees were set up to decide what constituted sedition under martial law. This was an important determination since anyone accused of sedition would be tried in a military court. Trial in a military court meant no lawyer and no due process and if found guilty individuals would be imprisoned or executed.⁵⁵ Martial law also meant that only government approved political parties were allowed to exist. This barred any opposition party from forming and despite allowing local elections not everyone was allowed to vote or run for office. This legalized political exclusion and the constant threat of being charged with sedition made it very difficult for Taiwanese to organize. Another major KMT priority for Taiwan was to increase Chinese influence on the island. Since it had been separated from the Mainland during the Japanese occupation, and after seeing that many had adopted Japanese cultural elements and sometimes even the Japanese language the KMT saw it as vital to make Taiwan identify with the Mainland. As a result the KMT imposed a Mandarin Chinese language policy on the island. This meant that no other languages, including the Hokkien dialect of Mandarin that was commonly spoken on Taiwan was to be used. This language policy was especially enacted in schools.⁵⁶ These policies were aimed at preventing the expression of Taiwanese nationalism or support for de jure independence and thus stunted not only the political development of Taiwan but also the development of a Taiwanese cultural identity.

⁵⁵ Linda Chao and Ramon H. Myers. "How Elections Promoted Democracy in Taiwan under Martial Law." *The China Quarterly* Vol.162 (2000): P.387.

⁵⁶ Alan Wachman. *Taiwan: National Identity and Democratization*. Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1994. P.82-88

Why care about Taiwan?

The PRC is an extremely large country with many natural resources and one of the largest labor forces in the world. It seemingly does not need more territory or more people to govern. The reason as to why Taiwan is so important to the PRC is fundamentally one linked to identity. The PRC disputes Taiwan's sovereignty under their 'One China Policy'. This policy is widely accepted by most nations in the world including the United States. It asserts that Taiwan is part of China and that there is only one China. The KMT also believes in the 'One China Policy' but the main difference between the Chinese view and the Taiwanese view is that the Chinese see the PRC as the 'one true' China, and Taiwan sees Taiwan as the 'one true' China. According to this KMT view, the government on Taiwan is the rightful government of the Mainland as well as the island of Taiwan. The reason for this policy goes back to the Han ethnic identity that many Chinese and Taiwanese shares. The Chinese Civil War, which started broke out in 1927, to this day remains unfinished and as long as Taiwan asserts claims over all of Mainland China it poses a threat to the long term existence of the PRC. Another reason why the PRC is so fixed on unification with Taiwan is related to internal stability and international politics. Similar to the 'Domino Theory' of the 1950s, there is the idea among the PRC that "if [the] Taiwanese are allowed to 'leave' the nation because of ethnic differences, then why not Tibetans, or Turkic Muslims (such as the Uighur), or even the Cantonese?"⁵⁷ If Taiwanese independence were recognized by the PRC it is likely that this could start a domino effect that could decimate the PRC. History has shown this happened before; recent examples are the break up of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), more commonly known as the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia. Therefore it is in Communist China's interest to achieve unification with Taiwan and an integral part of this is creating a shared Taiwanese Chinese identity. This is why the PRC often emphasizes the shared Han ethnic identity, as well as shared cultural practices and beliefs.

Overall, it is important to note that the issue of Taiwanese sovereignty is inextricably linked to the Taiwanese ethnic, cultural and political identity. Before the 1600s Taiwan was an island occupied by

⁵⁷ Melissa J Brown. *Is Taiwan Chinese?: The Impact of Culture, Power, and Migration on Changing Identities*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004. P.3

various Austro-Polynesian tribes that was then occupied and subjugated by various imperial powers including the Chinese. It was occupied first by the Dutch then the Yuan and Ming dynasties, followed by the Qing dynasty, Meiji Japan and eventually the KMT. Depending on one's interpretation of historical events, there is historical evidence supporting both the Chinese claim and the Taiwanese claim. Scholars such as Joseph Wu, who studied the democratization of Taiwan, find evidence supporting the Chinese claim on the island. Wu posits that it was during the Ming and Qing dynasties that large Han Chinese populations came to live in Taiwan. He also argues that the Yuan, Ming and Qing dynasties officially had set up varying types of government structures on the island. He therefore argues that Taiwan was initially treated more as a colony than as an integral part of the empire but it was still recognized as part of China. Furthermore he argues that since over 98% of the Taiwanese population is of Han Chinese descent and that while they may identify as Taiwanese the territory of Taiwan was officially returned to the ROC government of China after World War II.⁵⁸ Thus this interpretation of historical events would suggest that Taiwan is a Chinese colony rather than an independent state. The issue of Taiwanese statehood is further complicated by the KMT move to Taiwan and the fact that the KMT still identified culturally, politically and nationally as Chinese. Taiwanese independence was never declared by the KMT and the KMT party to this day still supports their version of the 'One China Policy'.

In sum the nearly constant state of occupation emphasized the differences in cultural identity between the different occupiers and the unique Taiwanese culture. While foreign occupation often forced the expression of this unique Taiwanese cultural identity underground, this did not suppress the development as a whole and instead influenced the development of a unique Taiwanese identity. Developments will show however that between 1949 and 1987 there is a move towards the public expression of a Taiwanese cultural, political and even national identity.

⁵⁸ Jaushieh Joseph Wu. *Taiwan's Democratization: Forces behind the New Momentum*. Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 1995.

Chapter 2

Martial Law and Democratization

This chapter shows how martial law which was in effect from 1949 through 1987, created friction and caused many Taiwanese to look for a cultural and political identity separate of the KMT and Mainland China. It also illustrates how the KMT changed its economic and political policies over the years to improve cooperation with the Taiwanese and improve life on Taiwan. The KMT made its governance more efficient by political restructuring; it redistributed land and focused on building an export-led economy. KMT rule was thus instrumental in affecting the economic prosperity Taiwan experienced during the second half of the twentieth century. Before the lifting of martial law, the period known as the 'White Terror' saw the fierce repression of the Taiwanese people by the KMT government. Widespread discontent with political exclusion and government repression however culminated in the Dangwai movement. The pro-democracy demonstrations coordinated and launched by the Dangwai movement led to the Kaohsiung incident in 1979, which was another violent repression by the government of popular discontent. This led to public trials that allowed the Dangwai movement to gain much popular support. Eventually the Dangwai movement culminated in the forming of the DPP, which was the start of democratization in Taiwan.

KMT Agenda:

After quelling Taiwanese resistance by force, the KMT knew that martial law and military strength alone would not result in the support of the majority of the local people. Local support and cooperation was needed if the KMT had any hopes of retaking the Mainland since the Taiwanese population outnumbered loyal KMT members who had fled to Taiwan from the Mainland. This was the underlying KMT goal. Chiang summarized it in his speech to the nation on the 52nd anniversary of the

founding of the ROC: “to us recovery of the Mainland is a sacred mission and to end Communist aggression in Asia is to remove the danger of a nuclear war. It is our duty to launch a punitive expedition against the rebels, to deliver our compatriots from under tyranny, and to recover the Mainland”.⁵⁹ In addition to recovering the Mainland it was also part of the KMT agenda to create a common Chinese national and cultural identity. To achieve this the Nationalists promoted the Han ancestry many Taiwanese shared with those on the Mainland. The KMT also emphasized that Taiwan was very much a part of Mainland China. Both of these were achieved by emphasizing the shared Taiwanese-Chinese history in education. Chiang and the KMT hoped to achieve their goal of recovering the Mainland while simultaneously making Taiwan a part of China by following Sun’s ‘Three Principles of the People’ (Nationalism, Democracy, and People’s Livelihood).⁶⁰

Political Restructuring:

Focusing on its more immediate challenges, the KMT started by restructuring the party in order to more effectively govern Taiwan. A powerful but temporary Central Reform Committee was set up to restructure the party. All KMT members were assessed and those deemed incompetent or corrupt were either ‘reeducated’ or simply removed from the party. In addition to internal party restructuring, after about a decade of KMT rule the nationalist party started to actively encourage Taiwanese to join the political party. This started in the late 1960s and continued until the abolishment of martial law in 1987. Since this was the main way for Taiwanese to be able to participate in politics many joined. Membership tripled from 1949-1952 and by 1952 over half of the total members of the KMT party were Taiwanese. Following Sun Yat-sen’s designs for democracy the KMT kept its National Assembly and Legislative Yuan. The National Assembly held most of the power including the power to pass constitutional amendments and elect the president. The Legislative Yuan passed laws that governed life on Taiwan. These were the most powerful political bodies on Taiwan and membership was virtually restricted to

⁵⁹ Chiang, Kai-shek. "President Chiang Kai-Shek's Message To The Nation On The 52nd Anniversary of The Founding Of The Republic Of China." Address. http://taiwaninfo.nat.gov.tw/ct.asp?xItem=165759&CtNode=124&htx_TRCategory=&mp=4. (accessed on 4 Feb. 2015)

⁶⁰ John Franklin Copper. *Taiwan: Nation-state or Province?* Boulder: Westview Press, 1990. P.47

Mainlanders. Since the KMT still posited that it was the government of all of China many former governors were appointed to their position in the government until the KMT would retake the Mainland. This meant effectively that these government officials were appointed for life. This meant that the Taiwanese were excluded from participation at the highest level of politics.⁶¹ Taiwan was officially designated as a province of ROC. This meant that according to the constitution the provincial government of Taiwan was locally elected. Even though the governor for the province of Taiwan was still appointed by the KMT, local elections for the provincial government of Taiwan meant that Taiwanese could participate in the political process at the local and district level. This was a crucial step towards consolidating KMT rule as political participation also meant cooperation with the locals. This laid the groundwork for the rapid economic development that Taiwan would experience in the next few decades. It was also crucial in the forming of the Taiwanese political identity, as democracy and political participation became an increasingly important issue for the Taiwanese.

Democracy as one of Sun Yat-sen's Three Principles of the People was supposedly a central elements guiding KMT rule. Despite its commitment to democracy on Taiwan and its political restructuring, the creation of a functional democracy on Taiwan was not a short-term goal. Instead establishing political dominance, economic development and recovery of the Mainland had priority. Specifically, the recovery of the Mainland was important to the KMT. In order to do this the KMT needed to increase its wealth in order to pay for military goods. The KMT recognized that if it would introduce their vision for democracy to Taiwan, including fair and competitive elections and suffrage for all Taiwanese, this would severely undermine their ability to extract wealth from the national economy in order to fuel their war preparedness efforts. Introducing democracy right after the violence of the 2/28 incident would surely see anyone but the KMT elected to government. Therefore it was crucial for the KMT to keep strict political control over Taiwan since political control afforded them control of the island's economy. As a result the democratization of Taiwan was a gradual process that stunted the

⁶¹ Lih-wu Han. *Taiwan Today*. Taipei: Chang Chung Book, 1988. P.20-22

maturation of Taiwanese politics. This also meant that it was a challenge for Taiwanese to organize since they could not organize and participate in the higher echelons of politics.

Nationalism:

The KMT tried to achieve its goal of recovering the Mainland and improving their rule on Taiwan by initially focusing on Nationalism and People's Livelihood. Nationalism was instilled through martial law and a focus on all things Chinese. This was done by the KMT penetrating and influencing Taiwanese society in many different ways. For instance the KMT used propaganda to promote a Chinese national identity on Taiwan. This was seen in the armed forces where soldiers were trained to fight 'the communists threat' and 'retake' the Mainland. The KMT introduced mandatory military service for all Taiwanese males in 1949 as part of martial law. This has however remained in effect through today, and while there have been plans to abolish conscription in 2015 plans have not yet been drawn up and it is likely to continue in the foreseeable future.⁶² In school curricula for instance, Taiwanese children were forced to study Chinese history and focused on the Chinese connection to Taiwan. Other examples of KMT influence was that key positions of influence in nearly all facets of society were given to ardent KMT supporters - examples include trade unions, farmers' associations, schools, interest groups and any other group. This meant that the KMT had tabs on nearly all facets of life on Taiwan, and this made it extremely difficult for resistance to form. It also meant that any Taiwanese wanting to have impact influence needed to be a KMT member. For instance if a factory worker wanted to change labor regulations he had to be a part of a labor union that was controlled by the KMT government. In order for a worker to achieve any change, one had to work with these government-controlled institutions. These policies thus allied many Taiwanese with the Mainlanders because the only way to improve their situation was to participate and work with the KMT. It is also the reason why there is so much confusion concerning Chinese and Taiwanese cultural identity.⁶³

⁶² *Taiwan's Army: Blooded*, 2013. <http://www.economist.com/news/asia/21583271-conscripts-death-has-brought-young-out-streets-blooded> (accessed on 05 April, 2015).

⁶³ Alan Wachman. *Taiwan: National Identity and Democratization*. Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1994. P.92

People's Livelihood and Economic Development:

Perhaps even more compelling was the KMT's focus on People's Livelihood. This can be understood as effort to improve economic and social policies. The KMT pursued three major economic policies in the early 1950s. These policies were land reform, price stabilization and changing import policies by creating a protective tariff policy. Land reform included more than redistribution of land and the reduction of rents on land. It also included revising standard land leasing contracts in favor of farmers. The consolidation and enclosure of certain farmlands had the effect of increasing productivity and reducing costs for farmers. Land use was reevaluated to make better use of the limited space available on Taiwan. Administration of land was also improved and ownership and rent agreements were better organized to avoid disputes. The land reform policy had two functions. First it was meant to show the Taiwanese that the KMT was following Sun Yat-sen's Three Principles of the People. The second purpose of land reform in Taiwan was to break up any economic power that a select few Taiwanese had gained under the Japanese occupation. This was thought to remove potential threats or challenges to the KMT government. Overall land reform was extremely successful in Taiwan. It led to a rapid increase in agricultural output and there were large gains in farmer productivity. It was also widely supported by Taiwanese and this contributed to its success.⁶⁴ Widespread local support for this policy also lent more credibility to KMT rule. Improved quality of life for many Taiwanese farmers who now had their own piece of affordable land linked them to the KMT government.

The KMT also enacted monetary reform. This involved adhering to strict government budgets and providing preferential interest rates to those who deposited their money in banks. Monetary reform was mainly aimed at curbing inflation. Since the Taiwanese economy had suffered severely as a result of World War II the KMT attempted to reboot Taiwanese industry by protecting it from foreign products. Their policies included imposing high import tariffs and import quotas as well as manipulating the value of their currency. As a result of these measures several industries such as the textile, plastics, artificial

⁶⁴ Anthony Y. C. Koo. *Land Reform in Taiwan*. Washington: Agency for International Development, 1970. P.64.

fiber, glass and fertilizer industries all showed significant growth. These policies contributed to the Taiwanese Economic Miracle, the period of rapid industrialization and economic growth between 1951 through the late 1980s. Evidence of the success of economic reform can be seen in Taiwan's annual economic growth rate. It averaged 8.9% from 1951 to 1984, and after a slight dip in 1985 when the economy grew by just over 5% the Taiwanese economy grew by more than 10% in 1986.⁶⁵ The resounding success of the Taiwanese economy due to KMT economic policies led to increases in standard of living and solidified KMT rule. It showed many Taiwanese that the KMT was capable of improving life on Taiwan and led to increases in popular support despite the still limited options for political participation.

Once these protectionist policies no longer worked, the KMT switched its policies and production to a strategy of growth by exports. This switch to an export-led growth strategy fueled industrialization in Taiwan. The government also adopted other monetary and fiscal policies to encourage domestic and foreign investment. This led to rapid economic growth from 1962 to 1973 and rapid industrialization. This overwhelming economic success led in 1973 to another change in economic policy that saw Taiwan focusing on its high-tech and other capital-intensive sectors. The second half of the 1970s however was not as booming for Taiwan as the 1960s had been. Due to the economic downturn in the West, Taiwan's export driven economy was now losing its momentum. Investment from both foreign and domestic investment slowed and stagflation set in. The government tried to counteract this by heavily investing in public works, especially improving Taiwan's infrastructure. These projects included building a north-south highway, expanding the railway network, building a new international airport, a nuclear power plant and more.⁶⁶

⁶⁵ Directorate General of Budget Accounting and Statistics. *Gross Domestic Product and National Income*, 2014. <http://eng.stat.gov.tw/public/data/dgbas03/bs4/NiYBE/naye.pdf> (accessed on 04 Feb. 2015).

⁶⁶ Ministry of Economic Affairs, Republic of China (Taiwan). *Taiwan's Economic Development*. <http://www.moeasmea.gov.tw/ct.asp?xItem=72&CtNode=263&mp=2> (accessed on 27 February, 2015).

Social and Political Reform:

In addition to economic reform the KMT also engaged in limited social and political reform between 1950 and 1986. The political transition was a slow one. From the outset, the KMT's political goals for Taiwan were the creation of a functioning democracy. Ironically when Chiang Kai-shek imposed martial law, it created "a period of dictatorship under the KMT [which scholar Denny Roy argues] was necessary to build up these preconditions".⁶⁷ Sun Yat-sen's Nationalist ideology called for certain initial stages economic development before democracy could be instituted. This resulted in the economic policies outlined previously. Initial political reforms had not included democratization on Taiwan. The KMT had a set of ground rules under which it would tolerate limited political opposition. For instance the KMT was to be the predominant political party in a one-party system, but as an alternative for those not wanting to vote for the KMT in elections the government created two other state-approved parties. These were the Chinese Youth Party and the China Democratic Socialist Party. But despite having these state-approved parties their influence was kept to a minimum. As the KMT gained more support due to the success of its economic policies, it also incrementally promoted democratization. This started at the local levels and later expanded to open elections for national representative office. As time passed martial law also eased up somewhat and military courts started to hold fairer trials. The KMT started to allow defendants a defense attorney and other measures were also instituted that would reduce military oppression. Elections were also gradually becoming more democratic at the lower levels. Political opposition was tolerated more and more and Taiwanese were allowed to serve in the local government. The KMT was also becoming a more inclusive party as more and more Taiwanese willingly joined.⁶⁸

International Setback:

A major blow to KMT popular support on Taiwan was its loss of recognition in the international arena. At the onset of the Korean War in June 1950 Taiwan became an ally of the anti-communist bloc

⁶⁷ Denny Roy. *Taiwan: A Political History*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003. P.79

⁶⁸ Linda Chao and Ramon H. Myers. *Proceedings of Centennial Symposium on Sun Yat-sen's Founding of the Kuomintang for Revolution*. Vol. 4. P.32.

led by the United States. This was largely due to the Nationalists' strong opposition to the CCP and communism itself. Furthermore the United States had supported the KMT financially and militarily dating back to World War II. As a result the U.S. was committed to supporting their long time ally. This meant that Taiwan enjoyed US protection from the PRC and allied military vessels were stationed in the Taiwan Straits as a form of deterrence. China's role in opposing the United States in Korea set up the ROC as the 'real' China in the United Nations and the international arena. From 1945 through 1971 the ROC was thus recognized in the international community (such as by the United Nations) as the legitimate government of China. In addition due to the allied protection the KMT could reduce its large military budget and focus more on public works. This significantly contributed to their economic success in the following decades. Despite initial allied recognition and support in 1971 the ROC lost its status as the legitimate government of China. With the passing of United Nations General Assembly Resolution 2758 (XXVI) titled 'Restoration Of The Lawful Rights of The People's Republic of China In The United Nations' the KMT government was no longer recognized by the United Nations.⁶⁹ The KMT strongly opposed this, and while the article called 'to expel forthwith the representatives of Chiang Kai-shek' this was in reference to the ROC as a whole. As a result the ROC was replaced by the PRC in the United Nations and many countries switched their diplomatic recognition to the PRC. This meant cutting off official diplomatic ties with the ROC.

In 1968 the ROC had diplomatic ties with 64 countries. Seven years later in 1975 it had relations with only 26 nations and in 2014 the ROC had diplomatic ties with 22 nations. As a result the KMT lost much public support and credibility in Taiwan.

The Korean War also had other effects on life in Taiwan. After the Korean War dragged on for months it became clear that even with American assistance the ROC had little chance of retaking the Mainland anytime soon. It became clear that the United States was not willing to use the atomic bomb again, and the Korean War showed that the PRC was strong enough to resist ground-invasion by the

⁶⁹ "Restoration Of The Lawful Rights of The People's Republic of China In The United Nations", United Nations. October 25, 1971.

United States. This meant that short of the United States using the atomic bomb, few were optimistic about ROC chances of retaking the Mainland. This meant the KMT started to see Taiwan as a new home rather than a temporary forward operating base. As a result more efforts were made to improve life on Taiwan in order to prove to the Taiwanese, the Mainland, and the rest of the world that KMT ideology was superior to communism.⁷⁰

White Terror:

While the evidence clearly shows the success of KMT economic policies from 1950 through 1986, Taiwan was still being governed by a fiercely repressive military dictatorship. The period of 1949 through 1987 was known as the 'White Terror'. During this time approximately 140,000 Taiwanese were imprisoned for opposing the Nationalist government. Between 3000 and 4000 were executed for the same reasons. Most of these imprisonments and trials took place from 1950 to 1952. The military courts targeted Taiwan's intellectual and social elite because the KMT feared these groups would become a source of political opposition. Some also feared the intellectuals might have sympathy for the CPP.⁷¹ This illustrates that life in Taiwan before the late 1980s was thus forcefully controlled by the KMT. Taiwanese were allowed to participate in local politics to the extent that their participation supported KMT goals and policies. If the Taiwanese worked with the KMT and followed their policies they would prosper and benefit as long as they stayed out of politics. Despite the support gained due to the success of its economic policies many Taiwanese still harbored extreme resentment towards the KMT. Martial law and the restrictions on public assembly and public discussions that ran against KMT policy forced the expression of a Taiwanese cultural and political identity underground. This political and cultural repression did however unite many Taiwanese by fueling their desire for the democratization of Taiwan. Democracy was to become one of the major facets of the Taiwanese political identity.

⁷⁰ John Franklin Copper. *Taiwan: Nation-state or Province?* Boulder: Westview Press, 1990. P.47

⁷¹ Tai-lin Huang. *White Terror Exhibit Unveils Part of the Truth*, 2005, <http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/taiwan/archives/2005/05/20/2003255840/2>. (accessed on 27 Feb. 2015).

Organized Resistance:

The lack of fair and contested elections combined with KMT one-party rule was perhaps the largest source of discontent. This growing discontent led to underground protests. These protests resulted in arrests and were repressed by force. Outside of the government approved parties Taiwanese intellectuals attempted to create political parties to influence local elections before 1977. The most prominent of these movements was the Dangwai movement. Dangwai is Chinese for ‘outside the party’ or independent. The Dangwai movement was thus an independent political movement. It consisted of local politicians who were dissatisfied with the KMT as well as dissident intellectuals. Magazine publications such as *Apollo*, *Free China*, *Taiwan Political Review*, *The Eighties*, and *Formosa* started to spring up. Most of these were quickly censored by the KMT due to their content that criticized the KMT government. One such publication, *Formosa*, became very popular and became a symbol of the Dangwai movement. Its message gained traction among the Taiwanese people and this culminated in a public rally to promote human rights in Kaohsiung 1979. The public rally resulted in clashes between demonstrators and the police. The police repressed the demonstration by force. This became known as the Kaohsiung incident. Many civilians and police officers were wounded and the leaders of the publication were arrested and tried. The leaders of the publication were charged with inciting a riot in order to overthrow the government. The Dangwai movement supported those arrested and provided funding for defense lawyers, including Chen Shui-bian. Chen was to be the first and only opposition party candidate to be elected President of Taiwan in 2000.

The Kaohsiung incident became a major event for the Taiwanese de jure independence movement and the democratization of Taiwan. The event highlighted the lengths to which the KMT would go to repress political opposition and led to a vast increase in support for democratization. The forceful repression of the rally did not weaken the Taiwanese people’s resolve. From 1980 through 1986 opposition to the KMT one-party rule grew and local chapters of resistance started to form throughout Taiwan. Some elected politicians also started to openly support democratization. In late 1986 the

Dangwai movement formed the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP). Many feared that a forceful crackdown was imminent but no official repression followed.⁷² This marked the beginning of democratization. Several months after the DPP was formed Chiang Ching-kuo, Chiang Kai-shek's son and successor, realized that democratization could not be stopped. He lifted martial law on July 15, 1987. This was a major step that would lead Taiwan down the path towards democracy.⁷³

Overall, martial law gave the KMT enormous amounts of power and discretion in prosecuting opposition forces. The KMT's ruthless prosecution of political opponents and the imprisonment and torture of suspected communists during the White Terror caused great dismay among the Taiwanese population. Martial law remained in effect for 38 years and was not officially repealed until 1987. During this time any political opposition to the KMT including advocating the development of a Taiwanese national or cultural identity or the desire for Taiwanese de jure independence was suppressed by force. Due to the severe political repression of any form of political activism outside of KMT approved channels there was a growing sense of discontent. Even though Taiwan experienced rapid economic growth and industrialization as well as improved quality of life during the period of martial law this did not make up for political repression.

The Dangwai movement formed in opposition to the KMT and advocated democratization in Taiwan. The movement was rooted in publications that focused on the development of a Taiwanese cultural identity. The Dangwai movement culminated in the formation of the DPP. This was largely in response to the KMT's efforts to promote a Chinese national identity on Taiwan. The KMT's political and social repression united many Taiwanese behind the cause of democratization. This popular demand for democracy was soon followed by the demand for de jure independence that the DPP used as its platform when participating in local elections.

Before the lifting of martial law, the KMT's social and political control in Taiwan had suppressed the expression of the unique Taiwanese cultural and political identity. Edwin A. Winckler, Senior

⁷² Shelley Rigger. *From Opposition to Power: Taiwan's Democratic Progressive Party*. Boulder: L. Rienner Publishers, 2001.

⁷³ Hung-mao Tien. *The Great Transition: Political and Social Change in the Republic of China*. Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Press, Stanford University, 1989. P.93-99

Research Scholar at Columbia University, notes that the KMT was very adept at adapting the KMT party and its policies in order to preempt and prevent an outpouring of demand for political participation.⁷⁴ This flexibility was crucial for the KMT to retain political control as long as it did but eventually the forces supporting democracy became too much for the Nationalist government. As a result Chiang Ching-kuo had no choice but to lift martial law and allow for the democratization of Taiwan. Martial law in Taiwan had influenced the development of a unique Taiwanese national identity by restricting the expression of these sentiments. Due to the social upheaval caused by the White Terror however a Taiwanese political identity started to form and demanded democracy. This led to the founding of the DPP.

⁷⁴ Emily Martin, Hill Gates, and Edwin A. Winckler. *The Anthropology of Taiwanese Society*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1981. P.483

Chapter 3

Taiwanese Nation Building

One can argue that the colonization of Taiwan ended in 1987 with the lifting of martial law. Since then there have been marked political changes in Taiwan leading towards democratization accompanied by decided efforts to strengthen Taiwanese cultural, political and national identities which had been forced underground during martial law. The KMT changed from being an oppressive dictatorship to one of several political parties and were no longer seen as a hostile occupying force after democratization took place. The main driving force behind these developments was the DPP. From 1986 through 2008 the DPP increased its political influence, most notable indicator of such was the election of their presidential candidate Chen Shui-bian in the 2000 elections. DPP efforts at nation building (the voicing of support for and efforts to strengthen the Taiwanese cultural identity) were meant to inspire Taiwanese to want de jure independence. These efforts were quite successful during this time and by 2008 48.4% of the population self-identified as Taiwanese. This is the first year that more people on Taiwan self-identified as Taiwanese rather than as both Chinese and Taiwanese. Despite increased self-identification as Taiwanese Chen Shui-bian was barely reelected in 2004. Chen and the DPP represented hope for those who supported and wanted de jure independence for Taiwan. However due to corruption and other failed policies DPP power petered out in 2008. One result of ineffective DPP policies and corruption scandals was the election of KMT candidate Ma Ying-jeou in the 2008 presidential elections. Overall polls show that the DPP's political influence was affected not just by corruption but also by broader geopolitical forces such as the PRC threat and ROC-U.S. relations. The DPP remains committed to achieving de jure independence and a decided effort towards achieving independence was made with the passing of the referendum law in 2003. But, in the end, broader and more powerful forces than the DPP's agenda were

at work. While the DPP effected the acceleration of the development of a Taiwanese cultural and national identity the party was unsuccessful in bringing about de jure independence.

The KMT and Democratization:

When Chiang Ching-kuo ended martial law, the KMT had become a vastly different party. Since the White Terror started in the 1950s, the KMT had started to allow Taiwanese to be elected. In 1993 Taiwanese politicians made up 57.1% of the party's central standing committee, while in 1952 not a single member was Taiwanese.⁷⁵ In addition, the party had stopped its emphasis on recovering the Mainland as a primary goal. Instead the KMT's platform emphasized its economic performance and democratic reforms as a basis for why Taiwanese should vote KMT. In addition, during the 1990s under KMT president Lee Teng-hui there were a series of constitutional revisions that changed the structure of the ROC government. Perhaps most significant was the fact that in the late 1990s the provincial government structure was abolished. The abolishing of the provincial government structure meant that the ROC relinquished any symbolic control it had over the provinces of Mainland China. The provincial government was maintained by the KMT when party members fled to Taiwan. This was done in order to preserve the image that the KMT was still in charge of all of China. Provincial Governors were appointed to represent provinces on the Mainland and meetings were held to discuss the goings on. In reality however the KMT had no say over anything that happened on the Mainland after 1949. When the provincial government structure was abolished this was a symbolic of the fact that the KMT now accepted it was not in charge of Mainland China and it signified a move towards a more moderate policy stance for the KMT.⁷⁶ There was also an expansion of government offices that were now open for election. This meant that the KMT would no longer simply appoint members of its own party to the more powerful and prominent positions in government and that instead the Taiwanese people could elect their leaders. The

⁷⁵ Charles Chi-hsiang Chang, Hung-mao Tien, and Teh-fu Huang. *Taiwan's Electoral Politics and Democratic Transition: Riding the Third Wave*. Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1996. Table 5.4, P.105-136

⁷⁶ Shih-shan Henry Tsai. *Lee Teng-hui and Taiwan's Quest for Identity*. Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005. P.105

first elections of the Legislative Yuan and the National assembly took place between 1991 and 1992.⁷⁷

Another major step towards democratization in Taiwan was taken on April 30, 1991 when President Lee announced that the 'Period of National Mobilization for the Suppression of the Communist Rebellion' was over. This announcement meant that the ROC was no longer formally at war with the PRC and that President Lee no longer claimed the powers given to the president under martial law. This was an important step in implementing all articles of the ROC constitution. While important for advancing the cause of democratization on Taiwan, the announcement was also interpreted by some as KMT recognition of CCP sovereignty on the Mainland. This severely weakened the ROC's claim to be the legitimate government of all of China.⁷⁸ Even though very few took the provincial government in the ROC seriously after Formosa lost its seat in the United Nations, it still undermined the image of the KMT in Taiwan. Other changes President Lee enacted were allowing more freedom of speech and assembly. In 1992 the law was changed so that advocating Taiwanese de jure independence or even communism was no longer an act of sedition. Instead many who were exiled or who had self-imposed their exile were allowed to return and the path was set up to release political prisoners. These reforms spearheaded by the KMT showed how the party became more moderate in the 1990s. Abolishing the provincial government structure and expanding democratic elections were all policies that were necessary for Taiwan to democratize.

Despite KMT electoral success in the 1990s the party became less disciplined. During the 1992 Legislative Yuan elections for instance one out of every four KMT candidates ran without permission from the KMT leadership. Additionally there was a percentage of such who received endorsements but were, in the end, not nominated. This shows that the KMT became disorganized which was largely due to infighting. This helped the DPP in gaining more seats in the Legislative Yuan. In addition the KMT had never changed the electoral system the Japanese had set up during their occupation. As a result the single-vote, multiple-member districts system made it significantly easier for candidates to get elected to office

⁷⁷ Charles Chi-hsiang Chang, Hung-mao Tien, and Teh-fu Huang. *Taiwan's Electoral Politics and Democratic Transition: Riding the Third Wave*. Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1996. P.12

⁷⁸ Denny Roy. *Taiwan: A Political History*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003. P.185

with a relatively small number of votes. This created a system in which corruption thrived since the candidate's handouts became more important than his stance on political issues. This led to vote buying and other forms of corruption. As a result it became necessary for anyone who wanted to get elected to raise large sums of money in order to compete with the gift giving and vote buying of all the other candidates.⁷⁹ Politicians, organized crime and gangsters all colluded with one another. While this was not restricted to the KMT it was perceived as more widespread due to the fact that the KMT had been in power for so long and because it was by far the largest party in the early 1990s. This led many to become disillusioned with the KMT and to throw their support behind other political parties.

The government tried to combat corruption in 1993 by passing the 'sunshine law'. This law required the disclosure of all financial assets of high-ranking government officials and their families.⁸⁰ There was much resistance from within the KMT and as a result the bill barely passed. Due to the widespread resistance to the sunshine law on the part of the KMT the party lost much public support. Hence this gave the DPP an edge and allowed the opposition party to gain more public support as it was seen as taking a stance against corruption. Furthermore during the early 1990s the KMT government also faced difficulties in its relations with the PRC. As Lee Teng-hui tried to improve Taiwan's international relations "the inherent contradiction became clear: Taiwan indeed raised its international profile, but alarmed Beijing in the process, upsetting the comfortable cross-strait stalemate and prompting Chinese responses that threatened the island's security".⁸¹ This made it difficult for the KMT to gain popular support for its foreign diplomacy efforts.

The DPP and Taiwanese Democratization:

When the DPP was founded in 1986 it was still an illegal party. More importantly it was an opposition party that received most of its support from grassroots movements. When it conducted its first

⁷⁹ Shelley Rigger. *Politics in Taiwan: Voting for Democracy*. London: Routledge, 1999. P.206

⁸⁰ *KMT Determined to Revise 'sunshine Law'*, 1993, http://taiwaninfo.nat.gov.tw/ct.asp?xItem=85913&CtNode=103&htx_TRCategory=&mp=4. (accessed on 04 Feb. 2015)

⁸¹ Denny Roy. *Taiwan: A Political History*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003. P.226

(and illegal) campaign in 1986 the DPP focused on calls for democratic reform, ethnic justice and Taiwanese self-determination. These initial demands and their political platform were more moderate than de jure independence for Taiwan. Former Dangwai leader Cheng Chung-hsin stated that initially the DPP's main demands were democracy, freedom, the right to form associations, and freedom of speech and publication.⁸² Democracy and freedom in this sense meant that the people on Taiwan would have the means and the opportunity to vote on issues in Taiwan—this included the question of de jure independence. The DPP thus from the start advocated that the future of Taiwan should be decided and voted upon by the people of Taiwan and not by one political party (the KMT). Within a few years however the party moved towards a more radical stance demanding internationally acknowledged independence. As a result the KMT and DPP were almost polar opposites concerning the national identity question.

As the DPP gained more supporters the party evolved. There were some elements within the DPP who took a more extreme approach to the independence issue. The party advocated a formal declaration of independence as soon as possible. Since these extremist factions within the DPP were the most powerful this was the platform on which the DPP ran in the 1991 National Assembly elections. The result was a resounding defeat. The DPP won just over 23% of the votes while the KMT won just under 70%. The KMT's decisive victory, as well as its significant financial and organizational advantages, made it seem as if Taiwan was unable to break free of its one party dominant system. The election however proved to be a learning experience for both the DPP and the KMT. DPP defeat showed that radical stances on the issue of independence were likely to be unpopular with the electorate. As a result the DPP moderated its public stance on independence and the 1992 Legislative Yuan election can be seen as the beginning of the DPP's moderation. It became clear that the electorate held moderate views on independence and unification and that some Taiwanese were thus not sure whether or not they wanted de jure independence. This meant that if the DPP wanted to gain more support it needed to focus its energies

⁸² Dafydd Fell. *Party Politics in Taiwan: Party Change and the Democratic Evolution of Taiwan, 1991-2004*. London: Routledge, 2005. P.12

on other issues while simultaneously investing more in creating a Taiwanese cultural and political identity.⁸³

To increase its support base the DPP broadened its issue appeal by focusing on social welfare, political corruption, women's issues, environmental protection and crime prevention. Moreover, the party focused less on the issue of legal independence and more on the need to rejoin the UN. This idea was initially discarded by the KMT since it would lead to conflict with the PRC. However the idea of joining the UN greatly appealed to voters and less than 2 years after the KMT denounced the DPP's idea of rejoining the UN the KMT changed its mind and in 1993 the ROC applied for UN membership.⁸⁴ The PRC however blocked the ROC's 1993 application for UN membership and continued to block future attempts. This was a major DPP triumph and shows how the DPP matured during the 1990s. It evolved from being a minor opposition party to becoming part of the political administration of Taiwan. The year 1997 was significant for the DPP as it won over half the local executive seats. This meant that the DPPs share of the votes exceeded that of the KMT. The increased popular support of the DPP showed that Taiwan had started to transition into a high functioning democracy with inter-party competition and the development of important electoral issues. While the political trend in the 1990s showed a move towards the more moderate center of the ideological spectrum, the KMT and DPP however were still distinctly different.⁸⁵ This allowed the voters to decide which party to support and gave them viable alternatives. This democratization led to increased DPP support, which was an important signal that more Taiwanese were interested in the idea of Taiwanese nationhood.

One of the main issues that the DPP faced in its early years was that of relatively deficient financial resources. Sufficient funding was a perennial problem for the DPP. In January 2000 the DPP reported NT\$226 million (U.S.\$7.3 million) in assets (this included bank accounts, cash reserves and property). Relative to the KMT's vast reserves, the DPP's assets were very modest. The KMT is one of the wealthiest political organizations in the world. Their funds have been estimated at over NT\$200

⁸³ Dafydd Fell. *Party Politics in Taiwan: Party Change and the Democratic Evolution of Taiwan, 1991-2004*. London: Routledge, 2005. P.13

⁸⁴ Dafydd Fell. *Government and Politics in Taiwan*. London: Routledge, 2012. P.138

⁸⁵ Dafydd Fell. *Party Politics in Taiwan: Party Change and the Democratic Evolution of Taiwan, 1991-2004*. London: Routledge, 2005. P.2

billion (U.S.\$6.5 billion). Business connections were especially what provided the KMT with its reserves. When in power the KMT used its power and control over government funds to provide government contract and subsidies to these businesses. As a result the KMT was effectively paying itself.⁸⁶ KMT corruption was a major issue in Taiwanese politics and the DPP's stance against institutional corruption was very popular among voters. The DPP portrayed the KMT as a corrupt party and emphasized its party's roots in Mainland China. As a result the DPP also gained more support for its views on de jure independence and for its advocacy of a Taiwanese cultural identity separate from Mainland China.

Chen Shui-bian and the DPP's rise to power:

After its electoral success in the latter years of the 1990s the DPP set its sights on the 2000 presidential election. Their candidate was Chen Shui-bian (陳水扁) whose career was largely symbolic of the DPP as a whole. Chen grew up in Taiwan and was the son of an agricultural laborer. His family had modest means and Chen worked hard at his studies. He graduated top of his class and was awarded a scholarship to study law at the National Taiwan University in Taipei. After he received his degree he started his own successful legal practice.⁸⁷

Initially Chen was not involved in Taiwanese politics but this changed when he was asked to defend the leaders of an anti-KMT protest who were arrested in Kaohsiung, in 1980. Chen agreed to defend Huang Hsin-chieh and several other defendants in the Kaohsiung incident. Despite not getting his clients acquitted Chen did manage to prevent his clients from getting the death penalty. Even though he lost the trial, his experience led to his involvement in the Dangwai movement. Chen realized that in order to change things he needed to enter into politics. In his autobiography Chen recalled hearing his client Huang speak in 1969: "Huang's platform really opened my eyes. How could someone be so bold, and so openly criticize the government, taking it completely apart with such merciless reproach. Witnessing

⁸⁶ Shelley Rigger. *From Opposition to Power: Taiwan's Democratic Progressive Party*. Boulder: L. Rienner Publishers, 2001. P.67

⁸⁷ *Profile of a President*, 2000, <http://content.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,2053775,00.html>. (accessed on 13 Jan. 2015).

Huang's attack, I was impressed with him from the bottom of my heart".⁸⁸ Chen became involved in politics by running for and winning a seat on the Taipei City Council. Chen started to rise through the DPP party ranks and in 1994 he ran for the highly coveted political office of mayor of Taipei. Western media reported that Chen's electoral victory was a firm step towards democracy in Taiwan.

An analysis of the votes and of public opinion however indicated Chen won the election because the KMT supporters had split their votes between two candidates.⁸⁹ Thus while initially Chen's election as mayor of Taipei seemed like a decisive victory for the DPP in reality it showed a divide within the KMT and indicated that support for Chen and the DPP was far from widespread. Significantly, Chen would eventually win the highest office of Taiwan under similar circumstances. Overall however it shows how much the DPP had matured and how party popular support had grown since the late 1980s.

While he was mayor of Taipei Chen gained a reputation for an authoritarian style of leadership as well as a strong stance against corruption. Chen was an eloquent and witty speaker and while in office he enjoyed over 70 per cent approval ratings.⁹⁰ In 1998 Chen ran for reelection as Mayor of Taipei and lost. Despite Chen's popularity, KMT candidate Ma Ying-jeou was able to garner a plurality of votes in the 1998 mayoral election because—in this instance—the vote was not split between three popular candidates. Even though he lost his bid for reelection DPP bylaws prevented Chen from running for President in 2000. According to these bylaws a DPP member could run for office only once every four years. In order to allow Chen to run for President the party suspended this bylaw in his case at the 1999 DPP Party Congress. Chen was then chosen as the presidential candidate of the Democratic Progressive Party.

DPP Electoral Platform:

From 1987 onwards after martial law was lifted, the DPP placed a strong emphasis on the expressing and promoting Taiwanese cultural and national identity. The focus of such was on shared

⁸⁸ Shuibian Chen. *The Son of Taiwan: The Life of Chen Shui-Bian and His Dreams for Taiwan*. Upland, CA: Taiwan Pub., 2000. P.57

⁸⁹ Jonathan Manthorpe. "Taiwan Moves Closer to Full Democracy." *The Vancouver Sun*, 5 December, 1994.

⁹⁰ "Chen Shui-Bian: The Man in the Eye of the Storm." *The Straits Times*, 19 March, 2000.

Taiwanese experiences and cultural practices as well as on the idea that Taiwan needed to be recognized as its own sovereign nation. One of the major ways in which the Taiwanese sought to distinguish themselves from their Han kinsmen was through their Aborigine roots. The DPP adopted this as part of its party platform by publicly supporting education and cultural reforms that would allow Aborigine tribes to retain their own language and culture. It should be noted that the aborigine roots was not the only factor that contributed to this emergent Taiwanese cultural and ethnic identity. The Taiwanese cultural identity also consisted of a highly religious population with Buddhism and Taoism being the two main religions. This is very different from Mainland China where religion is largely prohibited. In addition many Taiwanese people shared a sense of isolation from the Mainland and had virtually no shared common experience with the Chinese. The DPP sought to capitalize on these differences between Taiwan and the Mainland by constructing a Taiwanese identity that included facets of ethnic, cultural and political identity. Its hope was that if Taiwanese would identify with this version of a Taiwanese identity that the people would support de jure independence for Taiwan—a central DPP goal.

The year 1999 was a watershed moment in DPP history since at the 1999 DPP Party Congress the party adopted and passed its ‘Resolutions on Taiwan’s future’. These resolutions outlined the party's goals and its vision for Taiwan's future. The first paragraph of the resolution states: “following the 1992 general elections of the national legislature, the 1996 direct presidential elections, and constitutional reform to abolish the provincial government, Taiwan has become a democratic and independent country”.⁹¹ This opening statement puts the DPP’s position concerning the status of Taiwan at odds with the KMT and the PRC. The DPP argues that Taiwan is an independent country while the KMT and PRC argue that Taiwan is a part of China. The difference between KMT and CCP is that each sees itself as the legitimate government over all of China including Taiwan. Further proclamations in the document include clear statements of Taiwan’s independence and asserting that it is not a part of China. The DPP also rejects the ‘One China Policy’, as well as the ‘One Country Two Systems’ policies. These are important

⁹¹ *DPP Resolution on Taiwan's Future*. 1999, <http://www.taiwandc.org/nws-9920.htm>. (accessed on 08 Jan. 2015).

proclamations as it sets the DPP up as the ‘independence’ party in Taiwan. This resolution thus helped the DPP gain support amongst those who wanted de jure independence for Taiwan.

In its resolution the DPP further outlined its views on what the Taiwanese government should do in the future to improve the Taiwanese nation. The DPP wanted the government to expand its role and ties in the international community by obtaining international recognition and by joining the United Nations. Concerning cross-strait relations, the DPP argued for a constructive dialogue with the Mainland to improve understanding and economic cooperation. The DPP thus differs from the KMT in that it seeks Taiwan’s independent involvement in the international community rather than Taiwan replacing the PRC as an international actor. While the KMT took steps in this direction, its official party line had not changed. The KMT still adhered to its ‘One China Policy’ and saw the ROC as the legitimate government of all of China. While the DPP and KMT both want mutual understanding and economic cooperation with the Mainland, the DPP differs from the KMT in that the party wants this on equal terms, nation-to-nation, rather through eventual unification. In its resolutions the DPP also raises an interesting point. It maintains that “Taiwan is a sovereign independent country, not subject to the jurisdiction of the People's Republic of China. This is both a historical fact and a reflection of the status quo”.⁹² Whilst this is in some ways a repetition of Taiwan’s earlier stated independence it raises the point of the political status quo. The DPP’s basic position on Taiwanese independence is virtually identical to Lee Teng-hui’s statement that “the ROC has been a sovereign state since it was founded in 1912 [and] consequently there is no need to declare independence”.⁹³ This repackaged view on independence made the DPP more credible at the polls.

The DPP also proposed three areas of related reform. These were: the re-definition of national jurisdiction, structural revisions of the constitution, and the development of a new national identity. The DPP’s commitment to the development of a new national identity and the structural revisions of the constitution were signs that the DPP was committed to the idea of Taiwanese nationhood. These issues

⁹² *DPP Resolution on Taiwan's Future*. 1999, <http://www.taiwandc.org/nws-9920.htm>. (accessed on 08 Jan. 2015).

⁹³ Lee Teng-hui, Deutsche Welle Radio, 9 July, 1999, Deutsche Welle Radio.

figured prominently during Chen Shui-bian's presidency. The DPP also advocated changing the name of the ROC to Taiwan. Changing the name of the ROC to Taiwan was a symbolic gesture and would signify a step towards de jure independence. As a result it was highly opposed by many in the KMT and by the PRC government.

On the issue of ROC-PRC relations the DPP labeled the PRC as the 'greatest obstacle' to Taiwan's future. The PRC threat of war made most Taiwanese extremely wary to make a move towards Taiwanese independence. The DPP sought to diffuse ROC-PRC tensions in its resolutions document by arguing that the close proximity of Taiwan and the Mainland and its shared cultural origins make it impossible for hostility and isolation to continue indefinitely. As a result the DPP wanted to establish mutually beneficial cross-strait relations which were peaceful and on an equal footing. The emphasis was on the equal footing as the DPP wanted the Taiwanese nation to operate on an equitable state-to-state basis with the PRC. Passing the resolution on the future of Taiwan was also aimed at showing the public that the DPP was not an extremist party. It was meant to show that the DPP was more moderate and that the party would not endanger Taiwan by playing brinkmanship politics with the PRC.

Presidential Election:

Before the election the DPP published its 'DPP Year 2000 Policy Manifesto'. This manifesto outlined the party's vision for Taiwan's future. In it the DPP emphasized its fundamental values for governance that included: "Bottom-up public participation process in politics; Responsibility and accountability; Proactive and comprehensive risk management; [and] Political decisions based on the people's practical daily living experience".⁹⁴ The DPP also called for the development of multilateral security networks, promoting equal and peaceful relations with Mainland China that focused on practical issues. The manifesto further argued for the decentralization of the government giving more decision-making power to local governments as well as increasing democratic participation. As part of its economic policy the DPP also advocated increased transparency of its markets and a focus on Taiwan's

⁹⁴ *DPP Year 2000 Policy Manifesto*, 1999, <http://www.taiwandocuments.org/dpp03.htm> (accessed on 01 March, 2015).

high-tech industries. Other campaign promises included educational reform and improvements to social welfare and labor laws. The last proposal outlined called for improved environmental protection.

What was most notable about this manifesto however was that any type of independence was not mentioned. This was a strategic move meant to assure voters that the DPP was a more moderate party and that if elected Chen Shui-bian would not try to provoke a conflict with the PRC through formally declaring Taiwanese independence.

The 2000 presidential election was a three-way election. The candidates were Lien Chan who represented the KMT, James Soong Chu-yu who ran as an independent, and DPP's Chen Shui-bian. Significantly James Soong Chu-yu had originally been a KMT party member and supporter. He was also extremely popular within the KMT and with the people. When he was not given the party nomination he decided to run as an independent creating the People's First Party (PFP) in the 2000 elections. The PFP was a KMT splinter party. James Soong Chu-yu's independent candidacy split the KMT vote. He did so well in fact that it has been argued that he could have won the presidential election had the KMT nominated him as the party's candidate.

Geography was a significant factor in the 2000 presidential election with a clear split in party identification based on provincial origins and other relevant geographic indicators. In 1994 and 1995 two surveys were conducted showing distinct differences in how voters identified themselves according to their provincial origins, sub-ethnic identity and national identity. Those who supported the DPP were mainly those who self-identified as Taiwanese and who opposed unification. The KMT supporters included those who self-identified as Taiwanese and Chinese as well as the majority of people and families who fled from Mainland China in 1949. KMT supporters largely opposed any formal declaration of independence for Taiwan.

Another public opinion poll showed that support for the DPP ran 13% higher than for the KMT-PFP in southern Taiwan. More people living in southern Taiwan overtly self-identified as Taiwanese as compared to northern Taiwan. In contrast, the KMT and PFP had 24% more support in the northern part

of Taiwan (explained by the fact that Mainland Chinese exiles settled here in the latter 1940s).⁹⁵

As the race for the presidency heated up it became clear that Chen had a significant amount of support. Chen was the only candidate running for President who was born and raised in Taiwan.⁹⁶ Being a 'Taiwan native' helped him gain favor amongst those voters who self-identified as Taiwanese and lent credibility to his claims that he wanted to create a Taiwanese national and cultural identity separate of Mainland China. Despite having significant support Chen and the DPP did not have a majority. However since the KMT vote was split between two popular candidates Chen was able to carve out a sufficient plurality of votes. Even with the split vote, DPP victory was far from certain. But even with the split vote DPP victory was far from certain. This shows that while there was a distinct increase in voters who supported the DPP the majority of Taiwanese did not.

PRC involvement in the election:

The mainland watched closely as the Taiwanese presidential electoral campaign unfolded. The CPP had a vested interest in who won the elections since it feared what would happen if the DPP's Chen DPP party member, were elected president of Taiwan. The mainland much preferred a KMT president to a DPP one since the KMT party favored a unified China and supported the 'one China' policy. Chen and the DPP, on the other hand, were known to be fierce supporters of independence and the Chinese were adamant that the DPP should not win. The CPP saw a Chen Shui-Bian victory as running directly counter to their long-term interests in Taiwan.

Upon seeing that the polls favored DPP victory the Mainland tried to influence the election. The PRC government issued public statements warning Taiwanese voters "that electing Mr. Chen would mean hostilities between the two sides of the Taiwan Strait".⁹⁷ Several academics also feared hostilities would be the result of DPP victory. For instance Professor Li Jiaquan, former director of the Taiwan Research Institute under the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences stated in an interview that if Chen became

⁹⁵ Mily Ming-Tzu Kao, "The Referendum Phenomenon in Taiwan: Solidification of Taiwan Consciousness?" *Asian Survey* 44, no. 4 (2004): P.606.

⁹⁶ "Chen Shui-Bian: The Man in the Eye of the Storm." *The Straits Times*, 19 March, 2000.

⁹⁷ Mary Kwang. "Chen's Win Will Rule out Peace, Say Scholars." *The Straits Times*, 15 March, 2000.

president of Taiwan it was only a matter of time until war would break out between the PRC and Taiwan. The Taiwan Research Institute under the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences is a think tank located in the PRC. Chen was aware of these allegations and in order to gain more popular support he made sure to state clearly to the people of Taiwan that if elected president he would not declare Taiwanese independence. This was an important decision since Chen and the DPP had been committed to de jure independence for Taiwan. Chen recognized that any step the DPP made towards gaining legal independence would lead to conflict, so the party backed off in advocating this pro-independence line. This however did not make the DPP any less committed to promoting the Taiwanese national and cultural identity and its move towards eventually establishing Taiwanese nationhood.

Despite Chinese threats, on March 19, 2000, Chen Shui-Bian was elected president of Taiwan. A record number of voters cast their votes and the DPP victory ended 55 years of KMT rule. Many considered DPP victory a milestone for democracy in Taiwan because it showed a fair election and the transfer of power between two political parties. Chen Shui-Bian won the election with just under 40% of the popular vote while James Soong Chu-yu received just fewer than 37% and Lian Chan came in third with just over 23%. Xinhua, a major Chinese news outlet quoted the PRC's Taiwan Affairs Office which said that the election of a pro-independence candidate did not change the political situation, Taiwan was still a part of China.⁹⁸ Overall critics tend to stress the split KMT vote in accounting for Chen's election victory.⁹⁹

Victory:

Chen had thus won the highest office in Taiwan and it seemed like the eyes of the world (Taiwan, China, the United States and other countries) were on him. There was much debate as to whether or not he would keep his promise of not proclaiming Taiwanese independence. The first test was his inauguration speech. In it he lauded DPP victory not as the victory of himself or the DPP, but as the

⁹⁸ Willy W. Lam, "New leader offers olive branch to Beijing but warns: 'Taiwan must never become a second Hong Kong'; Defiant Chen crushes KMT." *South China Morning Post*, 20 March, 2000.

⁹⁹ Willy W. Lam, "Storm clouds gather over cross-strait ties." *South China Morning Post*, 19 March, 2000.

victory of the Taiwanese people and for democracy.

Keeping true to his word, in his inaugural address, Chen stated: “I fully understand that, as the popularly elected 10th-term president of the Republic of China, I must abide by the Constitution, maintain the sovereignty, dignity and security of our country, and ensure the well being of all citizens. Therefore, as long as the CCP regime has no intention to use military force against Taiwan, I pledge that during my term in office, I will not declare independence, I will not change the national title, I will not push forth the inclusion of the so-called "state-to-state" description in the Constitution, and I will not promote a referendum to change the status quo in regard to the question of independence or unification. Furthermore, there is no question of abolishing the Guidelines for National Unification (NUG) and the National Unification Council (NUC)”.¹⁰⁰ The National Unification Guidelines (NUG) was a process outlining the gradual unification of China and Taiwan. These guidelines were followed by the NUC, which was a government entity responsible for the promotion of unification with Mainland China.

Chen thus kept his word by reiterating his promise not to declare independence or in other ways seek to affect Taiwanese de jure independence. Chen’s rather weak stance on ROC-PRC relations was a source of criticism from his supporters. Many had hoped that despite his promises not to declare independence that he would at least stand up to the PRC in his speech. He also did not offer any specific proposals on how to solve the cross-strait conflict or how to improve Taiwan’s positions in bilateral negotiations with China.¹⁰¹ Despite disappointing some of his supporters concerning cross-strait relations Chen did mention his goals while in office. Foremost among these goals was fighting corruption. Chen’s career in politics had gained him the reputation as someone who was very much ‘above board’. Chen also wanted to reduce the influence of organized crime on politics and curb pollution and prostitution. In addition to these ambitious goals Chen also had to deal with allegations that members of the DPP party

¹⁰⁰ Shui-Bian Chen. *Taiwan Stands Up: Presidential Inauguration Address*, 2000, [http://china.usc.edu/\(S\(vp0nss55wvfm1kbu11v2nn45\)A\(cFef0oyzAEkAAAAANThhZWE5OWItMzg0MS00N2E0LTg1ZTgtYTY0NWM3ZmYyNDAXsqzE6IN5ymmiSuRACVYt93gM_-41\)\)/ShowArticle.aspx?articleID=1302](http://china.usc.edu/(S(vp0nss55wvfm1kbu11v2nn45)A(cFef0oyzAEkAAAAANThhZWE5OWItMzg0MS00N2E0LTg1ZTgtYTY0NWM3ZmYyNDAXsqzE6IN5ymmiSuRACVYt93gM_-41))/ShowArticle.aspx?articleID=1302). (accessed on 08 Jan. 2015).

¹⁰¹ Julian Baum. "What Makes Chen Shui-bian Formidable." *Far Eastern Economic Review* Vol. 163, no. 22 (2000)

had made ties with large corporations and organized crime.¹⁰² Many expected Chen's inauguration speech to be a lot more forceful concerning his views on de jure Taiwanese independence but overall his speech seemed to lack resolve.¹⁰³

Three major forces influenced Chen's equivocation during his inaugural address. First, Chen was trying to make a step forward towards acknowledged Taiwanese de jure independence. Second, Chen had to contend with ambivalence amongst the population, some of whom wanted unification with China, others whom wanted legal independence and still others whom were unsure and preferred maintaining the political status quo. At the same time Chen had to ensure that he retained public support since this was extremely important if he was to achieve any of his stated goals during his time in office. Third, Chen had to deal with the PRC and be very cautious in how he proceeded for a misstep could spark a war that his country would certainly lose. These three forces pulling Chen into opposite directions was likely the reason that his inaugural address lacked the resolve that many had expected.

First years in office:

One of Chen's first acts while in office was to resign from the DPP in May 2000. This was a major political move since Chen wanted his voters to know that he was serving the people and not just the DPP. It was also meant to send a message to the KMT. Chen wanted to show that he was intent on working with the KMT and hoped this move would remove some of the political polarization that had characterized the recent presidential election. At the beginning of his term, he achieved around 77% approval ratings. Despite high approval ratings Chen still had a weak power base. While the opposition voters were split during the presidential election, afterwards they often banded together to oppose the DPP political agenda. The KMT still controlled the Legislative Yuan including many branches of local government and even the armed forces. This made it very difficult for Chen to enact change. To bridge

¹⁰² Willy W Lam, "President-elect Chen Shui-bian Must Convince the Public Inexperience Will Not Stand in His Way; Forming Team First Challenge." *South China Morning Post*, 19 March, 2000.

¹⁰³ Veronica Lo. *Chen's Remarks Nothing New: MAC*, 2000. <http://www.taipetimes.com/News/front/archives/2000/06/29/0000041839>. (accessed on 01 March, 2015).

the gap between KMT and DPP Chen included many KMT members in his cabinet. This however failed and as a result he had to work with a cabinet that was divided and many from within his own party criticized his decisions. Tensions between the DPP and KMT were so strong that little was achieved during Chen's first year in office. The KMT refused to work with the DPP and issues such as nuclear power in Taiwan pitted the parties against each other. Polls showed that Chen's approval ratings dropped from 77% to 34%.¹⁰⁴

Despite his own struggles, the KMT suffered even more. The KMT first lost the presidency in 2000 and shortly after it lost its majority party status in the Legislative Yuan in 2001. This shows that despite many difficulties, the DPP platform was working as the DPP gained more and more political power. This DPP success suggests that its message of promoting the unique Taiwanese national identity was being positively received by increasingly larger parts of the Taiwanese population. To increase DPP support Chen and his party started working towards strengthening the Taiwanese national and cultural identity by undertaking 'nation building' projects. One example of the DPP's nation building efforts was near the end of Chen's first term in 2003. This is when the DPP mandated the inclusion of the name 'Taiwan' on the front cover of ROC passports from 2003.¹⁰⁵ Such moves were more prevalent in Chen's second term in office and illustrated Chen's continued commitment to advancing the cause of Taiwanese nationhood.

Cross-Strait Relations:

Chen's time in office was uneventful concerning cross-strait relations. The main sticking point in ROC-PRC relations during Chen's time in office was the issue of the 'One China Policy'. The PRC wanted Chen to embrace this policy while it went against Chen's own beliefs and those of the DPP. The Mainland stated that it refused to engage in cross-strait talks with the DPP until it publically accepted the

¹⁰⁴ Mark Landler. *Taiwan Chief Fails to Loosen Old Guard's Grip on Power*, 2001, <http://www.nytimes.com/2001/03/05/world/05TAIW.html>. (accessed on 04 March, 2015)

¹⁰⁵ Monique Chu. *ROC Passports Will Get Makeover*, 2003. <http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/taiwan/archives/2003/06/13/2003055047>. (accessed on 02 March, 2015).

‘One China Policy’. Chen tried to ease cross-strait relations in his inauguration speech but the CPP was not satisfied. In order for relations to improve the CPP wanted a commitment from Chen in defense of the ‘One China Policy’. In June 2000 Mainland Affairs Council Chairperson Tsai Ing-wen made clear the DPP’s stance on the ‘One China Policy’ in a press conference: "We will never accept the PRC's stance".¹⁰⁶

Instead of committing to the ‘One China Policy’, Chen focused on improving economic relations with the PRC. In 2000 the ROC government removed the ban on cross-strait travel and trade between the islands of the ROC and Mainland China. This policy was known as the ‘small three links’. It allowed travel from between the Taiwanese islands of Kinmen and Matsu and the PRC cities of Xiamen, Mawei and Quanzhou. The policy was formally introduced in January 2001 and allowed only residents of Kinmen and Matsu to establish trade with the Mainland after a 50-year ban.¹⁰⁷ In 2008 the ‘small three links’ were expanded and allowed all Taiwanese to enter China through the islands of Kinmen and Matsu.¹⁰⁸ This was one of the only events of cross-strait interaction during Chen’s presidency since the PRC chose not to have little with the ROC in the absence of Chen’s endorsement of the ‘One China Policy’. During Chen’s time in office, Taiwan’s trade with Mainland China reached \$46.32 billion in 2003. This represented a 23.3 percent increase over the previous year, and made up 17.1 percent of the total amount of foreign trade of Taiwan. As a result from 2003 onwards, Mainland China was the largest trade partner for Taiwan.¹⁰⁹ The fact that China became Taiwan’s largest trading partner showed the increasing economic interconnectedness between the ROC and the PRC. This could be used by the PRC in the future to exert economic influence over Taiwan.

¹⁰⁶ Veronica Lo. *Chen's Remarks Nothing New: MAC*, 2000. <http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/front/archives/2000/06/29/0000041839>. (accessed on 01 March, 2015).

¹⁰⁷ *The Small Three Links, Is New Outposts-Mainland Trade Law Practical?*, 2000. http://taiwaninfo.nat.gov.tw/ct.asp?xItem=17909&CtNode=103&htx_TRCategory=&mp=4. (accessed on 2 March, 2015).

¹⁰⁸ Shu-ling Ko. *Government Opens up the 'small Three Links' to China*, 2008. <http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/front/archives/2008/06/20/2003415229>. (accessed on 01 March, 2015).

¹⁰⁹ Yasuhiro Matsuda. *PRC-Taiwan Relations under Chen Shui-bian's Government: Continuity and Change between the First and Second Terms*, 2004. <http://www.brookings.edu/fp/Cnaps/events/matsuda20040523.pdf> (accessed on 06 April, 2015).

Referendum Law:

Taiwanese nation building and the strengthening of the Taiwanese national, cultural and political identity were important issues for Chen and the DPP. Central to these facets of identity was the principle on which the DPP was founded: self-determination. The DPP wanted to give the Taiwanese people the ability to decide their own future whether this meant unification with China or independence. However, there were no legal means for the Taiwanese people to do so. The constitution used in Taiwan during Chen Shui-bian's presidency had no provisions for referenda. As a result, the DPP tried to give the Taiwanese people the power of self-determination by passing a Referendum Law in November 2003. For many this was a sign of hope since a referendum gave the Taiwanese people more power to make decisions that affected the future of Taiwan. Even though the referendum law was an idea that originated with the DPP, the idea was very popular with KMT supporters, as well as those who had other political preferences. The referendum law was a very powerful political tool since it could be used to decide any matter, including that of declaring national independence. Since the DPP proposed the referendum law, most Taiwanese interpreted this as a unilateral move by Chen and the DPP towards proclaiming de jure Taiwanese independence.

The KMT initially opposed the referendum law as it feared it would cause political instability and antagonize the PRC. Since the referendum law theoretically could be used to vote on the matter of declaring Taiwanese independence, some feared that it would elicit a military response from the PRC. Soon after the announcement calling for a referendum law however, it turned out that the idea was very popular with the public. This left the KMT with few options. It could actively oppose the referendum law, stay silent on the issue, or actively support it. The KMT realized that it could not stay silent on the issue or reject it all together. This would have damaged the party's chances in future elections. Rejecting a referendum law would make the KMT seem opposed to democracy. As a result the KMT changed its stance on the issue from rejection to conditional support. The KMT's support was conditional since the KMT wanted to submit and pass its own version of the referendum law. This was an instance in which the

respective agendas of the KMT and DPP aligned since both wanted to gain the public support associated with passing a referendum law. The KMT however wanted to make sure that this law would not be used to advance DPP goals of legal independence.

The DPP and the KMT both worked on their own versions of what the referendum law would entail and how referenda would be held. The DPP's version of the referendum law included a 'discretionary' referendum clause. This meant that referenda could be held at anytime as decided upon by the government. In contrast, the KMT wanted a 'prescribed' referendum system. A prescribed referendum is based on strict procedures and legal preconditions as well as historic precedents. Prescribed referenda could only be held when the law required it and if all the conditions set out in the law were met. Conversely holding a discretionary referendum would not require any preconditions to be met. A discretionary referendum would thus give the government limitless discretionary power concerning the holding of referenda. Austin Ranney, an American political scientist and expert on political parties in the United States, argued that the discretionary referendum "is subject to no qualification at all and it is peculiarly exposed to the risk of exploitation for short-term political ends".¹¹⁰ Therefore the KMT strongly objected to the DPP discretionary referendum clause. If enacted this type of referendum could provide a legal and procedural basis for the DPP to hold referenda on the passing of a new constitution or on declaring Taiwanese independence. Both of these issues would threaten to provoke a military response by the PRC. The KMT therefore saw the DPP version of the referendum law as a potential threat to the national safety and political stability of Taiwan. The KMT thus wanted to prevent the DPP from achieving this type of influence and power in Taiwanese society since it feared this would lead to a formal declaration of Taiwanese independence. Both of these outcomes would be counter to KMT plans since the KMT sees the ROC as the government of all of China. The debate and passing of a referendum law shows the political maturation of Taiwan from 1986 to 2003. It shows that democracy was an increasingly important part of the Taiwanese political system.

¹¹⁰ Austin Ranney. *The Referendum Device* (American Enterprise Institute, 1981). P.21-22.

In the end the referendum law that passed was almost exactly the version proposed by the KMT. This was a missed opportunity for Taiwan since the law that was passed by the Legislative Yuan prohibited any referenda on changing the name, flag or national anthem of the Republic of China. Many of these were stated goals of the DPP and thus there was cause of disappointment when supporters learned that the referendum law would not apply to these important issues facing Taiwan. Immediately after the law had passed Chen announced he wanted to hold a referendum on the defense of Taiwan. Even more controversial was that Chen wanted to hold this referendum on the same day as the presidential election in which Chen was hoping to retain his presidency. This was done intentionally to underscore to voters it was Chen and the DPP who had called for the referendum law in the first place. This would show voters that Chen and the DPP were trying to make good on their promise of achieving de jure Taiwanese independence.

The referendum asked two questions. The first question was whether the Taiwanese people believed the ROC government should demand that the PRC forgo using military action against Taiwan. The second part to this question was that if the PRC did not agree to renounce military force, that voters believed Taiwan should improve its anti-missile defense systems. The second questions asked if the Taiwanese people thought the ROC government should engage with the PRC in negotiations to create peace and stability in Taiwan Straits.

These two questions made up the first referendum held in Taiwan. It took place on March 20, 2004. Despite the popularity of the referendum law, the referendum failed since the prerequisite conditions for a valid referendum were not met (less than 50% of the population cast their vote). While the referenda failed Chen and the DPP saw this as a step toward direct democracy in Taiwan.¹¹¹

Mily Ming-Tzu Kao, Adjunct Faculty at Mesa Community College, examined the referendum law in Taiwan. She found that it was vital for Chen's reelection to hold the defensive referendum. She argues that the referendum allowed Chen and the DPP to gain popularity because the opposition party

¹¹¹ David E. Hoffman, and Philip P. Pan. *Taiwan's President Maintains Hard Line*, 2004. http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A33076-2004Mar29_2.html. (accessed on 02 March, 2015).

would be credited with advancing democracy through the referendum movement. Further she suggested that holding a referendum could increase the legitimacy of the DPP government and, more importantly, it would allow Chen to bypass the Legislative Yuan for measures that the KMT would otherwise block. Kao argues that another important reason Chen held the referendum was because it would take power away from the government and give it to the people. This would, in turn, allow Chen and the DPP to gain more power since many of their policy proposals were popular. For instance the KMT would suffer greatly if it would try to block legislation that would help protect the environment. As a result the DPP would thus be able to force through legislation by holding a referendum. Last Chen hoped it would increase voter turnout and Chen needed all of his supporters to come out to vote.¹¹² Overall, the most significant reason for passing the referendum law was to create a legal framework through which Taiwanese could in the future vote on the issue of de jure independence. Any future vote on independence would be legitimized by the passage of previous referenda, as this would indicate a there was already self-determination in Taiwan. Chen's passing of the referendum law was thus arguably the most important step the DPP took towards eventual legal independence for Taiwan. It provided future generations of Taiwanese with the legal toolkit to decide their own fate.

2004 Presidential Election:

The 2004 presidential election was highly contested. While Chen had secured his first presidency due to a split in the KMT vote this election saw a unified KMT ticket opposing Chen. Chen also faced other challenges such as his failed economic policies during his first term. Data released by the Ministry of Economic Affairs showed that Taiwan's economic growth rate was down to -2.2% in 2001, the year after Chen was elected. In addition the unemployment rate rose to the highest it had been for two decades.¹¹³ Chen had however gained much traction with his nation building efforts.

¹¹² Mily Ming-Tzu Kao, "The Referendum Phenomenon in Taiwan: Solidification of Taiwan Consciousness?" *Asian Survey* 44, no. 4 (2004): P.612.

¹¹³ Department of Statistics, Ministry of Economic Affairs, Taiwan, R.O.C., ChartA-1, *Growth Rate of Major Countries*, <http://2k3dmz2.moea.gov.tw/gnweb/statistics/statistics01/reports/A1.xls>, and Chart A-14, *Unemployment Rate of Major Countries*, <http://2k3dmz2.moea.gov.tw/gnweb/statistics/statistics01/reports/A14.xls> (accessed on 12 March, 2015).

plane hit the buildings; an accompanying caption reads ‘Bin Laden's masterpiece’ which supposedly suggests that Chen is just as bad as the Saudi terrorist. Figure 2 is a poster comparing Chen to Saddam Hussein, the Iraqi dictator. The poster likens Chen to Saddam Hussein since the Iraqi dictator committed election fraud. The little speech bubble coming from the dictator’s mouth reads: ‘I am Hussein you will all do as I say’. The comparison to Hitler shown in Figure 3 drew strong criticism from the Jewish population in Taiwan. The KMT subsequently apologized for the ad and removed it. The KMT however refused to apologize to Chen.¹¹⁵ The severity of the negative campaign ads and the KMT refusal to apologize shows the extent of political polarization. The KMT and its supporters seemed to become more extreme in their anti-DPP views and the DPP was becoming more anti-KMT in its views as seen in Chen’s referendum law and other nation building projects.¹¹⁶

On March 20, 2004 Chen Shui-bian was re-elected by a narrow margin. He won by less than 23,000 votes out of approximately 12.9 million total votes cast. The KMT and its presidential candidates Lien Chan refused to accept the results and called for a recount. Chen and the DPP supported the recount and the results showed that Chen would serve a second term as President of the ROC.¹¹⁷ Chen and the DPP’s victory in the 2004 presidential election show the growing strength and influence of the DPP. Chen was able to defeat a unified opposition and gain more than 50% of the popular vote.¹¹⁸ When first elected in 2000, Chen garnered less than 50% of the vote. Chen’s higher electoral numbers suggests that Chen’s nation-building projects were working and that more Taiwanese were supporting the ‘pro-independence’ party. Another possibility is that the Taiwanese people wanted more stability.

Second term in office:

After his reelection Chen faced many of the same issues he faced during his first term. The referendum law and a proposed change to include ‘Taiwan’ on the new passports of all citizens of the

¹¹⁵ "KMT Apologizes about Hitler Ad -- but Not to Chen." *Taipei Times*, 13 March, 2004.

¹¹⁶ Jean-Pierre Cabestan. "Specificities and Limits of Taiwanese Nationalism." *China Perspectives* Vol. 91, no. 1 (2005): P.34-45.

¹¹⁷ Chieh-yu Lin. "Chen Backs Calls for Recount of Votes." *Taipei Times*, 24 March, 2004. *Taipeitimes.com*, Online (accessed on 02 March, 2015).

¹¹⁸ Dafydd Fell. *Party Politics in Taiwan: Party Change and the Democratic Evolution of Taiwan, 1991-2004*. London: Routledge, 2005. P.14

ROC caused moderate Taiwanese to be concerned that Chen was growing bolder regarding Taiwanese independence. In an interview with the *Financial Times*, Chen discussed some of the major challenges facing Taiwan. First was the split in national identity. This was the biggest challenge according to Chen since the issue of whether Taiwan was a part of China or not was highly polarized. Chen believed that if this issue was resolved it would be a great advance in the crafting of Taiwanese national identity.

The second major challenge, to Chen, was the constant fighting between the DPP and the KMT. This prevented meaningful cooperation.¹¹⁹ This issue was strongly related to the first issue since Chen believed that if the KMT and the DPP would share the same national identity that politics would become less polarized and the Taiwanese government could, in turn, become more effective in getting things done. These issues took center stage during Chen's second term in office. As a result, from 2004 through 2008, Chen's policies showed even more pronounced favor towards nation building and the strengthening and promotion of the Taiwanese national identity.

Taiwanese Nation Building:

An integral part of Chen's political agenda was the promotion and strengthening of Taiwanese identity – this included the multiple facets of cultural, political and national identity. Chen urged the Taiwanese people to be united behind Taiwanese nationhood that was inspired by Taiwanese culture and politics. In order to achieve this he focused policy efforts on promoting Taiwanese culture.

Political rivals, such as Lien Chan, chairman of the KMT, accused Chen of 'desinifying' Taiwan. This involved undoing the work of Chiang Kai-shek and his son as well as removing some Chinese elements from Taiwanese society. Lien Chan specifically criticized Chen's educational policies, which emphasized the teaching of Taiwanese culture and history, rather than Chinese culture and history.¹²⁰ Critics often cited DPP cultural policies and economic reforms as evidence. Chen and his education minister promoted a controversial program for educational reform relating to history. Known as the

¹¹⁹ Kathrin Hille. *Interview Transcript: Chen Shui-bian*, 2006. <http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/b8af3b80-6a53-11db-8ae5-0000779e2340.html#axzz3OFinUqQR>. (accessed on 08 January, 2015).

¹²⁰ Xinhua, *'Desinification' unacceptable - Lien Chan*, 2005. http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/english/doc/2005-04/29/content_438619.htm. (accessed on 06 April, 2015).

'Getting to Know Taiwan' textbooks, these were textbooks that focused on Taiwan's unique history. Chen included these textbooks in the Senior High School history curriculum. As a result a new course was developed that focused on Taiwan's 'Domestic' history. The purpose was to emphasize the uniqueness of Taiwan's culture.¹²¹

Another part of the educational reform enacted by Chen was focusing more on Aborigine education. Many DPP members advocated that Taiwan was different from China in part because of centuries of intermixing of Han Chinese and indigenous Aborigine tribes. This is where Chen and the DPP ventured to emphasize a separate ethnic identity for the Taiwanese. To emphasize this unique ethnic identity. Chen and the DPP significantly expanded government funding for Hakka and other aboriginal cultures. Examples of government support went to television and radio broadcasting in Aborigine languages as well as increased access and funding for Aborigine language education and cultural centers.

The DPP accelerated its nation building efforts in December 2004 when it focused on the symbolic identity issue of the name 'Republic of China'. Calls for name rectification were issued and the DPP advocated changing the name ROC to 'ROT', Republic of Taiwan. Chen and the DPP also instigated other name changes in order to desinify Taiwan. The process of 'desinicization', the removal of Chinese elements in Taiwanese society was important in the process of promoting the unique Taiwanese cultural identity. Most of these name changes were relatively minor until 2007 when DPP changed the names of government owned enterprises. In February 2007 Chen's administration changed 'Chunghwa Post' to 'Taiwan Post' and 'Chinese Petroleum Corporation' to 'Taiwan CPC Corporation'.¹²² Other examples include the change in nameplate on embassy cars in Panama. In March 2007 the ROC national emblem was removed and the words 'Embassy' and 'Taiwan' were added to the nameplates.¹²³

¹²¹ Dafydd Fell, Henning Klöter, and Bi-yu Chang. *What Has Changed?: Taiwan before and after the Change in Ruling Parties*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2006. P.187-206

¹²² Hsui-chuan Shih. "Chen Pushes Corporate Name-change." *Taipei Times*. 09 Feb. 2007. *Taipeitimes.com*, Online (accessed on 02 March, 2015).

¹²³ *Embassies in LatAm Replace Name Plates*, 2007. <http://www.chinapost.com.tw/news/2007/03/26/105531/Embassies-in.htm>. (accessed on 02 March, 2015).

Perhaps the most controversial campaign undertaken by the DPP was its campaign against the ‘cult of Chiang Kai-shek’ from 2006 to 2007. In late 2006 the DPP changed the name of Chiang Kai-shek International Airport to Taiwan Taoyuan International Airport.¹²⁴ Then, in 2007 the Ministry of Defense removed all Chiang Kai-shek statues from its military bases. The DPP also removed a large statue from the Kaohsiung Culture Centre. Perhaps the most insulting to the KMT was that the DPP renamed Taipei’s Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Hall and christened it Taiwan Democracy Memorial Hall.¹²⁵ The DPP argued this was promoting democracy in Taiwan and cited Chiang’s reign during the ‘White Terror’ as reasons why he should not be honored. Many KMT members however perceived these changes as attacks on Chinese culture in Taiwan.

The DPP’s campaign against the ‘cult’ of Chiang Kai-shek was met with KMT-led protests. Thousands joined the KMT in demonstrations in Taipei shouting: ‘Long live Chiang Kai-shek’. The protesters gathered to recognize and honor Chiang’s contributions to Taiwan. They denounced the DPP’s anti-Chiang campaign. Ma Ying-jeou who was running for president spoke during the protest and conceded that Chiang Kai-shek should be held responsible for the 2/28 Incident and the White Terror. But he also argued that his contributions to Taiwan should not be ignored.¹²⁶ This shows that the issue of Taiwanese identity was a very controversial one as the DPP sought to emphasize the separate Taiwanese identity while the KMT was looking to promote a shared Taiwanese-Chinese identity.

The DPP even made changes to Taiwan’s postage stamps. Phil Deans, Deputy Vice Chancellor and Provost at Richmond the American International University in London, illustrates in his analysis that during KMT rule postage stamps were used to portray Chiang Kai-shek as a virtuous leader as well as the KMT’s economic achievements. After martial law was lifted and Taiwan democratized the designs changed. The DPP created stamps that promoted the distinct Taiwanese culture and identity and which

¹²⁴ Jimmy Chuang. "'Chiang Kai-shek' Airport Enters Dustbin of History." *Taipei Times*, 7 Sept. 2006. *Taipeitimes.com*, Online (accessed on 02 March, 2015).

¹²⁵ Flora Wang, Rich Changand, and Hsui-chuan Shih. "CKS Statues' Removal Nears Completion." *Taipei Times*, 6 Feb. 2007. *Taipeitimes.com*, Online (accessed on 02 March, 2015).

¹²⁶ Yan-chih Mo. "Thousands Protest Anti-Chiang Campaign." *Taipei Times*, 1 April, 2007. *Taipeitimes.com*, Online (accessed on 02 March, 2015).

also emphasized that Taiwan was not a part of China.¹²⁷ This was significant as it showed how far the DPP went to promote distinctly separate-from-China Taiwanese cultural and national identity. The fact that the KMT reversed the change in postage stamps after Ma Ying-jeou became president in 2008 shows how important the China connection was to the KMT.

The clearest movement by the DPP towards promoting the unique Taiwanese national and political identity during Chen's presidency was in 2006 when Chen announced that the National Unification Guidelines (NUG) would cease to apply. The National Unification Guidelines was a process outlining the gradual unification of China and Taiwan. Many feared that abolishing the NUG meant Chen was breaking his pledge he made in his first inauguration speech in 2000. Chen went even further and also announced the next day that the National Unification Council (NUC) was also abolished.¹²⁸ The NUC's role before its abolishment was the promotion of unification with Mainland China. (such critics restated the standard fear that such moves would precipitate war). Over a year later in the spring of 2007 Chen went even further in antagonizing the PRC when he abandoned the *Five Noes* he made during his inauguration speech. Instead he declared: 'Taiwan wants independence, wants name rectification, wants a new Constitution and development'.¹²⁹ Abolishing the NUG and NUC, as well as breaking his *Five Noes* can be interpreted as acts of brinkmanship politics by Chen and the DPP.

Scandal and Corruption:

While Chen was increasingly successful in promoting a unique Taiwanese national identity he was also faced increasing legal troubles. In 2006, just two years after being reelected, Taiwanese prosecutors investigated Chen and his family for evidence of corruption. In late 2006, the prosecutors' office stated it already had enough evidence to prosecute the president but that it had to wait until he was no longer in office since he was protected by presidential immunity. Instead of going after Chen,

¹²⁷ Phil Deans. "Isolation, Identity and Taiwanese Stamps as Vehicles for Regime Legitimation." *East Asia* Vol. 22, no. 2 (2005): 8-30.

¹²⁸ Taipei Representative Office in the UK, Press Division. *President Chen Announces National Unification Council and Guidelines Are to Cease*, 2006. <http://www.taiwanembassy.org/content.asp?mp=132&CuItem=2499>. (accessed on 02 March, 2015).

¹²⁹ "Chen Declares "Four Wants and One Without"" *China Post*, 04 March, 2007. *Chinapost.com.tw*, Online (accessed on 02 March, 2015).

prosecutors filed corruption charges against his wife Wu Shu-chen and several former aides. The specific charges focused on the misuse and misappropriation of state funds.¹³⁰ These and other allegations were leveled against Chen and damaged his credibility.

2008 Election and indictment:

The 2008 presidential election was between KMT candidate Ma Ying-jeou and DPP candidate Frank Hsieh. The constitution prevented Chen from running again. Despite the popularity of Chen's nation building projects it was not enough to help DPP candidate Hsieh secure DPP victory. Ma Ying-jeou won the election with slightly less than 60% of the popular vote. To many in Taiwan this signaled a change in the preference of the Taiwanese electorate. While Chen had spent his last term promoting de jure independence for Taiwan and the promoting of the Taiwanese national identity, Ma Ying-jeou and the KMT took a more pro-China stance. In an interview with *Newsweek* magazine in late 2005 Ma affirmed that the KMT's eventual goal was unification with the Mainland.¹³¹ The following year during his trip to the United Kingdom he made a statement supporting the return to the '1992 Consensus'. The 'Consensus' referred to an agreement between the PRC and the ROC to disagree about the legal and political status of the ROC versus the PRC. Both sides acknowledged that there was only "One China," but both sides had different interpretations. Ma's victory thus suggests that the Taiwanese electorate was edging towards a pro-unification stance.

To further tarnish the DPP reputation and add to their defeat, Chen Shui-bian and several of his family members were indicted and imprisoned for corruption and money laundering. Chen was given a life sentence and fined NT\$200 million (US\$6.1 million). His civil rights were also revoked because he violated the Punishment of Corruption Act, the Money Laundering Control Act and the Taiwanese Criminal Code. Chen's son, Chen Chih-chung, was also indicted and sentenced to two years and six months in jail. He was fined a total of NT\$150 million (US\$4.8 million) for helping his parents wire

¹³⁰ "Taiwan's Chen in Corruption Case." *BBC News*. 03 November, 2006. *News.bbc.co.uk*, Online (accessed on 01 March, 2015).

¹³¹ Jewel Huang. "Ma's Cross-strait Comments Are 'nonsense': Lee." *Taipei Times*, February 21, 2006. *Taipeitimes.com*, Online (accessed on 01 March, 2015)

money to overseas bank accounts. Chen's daughter-in-law, Huang Jui-ching, was given a slightly lighter prison sentence. She was sentenced to twenty months in prison but also fined NT\$150 million for money laundering. Wu Shu-chen, Chen's wife, was also indicted for taking bribes and political donations totaling over NT\$310 million (US\$10 million). In addition to family members, some people on Chen's staff such as presidential aides, lawyers, and other friends were also charged and convicted of similar crimes.¹³²

While the loss of the presidency and the indictment of Chen might suggest a comprehensive defeat for the DPP, this was not the case. The DPP remained popular and influential in Taiwanese politics. This shows that their campaigns focused on promoting and strengthening the Taiwanese national identity still had significant impact on Taiwanese society and would continue to do so. Since his incarceration, Chen Shui-bian has faced increasing health complications. In January of 2015 he was released on medical parole.

Taiwanese Party Identification:

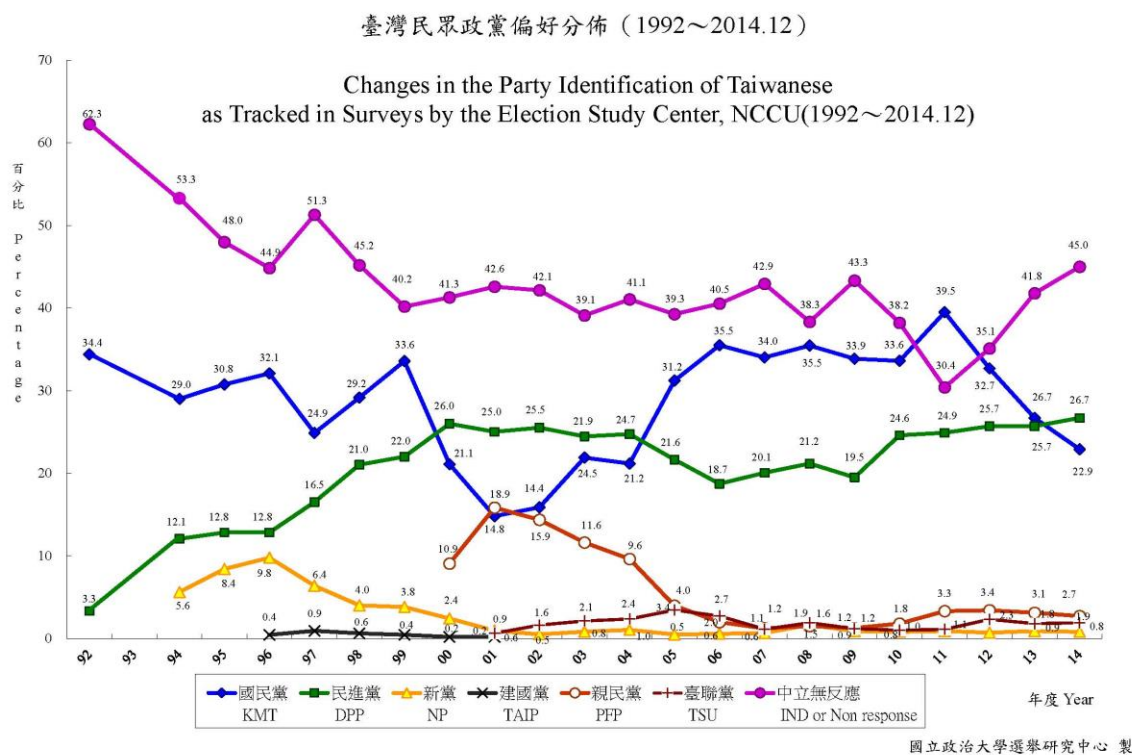
The twenty-one years since the lifting of martial law in Taiwan had thus seen major political change. The country's political system had matured from a single-party military dictatorship to a multi-party democracy with fair and contested elections. It had further seen the broadening of the political spectrum to include an opposition party that supports Taiwanese de jure independence. This was a radical change from the military dictatorship, which only tolerated support for Taiwanese 'recovery' of and unification with the Mainland. The 2000s also saw significant nation building efforts by the DPP that promoted the unique Taiwanese cultural, political and national identity. Another major change in events was the indictment of DPP president Chen Shui-bian.

All of these developments significantly impacted Taiwanese party preferences and the process of democratization of Taiwan. To quantify how these events translated into political support (or party preference) the Election Study Center at National Chengchi University in Taipei conducted surveys starting from 1992 through 2014 tracking respondents' political party identification. Specifically, the survey asked which political party respondents identified with and were required to choose only one

¹³² "Chen Shui-bian Gets Life." *Taipei Times*, 12 September, 2009. *Taipeitimes.com*. Online (accessed on 01 March, 2015).

(among seven options, six of which corresponded with a political party). The seventh option was ‘independent’ or the option not to respond. The survey thus quantifies how political, economic and social policies instigated by the DPP and the KMT translated into popular support.

Figure 2 Changes in Party Identification of Taiwanese



sources: Election Study Center, N.C.C.U., important political attitude trend distribution

Figure 4 shows how party identification changed between 1992 and 2014. The three main responses to focus on are the ‘Independent / non-response’, the KMT and the DPP. The KMT and the DPP are the two main political parties in Taiwan, and have been since 1987. It is telling that every year from 1992 through 2014, with the exception of, the majority of respondents identified as ‘independent’ or with a ‘non response’. This is important because it shows that on average over 40% of the population can be categorized as swing votes. They could vote for the KMT, the DPP, or any other party.

The study makes no distinction between ‘independent’ and ‘non-response’ responses, nor does it record the reason why voters choose to vote ‘independent’ or ‘non-response’. As a result one can only

speculate why voters would vote independent or not respond. It could suggest that since the KMT and DPP are on opposite sides of the political spectrum concerning the unification debate that many Taiwanese have not made up their minds yet on this issue. It could however also mean that many Taiwanese choose not to participate in national politics. This can also have many different reasons.

When looking at the DPP, it is noteworthy that in 1992 only 3.3% of respondents identified with the party. This was only six years after the DPP was founded and it was also just after the electoral defeat of 1991. The DPP was defeated by a large margin in the 1991 due to its adoption of an extreme stance for declaring independence. In the following years the data clearly shows that the DPP learned from its mistakes and as it became a more moderate party it gained more popular support. It is therefore remarkable that Chen was elected president in 2000 when only 26.7% of population identified with the DPP party. Chen was able to win because he adopted a more moderate stance on the unification issue and because he promised not to antagonize the PRC. It is likely that this allowed Chen to gain enough of the 'independent' or 'non-response' votes to defeat his electoral opponents.

The rate of respondents identifying with the DPP after the 2000 elections mirrors the success of Chen's policies. Between 2000 and 2003 there is a slight decrease in how many survey respondents identify with the DPP. This is likely due to the fact that the DPP was not able to achieve most of its policy objectives due to constant fighting with the KMT. Between 2003 and 2004 there is a slight uptake in DPP party identification. This could be the result of the passing of the referendum law, which was popular amongst the Taiwanese people. It was also a victory for Chen since the DPP had called for a referendum law in the first place.

In 2004 party identification with the DPP was higher than KMT party identification. Part of the lack of popularity for the KMT can be attributed to the negative campaigning. One of the main reasons that the DPP did not gain much popular support during either of Chen's terms as president was due to the DPP's weak economic policies and increased unemployment.

The year 2006 was an important one for the DPP and for party identification for several reasons.

This was the year that Chen started to more aggressively focus on the promoting of the Taiwanese cultural and national identity. Despite the corruption and money laundering allegations his nation building policies and the desinicization of Taiwan resulted in increased DPP party identification. From 2006 through 2008 there is an increasing trend in DPP party identification suggesting that its pro-Taiwan message was gaining more traction. Even after Chen's indictment and conviction on corruption charges, the DPP's party identification numbers held strong and, for each successive year from 2009 through 2014, more people have identified with the DPP party. 2014 was also the year in which a record amount of respondents identified with the DPP. This suggests that the DPP was largely successful its nation building projects, or that the nation-building projects translated into more popularity with the voters.

The KMT party identification trend-line is very erratic and irregular. Among poll respondents, 33.6% identified with the KMT in 1999, the year before the presidential election. Based solely on these numbers it seems evident that the KMT would win. KMT victory in the presidential election was prevented when the KMT split the vote between two popular candidates. One of the candidates, James Soong, founded the Peoples First Party (FPF) and this led to a significant decrease in party identification with the KMT. What caused the continued decrease in party identification was much essentially intra-party libel during the elections. Su Tseng-chang, Taipei County commissioner and DPP campaign manager for the 2004 presidential reelection bid, remembered that during the 2000 elections the KMT and FPF tried to discredit each other.¹³³ This made both parties and candidates unpopular during and after the elections. The data suggest that those who supported the FPF later switched back their party identification to the KMT, as the decline in FPF identification from 2001 through 2006 corresponds to an increase in party identification with the KMT. The other political parties received very little public support and very few identify with these parties. As one would expect, the KMT and the DPP have been the two dominant political parties in Taiwan since the early 1990s and remain so through 2015. The continued popularity of the DPP despite its recent electoral defeat and the indictment of their two-term president illustrates that

¹³³ Pat Gao. *Presidential Election 2004*, 2004, <http://taiwanreview.nat.gov.tw/ct.asp?xItem=942&CtNode=1337&mp=1>. (accessed on 03 March, 2015).

the efforts to promote and strengthen a unique, largely separate-from-China, Taiwanese national and cultural identity were discernibly successful in increasing popular support for the DPP.

After the lifting of martial law in 1987, Taiwan rapidly transitioned into a modern democracy. This was accompanied by determined efforts by the DPP to promote a unique Taiwanese cultural and national identity, with the long-term goal of Taiwanese de jure independence. Between 1986 and 2008 the KMT changed from being the sole ruling party to being one of the two dominant political parties in Taiwan. The DPP increased its political influence between 1986 and 2008 and its presidential candidate Chen Shui-bian was a symbol of hope for many Taiwanese who wanted legal independence. Chen's nation building policies were largely successful as by 2008 when his second term as president was over, 48.4% of the population overtly self-identified as Taiwanese. This was the first year that more people on Taiwan self-identified as Taiwanese rather than as both Chinese and Taiwanese. Despite this success Chen and the DPP did not manage to bring about de jure Taiwanese independence. Their rather weak stance and maintenance of the status quo in ROC-PRC relations was a disappointment to many. Constant conflict with the KMT in the Legislative Yuan prevented the DPP from enacting many of its policies and their weak economic policies ultimately led to their defeat in the 2008 presidential election. Overall however the DPP slowly gained more popular support as indicated by the upward trend of DPP party identification. This suggests that their nation building projects were increasing in popularity amongst the Taiwanese population. Also apparent is that support of the DPP continued to grow despite the indictment of Chen Shui-bian and members of his family and staff.

Chapter 4

The Unification Debate

Decades of foreign occupation and years of martial law under KMT rule prohibited the expression of the Taiwanese cultural and national identity, thereby driving it underground. Strife between considerable elements of the Taiwanese, who wanted political inclusion, and the one-party rule KMT led to the founding of the DPP. After the lifting of martial law in 1987 other political parties formed as well. The two main political parties in Taiwan from 1986 through the present are the KMT and the DPP. The central issue on which the parties disagree is also, significantly, the central issue influencing Taiwanese national identity: that is, whether or not Taiwan is a part of China (or if China is a part of Taiwan). Strongly related is the question of whether the people living in Taiwan identify culturally as Taiwanese, Chinese, or both.

These two issues are inextricably linked and survey data collected on these issues reveal that between 1992 and 2014 a stronger sense of overt self-identification as Taiwanese has developed. This suggests that the nation building efforts by the DPP were successful to the extent that they led more people to identify with Taiwan's unique cultural identity. However it could also suggest that the democratization of Taiwan allowed people to begin expressing what they felt anyway more openly. Support for the DPP could be a reflection of deep and long-lasting trends and identities. This increased support for the Taiwanese cultural identity however has not resulted in an equally strong desire for Taiwanese independence. As of 2014, more than one third of the Taiwanese population is unsure if they prefer independence or unification, and in total as of 2014 over 85% prefers to maintain the status quo at least for the foreseeable future. This means that while a stronger Taiwanese cultural (and perhaps ethnic) identity has developed, the population is not sure if this unique Taiwanese identity is to exist as a part of China (e.g. as a province), or as a sovereign nation. Thus the DPP's efforts at promoting and

strengthening the Taiwanese cultural and national identity may well have accelerated rate in Taiwanese self-identification.

Conversely, the movement towards de jure independence does not match the rate of increase in Taiwanese cultural self-identification. This shows that the political aspirations of the Taiwanese are much more cautious when viewed in comparison to their rate of cultural self-identification. This cautious approach to the future of Taiwan is likely—among several relevant factors—a result of perceived PRC hostility if Taiwanese tries to gain independence.

Unification versus Independence:

When looking at the unification debate it is important to first define the terms. From the ROC perspective, “unification” between 1949 and 1971 meant unification with Taiwan as the legitimate government of China. After 1971 when Taiwan lost its recognition in the United Nations this changed. Without international recognition it became clear that the world no longer saw the ROC as the real government of China. As a result of China’s military and economic development during this time it was also less and less likely that Taiwan would be able to take back the Mainland by force. This resulted in a fundamental change concerning the unification debate. From the perspective of the international community, and increasingly, Taiwan, unification started to mean unification with the PRC as the legitimate government of Mainland China and Taiwan. Terms of possible future unification have been debated between the PRC and ROC but no consensus has been reached. In this paper unification is interpreted as the integration of the PRC and the ROC on equal terms in which both parties are satisfied (or not satisfied) but under which both parties agree to unification.

“Independence,” while seeming a more straightforward concept, also has multiple meanings. Most commonly independence for Taiwan is interpreted as the creation of a new nation that has full sovereignty and international recognition. However since Taiwan already enjoys de facto independence

the term can also be interpreted as de jure independence. This is how the independence is used throughout this paper.

To examine the debate of “unification” versus “independence” and where the Taiwanese population stands on the issue, the Election Study Center at National Chengchi University in Taipei conducted surveys from 1994 through 2014 asking respondents their views on “unification” with the PRC versus “independence” for Taiwan. The survey spanned 21 years and started in 1994 (around the time that the DPP started to organize more effectively and become a viable opposition party). The survey, therefore, chronicles the change over time of how Taiwanese viewed the unification debate and how the attitudes of the population as a whole changed over time.

There were seven options respondents could choose from when asked which option they preferred concerning Taiwan-PRC relations. The first option was “unification as soon as possible” (UNF - shown in red). This option called for immediate unification with the mainland but it was not specified whether this would be on PRC or ROC terms. Despite this distinction the viewpoint overall indicates a strong cultural, ethnic, political and national identification with the Mainland and advances the viewpoint that Taiwan is inherently part of China.

The second option was de jure independence as soon as possible (IND – shown in dark green). This option indicated a strong sense of Taiwanese cultural and national identity and a radical point of view due to a degree of disregard for the safety and longevity of the ROC.

The third response was to maintain the status quo and move toward unification in the future (SQU – shown in dark red). This was a more moderate view that suggested that ties between China and Taiwan were strong enough to warrant future unification. However the point of view shows a desire to move towards unification in the future without specifying in the time frame—thus those supporting this point of view might want a change of circumstance before achieving unification. But the specifics were not given as to what these changes would have to be. Overall this point of view advances the idea of a Chinese or shared Chinese-Taiwanese identity. It is also not specified whether or not this eventual unification would

be on ROC terms or on PRC terms.

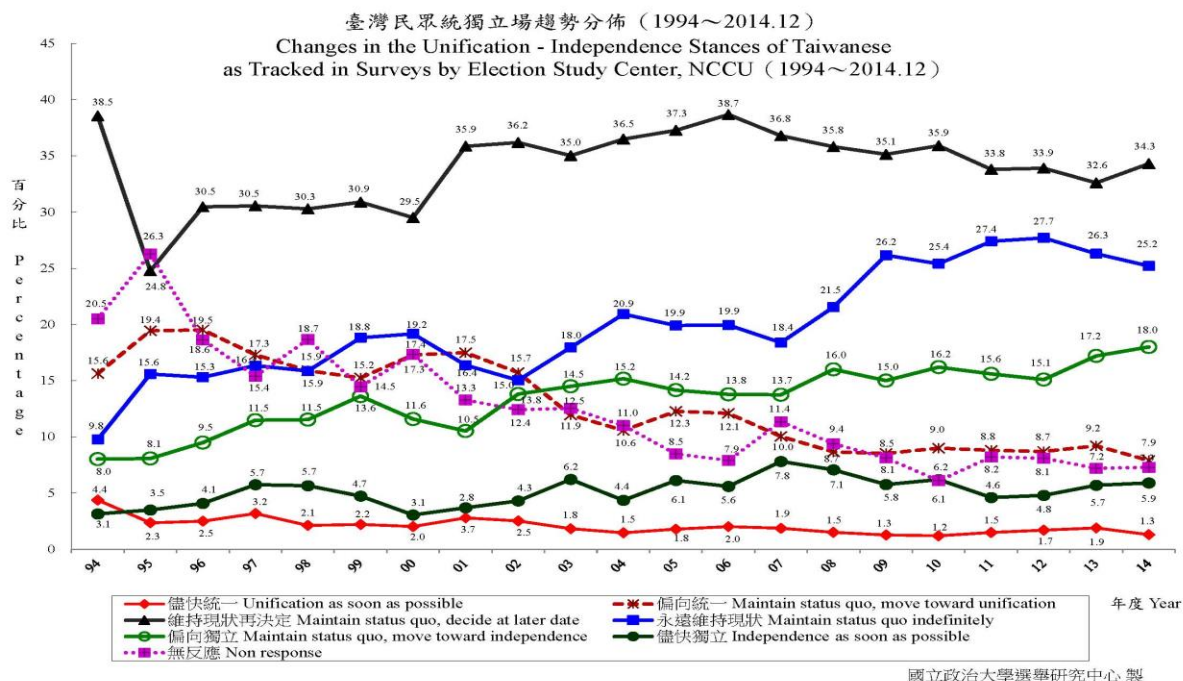
The fourth option was to maintain the status quo and move toward legal independence in the future (SQI – light green). This viewpoint is the opposite of the previous one and advances the idea that Taiwan should become an independent nation, but that under the current circumstances Taiwan cannot become independent. One can argue the main reason for this is the cross-strait tensions and the PRC threat of military force if Taiwan declares independence. This will be explored in depth later in the chapter.

The fifth option was to maintain the status quo and decide in the future between acknowledged independence and unification (SQL – shown in black). Taiwanese favoring this response, one could surmise, have likely not yet made up their mind on the unification debate. While respondents do not provide the reasons for this indecision there are several possibilities for wanting to decide later. For instance, the previously mentioned military threat but also that unification or formal independence would depend on the terms of the agreement. Therefore this point of view is indicative of a cautious approach to the unification debate.

The sixth option was to maintain the status quo indefinitely (SQ – shown in light blue). This point of view is perhaps the most pragmatic of all responses. While Taiwan's political status is currently very complicated, Taiwan is prospering economically and it has de facto independence. Therefore those adopting this point of view likely do not want to change the status quo for the fear that it might lead to worse circumstance.

The seventh option was the non-response (NR – shown in purple). There are several reasons why Taiwanese would not respond to the survey and since these reasons are not given it is difficult to assess what, if any preferences, these respondents have.

Figure 3 Changes in the Unification - Independence Stances of Taiwanese



sources: Election Study Center, N.C.C.U., important political attitude trend distribution

As figure 5 shows, there is significant change in attitude among Taiwanese concerning the topic of “independence” versus “unification”. Based on the answer choices available to the respondents and the responses given the Taiwanese population can be classified into 3 main groups. The first group is the ‘hardliners’ who want immediate unification or independence. The second group is the status quo group, who want to keep things as they are indefinitely, and move towards eventual recognized independence or eventual unification. The third group is the non-response group, those who did not respond to the survey.

First: there are the ‘hardliners’ who are located on either end of the political spectrum. They are shown in red and dark green and want either unification or formal independence as soon as possible. This group overall shrank as a percentage of the population between 1994 and 2014 dropping from 7.5% to 7.2%. The ‘hardliners’ are also part of the population who are least likely to change their mind on the unification issue. Further we see an increase in percentage of respondents wanting de jure independence

as soon as possible from 3.1% in 1994 to 5.9% in 2014. There is also a decrease in those wanting unification as soon as possible, from 4.4% in 1994 to 1.3% in 2014.

Political scientists T. Y. Wang and I-Chou Liu considered the shift in Taiwanese identification and how it relates to independence. They maintain that this change in identification and political preference was not just a shift in the way the Taiwanese voters think; instead they also attribute this change to the coming of age of the next generations or Taiwanese. Wang and Liu argue that the younger generation identifies more with Taiwan's current issues of independence and national identity, and that they are less interested in their Han Chinese ancestry.¹³⁴

A survey conducted by Taiwan Brain Trust in April of 2014 support their contentions and suggests that the increased desire for legal independence as soon as possible is likely to have come from the younger generation of Taiwanese.¹³⁵ Those born after the 1980s did not witness the economic and political progress Taiwan experienced under KMT rule. These younger generations are therefore less likely to appreciate KMT contributions to the development of Taiwan. Similarly, the younger generations have experienced the looming military threat of the PRC such as during the 2000 presidential election when the PRC threatened war if the DPP won the election. Perceived hostility can lead to alienation, and this alienation can be a reason why more of the younger generation Taiwanese want de jure independence from the PRC. Chinese hostility therefore could contribute to younger generations preferring recognized independence and could also explain generational shifts in Taiwanese cultural and national identity.

There are however other factors of influence such as place of birth and popular culture. For instance many KMT supporters fled from the Mainland to Taiwan during the 1945-1949 period but they were originally born on Mainland China. For this older generation, their home was China and they were forced to leave it due to the communist revolution. Conversely the younger generations were born on Taiwan and grew up in Taiwan. The new generations' experiences were thus primarily life as Taiwanese.

¹³⁴ T. Y. Wang, and I-Chou Liu. "Contending Identities in Taiwan: Implications for Cross-Strait Relations." *Asian Survey* Vol. 44, no. 4 (2004): P. 568-590.

¹³⁵ Chris Wang. "Survey Finds Young Adults Worried about Unification." *Taipei Times*. 03 April, 2014. *Taipeitimes.com*, Online (accessed on 22 Feb. 2015).

They also grew up with popular culture such as pro-Taiwan radio, television, movies and books. This is likely to have impacted the younger generations to more overtly self-identify as Taiwanese.

A second group is the ‘status quo’ group. This consists of a total of 71.9% of the population in 1994, and grew to 85.5% in 2014. It is worth noting that the vast majority of the population prefers the status quo. Even more telling is the fact that from 1994 through 2014, the most popular viewpoint on the issue of “independence” versus “unification” is the ‘Maintain status quo, decide at a later date’ group. This suggests that many Taiwanese are unsure about what they want for the future of Taiwan and instead want to decide at a later date. One can argue this is the most popular opinion concerning Taiwanese “independence” versus “unification” due to the fact that many Taiwanese feel they do not have enough information to make this decision. This group shows that the vast majority of Taiwanese are politically cautious and do not want to commit to either independence or unification. The cause for this political caution will be explored later in this chapter.

Almost equally telling is the second most popular point of view, the ‘maintain status quo indefinitely’ group. Initially this view was not very popular, but the popularity of this point of view grew from 9.8% in 1994 to 15.7% in 2002. After 2002 it became the second most popular opinion held by Taiwanese and it remained the second most popular through 2014. This stance is revealing not only because of its possible meaning, but also due to its popularity. In 2014, 25.2% of the respondents wanted to maintain the status quo indefinitely. Part of the reason can be attributed to the military threat posed by the PRC, and also the uncertainty of whether or not the United States or its allies will come to Taiwan’s aid if war broke out across the Taiwan Straits.

There are however also other possible explanations. For instance, as Dafydd Fell argues, when voters are asked what the most important political issues those centered on Taiwanese identity are often not ranked as most important by voters, even though they are often highly important to politicians.¹³⁶ This suggests that many Taiwanese are more interested in other issues such as reducing government

¹³⁶ Dafydd Fell. *Government and Politics in Taiwan*. London: Routledge, 2012. P.133

corruption, increasing social welfare, and tax rates that are on the forefront in politics of other democracies. This point of view therefore likely rests on the belief that the political status quo for Taiwan seems to be working and any change in this status quo might lead Taiwanese to be worse off. This is similar to previous KMT president Lee Teng-hui's view on Taiwanese independence. In a radio interview with *Deutsche Welle*, Lee stated "the Republic of China has been a sovereign state since it was founded in 1912. Moreover, in 1991, amendments to the Constitution designated cross-strait relations as a special state-to-state relationship. Consequently, there is no need to declare independence".¹³⁷ This stance on Taiwanese independence, while supported by a significant part of the population in 1994, became more prevalent through 2014.

Another part of the Taiwanese population can be defined as the politically 'moderate' group. This group prefers the status quo and can be divided into two sub-factions: those wanting eventual de jure independence and those wanting eventual unification. Perhaps at the root of this point of view is the apprehension that rapid political and economic change can have severe adverse reactions on a nation's economy and the welfare of its people. Examples of this are abundant in the former Soviet Socialist Republics but perhaps the most telling example is that of the Russian Federation, the former center of the Soviet Union. After the fall of the Soviet Union Boris Yeltsin enacted far-reaching economic and political reforms including privatization and the liberalization of the market and foreign trade. While advocated as 'shock therapy' and theorized to bring about the swift transition to a market economy, this set of reforms brought about a major economic crisis. During the first five years of the 'shock therapy' from 1990 through 1995, Russia's GDP and industrial output both declined by more than 50%.¹³⁸ There are plenty other examples of the dangers of rapid political and economic transitions and if Taiwan were to become independent or unify with China, this could lead to some severe political or economic changes. If Taiwan became de jure independent and the PRC, in turn, closed off trade with Taiwan, this could severely impair the Taiwanese economy. In 2014 the PRC was Taiwan's largest export market, making up over 40 per

¹³⁷ Lee Teng-hui, *Deutsche Welle Radio*, 9 July, 1999, *Deutsche Welle Radio*.

¹³⁸ Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. "Russian Federation: Law on the Continental Shelf." *International Legal Materials* Vol. 35, no. 6 (1996): P.1498-1538.

cent of Taiwanese exports. The PRC was also Taiwan's second largest import partner, second only to Japan.¹³⁹

These moderate points of view suggests that given the current political and economic situation Taiwanese do not want sudden changes and prefer to wait for either a change in circumstances or prefer gradual change.

The third group the respondents can be divided into is those who did not respond to the survey questions. The problem with a 'Non Response' answer is that it is not recorded why respondents did not reply. There can be several reasons for Taiwanese not to respond to this survey, including but not limited to: fear of political persecution, uncertainty, apathy or a myriad of other reasons.

The reasons for a 'Non Response' respond, if discerned, would be very informative and give a clearer picture as to the Taiwanese national sentiment on the issue of "independence" versus "unification." In 1994, 20.5% of the population had a 'Non Response', after a spike in 1995, it follows a downward trend to 7.3% in 2014. Between 1994 and 2004, 'Non Response' answers constituted more than 10% of the total responses. If the 'non response' part of the population favored either of the "unification" points of view, or either of the "independence" points of view, this would have a large impact on the overall picture of how overt Taiwanese self-identification changed between 1994 and 2014.

PRC Military Threat:

A major uncertainty involved in the unification debate is how the PRC will react. The official stance of the PRC government, outlined in its February 2000 "White Paper on China's National Defense," states: "if the Taiwan authorities refuse, sine die, the peaceful settlement of cross-Straits reunification through negotiations, then the Chinese government will have no choice but to adopt all drastic measures possible, including the use of force, to safeguard China's sovereignty and territorial integrity, and achieve

¹³⁹ Peter Drysdale. *Can Taiwan Survive in the Shadow of China?* 2015, <http://www.eastasiaforum.org/2015/01/19/can-taiwan-survive-in-the-shadow-of-china/>. (accessed on 06 April, 2015).

the great cause of reunification”.¹⁴⁰ Thus, if Taiwan was to declare independence and the PRC pledged to take military action, which could well result in a war. Military conflict between China and Taiwan would likely involve the United States, due to public commitments the United States made to Taiwan’s security as outlined in the Taiwan Relations Act, signed by Congress and President Carter in 1979.¹⁴¹ U.S. involvement in the conflict would likely draw its regional allies into the fray, such as Japan and the Philippines. In addition, China’s allies would likely enter the war to support the PRC, and so Russia could become involved. In sum, this could potentially lead to World War III. As David Lampton, director of China Studies at Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies, aptly put it in an interview with PBS “prior to the World Trade Center bombing and its aftermath, if you asked where in the world could two major nuclear powers come into conflict, I would have said that the only probable place -- and it is probably still the only probable place -- where two big nuclear powers could come into conflict would be the Taiwan Strait”.¹⁴² This suggests that a major factor contributing to the support of the status quo, and the desire to postpone decisions concerning formal Taiwanese independence is uncertainty about military retaliation from the PRC.

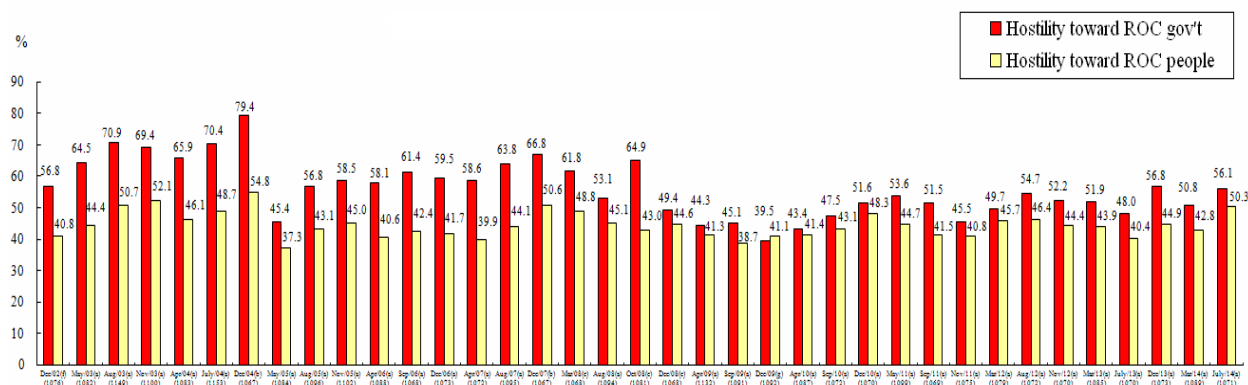
The level of PRC hostility toward the ROC as perceived by the Taiwanese is not to be underestimated. The Mainland Affairs Council of the ROC combined the results of seven individual surveys taken by different organizations (between late 2002 and mid-20014) polling Taiwanese on how they felt the PRC displayed hostility towards the ROC government and the ROC people. In these aggregated surveys, respondents were asked whether they felt the PRC showed hostility towards the ROC government and the Taiwanese people. Respondents could answer either ‘yes’ the PRC displayed hostility against the ROC government and / or its people, or ‘no’ the PRC did not. Hostility was defined as being threatening and ‘unfriendly’. The term hostility was not further defined to include specifics such as military threats.

¹⁴⁰ People's Republic of China. Ministry of Defense, September 2000. http://www.gov.cn/english/official/2005-07/27/content_17524.htm.

¹⁴¹ “Taiwan Relations Act,” *Statutes at Large* H.R. 2479, 96 (1979).

¹⁴² David Lampton et al. *Why the Taiwan Issue Is so Dangerous*, <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/china/experts/taiwan.html>. (accessed on 19 February, 2015).

Figure 4 Perceived PRC hostility towards the ROC



Source: Mainland Affairs Council of the Republic of China

As Figure 6 shows, from late 2002 through mid 2014, a large percentage of the Taiwanese population felt that the PRC displayed hostility towards their government and even to ROC civilians. In December 2004, 79.4% of respondents felt PRC hostility toward the ROC government; this spike was likely caused by the reelection of incumbent DPP president Chen Shui-bian. The percentage of the population feeling PRC hostility, while certainly fluctuating during the 12 year period, nevertheless showed a large part of the population felt threatened by the PRC either for the safety of civilians or that of their government. According to these surveys, in May 2005 Taiwanese people felt the least amount of Beijing hostility towards the Taiwanese people. During this time, however, 37.3% of the population still perceived PRC hostility against the people of Taiwan, and 45.5% felt hostility against the ROC government. This means that during the rest of the period surveyed, even more people felt a sense of hostility coming from the mainland. Perceived PRC hostility is thus likely to have an impact on the expression of support for the Taiwanese national identity, in that it can significantly dampen the expressed popular demand for de jure independence and Taiwanese nationhood. It is possible that more Taiwanese want immediate de jure independence, or to maintain the status quo and move toward eventual independence, but that people are afraid of answering these surveys either for personal safety reasons or for the safety of Taiwan. A unified Taiwan demanding independence could be the spark that starts a war in the Taiwan Straits. This could lead to people not voting their actual preference.

The PRC's military build-up and its offensive capabilities directed at Taiwan further spurred Taiwanese perception of PRC hostility and likely impacted their voting preferences. For instance the Taiwanese Ministry of National Defense in 2013 released a report stating that by 2020 the PRC will have the military capabilities to invade Taiwan and that no foreign power, including the United States, would be able to stop its military forces.¹⁴³ The Brookings Institution researched the Chinese military buildup. Brookings' findings concluded that the Chinese military, the People's Liberation Army (PLA) "has been zealously developing and deploying new types of short- and medium-range missiles as well as intercontinental and cruise missiles. It also continues to improve the accuracy of its missiles and their ability to penetrate the [Taiwanese] missile defense system. The PLA has stationed over 1,400 tactical ballistic and cruise missiles along Mainland China's southeastern coastlines, creating the ability to launch multiple salvos of precision strikes against Taiwan".¹⁴⁴ What makes the threat more credible is that China's growing military expenditure is sharply on the rise while Taiwan's defense budget has been declining. Taiwan's official 2013 defense budget contracted to NT \$312.7 billion (U.S. \$10.5 billion) from NT \$317.3 (U.S. \$10.6 billion) in 2012. According to the Congressional Research Service, Taiwan's 2013 spending on defense represented 2.1 percent of its gross domestic product (GDP), a record low matched only in 2006 and 2011.¹⁴⁵

What should be stressed is that Taiwanese perspectives on the "unification" versus "independence" debate remain in constant flux. Even if hypothetically the Taiwanese people would reach a national consensus in 2015 such that they would want de jure independence from China, this national consensus could be overturned if it becomes attractive for Taiwanese to be a part of China. If unification were to happen on ROC terms for instance, this could bring about a dramatic shift in political opinion on the Taiwanese unification issue. Similarly political allegiances can shift if economic benefits are to be

¹⁴³ Jenny W Hsu. "Taiwan Says China Threat Is Growing." *Wall Street Journal*, 09 October, 2013. *Wsj.com*, Online (accessed on 03 March, 2015).

¹⁴⁴ Andrew N.D. Yang, *Mainland China's Military Development and Taiwan's Countermeasures*, 2011, <http://www.brookings.edu/research/papers/2011/08/chinas-military-development-yang>. (accessed on 03 March, 2015).

¹⁴⁵ Craig Murray. *Taiwan's Declining Defense Spending Could Jeopardize Military Preparedness*, 2013. http://www.uscc.gov/sites/default/files/Research/Taiwan's Declining Defense Spending Could Jeopardize Military Preparedness_Staff Research Backgrounder.pdf. (accessed on 06 April, 2015).

gained. If it becomes very lucrative for the Taiwanese population to become a part of China then this could also perhaps alter public opinion on the unification question. If Taiwan were to declare independence, assuming that the Chinese would continue all existing economic ties with Taiwan, the ROC's economy would likely not be influenced. As outlined by Murray Scot Tanner, Senior Research Scientist at the Center for Naval Analysis and previously for the RAND Corporation, the Chinese have a strong 'weapon' of economic coercion they can use against Taiwan. While the Chinese have not yet threatened economic warfare if the Taiwanese declare independence, in his paper on 'Chinese Economic Coercion against Taiwan' Tanner highlights the vulnerability of the Taiwanese economy. The PRC could sanction Taiwan's imports, exports, investments, as well as engage in outright economic disruption, damage and sabotage. Since the PRC is Taiwan's largest trading partner, it would not have to use military force to defeat Taiwan, instead it could wage an economic war.¹⁴⁶ Therefore even if the Taiwanese people reached a consensus on the unification debate, this does not mean that public opinion on the issue is set in stone and that it cannot or will not change in the future.

Chinese, Taiwanese or Both?

Inextricably linked to the issue of "independence" versus "unification," is the issue of Chinese versus Taiwanese cultural and national identity. Alan M. Wachman, a scholar of East Asian politics and international relations specializing in cross-strait relations, conducted a study of factors shaping Taiwanese identity, according to the Taiwanese. The following four points were the main factors that shaped Taiwanese identity between 1987 and 1992. He argues that China's isolation from the Mainland and the repeated political, military and economic subjugation of Taiwan to foreign powers separated the Taiwanese from the Chinese due to differences in experience. Wachman further argues that there was friction between the KMT and the Taiwanese that brought the Taiwanese closer together and which emphasized their differences with the Mainlanders. In addition, Wachman found that the Taiwanese

¹⁴⁶ Murray Tanner. *Chinese Economic Coercion Against Taiwan*, 2007, http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/monographs/2007/RAND_MG507.pdf. (accessed on 06 April, 2015).

believed their culture and consciousness differs from Han culture and Chinese consciousness. He also noted there was an intense sense of “frustration resulting from the authoritarian nature of KMT rule, which seemed to favor Mainlanders and their interests over the Taiwanese, and which, in an effort to socialize Taiwanese as Chinese, inadvertently reinforced mutual perceptions of difference”.¹⁴⁷ Even though the nationalists who came from the Mainland shared the Han ethnicity with many of the local Taiwanese, a divide started to grow between the Mainlanders who came to Taiwan and the Han Chinese who had called Taiwan their home for generations. All of these reasons strengthened the Taiwanese national consciousness and the desire for some Taiwanese to express their own unique cultural and national identity.

To monitor the changes in Taiwanese/Chinese self-identification of the Taiwanese population the Election Study Center at National Chengchi University in Taipei conducted surveys from 1992 through 2014 asking respondents to self-identify. The survey spanned a considerable 22-year time period. Similar to the previous polls this survey started around the time of that the DPP became established as a viable opposition party.

In the survey respondents were asked whether they identified as Taiwanese (shown in green), Chinese (shown in blue) or both (shown in purple). There were also those who chose not to respond (shown in black). The fact that such a survey was held and that opinions on the matter were so divided clearly illustrates the complicated nature the identification debate among the Taiwanese population. To identify as Taiwanese is equated with, in considerable part, the viewpoint that Taiwan has a separate cultural, political and national identity from China. Self-identifying as Taiwanese also suggests support for Taiwanese independence, either as soon as possible or eventually.

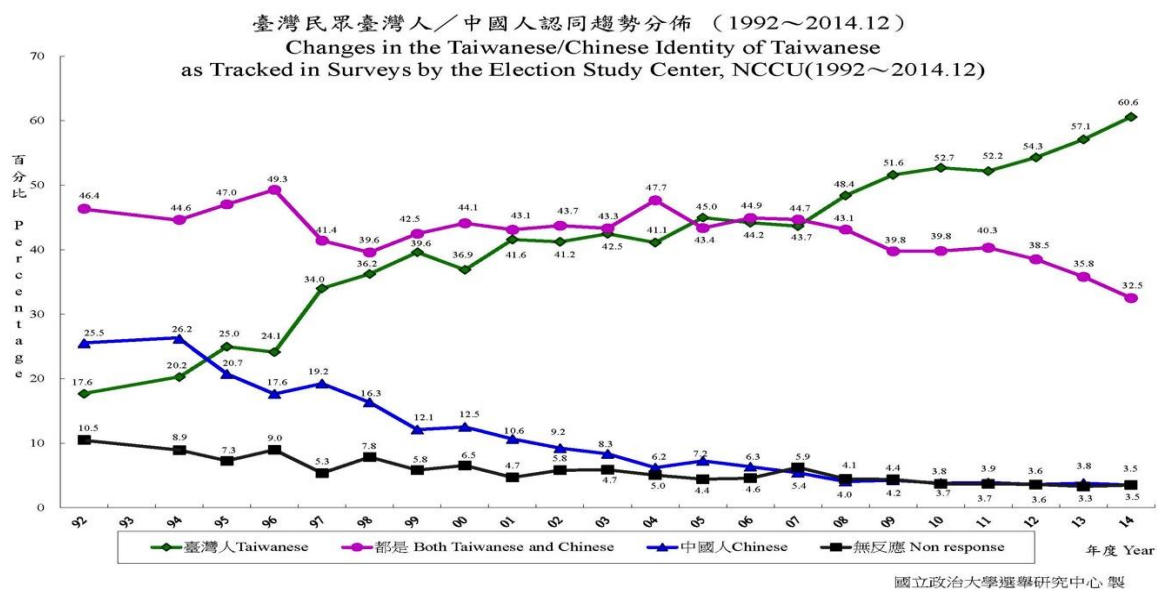
To identify as Chinese can be interpreted as seeing Taiwan as a part of China. This point of view supports the idea that Taiwan and China share an ethnic, cultural, political and national identity and that Taiwan is a part of China. It also indicates the desire for immediate or future unification with China.

¹⁴⁷ Alan Wachman. *Taiwan: National Identity and Democratization*. Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1994. P.92

Conversely, it could also indicate that one identifies only ethnically as Chinese, but that otherwise one supports Taiwanese independence. Identification as Chinese is thus more difficult since it could indicate ethnic, political, cultural or national identification, or a combination thereof. This point of view included respondents who believed that Taiwan was the legitimate government of China and those who believed the PRC was the legitimate government of China. This view is thus not held only by those ‘hardliners’ who want unification with China on PRC terms, but it also includes those who want unification on Taiwanese terms.

Self-identification as both Taiwanese and Chinese was defined as those supporting the idea that there is a strong connection between being Taiwanese and being Chinese. This viewpoint supports the shared ethnic and cultural identity of Taiwan and the PRC. It is however unclear whether such respondents identify more as Taiwanese or Chinese and thus also unclear whether they support eventual unification or the status quo.

Figure 5 Changes in the Taiwanese/Chinese Identity of Taiwanese



sources: Election Study Center, N.C.C.U., important political attitude trend distribution

This crucial self-identification question elicited very different and more distinct groups of

responses than the independence question. The number of 'Non Response' declined significantly, and remained the least common answer of respondents. The fact that there was a much higher response rate suggest that the issue of Taiwanese / Chinese self-identification is more clear-cut and that the Taiwanese are more certain of their self-identity as compared to the political future of Taiwan.

As figure 7 shows, in 1992, 46.4% of the population identified at both Taiwanese and Chinese and this was the most popular identity choice. Identifying as Chinese was the second most popular response constituting 25.5% of the respondents. The third largest group of respondents identified as Taiwanese constituting 17.6% of the population. This clearly shows that in 1992 overt self-identification as Taiwanese was not very popular. The strong sense of identification as both Taiwanese and Chinese suggest that many identified with the cultural and ethnic heritage of Mainland China. It is also likely that in the early 1990s many who originally were born on the Mainland and had fled to Taiwan with Chiang Kai-shek were still alive.

This however changes rapidly between 1992 and 2014. The biggest change in identity amongst respondents is found in the Taiwanese identity group. While in 1992 only 17.6% of the respondents self-identified as Taiwanese, the respondents identifying as Taiwanese grew to just over 60% in 2014. This increase in Taiwanese self-identification suggests that the DPP nation-building projects discussed in chapter 3 were successful in promoting and strengthening the Taiwanese national and cultural identity. It is however difficult to ascertain whether DPP nation-building policies shaped this identity shift in society, or whether a societal identity-shift helped shape government policy. Most likely however both of these forces were at work.

Nai-teh Wu, researcher at Academia Sinica published a study in 2005 on the identity change in Taiwan between 1998 and 2000. Wu's study takes into account the effects of material interests offered by unification with China, and the sense of cultural and ethnic belonging offered by the Taiwanese identity on the change of national identity. The results of this study suggest that the sense of cultural and ethnic belonging provided by the Taiwanese identity has a stronger effect on people changing their identity from

Chinese or ‘both’ to Taiwanese, than the material benefits have of convincing people to identify as Chinese.¹⁴⁸ The uninterrupted growing trend in people identifying as Taiwanese also suggests that this trend is likely to continue in the future.

The other identity group that shows significant change between 1992 and 2014 is the group identifying as Chinese. This part of the respondents shrinks from 25.5% in 1992 to just 3.5% in 2014. This could be explained in part by the stronger sense of Taiwanese identity that led some of the respondents to change their minds. Another contributing factor is that many people who were born in Mainland China and who had come to Taiwan after World War II were aging and passing away. The problem with this data is however that the same people were not surveyed every year. Therefore it is possible that many who identified as Chinese died between 1992 and 2014 and that therefore a larger part of the population identify as Taiwanese or Taiwanese and Chinese in 2014, as compared to 1992. It is also possible that those who previously identified as only Chinese changed their identification to Taiwanese and Chinese.

In addition those identifying as Chinese are also likely to shrink due to the ageing and dying older generation of Mainland Chinese who fled to Taiwan in 1949. Historian Gary Davison in his research on the history of Taiwan found that in January 1949 every day approximately 5,000 Mainland Chinese fled to Taiwan and that a few years later the total number of Mainland Chinese had reached around 2 million.¹⁴⁹ Nicholas D. Kristof, correspondent for the *New York Times*, opined in 1991 that “while the Communists [had] been unable to remove the older generation from power, that is what [was] happening on Taiwan. This transition [was] now under way and [would] have far-reaching implications for the island's political development”.¹⁵⁰ Davison’s evidence combined with Kristof’s argument helps to explain why the group identifying as Chinese is shrinking. These nearly two million Mainland Chinese who fled to Taiwan in 1949 were already in their eighties or older in 1991 when Kristof wrote his article. Thus by

¹⁴⁸ 吳乃德, Nai-Teh Wu. "麵包與愛情: 初探台灣民眾民族認同的變動," *Miànbāo Yǔ àiqíng: Chūtàn Táiwān Mínbào Mínbào Rěntóng De Biàndòng*," *Academica Sinica 中央研究院* 9, no. 2 (December 2005): P.5-39.

¹⁴⁹ Gary Marvin Davison. *A Short History of Taiwan: The Case for Independence*. Westport, CT: Praeger, 2003. P.82

¹⁵⁰ Nicholas D Kristof, "A Mainland Generation Now Being Ushered Out." *New York Times*. 15 February, 1991. *Nytimes.com*, Online (accessed on 04 March, 2015).

2014 this older generation of Mainland Chinese who had fled to Taiwan had most likely passed away.

The last trend showing a change in respondents' identity from 1992 to 2014 is the group identifying as both Taiwanese and Chinese. This group fluctuates slightly but overall follows a declining trend. It decreases from being the largest identity group, constituting 46.4% in 1992 to 32.5% in 2014. In 2014 the Taiwanese and Chinese identity group is the second largest group of respondents. Those respondents identifying as Taiwanese are almost twice as many as those identifying as both Taiwanese and Chinese. Overall a significant part of the respondents still identify as both Taiwanese and Chinese, showing that, despite the strengthening and promotion of the unique Taiwanese cultural and national identity, there are still many who identify at least partly as Chinese.

The fact that almost a third of the population on Taiwan still identifies as part Chinese shows how intertwined the two cultures really are. A major link is the shared Han ethnicity. The current Taiwanese cultural identity still includes many Chinese elements, such as a common language (although with different dialects), and this complicates the issue of self-identification for many Taiwanese. Furthermore, self-identification as both Taiwanese and Chinese can also be explained by the KMT's political point of view. Namely the KMT posits that the ROC is the real China, and that Taiwan is a part of China. Thus those identifying as both Taiwanese and Chinese could support this point of view, since they would want eventual unification with the Mainland, but on ROC terms.

Combined Trends:

When taking these two sets of data together the following trends become apparent. First, there is a dramatic increase in respondents self-identifying as Taiwanese, and there is also an increase in respondents wanting independence (either immediate independence, or maintaining the status quo and eventually gaining independence). However the relationship between identifying as Taiwanese and the desire for recognized independence is not proportional. The dramatic increase in respondents who self-identified as Taiwanese between 1992 and 2014 suggest one would see an almost equally steep increase in a desire for de jure independence. While there is a 12.8% increase in those wanting recognized

independence between 1994 and 2014 (calculated by the percentage change in those wanting independence as soon as possible plus the percentage change in those wanting to maintain the status quo but move towards independence), this pales in comparison to the increase in those overtly self-identifying as Taiwanese, which grew 40.4% between 1994 and 2014.

This disproportional relationship between self-identifying as Taiwanese and wanting de jure independence is explained by the fact that the majority of the population (59.5% in 2014) wants to maintain the status quo either indefinitely or decide at a later date what to do. This suggests that while more people overtly self-identify as Taiwanese this does not mean that self-identification as Taiwanese means wanting formal independence. People could thus identify as Taiwanese but consider Taiwan a part of China.

A current example of this can be seen in Guangdong province, where Cantonese is mainly spoken and where people identify as a 广东人, a person from Guangdong province, as well as a 中国人, a Chinese. The many respondents still identifying as both Taiwanese and Chinese reinforce this concept. In the same study on Taiwanese Identity change mentioned earlier, Nai-teh Wu finds that while Taiwanese cultural identity seems to be strengthening and stabilizing between 1998 and 2000, Taiwanese nationalism does not. Wu defines Taiwanese nationalism as voters who consider Taiwan independent and who never want unification even if there were no social differences with the Mainland. He attributes this to the fact that many survey respondents identify themselves as 'pragmatists'. This means preferring the status quo, while accepting a move towards eventual unification or independence.¹⁵¹ This pragmatic approach highlights the political caution displayed by the Taiwanese electorate.

The lack of a proportional relationship between the two responses can also be explained by other factors. For instance, as was made clear by PRC statements during the 2000 Taiwanese presidential election any declaration of independence would lead to war.¹⁵² The threat of war can be a significant factor in determining voting preferences. It does not make sense for a person who wants to avoid war to

¹⁵¹ Rich Chang. "'Taiwan Identity' Growing: Study." *Taipei Times*. 12 March, 2006. Taipeitimes.com, Online (accessed on 23 Feb. 2015).

¹⁵² Mary Kwang. "Chen's Win Will Rule out Peace, Say Scholars." *The Straits Times*, 15 March, 2000.

vote for a certain candidate or platform if they believe that victory will result in military conflict.

Therefore the ongoing military threat posed by the PRC, and the uncertainty of what will happen if independence is proclaimed can have a significant effect on how individuals view de jure independence.

It therefore does follow that the majority of the population prefers the status quo since the maintaining the status quo means no war.

Overall when considering survey data there are several limitations. While the surveys used provide a clearer picture as to what Taiwanese prefer for the future of Taiwan and how they self-identify, it is not clear whether their responses are sincere or strategic. The answers to these survey questions could be very different if the respondents were asked their preference for independence or unification assuming there was no military or other threat to Taiwan's sovereignty or economy.

One of the headlines in the *Taipei Times* on January 26, 2015 read: 'Taiwanese identity hits record level'. The article showcased the results of a December 2014 survey conducted by the National Chengchi University. The survey showed that the number of people who overtly self-identify as Taiwanese has peaked and is the highest it has ever been.¹⁵³ This supports the previously highlighted survey data, which clearly shows that from 1992 to 2014 a stronger sense of overt self-identification as Taiwanese has developed. In 2014, 34.3% of the population still had not made up its mind on the future of Taiwan. Another 51.2% of the population was leaning towards either eventual unification or eventual independence but was not sure in what time frame this should happen.

A possible solution to this national indecision is the removal of the threat of military force by the PRC and clarification as to what the terms of unification would be. These trends suggest that while more and more people are self-identifying as Taiwanese there are still many unsure about whether they want Taiwan to be a sovereign nation or part of China. From 1994 to 2014 a smaller proportion of the population wants immediate change. In 2014 only 7.2% of the population wanted immediate formal independence or immediate unification. On the whole however Taiwanese wanting de jure independence

¹⁵³ Wei-chen Tseng and Wei-han Chen. "'Taiwanese' Identity Hits Record Level." *Taipei Times*, 26 January, 2015. *Taipeitimes.com*, Online (accessed on 04 March, 2015).

outnumber those wanting unification, indicating the strengthening of the Taiwanese cultural identity and a (be it smaller) shift towards the popular desire of legal Taiwanese independence.

This disconnect between the strengthening of the Taiwanese cultural identity and the desire for independence can be explained by the limited influence of Taiwanese political parties in this debate. Both the KMT and the DPP are dealing with forces that are extra-political. The parties both discuss their views on the unification debate but in the end the parties have limited influence on the larger geopolitical forces at work. Therefore the data collected in these polls, while correlated with and related to political events in Taiwan, is perhaps even more so influenced by the events in the international arena. Examples of influences are the PRC military buildup and U.S. commitments for the defense of Taiwan. As a result of these larger forces, DPP and KMT efforts to promote and strengthen the Taiwanese identity have contributed to the accelerated the rate of overt Taiwanese self-identification. Conversely, the movement towards de jure independence does not match this rate. The Taiwanese political aspirations are much more cautious when viewed in comparison to their rate of self-identity. This political caution is caused by geopolitical factors that are outside the scope of influence of Taiwanese politics. Until this external threat is removed from the decision-making equation it will be difficult for Taiwan to make a move towards either unification or independence and the status quo will be maintained.

Conclusion

The strong ethnic and cultural ties between Taiwan and Mainland China, as well as the shared history dating back centuries make the seemingly simple question 'Is Taiwan Chinese?' a difficult one to answer. Further complicating the matter are the external pressures of geopolitics.

Taiwan had been occupied since the early 1600s. It started with the Dutch occupation in 1624 and was followed shortly after by some Spanish settlements. After the Dutch expelled the Spanish, Han Chinese occupiers came from Mainland China and ruled Taiwan from 1661 through 1683. From 1683 onwards Taiwan became a part of the Qing dynasty. The Qing imposed their language, culture and customs on Taiwan. During this time there were several million Han Chinese who settled on Taiwan. This was the start of the Taiwan-China connection. After more than 200 years of Qing rule the Mainland dynasty lost control of Taiwan. Taiwan was ceded to Japan after Qing loss in the first Sino-Japanese war of 1894-95. The Japanese took over and also imposed their language, culture and customs on the people living in Taiwan. The Japanese helped modernize Taiwan and ruled there for 50 years. After years of Taiwanese 'assimilation' into the Japanese empire Taiwan experienced a change in leadership yet again. As member of the Allied powers the government of China (headed by the KMT party) was given control over Taiwan. This was seen as returning to China the territory the Qing had lost half a century earlier. When the civil war that raged on Mainland China threatened to defeat the KMT, KMT supporters fled to Taiwan. After experiencing rapid development and industrialization under the Japanese, KMT arrival on Taiwan led to tensions. These tensions resulted in a repressive KMT government that instituted one-party rule and martial law. These conditions of being under constant foreign occupation forced the expression of the unique Taiwanese cultural, national and political identity underground before 1949.

From 1949 through 1987 martial law was imposed on Taiwan. This effectively created a KMT-led military dictatorship under Chiang Kai-shek and his son. Political exclusion and violent repression of

any action deemed contrary to KMT interests bred resentment. This period, known as the 'White Terror,' led to the popular demand for democracy and caused many on Taiwan to focus on strengthening the Taiwanese cultural and national identity that was separate from the KMT and Mainland China. During this period however Taiwan experienced rapid economic growth and industrialization as well as improved quality of life. This made some Taiwanese loyal to the KMT and further complicated the identity debate. The calls for democracy resulted in the formation of the Dangwai movement. The Dangwai movement evolved into the DPP, which was founded in 1986. As martial law was lifted, the popular demand for democracy was soon followed by the demand (though muted) for de jure independence. The DPP became mouthpiece for the Taiwanese legal independence and the promoting and strengthening of the unique Taiwanese cultural, national and political identity.

After martial law was lifted in 1987, Taiwan democratized very rapidly. Along with democratization came the intensified promotion of the Taiwanese cultural and national identity. The DPP became a major opposition party and its focus was on strengthening Taiwanese national identity and, relatively lesser so, achieving recognized independence. Chen Shui-bian was the first and only opposition party member to be elected president. Chen was in office for two terms until 2008 and his policies focused on what was called Taiwanese nation building. These nation-building efforts meant the desinicization of Taiwan and the promotion of a more distinctive, separate-from-China Taiwanese cultural, political and national identity. Chen and the DPP hoped to unite people behind a shared Taiwanese cultural identity believing this would make people desire Taiwanese de jure independence.

Chen's efforts at increasing overt self-identification as Taiwanese were largely successful. Despite this success Chen and the DPP did not affect the same increase in desire for de jure Taiwanese independence. Chen's two terms in office ended in a corruption scandal and indictments for himself and those close to him. This combined with the DPP's weak track record on ROC-PRC relations was a disappointment to many. Chen served largely as a symbol for the DPP during his time in office, but it is important to distinguish between Chen and the DPP. The DPP was a mouthpiece for the Taiwanese pro-

independence movement. Thus even after Chen's second presidential term ended in scandal, this did not mean that the whole party would fall apart. The party managed to survive largely unscathed in the polls since the pro-independence movement supported by the DPP was still popular among the Taiwanese population. While more people on Taiwan overtly self-identified as Taiwanese, the DPP was unable to bring about an increased demand for formal independence. The likely reason for this failure was internal and external pressures that prevented Chen and the DPP from implementing their desired policies.

The reason why the growing support for the unique Taiwanese national and political identity and overt Taiwanese self-identification is not matched by the growing desire for legal independence is, I argue, principally the result of external extra-political forces. These external forces are so strong that local politics does not have enough influence to make a significant breakthrough in the unification debate. The military threat posed by the PRC and U.S. commitments to defend the ROC from invasion are fear factors that bring the debate to a stalemate. As a result the majority of the Taiwanese population are stuck in limbo without a clear answer to the question of whether they are Chinese or not. This is the current status quo marked by extreme political caution. Resolution of the unification debate is unlikely until Taiwanese are free to decide their own future without the threat of violence. Until then the status quo will be maintained.

The increasingly close economic ties between the PRC and the ROC will be important to watch in the future. In 2014, between March 18 and April 10, Taiwanese students protested the signing of the Cross-Strait Service Trade Agreement (CSSTA) by the KMT government. This protest became known as the Sunflower Movement. Students were not the only ones who opposed the signing of the CSSTA; lawmakers, academics, civic organizations, and ordinary citizens also joined the protests. These protests resulted in the clause-by-clause review of the treaty and stopped it from being signed for the time being. The CSSTA has to-date not been ratified by the Taiwanese legislature. It aims to improve trade in services between the ROC and the PRC. This would mean closer economic ties between the ROC and the PRC including services such as banking, healthcare, tourism, film, telecommunications, and publishing.

The CSSTA would also make it easier for businesses from Taiwan or the PRC to set up offices and branches in the other country. The fear is that the CSSTA treaty would lay groundwork for eventual political unification with Mainland China.¹⁵⁴ The Sunflower Movement thus shows that the unification debate is far from being solved. In addition, KMT cross-straits policies that led to increasing economic ties with the Mainland have contributed to the sharp decline in President Ma's approval ratings. In 2014 the *Taipei Times* reported that several different polls put his approval ratings below 18 percent.¹⁵⁵ As President Ma enters his last year in office, it will be interesting to see if the 2016 presidential election will see Taiwan's voters will elect a DPP or KMT candidate.

¹⁵⁴ Moira Weigel and Yu-Yun Hsieh. 324: *Dispatches from Taipei*, 2014, <https://nplusonemag.com/online-only/foreign-affairs/324-dispatches-from-taipei/>. (accessed on 06 April, 2015).

¹⁵⁵ Stacy Hsu and Rich Chang. "Separate Polls Put Ma's Approval Rate under 18 Percent." *Taipei Times*, 14 May, 2014. Taipeitimes.com, Online (accessed on 06 April, 2015).

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