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## **Taiwan's Subjectivity and National Narrations: Towards a Comparative Perspective with Ireland**

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### **Abstract**

*This paper looks at how Taiwan has been imagined or narrated as a national subject from the perspective of different nationalisms, using Ireland in the context of the colonized Other as a comparator. As with Irish nationalist projects, the Chinese nationalism of the KMT and the Taiwanese nationalism of the DPP were and are complex phenomena, with ethnic, cultural, and civic dimensions. However, in the cases of the KMT and of the DPP the civic dimension was either suspended or remained under-developed. This paper takes a critical view, focusing on ethnic and cultural nationalism to explore how the KMT and the DPP narrated their respective national imaginaries. The first framework examined shows how Taiwan was narrated as part of China through a particular form of Chineseness, which was imposed on Taiwan by the KMT. The second framework analyses how Taiwan was re-narrated through Taiwanization discourses as a national subject in its own right; in particular, through a post-modern primordialist turn by which the DPP used Taiwanization to stress ethnicity politics. Critical interpretations here make use of a comparative perspective, re-examining notions of national subjectivity in juxtaposition with Ireland, whose own national imaginaries have, like those of Taiwan, also emphasized ethnicity and culture. The paper concludes by suggesting a third framework, emphasizing the need to pay attention to the cosmopolitan processes of mobilization and globalization. These can help us to re-consider Taiwan and Ireland as network societies that can be narrated in the light of relationships and connections through which they have been constituted as places.*

### **Introduction**

*Nations, like narratives,... [are ideas] whose cultural compulsion lies in the impossible unity of the nation as a symbolic force. This is not to deny the attempt by nationalist discourses persistently to produce the idea of the nation as a continuous narrative of national progress, the narcissism of self-generation, the primeval present of the Volk.*

(Bhabha 1990: 1)

This paper examines how Taiwan has been imagined, or narrated as a national subject from the perspective of different nationalisms. Further, I would like to explore comparatively to what extent there are parallels and divergences in the way that national subjectivity discourses emerged in Taiwan and Ireland in the context of colonialism. Ireland and Taiwan are both small islands whose histories reflect complex relationships with powerful adjacent neighbours. These histories, as well as the islands' politics and cultures, are marked by contested subjectivities and identities, and also by struggles over democracy, language and human rights. These are not, though, experiences that Taiwan shares with China. However, while Taiwanese nationalism did not properly develop until the 1970s, Irish nationalism can be traced back to the eighteenth century. There is, therefore, a considerable historical contrast between these two case studies, and as such I do not intend to make a direct comparison of Taiwan with Ireland. Rather, I will juxtapose elements and processes in the construction of ethnic, cultural, and civic nationalisms in these two contexts.

My discussion of how Taiwan's national subjectivity has been narrated focuses on two frameworks: Framework One is the national narrative of the Republic of China (ROC), which was brought with the Kuomintang (the KMT, or Chinese Nationalist Party) when it retreated from the mainland to Taiwan in 1947, while Framework Two is an ongoing narrating of Taiwanese nationhood which has been promoted by the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), which is the major opposition party and which was in Presidential office from 2000 to 2008. However, to place these two frameworks in context, the first part of my discussion briefly introduces the period before any form of nationalism shaped Taiwan. Prior to the arrival of the KMT there was no real sense, among the peoples of Taiwan, that they were a national subject; therefore, I locate the period of Qing and Japanese rule in Taiwan as being 'before the dawn of nationalism'. I also draw some contrasts with Ireland.

The second part looks at how Taiwan was framed as part of China, which remained at the centre of the KMT's imaginary of Chinese-ness as the rightful inheritance of the Mainlander minority now living in exile in Taiwan. It begins by examining the construction of Republican Chinese nationalism on the mainland in the decades prior to 1947. The exiled KMT regime forcibly imposed on Taiwan the political structure of the ROC, as well as a Chinese nationalist culture, and was indeed a kind of 'colonialism'. Taiwan was Sinicized and became a representation of true Chineseness as against its mutant strain on the mainland under communism. I then contrast this with Ireland, where descendants of the colonists have maintained a British identity that remains strong in Northern Ireland. I end this section with examples demonstrating that KMT Chineseness indeed shaped the study of Taiwan in the martial law period.

The third part explores how Taiwan was re-framed from the perspective of *bentuhua* (本土化, nativization, or Taiwanization) as a form of resistance to KMT Sinicization. *Bentuhua*, or Taiwanization discourses, emerged as a literary and cultural movement in the 1980s. They were later integrated into the process of democratic reform in the 1990s, and played a significant role in crafting Taiwanese subjectivities and nationalism. Taiwan was therefore re-narrated through the vehicles of de-Sinicization and Taiwanization, evidence for which can be found in the curriculum of *Renshi Taiwan* (認識台灣, *Knowing Taiwan*). I then investigate

the post-modern primordialist turn by which the DPP used Taiwanization to stress politics of ethnicity and identity by appealing to the major Hoklo ethnic group as a strategy in the struggle for power. I then compare this with Irish nationalism in the years before and after most of Ireland achieved independence from Britain. I end this section with examples demonstrating that Taiwanization discourses have in fact influenced the study of Taiwan since the late 1980s.

In the conclusion, I further consider subjectivity beyond imperialism, colonialism and nationalism, and I emphasize the need to pay attention to processes of industrial and digital modernization, mobilization, and globalization. I conclude that we must consider ourselves on the edge of new forms of belonging that bear no relation to anything that has been defined as Chineseness or Taiwanese-ness. We shall need new concepts and practices with which to re-consider Taiwan (and Ireland) as network societies to be studied and re-narrated in the light of forms and visions of connected-ness and related-ness that today can hardly be predicted.

### **Before the Dawn of Nationalism: Taiwan and Ireland**

Taiwan is situated on the immediate geographical periphery of China and Japan, as well as at edge of the USA's current sphere of influence. It has thus been seen as a frontier in relation to each of these three super-powers, with a special geopolitical significance that is greater than its size (36,000 sq. km.) would indicate (for Taiwan and geopolitics see Stéphane Corcuff in this special issue). Up until the early seventeenth century, Taiwan was inhabited almost exclusively by Austronesian-speaking peoples, consisting of more than twenty ethno-linguistic groups (Shepherd 1993: 31). Similarly, Ireland, before the first invasion by England, consisted almost exclusively of Celtic peoples divided into various kingdoms, although under the ceremonial authority of a High King.

The situation in Taiwan began to change from the seventeenth century. Dutch and Spanish colonizers arrived in the 1620s, and in 1661 the island was invaded by Cheng-Gong Zheng (known in the west as Koxinga), a Chinese merchant and pirate who was opposed to the Qing Dynasty that had displaced the Ming Dynasty in China. The Dutch were eventually expelled, and under Koxinga's successors the island remained independent from Qing Dynasty authority until 1683. From the middle of the century, large numbers of Chinese immigrants began to settle on the island, but these, like the native inhabitants, were diverse: the majority came originally from the localities of Quanzhou, Zhangzhou, or Hakka, and they brought the Hakka language and the Quanzhou and Zhangzhou dialects of Hoklo, as well as cultural variations in cuisine, dress, kinship, and religious practices. This variety has been described as 'subethnic' (Lamley 1981: 282). The Chinese immigrants later became the majority population in Taiwan, while in Ireland, by contrast, the indigenous Celtic population remained in the majority, even after the English invasion of Ireland in the same period as the Chinese settlement of Taiwan. However, Ireland and Taiwan continued to be seen as remote and uncivilized lands respectively in the eyes of the British Empire and the Manchurian Qing Empire.

The English invasion of Ireland in the mid-seventeenth century was undertaken with the aim of establishing control over a Catholic population widely viewed in England with suspicion and of being in need of civilizing. One important difference

from Taiwan, however, is that the contrast between England and Ireland was bound up with religious differences, following the Reformation of the sixteenth century. Roman Catholics continued to recognize the Pope as the earthly head of the universal church founded by Jesus Christ, while Protestants believed that the Pope's teaching was in conflict with God's teaching as given in the Bible. Protestantism was attractive to the King of England, because it meant the Pope no longer had authority over him, and that the Christian church in England could be brought under the control of the state in the form of the Church of England (or Anglican Church). This greatly consolidated a sense of English identity, particularly after a short return to Catholicism during which Protestants were persecuted. Most people in Ireland remained Roman Catholic.

While Chinese immigration to Taiwan in the seventeenth century was not directed by the central government, England's invasion of Ireland during the same period established Ireland as the first colony of an emerging British Empire. However, the effort to enforce the Reformation thoroughly in Ireland would have been too costly. Instead, it was decided to install a minority of Protestants from England and Scotland as the ruling class. The English colonial government introduced penal laws which sought to discipline the native population by preventing Roman Catholics from taking an active role in public life and restricting their religious practices (Bartlett 2010: 141). In 1700, Protestants owned 80 per cent of the land but represented only a quarter of the population (Brown 1991: 13); these landowners developed into a privileged Anglo-Irish class, and the period from 1691 to 1801 is known as the 'Protestant Ascendancy', reflecting their dominant position. In 1801, an Act of Union incorporated Ireland into the British state.

At the end of the nineteenth century, Japan was seeking to join the colonial powers, as a way to avoid becoming itself a colony of the West and at the same time to advance into becoming a modern nation-state. Lacking colonial experience, though, Japan framed its colonial model mainly with reference to European ideas and practices, and it mapped out a security region in which it further developed its interest in overseas trade. In 1895, following China's defeat in the First Sino-Japanese War, Taiwan was ceded by the Qing Dynasty to Japan, in accordance with the Treaty of Shimonoseki. However, neither the Qing Dynasty administration over the island from 1683 to 1895, nor Japanese colonial rule from 1895 to 1945, succeeded in imposing their nationalisms on the peoples of Taiwan. Nor did Taiwanese people develop nationalism into a substantial movement during the Qing and Japanese periods.

Taiwan under Qing rule could be seen as a colony-cum-province, or as an aspect of what Vivienne Shue calls the pre-modern 'honeycomb polity' of the Qing Empire (Shue 1988: 89). The Qing itself was not a nation in the modern sense, and it only ruled Taiwan to a very limited extent. Over more than two hundred years of Qing administration, many Chinese immigrants made their homes in Taiwan and became nativized, including members of the Confucian gentry created by the *keju* (科舉) examination system, and this class became mediators between the Qing Empire and Taiwan's localities. Japan, however, developed what Partha Chatterjee calls 'anti-colonial nationalism' (Chatterjee 1993 in R.-R. Wu 2004: 17), through which Japan sought to modernize itself via processes of nation-building. Following three years of military rule over Taiwan, Japan shifted its Taiwan policy

to a civic government, beginning a process of assimilation through differential incorporation (R.-R. Wu 2003). This meant that Japan expanded its territories and also incorporated the colonized – albeit hierarchically, not equally – into its modern nation-state formation. Although this policy did trigger resistance, this never developed into an island-wide nationalist movement, despite the fact that nationalist-type ideas did emerge, particularly in literary circles in the 1920s. Nevertheless, people in Taiwan were willing to accommodate themselves, to various degrees, to the new colonial situation and modern way of life. However, although the Japanese promoted *dōka* (assimilation), this was primarily a way to distinguish Japan from Western colonialism; the rhetoric of *dōka* was empty and did not lead to economic advancement or political representation (Ching 2001: 104–106).

However, Japanese colonialist projects engendered a new kind of research and knowledge about the peoples, societies, and cultures under colonial rule. Chinese residents in Taiwan were classed together administratively as *hontōjin* (islanders), while indigenous Austronesian groups were classed as *ban* (savages), in contrast to the Japanese *naichijin* (homelanders). Indeed, Japanese colonialism was based on an allegedly biological discourse of race (Weiner 1994: 27), which thereby distinguished ‘the Self’ from ‘the Other’ by differentiating the colonizer ‘Self’ from the colonized ‘Other’. It was this representation of Otherness that made people in Taiwan conceive of themselves as a distinctive ethnic and cultural group for the first time. This new research and knowledge further created a new self-reflection and self-awareness among Taiwan’s colonized people. Taiwan ‘came to be defined as an independent cultural entity with distinctive characteristics’ (Kikuchi 2007: 4) by its Japanese colonizers.

It is worth noting here that although the British colonization of Ireland goes back much further than the modern colonial theory of race, the Irish experience has a parallel with Taiwan under Japanese colonial rule. Stereotypical and indeed racist attitudes to Ireland and to the Irish remained normative in England even after the island was incorporated into the British state, and people in Ireland therefore learned that they were regarded as not-English and as not-England. As Declan Kiberd explains:

If Ireland had never existed, the English would have invented it; and since it never existed in English eyes as anything more than a patchwork-quilt of warring fiefdoms, their leaders occupied the neighbouring island and called it Ireland. With the mission to impose a central administration went the attempt to define a unitary Irish character.

(Kiberd 1995: 9)

Kiberd’s analysis is derived from a central theme of Edward Said’s *Orientalism*, which is the process of ‘Othering’ in imperialism. Said explored how western scholarship and imperial administration interpreted the Middle East, observing that ‘the Orient was almost a European invention’ (Said 1978: 1). Orientalism, he explained, was

A way of coming to terms with the Orient that is based on the Orient’s special place in European Western experience. The Orient is not only adjacent to Europe; it is also the place of Europe’s greatest and richest and oldest colonies, the source of its



civilizations and languages, its cultural contestant, and one of its deepest and most recurring images of the Other.

(Said 1978: 1)

### **Framework One: Chineseness in Taiwan in Dialogue with Britishness in Ireland**

In Ireland, British colonial rule created self-consciousness in the population of being 'Other' and of being subordinate. British rule prompted resentment and resistance, leading to Irish independence in 1922. However, the situation has continued to be complicated; Ireland experienced partition, with the north of the island remaining a part of Britain. Here, in Northern Ireland, a slim majority maintains a British identity. In the case of Ireland, we see a nation become a state through resistance and independence. However, in the case of Taiwan, although Japanese rule similarly created self-consciousness in the population of being 'Other', this, as noted in the previous section, did not lead to a sense of nationhood. In contrast to the sense of nationhood that preceded statehood in Ireland, a sense of nationhood in Taiwan was imposed with the arrival of the KMT's ROC state.

With Japan's defeat at the end of the Second Sino-Japanese War (from the end of 1941, part of the Second World War), the Allies gave Taiwan to the Republic of China. This was in accordance with an agreement made between Roosevelt, Churchill, and the ROC leader Chiang Kai-Shek at the Cairo Conference of 1943. The Treaty of San Francisco, which Japan signed in September 1951, included the sentence that 'Japan renounces all right, title and claim to Formosa and the Pescadores', but did not specify Taiwan's status. Chiang's KMT, meanwhile, had retreated to the island between 1947 and 1949 after losing the civil war with the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) on mainland China. While the CCP took control of China and established the People's Republic of China (PRC), the KMT re-located the ROC to Taiwan, planning to re-take mainland China at a later date. Although exiled to Taiwan, the KMT sought continuity with the Republican legacy on mainland China, and although *de facto* it had no authority beyond Taiwan it continued to assert its position as 'the sole legitimate government of all China' (Rigger 2011: 136).

Analysis of KMT's ROC nationalism in Taiwan needs to be traced back to the preceding period of KMT rule in China. As noted by Benedict Anderson, 'When Chinese nationalism did finally arise, it was rather late in world-historical time' (B. Anderson 1983: 36). In fact, the Qing Dowager Empress did try, at the very end, to use Chinese identity as a form of resistance against the European and Japanese imperial powers, but the attempt was made too late and the dynasty was soon overthrown and replaced by the Republic of China following the so-called 'Nationalist' Revolution of 1911. KMT Republican nationalism was indeed itself a fairly modern invention, derived from a new notion of the 'Chinese people' (中華民族) which was first formulated during the last decade of the Qing dynasty by Qi-Chao Liang. In his article 'Overview of Peoples of China in History' (1905), Liang indicated that when a person encountered a foreigner, he/she immediately distinguished him/herself as 'a person of China' (中國人). This 'person of China' was to be considered to be a member of the 'Chinese people'. He further explained that the 'Chinese people' were a product of history: all ethnic groups in

the territory of China had been assimilated into Chinese culture over thousands of years, and had thus been integrated into the 'Chinese people'.

The ROC's ideological foundation was formulated by Dr Sun Yat-Sen, as expressed in his 'Three Principles of the People': these were nationalism; civic rights or democracy; and civic welfare. For Dr Sun, China, after being freed from imperialist domination, needed to develop a 'China-nationalism' to unite all of China's different ethnicities. Adapting Liang's notion, in 1912 he further proposed a multi-ethnic 'Republic of the Five Peoples' ('五族共和說'), composed of five major ethnic groups: Han, Manchus, Mongols, Uyghurs, and Tibetans. However, these groups were all integrated into one national subject, constituting the 'Chinese people'. In the territory of China, membership as 'Chinese' was thus determined by assimilation into Chinese culture (Duara 1995: 143). From 1924, this assimilation also included Mandarin, established as the state language.

This new notion of Chineseness thus referred both to a homogeneous cultural category and to a homogeneous quasi-ethnic category. Further, a particular connection was made between this newer notion of Chineseness and an older notion of Zhong-guo (中國, Middle Kingdom). In this way, Zhong-guo now referred not only to the territory of the provinces of China (which at that time numbered 36) but was also tied to the idea of 'Chineseness', as a holistic conception of both a Chinese national subject and a Chinese national culture. In short, the boundary of the ROC as a territory/nation was synonymous with that of an imagined cultural Chinese homogeneity and of an invented quasi-ethnic Chinese homogeneity. The KMT's Chinese nationalism took a form which was seen in Europe and theorized in the eighteenth century by Johann Gottfried von Herder, although it was not acknowledged as such. Herder's primordialist view of nationalism saw an essential link between a land and its *Volk*. Herder's *Volk*, as elaborated by Kenneth Minogue, 'is not simply the people of a country, but a metaphysical entity defined relationally as *that which* produces a particular language, art, culture, set of great men, religion and collection of customs' (Minogue 1969: 57). However, the term 'Chinese' is vague and ambiguous: while it may denote all five ethnic groups, in most instances it was used to represent only aspects of the core ethnic Han group, as expressed through Han language, art, culture, and customs.

The KMT's national imagination was developed during the period when it had control of mainland China. However, while Chinese nationalism was being imposed on China, Taiwan was under Japanese colonial rule. This version of Chinese nationalism was rejected by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), which took control of the mainland, but it was brought to Taiwan by the KMT and imposed in a way that elided the island's history. The year before the KMT arrived on the island, officials who were sent to survey Taiwan claimed that Taiwanese people had been 'enslaved' (奴化, *nuhua*) as the outcome of fifty years of colonization by Japan (C. Chen 2002 in F.-C. Wang 2005: 59). Accordingly, a distinction was made between *benshengren* (本省人, 'provincial natives', or 'Taiwanese') and *waishengren* (外省人, 'provincial outsiders', or 'mainlanders'). *Benshengren* meant those peoples who had arrived previously and were seen as the residents of Taiwan province, mainly Hoklo, Hakka, and indigenous Austronesian inhabitants; in contrast, *waishengren* referred to those Chinese who came to Taiwan with the KMT after 1947 from various provinces other than Taiwan,



but who were united in a common interest as a ruling class (for more on the issue of class, see Kao in this special issue).

The KMT erased the past of Taiwan and turned the island into a frozen imaginary of the pre-Communist Republican mainland, both politically and culturally. In the political domain, as with the British establishment of the privileged Anglo-Irish class in eighteenth-century Ireland, the KMT implemented a similar strategy to install the *waishengren* as the ruling class of Taiwan, protected by law. The KMT maintained the political structure of the Republic in China; as such, legislators who nominally represented mainland districts were able to remain in the legislative assembly in Taiwan indefinitely, on the grounds that they could not be removed from office without elections on the mainland. These *waishengren* make up approximately 15 per cent of the population, but were overrepresented in military and civil positions (Corcuff 2002: 170).

In light of the 1946 claim of 'enslavement', it was decided that the *benshengren* should not be treated as equals with *waishengren* until they had been de-Japanized and re-Sinicized (C. Chen 2002 in F.-C. Wang 2005: 59). The de-Japanization campaign banned the formerly official Japanese language from use in school and media. It also downplayed the Japanese era as a disgraceful page in Taiwan's history. The 're-Sinicization' policy was further seen as re-awakening Taiwan's supposed historical connection with Greater China, and also re-connecting the island of Taiwan with the supposed territory of early twentieth-century China. 'Re-Sinicization' also imposed the Beijing dialect of Mandarin as the official language for education, media, and government. Other Chinese languages, such as Hakka and Hoklo, which had existed long before Mandarin and which were widely used as day-to-day languages in Taiwan, were reduced by this Sinicization policy to the marginal status of patois. Pupils were fined if they spoke their mother tongue at school. As Allen Chun elaborates,

The [KMT] government in effect played an active role (as author) in writing culture (by constructing discourses on tradition, ethnicity, ethical philosophy and moral psychology). It also inculcated these reconstructed notions of tradition (as culture) through the 'normative' machinery of the school, media, family and military in order to construct disciplinary lifestyles and ritual patterns of behaviour compatible with the underlying ethos of the State. Chinese culture ultimately became an object of discourse not only in a political sense but also through the construction of knowledge... market commercialization, and domestication of life routines.

(Chun 1994: 54)

Taiwan was somehow to be re-written into a long invented narrative of 5,000 years of unbroken Chinese history, beginning with the supposed common ancestor, the Yellow Emperor (黃帝, Huang Di), followed by about twenty dynasties and culminating in the establishment of the Republic in 1911. There was also an imagined geography of the 1911 ROC's territory that included even Outer Mongolia. It is noted that 'historical atlases published in Taiwan after 1949... often take for granted the logic of "imperial domain" and "lost territories"' (Callahan 2009: 156n). This invented narrative ignored the historical reality of repeated invasions by non-Chinese (so-called barbarians), the rise and fall of imperial dynasties, and constant interaction with non-Chinese cultures. It also suggested a continuous

connection of Taiwan with China, even though Taiwan had not been of interest to the imperial mainland until the late seventeenth century, and had further been ceded by the Qing Dynasty to Japan in 1895. While the narratives of the PRC and the KMT territories both include Taiwan as part of a much larger whole, the KMT's imagined geography differed from that of the PRC by continuing to include Outer Mongolia, which the PRC had recognized as independent in 1949.

In further contrast to the CCP, while Mao and the PRC encouraged the Cultural Revolution between 1966 and 1976, Chiang Kai-Shek and the ROC urged a restoration of 'tradition' from 1966 onwards, under the name of the Chinese Cultural Renaissance Movement (中華文化復興運動, *Zhonghua wenhua fuxing yundong*). For example, traditional writing forms were preserved and used in ROC Taiwan, in contrast to the simplification of Chinese characters on the CCP mainland. This was one means by which the KMT represented itself and the ROC as the last bastion of 'authentic' Chinese culture, in this way justifying its right to possess various high-cultural imperial treasures which had belonged to the Palace Museum in Beijing but which had been removed to Taipei. The National Palace Museum in Taipei was presented as the 'Temple' of Chinese civilization, the symbol of the KMT's preservation of that legacy (Vickers 2009).

In short, the exiled KMT in Taiwan attempted to demonstrate to the world that it was the legitimate heir and protector of traditional Chinese culture, and therefore of the Chinese nation. The KMT imposed only one form of Chineseness, consisting of political and cultural domination by a Chinese state (i.e., the ROC), a ruling class (i.e., *waishengren* with few token *benshengren*), and a high official language and culture (i.e., the Mandarin language and culture), at the cost of the suppression of other Chinese cultures and languages (i.e. Hoklo, Hakka etc.).

In the cases both of KMT Sinicization and British colonialism, one outcome was the same, in that Mandarin and English became the dominant languages in Taiwan and Ireland. However, there is a difference here between British colonialism in Ireland and the KMT's Sinicization of Taiwan. Although, as noted above, the British imposed penal laws to suppress Roman Catholicism, particularly from 1691, these were gradually abandoned during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. This was more in line with the general practice of British colonialism, which did not seek to impose Britishness on colonized populations, but rather to rule through a local elite. In the case of Ireland, this meant an Anglicized elite class that included settlers from outside, including Scotland. However for the Protestants of Ireland, Irish home rule made them not just a minority on the island, but the minority population of a Catholic country. The political compromise in 1921 was partition, with Northern Ireland remaining part of the United Kingdom. Here, Protestants were in the majority, although there was also a significant Catholic, and Irish nationalist, community.

Here we see another difference with Taiwan: a form of Chineseness was imposed on the *benshengren* majority across Taiwan, while the privileged status of Britishness was preserved by the Protestant minority in Ireland (the majority in Northern Ireland) only through partition. However, Britishness in Northern Ireland came to take on a distinct 'unionist' form; for example, unionist Britishness was expressed through symbols such as the display of the British flag, and through rituals such as parades organized by unionist 'Orange Lodges' (McAuley and Tongue 2010: 110). The men in these parades wore suits and bowler hats, which

looked smart but increasingly very old-fashioned. The marchers wear orange sashes, in memory of King William III, who became the monarch of England in 1688, replacing his wife Mary's father King James II. Although William's victory over James in Ireland was an important cultural memory in Northern Ireland, it is hardly remembered by most people living in Britain. Moreover, unionist Britishness projected by the officially-sanctioned culture of Northern Ireland did not even reflect the reality of Protestant diversity in Ireland, as Gillian McIntosh observes: 'Unionists' image of the state was exclusive, and one which alienated many, in particular, but not exclusively, Catholics' (McIntosh 1999: 223). Britishness in Northern Ireland for much of the twentieth century gave the impression of being frozen in time and of being exclusivist. According to McIntosh,

[Unionists'] proclaimed 'Britishness', when it did arise, was often a reflection of political necessity which co-existed with a sense of being 'Ulster' and, to a lesser extent, 'Irish'. Unionist culture was thus at times repetitive and contradictory; it claimed distinctiveness and individuality within the United Kingdom, while at the same time it rejected the state's own unique culture (particularly catholic) which it saw as a cover for an Irish national culture; and while it claimed unity with Britain, its culture simultaneously projected elements of anti-Englishness.

(McIntosh 1999: 222)

Britishness in Northern Ireland was only one form of Britishness, and it was different from that of most of the rest of Britain. Similarly, KMT Sinicization was based on just one form of Chineseness, quite different to the CCP version of Chineseness which is imposed on China today.

These processes of Sinicization also shaped the study of Taiwan during the 1960s to 1980s. As Stephen Murray and Keelung Hong (1994) have pointed out, anthropological studies of Taiwan at this time were conducted as if China and Chinese culture were the natural research contexts for Taiwan. According to Stevan Harrell,

This was the Golden Age, when Taiwan stood for China, not only politically but anthropologically, when foreign anthropologists, mostly Americans, dealt with their exclusion from the Chinese mainland [because of the Cultural Revolution] by moving to the next-best place, the island province, the unsinkable aircraft carrier, the place where Chinese culture had not only continued to flourish, but had not been subjected to the depredations of Communists trying to create a new world out of its ashes.

(Harrell 1999: 211–212)

Anthropologists at that time studied Taiwan within a holistic and structural-functional framework of Chineseness, although they acknowledged the importance of contextualizing their data in Taiwan historically and socially, and were also concerned with Taiwan's local differences and cultural variations. However, the basic assumption as regards the existence of an essential Chinese culture and of a subjectivity of Chineseness tied to Taiwan was largely unquestioned. For instance, the anthropologist Arthur Wolf could assert that the Taiwanese conception of the spirit world was modelled on a conception of imperial China: 'Gods are the supernatural counterparts of the imperial bureaucracy...

Ghosts are the supernatural equivalents of despised, dangerous strangers... Ancestors are the senior members of one's own line of descent' (Wolf 1974: 7–8). Similarly, Steven Sangren could also assert that: 'Despite the demise of its earthly counterpart [physically speaking, the death of the last imperial dynasty, in 1911], eighty years ago, the imperial bureaucracy persists in the religion of present-day Taiwan' (Sangren 1983: 5).

Wolf's and Sangren's assertions of the persistence of a continuing imperial and bureaucratic China in Taiwanese religion was regarded sceptically by Stevan Harrell (1999), who pointed out that the imperial bureaucracy had disappeared from Taiwan in 1895, when the island was ceded to Japan. Furthermore, as Feuchtwang, Shih and Tremlett have pointed out,

In retrospect it is clear that the problem was not that they contextualised their field work data, but that they did not develop a theory of context. Thus, China as a whole country or society, a whole culture or ethnic unit of identity was uncritically assumed to be a 'natural' or given context [for the study of Taiwan] rather than a political choice and/or contingent construction.

(Feuchtwang, Shih, and Tremlett 2006: 43)

But, as the KMT's subjectivity of Chineseness began to fade, new political and scholarly trends emerged to challenge it.

### **Framework Two: Taiwanese Nationalism in Dialogue with Irish Nationalism**

Briefly surveying Taiwan's past at the time of the 2004 election, Perry Anderson observed that 'out of this sequence of historical experiences has come a distinctive kind of national sentiment' (P. Anderson 2004: 2). As mentioned above, the 1946 claim of 'enslavement' created a distinction between *benshengren* and *waishengren*, and *benshengren* encountered hostility and exploitation from the KMT in ways that led to Japan becoming an object of nostalgia while a Taiwanese subjectivity was developing. Conflict began as soon as the KMT arrived in 1947. In months of fighting which began on 28 February 1947, perhaps up to 30,000 *benshengren* were killed in what is now known as the '2-28 Incident' (see Rawnsley in this special issue), while others went into exile, primarily to Japan or to the USA. Most of the victims were urban intellectuals and well-off rural landlords who had prospered during the Japanese colonial period (Simon 2005: 132).

In the aftermath of the 2-28 Incident, martial law was imposed in 1949 as a 'Temporary Provision', despite the democratic principles written into the Constitution of the ROC (Nathan 1985: xi). It was claimed by the KMT that as the rights given in the Constitution had been formulated to apply to all the people of mainland China, these rights were now temporarily suspended due to the national emergency that had been precipitated by communist control of the mainland. The KMT rulers were strongly anti-communist, and the hunt for communists on Taiwan quickly developed into the period known as the 'White Terror' in which those suspected of communism were executed or imprisoned. Even villagers with no knowledge of communism were accused of being communists and sentenced as a warning not to resist the KMT (one example was the Luku White Terror Incident, see F.-L. Shih 2011).

The nature of KMT rule forcibly imposed on Taiwan the political structure of the ROC, as well as a Chinese nationalist culture, and was indeed a kind of 'colonialism' which was no less 'foreign' than Japanese rule. As such, from the perspective of the ruled Taiwanese the KMT's Sinicization was a prolonged 're-colonialism' following on from Japanization (Edmondson 2002; Su 1986). KMT rule provoked resistance in the name of 'de-colonization' and alternative discourses that took the form of *bentuhua*, or Taiwanization. Taiwanization as a political and cultural movement played a significant role in crafting Taiwanese nationalism.

There are similarities here with the formation of Irish nationalism. In 1846 and 1847 there was a huge famine in Ireland caused by potato blight, a disease which destroyed the potato crop. During these years of hunger and disease, the British government still held to its strongly free market economic policies, exporting large quantities of grain from the starving island for greater profit, and refusing to intervene to feed the starving. Perhaps around a million people died, and half a million were forced to emigrate to survive, primarily to the USA. Irish bitterness at England's attitude is recorded in the popular Irish peasants' saying that 'God sent the potato-blight, but the English caused the Famine' (see Kiberd 1995: 21).

Ireland since 1801 had been part of the new United Kingdom, along with England, Scotland, and Wales. This meant that Ireland was represented at the Parliament in Westminster. However, one consequence of the famine was a rise in anti-English feeling. In the decades that followed the disaster there were increased calls for 'Home Rule', meaning for laws to be decided in Ireland rather than in Westminster. There was also increasing support for this in Britain, and some reforms were made. For example, in 1871 the official church, the Church of Ireland (a province of the Anglican Church) was disconnected from the state in Ireland, in recognition that most Irish people were Catholics and not Anglicans. However, Eric Hobsbawm notes that while most nationalist movements in Europe at this time simply wanted some local autonomy, the preference in Ireland was for a sovereign state. Nationalist organizations (members of which were known generally as 'Fenians') 'demanded an Irish Republic which could not but be independent from Britain' (Hobsbawm 1990: 37).

Ireland declared independence in 1919, and following a guerrilla war the Irish Free State was established in 1922 following partition the year before. Ireland was from that time divided, with Northern Ireland remaining a part of the UK. However, the Irish Free State remained within the British Empire as a 'dominion', like Australia or Canada, until 1949, when it became a Republic. In contrast, Taiwanization and Taiwanese nationalism did not really take shape until the 1970s, and it is still an ongoing process. As a cultural movement, Taiwanization needs to be understood as a prolonged but discontinuous formation beginning in the 1920s and reviving in the 1980s. On the other hand, as a political movement, Taiwanization emerged sharply after the 'Formosa Incident' in 1979 and further developed to become integral to democratic reforms in the 1990s. However, the development of political opposition needs to be seen in relation to wider changes in international and domestic politics in the two prior decades.

The ROC constitution guarantees civic liberties and participation; the KMT, though, had suspended democracy, justifying its authoritarianism by claiming that it was preparing for the recovery of mainland China. The regime claimed that once it had retaken the mainland and the Chinese nation was reunited, it would allow for

nationwide elections to be held. However, the international context radically shifted and, consequently, the KMT's legitimacy in representing all China both outside and within the island came into doubt.

With the Sino-Soviet split in the 1960s, ideological opposition to communism in the west lost ground to pragmatic political calculation. The US, along with many Western countries, used relations with China strategically against the Soviet Union (Goh 2009: 171–182, 215–218). As such, the CCP's PRC began to replace the KMT's ROC as the internationally recognized government of China. In 1971, the ROC lost its seat in the General Assembly and the Security Council of the United Nations, and this was followed by the loss of diplomatic recognition by the UK in 1972 and by the USA in 1979. The ROC has since become even more politically isolated, with the PRC undergoing a process of neo-liberal economic transition from the 1980s and increasing its interaction with the rest of the world from the 1990s (Naughton 1995).

By the early 1970s, it was clear in Taiwan that there was very little hope of recovering the mainland, despite years of war preparation. Increasing numbers of *benshengren* and some *waishengren* were becoming dissatisfied with the island's political situation and were no longer willing to tolerate the KMT's continually unmet promise of democracy. A token free press magazine sponsored by the KMT called *Free China Fortnightly*, run by a *waishengren* named Chen Lei, came to prominence: it began by publishing attacks on the CCP, but it shifted from its initial emphasis onto critiques of KMT authoritarian rule. *Benshengren* political activists expressed support for this change; mainlanders and Taiwanese worked together, campaigning for local elections and calling for the formation of an opposition party as a way to advance their demands for democracy. Both internal and external challenges increased the pressure on the KMT to justify its claim to legitimacy by reforming the political and electoral system.

Although opposition political parties were banned, activists could position themselves as members of the *Dangwai* (黨外, Outside the KMT Party). The *Dangwai* leaders founded *Formosa* magazine in 1979 to serve as a platform for voices of political opposition island-wide, and the magazine organized a march in Kaohsiung on 10 December in commemoration of International Human Rights Day. Eight leaders of the protest were arrested, and after trial given prison sentences of between 12 years and life (Denny 2003: 168–169). However, they were also recognized by Amnesty International as prisoners of conscience (Amnesty International 1980), while the KMT came under pressure from the US government, partly because of lobbying by exiled Taiwanese Americans (for the issue of Taiwanese Americans, see Lien in this special issue). The 'Formosa Incident' worked to radicalize opposition to the KMT regime and to give momentum to calls for democratic reform and Taiwanization. The first major opposition party, the DPP, was formed in 1986 and formally legalized in 1989, while martial law was finally lifted in 1987.

In Ireland, the perspective of colonial Britain engendered among the Irish a self-awareness of being not-English. In turn, Irish people were motivated to reflect on the idea of a distinct culture and language as forming the basis of their collective experience and identity; this laid a foundation for the Irish national imaginary, which can be seen as having primordialist elements but also, as we shall see, other cultural resources to draw on for the construction of a national identity –



resources routed in a long history of relationships with outsiders. From the end of the nineteenth century, there was an increased emphasis on Irish culture in Ireland, including a movement to promote the native Gaelic language and a new emphasis on the island's Celtic history. The Catholic Church also maintained a very strong focus for national identity: in 1879 some locals in the village of Knock claimed that they had seen a vision of Jesus' mother, the Virgin Mary, alongside two saints. This was taken to show that God supported the Irish for following the true religion, and the Virgin Mary, as 'Our Lady of Knock', was given the name 'Queen of Ireland' (Kearney 2007: 44). Knock is today Ireland's national Marian shrine.

As with Irish nationalist emphasis on ethnic and cultural particularity, Taiwan underwent a similar process, with the Irish model to some extent in mind among Taiwanese nationalists who have turned to Ireland to make sense of their own experiences. The *bentuhua* literary movement took its inspiration from an earlier manifestation of politicized localism, dating from the 1920s. Japan at that time had replaced military rule over Taiwan with a modern civic governance structure, and resistance primarily took the form of a reformist and non-violent anti-colonialism. While Ireland in that decade was achieving independence, Taiwanese activists at that time were seeking Home Rule, similar to the strand of Reformist nationalism in Ireland. They stressed 'Taiwan for the Taiwanese', and their aim was a reform of the colonial system rather than full national autonomy (see F.-S. Huang and S. Huang with Mulvagh in this special issue).

The perspective of the Japanese colonizers provided the first opportunity for people in Taiwan to see themselves as a group defined by a distinctive ethnicity and culture. More and more Taiwanese writers were eager to reflect on, and further to create, their own literature in their own languages. One prominent reformist, Wo-Chün Chang, regarded the Taiwanese language as 'a *patois*, an inferior language without a writing system'. He therefore wanted 'to change our *patois* into a decent language that can be written down' (translated in Hsiao 2000: 38) (see Li with Mac Mathúna in this special issue). Another cultural reformist, Shih-Hui Huang, promoted *xiangtu* literature (native literature: literally '鄉, *xiang*' meaning 'rural' and '土, *tu*' meaning 'soil'), arguing that '*xiangtu* literature represents speaking and each place has its own language' (translated in Hsiao 2000: 41). *Xiangtu* writing, by using native language, would be better able to reflect and represent local culture and people.

After two decades of escapist modernism in Taiwan (Hsiao 2000: 73), literary culture made a turn back to the *xiangtu* genre in the 1970s. This 'Return to *Xiangtu*' was an expression of complex responses to political and economic frustrations, such as the dispute over jurisdiction of the Senkaku-Diaoyu islands (once again in the early 2010s the focus of a diplomatic dispute between China and Japan), diplomatic failures, and also Taiwan's decline into an economic and cultural colony of the West, and in particular of the USA. The *xiangtu* writers urged the creation of a literature which 'bases itself on the soil of Taiwan's real society'; 'any kind of person, thing, and phenomenon existing in this society is what such a literature is intended to reflect and describe' (Tuo Wang translated in Hsiao 2000: 71). In *benshengren xiangtu* literature, we read about the 'use of the Taiwanese dialect [i.e., Hoklo], depiction of the plight of country folks or small-town dwellers in economic difficulty, and resistance of the imperialist presence in Taiwan' (Chang

1993: 149). Consequently, *xiangtu* writers were accused by the KMT of provoking 'localism' or 'provincialism', and therefore 'separatism' (Hsiao 2000: 70–71). It was not until the early 1980s that *xiangtu* literature took a further step toward 'a literature for nation-building', via the notion of *bentuhua*.

*Bentuhua* discourses were well connected with the political debates about Taiwanese subjectivity and identity. In fact, the DDP was born out of civic struggle for political participation and voting rights. More than 80 percent of the residents of Taiwan were *benshengren*, but until that time they had not been allowed to participate in the elections of public officials and there were only with a few token Taiwanese politicians. After Chiang Ching-Kuo died in 1988, Lee Teng-Hui, who was a KMT reformer, succeeded to his position as the first *benshengren* president of the ROC. The *bentuhua* movement gained further momentum under Lee's presidency (1988–2000), and he sought to develop a concept of 'new Taiwanese': According to Lee,

Between us, there should be no argument about ethnic division. We are all Chinese. Only identify with Taiwan, give your heart to preserving and developing Taiwan, no matter what ethnic group, no matter whether you came to Taiwan early or late, then all are Taiwanese.

(translated in Hughes 2011: 59, from *Zhongguo shibao* 31 December 1994)

Lee Teng-Hui acknowledged the plurality of ethnic background while maintaining a Chinese identity. Rather than emphasize Taiwan's status as a nation-state, Lee's vision focused on Taiwan's position within the 'global village', recognized for its commitment to human rights and democracy and for its economic achievements (Hughes 2011: 58).

Lee's approach and the DPP campaign both helped to increase the growth of the *bentuhua* movement, which was integral to democratic reform in the 1990s. The DPP, as the first native opposition party, regarded the KMT regime as alien and sought to displace its Chinese version of nationalism. It issued a manifesto in 1991 rejecting Chinese mainlander superiority, advocating Taiwan as an independent sovereign state, and articulating a new politics of Taiwanese identity and nationalism (Ogasawara 1998). The DPP portrayed Taiwan as a nation made up of successive waves of immigrants consisting of 'Four Great Ethnic Groups' (Rudolph 2008: 51–52): the Yuanzhumin (原住民, 'original provincials', or 'indigenous peoples'), Hoklo, Hakka, and Mainlanders (for more about the issue of immigration, see Fanning in this special issue). Furthermore, the DPP contrasted democratization against the KMT; independence against China; and Taiwanization against Sinicization.

Debates prompted by the *bentuhua* movement further led to a political transition to democracy in the form of electoral reform. Indeed, as Shelley Rigger observes, the only process that could allocate political power legitimately both for the ruling KMT and emerging opposition parties was 'voting for democracy'. According to Rigger,

The ruling party believed it could use elections to enhance its legitimacy in an unstable era. At the same time, it expected to control the pace and direction of reform, because it was confident of its electoral ability. The opposition saw elections as an

opportunity to gain influence and to reach a larger audience. Although dissidents recognized the limitations of the electoral system, the majority of them were convinced that working to change the system from within was the most fruitful course open to them.

(Rigger 1999: 33)

The 1990s saw a peaceful transition to democratic elections: as explained above, prior to 1991 delegates purporting to represent mainland districts did not have to contest their seats because there was no way that elections could be held on the mainland, and so they maintained their positions unchallenged. The only national elections that occurred were 'supplemental' elections for new seats relating to Taiwan and nearby islands. However, in the 1990s the first non-supplemental elections were held, respectively for the National Assembly and the Legislative Yuan. Nearly all of the newly-elected delegates represented Taiwan (Copper 1994: 23). In 1994, direct elections were brought in for the provincial governorship of Taiwan, and for the mayorship of Taipei and Kaohsiung; the first direct presidential election took place in 1996.

As well as changes in political structure, Taiwan also underwent a process of cultural transformation in national ideology and narration. In the previous section, we saw that the KMT consolidated its Chinese nationalism by creating a public amnesia about Taiwan's past; there was little place for Taiwan in the KMT's nationalist history and geography, other than in its current position as a retreat for preserving the ROC nation and Chinese culture. In fact, primary and secondary school textbooks on average devoted less than 3 per cent of their content to Taiwan (F.-C. Wang 2005: 62–63, citing Y.-T. Long 1987: 44); high school history textbooks had 5 per cent of their content on Taiwan, while geography textbooks less than 4 per cent (F.-C. Wang 2005: 62–63, citing calculations by Xiao-Feng Liu). However, following democratization, there was a new demand for knowing about Taiwan, and so a new way of narrating Taiwan was needed. A major change was announced in 1989 without serious controversy, in the form of a plan to publish new textbooks in a series called *Renshi Taiwan (Knowing Taiwan)* (Jacobs 2012: 220). According to this proposed reform, students would learn about Taiwan in their first year, followed by China in their second year, and the world in the third year. Moreover, the new textbooks would treat all ethnic groups proportionately, and accommodate the ethnic diversity in Taiwan.

'Voting for democracy' reached its fulfilment with the first direct presidential election, in 1996. During this time, the PRC held missile tests in an attempt to intimidate Taiwan's electorate. These persistent cross-strait tensions offer perhaps a useful counterpoint to the approach taken by Britain towards achieving a peace agreement for Northern Ireland (see Brown in this special issue). Britain accepted the partition of Ireland in the 1920s, and by the late twentieth century it was taking a more moderate and pragmatic attitude to the conflict in Northern Ireland. In 1985 the governments of Ireland and the UK signed the Anglo-Irish Agreement. The document said that Britain would consent to a united Ireland if a majority of the population of Northern Ireland agreed to it, and it established an 'Intergovernmental Conference' by which ministers and officials would meet. Britain accepted that Ireland 'will put forward views and proposals on matters relating to Northern Ireland'. Further:

The Conference shall concern itself with measures to recognise and accommodate the rights and identities of the two traditions in Northern Ireland, to protect human rights and to prevent discrimination. Matters to be considered in this area include measures to foster the cultural heritage of both traditions, changes in electoral arrangements, the use of flags and emblems, the avoidance of economic and social discrimination and the advantages and disadvantages of a Bill of Rights in some form in Northern Ireland.

(Anglo-Irish Agreement 1985)

The process continued with a 'Declaration on Peace' in 1993, and the Good Friday Agreement in 1998. The agreement contained details for a democratically elected power-sharing assembly in Northern Ireland, a North/South Ministerial Council, and a British-Irish Council 'to promote the harmonious and mutually beneficial development of the totality of relationships among the peoples of these islands' (Belfast Agreement 1998).

In contrast, the PRC is still unable to recognize Taiwanese people's rights and subjectivities (see Qiao in this special issue). The PRC's attitude has affected the formation of Taiwanese nationalism, which has consequently taken stronger anti-Chinese forms. For instance, the PRC's missile provocations have prompted incredible anger from Taiwanese citizens: Lee Teng-Hui, to whom the PRC objected as an electoral candidate, was voted into presidential office, ironically because of this anger. There was also a furious rejection of the PRC's claim to sovereignty over Taiwan, and resistance against both the ROC's Chinese nationalism as well as the PRC's Chinese nationalism. In 1996, a group of Taiwanese students burnt textbooks that expressed the KMT's Chinese nationalism in front of Taiwan's Ministry of Education, and they rejected Chinese identity with slogans such as 'We Want to be Taiwanese, not Chinese!', 'Study Taiwanese History, not Chinese History', and 'Study Taiwanese Geography, not Chinese Geography' (Hsiau 2000: 1). This anti-Chinese form of nationalism has been characterized by Horng-Luen Wang (2004) using Nietzsche's term *ressentiment*. Wang argues that although Taiwan has many of the elements of a state, including anthem, flag, army, and diplomacy, there is a sense of grievance against the PRC for not allowing Taiwan to be treated fairly in international society or to receive universal recognition as a sovereign state.

In 1997, there was a turn as the new *Knowing Taiwan* textbooks came under attack from an elite group of *waishengren* under the leadership of a legislator named Ching-Hua Lee. The dispute was fundamental to narrations of Taiwan's relations with China: the new textbooks interpreted Taiwan's history from a Taiwan-centred perspective, stating that the Spanish, the Dutch, the Ming Dynasty loyalist Koxinga and his clan, the Qing, the Japanese, and the KMT were all foreign rulers or colonizers over Taiwan. In contrast, the group around Lee attempted to restore the formerly hegemonic Sino-centric paradigm, arguing that Taiwan has since ancient times been a part of China, and that Koxinga and his clan, followed by the Qing dynasty and the KMT, were certainly not foreign (F.-C. Wang 2005: 73–76). *Knowing Taiwan* was criticized as promoting Taiwan's independence, attempting to erode Taiwan's links with the Chinese Mainland, and as using education to remove a Chinese consciousness from the people of Taiwan

(Hughes 2011: 63, discussing H.-P. Wang *et al.* 1997). Indeed, the position of the *waishengren* is described by Stéphane Corcuff as being in a state of 'liminality'; that is, a situation 'during which an individual is in transition between a state of life that (s)he has not yet fully left, and a new stage into which (s)he has not fully entered' (Corcuff 2011: 116).

Unfortunately, the Taiwanization movement since then has increasingly developed in a way that departs from Lee Teng-Hui's vision of a shared identity, emphasizing instead ethnic particularity. Although the Taiwan-centred political transformation of the 1990s established the principle of equality between *waishengren* and *benshengren*, members of the *waishengren* who had previously enjoyed political privilege felt threatened by their new minority status. At the same time, *benshengren* in turn continued to feel resentful of *waishengren* and, on top of this, to feel threatened by the attitude of the PRC. Meanwhile, long-suppressed nativist energies, created through reflection on being regarded as the Others (i.e. as not-China and not-Chinese), began to explode in the form of Taiwanese ethnicity and nationalism. Rwei-Ren Wu, who is dedicated to projects relating to Taiwan's nation-formation, argues that:

Taiwan was broken off China *before* the latter began its transformation from empire into nation, and from this point on the historical trajectory of the two bifurcated sharply; while the nationalism in China rose after the moribund empire's 1895 defeat to imagine a Chinese nation *without* Taiwan, the nationalism in Taiwan emerged as a reaction to Japan's colonial nation-building to imagine a Taiwan that belonged only to the Taiwanese. In short, the bifurcated histories of China and Taiwan since 1895 created two separate political fields that induced in both places movements of nationalism paralleled to – yet separate and different from – each other.

(R.-R. Wu 2004: 17)

While to some extent embracing multiculturalism and appropriating Taiwan's indigenous heritage, the DPP's overarching representation of itself was as embodying the marginalized Taiwanese majority. Indeed, many DPP activists were descendants of the victims of the 2-28 Incident and KMT authoritarianism. Taiwanization has further been used by the DPP as a political strategy to appeal to Taiwanese supporters and voters during election campaigns. However, the term 'Taiwanese' is vague and ambiguous: while it may denote all residents of Taiwan, in areas where there was a struggle for power, the DPP tended to stress the politics of ethnicity and identity, and 'Taiwanese' thus merely stood for the majority Hoklo people. As such, Taiwanization also became associated with the majority Hoklo identity and ethnicity.

Here, it is worth noting a comparison with Ireland: the new Irish state emphasized the historical identity of the Celtic-Catholic majority of the population; as Declan Kiberd observes:

Those words *Sinn Féin* (ourselves alone)<sup>1</sup> ... became synonymous with the movement for national independence. That movement imagined the Irish people as an historical community, whose self-image was constructed long before the era of modern nationalism and the nation-state. There are many texts in the Irish language to bear this thesis out.

(Kiberd 1995: 1)

However, alongside this emphasis on ethnic and cultural Celtic and Catholic identity, Kiberd also notes:

the extraordinary capacity of Irish society to assimilate new elements through all its major phases. Far from providing a basis for doctrines of racial purity, they seem to take pleasure in the fact that identity is seldom straightforward and given, more often a matter of negotiation and exchange.

(Kiberd 1995: 1)

If Irish nationalism contained strands of ethnic and cultural particularity and senses of hybridity, Taiwanese ethnic and cultural nationalism must be framed as an example of a discourse of strategic essentialism. In the beginning of his article 'Imagining Taiwan', Cheng-Feng Shih pointed out that:

On the way to democratic consolidation, Taiwan, as a multiethnic settlers' society, has faced the challenge of how to forge its national identity. If we understand nation as an 'imagined community', to borrow the term from Benedict Anderson..., the task of nation-building is to reach consensus on the question of 'who[se] community' and 'how to imagine'.

(C.-F. Shih 2003:14-1)

Indeed, the formation of Taiwanese nationalism was a process of self-conscious adoption of various nationalist strategies that had been identified by western scholars. The DPP and pro-DPP scholars appeared to take on a self-conscious primordialist perspective to develop a Taiwanese nationalism which reflected the old linguistic nationalism of nineteenth-century Europe, in which each supposedly 'true' nation 'was marked off by its own peculiar language and literary culture, which together expressed that people's historical genius' (see B. Anderson 2001: 40). As such, was the DPP attempting to prove itself to be a 'true' nation, by developing a totalizing and essentialist narrative of an 'imagined' community based on shared Taiwanese language, Taiwanese history, Taiwanese ethnicity, and Taiwanese culture?

The DPP's Chen Shui-Bian was in power as the first elected non-KMT president between 2000 and 2008. During this period, new cultural and tourist and recreation policies were developed and implemented: in contrast to the KMT representation of Taiwan as the last bastion of authentic Chinese culture, the DPP attempted to demonstrate to the international community that Taiwan was a sovereign state with

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<sup>1</sup> *Sinn Féin* is the name of a political party, founded in 1905 and associated with militant nationalist republicanism against British rule in Ireland and in later decades in Northern Ireland. It is today the third-largest political party on the island of Ireland.



its own distinct culture. Culture was constructed through 'invented traditions', a phenomenon explored by Hobsbawm and Ranger (eds 1983). There was thus a conscious 'invention' of tradition and authenticity, in which Taiwanese heritage and religious practices and rituals were selected, re-generated, and promoted as tourist festivals and destinations defined by cultural particularity as well as potential vehicles for Taiwanese national culture and identity. These were further designated as 'flagship' tourist events and also commercialized as consumable goods in the global capitalist flow (see F.-L. Shih 2006: 276–279).

As such, as noted above, in the play of ethnicity politics, the DPP in many instances has reduced the meanings of 'Taiwanese' to standing only for the majority ethnicity of Taiwan; that is, the Hoklo people. Indeed, this is a critical element in the DPP's strategy, which is to showcase an invented culture (i.e., the Hoklo culture, with few token Hakka, Formosa Austronesian and *waishengren* cultures) and an imagined community (i.e., the Hoklo communities, with few token Hakka, Formosa Austronesian and *waishengren* communities) that is local, essential and natural, which contrasts with what can be found in China, and which is enduring in a globalizing world. A-Chin Hsiao, who has paid extensive attention to Taiwanese cultural nationalism, points out that:

Based on the recognition that for specific political and practical purposes in identity politics, marginalized social groups cannot act without stabilized identities, strategic essentialism expresses a positive attitude toward and/or refers to the very act of essentializing the identities of such groups as a means to these ends. Strategic essentialism, however, can rarely remain just 'strategic'. In practice, any essentialist claim of identity strategically constructed for its practical effects typically turns out to be a form of de facto essentialism, which in turn causes essentialist reactions.

(Hsiao 2005: 127)

Yet, from within the limits of the DPP's essentializations and ethnicizations emerge the problems of the 'Others' and of the politics of a multi-cultural society. If the anthropology of Taiwan is a kind of barometer of the narration of Taiwan's subjectivity, it is worth taking note of how post-1980s anthropology of Taiwan has been influenced by *bentuhua* discourses to contextualize Taiwan in its own right and within its various processes. Taiwan by the late 1980s was no longer a simulacrum of a greater China but is instead its own place. But the anthropology of Taiwan has not, as it were, been 'colonized' by *bentuhua* discourses but has rather worked with and against them in the writing of a Taiwan profoundly implicated in local, regional and global connectivities. This shift has certainly generated a new trend of Taiwan-focused and comparative ethnographies; one good example is Robert Weller's *Alternate Civilities* (1999) which contrasts fieldwork data from Taiwan, Hong Kong and China, and takes proper consideration of the specific history and socio-cultural experience of each location. For instance, Weller demonstrates that the worship of ghosts thrived in Taiwan in the 1980s as a response to the new developments of a global capitalist economy in a way that 'tends towards utilitarian granting of individual desires, dissolving the local community interests of temple-based religion' (1999: 88) and thus imperial patterns of order and belonging. He also notes that the emergence of 'Buddhism in the Human Realm' (人間佛教, *renjian fojiao*) and the increasing role of women in the

movement, (such as seen in the Tzu Chi Association), are 'defining new kinds of communities no longer based on local geography' (1999: 88). Weller's Taiwan is described by Paul-Francois Tremlett in his 'Introduction' to *Re-Writing Culture in Taiwan* (2009) as:

a Taiwan that cannot be assimilated to the cultural and historical experiences of any elsewhere and which simultaneously throws down the gauntlet for new, comparative studies – religious beliefs and practices emerge as vehicles for different kinds of social action and identification, whereby what emerges is not the playing out of a Sinic code or deep structure of Chineseness, but rather the active and contested making of culture, place, and identity by agents with varying access to sources of economic, political, and symbolic capital and power.

(Tremlett 2009: 11)

I myself conducted research on the issues around maiden death and its related death practices, regarding religious practices in Taiwan as being always embodied or embedded in economic, political, and social processes in the globalizing world. My research took place in Taipei City and Taipei County during the mid-1990s and the mid-2000s, when urbanization, democratization, and increasing female mobility were causing the breakdown of traditions. It was shown that Chinese ancestral orthopraxy never manages to constitute itself as a fully complete structure, and its incompleteness provides spaces in which other practices and systems of relations can emerge in Taiwanese society (F.-L. Shih 2007). These findings have significant consequences for how Taiwan was re-narrated. If religious practices merely legitimate an imperial Chineseness, then they are broadly a passive reflection of a given Chineseness. If the relationship is drawn differently – if religious practices in Taiwan constitute a partially autonomous sphere – then they might also be understood as vehicles for different kinds of social action and identification, and could further be seen as the condition for social re-invention that may create the possibilities for changes in Taiwan (also see F.-L. Shih 2009).

This shift and trend in the anthropological study and analysis of Taiwan has broken new ground: in Tremlett's words, 'nothing here is essentialized. Culture, identity, society, religion – these "things" are not objects passively awaiting anthropological description, but are the contested sites of human social action' (Tremlett 2009: 11).

## Conclusion

Until recently, Taiwan was not a free subject as regards thought or action, and the narrating of Taiwan's subjectivity cannot be properly understood without an appreciation of the forces that have been imposed on the island. In Framework One, Taiwan was narrated as part of China and as embodying a particular form of Chineseness; therefore, to understand the narration of Taiwan as a metonym of China, we need to analyse the configurations of KMT power and domination. We can see that the KMT's Chinese nationalism as developed in the early twentieth century reflects a primordialist perspective, in which the nation-state is regarded as an expression of the essence of a people, in their language, history, culture, and territory. However, the people and culture represented in KMT nationalism for the

most part reflected only typical aspects of Han ethnicity. This nationalism was forcibly imposed on Taiwan during the martial law period, and Taiwan was Sinicized and represented as the last bastion of authentic Chinese culture. This, though, was a KMT invention which did not correspond with the full picture of the reality of Taiwan's history, people, languages or culture. Furthermore, KMT Chineseness dominated the representation of Taiwan in anthropological studies of Taiwan in that period. Taiwan was studied as merely a window through which a greater continuing imperial China, characterized by the idea of Chineseness, could be brought into view. I argue that the way the KMT narrated Taiwan as an embodiment of Chineseness was only one version of Chineseness, reflecting only one Chinese culture: that of a Mandarin ruling class.

In Framework Two, Taiwan since the transition to democracy was re-narrated as a national subject in its own right, or in some DDP instances as standing for a Hoklo subjectivity, and to understand this new narration we need to analyse the configurations of *bentuhua* discourses and the DPP's power struggle and political strategies. We see that the DPP developed education, tourism and recreation policies to create the Taiwanese as a re-imagined community; while DPP state discourse was primordialist, its approach to culture was promoted through invented traditions. I argue that the DPP engaged in a sort of playful or post-modern primordialism, self-consciously inventing a form of Taiwanese nationalism which stood in most instances only for the majority Hoklo subjectivity. However, although the DPP's strategic approach to crafting nationalism and national subjectivity was probably necessary for self-assertion in the context of a democratic struggle, and although there is recognition in Taiwanese nationalism of its inventedness and historicity, how can we judge the difference between strategic essentialism and un-reflexive chauvinism? We witness that Taiwan's democracy grew in close relationship to nationalism, but, as Craig Calhoun notes: 'nationalism was also (at least often) an attempt to reconcile liberty and ethical universalism with felt community'. He also asks: 'how can we reconcile the important potential of multiple and hybrid cultural and social identities with political participation and rights?' (Calhoun 2008: 444)

We understand people as implicated in social actions which to some extent they are not entirely free to choose. Ironically, despite the DPP's resistance to the KMT, the DDP's strategies of nationalism were not much different in form from those pursued by the KMT, as the KMT was the only example of a nationalist political party from which, as it were, the DPP learned its craft. I argue that although DPP nationalism was a form of post-modern primordialism, it still bears striking similarities to its KMT 'Chinese' counter-part: both nationalisms are strategically essentialized, assuming an underlying unity out of which a common national culture and subjectivity are formed, and this underlying unity is, respectively, an essential 'Chineseness' or an essential 'Taiwaneseness'. Here, we witness that the KMT's essentialism triggered the DPP's essentialist resistance. While the DPP's reactionary version of 'Taiwaneseness' may have been constructed strategically for its practical uses, it also turns out to be a form of *de facto* essentialism, in turn bringing about other essentialist reactions such as indigenous 'First Nation' nationalism (Simon 2009).

However, we also see that *bentuhua* discourses have inspired the crafting of Taiwanese subjectivity and nationalism, and have also influenced the post-1980s

anthropology of Taiwan. There has since then been a significant move away from the frameworks that typified the 1960s and 1980s – namely, a structure of essential Chineseness – towards the contextualization of Taiwan within its various processes of industrialization, urbanization, democratization, localization and globalization etc. The anthropology of Taiwan today represents plural voices and new claims on multiple histories and narrations in a globalizing web of connections that reach across space and time and suggest a Taiwan in both tension and transition.

This critical review of KMT and DPP nationalisms has further made use of comparisons with Ireland. I consider Taiwan and Ireland as both situated as the Other in processes of colonization. As such, I attempt to demonstrate that it is through the concept of Otherness that Taiwan and Ireland came to be places of distinct histories, marked by difficult formations of subjectivities. This Otherness is also what connects Taiwan and Ireland, through the experience of struggle for self-assertion over hegemonic domination. In both cases, we understand that the inhabitants of an island adjacent to a larger country have had not only to resist political domination and subordinate status, but also to negotiate identities that have been imposed upon them or used to maintain barriers. In the post-colonial era, Ireland and Taiwan have both sought to recover their pre-colonial pasts, as seen in the official recognition of indigenous cultures and languages. However, the present also contains colonial legacies, and I argue that there is the risk that a new 'official' identity will be at the expense of the rights of a minority who retain an identity that was formerly hegemonic. In the case of Ireland, that fear led to partition, which in turn led to a continuing conflict over identity in the north of the island. However, through consideration of the on-going struggle for peace in the north of Ireland, a struggle based in an attempt to shift nationalist politics away from identity and onto civility and the processes of democratic government, it becomes possible to imagine an alternative future for Taiwan (and Ireland).

Here, before ending this paper, I would like to raise several questions while arguing for an understanding of national subjectivity that embraces broader perspectives than the narrow frameworks of ethnic and cultural nationalism: Has globalization led to renewed nationalism and the strengthening of boundaries in Taiwan and Ireland? Is ethnicity an essential quality or merely one choice of identification? At what point is essentialism for Taiwan, as a strategy, no longer needed? While strategically it may have been useful as a vehicle for democratic struggle, is a new strategy needed in the second decade of the 21st century, after Taiwan's transition to democracy? In particular, how should we consider the narration of a subject beyond the subjectivities of imperialism, colonialism and nationalism, and instead in the contexts of transnational cosmopolitanism, digital modernization, and globalization?

In the main discussion of this paper, I show that imperialism, colonialism and nationalism have all imposed specific limits on how people in Taiwan belong together through the identification of a subject with specific intentions and imaginaries and so on. However, a fuller picture needs to consider the development of extended international networks formed by decades of diaspora and immigration, as well as by capitalism and gender politics, which mark the decline of the ethnic nationalist subject and the emergence of new forms and visions of belonging (also see Meaney 2011). Moreover, transnational

cosmopolitan processes expand through the new digital media, alongside older networks of kin and ethnicity, migration and diaspora, according to logics which seem a million miles from the intentions and imaginaries of any previous subject. Here, it is important to note that in order to be transnational, it is not necessary to be first a nation; although Taiwan is not recognized as a nation, it is a *de facto* nation-state. Taiwan is situated in a state of what Corcuff calls 'liminality', namely, 'being neither a state nor a non-state', and he suggests we should 'explore how liminality can be adapted from an analysis of a transitional period into a focus on spatial inter-connectivity within a timeframe' (Corcuff in this special issue: 53), in order to study the sociology of Taiwan's nationalism and international relations. However, whether analysis emphasizes a transitional period or a transnational condition, both represent a different way of thinking about international relations of power in tension, and a new way of connecting with other nations or other places in transition. Thus, we must consider ourselves on the edge of new forms and visions of belonging that bear no relation to old models of ethnic and cultural nationalisms. This requires new concepts and practices – in short, a new language, if we are to be able to make sense of them.

Post-modern critiques by the likes of Edward Soja (1989) suggest that places should no longer be understood to be natural facts or passive objects. Rather, places are constituted or fabricated in and through specific types of human action, social relationships and connections. It is through particular articulations of connectedness and relatedness that places come into being. Indeed, in both Taiwan and Ireland, Chineseness and Britishness, or Taiwanese-ness and Irishness, were and are imagined and invented, with technologies such as printing and the media creating a national bond of solidarity. The narration of the national subject, then, is not the expression of particular ethnic and cultural characteristics, but the social cement of a new kind of greater universalism in the clash of technologies for connectivity. Consequently, I conclude with the thought that we may usefully think of Taiwan and Ireland in a new framework as network societies that can be studied in the light of connectedness and relatedness through which they have been constituted as places in an inter-connected world. In my view, Taiwan's subjectivity and Irish subjectivity could be enriched by comparing what aspects of 'Otherness' are shared, but also by exploring 'the perspective on what humanity shares' (Calhoun 2008: 429); namely, the complex webs, links, relationships and connections through which Taiwan and Ireland have both become increasingly (dis) integrated parts of our globalizing world.

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