

The Tug of War between the Tradition of an Empire and the Reality of an Island Republic: Unexpected Suppression of Chinese Nationalist Discourse by the Chinese Nationalist Party at the Time of Taiwan's Withdrawal from the United Nations

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ABSTRACT

In response to the linguistic turn in historical sociology, this paper explores how and why Chinese nationalism was reduced from the official ideology to a suppressed target at the time of Taiwan's withdrawal from the United Nations. In this paper, I argue that this transformation had to do with the tug of war between the past traditions of the Chinese empire and the current reality that the Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT), as the nominal government of China, ruled only Taiwan and several neighboring islands. I investigate how and why the discourse “defending Taiwan through reform” became hegemonic because of the historical conjunction of multiple structures with varying temporalities, namely the one-China expectation structure, which constituted an epistemological obstacle to establishing a new state immediately; the international political system, which promoted sovereignty; the global Cold War, which produced a relatively stable opposition; and the international conjuncture, which involved changing alliances. The interaction of these structures through a specific sequence of events caused the KMT to repress Chinese nationalism and temporarily tolerate the discourse of Taiwan independence during its legitimization crisis in the early 1970s.

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1. Question

This study examined why the Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT), a regime with “Chinese Nationalist” in its name, suppressed Chinese nationalism rather than Taiwan independence at the time when Taiwan departed from the United Nations (UN). It goes without saying that a regime suppresses nationalism that promotes a new national boundary. It is not so evident that a nationalist regime suppresses nationalist movements that advocate maintaining the current national boundary. Many researchers have insisted that authoritarian regimes suppress any form of dissent. But this rule did not tell us too much, except to recite a seemingly timeless casual law. It can neither meaningfully nor convincingly explain why the KMT's suppression of Chinese nationalism occurred specifically at the time when Taiwan withdrew from the UN, or why the KMT chose to suppress the dissenter for Chinese nationalism rather than the dissenter for Taiwan independence.

This question can be answered by considering four structures with varying durations, the historical conjuncture of these structures, and the constitutive role of language in the social world (Cabrera 2004; Koselleck 1985; Morawska and Spohn 1994). The focal argument presented in this paper is that this anomalous and unexpected suppression was the product of the tug of war between the everlasting tradition of the Chinese empire for “one unified China” and the reality of the Republic of China (ROC) as an island republic. In this paper, I approach this question from the perspective of historical sociology after the linguistic turn (Delanty and Isin 2003) and investigate the interweaving of event sequences and structures with varying temporalities to answer the research question. Rather than considering ideology to be simply a false consciousness, I focus on the symbolic struggles concerning the legitimation of domination and analyze

how the official ideology was naturalized (Bourdieu 1991; Foucault 1972; Thompson 1990).

2. Background: When the reality of “two Chinas” met the indubitable concept of “one China”

The case under examination involves several *longue durée* structures. The most longstanding structure was an expectation structure that was shaped by the concept of *zhengtong* (the legitimate orthodox line of ruling dynasties) and the accompanying concept of “one China,” which was rooted deeply in the unconsciousness of most Chinese people (Tang 2004; Yao 2002: 187-206). A consciousness of Chinese that distinguished the Chinese from so-called “barbarians,” had emerged in preimperial times as a result of conflicts of interest and competition for resources. The unification of warring states into an empire simultaneously consolidated and nullified this consciousness. The formation of the empire caused a debate about whether the Han dynasty succeeded the temporary and allegedly tyrannical first empire (the Qin dynasty) or the earlier Zhou dynasty. This debate represented the earliest notion of *zhengtong*, because it proposed the question of what type of dynasty can be considered legitimate and ascribed to the orthodox line of successive ruling dynasties. However, *zhengtong* did not become a phrase and a real symbolic struggle until the empire was divided into three competing states. After the Jin dynasty ended the separation and reunited the empire, a regime that unified all of China or occupied *zhongyuang* (currently comprising Henan and parts of neighboring provinces) was generally considered orthodox. This usage did not change even when nomads later conquered *zhongyuan* and formed a state there. The Chinese literati often collaborated with foreign conquerors to protect their own interests and to avoid causing a disturbance. Despite being conquered by nomads, the Chinese literati were proud of their Chinese ethnic identity and believed that they were culturally superior to the ruling nomads. Following the civilized Chinese way of ruling was appreciated, but not yet the decisive criterion of orthodoxy.

The situation changed during the Song dynasty, when the previously discriminated nomads constructed a coequal seminomadic empire in the north of China. Being threatened by the nomads not only strengthened the ethnic identity of the Chinese (the Han) but also engendered a distinctive Chinese consciousness, a protonationalism (Ge 2011: 41-65; Tillman 1979: 403-28). This protonationalism was not limited to the literati; it also affected the general population. It was disseminated through storytelling, novels,

and theaters (and also through children's textbooks and imperial mandates during subsequent dynasties). The concept of *zhengtong* gained a moral sense and was judged according to the cultural achievements and moral performance of the regime rather than the factual rule of *zhongyuan*. The idea of loyalty to a single dynasty became prominent, and the collaboration that was previously approved because it saved the community was now criticized. When the Mongols invaded China, numerous scholar-officials became martyrs for the Song dynasty. The conquest of the Mongols interrupted, but did not terminate the development of this protonationalism, because the Mongols used the Chinese institution as an instrument of rule rather than to genuinely embrace the Chinese civilization. The Ming dynasty was able to dispel the Mongols and directly substitute the Yuan dynasty with the help of ethnic nationalism.

When the Ming dynasty was again overthrown by a purportedly "culturally inferior" ethnic group, this time the Manchu, martyrdom became both a topic of debate and a common phenomenon. Unlike the Mongols, the Manchu rulers not only comprehensively adopted the Chinese institution but also appealed to the culturalism of the Chinese, which has been a key aspect of the Chinese identity since preimperial times. Specifically, the Manchu stated that all people could become Chinese by following the Chinese way; thus, they legitimated their rule and integrated the Manchu into the Chinese. Simultaneously, they managed a complex dual system to maintain the identity and supremacy of the Manchu. This strategy plus strict literary inquisition successfully domesticated Chinese protonationalism and ensured the domination of the Manchu until they were confronted by Europeans and experienced a crisis. Various versions of nationalism rose to save either the state, the nation, or civilization.

The manifold controversy concerning the future stimulated the construction of the modern Chinese state, which required an "integrative revolution," according to Geertz (1973), to transform China from an old nation into a new (national) state. When political reform was repeatedly refused or obstructed, Chinese ethnic nationalism, which had been controlled by the Manchu and forgotten by the Chinese, was revived and became a vital source of support for the revolution. The 1911 political revolution successfully replaced the empire with a republic, but led to the establishment of an only superficial modern state. Although the revolution stimulated and advanced numerous social changes, it did not change the class structure or replace completely the traditional principle according to which society was organized. The cultural movement in 1918 deepened, broadened, and accelerated the changes in societal structure, but did not create a new social order to answer the questions of who the Chinese were and what lifestyle the Chinese desired. The movement formed part of the long-term seesaw struggle between the "new state" (epochalism) and the "old nation" (essentialism). Even the 1949 Communist revolution, a

seemingly complete societal change and an ultimate settlement, was only one part of the long social transformation of China rather than the end.

The 1911 revolution, despite its limitations, was a crucial event during which China was affected by the international political system and was finally incorporated into it. This brought the international political structure of the nation-state, which had developed since the Peace of Westphalia under the dominance of European states, into our field of vision. This system established the internal and external sovereignty of the state with delimited territory, and was gradually operated based on a realistic principle (i.e., most authorities recognized the sovereignty and legitimacy of the government that ruled a specific region in practice) (Tilly 1985). This indicated that one state normally cannot intervene in the affairs of another state, and an active attack on another state is an act of aggression that should be punished.

Therefore, the United States could not directly participate in the civil war between the KMT and the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), and decided to wait “until the dust settled,” although it had attempted to mediate conflicts. The military victory of the CCP in 1949 constituted not only a crucial event in the modern transformation of China but also an event that was embedded in the trajectory of the international political system. The shock of the “loss of China” urged the United States government to extend the thought of containment to Asia. The United States predicted that the KMT would be defeated by the CCP and prepared to recognize the PRC as the legitimate government of China. However, when the Korean War broke up in June, 1950, the United States quickly sent the seventh fleet to “neutralize” the Taiwan Strait. Although the United States anticipated a Chinese Titoism and once considered relinquishing Taiwan in exchange for a ceasefire in Korea, the development of the Korean War and the antagonism between the liberal and the communist camp pushed it to support the KMT again (Chang 2011).

The Cold War was the third structural level in the case under study. The Korean War was not an accident, but rather an event that was able to articulate with the past and future of international politics, because a tense confrontational structure formed between the Western bloc and the Eastern bloc after World War II. However, conflict was likely to occur in another place and form. Such a hot war was not necessary, but a contingent development that transformed the earlier confrontation into a normality and engendered the Cold War on a global scale.

Guided by the containment policy, various sectors of the United States government reached a consensus in the beginning of 1950 to establish a “defensive perimeter” along the Aleutian Islands, Okinawa, and Guam to avoid direct commitments on the Asian

mainland.¹ The military conflict on the Korean peninsula, which originally was not included in the defensive perimeter, demonstrated that this consensus, based on using the same concept, was only an illusion because the President of the United States, the National Security Council, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the Commander in Chief, Far East, interpreted the consensus differently. If the rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union was a real global war,² then shrinking the defensive perimeter to the island chain would be a wise strategy. However, during a cold war, such a strategy would be a severe failure because any small concession might produce wide political and psychological effects and soon lead to a domino effect (Gaddis 1987).

To prevent the ROC from placing a veto when the UN Security Council discussed sending troops to the Korean peninsula, the United States government resumed its support of the KMT, included Taiwan in the defensive perimeter, and rescinded its decision to recognize the PRC. This suspended the realistic principle of sovereignty discussed previously.³ The Korean War, originally not related to the recognition of the ROC or PRC as the legitimate government of China, became an opportunity to save the KMT regime externally.⁴ Based on this development, the ROC asserted its identity as an “old nation” and continued to claim, following the logic of *zhengtong*, its sovereignty of Mainland China rather than considered to create a “new state” in Taiwan.

However, the realistic principle of sovereignty had been implemented before the Korean War.⁵ The government of India first recognized the PRC on December 30, 1949 and claimed a nonalignment policy. On January 6, 1950, England also recognized the PRC as ruling Mainland China in practice.⁶ Although the Korean War interrupted worldwide recognition of the PRC, the Korean War could not reverse the decisions of the states that had already recognized the PRC.

¹ The U.S. government never doubted the strategic value of Taiwan, but neither included it in the defensive perimeter nor took over Taiwan because the Taiwan autonomy movement was poorly organized. Even if an “independent” regime were established there, then the United States would have had to send military forces to defend it. This contradicted the goal of the defensive perimeter (Gaddis 1987: 81).

² Considering that a total war or the use of nuclear weapons might harm or even destroy both sides, the United States and the Soviet Union refrained from escalating the war. Therefore, the Korean War continued to be a limited war (Halperin 1967).

³ This case contradicted Braudel’s (1980) view that the enduring immobile structure exhibited more causal determining power.

⁴ By the end of 1949, both the State Department and the Central Intelligence Agency estimated that Taiwan would fall to the CPC without the help of the United States (Gaddis 1987: 83). In addition, Chiang Kai-shek confessed that his regime would collapse in September, 1950 without American special aid (Qin 1978: 259).

⁵ The U.S. Secretary of State stated clearly in May, 1949 that the first condition among three to recognize the new Chinese government was that the CPC “actually controlled the territory and administrative organs.” When the United States advocated at the UN assembly in 1971 that the ROC should not be excluded because of the PRC’s accession, one critical reason of its argument was the “effective control of its people.”

⁶ Protecting England’s interest in Asia, especially the Hong Kong, was another central reason (Wang 2014).

“Two Chinas” became a reality under the simultaneous influence of the three structures mentioned previously and caused numerous controversies as well as a conflict with the concept of one China (Chen 1996; Garver 1997; Grasso 1987; Liu 2011: 87-118; Tucker 1994). Originally, whether the ROC or the PRC represented the legitimate government of China would be determined by the consequence of a civil war. However, the determination became embedded in the opposition between the Western and Eastern bloc, producing an exceptional decoupling of the recognition of a regime from factual rule. Although the primary rule of the ROC was limited to Taiwan, an island that was renounced by Japan and under the control of the ROC only since 1945, the ROC was recognized by most nations. The Cold War, which made the principle of sovereignty invalid, provided the KMT with time not only to rest but also an opportunity to activate the imperial legacy, use the *zhengtong* to legitimize its rule, and claim that the ROC continued to possess complete sovereignty over China. The PRC also advocated the existence of only one China, but claimed that the PRC rather than the ROC was the legitimate government.

This consensus between the ROC and the PRC was incomprehensible for most Western politicians, who typically thought according to modern political logic based on sovereign states. After the signing of the Geneva Accords, which created peace between northern and southern Vietnam in 1954, the governments of England and India that had recognized the PRC began to promote the notion of “coexistence” between the PRC and the ROC in international politics. This notion not only justified their earlier recognition of the PRC but also represented the only solution that they could formulate to mediate the unique conflict between these two governing bodies.

However, this solution was rejected and criticized as “international pacifism” by the KMT. To abandon unification, temporarily or eternally, indicated acceptance of temporary ease and exercising sovereignty over only a part of the country. According to the concept of *zhengtong*, this resigned attitude would indulge improperly the evil enemy and enable the illegitimate ruler (i.e., PRC) to become stronger. Furthermore, renouncing any territory was considered an act that betrayed the entire nation and was worthy of serious punishment. Despite the earlier nonmoral version of *zhengtong* that recognized the factual unifier as orthodox, no excuse could justify the abandonment of territory or the mission of unification, because the legitimate ruler would automatically win the active support of the populace. Fear of loss or refusal to continue to attempt unification would be considered a sign of illegitimacy. As stated previously, a moral tone was added to the concept of *zhengtong* during the Song dynasty. The saying of Zhuge Liang that “the Chinese and the wicked (traitor) should not stand under the same heaven” became a common ideology despite knowledge that it was impossible. Among the extreme developments of this

ideology was that a bureaucrat would be regarded as a “traitor” if he was familiar with the foreign language (Liu 1997). This and other similar developments increased the prevalence of yin/yang dual structures and a yin/yang dual action logic. The KMT used this tradition to legitimize itself and to appease and encourage citizens. The KMT used the rhetoric of “not standing under the same heaven” to describe its relationship with the PRC. This cannot be considered simply deceptive propaganda; otherwise, the logic of the actors cannot be understood.

From the modern Western perspective, the concept of one China was simply a myth (Dreyer 2008). In reality, China was a “nationless state” (Fitzgerald 1995: 75-104). However, Chinese nationalism never diminished after its rise during the late Qing dynasty because of the national disaster caused by the aggression of Western imperialism (Townsend 1992: 97-130). Although the imagination of national subjugation and genocide, the controversy of excluding the Manchu from the Chinese, the development of provincial independence, and the following separation by warlords had previously caused an identity crisis and political fragmentation, all of these ethnic nationalist ideas, which had promoted a small nation of only Han Chinese, transformed sequentially into a form of republican nationalism, namely a state nationalism that embraced a greater Chinese nation consisting of Han, Manchu, Mongol, Hui, and Zhang peoples (several versions also included Miao and Yao peoples). This imagination of a unified Chinese nation, *zhonghua*, not only consolidated the Chinese identity but also encouraged unification, enabling one China to be realized. When the expedition of the KMT to the north succeeded and preliminary unification was realized in 1927, the Chinese began to regain national confidence. After the Manchurian Incident in 1931, it became a fashion to use the semantics and image of “national renaissance” to emphasize a national awakening, implying that the long, glorious history of the nation was an objective guarantee of renaissance. The subsequent national mobilization during the war against Japan not only facilitated a penetration of the imagination of a greater Chinese nation, *zhonghua*, into various nations and classes but also produced the structural conditions necessary for the realization of one China (Huang 2002: 128-41; Huang and Wang 2006: 129-37).

Based on this history and expectation structure, the KMT, as a self-proclaimed force for national renaissance, could neither suddenly change nor completely abandon the mission of national renaissance that had legitimized its existence, particularly because the KMT had criticized the CPC as a national enemy, because communism violated the principles of Chinese culture. Therefore, despite the declining situation, the KMT resolutely opposed the suggestions of a trustee, suzerainty, one China and one Taiwan, or two Chinas proposed by England and the United States. Neither the unfamiliarity of the KMT with international political principles and international law nor its confidence in the

United States' steady support resulting from the structure of the Cold War could sufficiently explain the KMT's insistence on one China, particularly because those various suggestions were discussed openly in the media. However, even the magazine *Free China*, which had criticized the KMT's authoritarian rule, claimed that the ROC's constitution drafted in 1947 was a symbol of freedom that could attract a positive response from the populace in Mainland China and supported the KMT's concept of *fatong*, namely respecting the ROC's constitution as a representation of the orthodox successor of China's legitimate government analogous to the concept of *zhengtong* and using this excuse to hinder the development of a complete democracy in Taiwan. Because numerous mainlanders moved to Taiwan with the defeated KMT and anticipated returning to their homeland in the future, the insistence on one China was not only a subjective wish of the KMT's leaders but also a common opinion supported by a solid expectation structure. The frequent use of Chinese language and the greater Chinese nation (*zhonghua*) as self-evident ideas in daily life caused the concept of one China to become an insurmountable "epistemological obstacle" according to Bachelard (2002).

For example, many newspapers opposed the negotiation of ceasefire during the first Taiwan Strait Crisis in 1955, reasoning that the act of ceasefire was equal to recognizing the CPC as a legitimate ruling group and created a temporary military division that would cause a political division, which would eventually cause a political separation. When Yin Haiguang questioned the probability of KMT's recovery of Mainland China, even Hu Shih stated that this was an "untouchable issue," because "it was a signboard loaded with countless people's hopes," namely a deep belief beyond doubt and rational calculation.

In fact, the KMT was not a completely inflexible regime. Chiang Kai-shek was a practical military and understood the necessity for timely compromise. When the UN discussed the membership of the Mongolian People's Republic in 1961, Chiang changed his opposition at the last minute and used his personal channel, bypassing the diplomatic department, to reverse the government's earlier decision to avoid offending the African states that might support the PRC as the only legitimate government of China in the UN. However, this recognition of the Mongolian People's Republic negated the claim of one China promoted by the ROC (Wang 2009). For Chiang, to adopt an uncompromising stance on one China or even to mention a military counterattack before completing the final compromise was a just and honorable reason that could become an advantageous instrument for negotiation with the United States. Moreover, this strategy was consistent with the Chinese tradition of symbolic politics, which enabled Chiang to maintain his prestige and leadership irrespective of the results of the negotiation.

The necessity for flexible adaptation indicated the existence of the fourth level of structure, dynamic friend/enemy relationships in international politics. Although

international conjuncture exhibited some stability, it changed relatively quickly because international politics was full of strategic coalitions, and opposing groups adopted the so-called “wedge strategy” to destroy the alliances of opponents in the Cold War (Wang 2014). In 1964, France engaged in diplomacy with the PRC to avoid the guidance of the United States. In the same year, the PRC successfully completed a nuclear experiment. This changed not only the triangular relationship between the United States, the PRC, and the Soviet Union but also created a hiatus in the stable Cold War structure because the relationship between the PRC and the Soviet Union became discordant and the United States sought not to become involved in the Vietnam War. These developments pushed the relationship between the United States and the PRC to evolve toward “normalization,” and the operation of the international political system to return to the normal and realistic principle of sovereignty.

An increasing number of noncommunist countries opposed the ROC as the exclusive legitimate government of China in the 1960s because they did not consider the ROC as the ruler of Mainland China, and the KMT therefore seemingly attempted to experiment with the concept of two Chinas. The ROC did not sever its diplomatic relations with France after France recognized the PRC but claimed not to initiate the discontinuation of diplomatic relations with the ROC. However, the KMT focused efforts on determining the attitude of the United States rather than negotiating with France to realize dual recognition and to persuade the citizens under its rule (Su 2000). This passive attitude was quickly criticized by the mass media. After several weeks of hesitation, the KMT finally severed diplomatic relations with France.

France’s recognition of the PRC did not cause a domino effect because of the PRC’s exportation of the Cultural Revolution and rebellious diplomacy. However, when Canada recognized the PRC in 1970, a domino effect was anticipated if the ROC did not change its policy. When South Korea established diplomatic relations with the PRC in July, 1971, the special envoy Chang Chun, a close friend of Chiang Kai-shek, stated in Seoul that the ROC would not sever diplomatic relations with countries that cooperated with the PRC. However, this statement was soon negated by the foreign ministry, who repeated the maxim of “not standing under the same heaven.” At this time, the U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger declared after his secret visit to mainland China that President Richard Nixon would visit the PRC the next year. In October, immediately before the routine vote of the UN assembly regarding the representation of China, Kissinger stated that he would visit China again. Chiang Kai-shek understood that most countries would not continue to support the ROC as the government of China and was therefore reluctantly persuaded to accept the proposal of a dual representation suggested by the United States. However, he recognized this only as a strategy for hindering the PRC’s participation in the UN and

continued to follow the Chinese logic of symbolic politics by commanding the ambassador to officially oppose any proposals of dual representation but not to vote against the proposals. This confused the countries that supported the ROC, and neutral countries sympathized with the PRC. When Chiang became aware of the certainty of the PRC's entrance into the UN, he withdrew the ROC from the UN before the vote. This active separation from the UN caused the KMT's legitimacy based on international recognition to collapse, and the opportunity to change two Chinas from *de facto* to *de jure* was lost because the majority of countries did not want to dispel the ROC but rather simply hoped for a correspondence between factual rule and representation (Kirby, Ross, and Li 2005; Tu 2008).⁷

3. Front: Historical conjuncture favorable for the discourse of defending Taiwan through reform to win hegemony

This sudden degradation of the ROC from the exclusive legitimate government of China to its opposite, namely the "evil traitor," might be the primary cause that implicitly transformed nationalism from the official ideology into a taboo. However, history could have developed otherwise because both the event sequences and the interweaving of the four structures mentioned previously were contingent rather than determined.

In the beginning of the 1950s, the KMT did not promptly decide to create a new state in Taiwan, because the KMT not only believed that it could recover Mainland China by executing a counterattack but also had to meet the expectations of soldiers and civilians returning to their homeland. Furthermore, almost all people took one China for granted at that time. The first priority of the KMT was to survive the PRC's penetration and invasion of Taiwan and the possible resistance or rebellion of the Taiwanese. Therefore, the KMT concentrated on eliminating the "left," especially those who anticipated a "new China" (the CCP) and shifted the focus of its legitimation engineering in Taiwan from de-Japanization and re-Chinalization to anticommunism.

Although the Korean War saved the KMT, the United States' policy for neutralizing the Taiwan Strait also limited the KMT's options for counterattack. With the guarantee of external security, the KMT focused on coping with the internal enemy and successfully removed the underground communist party in 1955. When the external legitimacy of the ROC was secured

⁷ A salient sign was that the ROC was designated the vice president of the UN assembly in September, 1971 immediately before its voluntary exit.

by the United States' support, the KMT's initial adherence to *zhengtong* became probable and convincing. Anticipating a final victory in the civil war with the CCP, the KMT endeavored to form a base for (national) renaissance rather than a new (Chinese) state. The KMT implemented limited land reforms and local elections to win native Taiwanese support. However, the experience of losing Mainland China did not cause a deep, practical reflection, but rather urged the KMT to depend more strongly on the means of authoritative rule and dogmatic inculcation rather than to fulfill the integrative revolution through democracy and spontaneous loyalty. The legitimatizing discourse of the KMT was primarily nationalism and was associated with the concept of *fatong* and national renaissance as well as the sanctified leader. Students learned positive messages about the Chinese nation and Chinese history from textbooks, but were unaware why the KMT, as a representative of good, was defeated by the "evil" CPC. To avoid the development of Taiwanese nationalism, relevant knowledge of Taiwan was either suppressed or depreciated, except for the Taiwanese resistance against Japanese colonial rule. Therefore, after leaving school, students were likely to identify with China, an unchanged, eternal nation, but did not necessarily identify with a specific, substitutable regime such as the ROC or the KMT, nor felt familiar or intimate with Taiwan.

The KMT regime in exile perceived Taiwan as a hostile environment and constantly feared rebellion, although its authoritarian rule was seemingly stable. One main reason was the potential of ethnic conflict between Taiwanese and Mainland Chinese since the 228 incident in 1947. The provincialism of the Chinese empire's tradition undoubtedly played a role in this complex incident, which was related to the Taiwanese people's expectation of liberation and political participation, their moral resentment caused by disappointment and relative deprivation, and the cultural differences and civilizational gap between Taiwanese and Mainland Chinese. In late imperial times, one's native place was a critical element of personal identity and the administrative hierarchy, especially the province level, constituted a primary cognitive map and the sole spatial framework for societal self-description (Skinner 1997). The rub and discord between people from different provinces was liable to be considered ethnic conflict or to develop into a real ethnic conflict because the distribution of dialects often overlapped with provincial boundaries and most natives customarily discriminated against foreigners.

The shadow of ethnic conflict became ineliminable after the 228 incident because the KMT chose, based on resource limitations, to pursue a "two nations" hegemonic project to mobilize the support of strategically significant sectors of the population (Jessop 1990), such as the military, civil service, and education, whose members contained a higher percentage of Mainland Chinese than average for political and structural reasons, and shifted the costs of the material concessions of this project to other sectors. The political inequality and differential treatment between Taiwanese and Mainland Chinese caused general discontent among

Taiwanese. The requirement of later oppositional movements for democracy (e.g., eliminating the political inequality) was therefore often implicitly interwoven with ethnic or even national concerns. The dissenting *dangwai* (literally: outside KMT, insinuating KMT's dictatorship) often gathered thousands of supporters during elections (called "democratic vacations") in the late 1960s, even when it rained (University 25: 37-38). For the KMT, this was a warning signal of the instability of the regime.

Subversive actions, real and alleged, continued to occur occasionally after 1955, including a bombing event in the early 1970s. Instances of Taiwan independence increased since the 1960s. Furthermore, completely indigenous subversive groups that possessed no connection with overseas forces began to emerge. After the KMT retreated to Taiwan, its legitimacy was unceasingly questioned by leftist discourse in relation to unification with the PRC and Taiwanese independence. However, supported by the structure of the Cold War, the KMT effectively suppressed the circulation of these two discourses within Taiwan and limited their influence overseas. The indigenous subversive groups indicated that the KMT's rule was not only unable to assuage dissent, but even produced discontent. Regardless of the truth of such subversive groups, these incidences demonstrated that the KMT felt insecure and strengthened authoritarian rule to solve this problem.

After the enactment of the Mutual Defense Treaty between the United States and the ROC in 1955, the KMT recognized the improbability of recovering Mainland China. However, on the official, yang side, the KMT continued to insist on the recovery with the consideration that abandoning this symbol might endanger its legitimacy and cause a wide psychological impact leading to instability of the regime. However, the KMT changed its slogan to unify all of China through the "Three Principles of the People," and claimed that recovery of Mainland China depended only 30% on military and 70% on politics. If the KMT could maintain external legitimacy through the structure of the Cold War, then it could use this legitimacy to support its internal legitimacy and focus on spiritual mobilization of a fascist style to prepare for war, discipline the populace, and foster the development of loyalty (Lin 2005). This could function well if international conjuncture did not change.

The PRC's successful production of nuclear weapons in 1964 and satellites in 1970 not only enabled it to become a "hegemon" but also disturbed the balance of the global Cold War and caused the transformation of international conjuncture. Most overseas Chinese began to identify with the PRC because these developments enabled China to realize its national dream of becoming a strong state, and antiimperialism was a core element of (Chinese) nationalism since the late Qing dynasty. Numerous overseas Chinese scholars later directly pressured the ROC to negotiate with the PRC, or indirectly urged the U.S. government to pressure the ROC to retreat its standing armies on the islands neighboring Mainland China and to accept the PRC's participation in the UN (University 50: 36). Also in 1964, Peng Ming-min, a professor

of political science at NTU and his students wrote a “manifesto for Taiwanese people’s self-salvation” to advocate one China and one Taiwan, but were arrested before its distribution. Perhaps as a result of the inability to resist the international trend, the KMT engaged in propaganda against Taiwanese independence by successfully persuading one overseas leader to renounce support for Taiwan independence.

The following Cultural Revolution further relaxed the KMT’s vigilance. The KMT was unaware that younger citizens saw the Cultural Revolution from a completely different perspective, and the KMT’s control of information and dogmatic propaganda was limited to Taiwan. A contemporary stated that Taiwan might be the only country without a student movement in the 1960s, but also the only one not to start an active student movement until abroad. Overseas students from Taiwan tended either to identify with the PRC if their original domicile was Mainland China or to promote Taiwan independence if they were native Taiwanese (University 54: 20-21; 58: 19-30, 31-36). Influenced by the global sentiment of youth rebellion and “China fever,” Taiwanese overseas students, particularly Mainland Chinese students, often selectively recognized the positive side of the Cultural Revolution and were attracted by the ideals of socialist China and the image of a strong fatherland with nuclear weapons.

One overseas student warned that nothing connected Mainland Chinese overseas students with Taiwan, except for the chain of kinship, and promoted the understanding of Taiwan and the invalidation of the popular fallacy that “there was spiritually no homeland” among students from Taiwan before the rise of the student movement defending the sovereignty of *diaoyutai* (senkaku) (University 20: 11). However, to “rediscover” China, namely to understand China from a perspective other than that of the KMT was the first lesson that should be learned by most overseas students from Taiwan (University 25: 39-41). The younger generation saw the PRC’s resistance to Soviet Union abroad rather than its subordination like they had been taught by the older generation with personal experiences. They never experienced the PRC’s cruelty in seizing power, but learned about the advances in engineering and nuclear weapon development achieved under PRC rule. Therefore, the younger generation sympathized with the PRC because of nationalism, whereas the older generation opposed the PRC because of nationalism (University 49: 36-44).

When the overseas student movement defending *diaoyutai* was introduced to Taiwan in the beginning of 1971, the KMT first tolerated or even implicitly supported it. In this early phase, separatism was still the common target of blame within Taiwan. One member of the critical magazine *The University*, which had achieved a tacit alliance with Chiang Ching-kuo, petitioned the government to consider the flexible diplomacy suggested by domestic and overseas intellectuals to take an “ambivalent” attitude toward two Chinas (University 37: 59). This was soon strongly opposed by another member, Chiu Hungdah, a professor of

international law at the University of Maryland who visited National Cheng-Chi University in 1971. Chiu stated that foreigners possessed no motivation and that their suggestions (two Chinas, one China and one Taiwan, trustee, plebiscite) were only experimental. If the experiment failed, foreigners would lose nothing, and might even be justified to form a normal diplomatic relationship with the PRC. Those who proposed the destruction of the fatherland's territorial completeness and political independence were traitors to China (*hanjian*) and should be severely punished by the government (University 37: 20-23). As a professor of international law, Chiu was capable of guiding the direction of public opinion. Thus, it was unsurprising that the KMT maintained its standpoint on one China because even Chiu, an expert on international law, insisted that one China was the only and most suitable solution.

Parallel to this debate, *The University* thematized publicly the taboo issues of provincialism and political inequality at the beginning of 1971 and proposed to solve mutual ethnic discrimination between Taiwanese and Mainland Chinese through the equality of chance (University 37: 8-10). As the sovereignty controversy extended from *diaoyutai* to Taiwan, both the internal and external legitimacy of the KMT were questioned because the United States claimed that Taiwan's status was undecided according to international law in May, 1971. *The University* then chose to continue to support the government resolutely and wrote an article to refute the undecidedness of Taiwan's legal status, stating "that Taiwan is a territory of China is an unchanged, indisputable fact" (University 41: 2-6). Another article reporting the student movement in the same issue of the magazine stated that one critical achievement of this movement was to support the government to defend the sovereignty of *diaoyutai*, and separatism was intolerable among the Chinese youth (University 41: 15).

The University changed its restrained attitude in July, 1971 and increasingly shifted its focus toward the examination of internal problems rather than diplomacy. It correspondingly withdrew its earlier nearly unconditional support for the government to cope with the external crisis. In the August "diplomacy" issue, authors of *The University* stressed not only the achievement of external survival by domestic political innovation but also claimed that the sole diplomatic aim should be to protect the security and stability of the "free base" (the ROC) at minimal cost.

The key factor causing this change was that the overseas student movements identified increasingly with the PRC and made a formal conclusion by voting to recognize the PRC as the exclusive legitimate government of China in September. The shift in *The University's* position was reflected in its publication of a series of articles about Taiwan's history and more clearly in its subsequent response to the provincial assembly's passing of a proposal to register citizen's "original domicile in Mainland China" on the identity card in July to promote a healthy mentality regardless of who inhabited Taiwan first. The mass media which

were closely aligned with the government applauded that this was an excellent idea that would be supported by all descendants of *Huangdi* (i.e., all Chinese people) and should be accentuated in national democratic history (United Daily 1971-7-9), but one article in *The University's* September issue criticized that this hindered, rather than contributed to, national integration and attributed the origin of Taiwan Independence to defects in domestic politics (University 45: 27). The withdrawal from the UN in October prompted *The University* to ask for a total reelection of the parliament and emphasize cooperation between Taiwanese and Mainland Chinese.

Although the members of *The University* were careful not to discuss the sensitive topic of provincialism, the “accidental” hot debate in 1973 about whether television programs spoken in the Taiwanese dialect should be limited (or purified) indicated that a strong hostile sentiment between Taiwanese and Mainland Chinese existed latently for a long time, and an open discussion and debate enforced this construction (University 62-64, 67). The group that supported speaking the national language used the nationalistic distinction between Chinese/non-Chinese as a self-evident starting point of discussion and thought that speaking the Taiwanese dialect would harm national unity, associated this behavior with Taiwanese independence, and even reprimanded *The University* for promoting Taiwan Independence. By contrast, Taiwanese felt humiliated because the rhetoric of “purification” implied that the Taiwanese dialect and Taiwanese people were impure. They were concerned about dignity and equality, but only dared to emphasize the difference within the official framework of the greater Chinese nation, *zhonghua*, and the value of Taiwan as a current base for national renaissance, even though several of them might support Taiwan Independence.

Confronting the double threats of the conversion of previously faithful mainlanders, the regime's pillar, to the PRC and the Taiwanese resentment caused by the discriminating hegemony project, the KMT, trapped in a fatal legitimation crisis after its withdrawal from the UN, could only relieve this crisis by conforming to *The University's* critique to defend Taiwan against the PRC's threat and to rebuild its legitimacy through democratic reform, because the KMT had neither face nor courage to persuade the populace to try the objective possibility of two Chinas as a fundamental solution that might impair its regime. However, the KMT was not immediately conscious of this method for relief, had no resolution for complete reform, and, especially, lacked the capability to form a convincing discourse to reestablish its legitimacy. It was rather *The University* which served the function to create a new hegemony that later became the guiding idea of the KMT regime, although its alliance with Chiang Ching-kuo was weakened because it energetically promoted the student movement and shifted its critique toward domestic politics.

Members of *The University* supported the KMT because they were incapable of mobilizing the mass population, and the KMT was the strongest and sole force that could

resist the CPC's dictatorship at that time, meaning that "to rescue the KMT was to save ourselves" (University 46: 18). Similarly, the discourse of defending Taiwan through reform could seize hegemony because the destiny of the KMT as particular regime was locked with the universal fate of Taiwan's residents. The horror of being unified by the PRC became the common denominator that suspended dissent and united different camps.

This reform discourse received the title "universality" because it was open to diverse interpretations. Depending on a person's standpoint, which was often affected by his or her ethnic background, the native land could be understood either as Taiwan within the framework of all of China or as Taiwan only (or primarily), and put Mainland China temporarily into the bracket. The KMT could not but embrace reform otherwise it would lose regime. For reformers who possessed the mentality of greater China, Taiwan was both the current base and the live tangible China. Therefore, the reunion of China in the future was only possible when the KMT could save the surviving free China (i.e., Taiwan) first through reform. The reformers who considered Taiwan the first priority accepted it, because at least reform implied facing reality, expanding Taiwanese political participation, and abolishing the myths of counterattack and *fatong*. When the members of *The University* challenged the legitimacy of the KMT's rule and thematized sensible class and provincialism problems, they dared only to cite or to appropriate the Chinese nationalism and the "Three Principles of the People" as critical discourse elements, because this strategy could protect themselves and increase the persuasive power of their discourse under the condition that one China was still an epistemological obstacle at that time, regardless of whether they believed in it. Ensuring the ROC's *de facto* independence under the framework of one China was the most desirable achievable result. By reinterpreting identification with the ROC as maintaining the factual and substantial independence of the ROC (i.e., Taiwan), this reform discourse successfully combined the specific requirement of reform with the universal requirement of defending Taiwan. Thus, this discourse fortified the dummy official nationalism of the KMT, which could not be used to fulfil an "integrative revolution," and extricated the KMT from the legitimation crisis provisionally.

4. Contingent but understandable consequence: The transformation of Chinese nationalism from the official ideology to a taboo

When *The University's* discourse of defending Taiwan through reform successfully filled the gap in official ideology and created an aura of solidarity for coping with national disaster, it unavoidably suppressed particular voices, as has done every discourse that has

won hegemony (Foucault 1972; Laclau and Mouffe 1985). The discourses that were favorable for unification and identification with the PRC became implicitly the other that had to be excluded. However, if the KMT could soon relegitimize itself through democratic reform, then it would not be necessary to identify an internal enemy or even to invent a scapegoat to create cohesion, even though this was a typical strategy for authoritarian regimes such as the KMT. It was a contingent development that the exclusion was manifested as the suppression of Chinese nationalism.

In the early phase of the overseas student movement for defending *diaoyutai*, *The University* opposed the KMT's discredit and allusion that this movement was supported or even directed by the PRC. However, the transformation of this movement into a movement for unification with Mainland China and the replacement of the ROC by the PRC in the UN reversed *The University's* attitude. It reprinted the confession of one member of the overseas movement that the PRC supported this movement secretly. A more subtle and complex change was that *The University* no longer critiqued Chinese tradition as it did in its earlier issues, but rather affirmed it. Without a social base to pursue any fundamental solution, *The University* could only avoid the topic of state and sovereignty and instead discussed nation and culture in the tone of patriotism to stress the incompatibility of communism with the Chinese nation and culture. This caused *The University* to draw close to the KMT's position toward nationalism.

However, although the KMT constantly proposed unification and nationalism, it did not want nationalism to become stronger at this time. Based on the strong overseas nationalistic current of "return" and "unification," the KMT feared that the populace began to identify with communist China because of nationalistic sentiment, especially the hope that the country prospers and strengthens. Therefore, although the KMT did not accept two Chinas, it emphasized its factual rule of Taiwan to resonate with *The University's* claim for defending Taiwan and temporarily assuaged nationalistic sentiment.

However, the main dynamic of the student movement for defending *diaoyutai*, both overseas or domestic, was nationalism, because it involved the problem of territory. The concern of defending territory caused this movement to possess a strong characteristic of antiimperialism that constituted a critical dimension of Chinese nationalism since its beginning. The KMT's position on antiimperialism was complex and ambivalent. Although the KMT's nationalistic discourse condemned the imperialists' invasion in the late Qing dynasty, the KMT maintained positive relationships with foreign forces most of the time after considering gains and losses, similar to its following of antitraditionalism during the revolution, but later embraced tradition, or used tradition to compete with communism (Levenson 1965). This attitude clearly distinguished the KMT from the PRC's position. It was no surprise that the KMT initially supported this movement, but

attempted to suppress it, particularly after developing autonomy.

What caused the KMT to suppress Chinese nationalism was exactly the nationalism debate, with a “forum about nationalism” held autonomously by students at the end of 1972 as the climax. One key member of *The University*, who had consolidated its discourse of defending Taiwan through reform, criticized the Europeanism at this forum to hint at the terrible union with Mainland China. The KMT was now clearly aware of the danger to continue promoting nationalism and followed *The University's* tone. Its representatives claimed that unification continued to be the nation's goal, but exerted the most effort on refuting the overseas popular syllogism: all people wanted China to become strong; Mainland China was stronger than Taiwan; therefore, Taiwan should be incorporated by the PRC. By contrast, several participants who supported the student movement and were also active members of *The University* emphasized that nationalism was useful for defending the national interest and concentrated on a critique of the United States and Japan.

One side questioned whether foreigners or Chinese oppressed the Chinese more severely, whereas the other side stressed that “a compatriot was always compatriot, whether he was good or bad, or burned to dust.” One side stated that it made no sense to discuss nationalism and to distinguish between compatriots and nations before national unions, and emphasized that patriotism must first be anticommunism. The other side claimed that we could fight against communism only through patriotism, and that anticommunism was not identical to anti-Chinese. When one side questioned why the other side only talked about antiimperialism without mentioning anticommunism and accused the other side of promoting a nationalism that might be a Taiwanese version of the CPC's conspiracy; the other side responded with the distinction between true and false nationalism and labeled the antagonist as separatism that supported Taiwan Independence.

To prevent nationalism from causing a domino effect leading to identification with communist China, the KMT “arrested” the students and teachers who passionately embraced (Chinese) nationalism to inquest because they insisted that the goal of nationalism was to achieve national union, whereas the group advocating the discourse of self-determination that had an affinity with Taiwan independence and gradually became an undercurrent after the “manifesto for Taiwanese people's self-salvation” was tolerated, at least provisionally.

To fully understand why nationalism transformed from the KMT's official doctrine into an unspeakable taboo, the importance of language use in mediating people's understanding of reality must be considered. Seriously speaking, only the specific type of nationalism that led to identification with the PRC had to be excluded. However, Chinese nationalism was the only permitted and heard nationalistic discourse in the contemporary

public sphere, and people took the term “nationalism” for granted and seldom added a qualifier to specify the type of nationalism being referenced. Therefore, most people were unable to distinguish between the various versions of nationalism. The problem of ambiguity of reference was exacerbated because two Chinese governments existed, and the PRC became the doubtless center of national union after it successfully replaced the ROC in the UN. This forced the KMT to suppress the students’ nationalist movement because people did not know the difference between the nationalism discussed by students and the strategic nationalism of the PRC. Furthermore, students’ requirement of defending territory implied an alliance with the PRC, and their antiimperial position was akin to that of the PRC. Therefore, the fact that the promotion of nationalism led to identification with the PRC was almost logical from the KMT’s perspective.

The KMT’s concern for nationalism was reflected in its later propaganda manual issued in the late 1970s, which named nationalism as one of the PRC’s strategies to create a united front. It was a historical irony that nationalism had facilitated the establishment of the ROC, but the ROC now possessed misgivings about nationalism. This could be traced to the empire’s legacy of insistence on one China as the old nation. However, without the support of specific objective conditions, such an insistence was impossible. After all, it was the tug of war between the concept of one China and the reality of two Chinas and the historical conjuncture of four structures with varying temporalities that caused the KMT to become entrapped in the web of its own spinning.

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