Understanding Contending Nationalistic Identities –

Reading Ernest Gellner and Benedict Anderson from Taiwan

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One task of the intellectual is the effort to break down the stereotypes and reductive categories that are so limiting to human thought and communication.

- Edward Said (1994:xi)

Prelude: the personal and the theoretical

Ernest Gellner's lifelong interest in nationalism is heavily influenced by the circumstances of his life, suggests John A. Hall. He says that it is "utterly impossible" for Gellner to neglect the significance of nationalism because of Gellner's background: a lower-middle class Jew of German Bohemian origin, growing up in a family loyal to the Czech Republic when the Nazis arrived, but disillusioned with post-war Czechoslovakia in its expulsion of the Germans. (Hall 1998:2-3) Indeed, a reading of Gellner's theory of nationalism takes on new meaning once the reader leams of Gellner's background and of the political concerns expressed (or hidden) in his works.

Another person this paper will mention often, Benedict O'Gorman Anderson, is probably not different in having his background influence his work. Anderson recalled that his interest in the study of nations originated from his own earlier personal experiences. These include his broad overseas experiences during his childhood, his family background (he is of both British and Irish descent), his resentment of British imperial snobbery, his personal encounters with a war of independence and with

nationalism in Indonesia under Sukarno (Anderson 1998)[1], and his "funny" accent in daily life in the American-English world.

The same could be true for others, such as Frantz Fanon, Edward Said, and Partha Chatterjee. It goes without saying that the powerful tension exhibited in Fanon's works is related to his African and Algerian origin, in contrast to the elite training he received as a French citizen and a professional psychiatrist. (Black Skin, White Mask,1967) Also the highly elaborated themes regarding culture and power Said always conveys in his works become all the more clear after reading Out of Place: a Memoir (1999), his own recollection of the many paradoxes he experienced during his life. And, of course, Chatterjee's post-colonial thinking is more understandable after one becomes aware of his two modes of self-expression in two languages and different worlds: one, as we all know, as an eminent scholar (in English), and, the other, as a theater worker and playwright using Bengali in Calcutta.

The many studies of nationalism and the ideas behind them are inseparable from their authors' frames of meaning, or their *moral horizons*, to borrow from Charles Taylor, and the tensions they experienced subjectively. Hall believes that this underlies Gellner's entire oeuvre. (ibid, 3)

Of course, this does not mean that theories of nation and nationalism are predicated by theorists' political or moral standings. But reading these theories could be also reading the narratives of the authors and their responses to the larger political and social-cultural milieu in which the authors are situated. There is really nothing new about what I just said – concerned scholars constitute and re-constitute themselves in their own writings. But in common practice, the academic community -- of both professors and students -- is inclined to read theoretical texts as merely some objectified "textual reality," as if they were a body of codified knowledge, abstract and independent from the author's personal subjectivity or political bent. And

[1] During Anderson's very recent visit to Taiwan earlier this year, we were surprised to find out that being a pre-eminent professor from Cornell and living in the States for more than forty years, well-versed in different languages, he has been traveling with his Irish passport all the time. He said in a very casual manner: it is just a "habit".

this problem can be even more conflated for contemporary non-Western scholars such as me. We grow up under different cultural and political contexts, despite the lasting influences of modernization and globalization. Not only the socio-political context in which the theories and theorists are confronting could be foreign to us, but also the language used in theoretical writing itself could become a barrier. It is a problem we have to face all the time in engaging in intellectual dialogue with English and other foreign language writers.[2] Moreover, from time to time, we find gaps and cracks between our specific experiences and the general ideas or abstract theories about nationalism, whether they originated from Western tradition or from the subaltern.

I am not advocating a strong relativism that places authentic cultural difference above universalizing tendencies, stressing the oversimplified and straw-man-like dichotomy between the "West" and the "East", nor proclaiming the "uniqueness" of Taiwanese national issues in the study of nationalism. My position is rather simple: to engage in constructive dialogue between selective theories and "our" particular lived experiences in this nationalistic world, with a strong emphasis of comparison and self-reflection in mind. I think that in our academic world, it is a too-common practice for scholars to cite or quote culture-and-politics-free "theoretical texts" that are "objective" and "universal," or coined in the names of social sciences such as political science, sociology and psychology. Theories are really like telescopes or tools with a cultural bias for scholars to look around. And I often feel that even with their far-sight ability the images appearing in the telescopes do not capture our historical experiences well since they were made for a different set of concerns at first. In fact, sometimes, unknowingly we place ourselves on the wrong side of that telescopes when trying to explore one's own place. Reflexive reading of the theories is almost unavoidable toward the end. Both reflexive reading and comparison are also useful

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[2] During my college years in Taiwan University, we used Paul B. Horton and Chester L. Hunt's Sociology (1968, McGrwa Hill) as the textbook for our sophomore "English" class. Learning sociology and learning English, though many critics often say that sociology is written in incomprehensible English, was actually combined in those days. And, just not long ago, one of my graduate students, who was very frustrated by English, asked me: why must we heavily rely on western theories (referring to the English works we have chosen for the class) for our academic training.

for the advancement of the ideas or the knowledge that might have been conceived with unknown blind spots of the authors from "other" cultures. It is therefore my wish, through reading Anderson and Gellner, and approaching the analysis of Taiwan's circumstances dialectically, that not only can we achieve a better understanding of Taiwan's national problem but also increase the academic community's stock of knowledge regarding nations and nationalism.

Why Gellner and Anderson? The answer is obvious: They are two of the most widely read and quoted scholars in recent literature about nationalism. Anderson, moreover, is particularly influential in recent studies on nationalism in Taiwan. Anderson and Gellner share some similarities in their arguments but with strongly different emphases. At the most abstract level, they all subscribe to the rationalistic assumption of nationalism. They both belong to an influential group of scholars who argue against the naturalist viewpoint of nation, and for the artificial construction (or imaginary) process of nation.

Nation is said to be a historical product, a cultural artifact, and, for that reason, nationalism is often employed as doctrine or ideology for political maneuvering. Gellner and Anderson also believe that the birth or the growth of nationalism was rooted in the conditions for organized political action for social and cultural changes. But they have very different approaches and emphases regarding the social-cultural reasons for the birth of nation and nationalism. For instance, Anderson suggests that the change in how people look at themselves proceeded to the birth of nationalism as a political doctrine or movement. He uses the rise of the vernacular and the fall of the influences of the Church in medieval Europe, followed by the latter growth of "print capitalism," meaning the development of new technology and markets for newspapers, novels, and books. For Gellner, however, he looks at the reasons for the birth of nation based on assumptions of progressive stages of social evolution. He suggests that it was the historical force of industrialization, the need for efficiency, and the division of labor that strongly pushed the state to institutionalize and to impose a "national high cultural" above all local or regional differences.

They differ also a great deal regarding the "goodness" of the state and the nation. Anderson believes that a "genuine" "nation" -- which emphasizes love and "seriality,"and resists colonialism and oppression -- is admirable and far from either Fascism or racism. But Gellner has not much respect for nation or nationalism. He thinks that nationalism is an epi-phenomenon, an expression of needs for industrial growth. But he also supports the role of the state in holding many differences under one nation-state roof, since he views the state as having the only legitimate monopoly on force, perhaps the only likely or conceivable apparatus to preserve peace and to prevent atrocities.

To compare them directly -- though perhaps inevitable -- is not the goal of this paper. In the following, I will move to the discussion of my reading, my experiences, and my study of different political claims made by different nationalistic camps in Taiwan. What I intend to do is to develop a framework for the understanding of the origin and the making of Taiwanese national identity in both dwelling on and against Gellner and Anderson.

But this will not be a conventional theory or sociology paper. First, there are no systematic examinations of alleged "theories". These have been done somewhere else, such as O'Leary (1998) for Gellner, and, to a lesser degree, Stefan Senders (1999) for Anderson. It would be silly for me to repeat their informative and agreeable works. Second, this will be a "self-reflexive" article. I will not only interpret the national question in Taiwan but also will recruit myself to be my readers' "informant."

Of course, I am obliged to be a sociologist in profession and committed to be a reflexive intellectual. On the one hand, I find it abhorrent when finding some authors allows their own political viewpoints, especially on nationalistic issues, to dictate their research. It is important to separate committed nationalistic scholars from scholars committed to the study of nationalism.[3] I know that we all have blind spots

[3] As Eric Hobsbawm has said about the ideological nature of nationalism, "...that no serious historian of nations and nationalism can be a committed political nationalist...nationalism requires too much belief in what is patently not so. " Eric J. Hobsbawm (1990:12).

and all are caught at a particular time and space in real life. I am no exception. I cannot pretend to be innocent from any political influences surrounding my circumstances. But I believe in the potentiality of reflexivity and its power to break us from the chains of stereotypes and naturalized biases. As for my blind spots, I will let them be exposed or challenged by my readers. In essence, this article will be a dialogue between Anderson's and Gellner's main theses about nation, the imagination and the political ideology and Taiwan's national problem, and me, the person. I hope this essay proves to be a successfully candid analysis of the national problem of Taiwan, my own country.

Part One: Examining the Origin of the Making of "Taiwanese People"

Some of my major points regarding the origin and transformation of Taiwan's national identity have been expressed elsewhere (Chang, 2000). Since my purpose here is to engage Anderson and Gellner, I will not repeat all the results except a brief summary at appropriate places. The first point I want to raise is about the importance of history and its impact on how do people perceive themselves. Basically, the emergence of Taiwanese consciousness (and national identity) is a historical and conjuncture outcome, instead of a structural one.[4] Anderson's book Imagined Community is illuminating in several ways. First of all, his arguments surrounding the importance of people's self-image, the changing mode of thinking about oneself, and the process of consciously making one "nation" collectively, immediately reject the pseudo-scientific and naturalistic claims of most of the nationalistic indoctrination. His thesis about the transformation of self-images preconditions the rise of the imagination of nation, and his implied message for the "man-made" or pretentious components of an imagined community, forces people to ask when and how did the

[4] By conjuncture, I mean the convergence of many forces of social relations at a particular time of the history. It is different from the meaning of the "structural". The "structural" implies the outcome is somewhat determined by objective social relations in pre-given manner.

people (in Chinese history) to perceive themselves as "one nation" in modern sense.

The official line that the Chinese people have possessed a "oneness" since almost five thousand years ago could not stand unchallenged in Anderson's mode of questioning. The entire concept that we Han Chinese have all belonged to the "Chinese nation" since beginning of history is also under siege as a result.[5]

It was not easy for me to embrace Anderson at first. I was born in Taiwan in 1953 with mainlander parents who fled their homeland for Taiwan with the Nationalist army and the majority of other mainlanders settled in Taiwan since 1949. Like many first-generation mainlander families, my family had little contact with either the native society or with our mainland relatives. And I received a nationalist education -- including literature, Chinese history (*not* Taiwanese history), and civic education -- and political indoctrination, such as through studying the thought of Dr. Sun Yat-sen throughout my early education up until into the college. I grew up under the influence of the cold war with right-wing, pro-American, strong state-promoted patriotism, and the ideology for development and economic prosperity. When the West was troubled by the Vietnam War and waves of social protests and experiments, we in Taiwan were almost unaffected as if enclosed in an ideological capsule sealed by the authoritarian government. My own personal and political identity had been categorically nationalistic Chinese and patriotic without any doubt. Nowadays my views have changed a great deal since then. Reading Anderson was part of my self-growth, which helped me in reshaping my worldview regarding nations and peoples.

But what can Anderson's thesis offer to the understanding of the opposite nationalistic claim, namely that the Taiwanese is unequivocally one racial/national group entitled to be an independent nation with their own country? Some of the

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[5] Works on de-mythifying Chinese Nation can be found in, for example, the Duara's (1993) and Shen's (1997) works. Duara suggests that Chinese nationalism has had many competing historical strands. He rejected the singleness of official nationalistic narrative. Since he thinks that the notion of Hua and Han people has had a long history, he also rejects the modernist point of view, which suggests a clear break of national consciousness in modern era from the traditional mode of consciousness. Shen belongs to the second group, the modernist view, when opposing the mythicized Chinese nation.

pioneers of Taiwanese nationalists suggest that Taiwanese people have been a suppressed nation since the seventeenth century, with the Taiwanese nation (*Minzu*) constantly ruled by foreign intruders, including the Spanish, the Dutch, the Chinese, and the Japanese (Shi 1980). If Anderson's thesis makes me to look at my own Chinese nationalistic background with more skepticism, it also makes me look closely at the question of when and how did the Taiwanese begin to think of themselves as comprising a nation?[6] When and under what historical conditions did this self-awareness or imagination of being Taiwanese come into existence?

In fact, I had never heard the term "Taiwanese nation" (*Taiwan minzu*) until 1979, when the Kaohsiung Incident took place. Taiwan was still under martial law at then, and I was twenty-six.[7] The incident broke out in Kaohsiung, southern Taiwan's largest city. Military police clashed with dissidents marching for human rights in the streets. It was followed by the crackdown on the opposition movement and the arrest of almost every well-known Taiwanese opposition leader of the time. Later, under international pressure, the dissidents were put on a showcase for trial on military court. Soon I began to hear and read materials distributed by overseas dissidents about the Taiwanese nation, an allegedly different "nation" from the Chinese. I was actually shocked and found this absurd. How could we the mainlanders and the Taiwanese people belong to different "race"? [8] I thought we were all "the same," of Chinese origin, descendants of the Legendary Yellow Emperor, and "kin of the Dragon." I had little sense of either a "racial problem" or "meaningful differences" other than accents

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[6] But first, it was its inspiration in my own effort to deconstruct the "authentic" nature of Chinese nation. I was probably one of the earliest scholars who apply Benedict Anderson's thesis to the understanding of Chinese nation in Taiwan in 1993. I made a point by saying that the "authenticity" of Chinese nationalism that was taught to the youngsters is part of national mythology. It was more like an agreed-on imagination than reality. What really matters is what we think of ourselves. And my pursuing of the study of Taiwanese nationalism came after my self-reflection of Chinese nationalism.

[7] I was studying for my sociology degree at Purdue University in the state of Indiana in the United States. I received newsletters distributed by local Formosan Student Association. It supported the general outcry against the arrest of Taiwanese opposition activists in the Kaohsiung Incident.

[8] I am referring to the notion of Taiwan *Minzu* characterized by Dr. Liao Wenyi, the pioneer of Taiwan Independent Movement. He said in the 50's that Taiwan *minzu* consists of people of mixed blood lineage from the Spaniards, Dutch, Aborigines, and Han settlers. This racial notion of Taiwan *Minzu* was largely abandoned today. It "is" absurd if we think of the invoking of the concept of race to define nation.

between my Taiwanese peers and me when I grew up.

Now looking back, my ignorance about the Taiwan *Minzu* seems only normal given my mainlander background. It also came from the suppression by the notorious martial law rule (1951-1987) which had put many dissidents into silence and forced autonomous civic participation almost impossible. There was little chance for me to hear, nor to learn anything about the Taiwan *Minzu*. Now the events surrounding the February 28 Incident -- a brutal suppression of a Taiwanese uprising in 1947 which caused thousands deaths, and its aftermath-- the subsequent "white-terror era" against suspected leftists are widely known to the public. But only several years ago they were still carefully guarded national taboo. People were forbidden to discuss it openly, and disallowed to carry out any research on related subjects. In fact, the "official" meaning of Taiwan's existence appeared to be for the recovery of the mainland, and the recovering of the civic-war divided motherland. It did not exist for its own sake, so to speak.

As many political scientists have described, 1979 was a watershed year in Taiwan's political development.[9] One year before the Kaohsiong Incident, mostly Taiwanese dissidents -- together with the help of a very small number of democratic mainlanders – were becoming active in organizing their actions pushing for political liberalization and democracy. And, one year later, the large-scale clash in Kaohsiong, and the trial of the democrats all of a sudden "awakened" many people of Taiwanese origin. People were sunken into a stage of "silent angry" under strict martial law rule. (Hsiao 2000) As a result, the setback of the opposition movement only gave it broader support during the next elections (Rigger 1999). The suppression helped to trigger the outrage of overseas Taiwanese groups, and hence strengthen their mobilization and other "underground" activities against the regime. Exiled dissidents sought channels to help the democratic movement in Taiwan and propagated to build an independent statehood through self-determination to replace the ruling regime, the

[9] An often-cited study on the February 28 Incident has been Lai, Myers and Wei (1991). As for about the importance of the Kaohsiung Incident, see, for example, Tien (1989:95-100) and Chu (1992:38-40)

Nationalistic Kuomintang.(Chen 1992, Geoffroy 1997)

The mainlander's reaction to Kaohsiung incident, however, was quite different. They were pro-regime and patriotic, believing the government and dismissing the accused as agitators, conspirators, accomplice to the "Communists bandits," and even traitors. The divide in the reaction between the mainlanders and many Taiwanese was very deep.

The timing was also a watershed for me. I was in the United States, about to choose ethnic/racial politics -- and later nationalistic politics -- as my research agenda. My exposure to this subject in the United States started my own early self-transformation to liberal and multi-culturalistic thought from a conservative nationalist of my background.

Let's return to the near present, the year 2000. In a lecture to Taiwanese audience on April 26, 2000,[10] Anderson said that Taiwan belongs to the kind of "creole nationalism" that is similar to that of North America, Australia, New Zealand, Singapore, Quebec, and many other places. Creole nationalism is formed when children of immigrants in the "New World," despite of their cultural inheritance from the motherland, begin to see themselves with distinct distance from their ancestor homeland (through either alienation or subjugation process); or, after going through a "pilgrimage process" to the center, they begin to evolve into a community of expatriates,. The coming existence of the "mixed blood" generation, or the "mestizos," in many places also affect people's self-consciousness. Anderson implies that the creole nationalism is inevitable for Taiwan and therefore a pre-determined result.

Here I find Anderson's ambition to generalize his "ideal type" of creole nationalism unsatisfying, if not incorrect. The examination of the emergence of the origin of Taiwanese nationalism really says otherwise. The call for the existence of

[10] The title of the paper was "Western Nationalism and Eastern Nationalism: Is there a Difference difference that matters?" As the title suggests, Anderson is inclined to a general understanding (or a generalized theory?) for nationalism that go beyond the "east" and "west" division.

Taiwanese national identity was not aimed at a separation from the "motherland" nor through any pilgrimage experience. And, the "mixed blood" people were not a salient issue in the forming of Taiwanese identity either.

What Happened in the Beginning?

To trace the origin of nationalistic thinking requires a knowledge of history. Taiwan was inhabited by Aborigines before large number outsiders came. From the beginning of the 17th century, the colonization of Taiwan became large in scale until to the last few years by Han Chinese settlers, who drove out other settlers like the Spaniards, the Dutch, and the Japanese. The settlers and their government succeeded in pushing the indigenous peoples into sinicization, or relocating to more remote, mountainous areas. (Shepherd 1993) Taiwan was located at the southeastern frontier of the Manchu Empire since 1683. Although the island was very different from southern China in many aspects before it was ceded to Japan in 1895, those looking for linguistic and cultural similarities between Taiwan and the mainland can easily find them. As we have known, one camp of Taiwanese nationalism suggests that the "Taiwanese people" are genetically different from Han Chinese because of the "mixed blood" among early settlers and the aborigines, the Dutch, the Spaniards, and the Japanese. But this contradicts the history since "blood" or "lineage" was less a concern than "civility" during (i.e. as defined by Han Chinese society). Aborigines were not excluded from adopting Chinese civilization or segregated from the settlers. They were not salient issues while the lack of "civilization" was much more a concern. A higher level of sinicization was both promoted by the government and agreeable to the Han immigrants. [11] Also, despite that mixed marriages were rather common between the Han and Aborigines, there were little concern of this "mixed-breed"

[11] The general opinion today is that the plain Aborigines were deprived of their land and culture, and were forced to become sinicized. But Shepherd (1993) has written to refute this belief. He suggests that Manchu government was quite rational and conscientious in managing the Aborigine affairs.

racial category.[12] This absence of the cultural and social significance of the "*mestizos*" phenomenon in Taiwan was the other evidence to put down the importance of blood or lineage, and Creole nationalism likewise.

Before Taiwan was ceded to Japan in 1895, the state-society relation as a whole in Taiwan had been undergoing sinicization, as plain Aborigines were half-encouraged, half-compelled to adopt Han culture. Also, once when we started to look at the transforming process of self-images from pre-national to national, we found out that the call for a distinctive Taiwanese people was not found in any document before 1918. The very recently constructed political myth of the "four-hundred-year history" of Taiwanese thus falls apart easily upon close examination. "Taiwanese" consciousness and self-image, as we imagine them today, could not possibly have started to form four hundred years ago. It became "four hundred years old" only after the projection of the image of contemporary Taiwanese "back into" history.

The 1920s were very significant in the modern history of Taiwan. It was in this period that the Taiwanese began to grasp their own conditions, their "fate" of being the subjects and quasi-citizens at the same time of the Japanese empire, and their acquisition of new (modern) modes of political thinking in resisting the colonialist using this new term, "nation". Most early Taiwanese nationalists were Taiwanese elite from well-to-do families who received a Japanese "modern" and "national" education, often in Tokyo, which was the center of new ideas and Western modes of thinking in Asia in the early twentieth century. Their acquisition of Taiwanese nationalist sentiments took place in the milieu of four objective factors.

First, Chinese settlers in Taiwan suffered from relatively low standing in the Japanese Empire. The Japanese government treated them as people of a different "race" without giving them equal citizenship under the empire's political system. It also looked down upon Taiwanese because of their defeat, and their pre-modern

[12] In a recent study, Melissa Brown (2001:153-64) also demonstrates that "culture is more important than ancestry in classifying people" between the Aborigines and Han people in adjacent communities in Southern Taiwan.

(backward) "cultural-traits." Second, exposure to Western ideas about citizenship, equality, justice and colonial conditions were important for Taiwanese consciousness. The first few Taiwanese nationalists began to learn about the Wilsonian principle of self-determination for colonized people that became widespread after the World War One and studied independence movements that had spread even to Korea, another Japanese colony, in 1919. Through these new political concepts about the people in colonization conditions, and hence new mode of thinking, the consciousness of being Taiwanese -- the notion of a Taiwanese nation – started to form very quickly. Third, the softening of the Japanese bureaucratic empire and Japan's transformation to parliamentary politics -- which took place during the *Taisho Minshu* (democracy) era (roughly 1918 - 1932) -- also helped to widen their horizons and allowed rooms for political activities. Fourth, Taiwanese consciousness also meant to be self-reliant to resist Japanese. The formation of new consciousness was based on assessment of the concrete political reality that the separation between Taiwan and China, the ancestor homeland, seemed irreversible. At then China was divided, weak, chaotic, and incapable of doing anything to help the Taiwanese drive the Japanese out. Taiwanese people would have to rely on themselves to resist the Japanese and their discriminatory rule.

As one recent work (Wu Ruiren 2001) has shown, the notion that "Taiwan belongs to the [Japanese] empire but also belongs to the Taiwanese people" was clearly stated by Tsai Pei-huo and other young intellectuals in Tokyo (the Taiwan New People Association, the *Taiwan Xin-Min-Hui*) in 1920. The first part of the sentence iterates the political reality that their struggle could not be considered to be revolutionary but more like moderate cultural awakening of the people, testing the limits of tolerance prescribed by the authority: Taiwan is a part of Japan, and Taiwan independence was not the immediate goal. While the second part stated the wish for home rule by the people of Taiwan (an expression of the idea of self-determination), it was a "polite" demand for recognition for the distinctive status for Taiwan and its people. Their political action led to the now well-known "Abolition of the Bill No.

63 "[13] and the "Petition Movement for the Creation of Taiwan Council," and the creation of the first influential political association, the Taiwan Cultural Association (*Taiwan Wenhua Xiehui*, 1921-1931).[14]

Their aim, unlike that of Creole nationalism, was not to cut ties with or oppose the ancestor homeland. Rather, they found that they were sandwiched between their Han roots and their unequal status under the Japanese. They could not be fully Han Chinese because they belonged to Japan. And they could not be fully Japanese either because they were different from Japanese and treated as if they were a "distinct race" by Japanese authorities. The sociopolitical conditions for Creole nationalism to arise to become an independent nation just were not there.

However, the call for "elevating people's cultural consciousness" implied a Taiwanese modernist standpoint, which was a call to abandon part of their old Han customs.[15] This "progressiveness" may be a conscious movement, but it was prompted by their own comparisons to the modernized colonialist and the outside world. It was moving away from conservative Han traditionalism, but not from Han Chinese identity just yet. This is important since this self-awakening process and their political actions through both resisting colonial conditions and modernization really set Taiwanese consciousness apart from their "compatriot's" Chinese nationalism, which was peaking at the same period. But it needs to be re-emphasized that prior to 1945, this Taiwanese consciousness was not formed to deny their Han Chinese roots, as some contemporary Taiwanese nationalistic rhetoric tends to suggest.

Inter-class differences matter very much too when Taiwanese tried to define their own fate and their meaning of existence in opposing against the Japanese. We find

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[13] "Bill No. 63" (1896-1920) which was modified and became the "Bill 3-1" later, gave *Taiwan Sotoku* (Governor General) to concentrate power in his own hand without being accountable to either the Imperial Deity (the Congress) of Japan nor to the Taiwanese. Taiwanese was thought to be "different" and "unique" "race" living on the new soil of the Japan Empire. People in Taiwan hence were not qualified as equal Japanese citizens.

[14] The Left and Right split openly in 1927, and the association tum Left after series of intemal fight.

[15] In 1920, progressive Taiwanese youth envisioned their cause in terms of four movements: (1) woman's liberation, (2) prolitarian movement, (3) suffrage movement, and (4) nation-awakening movement. Another way to put it was to place woman, class, and nation as the three main issues of Taiwan. (Young 1993:86-87)

that other contending sources of self-transformation originated from the changes that took place in China and the rise of Leninism. The influences of development in China include, at least at first, the New Cultural (and patriotic) movement (i.e., the May Fourth Movement, 1919) which incited a short-lived yet blossom New Literature Movement from 1920 (but mainly between 1924-26) in Taiwan, and second, the rise of the republican revolution and the Communist advancement. The Taiwan Communist Party[16] was formed secretly in Shanghai in 1928. It was actually the first group that espoused outright National Independence and Liberation for Taiwanese *Minzu*. (Wu Ruiren 2001) Inspired by Leninism, which called for a united front of all oppressed and colonized nations to overthrow all forms of oppression, such as feudalism and colonialism, it aimed to "awaken" the Taiwanese and ally them with the people of other colonized nations to overthrow the colonialists.

Unlike the other more moderate Taiwanese elite youth, the leftist group promoted class struggle against not only Japanese colonialism and conglomerates but also conservative Taiwanese landlords and bourgeoisie. Their political actions merged with the then newly rising urban workers and sugarcane farmers[17] and led to island-wide mobilization of farmers' protests (1926-1932) and workers' strikes (1927-1931). Because of their leftist tendency, their relations to the more elitist, reform-oriented, and "moderate" national movement was sometimes cooperative and sometimes antagonistic. They were cooperative during moments when to "awaken" the mass and to mobilize the mass into a unified anti-colonial course was the major goal. And yet they were also very competitive and antagonistic. They often engaged in fighting over how to lead the anti-colonial and liberation movement – and who should be the leader. (Chen 1998)

Both the Right and the Left, Taiwanese Nation and Nationalism were created at

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[16] It was first created as the Division of Taiwan Nation in Japanese Communist Party, receiving instructions from both Moscow and Tokyo. Its relation to the Chinese Communists was not very significant until later in 1940's.

[17] Sugar cane farmers were contracted tillers and workers under the Japanese sugar industry conglomerates.

the juncture of the rapid change of the world after World War One. Different strands of ideas and strategies like self-determination, class struggles, modernization had filtered through Taiwanese elite and activists and became part of their new self-imagination. Its discourses and actions were built around their efforts to struggle against oppression in relation to the prevalent progressive ideas that were available to them, including, first, self-determination, and, second, national liberation. Both elite and left activists were reflecting on their own historical situation, their humiliation and suffering in the world context, using the new theoretical languages about nationality, race, citizenship, assimilation, and equality from the global context. They were not only searching for a new meaning of existence and identification but also devising to change their own circumstances with different political strategies.

There was little disagreement about the "evils" of the colonial system. But the landlord and middle-class based self-rule movement didn't seek an all-out social change, and hence shied away from an all-out mobilization of the masses. The leftist national liberation faction, on the other hand, drove for more radical social and political changes for the masses. The nationalistic theme in this "moment of departure," paraphrasing Partha Chatterjee (1993:54), was already divided over the class origin. When it came to the notion of the Taiwanese nation, these two wings might have been similar -- i.e., the Taiwanese were people caught in the middle -- but they differ significantly in relation to their moral frames about social reforms for political orientation.

To summarize my points at here: Early Taiwanese nationalism was created by several historical and global conditions by different groups occupying different positions in the social hierarchy. They disagreed with each other strongly according to their class backgrounds. And when Taiwanese nationhood and nationalism were first conceived, under Japanese rule, they were not aimed at independence from the Celestial China, their ancestor homeland. Unlike in other Creole nationalism, the pilgrimage to motherland was not possible because of Japan's colonization, neither was there any presence of oppression from the ancestor homeland. The motherland

was just not the target for resistance. Instead, it was a source of intellectual inspiration and identification that Taiwanese relied on from time to time to differentiate themselves from their colonial masters.

On the Transforming of the General Public: The Colonial State, Activists and the Masses

The above part of Taiwan history was not taught in my national education. Taiwanese nationalism only very recently became a topic of scholarly research. It had been primarily a topic for lay "historians" (mainly of Taiwanese origin) who are inclined to favor Taiwanese Independence. For instance, it is common for them to hail the moderate resistance as "the good and the righteous, and exemplary demonstration of Taiwanese identity." By doing so, they either deliberately play down the importance of the Communist activists for their relation to the Communism -- a prefix which has been attached to "mainland China" since the 1950s -- or they tend to overlook the importance of the impact of the Republican revolution in China, treating it as a problem or as an irrelevant factor.(See Wang yude 1993 for example.) As for the contemporary Chinese nationalists (the pro-unification inclined) in Taiwan, they had little interest in this Taiwan home-rule movement from the 1920s. But in reaction to the surge of interest in studying (and providing a lineage) of Taiwanese nationalism, the right-wing Chinese nationalists want to interpret them as a larger part of Chinese resistance to Japanese imperialism. On the other hand, the left-wing Chinese nationalists want to play down the historical significance of the call of Taiwan *Minzu* Independence advocated by their comrades in 1927. I have no intention to incline to either one of these skewed interpretations. I believe the ideas, actions and achievements of different groups from those days need to be placed in their context to be studied and evaluated.

To search the origin of nationalistic ideas, political programs, and Taiwan's pioneering activists is one thing, but to reconstruct the socio-cultural and imaginary

change of the general public is another. We can study the former through going over their documents and records. But to reconstruct the self-transformation requires much larger effort and phenomenological interpretation of the ordinary people who left little personal records. The worldview of the majority of Taiwanese before 1895 was "racialized" (such as the dichotomy of "the civilized versus the savages," or the "Great Han versus the Foreign Devils"). The Japanese were clearly the foreign intruders, while the Aborigines were still uncivilized savages. They were also confined to the different local allegiances and ancestor lineage, for example, the Hokkian versus the Hakka. And Han settlers in Taiwan before 1915 were not very different from their counterparts in China. More than 80 percent of adults were poorly educated peasants. They were living in poverty with little opportunity for education. I must contend that they were very Han Chinese, practiced folk beliefs and studied Han literature if they were given the opportunities. Confined to their locality and economic condition, their transformation process cannot be equated to the elite and activists. In short, most Chinese in Taiwan during the early years of Japanese rule were still pre-modern and pre-nationalistic in their worldview. Then what were the socio-cultural or political factors that transformed them into a imagined national community? Were the elite and activists successful in helping to transform the rest of the majority? What was the Japanese influence on the ordinary people then?

The greatest obstacle for activists to reach these illiterate masses would be, of course, the suppression of political activities and police surveillance in Taiwan by the Japanese police. The other problem would be the communication gap between the elite and the masses. For instance, only one newspaper -- published by activists in Taipei and with a daily circulation around 2000 copies at its peak -- could be thought of as a major forum for public discourse. And its effect to produce an "imagined community" among the general public is still very hard to assess, and should not be exaggerated. And, after 1937, the Taiwanese were forbidden to use Chinese characters completely. It is ironic that Japanese gradually became the *lingua franca* for both activists and diverse peoples in Taiwan.

This is not unusual for colonial people. Anderson thinks likewise. The new *lingua franca* helped to break down the localism and brought people of divisive backgrounds into one larger imagination. But what is unusual is that the Han Chinese were unlike the "natives" or the tribal populations Anderson mentioned, such as in the Philippines, the Indies, or on other islands. The Han Chinese indeed share a common writing system and a larger common culture, as shown, for example, in folk religions, ancestor worship and Confucianism. And Japanese was not used as a new communication system only, but also as a new "high cultural" system sanctioned by the colonial power: the influence of the colonial state writ large not just in the linguistic landscape, but also a new worldview for the people.

The Effect of Colonialist Governance on Collective Image

In 1994, in an interview titled "the Sadness of Being Taiwanese" by the late Japanese writer Shiba Ryotaro, former Taiwanese President Lee Teng-hui[18] was quoted as saying, "I thought that I was a Japanese until I was twenty-years-old." Lee believed that he was speaking for his generation as a whole, which cannot be really so but contains some partial truth. The Japanese were very serious and successful in promoting assimilation and patriotism. Modern national education was institutionalized in Taiwan beginning in the 1920s. The enrollment rate of school-aged children was 10 percent in 1915, 25 percent in 1920, and 71 percent in 1944. (Tsurumi 1977:148) In the competition for Taiwanese' minds, the Taiwanese resistance did not seem to have the upper hand. The research question now becomes: After 1920, did Taiwanese began to image themselves as Taiwanese with a national destiny striving for political independence, or did some begin to embrace the idealized notion of being Japanese as well? Can Anderson's thesis offer us any clue in understanding this?

[18] He was born in 1923. His father and eldest brother both worked for the Japanese government. His eldest brother, who was selected as an outstanding Taiwanese youth placed in the "voluntary army," and was killed near Manila. Lee studied in Japan for two years and returned to Taiwan in 1945.

In his revision of Imagined Community, Anderson modified his earlier interpretation about official nationalism, which assigned importance to official indoctrination in post-colonial states. He added new factors that had their origins during the colonial era to his thesis. These factors, census, map, and museum, he suggested paving the way for the post-colonial state to forge a newly imagined nationess. (Anderson, 1991:163-185) These colonial institutions are conducive to breaking down isolation and localized regionalism (confined to traditional tribal dialects or regional feuds) by providing new political "boundaries" and "icons" of a larger and more general representation, which in turn change people's self-image, and image of the "others." And these provided a sense of "bound seriality" (Anderson, 1998: 35), and a new "lineage" of the nationhood.

The Japanese were indeed the first rulers of Taiwan to put population surveys into practice here. The "entire" population (at least of the portion of the island under effective Japanese control) was counted periodically, beginning in 1905.[19] The beginning of inhabitants in Taiwan were represented and narrated in the first Taiwan museum in Taipei City in 1908. The government also launched "scientific" surveys of the aborigines in the name of ethnography. The classification system for Han Chinese sub-populations was completed in 1905, and for the aborigine "race" in 1915.

But before more concrete evidence can be produced, I hesitate to contend that these measures were important then in building people's collective imagination of being distinctive Taiwanese. If they were important, I would think that the learning of Japanese as *the* "national" and *the* "higher" form of language by Taiwanese would be even more important since it really penetrated into the daily interlocution for people from different dialects and ethnic origins in Taiwan. The learning of Japanese as a national language was also accompanied by the suppression of Chinese, with successive bans: the teaching of Chinese in 1932, the use of Chinese in newspaper in 1937, and then the import of Chinese printed material to Taiwan in 1940. The

[19] The first one was carried out in 1905. Since 1915, it was carried out in every five years.

successful Japanization of the linguistic landscape, so to speak, should have carried a much bigger impact on the imagination on the people than the census, museum and map.

I am not saying that Anderson is wrong, just that we need to re-emphasize that the cultural artifacts and icons representing the community in bonded territory and seriality could not create the meaning or the feeling of the community by itself. They need to be worked on, narrated, interpreted, constructed or even fabricated intellectually. Their adoption into the nation-building project can take place only during the post-colonial time by the newly emerging independent state. Museums and maps and other ruling techniques were used to promote not a larger notion of being Taiwanese, but were in fact to pay tribute to the greatness of Japan, and to manufacture more docile subjects (by consenting to their inferior status) of the great Empire.

Gellner and the High Culture Sanctioned by the State

The state's ideological work on the people can carry a heavy weight. In this sense, Gellner may have made a much stronger case than Anderson in attributing the importance of the state to the forming of a collective consciousness. If we turn to Gellner's thesis on nationalism, we find he adopted a much stronger stance on formulating a modernist and universalistic theory on nationalism. This was reflected by his argument for historical stages of societal development -- from pre-agrarian to agrarian to industrial society-- and by his functionalistic attempt to argue for nationalism as the necessary invention for industrialization. Nationalism was pursued by the rational calculation of the state and power elite to impose a national "high culture" to homogenize, to break down ethnic and other differences. Gellner was not speaking about the colonial context, but a phenomenon of the larger world (the West?), i.e., industrialization, sometimes, modernization. Colonial condition was at most understood as the intrusion of "foreign" rulers for Gellner. His work can be easily

faulted for its implicit Euro-centric tendency in discussing the evolutionary stages and the functionalistic need for nationalism.[20]

But I am not going to dwell on this. I don't think his blind spot automatically disqualifies him from offering meaningful contributions to the understanding of Taiwanese nationalism. To me, Gellner is important in directing our attention to the link between the state and modernization, on the one hand, and nationalistic culture on the other, namely, the imposition of national high culture through communication and uniform language policy and education on a diversified population. Unless we come to grasp the role of the state, the techniques of governance it employs, and the cultural institutions the state relies on to nurture nationalistic narratives and collective ancestry consciously, we can not come to grasp fully the power to imprint any national image on the general populace.

Gellner helped me see the change of Taiwanese under the influences of Japanization promoted by a supreme power to serve the national interests of Japan. Taiwan under Japan had achieved by 1920 the highest industrialization level in Asia outside of Japan itself. Tap water, modern medicine and professions, public schools, agricultural inventions, science, and so on helped to improve the living standards of the Taiwanese. North-south roads, railways, telecommunications, electricity, radio, unified monetary and measurement systems helped to develop a collective imagination of the islanders and the Taiwanese as one larger community, but with an "institutional" Japanese national identity, and mixed feeling of belonging to the Empire. This is not necessarily the "Taiwanese identity" with strong self-assertion that people are thinking of today. (Lamley 1994)

The "science" employed by the government for administration was not confined only to this material side; it was also to persuade the people to abandon their Chinese heritage. This was not just for the need of industrialization that Gellner speaks of, but

[20] But toward his later age he was devoted to the study of the surging of new nationalism after the fall of the Communist states in the Eastern Bloc, and the relation between Islam and industrialization and nationalism.

for the need of loyalty and sacrifice to the Empire. This was especially true beginning in the late 1930s when Japan intended to build Taiwan as her base to expand into the South Pacific. The persuasive measures included not just formal education but also social campaigns and elaborate displays of honor and citizen's loyalty.(Lamley1994: 215-216) Especially from 1935 to 1945, Taiwanese were under heavy pressure to further their degree of Japanization. The governor general of Taiwan implemented a carefully orchestrated social-cultural campaign, known as the *Kominka* Movement, to mobilize the general population. Police surveillance was common. People were monitored through civic registration and the established neighborhood watch organizations (the *Ho-ko* system). The over-arching goal was to change the mindsets of Taiwanese, not just for the need of industrialization, but also the need for ruling, and expansion. As a result of *Komika*, some Taiwanese were even eager to compete for the chance (and honor) to devote their lives to the "fatherland" (referring to Japan) by joining the imperial armed forces voluntarily toward the last few years of Japanese rule.[21]

It is difficult to assess the Japanese legacy on Taiwanese consciousness, especially for the older generation that grew up under it. Former President Lee Teng-hui's remarks are a good illustration, though. Two Taiwanese nationalist intellectuals exiled to Japan in the1950s, Dr. Ong Jok-tik and Dr. Huang Zhaotang, also had ambivalent feelings about their former colonial master. Dr. Ong said that the most abhorrent part of Japanese education was the indoctrination of patriotism and the loyalty to the emperor. But Japanese education also lifted Taiwan from a superstitious and feudalistic society to modernity. In his assessment, the Taiwanese became a learned and modernized people because of Japanese education. (Wang 1993:127-138)

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[21] The *Kominka* movement included social, cultural and linguistic policies to facilitate the rapid learning of Japanese, sciences and Japanese virtues to promote speedy Japanization and extreme patriotism among the Taiwanese. Its purpose was to prepare the Taiwanese to join the Empire to fight in an escalating pacific war. All sectors of the society were mobilized for glorifying the Empire and the Emperor. The total number of Taiwanese in the Japanese military was about two hundred thousands or more. Former President Lee's elder brother was one of them. During the last year of the War, more than forty thousand Taiwanese were also drafted (involuntarily) to join the military.

Dr. Huang, now a university professor in Japan, wrote that the Taiwanese had a bloody hatred for the Japanese, and that he could never forget the shame that Japanese had brought upon Taiwan through racist colonialism. But he was also quick to point out that the Taiwanese were much better off materially under Japan than they had been before. (Huang 1998:48-50) He also believes that it is very possible that being assimilated and educated Japanese-Taiwanese, and that being a part of the great empire indeed gave Taiwanese a chance to feel proud of themselves by abandoning their old low status of Chinese identity. (Huang, ibid, 10,11,17)

So the governance of Japan did matter a great deal in shaping the Taiwanese collective image. It on the one hand created a number of activists who became "modernized" and "enlightened" through their awakening process, and who started the first wave of anti-colonial struggles invoking a new self-image of the Taiwanese people. On the other hand, the colonial governance created an indisputable high culture of the society against which the commoners were measured for their merits. The state was in fact the most influential institutional force in re-shaping the "moral horizons" of Taiwanese people. It also created a largely compliant population who supported the system through participating, and collaboration out of enticements, persuasion and coercion.

Thus, Taiwan was with all the favorable cultural conditions, suggested in Anderson's thesis, for developing a Taiwanese imagination. There were the spreading of a national language, new communication technology, press and radio, and new skills of cultural representation. But the meaning of Taiwanese identity is far from settled. I think that it is a loophole in Anderson's thesis that he did not separate the "conditions favorable for national imagination" from "what does imagination actually mean." I am suggesting that Taiwan started to develop its conditions for national imagination because of its collective experiences under the colonial governance of the Japanese. But what kind of identity can we ascribe to that imagined collectivity? I hope I have demonstrated the complexities and the vicissitudes: People were reacting and choosing to act differently. Feeling sandwiched in between, some chose to be

nationalist Taiwanese holding onto their Han Chinese-ness with a modern bent; some became patriotic Japanese; some became left-wing Taiwan nationalists; and some sided with the moderate middle-class reformists. On the other hand, Gellner make us to look at the imposition of "high culture" on a colonized territory, but his analysis is limited by missing the colonial context and the effect of the combination of colonial domination, expanding imperialism and modernization.

Part Two: Contending Nationalistic Views and Democratization

Anderson and Gellner share one fundamental research question: Under what circumstances or historical conditions do people become consciously aware of their collective existence and act accordingly in the name of a nation? Their answers to these questions provide us with useful frameworks. But, despite considerable efforts and resources, they are much less successful in understanding how and why in some places and at some times this consciousness fails to materialize. And, they offer little to explain the rise of conflicting nationalistic imaginations, nor about why contending nationalistic imaginations could emerge under the same roof of nation-state. This is because they pay more attention to the operating principles or political functioning of nations and nationalism than to how people become engaged in real politics. Regarding this, Brubaker (1996) is right to remind us that "nationalism is a form of doing politics." It is precisely the concrete "politics" and the analysis thereofore, that both Anderson and Gellner lack.

The Failure of the Authoritarian-Nationalistic State

The Chinese nationalistic regime (the Republic of China) on Taiwan has failed (or succeeded only partially, to note other points of view) to bring up a unifying Chinese nationalism. Not only has it failed to achieve its professed goal to "unify" all its people, it has helped to provoke the further development of a separatist identity:

Taiwanese nationalism. Analysis of this kind of political process is missing in both Anderson and Gellner. The Republic of China on Taiwan, prior to 1985, was described as a "strong" or "hard" state for its authoritarian and developmental characteristics. It has been very dedicated in manufacturing a genuine patriotic population with a strong Chinese national identity when pursuing the goal of industrialization, and most importantly, the mission for national unification (i.e. Taiwan with mainland China, which was "stolen" by the Communist "bandits" in 1949). My personal experience of school education and the passed-on narratives in my family testify to that. But when one starts to look into the reasons why the competition between Taiwanese nationalistic and the Chinese nationalistic thinking took place, the weakness of both Anderson's and Gellner's theses in analyzing real politics become obvious.

In an earlier article (Chang 2000) I attempted to solve this question in terms of the following factors. First, the people in China and the people in Taiwan, despite their elements of common heritage, such as folk religions, dialects, and worldviews about nation-race, have gone through a series of separate transformations and through different trajectories since their forced separation in 1895. The notion of self-determination and demand for recognition were already prevalent among the Taiwanese elite, to say the least. The arriving mainland Chinese from the ancestor homeland, however, were very much wrapped in their nationalistic fervor of trying to "unite" all people of different "Chinese" origins in order to rebuild the war-torn motherland, and also, more immediately, to prevent communists or other post-war national "opportunists" from rising up against the "Chinese Nation".

This gap of mutual expectation between the mainlanders and Taiwanese was created by their respective historical conjunctures. In fact, their respective self-transformation processes took place in reaction to each other's own circumstance without much direct participation from the other side until 1945, when Japan surrendered Taiwan back to China. Before then, Taiwan and China existed as two separate political fields. As it was said earlier, the Taiwanese people were a kind of

sandwiched people between the Japanese Empire and their ancestor homeland. To resolve this dilemma, some turned to resisting Japanese through campaigning for "cultural elevation","awakening" and "recognition for the right to home-rule", while others choose to identify with the Japanese through a conscious Japanization process, though maybe just for convenience under those circumstance. In any event, their frames of meaning and their references to Japanese legacy were very different from those of the mainlanders, who came to "replace" the Japanese. As for the newly arrived Chinese who were with strong nationalistic fervor, this so-called Taiwanese self-consciousness, expectations for autonomous rule and social justice, did not meet the "needs" for a strong and unified Chinese Nation. In addition, in the first two years ruling by the motherland since 1945, officials were commonly authoritarian, abusive and corrupt. Chinese nationalism was in this sense used to justify the privilege of the mainlanders over the Taiwanese in the new government. As a result, what was supposed to be a de-colonization process after the war ended in 1945 became instead a domestic kind of colonization. Taiwanese found their status in Taiwan had little improvement and that the Chinese government was no better than that of the Japanese.[22]

A collision of different moralities and an uprising of some kind become inevitable when a group of "outsiders" is perceived as dominating the established community. This background helps explain why the February 28 Incident, which erupted in 1947, has had such a great impact on the later development of Taiwanese consciousness. We also understand more about why, after the eruption, the present-day Taiwan Independence movement was started almost exclusively by Taiwanese and not mainlanders, and why so many Taiwanese -- but not mainlanders --

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[22] The late Dr. Wang Yude was a Taiwanese independence activist. He lost his elder brother during the February 28 Incident when he was still a student. He was forced to go into exile in Japan in 1949. He made angry and racist remarks against the "mainlander regime" in his book: "Only now (referring to the abusiveness of Chinese officials in Taiwan), Taiwanese began to miss the Japanese period. Taiwanese despised Japanese and had called them 'dogs.' 'Dogs' bark, but 'dogs' will watch the door for you. Chinese are 'pigs.' 'Pigs' only know how to glut themselves."

felt so strongly for the opposition who were given life sentences after the Kaohsiung Incident some three decades later. Scholars and politicians who want to play down the ethno-nationalistic significance of these events, often list "misunderstanding" and "oppressive governing" as the two major reasons for such incidents of resistance to have occurred. But in fact, these events were really related to the collision of two "peoples" (despite having the same origin and many shared cultural facets) embarking on different routes for self-transformation, who were then forcefully united under the banner of Chinese nationalism at its high tide in 1945.

Secondly, since the early Taiwanese independent movement was largely and successfully kept as an exile movement outside of Taiwan, its influence on domestic politics and ordinary people before 1978 was not significant.[23] Independence was at most an implicit, not explicit, program of the opposition movement suppressed by authoritarian rule, which lasted from 1949 until at least 1985. But for the same reason, authoritarian rule increased the frictions and deepened the difference between Taiwanese and mainlanders. Though the regime evolved from "hard" to "soft" (Winckler 1984) when Chiang Chin-kuo succeeded his father in 1971, it continued to employ measures to limit the representation of Taiwanese, which continued the asymmetrical distribution of power between different groups.[24] It is thus no surprise that Taiwan's democratic movement was predominantly led by activists of Taiwanese origin, along with only very few exceptional mainlanders. Before the independence program surfaced in the late 1980s, fighting for democracy was also fighting for equal participation and representation of "our kind." After all, democratic politics is not just about the representation of interest, but an interrelationship between the representations of "interest" as well as "identity"- type of person. After a long period of enforced silence, ethnic division and (Taiwanese) mobilization started to warm up

[23] Along with political liberalization, and their defiant returning to Taiwan in late 1980s, their influence began much more prominent.

[24] In fact, ordinary mainlanders were also excluded from participating in politics because of the nature of the regime. But they seemed to be over-represented in the higher circle and power elite. And unlike the Taiwanese, they were rather supportive of the authoritarian rule by the Kuomintang before its split in 1992. (Chang 1989)

on the eve of the Kaohsiung Incident, and moved on to surge in the late 1980s after political liberalization. (Wang Fu-chang 1996, Hsiao 2000).

Thirdly, Japanese was able to succeed only partially in assimilating Taiwanese. It failed to accomplish a national hegemony when defeated in the War. Parallel to Japanese, the same happened to the Nationalist Chinese. Like the Japanese government -- or even more anxious than the Japanese for Taiwanese patriotism because of the eminent threat from Chinese Communists -- the nationalist state had been actively engaging in imposing on the Taiwanese an "appropriate" nationalism and nationalistic high culture. This included campaigns and policies like the Speak Mandarin Movement, Cultural Renaissance Movement, Anti-Leftist Campaign, and patriotism and extreme loyalty. (Chun 1996) Also like the Japanese, the mainlanders had only partial success in manufacturing their own nationalism. Nationalistic education was most successful with mainlanders and their children, but had uneven with the group of Taiwanese origin. For instance, highly educated Taiwanese and members of the older generation that grew up under the Japanese had a greater possibility of developing reservations about or distaste for official Chinese nationalism (Chang and Wu, 2001). This can be attributed to their greater demand for recognition and respect from the status-quo system. One example of them has been the Taiwanese Presbyterian Church, whose membership was predominantly of educated Taiwanese. The church has occupied a significant position in advocating the democratic movement with a strong bent toward Taiwanese self-determination since the 1970s.[25]

Therefore, nationalistic teachings under authoritarianism achieved a partial success in imposing upon most Taiwanese an indisputable Chinese national identity, but may also have unintentionally provoked resistance from some Taiwanese by making them feel humiliated and defeated in both real politics and in their self-image. The fundamental drive for Taiwan's democratization movement, and the force of

[25] See Michael Stainton's chapter, "Through Love and Suffering" about the importance of Taiwan's Presbyterian Church in this book .

Taiwanese opposition, has arguably grown out of the cracks of and reactions against the authoritarian regime and the nationalism it attempted to impose on people of the Taiwanese origin.

Regime Transformation and the "Ethnization" of Politics

Issues on regime transformation, from authoritarian rule to liberal democracy, were not the concern of either Gellner or Anderson.[26] But in reality, the issue of nation or nationalistic identity is often salient in the process of democratization. It is inextricably intertwined with electoral mobilization and social justice rhetoric in a political competition. It happened not just in Taiwan (e.g., Wachman 1994, Wu Naiteh 1994, 1996), but also elsewhere, such as in South Korea, Canada (especially in Quebec), Australia, and, of course, post-communist Europe (both Eastern and Western). If we agree with Anderson, nation is conceived in the mode of consciousness of the ordinary people, or if we agree with Gellner, nation is a useful cultural construct for both the state and the elite to pursue industrialization and other objectives, then the "uses" of nation in real politics and regime transformation process could be only normal and prevalent. But this was apparently not their primary *problematic.*

My position is as I said at the beginning of this paper: We need to study the historical context and historical conjuncture factors, not generate an over-arching theory in searching for the roots of nation, its origin and transformation. And likewise, we need to examine its relation and effect on political process. It would be difficult for me to imagine the route of Taiwan's regime transformation solely in terms of the modernization theory, which stresses economic development or the growth of middle

[26] Whereas earlier studies of regime transformation, for example the well-known G. O'Donnell and the team work on regime transformation in Latin America (1986), mentioned little about nationalistic issues. So didn't Chu (1992) mention its importance when analyzing Taiwan's democratization. But more and more authors have come to notice it especially since the fall of the Communist Parties in Central and Eastern Europe; for instance, see Snyder (2000), and Sakwa (1995).

class as the major factor contributing to democracy. Nor it is possible to imagine the transformation only in terms of the theory of state-elite, which assigns primary importance to the adaptability of the regime, or the will of some "wise" dictators such as Chiang Chin-kuo. In Taiwan, it is like what Ernest Renan once said, there are two things that constitute the nation: "One lies in the past, the other in the present. One is the possession in common of a rich legacy of memories, the other is present-day consent, the desire to live together, the will to perpetuate the value of the heritage that one has received in an undivided form." (Renan 1990:19) And for the rise of the early Taiwanese opposition and movement activists, both of these two things, common memories, and consent to the regime and its national bent, were all absent. Therefore, the regime transition, led by the challenge from the opposition, and the regime's adaptation to this challenge, have been all related to not just forging democracy to replace authoritarianism, but also to building a new imagining of a nation state to replace the existing one.

Conclusion: Nationalism and Pragmatism

I hope I have been successful in identifying and explaining the nascence of Taiwanese nationalistic thinking. I have submitted that the notion of being Taiwanese, being a nation, began to take shape in the 1920s. That it evolved from the political reflections, attitudes and actions of the modernized elites toward their own pre-modern Han traditions and their adversaries under Japanese colonial rule. The term 'Taiwanese' did not become a distinct category of people until it was used to oppose the nationalist Chinese government after the uprising in 1947. The diversities and changes of meanings of the single term 'Taiwanese' has been continuously shaped by the conjunctures of different historical events. It carries the connotations of being 'ethnic and racially' distinct, or 'culturally and politically' separate, or 'national' independent, contingent on the context. Also, I have tried to show why Chinese nationalism has failed to assimilate all people under one nationalistic banner in Taiwan after 1945. This ruffling was not caused by some a priori ethnic differences

between mainlanders and Taiwanese, but it largely resulted from a series of Taiwanese cultural and political responses to the imposition of a nationalistic high culture over their daily lives and the accompanying coercion, insulting, and political exclusion that went with it. I have also discussed the benefits of reading Anderson and Gellner, including my own debts to their work. Their arguments helped reshape my mindset and it helped me shed my 'ethnic' biases. Their ways of reasoning also made me cognizant of the blindness of many 'nationalistic scholars' and of many Taiwanese and Chinese officials as well as ordinary people from both sides of the Taiwan Strait.

My critique of Anderson and Gellner can be summarized in two major points: First, their views and interpretations of nation, nationalism, and nation-state are too broad, and too unifying. Their ambitious positing of overarching theories led them to lose sight of the importance of historical specificities, and the evolving and conflicting nature of any particular 'national imagination.' Second, the concept of nation they presented was like either an imagined bondage or similar to a banner fluttering in the wide-open air of the era of world transformation, without giving much care as to the direction of the wind. After submitting that the concept of 'nation' is an abstract community above all of the local and sub-communities within the state boundary, we find that every nation, or every form of nationalism, is always characterized by different and sometimes conflict strategies related to class, ethnicity, religion, gender politics, frame of moral references, and pragmatic interests of the present time. We step into an epistemological pitfall if we think of a nation as a group of people independent from how and why people organize their political actions in certain ways and directions. That precisely is where I often find the arguments of both Anderson and Gellner not satisfying.

Already comparative studies have found that Taiwan's transition from authoritarianism to democracy has been relatively peaceful compared to those of neighboring Asian countries or some of the Latin American regimes. (e.g., Huntington 1991, Fukuyama 1995) The question is, will rival nationalistic claims in Taiwan become more and more ethnic-prone, intolerant, and eventually lead to violence? Or,

will the Taiwanese elite eventually fall for the lure of a proclaimed independent nation-state and stir up a new wave of ethnic-nationalistic conflict between Taiwanese and mainlanders, or between Taiwan and China? Indeed, Snyder has pointed out in his acclaimed book From Voting to Violence (2000:20) that a multi-ethnic country can easily fall victim to nationalistic violence during the democratization period if political elites were to find ethno-nationalism appealing and useful in guiding their self-interests in the post-authoritarian era. He warns that internal warfare and hegemonic aggression are likely to occur should this "detour" ever happen, using Rwanda, Sri Lanka, and former Yugoslavia as exemplars. What are we to think of this hypothesis, when examining Taiwan's journey into democracy to date?

Based on the following reasoning, my view regarding Taiwan is an optimistic one. I think Taiwan is more likely to continue its peaceful movement toward a mature democracy despite of the lacking of 'national' unity.[27] The first one is about the prevalence of routine politics and the existence of a well-established electoral system in Taiwan. As mentioned earlier, early political liberalization in Taiwan began with Chiang Chin-kuo in 1971. This process gradually built up its momentum though very slowly and not without rollback, such as the brutal crackdown of the *Mei-li-Dao* (the "Formosa Incident) in 1978. This 'softening' of authoritarianism was accompanied by Chiang's willingness to reform his party, and for the ruling apparatus to accommodate the new political conditions (e.g., Winckler 1984, Cheng 1993) This well-known "Taiwanization" policy spearheaded by Chiang Chin-kuo was

[27] Any geo-politically oriented analyst is likely to fault my following arguments for not mentioning the scenario of Beijin's intervention of Taiwan's domestic politics. What would be Taiwan's democracy future if there were invasion from China against Taiwan's possible 'provocation' by moving toward independence? My arguments for optimism would be of course hard to maintain if this ever took place. In fact, this external factor, constituting both a national security and economic factor for Taiwan, has exerted tremendous pressures on Taiwanese domestic politics. Beijin's sovereignty claims over Taiwan, disallowing Taiwan's participation in inter-*national* institutions as a "national" member, calling for establishing direct flight, forcing Taiwan to recognize 'the one China principle' and etc., have already affected how politics is conducted in Taiwan. And Beijing's calculated expressions of favorable or unfavorable treatment toward different political parties in Taiwan of course will also complicate and poises a challenge to the established democratic virtue. But because of space limit, I do not think this particular topic can be properly dealt with in this chapter. In fact, my following observations have included very recent developments up till 2000 when, to defy Beijing's direct warning, Chen shui-bian was elected as the presidency by the citizen of Taiwan.

one of many examples. Through careful and increasing incorporation of diversified Taiwanese interests and elites into his ruling stratum, not only could he and his party remain in power despite the rising challenges (Wu 1994), but he also prepared a new stratum of ruling elites, including people like Lee Tenghui, (the President and Party Chairman of KMT from 1988 – 1999) who were even much more accommodating to Taiwanese nationalism up to the point that the party broke up because of series of intra-conflicts during the 1990's.

In addition, the previous opposition, now the ruling DPP elite, have not had much the interest in generating any violence in domestic politics either since they have been very much confined by the rules of the game and the electoral systems without much of an alternative. From an institutional perspective, the tendency towards Taiwanization was characterized by a gradual and slow expansion of elections, which have been effectively institutionalized for various level of government as early as in 1951. The system has evolved from being a show-case of democracy dominated by the KMT and manipulated under an authoritarian regime, to the "election holidays" for the dissidents (xuanju jiaqi) during the late 70s and 80s (e.g., Copper 1981, Li 1984) The system for political competition has generally been open and credible after 1994 when the popular election for the presidency was institutionalized in the revised Constitution. (Diamond et al 1997)

This slow process of opening-up for the first twenty some years, and the persistent denial of an all-out institutional change by the authority gave the opposition parties in Taiwan a strong motive and a salient target to strive for. In other words, they have had participated and hence legitimized, thought not openly admitted, a system that they believe could be democratized and localized through gains in winning elections and popular support. The opposition used various strategies including publishing magazines, street protesting, negotiating, and above all, by routinely participating in the not-so-just electoral politics prescribed by the authority. They did not use radical means, such as an all-out revolution or an all-out nationalistic attack on this "outsider regime". The opposition movement prior to the year 2000

always was a mixture of many issues lumped together, including social activism, human rights, anti-corruption, critique of a lack of efficacy, and, the 'collective sufferings' of the Taiwanese people. (Wu 1994) It is clear that the outcry for Taiwan's independence and Taiwanese nationalism was still punishable by law before 1991. Taiwanese nationalism was therefore 'hidden' under many other governing issues. Therefore, politics have been made complicated, almost always about nationalism, but not exclusively so. This has made for two intertwined movements, one for democratization, and the other for nationalism, closely allied with each other with relative independent value, while neither one could be completely absorbed by the other.

The political institution has passed the fierce test of the 2000s presidential campaign when the long time ruling KMT party lost to the DPPs pro-Taiwan independence candidate Chen Shuibian. For almost five days, beginning from the late evening of March 18 when the election result was reported, a part of the Taipei City, near the headquarters of the KMT, was occupied by several thousand strong KMT (ex-) loyalists denouncing their party chairman Lee Tenghui for breaking up the party and so leading to the present disgraceful loss of the election. This chaos and angry crowd finally left the street after Lee agreed to step down from the chairman position a few days later. But, other than this incident, the overall transition of power has been relatively peaceful although generally shaky and rather noisy. These electoral politics and the peaceful handing-over of government truly pre-suppose a firmly-held belief in the protection of freedom of speech, civic liberties, and due process.

This is particularly so if we look at the level of protection of freedom in expressing different views on nationalism. Since 1991, both the advocating for Taiwan independence and unification with the mainland motherland have been essentially free from any legal punishment. This was achieved by the revoking of the article for treason of the Criminal Act in 1992. Prior to 1991, or even after the lifting of martial law in 1987, people holding political opinions that were regarded as contrary to the nation-state's interest, such as Taiwan's independence or unification

with the Chinese Communists could be arrested and given a life-sentence or even a death penalty for treason and conspiracy. It took almost two years of heated, polarizing and partisan debate, and many rallies as well as a great deal of cross-party maneuvering, before these two rivalry nationalistic discourse can become real 'normal' speech and expressions. This is equivalent to the guarantee of personal liberty and the right to express views opposing the state's view on nationalism. It had an immediate effect on bringing conflicting nationalistic arguments into the routine democratic process institution politics. Now, popular support for a particular nationalistic ideology must rely on the effectiveness of political organizations to compete for their respective audiences. There is indeed a 'market' in which different parties with different nationalistic ideologies compete for its advantage. On the other hand, intimidations, threats, violent conflicts, terrorism attack and so forth, are not only less attractive, but also more risky. These actions are outlawed, and extremely difficult to be justified in a relatively open system.

The consequence of a well-established electoral system, and a high level of protection of freedom of expression is peaceful regime transition under the same old national constitution. Today, the national constitution of the Republic of China, which itself has been a fierce battleground for political groups with different interests and different nationalisms, still hold on to its apex position as the ultimate legitimate power for all governments despite the constant criticism from across the spectrum of many politicians. In other words, even if Taiwan's new democracy seems to be awkward, hard-to-steer, (Clark 1998, Rigger 2000) hindered by nationalistic disputes and strong partisanship which parallel the group difference between mainlander and Taiwanese, and even if people of different backgrounds sometimes disagree and distrust each other, sometimes quite strongly, Taiwan, the Republic of China, is more likely to follow a peaceful route for resolving nationalistic differences, rather than derail and turn towards violent means.

Wouldn't there be anyone who wants to corrupt this 'normally competitive political market' for his or her own interests? A good guess would be yes, just like in

any situation in life. However, for them to have any possibility of succeeding, the larger political framework like the constitution and a myriad of civic laws would need to be discarded first. And, many people would have to feel very strongly and be very willing to take the risk to abandon the status quo, meaning their daily routine, habitual political practices, and affiliations along with many stakes. I would argue that the prevalence of pragmatism regarding politics and nationalism would make this a remote possibility. And that would be the third reason why I believe that Taiwan is unlikely to move toward a violent conflict over the issue of nationalism.

Snyder did mention in his above book that the level of economic prosperity may be negatively related to the chances of ordinary people's acceptance of elite's manipulation for nationalistic conflict. That is, citizens of the wealthier countries with a larger middle class sector may be less likely to go to the nationalistic extreme than those of the poorer countries.[28] With other words, if the citizens of a country are well enough off so that they feel they have something to lose by supporting a conflict, they are less likely to do so. Not only has the level of economic prosperity in Taiwan been on a continuous ascending trend for the past decade, but also has it experienced a development take-off prior to the early liberalization in the1970s. The growing of the moderate and somewhat conservative middle class (mainly the civic, professional and managerial level) has been limiting the rise of both a strong labor movement and extreme nationalism. (e.g., Chang 1993, 1994) . It will be very reasonable to suggest that the combined effect of the drive for economic prosperity of the society on the overall competition for nationalistic domination, and daily politics, is pragmatism, which is also demonstrated by the existence of the large proportion of middle-of-the-roader. A situation that is mediated and facilitated by the general dependence on a calculable larger environment, of which politics is an important and integral part. Evidence of the prevalence of 'middle-of-the-roaders' has been

[28] Though Snyder is not clear about the difference between 'relative poverty" referring to the gap between the rich and the poor in the country, and 'absolute poverty' referring to the level of income of that country.

demonstrated by the transformation of the DPP, the 'great re-conciliation' policy since 1995, (Guo 1998), and the call for the 'third-way alternative' for moving toward the middle between extreme nationalist claims. (Chen 2000)

Here I want to add a strong note of caution to the dichotomy between the 'Taiwanese' and the 'mainlanders' in Taiwan, which has been one of the central themes of this paper so far. Of course, there has been rising tendency of polarization, that is, if one is to be a truly Taiwanese patriot, one cannot be a respectful Chinese at the same time, nor vice versa. But if we look at results from political attitude study, from 1992 to 2000, we will notice the large proportion of people who elect to be in the 'middle' category. For instance, when asked: 'How would you answer if you would be asked if are you Chinese or Taiwanese?', and given the choice of possible answers: (1) I am Chinese, (2) I am both, or (3) I am Taiwanese, the percentages for 'I am Chinese' ranged from 11 percent to 19 percent, for 'I am both' (the compromise category) the answer ranged from 37 percent to 46 percent, and for 'I am Taiwanese' the response ranged from 27 percent to 39 percent.[29] It is therefore really possible for at least one fourth of the population with contingency identities, depending on the situation and the contexts.[30]

Pragmatism is also very significant if we look at the growing trend of economic ventures of many Taiwanese business interests in mainland China, despite political tensions between Taipei and Beijing, and despite continuous warnings from the Taiwan government of unexpected risks. And the total trade dependence of Taiwan on China (excluding Hong Kong and Macao) has increased from 2% in 1987 to 17.5% in 1999. [31] If we look at cross-nation visiting and travel between mainland China and

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[29] Based on the statistic report from the Mainland Affair Council, Executive Yuan, ROC, March, 2000.

[30] The other reason for being in the middle and being pragmatic is the prevalence of cross-marriages. Sociologists estimate that 50 percent of the 'mainlanders' born between 1950 and 1960 came from parents of different origins. The percentage is even higher—up to 80 percent—for those born between 1960 and 1970. This phenomenon alone can make ethnic 'divide' questionable. Giving the high level of urbanization and industrialization, everyday life in Taiwan is much too complicated to allow a hostile dichotomy to get in the way all the time. Being politically tolerant therefore can be essential for daily life to continue normally.

[31] The Taiwan government registered as much as US$16.1 billion, or 22,616 cases, of approved investment from Taiwan to China from 1991 to October 2000 (see the Monthly Report for Cross-Straits

Taiwan, this phenomenon is even more intriguing.[32] And above all this is occurring without the convenience of any amiable political ties between the two political governments, nor with the convenience of direct flight routes across the Straits. Therefore, some scholars have even gone so far as to talk about Taiwan as a post-nation society, a society that is not constrained by limiting nationalistic ideas or projects (see, for example, Shi Zhiyu 1995).[33]

In the beginning of this paper, I mentioned the importance of being reflexive in reading the theories. The prevalent theoretical view of nation, seeing it as: a state-led or class-based creation and everything else as a fabrication—just neglects the capacity among people to reflect and act upon the political and economic reality surrounding them. Also, I think that authoritarian elites maybe able to impose 'order' and 'peace', but cannot 'impose' nationalism on the majority of the people over a long period of time. And at present it would be even more difficult for any authoritarian ruling elite to do so, especially now when confronted by today's challenge from a fast expanding global economy. Is nationalism coming to a historical end all over the world? My study of Taiwan tells me 'no', and that this question itself is often too general to be meaningful. Today, in the relatively well-to-do places like Taiwan, Quebec, South Korea, Scotland, or even Australia, people can still feel the strong power of nationalism and its forces in all level of politics, despite that it is holding in check by institution politics and the overriding pragmatic concerns coming from many directions.

Economy, published by the Mainland Affairs Committee). These official statistics are believed to be lower than the reality.

[32] It is estimated that from 1988 to 1998 there have been an average of 1.2 million entry visa issued by mainland authority to Taiwanese every year. The source came from a report from the Interior Ministry of the ROC.

[33] But I am very skeptical of Shi zhiyu's viewpoint. The fluidity and diversity of identity politics in Taiwan, and the mixture of many different (or contradicting) strands of ideas and behavior connected with them, can be better interpreted as market-driven pragmatism without attributing anything to post-modern thinking.