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ABSTRACT

This thesis analyzes the development of the nationalist movement in Taiwan during the period 1921-1947. In particular, the thesis traces the confluence of the movement into pro-independence "Taiwanese" and pro-reunification "Chinese" nationalist groups. Some scholars have suggested that a strong "Taiwanese" nationalism emerged as an immediate response to the ceding of the island to Japan in 1895, and has remained as an unchanging force in Taiwanese politics to this day. The author shows that this is not the case: nationalism as a strong political force did not emerge until the early 1920s, and was initially overwhelmingly "Chinese" rather than "Taiwanese" in content. Modern "Taiwanese" nationalism as we now know it - staunchly pro-independence in nature - did not emerge until the late 1940s.

Using concepts first formulated by political scientists Anthony Smith and Ernest Gellner, the thesis examines the changing content of nationalism in Taiwan. Following Smith and Gellner, the author distinguishes between the political and ethnic underpinnings of modern nationalism, and equates "Taiwanese" nationalism with a predominantly "statist" argument, while associating pan-Chinese nationalism with an "ethnicist" point of view. This allows the author to identify three distinct phases in the evolution of the nationalist movement in Taiwan. Each phase was characterized by a different domestic political situation,
which in turn influenced the content of the nationalist movement. Japanese rule prompted one nationalist response, while the initial period of renewed mainland rule created a quite different one. Finally, the increasingly oppressive rule of the central government, culminating in the Erh Erh Pa incident and the White Terror, provoked yet another type of nationalism. The thesis examines each phase in turn and reveals that each was characterized by a different degree of cooperation/conflict between the "ethnicist" and "statist" elements. As the author shows, the professed goals of the nationalist movement tended to oscillate between the extremes of pro-reunification and pro-independence, depending on whether the "statist" or "ethnicist" camp was dominant within the movement.
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INTRODUCTION

The lifting of martial law in Taiwan in 1987 unleashed a flood of long-suppressed scholarship on the issue of Taiwanese nationalism and related questions concerning the claim that the Taiwanese were racially (chung tsu) or at least ethnically (tsu ch’ünn) distinct from the “Chinese” on the mainland.¹ For the first time in more than forty years the people of Taiwan were free to question not only the political desirability, but also the ethnic rationale for reunification.

Although a number of studies on this subject have been published in Chinese, writings on Taiwanese nationalism in English are few and far between. In this thesis I utilize primary sources such as autobiographies of Taiwanese nationalists plus numerous recent Chinese-language secondary materials from Taiwan in order to explain the origin and the evolution of Taiwanese nationalism to western audiences. By adopting an analytical framework derived from western works on nationalism, I believe that I have shed new light on the evolution of Taiwanese nationalism, and in the process refuted many of the interpretations put forward by scholars writing in Chinese.

¹ chung tsu: 种族, tsu ch’ünn: 族群.
Taiwanese scholars such as Huang Chao-t'ang had long held that the people of Taiwan possessed an ethnic identity that was clearly distinct from that of the mainland Chinese, while others like Shen Chien-te had gone even further in claiming that the pre-1947 residents of Taiwan were racially distinct from the Han Chinese. Both arguments were targeted at the long standing claims of racial/ethnic oneness that underlay the pan-Chinese nationalists argument for reunification. Some scholar such as Ch'en Shao-t'ing have even sought to demonstrate that "Taiwanese" nationalism in its current form is the direct descendent of a movement that arose in response to the mainland "betrayal" of 1895 and the subsequent Japanese occupation.

Huang and others argue that the "Taiwanese consciousness" generated by these events provided the driving force for a Taiwanese nationalist movement under both Japanese and Kuomintang (KMT) rule. However, this was simply not the case. No coherent "Taiwanese consciousness" emerged in response to the arrival of the Japanese.
The early uprising Huang and other heralded as the first signs of a "Taiwanese" nationalist movement were actually uncoordinated and ultimately ineffective efforts by groups with widely divergent and often competing aims. Nationalism that was supra-clan and class-transcendent in its appeal did not emerge until the early 1920s. Furthermore, far from possessing a "Taiwanese consciousness" based on a recognition of their racial and/or ethnic distinctiveness from both the Japanese and the mainlanders, most of the early nationalists were quite proud of their Chinese cultural heritage even though their enthusiasm for things Chinese did not in all cases translate into a desire for an immediate return to mainland rule.

The strength of this "Chinese consciousness" within the nationalist movement varied over time, waxing and waning in response to conditions under Japanese and mainland rule. Fluctuations in the strength of "Chinese consciousness" were reflected in the aims of the nationalist movement, which, contrary to the claims of Huang and others, changed considerably over time. I argue that the Taiwanese nationalist movement passed through three distinct phases during the period 1921-47: 1) the first phase, which coincided with Japanese colonial rule up to 1945 was characterized by a "Chinese" consciousness that was anti-Japanese in nature rather than specifically pro-reunification; 2) the second phase which coincided with the initial period of mainland rule from
August 1945 to March 1947 was characterized by a Chinese consciousness that was overtly pro-reunification; and 3) the third phase which coincided with the February twenty-eighth incident and the subsequent white terror in the spring 1947 was characterized by the emergence of distinct “Taiwanese” consciousness which manifested itself in a staunchly pro-independence nationalism. Furthermore, the nationalist movement in Taiwan is currently evolving in yet another, completely new direction.

In order to understand the differences between the nationalist movement in Taiwan in each of the three phases, I have drawn heavily on the theoretical work of two political scientists. Ernest Gellner’s *Nations and Nationalism* focuses on the importance of both ethnic and political compatibility in the formation of nation states, and proved to be most useful in analyzing the oscillations between pan-Chinese and pro-independence sentiments within the Taiwanese nationalist movement. Similarly, Anthony Smith’s distinction between “ethnicist” and “statist” nationalism provides a solid basis for distinguishing between “Chinese” and “Taiwanese” nationalist impulses, both of which were present in varying strengths at various times within the nationalist movement in Taiwan. Together, these two scholars provide the theoretical framework for the analysis in this thesis.

To complete this task, this thesis is divided into three chapters. Chapter One is the background section in which I explain
the historical background and the emergence nationalism in Taiwan. Chapter Two explores the development of Taiwanese nationalist movement during the Japanese colonial period, with particular attention devoted to the Petition for the Taiwanese Legislature Movement and the formation of the Taiwan Culture Association. Chapter Three will deal with the retrocession period of 1945-1947, including the February twenty-eighth incident and the white terror that followed.
CHAPTER ONE

THE BACKGROUND AND NATURE OF TAIWANESE NATIONALISM

What is nationalism? As we are well aware, there are many contending definitions of the term. This is certainly the case when we are dealing with nationalism in the Chinese context. To start with, there is no simple direct translation of the word nation or nationalism in the Chinese language. The concept of nationhood in Chinese has always been a fuzzy one. The word “nation” in Chinese depends on the usage, and can be adapted to reflect the notion of ‘citizen’ (kuomin, kungmin), ‘people’ (jenmin), and ‘race’ (mintsu). This contrasts with the word “state” (kuo) which is more clearly defined as the political entity that has control over a physical jurisdiction. Thus, as John Fitzgerald points out, in Chinese history, states come and go. To the Chinese people the ‘death of the state’ referred to little more than the downfall of a dynasty and as one dynasty was generally replaced by another in the older cyclical view of history, it implied little more than a historical transition between ruling houses.

Although the state came and went, the nation – at least as we in the West understand the concept – lived on.

In the West, nationalism is often defined in a manner which implies the subordination of the political entity – the state –

6 Ibid.
to the ethnically based nationalist impulse. Thus, Ernest Gellner defines nationalism as "a theory of political legitimacy which requires that ethnic boundaries should not cut across political ones, and, in particular, that ethnic boundaries within a given state — a contingency already formally excluded by the principle in its general formulation — should not separate the power holders from the rest." He also points out that if the rulers of the political unit belong to a nation other than that of the majority, it constitutes a situation which Gellner feels violates the national principle. This principle holds that the political unit (the state) and the national unit (the ethnically homogeneous community) should be congruent. When the actual situation is at odds with this principle, nationalist movements may arise in reaction to correct the situation and create a true "national state."

In Gellner's view the following two points are critical in defining a nation state:

1. Two men are of the same nation if and only if they share the same culture, where culture in turn means a system of ideas and signs and associations and ways of behaving and communicating.

2. Two men are of the same nation if and only if they recognize each other as belonging to the same nation. In other words, nation maketh man; nations are the

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8 Ibid.
artifacts of men's convictions and loyalties and solidarities.\textsuperscript{9}

Benedict Anderson further adds to this second point by suggesting that a nation is "an imagined political community — and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign.\textsuperscript{10}" In Anderson's view, "members of the even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow members, ... yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion."\textsuperscript{11} In other words, when people in a community no longer consider themselves to form a nation or behave as if they form one, the nation would no longer exist. By applying these definitions in the context of Taiwan, we can gain a better understanding of the rationale(s) guiding the nationalist movement in each of the three historical phases.

When Taiwan was ceded to Japan in 1895 under the terms of the Treaty of Shimonoseki, the Ch'ing government gave up the island without much regret. This was because the Manchus had never held the island in high regard, viewing it as a base for pirates and renegades such as the former anti-Manchu Koxinga. Because the Chinese government had ceded the island to Japan, the Taiwanese were faced with a situation in which they were ruled by a minority that belonged both to a different ethnic group and to what had previously been a foreign nation. This was clearly in violation

\textsuperscript{9} Ibid., 7.

of both the principles laid out by Gellner, and, as he predicted, a nationalist movement eventually arose amongst the Taiwanese people in the 1920's. The Taiwanese people faced a similar situation again in 1945 when Taiwan was returned to the Nationalist government at the conclusion of World War II. However, this time, Taiwan's new rulers were from mainland China.

Taiwan's new mainland rulers were in essence members of the same ethnic group as the Taiwanese, hence reunification with the mainland in 1945 did not in itself violate the first principle cited by Gellner in his definition of the "nation state". In fact, most Taiwanese initially welcomed the mainlanders for precisely this reason. Unlike the Japanese, the mainlanders were ethnic Chinese, as were the Taiwanese, and thus the reunification seemed both natural and desirable. However, mainland rule soon proved to be a disappointment to the Taiwanese, for a variety of reasons, and the fact that the KMT rulers obviously considered their Taiwanese compatriots to be second class citizens made mainland rule seem as alien as the earlier Japanese rule. In effect, majority of mainlanders' conduct aroused separatist ambitions amongst the Taiwanese thus continuation of mainland rule increasingly seemed at odds with the second of Gellner's principles, which states that members of the same nation need to recognize each other as belonging to the same nation. Some Taiwanese came to view the mainlanders

\[\text{Ibid.}\]
as alien rulers. Despite their common ethnicity, they sought freedom from mainland rule. Hence the emergence of a "new" nationalist argument in favor of Taiwanese independence. This time around, the nationalist argument was aimed not at "alien" Japanese rule, but at "alien" mainland rule.

In essence, pre-1945 Taiwanese nationalism met all of Gellner's criteria, at least in so far as it was an ethnically-based movement and aimed at achieving a degree of independence from an ethnically and politically alien state. Most Taiwanese did not consider themselves to be "Japanese," nor did they see Taiwan as a natural part of the Japanese Empire. Yet reunification in 1945 led not to the triumph of pan-Chinese nationalism, but rather to the emergence of a different nationalism that seemed simultaneously to be in accord with Gellner's second principle while violating his first. Distinguishing between the anti-Japanese nationalist movement and the anti-mainlander nationalism of the post-reunification period requires the adoption of a different set of criteria.

Smith's categorization of nationalism as either "statist" or "ethnicist" lends itself well to an analysis of the situation in Taiwan.

According to Smith, the "statist" defines the nation as a 'territorial-political unit,' with nationalism involving an aspiration for self-government, while the "ethnicist" defines the
nation as a 'large politicized ethnic group defined by common culture and alleged descent.' While pan-Chinese nationalists clearly fall into the ethnicist camp, the majority of Taiwanese nationalists came to belong to the statist camp. This value difference is the site of conflict between Taiwanese Nationalism and Chinese Nationalism. "Ethnicist" pan-Chinese nationalists favoured a culturally-based movement, its object being to use cultural and ethnic linkages to create bonds of ethnic, and eventually political solidarity beyond the present jurisdiction of mainland China. This has in fact been the policy of the KMT government in Taiwan for the past fifty years. In a sense, the "ethnicist" form of nationalism stresses Gellner's first principle, while either ignoring or downplaying the significance of the second in those situations where local political aspirations contradict a broader ethnic solidarity.

In contrast, Taiwanese nationalism in the post-1947 period was and is of the "statist" type. Its objective is to create a sovereign Taiwanese state. Thus, its nature is exclusive, and it flies in the face of the ethnic ties that seem to link Taiwan to the mainland. Yet even the statists have found it useful, even necessary, to fall back on ethnicist strategies in mobilizing

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support. The Taiwanese nationalism which emerged in reaction to mainland rule tried to find and isolate a distinct Taiwanese culture, in the hope that it would serve to counteract the powerful draw of the ethnicist argument in favor of reunification.

As Li Chiao pointed out, there were historically two types of elements that the Taiwanese nationalists wanted to overcome, and these dictated the objectives and strategies of the proponents of Taiwanese Nationalism. First, there was economic, political and cultural oppression under colonialism. Japanese rule was ethnically and politically alien to the Taiwanese, and it generated a nationalist response that unified both ethnicist and statist nationalists in the short-term goal of forging a united front against Japan. Secondly, there was oppression in the form of the exploitative mainland rule that arrived after Japan's unexpected defeat. Oppression at the hands of "fellow-Chinese" brought the latent conflict between the two nationalist camps into the open, where it remains to this day. For the "statists," the main struggle has been against the lure and the threat of chauvinistic pan-Chinese cultural nationalism, while for the "ethnicists," the main struggle has been against the potentially precedent-setting "provincial-separatism" which they saw as the main plank in the "statist" platform. So long as the direct source of oppression

14 Li Ch'iao. "「台灣民族主義」的幾個問題." ("T'ai-wan min tsu chu i ti chi ke wen t'i ") (Some Questions on Taiwanese Nationalism) in 台灣民族主義, (T'ai-wan min tsu chu i) (Taiwanese Nationalism) ed. Shih Chéng-féng (Taipei: ch'ien wei ch' u pan she, 1994), 19.
was ethnically and politically "alien", statist and ethnicist nationalists could find common cause. However, when the source of oppression was merely politically "alien", the fault lines inherent in the early united front efforts of the Taiwanese nationalist movement widened to the point where the movement was split into irreconcilably hostile ethnicist and statist camps. Such is the situation today.
CHAPTER TWO

THE DAWNING OF TAIWANESE NATIONALISM, 1921-1945

The Uneven Effects of Japanese Colonialism

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the primary characteristics of Taiwanese nationalism were: a) that it arose as a means to resist foreign rule, and b) that it tended to oscillate between a statist and an ethnicist orientation. These two points became increasingly evident during the period of Japanese occupation between 1895-1945. In this chapter I will explain the process by which early Taiwanese nationalists attempted to use nationalism to resist Japanese rule. More importantly, I will also try to show how the anti-Japanese struggle temporarily masked the fault lines separating the ultimately irreconcilable visions of ethnicist and statist forms of Taiwanese nationalism. Before launching into a detailed discussion, however, it is important for us understand how Taiwanese society evolved in the late 19th century and into the period of Japanese rule.

After nearly two hundred years of settlement, Taiwan had evolved from a primitive frontier society into a province that was fully integrated into China's bureaucratic state. That meant by 1895 Taiwan had adopted social institutions and structures more or less identical to those on the mainland. This evolution also represented significant changes in the leadership of Taiwanese
society. In the early settler days, when society was divided either by surname, or by trade (i.e., business person, labour, landlord) as well as by subethnic lineage divisions that separated settlers from Changchou (漳州) from Chuanchou (福州), Holos (鵝佬人) from Hakkas (客家人). Social leadership was concentrated in the hands of lineage or business leaders. With the emergence of major towns, ports and city centers, plus the coming of the civil examination system and the establishment of more government offices, the social structure changed and a new, mainland style, Shih Shêng class (士绅階層) merged. This Shih Shêng class, composed mainly of intellectuals, landowners, government officials and business leaders, came to share the leadership roles in Taiwanese society by 1895. The majority of Taiwanese population were tenant farmers, fishermen, artisans, labourers, and small merchants.

In terms of the makeup of Taiwanese society in 1895, there were three main categories: the Shih Shêng (士绅), the shang jen

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15 Shih Shêng (士绅): Can be loosely translated into English as elite or notable. I have chosen not to translate and instead directly adopt the Chinese term as it was used by the original authors. Since scholars have use different "system" (i.e. Marxist, Confucian) in analyzing Taiwanese Society, there is little point in attempting to use western class label. To do so would only mislead the reader into making unwarranted assumptions about the nature of social stratification with Taiwanese society.

16 Wu Wen-hsing, 日據時期臺灣社會領導階層之研究 (Jih chu shih ch'i Tai-wan she hui chieh ts'eng chih yen chiu) (Study on the Leadership of Taiwanese Society During Japanese Occupation) (Taipei: Cheng chung shu chu, 1992), 11.
The Shih Sheng included government officials, big landlords and some scholars. Most had close ties with the mainland, as their fame and fortune tended to be dependent upon their links with the mainland. Many received their appointments, titles or other benefits from the Ch’ing government. As a result, they stood to lose the most with the arrival of the Japanese. For this reason, it is not surprising to find that many remained loyal to their Chinese roots and staunchly defended the Chinese heritage in the face of Japanese efforts at assimilation. Many of their offspring would later become prominent leaders of the nationalist movement in Taiwan. The liberal nationalists to whom I shall refer came mainly from this group.

The bulk of the business elite — those with middle to large scale enterprises — worried much less about the change in sovereignty in 1895. They cared most about their business interests and personal well being, and they were worried mainly about the possible negative effects on business of any instability that might follow the change in sovereignty. Thus, most members of merchant elite, along with many landlords, worked alongside the Japanese in the interest of stability. These people were collectively recognized by other Taiwanese as collaborationists.

17 shang jen (商人): Can be loosely translated as merchants or business group.

18 yi pan min chung (一般民众): Can be loosely translated as commoners.
and many were rewarded handsomely by the Japanese for their cooperation.

The remainder of the population, which included agricultural workers, urban labourers, artisans, and small-scale entrepreneurs constituted the majority of Taiwanese society. Individually, they were the most powerless in the face of Japanese rule, and they also had the most difficulty responding collectively to the new situation. But once they were organized, as we shall see later, they became a very strong force, particularly in the left wing of the nationalist movement. Let us now look at Japanese colonial policies and how they impacted on Taiwanese society.

Japanese colonial rule in Taiwan was a double edged sword. While some aspects of Japanese rule proved to be beneficial to the economic development of Taiwan, we also cannot deny that many of the colonial government's policies were considered to be oppressive by the Taiwanese people. Furthermore, the benefits of Japanese colonialism, such as they were, were unevenly distributed among the various social strata discussed above. On balance, Japanese colonial policies tended to benefit the elite sectors of Taiwanese society most.

The impact of Japanese colonial rule on Taiwanese society was manifested in three areas: economics, politics and culture. It was the colonial economic policy that had the most significant impact on the everyday life of Taiwanese. On the positive side,
the Japanese colonial role was responsible for major advances in the modernization of Taiwan's economy. The Japanese made great efforts to modernize Taiwan's infrastructure. They built roads, railways, ports and power plants around the island. The Japanese also introduced modern agricultural techniques such as the use of chemical fertilizers as well as new strains of sugar cane and rice, all of which helped to increase crop the yield. The Japanese also brought modern industries to Taiwan such as petroleum refineries, sugar refineries, steel mills and cement plants. Indeed, many economists have argued that Japanese colonialism established the material foundations for Taiwan's current economic success.

This modern infrastructure benefited every sector of Taiwanese society. Some sectors, however, benefited more than others. For example, business circles generally welcomed these modernization measures and accompanying opportunities to conduct more business. However, modernization did not come without cost. As a colony, Taiwan experienced the same exploitation suffered by the colonies of other imperial powers. The main beneficiaries of the aforementioned Japanese efforts at developing the infrastructure were the Japanese themselves. Taiwanese were on the receiving end of the exploitative measures. In the course of their daily activities, Taiwanese had to deal with an oppressive tax regime that included land and building taxes; consumption taxes on sugar, soft drinks, textiles, and cigarettes; and various miscellaneous fees which had no precedent in Taiwan. The tax regime
had the most direct impact on the poorer sectors of society, as their already marginal existence became even more precarious. The monopoly system which the colonial government imposed included many everyday items such as camphor, tobacco, wine, matches, and petroleum. Although this arrangement benefited a few Taiwanese collaborationists, it was a heavy burden for the average Taiwanese. The prices for these goods were often marked up as much as 190%, and the profits contributed up to 49.3% of the colonial government's regular income. Although benefiting from the higher yields made possible with Japanese technical assistance, farmers were restricted in their choice of crops and were forced to sell to the colonial government at artificially low prices. Others had their land expropriated by the government without compensation. All these policies led to great resentment of the colonial government.

On the political front, colonial rule was a mixed blessing. The Japanese occupation soon brought stability to Taiwan, and effectively ended the once infamous lineage fights. The colonial government was relatively free from corruption, the civil service became efficient, and military forces well disciplined. Due to

19 Shih Ming, 臺灣人四百年史 (Tai-wan jen ssü pai nien shih) (The Four Hundred Year History of Taiwanese) (San Jose, Calif.: Paradise Culture Associates, 1980), 114.

20 The land expropriation problem actually led to the "Lin Chi Pu Riot" in March 22, 1912 after the colonial government expropriated 15,000 (Chia) of bamboo forest and turned the land over to Mitsubishi. This led to 5,500 household to lose their livelihood. For more details on this episode see Shih Ming 臺灣人四百年史 (Tai-wan jen ssü pai nien shih), 434-7.

21 According to Shih Ming's, there were six riots between 1907-1915 that can be traced to Taiwanese resentment of the harsh taxation measures.
the harsh criminal code and extensive police network, criminal activities were very rare. The negative side of this was that the Taiwanese were deprived of any voice in their own governance. People's rights and freedoms were severely curtailed as the police had the power to arrest and imprison any civilian for up to eighty-nine days without trial.\textsuperscript{22} Such repressive laws in combination with the dreaded "Pao Chia,"\textsuperscript{23} or mutual surveillance system, and various other security measures, effectively turned everyone's neighbors into police agents.\textsuperscript{24} Also, discriminatory treatment towards the Taiwanese by Japanese officials was the norm.

The biggest impact that Japanese rule had on Taiwan was in the realm of culture. The Japanese created a compulsory but segregated education system the Taiwanese children.\textsuperscript{25} Students were forced to go to school to learn how to speak, read and write Japanese. The Japanese intended to convert the Taiwanese into loyal subjects of the Emperor.\textsuperscript{26} Thus, the school curriculum put emphasis the glory of the emperor and the empire. To most Taiwanese,

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{22} Tsai P'ei-huo et al., 臺灣民族運動史, (T'ai-wan min tsu yin tun shih) (The History of Taiwanese Nationalist Movement) (Taipei: Tzu li wan pao, 1971), 64-65.
  \item \textsuperscript{23} Pao Chia: 保甲.
  \item \textsuperscript{24} Detail information on the "Pao Chia" system can be found in Yang, Pi-ch'uan, 反抗史, (Jih chu shih tai T'ai-wan jen fan k'ang shih) (History of Taiwanese Resistance Movement During Japanese Occupation) (T'ai-p'ei hsien Pan-ch'i ao shih: Tao hsiang ch'u pan she, 1988), 2-3.
  \item \textsuperscript{25} Taiwanese and Japanese children attended separate schools.
  \item \textsuperscript{26} He I-lin, "皇民化期間之學校教育," ("Huang min hua ch'i chen chih hsueh hsiao chiao yu") ("Japanese Colonial Education of Kominka Age in Taiwan") 資料 (T'ai-wan feng wu) (The Taiwan Folkways) 36, no. 4 (December 1986): 50.
\end{itemize}
however, this measure's benefits outweighed its drawbacks. For the first time most people picked up basic reading and writing skills from school. However, local elites were frustrated by the rigidly controlled curriculum. The Japanese feared too much education might make the Taiwanese harder to control by fostering independent thinking. As a result, the Japanese limited the subjects which Taiwanese students were allowed to study to medicine, education, and agriculture. Subjects such as political science and law were placed off limits.

Japanese colonial policies failed to anticipate that this segregated education policy would eventually foster the growth of nationalist resentment, particularly among the elite sectors of Taiwanese society. Prior to the advent of Japanese colonial rule, the elite and their children had relied on the civil exam system to gain upward mobility in the society. After the Japanese takeover, many members of the elite sent themselves or their children to study abroad – mostly in Japan. This was a particularly popular practice during the 1910s. Ironically, not only was studying in Japan much easier and cheaper, but students were also free to study subjects forbidden in Taiwan. And the biggest irony of all for the colonial government was that when most of those students returned to Taiwan, they became either leaders or active participants in the Taiwanese nationalist movement.
Outside the schools, the Japanese continued their efforts to assimilate Taiwanese through campaigns such as the "National Language" movement, which had the aim of replacing Chinese or Taiwanese dialects with Japanese as the everyday language. The Japanese also tried to displace the traditional religions of Taiwan such as Buddhism, Taoism and folk religion, and to replace them with Japanese Shintoism. When the Sino-Japanese conflict broke into open war, the colonial government responded by attempting to accelerate the assimilation process. Under the name of the Kominka movement, which meant "to transform the colonial peoples into imperial subjects," the Japanese went so far as to force people to exchange their Chinese surnames for Japanese ones.

Taiwanese did not accept these exploitative measures passively. Resistance was initially open and violent, with predictably bloody results. The record shows that during the early period from 1895-1915, there were thirteen major armed uprisings against Japanese rule, and some ninety-four sporadic attacks on Japanese, with some thirty thousand people losing their lives. However, after the Chiao Pa Nien incident of 1915, the bloodiest

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uprising of all, after which 1,413 people were prosecuted and 866 people were sentenced to death by the Japanese — the resisters realized they needed a new way of resisting the Japanese.

The failures of those early efforts were largely due to the fact that there was a lack of cohesion among the various participants in the anti-Japanese struggle. For example, in the early period, with the exception of the “Republic of Formosa” episode in 1895 when the Taiwanese elite declared independence and organized military campaigns against the initial Japanese occupation, most of the military uprisings were organized by commoners. Moreover, in most of the uprisings there was no consensus among the resistance leaders as to what they wanted to do after they had defeated the Japanese. Some wanted to return the island to the Ch’ing court; others wanted to set up a government in order to carry on the unfinished business of Koxinga — one of former Ming renegade generals who fled to Taiwan to resist the Manchus and restore the Ming dynasty; while still others wanted to seize the dragon throne.

29 Chou Wan-yao, 日據時代的臺灣議會設置請願運動 (Jih chu shih tai ti T’ai-wan i hui she chih ch’ing yian yin tung (Petition for Taiwanese Legislature Movement During Japanese Occupation Period) (Taipei: Tzu li pao hsi wen hua ch’u pan pu, 1989), 8.
30 Ibid.
31 Huang Chao-t’ang, 台灣總督府 (T’ai-wan tsung tu fu) (The Office of Taiwan Governor Generl) (Taipei: Tzu yu shih tai ch’u pon she, 1989), 134.
for themselves and create their own dynasty. Given this diversity of aims, it is hardly surprising that the early resistance movements failed to achieve a united front against Japanese rule.

The Significance Of China In Taiwanese Nationalist Thought

By 1920, nationalism had emerged as a political tool for resisting Japanese efforts at political and cultural assimilation. The call for national self-determination was circulating widely in the colonized regions of Asia. Educated elites were embracing the new trends in thought that emerged in the aftermath of the First World War, and there was a growing belief that imperialism in any form was inherently wrong. The Russian Revolution had also made an impact and international socialists were also calling for the liberation of the colonial peoples, but on the basis of class struggle—the proletarian colonial subjects against the capitalist colonial powers. The situation in Taiwan during the 1920s followed this global trend quite closely. There was a new surge in the formation of anti-Japanese groups, and this time the leadership consisted mainly of an elite group of returned students from Japan. Many realized that in order to resist Japanese colonialism, they would need a cause that could unify all Taiwanese. They embraced nationalism, but as in the case of earlier movements, the nationalist banner came in many colours.

Weng Shih-chieh, 101-102.
The immediate problem confronting the nationalists was the need to decide under which banner they should promote nationalism: Chinese nationalism, or Taiwanese Nationalism? Although all were emotionally and culturally tied to China, there were two very different views regarding the future of the Sino-Taiwanese relationship. One camp consisted of political activists who were mainly intellectuals of lower-class pedigree. This group held a more idealistic view of China, and believed that although China was weak at the moment, it would become strong again and eventually reclaim Taiwan. Therefore, these idealists or "Tsu kuo p'ai"34 as they are commonly called by Taiwanese historians, believed in trying to use Sino-Taiwanese ethnic ties to stimulate the Taiwanese peoples' "Chinese consciousness". Although China was momentarily incapable of helping Taiwan to oust the Japanese, they nonetheless felt it was important to ensure that the Taiwanese were aware of their "Chinese-ness" and the larger scope of their nationalist struggle.

There was also a realist camp or "Tai-wan pai,"35 whose members tended to be from landlord or former gentry families. This group did not have much faith in China. They believed that improving the situation in Taiwan should be the first priority and that it would be pointless to advocate Taiwan's return to a China wracked

34 Tsu kuo p'ai: 祖國派.
35 T'ai-wan p'ai: 台灣派.
by internal disorder. They held that if someday the situation in China should improve, then and only then would they welcome the return of Taiwan to China. However, since they did not see such a situation as imminent, they believed that it was more important to work within the Japanese system in order to ameliorate Taiwan’s immediate situation. Part of this inspiration came from Chinese nationalist Liang Ch’i-ch’iao. In one meeting between Liang and the prominent realist leader Lin Hsien-t’ang, Liang told Lin that in his view since China itself was a wreck, it would be incapable of lending any support to the Taiwanese in their efforts to resist the Japanese. He therefore suggested that the Taiwanese nationalists adopt the Irish nationalists’ approach and work within the system to achieve their objective. This suggestion from Liang was said to have greatly influenced the realists’ choice of tactics in resisting Japanese.

Somewhere between the two camps were the socialist nationalists. They were neither happy with the realists’ pacifist view of Taiwanese nationalism, nor were they satisfied with the idealists’ view of unification. Many of them believed that Taiwan should be a separate nation from China and that Taiwan should fight for independence. However, as committed socialists, they also

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believed in cooperation with other socialist forces in the world, Japan and China included.

By seeking a modus vivendi with the Japanese, the realists and idealists put off the question of reunification versus independence until some time in the distant future. Furthermore, despite the differences in their views on Taiwan's destiny, even the ardent pro-reunionists agreed with the realists that open promotion of Chinese nationalism would provoke Japanese retaliation. They thus recognized the tactical necessity of toning down the Chinese nationalist theme, and as a result they found common cause with the realists in advocating a moderate form of Taiwanese nationalism — in the guise of self-rule — as an immediate goal. This allowed for the creation of a united front and the first formal expression of modern Taiwanese nationalism: The Petition for the Taiwanese Legislature Movement of 1921.

The Petition Movement & The Taiwan Cultural Association

The idea of a petition for a Taiwanese Legislature originated with Taiwanese students in Japan. After witnessing the success of the Irish self-rule movement, and the ongoing campaign for self-rule in Korea, in addition to the intensive debates among Taiwanese students in Japan over "mainland extensionism" and "self rule," the students plus some activists like Lin Hsien-t'ang
decided that a legislative assembly would serve to counter the power of the Japanese Governor General of Taiwan.\textsuperscript{38} When the Japanese first arrived in Taiwan, the Japanese Imperial Council had enacted the so-called "Law 63" which established a "deputy legislation system."\textsuperscript{39} The system empowered Taiwan's Governor General to issue administrative decrees\textsuperscript{40} that had the same legal statuses as regular Japanese laws. In fact, governor-general's administrative decrees actually took precedence over regular Japanese laws if conflict ever arose between the two, and as historians have pointed out, this effectively made the Governor General the second most powerful person in the Japanese Empire after the Emperor himself.\textsuperscript{41} The organizers of the petition movement believed that a successful petition to remove "Law 63" would remove the Governor General's legislative and budgetary power, leading inevitably to an elected legislature and self-rule.

The petition movement was a good idea in theory. The movement was legal, since under the Japanese Imperial Constitution people had the right to petition, and the Imperial Diet was obliged to

\begin{paracol}{12}
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37 Tsai P'ei-huo et al., 107.

38 Chou Wan-yao, (Jih chu shih tai ti T'ai-wan i hui she chih ch'ing yün yün tung (Petition for Taiwanese Legislature Movement During Japanese Occupation Period) 43-44. For more details on the debates between those two ideas see Chou 36-50, Chang 108-114, and Tsai 67-76, 107-114.

39 Deputy Legislation System: 委任立法制 (wei jen li fa chih)

40 Administrative Decrees: 律令 (lü ling)

41 Shih Ming, 268.
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\end{paracol}
accept such petitions. The police and colonial government officials could not legally block a petition. However, there were some shortcomings with this method of promoting nationalism. First, the nature of the movement was passive, in that its success was entirely dependent on the acquiescence of the Japanese. Second, although the movement was successful in generating popular enthusiasm for self-rule under an elected legislature, in terms of raising people's national consciousness, its success was limited. Many members of the petition movement were aware of this shortcoming, and in response they founded the Taiwan Cultural Association (TCA) on October 17, 1921. One of the association's most prominent organizers, Chiang Wei-sui, remarked in his introductory speech during the opening ceremony of the organization that

the problem with the Taiwanese people right now is that they are suffering from a severe case of knowledge malnutrition. If this problem is not cured, Taiwan will forever lack the human resources necessary for achieving success in this new world. The prescription to cure this disease is to supply people with a lot of the knowledge necessary to make up their deficiencies. The Cultural Association is the agency that would hopefully deliver this prescription to the people.

Although the Association's espoused aim was to expose Taiwanese to the new ideas that were emerging around the world, there was also an ulterior, hidden objective. As Yeh Jong-chung,

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43 Tsai P'ei-huo et al., Ibid., 284. Taken from "Speech for the Founding of the Cultural Association by Chiang Wei-sui" 臺灣民報 (T'ai-wan min pao) No. 76 Aug 26, 1925.
one of the active participants of the TCA pointed out, the intention of the leaders was to expose Taiwanese to various indigenous forms of arts, music, culture, philosophy. They aimed to cultivate a distinctly Taiwanese culture that could resist Japanese cultural influences imposed by the colonial government. The TCA was well-suited to such a task as the executive members included many top Taiwanese intellectuals and professionals of the time like Tsai Pei-huo, Lin Mao-sheng, Chuang Ch’ui-sheng.44 The TCA conducted many activities; but the major ones consisted of a lecture series and summer school with topics in Taiwanese history, western civilization, modern political philosophy, modern economics, foreign affairs, Chinese philosophy, Confucianism and more. These events as well as the TCA itself were well-received by most sectors of Taiwanese society with the exception of the collaborationists. The lecture series was aimed primarily at a popular audience and despite constant police interference remained the most popular function of the TCA, with more than 300 lecture series per year and audiences exceeding 110,000 per year.45 The TCA also sponsored book stores that imported Chinese books from the mainland and movie sessions on contemporary world affairs. Through such educational activities, the TCA was not only making a political statement by circumventing the restrictive Japanese

44 Ibid., 292.
45 Ibid., 308.
education system, but it also paved the way for self-rule by
fostering a sense of Taiwanese self-identity.

Collaborationists

Initially both the petition movement and the TCA enjoyed
considerable popular support, as suggested by the number of people
who signed the petition (a ten fold increase from 1921 to 1927 in
eight petition attempts)\textsuperscript{46} and joined the TCA. The TCA's success
worried not only the colonial officials — as demonstrated by the
arrest of many of the organizers in a raid during 1924 — but also
some Taiwanese as well. The so-called collaborationists were
worried that the success of these two movements might disrupt their
good relationship with the colonial government.

During the fifty odd years since Japan's defeat in 1945, the
collaborationists have been vilified as "betrayers of the Chinese
nation\textsuperscript{47}" or as "traitors to the Taiwanese people", not only because
their families had accumulated tremendous amounts of wealth under
Japanese rule, but also for their open opposition to the Taiwanese
nationalist movement. However, their stance was quite
understandable. Their views on Taiwanese nationalism were not
unlike those of nationalists in the realist camp mentioned above.

\textsuperscript{46} Chou Wan-yao, (Jih chu shih tai ti T'ai-wan i hui she chih ch'ing yüan yün tung (Petition for
Taiwanese Legislature Movement During Japanese Occupation Period), 205-7.

\textsuperscript{47} Here the word nation refers to the Chinese notion of 民族 (min tsu)
That is to say, they both considered that China was too weak to help Taiwan in the immediate future, and therefore, it would be in Taiwan's interest to work within the colonial system. However, because of their economic background (most were either businessmen or land owners) they were primarily interested in political and economic stability. They therefore sought to avoid any type of antagonism between the colonial rulers and Taiwanese. As Ku Hsien-jung, one of the most prominent collaborationists, once said, he would rather live his life as "a dog in peace, rather than a man in turmoil." This sentence summed up their view of the Taiwanese Nationalist movement. They believed that the petition movement had no realistic chance of succeeding in its ultimate goal of establishing a legislative assembly for Taiwan, and that the movement's massive popular support would only serve to incite tensions between Taiwanese and Japanese. For these reasons they opposed it. However, to say that the collaborationists were entirely untouched by nationalism would be unfair. As they simply decided to express their nationalism in a different and very subtle way, calculated to avoid antagonizing the Japanese. For example, some collaborationists funded the first and the only high school

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49 Ku Hsien-jung, "奉氏政談" ("Ku shih tao chêng t' an") ("My Views on Taiwanese Politics") 奉霍榮俊傳 (Ko Ken'ei-o den) (Biography of Ku Hsien-jung) (Taipei: Ko Ken'ei-o Denki Hensankai, 1939), 316-321.
for Taiwanese students — the Taichung High School. And some of the collaborationists never bothered to change their surnames to Japanese, nor learned to speak Japanese. The collaborationists considered Taiwanese nationalism a private issue. As Yeh Jung-chung pointed out, relations between the collaborationists and the Japanese were more like business transactions, and that was all there was to it. He argued that although their realistic outlook and business interests might have forced their bodies to ally with the Japanese, at heart, their sympathies lay with the Taiwanese.  

The Reinterpretation of Taiwanese Nationalism

Between 1921 and 1927, the Taiwanese Nationalists pursued a passive agenda, in which the success of the movement was almost entirely dependent upon Japanese tolerance. But although many Japanese, particularly in Japan itself, sympathized with the Taiwanese Nationalists, the movement made little progress. The organizers of the movement made eight attempts to petition the Japanese Imperial Council but each time the petition was flatly rejected. The failure led some to question whether a passive approach was the best way to achieve self-rule. By October 1927,

50 Lin Chung-sheng. 陈逸松回忆录—太阳旗下风雨台 (Ch' en I-sung hui i lu : t'ai yang ch' i hsia feng man t'ai) (Memoirs of Ch'en I-sung) (Taipei: Chien wei ch'u pan she, 1994) 221.  
51 Yeh Jung-chung. 臺灣人物群像. (T'ai-wan ien wu ch' un hsians) (Profile of Taiwanese Figures) (T'ai-peih hsiun Chung-ho shih, Taipei: P' a mi erh she tien, 1985), 181-2.
this crack in the united front finally led to the breakup of the TCA and a turning point in the development of Taiwanese nationalism.

As mentioned above, from its beginning the Taiwanese Nationalist movement suffered from differences of opinion between realists and idealists over the nature of future Sino-Taiwanese relations. There was, however, another fault line that was not readily apparent in 1921, but which by 1927 threatened the integrity of the whole nationalist movement. At issue was the socio-economic nature of the Taiwanese Nationalist struggle.

By 1927 significant changes had occurred in Taiwan’s economic structure as a consequence of Japanese colonialism. Since the beginning of the 1920s there had been a massive influx of capital from various Japanese Zaibatsu including Mitsui and Mitsubishi. With the help of the colonial government, these Zaibatsu had taken over most of the industries in Taiwan.\(^{52}\) While some believed that the nationalist struggle was simply a political struggle between Taiwanese and Japanese, other nationalists, mainly intellectuals who had been influenced by socialism while studying in Japan, embraced the Marxist view that the struggle contained an important social and economic component as well. The socialists believed that in the short-run the Taiwanese nationalist struggle was a

\(^{52}\) Yeh Yun-yun, “永不仆倒的臺灣近代史塑造者—悼蔣渭水逝世一甲子” (“Yung pu p’u tao ti T’ai-wan chin tai so tsao che”) (The Ever Standing Sculptor of Modern Taiwanese History: In Commemoration of Sixty Year Anniversary of the Death of Chiang Wei-sui) 中國論壇 (Chung-kuo lun-t’an) 31 no. 11 (August 1991): 88.
class-transcendent cause uniting all exploited Taiwanese against Japanese imperialism. They held that the colonial government was actually the representative of Japan's capitalist interests, and that the root of Taiwan's problems was actually capitalist expansion through imperialism.\(^\text{53}\) Thus, in their view the short-term solution to Taiwan's problem required an anti-imperialist nationalist revolution in conjunction with similar efforts on a global scale. However, only the long-term goal of socialist revolution could permanently eradicate exploitation in Taiwan. What is most significant for our purpose is that this long term goal made any united front with non-socialists elements inherently unstable.

In 1927, socialists like Lien Wen-chin and Wang Min-chuan, whose efforts in the TCA had been focused on organizing various "Youth Study Groups" and setting up farmer's co-ops, felt that the situation in Taiwan called for the elevation of the struggle from a nationalist to a socialist level. The first move came during the annual general meeting of the TCA in 1927. The nationalists belonging to the socialist faction took over the organization, prompting the non-socialist nationalists to withdraw in protest. The split came as a disappointment to many nationalists, but was hardly surprising given the class background of the early

\(^{53}\) Ch' en Fang-ming, "殖民地革命與臺灣民族論" ("chih ti ke ming yu T'ai-wan min tsu lun") (On Colonial Revolution and Taiwanese Nation) in 台灣民族主義. (T'ai-wan min tsu chu i) (Taiwanese
nationalist leadership. As Shih Ming has pointed out, the united front of nationalists during the petition movement actually incorporated nationalists from various classes with conflicting interests. When individual groups sought to use the nationalist movement to further their own agenda, the united front inevitably collapsed. Such was the case in 1927. During the preceding seven years, the petition movement and the TCA had raised the status of the nationalist movement to the point where it became an appealing take-over target for groups such as the socialists and, later on, the Taiwanese Communists.

During the first split, the people who left the TCA were mainly landowners, capitalists, intellectuals and professionals from the upper strata of the society. These figures included Lin Hsien-tang, Tsai P'ei-huo, Chiang Wei-sui, and Tsai Hui-juo. Although most of these nationalists had studied in Japan during the early twenties and were exposed to the radical ideas circulating in the relatively free era of Taisho democracy, their class background led them to embrace the liberal idea of national self-determination while simultaneously rejecting the more extremist ideologies of socialism and anarchism. Thus when they realized that the TCA was

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54 Shih Ming, 452-3.

55 Yang, Pi-ch'uan. 日據時代臺灣人反抗史 (Jih chu shih tai T'ai-wan jen fan k'ang shih) (History of Taiwanese Resistance Movement During Japanese Occupation) (T'ai-pei hsien Pan-ch'iao shih: Tao hsiang ch'u pan she, 1988), 66.
being hi-jacked by socialists like Wang Min-chuan and Lien Wen-chin and was in danger of becoming a labour-and-farmer centered revolutionary organization, they left the TCA without any reservation.\textsuperscript{56}

When the non-socialists left the TCA, they formed the Taiwan Populist Party\textsuperscript{57} partly in protest against the "New TCA" which was now being run by the socialists. Their goal was to maintain a moderate approach toward self rule through a continuation of the petition movement, while at the same time complementing the petition movement with the formation of a political party to raise the level of political activity. However, even within the Taiwan Populist Party, there were differences which would eventually lead to a further split. During the founding stage of the Party, it was recognized that in order to broaden the appeal of the Taiwanese nationalist movement, it was necessary to generate support from other social groups like the increasingly active labour and farmer coalitions. However, when Chiang Wei-sui, who was effectively put in charge of running the party, was seen to be putting too much emphasis on the labour and farmer's movement, land owners like Lin Hsien-tang, and professionals like Tsai P'ei-huo and Yeh Jung-chung, who had been the driving force behind the original petition movement and the TCA, felt the Populist Party had gone too far to

\textsuperscript{56} Ibid., 136.

\textsuperscript{57} Taiwan Populist Party: 台湾民眾黨 (T'ai-wan min chung tang)
the left and decided to leave. They felt that their goal of achieving self-rule through the petition approach was becoming tainted by socialist influence. In response, they formed their own organization, the Taiwan Self Rule Coalition.

By 1930, then, the Taiwanese Nationalist movement was formally divided into three camps. The socialist / communist \(^{58}\) camp led by Wen Lien-chin and Wang Min-chuan, with the TCA as their power base, was actively pursuing the route of socialist revolution. With cooperation and help from Chinese and Japanese Communists and the Communist International, this group worked closely with the Taiwan Communist Party to support various revolutionary, labour, farmer, youth, and anarchist groups. Their position called for an aggressive approach toward anti-Japanese struggle. However, their bigger aim was not merely to overthrow the Japanese: through nationalist struggle with the Japanese, they hoped that they would help provoke socialist revolutions world wide, and lead the establishment of a socialist society in Taiwan.\(^{59}\)

The Populist Nationalists (those who remained loyal to the Populist Party until the end) occupied a unique position in the

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\(^{58}\) The Taiwanese Communist Party (TCP) played minor role in the nationalist movement. Formed circa 1928, the TCP was a loosely structured underground organization, and maintain close relationships with both the Chinese and Japanese Communist Party. For more information on the TCP, one can read Lu Hsiu-i, 日據時代台灣共產黨史, (Jih chu shih tai T’ai-kan kung ch’an tang shih) (The History of Taiwan Communist Party During Japanese Occupation Period) (Taipei: Tzu Yu shih tai ch’u pan she, 1989) or Ch’en Fang-ming, 謝雪紅評傳,落土不凋的雨夜花, (Hsieh Hsüeh-hung p’ing chuan: lo (’u pu tiao ti yi yi yeh hua) (Biography of Hsieh Hsüeh-hung) (Irvine, CA: T’ai-kan ch’u pan she, 1991).

\(^{59}\) Ch’ en Fang-ming, 298.
nationalist struggle. Although they voiced sympathy with farmers and labours, neither leader Chiang Wei-Sui nor the bulk of party members were socialists. In fact, Chiang was a loyal follower of Sun Yat-sen's Three People's Principles. Chiang was an idealist in his view toward China. Thus, the goal of the Populist Party was to someday return Taiwan to China. Since he believed in Sun's ideology, Chiang wanted the Populist Party to model itself after the KMT in China, and he viewed the struggle between the Taiwanese and the Japanese as an ethnic nationalist one. Thus, like Sun, he believed that the party should incorporate all Taiwanese regardless of class in order to resist the Japanese and to reunite Taiwan with China. In practice this meant that in addition to political activities, the party should also engage in social activities to help out the people in their everyday struggles, regardless of class. Underlying all of their activities, however, was their long-term goal of reunification with China. For them, the nationalist movement in Taiwan was thus a mean to a larger end.

The last group are often described as liberal nationalists or "min tsu chu i p'ai" as they are called in Chinese. Despite their belief in national self-determination and despite being the

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60 Huang Huang-hsiung, 革命家-蔣渭水 (Ke ming chia: Chiang Wei-shui) (A Revolutionary: Chiang Wei-shui) (Taipei: Ch'ang ch'iao ch'u pan she, 1978), 102.
61 Ibid., 104.
62 min tsu chu i p'ai: 民族主義派.
63 Tsai P'ei-huo et al., 347.
most "Chinese" among all the nationalists in terms of their cultural orientation (many had received a classical Chinese education), their business interests combined with their realist view of the situation China led them to maintain a consistently more moderate approach in their struggle against the Japanese. They were willing to work within the Japanese system to achieve the self-rule they saw as the solution to Taiwan’s problem. Although this method seemed to be very passive and low key in terms of its goal of avoiding friction with the colonial rulers, it also explains why the colonial government allowed this group of people to operate openly for so long. Their approach allowed the Petition Movement and the TCA to promote Taiwanese nationalism despite Japanese efforts at assimilation, and their contribution to the nationalist cause was therefore a valuable one.

**Outcome and Conclusion**

Despite the combined efforts of the various groups, they ultimately failed to achieve their common objective of achieving self-rule for Taiwan. With Japanese aggression against China intensifying by the early 1930s and the political situation in Japan turning toward extreme militarism, the colonial government started to crack down on nationalist groups in Taiwan. The first victim was the Populist Party. With the death of their leader Chiang Wei-sui from typhoid in 1931, and a subsequent Japanese ban on their
activities, the party was effectively dissolved. The socialists / communists enjoyed a few years of success after gaining control of the TCA in 1927. They successfully organized and mobilized many labourers, farmers, and youths. However, because of their explicit leftist line, they also lost many potentially significant supporters, especially among intellectuals. With the crack down by the Japanese police in 1930, they too were disbanded, although many activists subsequently went underground and tried to organize secret cells in anticipation of future opportunities to strike back at the Japanese.

The liberal nationalists survived the longest; their petitioning for the legislative assembly continued until 1934. However, the Japanese had rejected the idea of a legislature during the Taisho democracy period in the 1920s, and were certainly not going to accept the petition during the militarist period of the 1930s. By 1934, even the organizers of the movement realized they did not have any real chance of getting the petition through. Furthermore, after thirteen years of petitioning without any success, many supporters were growing disillusioned with the effort, and this was reflected in a steady decline in the number of names on the petition list.64 By mid-1930, they conceded that their low key approach had failed to bring self-rule to Taiwan.

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64 Chou Wan-yao, *Jih chu shih tai ti T'ai-wan i hui she ch'ing yüan yün tung* (Petition for Taiwanese Legislature Movement During Japanese Occupation Period), 142, 176.
The next ten years were literally a blank period in terms of the Taiwanese Nationalist movement. Although a strong nationalist sentiment had developed and matured after fifteen years of struggle against the Japanese, the international situation and Japan's unchallenged strength left no realistic chance for the movement to succeed. However, it is interesting to note that many of the populist nationalists and socialists / communists who were not willing to give up in mid-1930 left Taiwan for China to work for either the KMT or the CCP. Their logic was that if they could not liberate Taiwan through their own efforts, they might as well help mainland forces in the hope that, someday, these forces would in turn help liberate Taiwan.

From the start, Taiwanese were united only by the short-term goal of self-rule under the Japanese Empire. Regardless of class, or individual views on the nature of any future Sino-Taiwanese relationship, all could agree on the following: 1) violent resistance to Japanese rule was undesirable and not likely to succeed; and 2) the only feasible approach was therefore to agitate for self-rule within the Japanese system. Despite common acceptance of this short-term goal, however, there were from the start serious fault lines within the coalition associated with the Petition Movement and the TCA. Class differences had initially been ignored or downplayed for tactical reasons, thus leaving room for a leftist attack on the trans-class nature of the movement. The ad hoc nationalist movement also ignored the difference in the
long-term goals of those who saw reunification as both desirable and inevitable, and those who desired independence for Taiwan following the ouster of the Japanese.

These fault lines turned into clear rifts when a strong leftist movement developed in the mid-1920s, and when it became increasingly obvious that the petition approach was not working. From 1927 on, the nationalist movement lost what little cohesion it had once possessed. The leftist takeover of the TCA introduced class politics to the movement and predictably precipitated the speedy exit of upper-class elements. These elements were themselves in turn torn apart by fundamental differences over both means and ends. The emergence of the KMT and its success in reunifying the mainland by 1927 raised the prospect of a newly resurgent China, thereby imparting fresh hope to those Taiwanese who saw themselves as ethnically Chinese. The non-leftist nationalists ended up in two camps, with one embracing the KMT ideology and Sun's vision of a great China — including Taiwan — and the other which saw Japanese rule strengthening rather than weakening, leading them to advocate a continuation of the quasi-legal campaign for limited self-rule.

The critical fact in the period both before and after the TCA split was that the question of Taiwan's future relationship with China was largely irrelevant, given Japan's firm grip on the island. Taiwan's "external" oppression came from Japan, and thus the
nationalist response was more anti-Japanese than pro-Chinese. With little hope for a Chinese takeover or a sudden collapse of Japanese power, the Taiwanese nationalist movement was of necessity focused on short-term statist goals such as self-rule. Only when there appeared a real chance of Japan's defeat did Taiwanese nationalists have to confront the necessity of making an immediate choice between the statist (independence) and ethnicist (reunification) visions of Taiwan's future. That would not happen until 1947.
CHAPTER THREE

FROM ISLAND OF HAPPINESS TO ISLAND OF SADNESS, 1945-1947

When Emperor Hirohito announced the surrender of Japan on August 15, 1945, Taiwanese experienced mixed feelings. On the one hand, most were jubilant over the end of Taiwan’s colonial status following the termination of the war and the pending retrocession of the island to the “motherland.” On the other hand, there was also a strong sense of uncertainty among many Taiwanese as they wondered what the future might hold for them subsequent to the resumption of mainland rule. The transition period from 1945 to 1947 marked the most fascinating yet most overlooked period in the history of Taiwan. In the short space of two years, the situation in Taiwan changed from one of jubilation over the arrival of mainland troops and officials in 1945, to one of intense hostility where in mainlanders and Taiwanese viewed each other with suspicion and hatred. Developments in the nationalist movement paralleled these shifts, with Taiwanese nationalism all but disappeared in 1945, only to become a political force once again by 1947.

This transition period was critical for the nationalist movement in Taiwan. As we have seen in the previous chapter, there were fault lines that divided the Taiwanese nationalists over the

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65 Wu Mi-ch’a, “Taiwanese’s Dream and February Twenty-eighth Incident” ("T' ai-wan jen ti mèng yù erh erh pa shih chien") ("Taiwanese’s Dream and February Twenty-eighth Incident") 當代 (Tang Tai) 87 (July 1, 1993):33.
question of what Taiwan’s future relationship with China would be like. But with the retrocession in 1945, those fault lines all but disappeared — temporarily at least. With the end of alien Japanese rule and the welcome return of mainland rule, the conditions which had violated Gellner’s two principles — a) that Taiwanese was ruled by an racially alien minority b) they do not recognize each other as belonging to the same nation — no longer existed. Accordingly there did not seem to be a need for a “Taiwanese” nationalist movement anymore. Indeed, all the previously divided nationalists came together in welcoming their mainland brothers. But the newly arrived KMT rulers soon demonstrated their true colours by treating the Taiwanese as aliens instead of brothers. The consequence of such an attitude, and the policies that accompanied it, was that by 1947 the Taiwanese had been alienated to the extent that Gellner’s second principle was clearly being violated, and a “Taiwanese” nationalist movement accordingly gained strength yet again. Taiwanese society in 1947 was like a room filled with gas, needing only the slightest spark to ignite a giant explosion. That spark finally came on the eve of February 27, 1947, as island-wide trans-class resentment exploded in a bloody uprising against oppressive mainland rule. When the Taiwanese people’s demands succeeded only in provoking a harsh crack down by the mainland rulers, a new type of Taiwanese nationalism arose, which has lasted to the present day.
To look at this transition period of 1945-1947 in greater detail, we need to further divide it into three sub-periods. The first period was the "political vacuum" period between August and October 1945, when the Japanese had declared their surrender but the KMT officials from mainland China had yet to arrive in Taiwan. During this period, the Taiwanese experienced two months of unprecedented complete self rule. The second period was from the Chinese take over in October 1945 to the eve of the "February Twenty Eighth Incident" (also known as the "Erh Erh Pa Incident") on Feb 27, 1947. In this period, Taiwanese experienced the disappointing reality of mainland Chinese rule. The final period was the "White Terror" that followed the Erh Erh Pa incident. Let us deal first with the "political vacuum" period.

Light at the end of the Tunnel

When Japan surrendered in 1945, most Taiwanese were jubilant. Accompanying the jubilation, however, were false expectations as to what mainland rule would bring. After all, for fifty years the Japanese had taught Taiwanese that the "Daiwa" race was superior to all others, and that the Japanese Army and Navy was the best in the world. Having seen mighty Japan defeated by the motherland and its allies, many Taiwanese innocently assumed that if Japan was good, then China must be even better. So it was only natural that the Taiwanese people would have high respect and equally high
expectations for the motherland. For once, they thought, they could finally escape from their miserable life as colonial subjects and become "the masters of their nation."  

People hung the Chinese national flag along with portraits of important KMT figures like Sun Yat-sen and Chiang Kai-shek, and celebratory arches were erected to commemorate the occasion. All these actions were meant to show that despite fifty years of separation and Japanese efforts at assimilation, the Taiwanese were at heart still very Chinese, and that they were glad and proud to be Chinese once again. Many Taiwanese also enthusiastically learned to speak mandarin and sing the national anthem. These were all indicative of the loyalty and patriotism with which the Taiwanese greeted their return to motherland.

Although almost everybody welcomed the retrocession, some were happier than others. Above all, the former nationalists, particularly the liberal nationalists, were exhilarated. The former liberal nationalists, most of whom came from the Shih Shéng class, were actually strong advocates and preservers of Chinese culture and traditions. However, due to Japanese pressure, they had been forced to downplay their emotional ties to China. But with the Japanese now gone, they were again free to express their devotion to China and openly espouse Chinese nationalism. Thus,
former liberal nationalists like Lin Hsien-t’ang, Ch’en I-song, Lin Chen-lu, and Ch’en Hsin to name a few, voluntarily contributed to the organization of various “welcome” committees in different parts of Taiwan. The purpose of these “welcome” committees was not only to organize welcome activities for the incoming mainland officials, but also to re-orient the Taiwanese public by providing them with knowledge about China.  

At the same time, they also took up the responsibilities of maintaining social order. While there was no one in charge in Taiwan officially, some elite members of society, acting under the direction of mainland officials, organized the “Three People’s Principle Youth Corporation” and recruited many youths to perform the tasks of maintaining social order and supervising the remaining Japanese soldiers in Taiwan. The results of their efforts were most impressive to say the least. As Wu Cho-liu pointed out, unlike in mainland China where social order collapsed as China underwent the demobilization process, with widespread criminal activities and acts of revenge against the Japanese, the 

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67 Lin Chung-sheng, 298-299.
68 Yeh Jung-chung, “台灣省光復前後的回憶” (“T’ai' ai wan shèng kuang fou ch’ien hou ti hui yi”) 小屋大車集 (Hsiao wu ta ch'e chi) (Recollections of Yeh Jung-chung) (Taipei: Chung yang shu chu, 1967), 203-4
69 San min chu yi ching nien tuan: 三民主義青年團.
70 Lin Chung-sheng, 301-2.
situation in Taiwan remained calm. There were no massive beatings of Japanese and criminal activities were almost nonexistent. The social order remained intact despite the presumably lawless situation in Taiwan during the transition. Some believed this was due to the Taiwanese desire to prove a point to the Japanese. Wu Cho-liu believed the Taiwanese at the time were trying to prove to the Japanese that they were just as capable of governing Taiwan themselves as the Japanese. Out of national pride, they simply could not allow the Japanese to enjoy the satisfaction of seeing Taiwanese society slide into chaos. Because of this challenge the Taiwanese people strove to rule themselves well. At the same time, they also wanted to prove to the incoming Chinese officials that they were possessed of the same degree of social and political sophistication that the Taiwanese people presumed the mainlanders to have. In fact, when mainland Chinese officials finally arrived they were quite impressed as to how obedient Taiwanese citizens were. The experience of self-rule, although only two months long, had taught the Taiwanese people an important lesson. Not only did the experience allow them to experience what it was like to be their own master, it also led to the realization that if the Taiwanese were ever called upon to rule themselves again, they were quite capable of doing so.

72 Ibid., 124
Despite all the positive feelings that Taiwanese held about the retrocession, there was one group that was not particularly enthusiastic about the change. The collaborationists realized that their interests were dependent upon the monopolistic powers granted to them by the Japanese. With the departure of the Japanese, not only did their privileges evaporate, many also feared that perhaps they would have to face prosecution when the mainland officials arrived. Thus, a few days after Japan's defeat, some former collaborationists like Ku Cheng-fu, (son of Ku Hsien-jung) Hsü Ping, and Lin Hsiung-hsiang\textsuperscript{73} came up with the idea of collaborating with the remaining Japanese generals in Taiwan to stage a coup and declare Taiwan's independence.\textsuperscript{74} Unfortunately for the collaborationists, the Japanese Governor General of Taiwan heard of this plot and stopped it before the plan materialized. Just like the hard line Japanese military personnel, the collaborationists eventually had to accept the fact that Taiwan's return to China was an irreversible fact. However, as we will see later, the collaborationists eventually adapted to the situation extremely well, and learned to collaborate with the KMT just as they had earlier with the Japanese. In fact, quite ironically, they were the only group that survived the Erh Erh Pa incident intact.

\textsuperscript{73} Ku Cheng-fu: 華振甫, Hsü Ping: 許丙, Lin Hsiung-hsiang: 林熊祥.

\textsuperscript{74} Lin Chung-sheng, 295.
By and large, Taiwanese were optimistic about the future as they anxiously awaited the arrival of KMT troops and officials from the mainland. With the arrival of the mainland forces on October 17th, tens of thousands of citizens lined the streets from the port of Kee Lung all the way to Taipei to welcome them. However, what they saw was completely at odds with the expectations they held concerning their mainland brothers. Without giving consideration to the fact that China had just come out of an eight year war with Japan and that China was a country in ruins with its troops exhausted, many Taiwanese had expected the arriving troops to look like the disciplined, well dressed and well-equipped Japanese army forces that they were used to, if not better. Instead, they witnessed the arrival of rowdy troops who were dirty, badly equipped, with cooking utensils on their heads and bedding on their backs. The impression that these troops gave to most Taiwanese was nothing short of appalling. As Chen I-song pointed out, the troops "looked more like refugees on retreat rather than an army that has just defeated the mighty Japanese."\textsuperscript{75} However, the Taiwanese were still willing to give their compatriots the benefit of the doubt, for despite the disappointment of the initial encounter, they continued to believe that Chinese rule could not possibly be worse than living under colonial rule.

\textsuperscript{75} \textit{Ibid}, 307.
Just as Taiwanese made the crucial mistake of holding unrealistically high expectations about mainland rule, the incoming mainlanders also made the crucial mistake of stereotyping the Taiwanese as uncultured provincials of questionable loyalty. As we shall see in the next section, this attitude quickly turned what might have been a joyous reunion into an alien and oppressive occupation.

The Period of Awakening 夢醒時分

The second period between October 1945 to February 1947 I call "The Period of Awakening" for it was during this time that Taiwanese began to experience the harsh reality of rule by the mainland. As mentioned above, one reason for the disappointment of the Taiwanese and the eventual tension between the 'Yams' and 'Taros' was the unrealistically high expectations that most Taiwanese seemed to hold for the retrocession. A second major reason was the misunderstanding and prejudice on the part of the newly arrived mainlanders concerning Taiwanese people and society.

According to the report of the Investigative Committee of the Executive Yuan on the Erh Erh Pa Incident published in 1994, there were nine general reasons for the tragedy. In brief these were:

76 Yam is the nickname for Taiwanese (蕃薯) because its shape resembles the profile of Taiwan, while taro (芋仔) is the nickname for the Mainlanders arriving in Taiwan during this time.
1) the Nanking government's failure to address the Taiwanese people's expectations and needs; 2) the government's obstruction of the return of Taiwanese from the mainland; 3) mishandling of issues concerning Japanese property in Taiwan and Taiwanese property on the mainland; 4) discriminatory treatment of the Taiwanese; 5) corrupt and inefficient officials; 6) a badly disciplined civil service and military; 7) hyper-inflation; 8) a controlled economy with unfair monopolistic practices; and 9) overly optimistic expectations on the part of the Taiwanese. 

If we take a closer look at this list, we can see that six out of the nine reasons could be categorized as "attitudinal" problems on the part of the mainlanders concerning the Taiwanese. As Yang Mo pointed out, instead of appreciating what Taiwan had to offer to the motherland, the majority of mainlanders came to Taiwan with a looter's mentality. The incoming mainlanders from the top officials down had very little trust in the Taiwanese. Thus, instead of accepting the sincerity of the Taiwanese people's devotion to China as demonstrated in numerous public displays, they believed that after fifty years of Japanese rule, the Taiwanese could not possibly be loyal to the motherland, and therefore, simply could not be trusted. The refusal to accept the Taiwanese as true compatriots was reflected in the policies of the Taiwan

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77 The only official objective report on the incident to date with the input from the families of the victims.
Provincial Administrative Executive Office. This attitude and the policies it spawned were instrumental in creating animosity between Taiwanese and mainlanders.

Under Japanese rule, Taiwan was a strictly policed state, and as a result Taiwanese were accustomed to a high standard of law and order. Such was not the case on the mainland, where graft in business, bribery of officials, nepotism in government, and terrorizing of the civilian populace by unruly soldiers were common place. Unfortunately, as Wu pointed out, the mainlanders transplanted all of those bad habits to Taiwan. As a result there was a degradation of the social order in Taiwan, and many Taiwanese were understandably frustrated.

On an individual level, many Taiwanese were also frustrated by the discriminatory treatment they received when dealing with the new authorities. Under Japanese rule it was expected that most of the mid to high ranking jobs in the civil service would be filled by Japanese. With the defeat of Japanese most Taiwanese expected those positions vacated by the Japanese would be filled by Taiwanese. But according to government records in 1946, while Taiwanese people made up 72.71% of the entire civil service, only 5.6% occupied high

80 Lai Tse-han, 21.
81 Wu Cho-liu, 138.
ranking posts. Most of those higher ranking positions were either retained by the Japanese incumbents on an interim basis, or filled by mainlanders through nepotism. Only a few returning Taiwanese who had worked for Nationalist government in Chungking during the war or Pan Shan (半山) as they were commonly called got to fill a handful of such positions. In effect, the Taiwanese had been shut out of any chance of playing a role in running Taiwan. Not surprisingly, this policy created resentment among those who felt they were equally or better qualified. The incoming government also retained the Japanese two-tiered wage system, only this time it was the mainlanders who claimed the higher wage scale. As government records show, for employees doing the same job, mainlanders got the highest salary, followed by Japanese technicians who had remained in Taiwan, while Taiwanese employees were at the bottom. Indeed, the wage discrepancy between Taiwanese and mainland workers was more than fifty percent. The impact of this policy on critical sectors of Taiwan’s society would play an important role in revitalizing the “Taiwanese” nationalist movement. Civil service posts were traditionally filled by those with education. By cutting off their access to government employment, the KMT’s policies alienated an influential group

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83 Wang, Chien-sheng. 一九四七台灣二二八革命 (1947 T'ai-wan Erh Ehr pa ke ming) (February 28 Uprising of 1947 in Taiwan) (Taipei: Ch'tien wei ch'u pan she, 1990), 48
within Taiwan. Many overseas Taiwanese who had returned home were also unable to find jobs because of the "mainlander-first" policy, and those who were employed had to suffer lower wages for the same work. The psychological impact on the Taiwanese was significant. In a sense, the government treated the Taiwanese people as third-class citizens ranking even lower than the Japanese even though the Japanese had lost the war. It was understandable for the Japanese to have set up an unequal wage policy; after all, they had been the colonial rulers. It was, however, totally at odds with pan-Chinese nationalism for certain Chinese (in this case, mainlanders) to be "more equal" than others. Taiwanese could not understand why the Chinese government, after such a prolonged effort to defeat the Japanese, continued to give Japanese preferential treatment. The fact that the government would apparently trust the Japanese – the former enemy – rather than Taiwanese – supposedly their compatriots – left many Taiwanese both angry and frustrated with the mainlanders. Many started to have doubts about the benefit of the retrocession. The mood at the time was reflected in the old Taiwanese saying "we send away the dogs and welcome in the pigs." 

Those members of the elite who had been fighting for self-rule under the Japanese did not fare well under mainland rule. These people hoped that with the retrocession they could finally achieve

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84 The dog refers to the Japanese, and the Pig refers to the mainlanders. The mainlanders were
self-rule, albeit as a province of China. But instead, the Nationalist government created a special government structure for Taiwan. Instead of enjoying a status similar to that of other provinces on the mainland, Taiwan was to be ruled by the Taiwan Provincial Administrative Executive Office with Governor General Chen I as its head. To the Taiwanese, this structure was ominously similar to the Japanese Colonial Government. In fact, the Governor General’s power mirrored the powers of the Japanese Governor General in colonial days; the new regime on Taiwan was seen to be as authoritarian as the Japanese colonial government. It was true that there was an elected Provincial Council and many local councils, in which many members of the former nationalist elite participated. However, these councils did not have any real power over the Governor General. Although their criticism of the government was both ardent and frequent, these various councils were largely ineffective in challenging the KMT government. For example, Taipei city councilor Wang Tien-ding (who was later executed during the Erh Erh Pa incident for participating in the “resolution committee”) exposed large numbers of scandals involving government officials stealing properties handed over by the Japanese. Yet, rarely were the accused officials held accountable.\(^{85}\) With their access to bureaucratic circles restricted by the government’s discriminatory

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\(^{85}\) Li Hsiao-feng, 二二八消失的台灣精英 (Erh erh pa hsiao shih ti T’ai-wan ching ying) (The Disappearing Taiwanese Elite of Erh Erh Pa) (Taipei: Tzu li wan pao she wen hua ch’u pan pu, 1990), 58-59.
appointment policies and by the ineffectiveness of their participation in "government-approved" councils, local elites were as effectively barred from access to power as they had been under the Japanese.

Other examples of government mismanagement had a broader impact on Taiwanese society. Mismanagement of the economy led to hyper-inflation rates of as much as 400%. Profiteers from the mainland hoarded goods from Taiwan for resale on the mainland, leading to local shortages of vital goods such as rice and sugar. These trends struck hard at the livelihood of even the most apolitical of Taiwanese. But economic incompetence on the part of the new government was not in itself capable of provoking a resurgence of "Taiwanese" nationalism. It was the distrustful and prejudiced attitudes of the mainlanders that turned what might have remained a simple local protest against overbearing central authorities into a Taiwanese nationalist movement. By making Taiwanese de facto third class citizens, the mainland rulers had violated Gellner's second principle of national identity. By viewing Taiwan as war booty and treating the Taiwanese as if they were colonial subjects, the central government created a sense of alienation that drove many Taiwanese to disassociate themselves

86 Ramon H. Myers et al., 悲劇性的開始: 台灣二二八事變 (Pei chu hsing ti k'ai tuan : T'ai-wan erh erh pa shih pien) (Tragic Beginning) (Taipei: Shih pao wen hua ch'u pan kung szü, 1993), 138.
from their “Chinese” compatriots and to view mainland rule as undesirable.

The Erh Erh Pa Incident

The 1989 movie *A City of Sadness* was the first accurate portrayal of Erh Erh Pa incident, and it was widely acclaimed within Taiwan. The unjust treatment meted out to the movie’s main character Lin Wen-hsüng and his family members reflected the Taiwanese experienced at time. In the movie Lin summed up the retrocession experience as follows: “Taiwanese are being exploited, and abused by everyone and loved by no one.” In this one sentence the movie summed up the sentiments of the Taiwanese following the retrocession. Within a short two years the Taiwan had essentially turned from an island of happiness, overjoyed at the reality of reunification, to an island of sadness as the new mainland rulers started to show their true side.

The events surrounding the Erh Erh Pa Incident are complicated. What started as a simple argument between officers of the Tobacco Monopoly Bureau and an elderly street peddler over some allegedly smuggled cigarettes led to an innocent bystander being shot dead

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88 Tai-wan lang, ching lang chia, ching lang keyia, mou lang t'iang (Pronounced in Taiwanese): 台灣人，眾人吃，眾人騎，無人疼.
by the Bureau officer. Next day, when citizens of Taipei marched to the residence of the Governor General and demanded the alleged officers be punished, the guards at the Governor General's home responded by firing machine gun at the crowd trying to disperse them. From this initial conflict, in about two days time it turned into an island-wide clash between Taiwanese and mainlanders. Until quite recently, the KMT suppressed research into the incident and stuck to the original "official" explanation which considered the event an insurrection against the Nationalist government organized by the Taiwanese Communist Party. It was only with the passing of the political strong men involved and the lifting of martial law in 1988 that the detailed about what happened in the spring of 1947 has began to come to light.

Even today, many aspects of the incident still provoke heated debate among historians. However, there is one detail on which virtually all can agree: Erh Erh Pa did not originate as a communist insurrection against the government. Many alternative explanations have been offered to account for the high death toll. Some scholars, such as Chen Tsui-lien, have even pointed to the mysterious death of certain KMT officials as evidence of an internal power struggle going on at the same time. In any case, we need

89 Ch'en Ts'ui-lien, 派系鬥爭與權謀政治: 二二八悲劇的另一面相 (P'ai hsi tou ch'eng yü ch'üan mou ch'eng chih - erh erh pa pei chu ti ling i mien hsiaoh) (Faction Struggle and the Use of Scheme and Power: the other side of the Story to the Erh Erh Pa Tragedy) (Taipei: Shih pao wen hua ch'u pan kung szü, 1995), 209-318.
to realize that the incident was a consequence of the frustration
Taiwanese felt toward the heavy-handed rule of Nanking. If we take
a closer look at the resolutions passed by the various “incident
resolution committees”\(^{90}\) in different cities this point becomes very
clear.

After the initial period of confusion and rioting, many
“incident resolution committees” were set up to find a solution
to the problems caused that had supposedly provoked the incident.
According to Teng Kong-chao, the people who participated in those
committees can be classified into three categories. The first were
“democratic people of the ruling class.”\(^{91}\) Those included members
of local councils, representatives to the National Congress, KMT
party officials, officials and workers of the youth league plus
some members of the business elite. The second category included
a limited number of former Taiwanese Communist Party members. The
third category included intellectuals, professionals, students,
teachers, and journalists.\(^{92}\) As we can see, these committees
encompassed a broad cross-section of the Taiwanese elite. The
committees went beyond the investigation of immediate causes and
demanded political reforms, including the abolition of the existing

\(^{90}\) Incident Resolution Committees: 事件處理委員會 (shih chien ch’u li wei yuan hui)

\(^{91}\) Democratic People of the Ruling Class: 統治階級中的民主人士 (t’ung chih chieh chi chung ti
min chu jen shih).

\(^{92}\) Teng Kung-chao, 約凡二八事件看民主與地方自治的要求 (Tsung erh erh pa shih chien k’an
min chu yu ti fang tzü chih ti yao ch’iu) (Demand for Local Self-Rule and Democracy in Respect to Erh Erh Pa
Incident) 當代 (Tang Tai) 34: 68-69.
government structure centered on a Governor General, the implementation of a government structure compatible with the mainland constitution, and the holding of free elections.\textsuperscript{93}

The demands were not unreasonable. As Teng pointed out, many Taiwanese, not realizing the authoritarian nature of KMT rule throughout China, still innocently thought that by getting rid of Chen I and his officials and replacing them with locals, everything would be fine.\textsuperscript{94} At that point in time, the response of the Taiwanese elites bore a striking resemblance to the long-standing practice of mainland provincial elites in protesting incompetent or harsh centrally-appointed officials. As such it should not be viewed as a call for Taiwanese independence or as Anti-Chinese in intent. It required a further demonstration of the harsh nature of mainland rule to provoke those responses. Sadly for all concerned, that came soon enough.

Claiming a communist uprising was underway, Chen I requested reinforcements from Chiang Kai-shek. When the reinforcements arrived in Keelung, they literally shot their way to Taipei. Immediately, the Governor General declared martial law in Taiwan and a "white terror" began. People who had been involved with the incident resolution committees the previous week were arrested. The majority of the Taiwanese elite, including intellectuals like

\textsuperscript{93} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{94} Ibid., 78.
Lin Mao-shen, Ch'en Hsin, and Juan Chao-jih who had criticized the government in the past, were rounded up, and even some apolitical intellectuals were caught in the net and never seen again. Many civilians were killed by stray bullets because they were at the wrong place at the wrong time. Later on, after the initial wave of arrests was over, a follow up "pacification program" took aim against anyone accused of "anti-government" activities. In practice this meant that activities such as reading Karl Marx could land people in jail or in front of a firing squad. Altogether it is estimated by the Relatives of the Victims of the Erh Erh Pa Association that about 20,000 people might have been killed during the incident.

Somewhat ironically, after the crack down the group that escaped unscratched were the former collaborationists. Despite their prior call for Taiwanese independence (with Japanese aid), some emerged after serving short jail terms and promptly began to collaborate with the KMT regime. The Ku, Lin, and Yen families in Taipei and Wang family in Kaohsiung were among the major collaborators. Consequently, they remained some of the most prosperous people in Taiwan. Another group of people who were

95 Lai Tse-han, 269.
96 Pacification Program: 濟鄉 (Ch’ing hsiang)
97 Lai Tse-han, 263.
relatively well off was the Pan Shans. Until the mid seventies, they were the only Taiwanese who could obtain government positions. Even then, most of the positions held by Pan Shans were show case positions designed to demonstrate KMT concern for the Taiwanese.

Overall, the net effect of the destruction of the Taiwanese elite was devastating. The KMT managed to wipe out or cow groups most likely to criticize the government. However, the harshness of the crack down also created an irreparable rift between Taiwanese and mainlanders in Taiwan, one that many argue still exists today. And in the end, it was Erh Erh Pa and the "white terror" that followed that drove the Taiwanese beyond "provincialism" and into what we now call "Taiwanese" Nationalism.

The new wave of thinking held that since the people from the motherland did not regard the Taiwanese as true compatriots, Taiwanese should face the fact that true self-rule could only be guaranteed by total independence. Prior to the massacre, the Taiwanese still saw the central government as a source of redress, but once the guns had been fired, that perception was reversed. The post Erh Erh Pa nationalism was statist in content. The differences the Taiwanese nationalists had with the mainlanders were essentially political in nature, and could of course be compared to the traditional center-provincial power disputes

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98 Pan Shan refers to Taiwanese who went to mainland during the Japanese rule and returned to Taiwan after 1945.
endemic on the mainland. However, unlike previous drives for provincial / regional autonomy on the mainland, Taiwan possessed the strategic prerequisites for true "independence." Its isolation from the mainland and relative self-sufficiency made the notion of an independent Taiwan seem far more feasible than the notion of an independent Ssuch’uan or Kwangtung. By their harsh rule, the Nanking government alienated the Taiwanese, driving the latter to view "opting out of China" as a desirable goal. Although ethnically one people, mainland misrule created a situation violating Gellner's second principle, and the emergence of a renewed, statist-oriented Taiwanese nationalism was the result. Yet the lure of pan-Chinese ethnicist nationalism remained strong. Mainland rule did not appear to violate Gellner's first principle. Could political differences — on which the statist argument and Gellner's second principle are based — outweigh the attractions of "Chinese" solidarity — on which the ethnicist argument and Gellner’s first principle are based? It would be premature to proffer a definitive answer, but it would appear that the post Erh Erh Pa Taiwanese Nationalists believe the answer is "No". Thus, as KMT rule has relaxed its grip on Taiwanese civil society there has been a concomitant increase in Taiwanese nationalist efforts to define a "Taiwanese" culture. Such efforts are clearly a first step in shattering the bonds of
Pan-Chinese ethnic solidarity that seem to keep Taiwan's future firmly enmeshed with China's.
CHAPTER FOUR

CONCLUSION

Before discussing briefly the direction in which the nationalist movement in Taiwan has evolved in the post-Erh Erh Pa era, this is perhaps a suitable point to recapitulate the major findings of this study. In the first phase from 1921-1945, the ethnically and politically alien rule of the Japanese clearly violated both Gellner’s first and second principles. As stated earlier, Gellner’s first principle held that ethnic and political boundaries should be congruent while the second stressed that members of each nation recognize each other as belonging to the same nation. Most Taiwanese did not see themselves as “Japanese,” nor did they desire to be part of Japan’s empire. As a result, ample grounds existed for the emergence of a nationalist movement based on both “statist” and “ethnicist” arguments. However, contrary to what some scholars’ have suggested, the early “ethnicist” argument was based on a “Chinese consciousness” rather than a “Taiwanese” one, and reunification with the mainland was held to be the proper goal of any nationalist movement. Yet these “ethnicists” were also “statist” to some extent, for they recognized that their ultimate goal would be unattainable in the foreseeable future, and they therefore embraced self-rule as an acceptable immediate objective. Similarly, those who argued from the “statist”, pro-independence standpoint also accepted the
validity of the pan-Chinese "ethnicist" view, for their hesitation in embracing the goal of reunification was based on the chaotic state of Republican Chinese politics rather than on any deep-seated sense of a unique Taiwanese ethnic identity. The first phase of the nationalist movement in Taiwan was therefore characterized by cooperation between pan-Chinese "ethnicists" and the pro-independence "statists" in pursuit of the short-term goal of self-rule within in the Japanese Empire.

The surrender of Japan and the return of Taiwan to mainland control in late 1945 created a situation in which both of Gellner's principles were apparently observed. Taiwanese initially viewed the arriving mainlanders as compatriots and generally welcomed the re-establishment of mainland rule. The unanticipated defeat of the Japanese and the sudden reality of reunification essentially made the "ethnicist" versus "statist" debate meaningless, and the nationalist movement in 1945 and 1946 was clearly pan-Chinese in its nature. Unlike the situation in 1921-45, when Japanese rule clearly violated both of Gellner's principles and generated a vigorous nationalistic response, Taiwanese now found themselves ruled in a manner which seemed — however brief — to be in accord with both those principles, and as one might have expected, the nationalist impulse receded. Sadly, however, misunderstanding and misrule on the part of the KMT quickly led to the breakdown of relations between the two sides. It was no wonder that many
Taiwanese at the time used to say "out goes the dog and in comes the pig."

The systematic social, economic, and political marginalization of the local populace at the hands of their mainlander overlords soon alienated many Taiwanese. It soon became clear that despite their "ethnic" kinship, Taiwanese were destined to be treated as second class citizen by their mainland compatriots, and this realization led many to question the desirability of permanent unification. From 1946 on, mainland rule essentially violated Gellner's second principle, even while the supposed "ethnic" oneness of rulers and ruled seemed to be in accord with the first. The first open expression of Taiwanese discontent in 1947 and the bloody crackdown that followed combined to catalyze the emergence of a strong "statist" argument for independence. For the first time in Taiwan's history, the "statist" argument for Taiwanese self-rule came into conflict with the pan-Chinese "ethnicist" argument for continued mainland rule.

In post-Erh Erh Pa Taiwan, this conflict was perpetuated by the ruthlessness of the KMT's repressive apparatus and the government's energetic efforts aimed at "sinifying" Taiwanese society. Protests against KMT rule were rare, and criticisms came only from a handful of activists such as Liao Wen-yi, Ku Kuan-min, and Peng Min-ming, both within Taiwan and overseas, throughout the fifties, sixties and the seventies. The loss of the mainland
to the CCP in 1949 had little apparent impact on either the staunchly pan-Chinese “ethnicist” nationalism of the now marooned mainlanders, or on the resentment of the Taiwanese, who continued to view their rulers as outside (wai sheng) overlords. That many if not most Taiwanese continued to feel this way is borne out by the remarkable growth in the independence movement that followed the lifting of martial law in 1987. These new nationalists saw the continued adherence of both the CCP and KMT to the principle of reunification as a standing threat to the freedom of the Taiwanese people.

Thus, despite the appointment of a native born Taiwanese to the Presidency and the subsequent gradual drift towards both a de facto and de jure independence, a vigorous nationalist movement continues to attack any talk of reunification. The lure of pan-Chinese “ethnicist” nationalism remains strong and the present incompatibility of the political systems in Taiwan and the mainland has not prevented some Taiwanese from embracing the vision of reunification “down the road” — presumably when the regime on the mainland finally recognizes the error of its ways. This “ethnicist” nationalism, based on the “ethnic” oneness of the two peoples, seems to follow the logic of Gellner’s first principle concerning the alignment of national and ethnic boundaries. Against this, the Taiwanese nationalists have raised a statist argument based on the
second principle: simply put, Taiwanese do not want to be part of a greater China, regardless of what the mainlanders promise.

It would seem that present split is once again between those with a “Chinese Consciousness” and those with a “Taiwanese” one, with the former embracing the “ethnicist” reunification goal and the latter endorsing independence. The result at times appears to be a stalemate. Many in the Taiwanese nationalist movement recognize this, and as a result, efforts have been made in recent years to strengthen “Taiwanese consciousness” by highlighting the ethnic differences between the mainland and Taiwan. Thus the use of native dialects such as Holo and Hakka plus aboriginal languages has increased dramatically, as has the popularization of Taiwanese culture in various forms such as music, movies, dramas, paintings and so on. The Taiwanese nationalist movement is clearly attempting to create an “ethnicist” argument of its own to support their “statist” argument for independence. Such moves are both understandable and predictable.

Like the famous Taiwanese author Wu Cho-liu’s once said in his work The Orphan of Asia, the fate of Taiwan’s destiny has been set since the day that the Ch’ing government handed over the sovereignty to Japan. Ever since then Taiwanese society has been on its own struggling to survive. The brief return to the mother’s
arms proved to be a painful experience. Added to the fact the Taiwanese society had a brief taste of the flavor of self-rule, it is not surprising that most Taiwanese society would want to remain independent. Like a child abused at a young age, if he knows gaining independence is such a pleasant experience, why would he want to return to the arms of the abusive parents? And if anyone tries to take the independence from him, would it be any surprise that he would try to fight back for his freedom?

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