Building the National:
Historical Perspective of Taiwanese Nationalism

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Abstract

In this paper, I provide discourse analysis of Taiwanese nationalism from historical perspective. Taiwanese nationalism is fluid and adaptive. This makes an ideal-type study of Taiwanese nationalism prone to commit the error of homogenization or essentialization. A tenable approach is proposed by Brubaker, who maintains nationalism is historical process and should be considered as the category of practice rather than the category of analysis. Thus, I view the nature of Taiwanese nationalism as resistant strategy. To explore the historical process, three episodes of Taiwanese nationalism are analyzed to demonstrate the consistency and evolvement of national discourses. At last, I conclude that the democratic edge is “the greatest denominator” to garner bipartisan support against foreign oppressors.

Keywords: Taiwanese nationalism; colonial nationalism; civic nationalism; Taiwan independence movements; Formosa
Introduction

“Identity” becomes a buzzword in the vernacular jargon of contemporary politics. For students who are interested in identity research, however, have different notions referring to this topic. From the ancient Greeks to contemporary analytical philosophy, identity has been used to address the perennial philosophical problem of social solidarity to cause manifest change, e.g. proletarian dictatorship, and feminist movements. But political scientists, mainly post WWII, raise this issue from a context coincident with much more recent vintage, and local roots. For instance, the U.S. suffered erratic social unrest derived from identity “crises” of postbellum generation. Generational rebellions since the 1960s, conflated with the Black Power Movement, shocked American society, and brought the ethnic concern into American academic debate.¹

In Asia, artificial concoction of rightist “identity” was introduced into the national scheme to construct official ideology to consolidate state control and political mobilization. Partially this situation was highly constrained by postbellum international environment that was directed by the U.S. in this region to contain communists.² From Japan, Taiwan, South Korea, to Southeast Asia, pro-U.S. conservative regimes was established, and top-down identity shaping was instilled. The Left was generally suppressed, or annihilated by the authoritarian state, sometimes under American tutelage.³ This situation had lasted until the rise of Japan in the 70s and China in 90s that potentially challenged America’s hegemony in this region. Of this climate, identity politics, such as gender, ethnicity, race, and environment, won the chance to alter the politico-sociological terrain. Activists garnered social support through identity mobilization in the 1990s. Public authority in this region is generally undermined, or challenged. Of various levels of identity politics, nationalism can be one of the most prominent issues in debate. Forgotten history and political victims increasingly occupy the front pages of national press. Eventually, ideological debate culminated into political action.

Nationalism can be defined as an ideology that advocates communitarian identity at national scale. For some extent, nationalism means a group of people identity themselves as a nation. In Asia, national identity has ambivalent characteristics. On the one hand, it has been symbolized as ethnic nationhood: Chinese revolutionaries motivated the oppressed to subvert the feudal and imperial Ch’ing sovereign by awaking the dignity of Han people in 1911. Korean nationalists stimulated the sharing

perception of suffering history of Korean people to rebel against the Japanese colonial state. Identity is artificial concoction. People die for it. On the other hand, official nationalism is used instrumentally to consolidate the state rule: Japanese launched national assimilation policy to convert Han Taiwanese into the subjects of Tennō, the Japanese Emperor. Obviously, national identity is Janus-faced. It has enormous strength of liberation as well as mysterious capacity to support dictatorship.

Taiwan, an island republic being colonized by Chinese first, and Japanese after, is a more complicated case insufficiently explored. Internationally speaking, Taiwan receives little band of diplomatic recognition, whilst most countries generally accepts China’s argument to treat Taiwan as a ‘renegade province’ of China. China also threatens to use force unhesitatingly to deter Taiwan’s will to independence regardless of cost. Domestically democrats advocate people’s right of self-determination, sometimes means independence, to struggle against authoritarianism. Obviously nationalism is both repressive and liberative to Taiwanese people. The Chinese irredentism coerces Taiwan to unite with China, whilst Taiwanese nationalism motivates Taiwanese people to aspire more freedom.

Taiwanese nationalism, like other Asian nationalisms, has been an ideology to resist repression since the onset in 1920s. No doubts, both the Japanese colonial regime and the Nationalist émigré regime held hostile position against Taiwanese nationalism. However cascades of Taiwanese nationalism do not cease even in the heyday of official repression. Resistant forces developed discourse strategies to interpret Taiwanese people’s inferior political standing as the “petty nation” in the history, and highlight Taiwanese people’s holy right of self-determination. Due to information insufficiency, language barrier, and official intervening, Taiwanese nationalism has been under-studied even in Taiwan. Worse, Taiwanese nationalism has been distorted both by its proponents and adversaries. In this paper, I provide a historical overview of Taiwanese nationalism and discourse analysis of different “schools” and praxis of Taiwanese nationalism in various historical episodes. Empirically, I illustrate the effects of Taiwanese the resistant strategy of Taiwanese nationalist to use nationalistic discourse for counter the repressors.

In this paper, I provide discourse analysis of Taiwanese nationalism from historical perspective. Taiwanese nationalism is fluid and adaptive. This makes an ideal-type study of Taiwanese nationalism prone to commit the error of homogenization or essentialization. A tenable approach is proposed by Brubaker, who maintains nationalism is historical process and should be considered as the category of practice

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5 Historically “Tai-wan” initially referred to the “Tai-na” area of central Taiwan. “Formosa” was named by Portuguese indicated the Taiwan island. Therefore, most Taiwanese nationalists who were brought up during the Japanese colonial period preferred to use Formosa, rather than Taiwan, to indicate the Taiwan area. In this paper, I use Formosa and Taiwan interchangeably based on the context. See Yuzin Chiautong Ng (Kō Shūdō), "Chan-Hou Tai-Wan Tu-Li-Yün-Tung Yü Tai-Wan Min-Tsu-Chu-Yi Te Fa-Chan (the Development of Postwar Taiwan Independence Movements and Taiwanese Nationalism)," in Taiwanese Nationalism, ed. Cheng-feng Shih (Taipei: Avanguard, 1994), 201.

6 Rwei-Ren Wu, "Taiwan Feishih Taiwanjen Te Taiwan Puke (Taiwan Must Be the Taiwan of Taiwanese)," in Mintsu Chuyi Yu Liangan Kuanhsi (Nationalism and Cross-Strait Relations), ed. Chia-lung Lin and Yung-nien Cheng (Taipei: Third Nature Pub., 2001).
rather than the category of analysis. Thus, I view the nature of Taiwanese nationalism as resistant strategy. To explore the historical process, three episodes of Taiwanese nationalism are analyzed to demonstrate the consistency and evolvement of national discourses. At last, I conclude that the democratic edge is “the greatest denominator” to garner bipartisan support against foreign oppressors.

The Rise of Taiwanese Nationalism

Taiwan’s successful and smooth transition from an authoritarianism to democracy since the late 80s was dubbed as “tranquil revolution”, and “political miracle”, thanks to her unconventional route to displace the junta without military conflict and resilience to the issue of whether the PRC-staged its 1996 missile incident, or the 1997 Asian Financial Crisis. However, while the island republic seems ready to celebrate nascent democracy and on the way to incremental reform like her Korean counterpart, Taiwanese people are perplexed and uncertain about the next step ahead. No surprisingly, Taiwanese national identity ascends rapidly in the wake of democratization. However, the deep fear of China’s invasion makes Taiwanese nationalism obscure and implicit. The quest of statehood thus becomes the most divisive issue in Taiwan’s society.

The Chinese national identity imposed by regime émigré from Mainland China in 1949 is seriously questioned. The Kuomintang, literally the Chinese Nationalist Party and abbreviated as KMT hereafter, claim it held the sovereign over China and set the reunification of Taiwan and China as its historical mission. In this context, Taiwan was considered as the military base for Mintsu Fuhsing, liberally national regeneration, and territorial foundation of Fatung, literally the legitimate succession. On the contrary, the opposition, whether under the name of Tungwai, namely “Outside KMT,” or DPP, consistently maintained that the future of Taiwan had to be determined by the “Taiwanese people” through the process of self-determination. Obviously, the KMT and the opposition proposed two rival imaginations of nationhood. While Chinese

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8 Tun-jen Cheng and Stephan Haggard, Political Change in Taiwan (London: Lynne Rienner, 1992), Yun-Han Chu, Crafting Democracy in Taiwan, National Policy Research Series; No. 2 (Taipei, Taiwan: Institute for National Policy Research, 1992), Michael Hsin-Huang Hsiao, Wei-Yuan Cheng, and Hou-Sheng Chan, Taiwan: A Newly Industrialized State (Taipei: National Taiwan University, 1989).

9 The KMT was originally found by Sun Yat-sen in China’s Kung-tung devoted to subvert the Manchurian Ch’ing. Sun’s Mintsu Chuyi, literally Chinese Nationalism, was originally committed to mobilize Han people against Manchurians’ Ch’ing dynasty. However, he revised the notion of Chinese nationalism and concluded Manchurians as members of the Chinese nation after the Republic of China was established in 1912. Sun’s theory of Chinese nationalism constructed KMT’s theoretical root of political and cultural legitimacy to represent the Chinese nation. The KMT lost to communists in the civil war and retreated to Taiwan in 1949. The KMT’s version of Chinese nationalism was since utilized as an ideological weapon against Red China externally and Taiwanese nationalism internally. Following series of diplomatic blow of the Republic of China, the KMT’s Chinese nationalism claiming representation of China was increasingly challenged by the opposition. In 2000 the KMT lost the presidential election in Taiwan and conceded power to the opposition Democratic Progressive Party, abbreviated as DPP hereafter. Some local observers considered this as the pivotal moment of the rise of Taiwanese nationalism and the fall of Chinese nationalism. However, judged from sequential development after 2000, this observation might be too simplified. See Mau-kuei Chang, “Hsintaiwanjen Chih Feilun (the Counterargument of New Taiwanese People)," Dandai (Con-temporary Monthly) 137 (1999), Fu-Chang Wang, ”Mintsu Hsianghsiang Tsuchun Yichih Yu Lishih (National Imagination, Ethnic Consciousness, and History),” Taiwan Historical Research 8, no. 2 (2001).
nationalism stressed cultural and historical links between Taiwan and China, Taiwanese nationalism however argued that colonial history and common experience of political repression from the Chinese Communist Party made the Taiwanese people share the same destiny. Underpinned the two nationalisms were ethnic base of political mobilization. Epistemologically, discourses of Chinese nationalism and Taiwanese nationalism all leave space for mutually exist. In real politics, however, the KMT utilized Chinese nationalism appealed to Waishengjen, namely mainlander, who immigrated to Taiwan with the KMT and shared historical experience of diaspora. Taiwanese nationalism mainly invoked common experience of political repression of Penshengjen, literally “provincer.”

The 2004 presidential election hence represented the competition of two national imaginations. Just a few weeks before the 2004 Presidential Election, more than three million Taiwanese people linked hands the length of the island to demonstrate their will to protect their motherland. Unfortunately, the 3-19 shooting incident became the blasting fuse that triggered ethnic distrust in Taiwan. The ethnic cleavage dampened the possibility for the island to leave the Machiavellian moment since the late 1980s. A year later, around one million people flooded Taipei’s streets to protest against China’s Anti-secession Law, aiming at keeping Taiwan away from any move towards either de facto, or de jure independence. However, this civic national movement failed to make the national united under the democratic value. A special issue of Asian Survey dedicated to Taiwanese national identity in the wake of this controversial presidential election denoted significance of this issue.

For Taiwan, identity is paradoxically both contentious and consensual. It is contentious because people who harbor conflicting national imagines bicker over every rank of issues. But the Taiwanese people also recognize that a peaceful relationship with China should be coincident with national interests. It seems that identity politics in Taiwan turns into a gyrature phenomena, intriguing and inextricable

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10 Before the Household Registration Law revised Article 13 in 2005, the provincer, Penshengjen, was an administrative category based on the household registry of paternal family. Therefore the provincer was mainly referred to the Han people who immigrated to Taiwan before 1945. After the revision, the household registration categorized inhabitants by birthplace. Therefore, the household registry, Shengji in Chinese, had been considered an important indicator of ethnicity in Taiwan.


12 The 3-19 shooting incident is the first ever assassination attempt on incumbent presidential candidate Chen Shui-bian and vice presidential candidate Annette Lu, both of the majority Holo ethnicity. This incident provoked Chen’s supporters and revered the election outcome, early polls indicated that the Pan-blue camp was slightly favored. This case was officially closed in 2005 claiming that one deceased suspect was the shooter. However, the pan-blue camp refused to accept this result and insist continued investigation. This incident is still the key issue that undermined Chen’s legitimacy to rule.


for the core dynamics of the society. This can partially understand from the historical experience of this island. In the past century, Taiwan has experienced three cycles of regime shift that have lead to a transformation from a colonial, authoritarian state, to a democratic one. Within the first two émigré regimes that plotted to establish their ruling legitimacy, the state imposed national projects to harmonize the islanders as Japanese, and later, Chinese. Insomuch the state was suppressive, the society was “domesticated”, the people were petrified, and therefore any debate about national identity was tabooed. The political democratization and economic liberalization of the late 1980s created a sea of change. As Taiwan became further integrated in the world market, ironically, the aspiration of the people to acquire a “normal” national image ascended. Identity, curtailed by the iron hand of the state and advocated by Taiwanese expatriates, sets up the default line grouping people into rival socio-political camps. Taiwan, a counterexample against cosmopolitan liberalism that maintains harmonized culture and makes blurring national boundaries a sure trend, is bogged down with conflicts concerning the national image.

The Complicated Course of Taiwanese Nationalism

Taiwan’s identity politics ascended as a social movement in the wake of democratization. The course of Taiwanese nationalism is rather fluid, fragmented, and positional. Tentatively speaking, there are few strains of forces contributing to the rise of Taiwanese nationalism in the 1990s.

Historically, two mandatory national images had been instilled into Taiwan: firstly, by the Japanese colonial state since the 1895 Sino-Nippon War, and secondly, by the émigré Kuomintang state, hereafter abbreviated as KMT, since 1949. Nationalism was instrumental to the Japanese colonial state to mobilize the Taiwanese people to join the “Great East-Asia War”. After 1949, the KMT state lost the civil war to the Chinese Communist Party and were exiled to Taiwan. KMT proclaimed itself the orthodox representative of Chinese nationalism, and Taiwan was deemed to be the “Revival Base” for the Chinese nation. During the next five decades, the official image of China, albeit historical, was passed on to the Taiwanese people through mandatory Chinese nationalistic education in order to legitimize the KMT’s rule. However, the official nationalism claimed by the KMT state that it held the sovereignty over the whole of China was thoroughly questioned following the onset of democratization. Though some intellectuals consider that civic-nationalism in Taiwan was the result of the successful founding election in 1991, quite a few primordial Taiwanese nationalists still argue that Taiwan needs to establish a new state in order to re-enter the international community.

Socio-economically, the official KMT ideology was mainly an ethnic-nationalistic approach skewed towards China émigrés. Key governmental posts and resources were held in émigrés’ hands, and the local Taiwanese were looked upon

as inferior to émigrés in terms of socio-economic status, culture, and education.\textsuperscript{19} The KMT state instituted a comprehensive patron system to accommodate the social impact of the arrival of great amounts of China émigrés after 1949, and virtually set the line of socio-economic class between émigrés and the local Taiwanese.\textsuperscript{20} This fuelled a grudge among Taiwanese nationalists against the injustice of the KMT state.

Politically, the KMT state used Chinese nationalism to hinder democratic reform and to consolidate its rule. Whereas Chinese nationalism represented sovereignty of China, the electorate of the National Assembly, the national legislature, needed to be coincident with the official territory. This implicated the National Assembly to only be re-elected after the KMT state restored its rule over China. Therefore, before democratization occurred in the early 1990s, Taiwan, though almost equivalent to the \textit{de facto} territory of the Republic of China (the official title of Taiwan), was barely franchised to elect her few representatives in the National Assembly, lest to say the president. For Taiwanese nationalists, mainly anti-statist before democratization, Chinese nationalism was used as a symbol of a continual dictatorship and to delay the schedule of political reform.

Internationally, the Republic of China (the official title of the KMT state) has been expelled from the UN since 1972. However, only since the 1990’s Taiwanese people were allowed to travel at will, did they start to understand that their official passport was unrecognized by the world. Repetitive humiliation and inconvenience occurring on their journeys motivated the Taiwanese people to acquire a normal statehood. But China continually conducts uncountable diplomatic maneuvers to seal off the international space of Taiwan. The hegemonic posture of China, however, undermines the appeal of Chinese nationalism in Taiwan and polarizes anti-China sentiments. Flows of people, as Lash and Urry maintain, substantially stimulate the desire of a nation.\textsuperscript{21}

National identity, Taiwanese nationalism, and Taiwanese consciousness constitute a set of ideas that create a picture of a sociological issue \textit{writ large}. The civic republicanism following the episode of democratization did not lose any of the weight of identity politics. Quite the opposite, the struggle of political interests, cultural orientation, social cleavage, and psychological affinity, make Taiwan’s national image even more uncertain than expected.

\section*{Nationalism in formation: the antebellum development before WWII}

Before Taiwan was ceded from the Ch’ing Empire in 1895, Taiwan had a long history. Originally, Austronesian aboriginal tribes spread around the island. In 1624, the \textit{Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie}, literally Dutch East Indian Company, first claimed Taiwan as a base for its trade expansion in East Asia, and made the island an essential part of the international trade network. The European explorers even gave this island a beautiful name: Formosa. In 1662, Koxinga, the Prince of Yânping and Ch’âotao Grand General of the late Ming Empire, oust the Dutch from Zeelandia, Fort Anping in Chinese, and continued to lead anti-Ch’ing movement based on Taiwan. Two years later, Koxinga’s son Ch’êng Ching inherited his royal title and declared Formosa as the Tung-ning Kingdom. Ethnically speaking, the Tung-ning Empire was

\textsuperscript{19} See Cheng and Haggard, \textit{Political Change in Taiwan}.
\textsuperscript{20} Hsiao, Cheng, and Chan, \textit{Taiwan: A Newly Industrialized State}.
established by the Han people. On the settling process, the Han settlers met military resistance from the Pen-po Chôk tribes. In 1683, the Tung-ning Kingdom was integrated into the Ch’ing Empire. But the Ch’ing Empire viewed Formosa as a military outpost outside the mainland and promulgate various prohibitions against further Han settlement. The feudal society in Taiwan experienced large scale of intra-Han armed conflicts. To this point, the ethnic consciousness of Han was hardly forged. The turning point was the First Sino-Japanese War. The losing Ch’ing Empire conceded to sign the Treaty of Shimono-seki that ceded Formosa to Japan for peace. This rational decision from Peking triggered emotional reaction from the Formosan inhabitants. Outraged Formosan gentry-leaders filed innumerable petition to Peking begging the Manchurian court to reverse its decision. When the Formosan gentry-leaders from Taipei faced callous response from the Manchurian court, they were forced to establish Tai-wan Minchukuo, namely the Republic of Formosa, as the last resort to resist the impending Japanese takeover. Resistance of the Republic of Formosa was bloody. The Japanese occupation forces spent six months, murdered more than fourteen thousand lives, and cost 275 soldiers. This significant episode of both modern Chinese and Taiwanese history marked an important implication for the “Formosan people”. The Formosan intellectuals recognized the harshness of Realpolitik and since invoked the Republic of Formosa as a starting point of Formosan resistant movements.

According to Yanaihara Tadao, the reputed professor of colonial economy in the Imperial University of Tokyo, Japan soon realized that ruling the newly acquired territory was costly. To make the rule sustainable, the modernization scheme around the island directed by the Taiwan Governor-General became crucial. The Taiwan Governor-General Tadama Gentarō and the Chief Civil Officer Gotō Shinpei constituted the so-called Tadama-Gotō regime for this mission. Imposed infrastructural construction, including modern police system, bureaucracy, transportation network, modern primary education, introduction of Japanese education and agricultural technology not only extended the capacity of the Taiwan Government-General, but also set political boundary between the Japanese nationals and island inhabitants. Through the Japanese colonization, conventional ethnic default line of Han-aboriginal had been transformed as Japanese-Han, or Japanese-aboriginal. The oppressed Han and aboriginal people had generated common conscious of the same destiny. Consequently, a sense of “national” conscious surmounted intra-Han localism and aboriginal tribalism evolved. The dialectically relations of national debate proceeded along the historical path. The conspicuous case is the Movement for the Establishment of Taiwan Parliament, abbreviated as METP.
hereafter.

The way to govern Taiwan had been a serious debate since Japan acquired this new territory. In 1919, the Prime Minister Hara Takashi’s proposal of Naichi Enchō Shugi, literally motherland externalism, which asserted a more extensive and intensive assimilation as well as institutional integration, became the official policy toward colonial Taiwan. Under Naichi Enchō Shugi, Taiwan had to be culturally assimilated before integrated into the Japan Empire. This radical assimilation policy was a serious debate among Taiwanese intellectual elites between 1918 and 1920. The legal basis for the Taiwan Government-General to segregate Japanese and Taiwanese was named Law No. 63. The Dōkakai movement in 1914-15 was actually the first attempt of Taiwanese gentry to pursue equal legal status with Japanese, though having to cost Han peoples culture identity with China and to be assimilated as Japanese. However, this strategy met strong opposition from the Government-General, who considered the Dōkakai movement was threatful to Japanese prerogative in Taiwan. Just as the destiny of fragile liberalism in metropolitan Japan during so-called Taishō democracy (1912-1925), Taiwan’s assimilation for liberalization was soon crashed the time Count Itagaki left Taiwan. From the time on, the Taiwan elites did not share consensus of assimilation. After 1918, the anti-assimilationism became central theme of Taiwan intellectual elites. They were not enthusiastic to organize a political movement to repeal the notorious Law No. 63. The Wilsonian principle of self-determination, and latter, Lenism spread over colonies. The people in the colonial peripheries were inspired to seek dignity and to stand up against the metropolitan colonizers. The conspicuous case was the March First Independence Movement, the Samil Movement, occurred in Korea in 1919. The subjects in colonial peripheries were not satisfied with gradualism and eager for more autonomy. Among this climate, Taiwanese intellectual elites who studied and lived in Tokyo presented political discourse pursuing national autonomy.

The Taiwan Bunka Kyōkai, literally the Taiwan Cultural Association, and Tāi Oân Chheng Liân, literally the Taiwan Youth, were two indicative movements providing histography of national discourses. The two political movements were both parts of the METP. The programme of Taiwan Cultural Association asserted national liberation. According to the Japanese official archive, the manifest of Taiwan Cultural Association was “awakening Han national consciousness to make Taiwan as Taiwan of Taiwanese, to eliminate humiliation, and to unite Taiwanese.” During internal debate,

29 Dōkakai, literally the Assimilation Association, was a political strategy of Taiwanese elites to ally with progressive Japanese to pursue full Japanese citizenship rights. The initiators managed to persuade Count Itagaki Taisuke, the legendary leader of the Jiyūminken undō (Peoples Rights Movements), to become its most eloquent spokesperson. As said by Yanaihara, Taiwanese joined the group rationally to receive the same rights and treatments as the metropolitan Japanese. See Wu, "The Formosan Ideology: Oriental Colonialism and the Rise of Taiwanese Nationalism, 1895-1945", 167, Yanaihara, Teikokushugi Ka No Taiwan (Taiwan under Imperialism), 242-43.
30 See Wan-yao Chou, Jihchu Shihtai Te Taiwan Yihui Shechi Chingyuen Yuntung (the Petition Movement for the Establishment of Taiwan Parliament) (Taipei: Tzuli Paoshi Wenhua Chupanpu, 1989), Chap. 2.
31 Taiwan Sōtokuku Keimmukyoku, ed., Taiwan Sōtokufu Keisatsu Enkakushi Dai Ni Hen: Ryo Tai Igo No Chian Jōkyō (Chukan) [Taiwan Shakai Undō Shi] (Taiwan Government-General History of Police Part. : Condition of Social Order since the Acquisition of Taiwan, Vol. 2 [History of Taiwan’s Social
the Taiwan Cultural Association frequently delivered speeches advocating national autonomy. For instance, the founder Chiang Wei-shui took a biological view to explain all race had unique attributes in order to differentiate Taiwanese from Japanese. Chiung concluded that since assimilationism could not be used to govern different races, home rule policy was the only sensible solution. Inside the Association, the colonial questions were central of discussion. Irish home rule, Alsace-Lorraine, Ghandi’s nonviolent resistance against U.K., and petty nation liberation all drew great attention among the Association members.

This sort of discussion did not provoke only one thought. Generally, members inside the Association had two ways, by relation of their class and socio-economic position, to interpret colonial situation. The “rationalism” was supported by gentry and local capitalists who calculated cost and benefit of resistant strategy rationally and maintained a moderate route to reform socio-political inequality. Representative figures, such as Lin Hsien-tang and T’sai P’ei-huo argued the national conditions of Taiwan were different from Korea, and cooperative strategy could win the most benefits for the Taiwanese people. If necessary, the rationalists would prefer to trade home rule for the METP. It is noteworthy that the rationalists were basically nationalists. For instance, Lin Hsien-tang adored Chinese culture and refused to speak Japanese through his life. The key reason the rationalists pursue Ireland style home rule originated from the harsh reality that China had no capacity to liberate Taiwan within thirty years. Avoidance of direct confrontation and waited for the time might be the optimal choice. On the contrary, “radicalism” was supported by professionals and middle class intellectuals. The leader Chiang Wei-shui was inspired by Sun Yat-sen’s revolutionary movements in China. He proposed a resistant movement organizing all Taiwanese, national movements and class movements. To the Government-General, the radicalists were “extremist nationalists.” The radicalists not only criticized Lin Hsien-tang’s ambiguous relationship to the Government-General, they also allied with national movements in China and Korea. For young students, the radicalists were more attractive than rationalists. Therefore, the radicalists organized eight students strikes in famous high schools during 1920 to 1928. The students who were expelled by the

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32 Chiang was the founder of the Taiwan Cultural Association and the Taiwan People's party. He has been considered one of the most important figures in the colonial national resistant movement. He practiced as a doctor in Taipei. This made him sympathetic with Sun Yat-sen’s revolution movement. Chiung found the Taiwan People’s Party after internal split of the Taiwan Cultural Association, and adopted Sun’s Three Doctrines of the People. Chiang was died in 1931 and honored as “Taiwan’s Sun Yat-sen.” His argument concerning the Taiwan People’s Party, see Wei-shui Chiang, "Wo Li-Hsiang Chung Te Min-Chung-Tang: Fang-Chi Hsiao-Erh-Ping Lao-Shuai-Cheng, Pa-Ch'i'h Li-Hsiang Ning-Shih (the People's Party in My Ideal: Abandon Infantilism and Senility, Hold Tight the Ideal and Gaze at the Reality),” Taiwan Minpao, no. 189 (1928).

33 Taiwan Sōtokuku Keimmukyoku, ed., Taiwan Sōtokufu Keisatsu Enkakushi Dai Ni Hen: Ryo Tai Igo No Chian Jōkyō (Chukan) [Taiwan Shakai Undō Shi] (Taiwan Government-General History of Police Part. 2: Condition of Social Order since the Acquisition of Taiwan, Vol. 2 [History of Taiwan's Social Movement]), 155.

34 Tsui-lien Ch'en, "National Identity of Taiwans Political Movements in the 1920s" (paper presented at the Taiwan Political Science Annual Conference, Taipei, 1999), 10-11.

35 Chou, Jihtchu Shihtai Te Taiwan Yihui Shechi Chingyuen Yuntung (the Petition Movement for the Establishment of Taiwan Parliament), 43.

36 Taiwan Sōtokuku Keimmukyoku, ed., Taiwan Sōtokufu Keisatsu Enkakushi Dai Ni Hen: Ryo Tai Igo No Chian Jōkyō (Chukan) [Taiwan Shakai Undō Shi] (Taiwan Government-General History of Police Part. 2: Condition of Social Order since the Acquisition of Taiwan, Vol. 2 [History of Taiwan's Social Movement]), 457.
schools might choose to continue education in China.\textsuperscript{37}  

From 1921, the METP started. For some extent, the METP could be considered the official confrontation of the Taiwanese people against the metropolitan \textit{Naichi Enchō Shugi}. The central theorist advocated the METP was Lin Ch’eng-lu, the Meiji University-trained law student who became the chief editor of \textit{Tāi Oân Chheng Liân}, literally the Taiwan Youth. Lin Ch’eng-lu pointed the third way of Taiwanese movements beyond the special rule (the Governor-General dictatorship) and assimilationism (\textit{Naichi Enchō Shugi}). Lin Ch’eng-lu argued the Japanese nation and the Taiwanese nation had different ancestors, history, custom, language, and thoughts. Since it was impossible to assimilate the Taiwanese people as the Japanese people, Japan should devolve to allow partial home rule and establish a special representative organ consisted of Taiwan and Japanese residents.\textsuperscript{38}  

In “Reasons for the Petition for the Establishment of Taiwan Parliament,” Obviously, the national autonomism was based on two principle: Taiwan’s particularity and anti-assimilationism. Lin Ch’eng-lu precisely elaborated the two principles in “Taiwan Gikai Secchi Seigan Riyōshō” (Reasons for the Petition for the Establishment of Taiwan Parliament). In the beginning, Lin Ch’eng-lu upheld that Taiwan particularity was historical and impossible to abolish. The reason that the metropolitan government held the Japanese constitution could not perform in “area with special custom” was invalid. Thus the Taiwanese inhabitants deserved special franchise in order to bring a more peace world. The form of special franchise could perform through the Taiwan Parliament with limited legislative power. If the legislative framework operated well, the Great Japan Empire might thus turn into a federal country, like U.S.\textsuperscript{39}  

“Reasons for the Petition for the Establishment of Taiwan Parliament” was an outstand statement that contained no “nationalism” and “national self-determination.” Nevertheless, the “special franchise” was a indirect argument containing national self-determination. More important, Lin Ch’eng opened a window to image a colonial community of self-government.

When it came to the middle period of the 1920s, class differentiation incrementally compounded, due to economic boom post WWI and rapid expansion of mining industry. The conspicuous phenomena were widespread of strikes. The rise of class question and worker-peasant movements directly challenged the resistant movement led by the gentry class’ Taiwan Cultural Association. Further, the deepening Japanese economic exploit of Taiwan since 1925 forced the problem of class to surface as the central political agenda that triggered intense debates within the united front of Taiwanese national liberation.\textsuperscript{40}  

In 1927, the Left led by Lien Wen-ch’ing took over the leadership of the Cultural Association and forced the righ-wing leaders such as T’sai Pei-huo and Chiang Wei-shuí to withdraw from the organization. As a result, the liberal united front that had dominated the Taiwanese nationalist movement since 1920 collapsed. On the Left side, the more moderate social democrats led by Lien Wen-ch’ing and the more radical communists proposed a confrontation strategy against the Imperialism. The Left did not consolidate under the same flag of resistant movements. Instead, tension between the so-called “Shōtai ha” (faction of Shanghai University) that supported the 1927 Program of the Japanese Communist Party, and disciples of Yamakawa Doctrine led by Lien Wen-ch’ing, and that between anarchists and communists. Following a series of internal power struggle and purges within the

\textsuperscript{37} Ch’en, "National Identity of Taiwans Political Movements in the 1920s", 12.  
\textsuperscript{38} Wu, "Taiwan Feishih Taiwajen Te Taiwan Puke (Taiwan Must Be the Taiwan of Taiwanese),” 60.  
\textsuperscript{39} Ibid., 62.  
Left, the Taiwanese Communist Party (TCP) united the Left and turned the Taiwan Cultural Association as the TCP’s mass group. The TCP was founded in 1928 according the directive and tutelage of the Third International. Originally the TCP was established as the Taiwanese branch of the Japanese Communist Party.41 Though experienced disturbance in the beginning, the TCP successfully integrated the Left in Taiwan within the same year. Judged from the TCP’s Political Program, under the directive of the Third International, all colonies should be granted complete independence. This placed “Taiwanese national revolution” in an independent category, different from the Chinese and the Japanese national revolutions.42

On the Right side, the rationalists led by T’sai P’ei-huo and radicalists led by Chiang Wei-shui committed to moderate nationalist reform.43 Chiang Wei-shui actively organized various independent political groups to advocate national liberation. Several political organizations, such as the Association of Taiwanese Self-Government, the Association of Liberation, the Association for Reforming Taiwan’s Politics, were initiated as the preparatory work for the formal political party. On 10 July 1927, the Taiwan Minshūtō (Taiwan Peoples Party) was legally established. This was the first political party in Taiwanese history.44 The Taiwan People’s Party under the leadership of Chiang Wei-shui advocated the non-communistic anti-imperialistic united front of the oppressed nations and classes all over the world. The Chiang’s leadership made the Taiwan People’s Party followed Sun Yat-sen’s Nations International vision. This radical position did cause tension inside the Rightist camp, as T’sai preferred reformist strategy more than engaging in direct struggle against the Government-General. Here, the political liberation of “the whole of Taiwanese” to “attain political right” became the minimal common ground of alliance for the radicalists and the rationalists.45

The disintegration of united front illustrated the rise of class consciousness of national autonomism. The vehement debate process inside the Association frequently invoked the Lenist theory of national liberation. Terminologies, including the oppressed nation, the petty nation, nationalist revolution, the struggle of national liberation, constituted the linguistic practice of emancipatory language, and, latter, reification of the public discourse of colonial Taiwan. The Taiwanese nation was now a member of the oppressed petty nations of the colonial world.

**Nationalism as Resistant Ideology: Early Postbellum Independence Movement**

The political climate changed drastically in the wake of a series of political financial blows in the late Taishō period. Economically Japan was internationally excluded. The compounded economic grievance provoked the rise of the Left. On the contrary, domestic extremists were depressed about sequential development of the

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41 Hisu-yi Lu, Jinchu Shitai Taiwan Kungchantang Shih (History of Taiwanese Communist Party During the Japanese Rule) (Taipei: Tzuyu Shihtai Chupanshe, 1989), 55-59.
42 Wu, "Taiwan Feishih Taiwannjen Te Taiwan Puke (Taiwan Must Be the Taiwan of Taiwanese)," 93.
43 Taiwan Sōtokuku Keimmukyoku, ed., Taiwan Sōtokufu Keisatsu Enkakushi Dai Ni Hen: Ryo Tai Igo No Chian Jōkyō (Chukan) [Taiwan Shakai Undō Shi] (Taiwan Government-General History of Police Part. : Condition of Social Order since the Acquisition of Taiwan, Vol. 2 [History of Taiwan's Social Movement]), 190.
45 Wu, "Taiwan Feishih Taiwannjen Te Taiwan Puke (Taiwan Must Be the Taiwan of Taiwanese)," 90.
“Washington System”. In 1921, the assassination of the Prime Minister Hara Takashi, reputed as the commoner and minister, Heimin Saishō, by a disenchanted railroad worker somehow demonstrated escalation of ideological confrontation domestically. In 1925, fear of a broader electorate, left-wing power, and the growing social change engendered by the influx of Western popular culture led the Diet to the passage of the Peace Preservation Law, Chian Ijihō, which forbade any change in the political structure or the abolition of private property. The police apparatus of the day use this law to control the socialist movement and made the Japanese Communist Party turn underground by 1926. In 1931, the Right-wing ultra-nationalism plotted the Manchuria incident, and triggered the so-called “Fifteen Year War.” This implicated the feeble foundation of liberalists of Taishō Democracy, and, virtually choked potential of Taiwanese nationalism. In the late 1920s, even legal resistant movements were forbidden in colonial Taiwan. The only feasible way to continue ideological resistance within the island was the cultural one. However the undercurrent consciousness of the Taiwanese nation had spawned around the island and buried the seed for self-government.

The end of WWII opened another stage of political development. Before the KMT conducted the infamous 228 Incident, Ji-jī-pat Sū-kiān, that murdered Taiwanese elites in great scale on Feb 28 1947, several incidents tested the chance to make Taiwan an independence state. Students of political history should not improperly categorize these incidents in the category of Independence Movements. These incidents could only be understood and judged based on motives, involved parties, and event processes. The 815 Incident was initiated by the Taiwanese gentry elite Koo Chen-fu, the Japanese Major of the 10th Area Army Makizawa Yoshio and Nakamiya Gorō to make Taiwan an independent state, following the Manchuria model. This plan did have some chance of success. However, the then Taiwan Governor-General Ando Rikichi declined this plan and considered saving Japanese lives in Taiwan as priority. After this mutiny was sealed before action, the Taiwanese masterminds drastically convert their position and managed way to survive. For instance, Lin Hsien-tang, also involved in this incident, immediately organized the Restoration Tribute Group, Kuang-fu Chi-ching Tuan, to participate the Surrender Ceremony of Japan in Nanking. Lin’s move was obviously political calculus to build link to General Chiang Kai-shek as his cover to avoid arrest of the KMT takeover officials in Taiwan. From the perspective of allied parties, and the plan form, the 815 Incident had not mass foundation and never appealed for Taiwanese nationalism. More precisely, the 815 Incident might only congeal the situation of vested interests in colonial Taiwan, if it succeeded. This hardly justified the 815 Incident as independence movement of Taiwanese nationalism.

There were other less conspicuous independence movements around the island. In 1945, some Taiwanese, aboriginals, and U.S. military officials, who arrived Taiwan before the KMT takeover troop, tried to ally with the Japanese to resist the landing of KMT military. The primary school principal Okuno Hisaji and the Japanese-American U.S. Lieutenant Connor plotted to rob the ammunition depot in northern Taiwan to

46 The phrase “Washington System” was created by Ire Akira that proposed a strategic framework honored by great powers involving in the East Asia region based on the Treaty of Versailles and the treaties related to the Washington Naval Conference in the 1920s. From the Japanese perspective, this framework confirmed its leading naval position through signing a naval treaty with Britain and the United States, and obtained official recognition of special interests in Manchuria and Mongolia. For details, see Akira Irie, After Imperialism: The Search for a New Order in the Far East, 1921-1931, Harvard East Asian Series, 22. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1965).

47 See Li-fu Chi'en, “The Research of Formosan Nationalism” (Ph.D. Diss., National Taiwan University, 2004), 103-27.
support independence movements. This action was busted right after the KMT military succeeded to land in Keelung. The Chiao-pan-shan Incident was independence movement of the aboriginal Atayal tribe against the KMT takeover military. Atayals declared independence right after the Japanese surrender and resisted the KMT takeover. The Atayals also supported Han Taiwanese’ armed independence movement in the Taiwan Incident. Generally, the KMT takeover military was corrupted and undisciplined in Taiwan. General frustration of the takeover military from the “motherland” busted Taiwanese nationalists' fantasy of China in the colonial period. Unfortunately, the KMT takeover military failed to recognize this and passed wrong messages back to Nanking. Eventually, the 228 Incident triggered great scale murders. There was a group proposed to appeal to international law to delegate Taiwan as the UN Trustee Territory and to call for the self-determination plebiscite later. Lin Mosei, the Dean of Arts at the National Taiwan University, and Lin Ts’ung-hsien, the Taipei tycoon, contacted the U.S. consulate in Taipei to submit the trustee petition. This incident was detected by the KMT and directly caused the execution of Lin Mosei without trial.

Generally speaking, the 228 Incident was considered as a symbolic event leading to enlightenment effects of “national consciousness.” This corollary was too soon, judged from sequential path of Taiwanese nationalism evolved from the ethnicity-based to the civic one in the late 1970s. Consequently the most direct impact of the 228 Incident was the disillusion of Chinese nationalism. On the one hand, Taiwanese nationalists was disappointed of atrocity of the KMT, a party claimed to honored Sun Yat-sen’s Three Doctrines of the People which upheld a chivalric proposal to help the weak and little nations. On the other hand, after a series of cooperation and competition of leadership of Taiwanese nationalist campaign, the priority between class consciousness and national consciousness turned clear. The national identity was reification through internal debate of movement strategy. The dialectic dynamic between nationalist discourse and the independence movement established a civic tendency of nationalists.

In the wake of the 228 Incident, Liao Wen-yi and Liao Wen-kwei founded the Formosan League for Reemancipation with Huang Chi-nan and Su Hsin in 1947. On that time, Liao Wen-yi did not clearly propose Taiwan Independence. What Liao imaged a highly autonomous region, close to the China-Taiwan Federation or China-Taiwan Confederation. Before reaching this point, Taiwan might be delegated as the UN Trustee Territory. Liao Wen-yi was latterly convinced by Huang Chi-nan to drop the trustee proposal and to concur the-independence-through-plebiscite proposal. However, Liao’s proposal was opposed by Hsieh Hsueh-hung and Su Hsin who considered Liao’s proposal, either trustee or plebiscite, was backed by the U.S. Su Hsin maintained the U.S. support of Taiwan Independence was an imperial attempt to extend its influence in Asia. Though Su Hsin did not have direct evidence that Liao was supported by U.S., he decided to withdraw from the Formosan League for Reemancipation. In 1950, Liao Wen-yi reorganized the Taiwanese Plebiscite Initiative Councils in Tokyo and Yokohama, and the Taiwan Democratic Independence

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48 Based on known documents, the Chief Officer of the takeover military Chen Yi did not released the right message conveyed by the negotiated representatives and determined to crashed social disorder by force from the beginning. Regarding the details of policymaking process, please refer to Chang et al., Research Report on Responsibility for the 228 Massacre, 202-07, Lin, From 228 Massacre to White Terror in the 1950s.

49 In fact, Liao Wen-yi did not really have support from the U.S. mainstream politicians, albeit few diplomats backed Liao privately. See Ch'en, "The Research of Formosan Nationalism", 177.
Alliance to found the Taiwan Independence Democratic Party. In 1955 the Formosa Provisional National Parliament was established. In 1956 the Provisional Government of the Republic of Formosa was established. In 1966, the United Formosans in America for Independence, UFAI, was founded.

Liao Wen-yi and his senior brother Liao Wen-kwei were ardent Chinese nationalists in the Japanese rule period. The reason that they converted to Taiwanese nationalism had to be understood from the thought dialectics. They argued the central characteristics of Chinese nationalism was chivalric spirit to save the weak and little nations. Liao Wen-kwei authored Formosa Speaks to explain the rationality of Taiwanese nationalism. This was an important book framed overseas independence movements during this period. For Liao Wen-kwei, Chiang Kai-shek’s KMT regime was imperialism that implemented domestic colonization of Taiwanese and violated the ideal of Chinese nationalism. Therefore, as idealist Chinese nationalists, saving the weak and little Taiwan was moral obligation and practice of ideal Chinese nationalism. Liao Wen-kwei also maintained formation of the Taiwan nation was a historical process of resistance. By resistance against the Dutch, Japanese, and the KMT, the consciousness of the “Taiwanese people” was constructed through resistance against the Chinese people. Thus the conversion from an ardent Chinese nationalist to an ardent Taiwanese nationalist did not suggest discard of Chineseness. Instead, since the Chinese nationalism upheld a chivalric spirit, it was totally just to support the oppressed Taiwanese nation.

Another important argument was proposed by Wang Yü-te through the Taiwan Youth Society. Wang maintained the “Han nation” was not nation, which appeared after modern capitalism. Therefore the “Han nation” was actually the “Han folk.” Of this sense, both Holo people and Hakka people could be categorized as the “Han folk.” However, under geographic and historical conditions, bot Holos and Hakkas became part of the “Taiwanese folk.” The modernization of Taiwan during the Japanese rule made the “Taiwanese folk” as the Taiwanese nation. After the 228 Incident, the substance of the Taiwanese nation was established. However, the Taiwanese nation had to be completely established through the establishment of a nation-state. To this point, Wang Yü-te took a constructivists approach to virtually to develop his theory of Taiwanese nationalism. He abandoned the geological view of ethnic nationalism and proposed a cultural and historical process of nation formation. The ambivalent part was Wang’s way to treat aboriginals. His statement concerning aboriginals was not totally consistent. Both Liao Wen-kwei and Wang Yü-te sophisticatedly gave Taiwanese nationalism modern sense and proposed the proto-type of the community of destiny, which was stated with revision to integrate mainlanders inhabitants by the DPP lawyer Hsieh Chang-Ting in 1987. However, when it came to practical situations, the political language that tried to differentiate Taiwan from China was frequently used, emphasized, or consciously misinterpreted. The way Liao Wen-yi defined the Formosans was a conspicuous example. Liao Wen-yi utilized genealogical discourse to described the Formosan people had “mixed the blood of the Indonesian, the Dutch, the Portuguese, the Spaniard, the Fukian, the Hok-kián, the Kńg-tang, and the

50 Joshua Liao, Formosa Speaks (Hong Kong: Formosan League for Reemancipation, 1950).
Here Liao Wen-yi strategically took a genealogist or racist definition of the “Formosan people” to uphold a political vision to convince foreigners that the Formosan people was endowed with holy right of self-government as an independent “race” discrepant from the Chinese people. It is improper to deduce Liao Wen-yi as a nature-born racist. The consciousness of Taiwanese nationalism did not reach consensus until the 1960s. An active member of the Taiwan Youth Society, Koh Se-kai had questioned the consciousness of Taiwanese nationalism of the day and maintained the obstacles to Taiwanese nationalism were the dominant consciousness of Chinese people instilled on the Formosan people who were lacked of an independent space to construct an independent national consciousness. Liao Wen-yi was sure to acknowledge the conditional constraint of Taiwanese nationalism, and chose to present a strategic essentialism, defined by Spivak, to essentialize the Formosan people as a national whole to mobilize the oppressed to resist the KMT state violence. The purpose of Liao Wen-yi is political, rather than moral, to consolidate the Formosan people to resist the KMT rule.

Sú Bêng contributed a powerful historical materialist analysis Taiwanese nationalism. He contended that the formation of Taiwanese society was a historical process of four hundred years’ immigration, cultivation, modernization, capitalization, and struggle of colonial liberalization. Taiwan’s special geography and the common shared oppressed destiny incrementally shaped a united community; the nation, and spawned the common consciousness among the members. The historical experience created a modern Taiwanese nation different from the Chinese nation. Sú Bêng presented a Marxist explanation that described different material base of Taiwanese nation. The most heuristic part of Sú’s theory was the struggle view of history. He stated that the historical conjunctures of Taiwan, and the Taiwanese people always came from struggle against China, and the Chinese people. So, Sú Bêng concluded, the Taiwanese nation was a historical product contributed from the Taiwanese people’s efforts to escape the domination of China.

By and large, the Taiwanese nationalist developed discourses as resistant strategy against official Chinese nationalism and the CCP Chinese nationalism up to the 1960s. Waishenggien, meaning mainlander immigrants that came to Taiwan with the KMT government post 1949, continued to be considered as the “Chinese nation,” contrary to the Taiwanese nation. The Taiwanese nationalists maintained the KMT government established a domestic colonial situations through the ruling strategy of “separating Penshenggien, meaning the Han Taiwanese people, and Waishenggien, and govern. In 1976, Chang Ts’an-hung of the World United Formosans for Independence presented a new proposal in the confidential document inside the organization. He argued that the Chiang regime utilized an ethnicity segregation tactic to create regional discrimination between the Taiwanese people and the mainlanders. After the success of Taiwanese Independence, the WUFI had to eliminate this phenomenon. Any resident, no matter

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53 Kuang-chun Li, “Yukuan Chanhou Taiwan Mintsu Chuyi Shehui Hsingke Te Chitien Ssukao (Reflections on Social Characteristics of Post-War Taiwan Nationalism),” in Mintsu Chuyi Yu Liangan Kuanhsi (Nationalism and Cross-Strait Relations), ed. Chia-lung Lin and Yung-nien Cheng (Taipei: Third Nature Pub., 2001), 120.
54 Ng (Kō Shūdō), “Chan-Hou Tai-Wan Tu-Li-Yün-Tung Yü Tai-Wan Min-Tsu-Chu-Yi Te Fa-Chan (the Development of Postwar Taiwan Independence Movements and Taiwanese Nationalism),” 207.
56 Bêng Sú, Tâi-Ôan-Lâng Sì-Pah-Nî-Sú (the Four Hundred Year History of the Taiwanese People) (San Jose, CA: Hông-tô Bûn-hóa, 1980), 1095-96.
the time he came to Taiwan, was granted as Taiwanese nationals, if he identified Taiwan, loved Taiwan, and took Taiwan as his homeland. This argument had been called by Ng Chiautong as “the theory of indiscriminate identification (Wu-cha-pie Jen-tung-lun).” The progressiveness of the theory of indiscriminate identification derived from the encompassing of Waishengjen and took a constructive view of identity. The genealogy was discarded as the qualification to judge one’s nationality. Instead, only those who subjectively identified Taiwan could be Taiwanese. This breakthrough of discourses signified the change of social character of Taiwanese nationalism from primordial exclusion to conditional membership. This adaptation of Taiwanese nationalism reflected the fluidity of nationalist discourse and the temporal situation. Domestically, since the 1960s, the liberal Waishengjens cooperated with Penshengjens to engaged in opposition movements. Internationally, the KMT government met diplomatic crises in the 1970s. It was absolutely rational for the Taiwanese nationalists to revise the content of political argument to woo more support among the island inhabitants. The limitation of the theory of indiscriminate identification was worth knowing. Since the U.S. suspended official relationship with Taiwan, the KMT government decided to accelerate democratization process to build political legitimacy. However, the Tungwai activists took this opportunity to garner political monument as well. In the campaign, the shared memory of the 228 Incident and the political use of Holo language were effective issues to mobilize the mass. The historical conditions of the late 1970s could not easily bridge linguistic and cultural difference. The theory of indiscriminate identity need more time to spread in the society.

Emergence of Civic Nationalism: Nation-Building and Democratization

In the late 1980s, the political terrain in Taiwan experienced sea change that the Taiwanese nationalists might image. In the wake of Chiang Ching-kuo’s death, Lee Tung-hui succeeded the presidency and accelerated the democratic reform. The political reform carried included discharge of un-reelected legislators, amending unrepresentative constitution, and full franchise to elect the president and the province governor. But the Chinese Communist Party interpreted President Lee’s reform as a scheme pursuing for incremental Taiwan Independence. In the 1996 Presidential election, the CCP threatened to shoot missiles to stop the election. The diplomatic gaffe however stimulated mass anger that made Lee win the election with great margin. This provoked the third wave debate of Taiwanese nationalism. Different from previous two waves nationalist debates forbidden and prevented by the government, the third wave of nationalist debate appealed more to civic values and called for political mobilization through resistant discourse. Confronted with military threat from China, this was a rational strategy to demonstrate institutional difference and to deepen the link to the democratic world. A methodological pluralism was the main theme of nationalist debate of this period. For Taiwanese nationalists, the mission to de-colonize the legacy of official Chinese nationalism preached by the KMT, and to confront the

57 Li, “Yukuan Chanhou Taiwan Mintsu Chuyi Shehui Hsingke Te Chitien Ssukao (Reflections on Social Characteristics of Post-War Taiwan Nationalism),” 126.
58 Ibid., 127.
59 In the Free China Case, the mainlander intellectual Lei Chen criticized the KMT government and proposed “the Republic of Chinese Taiwan” as the political resolution for the Republic of China.
challenge of the rising China became vital for democracy consolidation. Therefore, what conspicuous during this period was sophisticated analyses of nationalism through serious academic research.

Generally, three strands of nationalist debate in action deserved special attention. Each strand had its historical origin. The first strand of Taiwanese nationalism asserted historical perspective on Taiwan. The Sú, Bêng style discourse that stressed the “community of destiny,” Min-yün Kung-tung-ti, emerged from the historical experience of resistant movements against foreign regimes. As the DPP lawyer Hsieh Chang-Ting interpreted in 1987, the community of destiny of Taiwan was consisted by four priorities: Taiwan, the weak, the culture, and the environment. Hsieh Chang-Ting argued the evolution of membership of the community was relationship of organic solidarity. The boundary of community membership was fluid, practical, and dynamic, and might be discovered through historical process. Since the boundary was fluid, the priority to emphasize the self-existence of Taiwan would not impede mutualism. By this logic, the construction of Taiwanese “subjectivity” and tolerance were both important for the community. Hsieh’s theory provided a communitarian view of the nation. Under this flag, theorists explored “the history of sadness” from a colonial perspective and highlight oppression of imperialism. For some extent, the essential perspective of Taiwanese nationalism prevailed once was substantially deconstructed. Primordial nationalism was so untenable on the historical process. Serious analyses of individual perception demonstrated the infiltration of authoritarianism and historical conjuncture that denied existent memories. For instance, Zheng Honsheng vividly stated a scandalous episode that the KMT used the debate of nationalism to oppressed progressive faculty on campus of National Taiwan University. On the contrary, Lu Chien-lung deconstructed the Chinese consciousness presented in a fiction based on Chu'an-ts'un', the KMT government sponsored veteran villages resided the family dependants of the military. Lu Chien-lung demonstrated that class consciousness might conflate with ethnic consciousness to cause discrimination. These analyses undiscovered the myth of primordial nationalism. The categorical intuitions established by the state organs formed sociological hurdles segregated ethnic groups and caused social discrimination.

The second strand started from social research by taking nationalism either as explanation or explanandum to political issues. Classic works were a series of works contributed by Wu Naiteh. He persuasively demonstrated the high volatility of national identity through panel study of interview surveys. Wu noted the primacy of “realistic nationalism” of survey respondents. The ethnic-cultural identity only slightly surpassed rational calculation of material interests as the main factor influenced

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Taiwanese national identity. If the ethnic cultural constituted cognitive framework of national identity, Karl Shaw explained the reason that Lee Tung-hui changed political vocabulary to stress “community of lives,” or *Geminschaft* by the time his power was consolidated. Lee called for civic nationalism was a political response to expansive China diplomatic policy against Taiwan. The rise of China substantially constrained diplomatic maneuverability of Taiwan. Direct effects brought by this asymmetrical power competition were general adaptation to authoritarian China. The charm of democratic values seemed to run off. If Taiwan was destined to tied the future with China, communitarianism might be a better moral and intellectual source for self-understanding to establish an autonomous people. Shiau Chyuan-Jenq had interpreted *Geminschaft* through politico-economic perspective and proposed a more pragmatic view to establish a national system of political economy. Shiau Chyuan-Jenq asserted that democratic transition fragmented subjectivity and holism of Taiwan. The integrative function of the centralist government was no longer existent. Establishment of a nationalism based on “the national whole” should be considered as the next grand strategy of Taiwan. Economically, Taiwan had to build a national economy based on the interests of the whole country. The government has to perform the auxiliary and intermediate role in the regional economic block. Politically, the national political regime has to reflect the will, interests, and needs of the national whole, rather than few individual, groups or parties. Administratively, the KMT government has to transform as a national government that serves nationals within territorial boundaries. Diplomatically, Taiwan has to extend economic and trade relations pragmatically. A multi-level framework that integrates foreign relations with developing, Chinese, and advanced countries is necessary to ensure Taiwan’s survival. Shiau adopts an economic nationalist discourse to bridge over domestic conflicts derived from class and ethnic inequality. Taiwan had been bogged down with the debate of globalization and Taiwanization of late. A national thinking of economic regime may be the solution.

The third strand nationalistic discourse is contributed by Chang Mau-kuei. Chang was the author of the Democratic Progressive Party’s *White Paper of Ethnicity and Cultural Policy*. The ultimate concern of Chang Mau-kuei was a solution to build a nation-state, based on civic consciousness. Chang argued the reason to cause Taiwan Independence movements was the desire to “build a tribal idol with a proper name. This was the foundation of a collective symbol for self-worship, coincident with collective life experience on Taiwan. Chang’s theory invited vehement critics of Chao Kang who criticized Chang Mau-kuei for proposing “hyper-ethnonationalism or “Voodoo nationalism.” Chao’s critique of Chang Mau-kuei applies a discourse strategy frequently invoked by radicals. For instance, Chen Kuan-hsin advocated

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63 Lee Tung-hui’s idea of statecraft could be explored from his political language, such as “community of lives” or *Geminschaft*, sovereignty in the people or popular sovereignty, “manage the great Taiwan, establish the new central plains,” and “special state-to-state relationship.” See Tzu-hwa Huang, "Lee Tung-Hui Tè Chih-Kuo-Li-Nien Yü Cheng-Tse: 1988-2004 (the Ideas and Policy of President Lee Tung-Hui's Statecraft)" (Ph.D. Diss., National Taiwan University, 2003), Carl K.Y. Shaw, "Modulations of Nationalism across the Taiwan Strait," *Issues & Studies* 38, no. 2 (2002): 135.

64 Shaw, "Modulations of Nationalism across the Taiwan Strait," 143.


67 Kang Chao, "New Nationalism, or Old?" *Taiwan: A Radical Quarterly in Social Science* 21 (1996): 44.
New Internationalist Localism. Ontologically Chen Kuan-hsin asserts the popular democracy based on weak groups beyond existed reunification/independence thinking. Alliance with local opposition movements and regional international opposition movements turns out to be the ultimate struggle strategy to confront against transnational capital and colonial culture. The self-reproduction of “national chauvinism” has to be destroyed to liberate exploited people. 68 The post-national thinking is a critical mix. Chang Mau-kuei responded with a statement with more substance registered complexity and richness of nationalist discourse. Here, it was easy to see the hazard to commit the error of essentialize all nationalist discourse. 69 In fact, what Chang argued was an innovative thinking that supported civic nationalism that ensured ethnic diversity, plural development, modern civic consciousness, national consciousness, and the communitarian spirit. A more sincere attitude might be the best policy for effective communication on sensitive issues. 70

Conclusion

The unique situation of Taiwan’s statehood makes the study of Taiwanese nationalism trickier to handle. Diplomatically, Taiwan has been deprived of her right to represent China in the United Nations since 1972, and has lost official diplomatic ties with major states in the international community. This situation makes Taiwan neither a nation-state, nor a non-nation-state, i.e. a colony or a trustee. If a nation-state is taken as an institutional arrangement to receive support and recognition from other states, Taiwanese nationalism is constrained by the coercive threat from China to seek independent statehood. 71 Following Brubaker and Cooper, the purposes of existent nationalisms can be categorized as either anti-state, or polity-seeking. 72 Whereas the statehood of Taiwan is ambiguous, Taiwanese nationalists, who were mainly anti-statists before the republic’s first peaceful power turnover from conservatives to democrats in 2000, are somehow framed in an ironical dilemma to choose polity-seeking strategy at the expense of their anti-state position.

In addition, Taiwan is now ostracized as an international orphan with meager recognition provided from less than thirty countries in the world. Whilst most countries acknowledge a “one China” policy after the U.S. rapprochement with China, Taiwan is deemed as a “renegade” province of China. Mainstream Taiwanese nationalistic discourse blame Taiwan’s disadvantaged condition to illusionary “Great China” thinking advocated by conservatives. Compared with other isolated states, such as South Africa, Israel, and North Korea, Taiwan has complied with international laws and behavior as a good world citizen. 73 Therefore, Taiwanese nationalists’ belief in the mindset to compete with China for international representation sets Taiwan in an even

72 Rogers Brubaker and Frederick Cooper, "Beyond "Identity"," *Theory and Society* 29 (2000).
73 Wang, "Rethinking the Global and the National: Reflection on National Imaginations in Taiwan."
worse position of not being accepted by international organizations.

In fact, the national question of Taiwan presents a challenge to existent theoretical work contributed mainly by academics from the West. Either constructivism, or primordialism could appropriately answer Taiwan’s national question. As stated above, built over historical, socio-economic, political, and international grounds, a more inclusive research framework should be constructed. This paper was a short foray to this question. The rationality of Taiwanese nationalism was adaptive, structural, and historical. The Taiwanese nationalists utilize political discourse as a resistant strategy to mobilize the oppressed nationals against the oppressors. In the colonial period, the national consciousness was under forming. The positional asymmetry and historical experience incrementally inspired the national consciousness of the Formosan people and set a cognitive framework to debate colonial nationalism. The postbellum period structured a scenario encouraging cooperation of liberalists against authoritarianism. The revised view of Taiwanese nationalism that integrated new immigrants registered the dialectic dynamics between history and structure. The constructivist theory of indiscriminate identification shed light on the potential of communitarian thinking. Democratization became the prelude of civic nationalism. International oppression of democratic values turned into “the greatest common denominator” that garnered unanimity against the CCP military threat. The complex nature of Taiwanese nationalism rejects homogenization and essentialization. For students of national identity in Taiwan, a more transcendent perspective of national question is required to salve controversy. Judged from the three waves of Taiwanese nationalism in history, a more communitarian thinking that encompasses democracy, human rights, and social justice constitute the core of mainstream discourse. Holding this in mind, strategic alliance with liberal and progressive values and re-incorporate social forces may be the best solution to national question in Taiwan.

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