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Strait to the Point:

A Transnational Analysis of the Formation of a Taiwanese American Identity

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by

Bing Wang

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ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

Strait to the Point:
A Transnational Analysis of the Formation of a Taiwanese American Identity

by
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This research examines the formation of a Taiwanese American identity from a transnational perspective, filling a scholarly gap in the understanding of intraethnic diversity. Before the surge of Taiwanese immigration to the United States since the 1970s, Taiwanese Americans and Chinese Americans were often perceived as a single ethnonational group, and the two identities conflated. Taiwanese Americans, particularly the second-generation, have constructed a distinct identity separate from Chinese Americans. The lifting of martial law in 1987 and democratization efforts in Taiwan allowed Taiwanese and the Taiwanese diaspora to publicly oppose the KuoMinTang (KMT) party, giving rise to Taiwanese nationalism, encouraging Taiwanese Americans to fully embrace the Taiwanese independence movement, create and reinforce a Taiwanese American identity, and call for recognition of Taiwan in international organizations. I argue that the Taiwanese American identity is formed through the disidentification from Chinese American community, construction of socioeconomic support networks, engagement with transnational political activism, and appropriation of Taiwanese Indigenous symbols.

The thesis of Bing Wang is approved.

Valerie J. Matsumoto

Jinqi Ling

Min Zhou, Committee Chair

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ABBREVIATIONS

DPP – Democratic Progressive Party

FAPA – Formosan Association of Public Affairs

KMT – Kuo Ming Tang (Chinese Nationalist Party)

PRC – People's Republic of China (Mainland China)

ROC – Republic of China (Taiwan)

TACL – Taiwanese American Citizens League

TAF – Taiwanese American Foundation

TAP – Taiwanese American Professionals

TECRO – Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office

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Chapter I

Introduction

Despite their sociocultural and historical differences, Taiwanese and Chinese have historically been treated and categorized as the same ethnic group in the United States. According to the Department of Homeland Security, around 470,000 Taiwanese people became U.S. citizens between 1950 and 2014. While only 721 immigrants from Taiwan were admitted as permanent residents between 1950 and 1959, migration increased substantially, with 15,657 Taiwanese immigrants arriving between 1960 and 69 and 132,647 arriving between 1990 and 1999 (Lien and Harvie 2018). Up until 1979, when the United States severed diplomatic ties with the Republic of China (Taiwan) in favor of the People's Republic of China (Mainland China), the People's Republic of China had banned immigration to the United States. As a result, immigration from Taiwan reached its peak in the 1980s and 1990s, at a rate five times larger than those from mainland China. While immigration data counted immigrants from Taiwan and Hong Kong as Chinese immigrants, census data, which now disaggregates these groups, provides a clearer picture on the U.S. Taiwanese population. With the 2010 census and the push to check "other Asian" and write-in "Taiwanese," an estimated 215,441 people in the United States considered themselves of Taiwanese ethnicity.

Since entering the United States, Taiwanese Americans have developed a distinct Taiwanese American identity separate from Chinese Americans. While the Chinese American community and Chinese Americans have been widely studied, the Taiwanese American community remains an understudied aspect of Asian American Studies and

American society. Wendy Cheng explains that Asian American Studies "treats Taiwanese as either unequivocally Chinese or class-privileged migrants without any politics to speak of" (Cheng 162). The conflation of China and Taiwan, as well as Chinese and Taiwanese, renders Taiwanese Americans largely invisible within Asian American scholarly work, leaving a significant void that calls for more research underscoring the intra-ethnic dynamic. Another reason attributing to the dearth of literature on Taiwanese Americans derives from its current population size. Decreasing emigration from Taiwan and the exponential growth of migrations from Mainland China after the 1980s makes Taiwanese an intra-ethnic minority (Lien and Harvie 2018). Nonetheless, the Taiwanese American experience remains "a central and critical component of the social, cultural, and political formation of the contemporary Chinese American experience" (Lien and Harvie 41).

Recent literature often treats Taiwanese Americans as "class-privileged migrants" because a large portion of highly-skilled Taiwanese immigrants migrated to the United States after 1965. Because of this, the pivotal political history between China and Taiwan often remains overlooked. An important difference is the history that Taiwanese tension with China created anti-communist sentiments within the Taiwanese American community—sentiments promoting a reliance on United States political and economic assistance (Cheng 2017). The Taiwanese reliance on the United States promoted American exceptionalism and the Cold War military-industrial complex. Because of this, American imperialism has largely influenced the shaping of the Taiwanese American community. Lien and Harvie further argue, "because of the anticommunist U.S. policy during the Cold War era, Chinese Americans associated with the Nationalist government and/or from Taiwan enjoyed the status of being the "good" immigrants" (Lien and Harvie 32).

Another distinctive quality of the Taiwanese American migration experience is the formation of strong Taiwanese American social groups which function across multiple migrant generations and for various community needs. Taiwanese Americans, who are dispersed residentially, organize themselves along professional lines, hence the emergence of various types of Taiwanese American social, professional, and political organizations. Organizations such as the Taiwanese American Citizens League and the Taiwanese American Foundation hope to foster a strong Taiwanese American community. Local chapters of Taiwanese American Professionals connect Taiwanese American professionals and provide opportunities in various large cities. Political organizations established by both Taiwanese Americans (Formosan Association for Public Affairs) and the Taiwanese government (Taipei Economic Cultural Office) have ties with local governments in lobbying the U.S. government for international recognition. College campuses across the United States formed Taiwanese Americans Student Associations, providing spaces for Taiwanese American students to socialize, network, and find future opportunities.

In this thesis, I explore the methods Taiwanese Americans use to formulate a distinct Taiwanese American identity. Although often conflated with Chinese Americans, Taiwanese Americans have formed a separate identity via social, political, and economic organizations dedicated to serving the needs of their own community. Taiwanese Americans have negotiated their identity through maintaining transnational ties with their home country, engaging in anti-Chinese activism, establishing Taiwanese American organizations, and utilizing Taiwanese symbols, such as foods, celebrities, and the various Taiwanese Indigenous groups. Moreover, the lifting of martial law in 1987 and the subsequent democratization allowed Taiwanese Americans to openly oppose the

oppressive Chinese nationalist KMT government and foment a Taiwanese American identity and spark Taiwanese independence movements in the United States. I argue that Taiwanese Americans formulate their identity through proactively dis-identifying from Chinese American communities, establishing social, political, and economic networks such as the Taiwanese American Citizens League, Formosan Association for Public Affairs, and the Taiwanese American Professionals, engaging in transnational political activism in the United States and Taiwan, and appropriating Taiwanese Indigenous symbols as a uniquely Taiwanese culture. To be clear, the Chinese American identity and Taiwanese American identity is not an either/or categorization. In some cases, these identities overlap. Many Taiwanese Americans use both identities to describe their ethnicities because many Taiwanese are ethnically Han Chinese with ancestry in mainland China.

The research for this thesis is conducted through using a combination of materials and sources, both online and on site. I have personally been involved in Taiwanese immigrant and Taiwanese American circles since arriving in the United States and retain a large influence in the Taiwanese American Foundation summer camp as a high school program director. At the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, my undergraduate alma mater, I was active in the Taiwanese American Students Club where we held workshops and events pertaining to Taiwanese and Taiwanese American culture. Being the son of a Taiwanese diplomat, I often attended Taiwanese functions organized by the various Taiwanese groups in American cities. These functions include Double-Ten National Day parades, Chinese New Year festivals, and Taiwanese American heritage month events promoting a Taiwanese American identity. This study draws from my personal observations from attending Taiwanese immigrant and Taiwanese American events and

being a significant participant of Taiwanese American circles. I draw on my personal observations and conversations within the Taiwanese American Foundation summer camp and the Taiwanese American Students Club at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Taiwanese American organizations, in which I am not a participant, were found through scouring the internet and reading through their mission statements. Taiwanese American events and political participation were found through combing English news articles operated by Taiwanese Americans in both Taiwan and the United States.

In chapter two, I trace the colonial and settler-colonial history of Taiwan from the Dutch settlement in 1624 to today. Taiwanese history is marked by various transfers of colonial rule. Since the 17th century, the island of Taiwan has been controlled by the Dutch, Chinese, Japanese, and the Chinese again. Since 1945, when Japan returned the island to the Republic of China and when the KMT lost the Chinese Civil War in 1949, Taiwan's status as a sovereign nation has been up for question. Less than twenty countries in the world have diplomatic ties with Taiwan and formally recognize Taiwan as an independent nation. In this chapter I also note the politics of nation-building through a political divide between pro-independence and pro-reunification camps and the cultural divide between benshengren, waishengren, and Taiwanese aboriginal peoples.

In chapter three, I explore the formation of Taiwanese American identity through community building and political activism. Taiwanese immigrants in the United States usually do not speak Cantonese and therefore have felt out of place living in the various American Chinatowns. Taiwanese Americans instead settled in ethnoburbs adjacent to

large cities such as Los Angeles and New York City. This settlement in ethnoburbs is another method to disidentify from Chinese Americans, as Chinese Americans mainly reside in ethnic enclaves within big cities. Taiwanese American developers built ethnoburbs away from metropolitan cities. Community organizations such as the Taiwanese American Citizens League and Taiwanese American Professionals offer networking opportunities both on and outside of college campuses. Taiwanese Americans are no stranger to political activism either. Taiwanese American activism is centered on lobbying Taiwanese Americans and the U.S. government to internationally recognize Taiwan as a sovereign nation. Efforts such as the 2010 and 2020 "write-in Taiwanese" census campaign spurred people of Taiwanese ancestry in the United States to write "Taiwanese" as their ethnicity on their census forms.

Finally, in chapter four, I further my argument about Taiwanese Americans formulation of a Taiwanese American identity through the usage of Taiwanese Indigenous symbols. In this chapter, I trace the history of violence, dispossession, and displacement faced by the native Taiwanese population enacted by the various colonial powers. I argue that Taiwan attempts to portray itself as a separate country and dis-identify from China through the proliferation of Taiwanese aboriginal symbols. I further argue that the Taiwanese American community follows suit in utilizing Taiwanese Aboriginal symbols to create a distinct identity. Taiwanese aboriginal symbols have been used in Taiwan's Double-Ten Day parades, Taiwanese cultural festivals, and in the numerous Taiwanese American community organizations.

Chapter II

Taiwan History, Culture, and the Politics of Nation-Building

History of Taiwan

Taiwan has a lengthy history of colonial rule by various colonial powers including the Dutch and the Spanish from 1624 to 1662, the Manchu Qing Empire from 1683 to 1895, the Japanese from 1895 to 1945, and the Kuo Ming Tang (KMT) Chinese from 1945 to 1988. Indigenous people in Taiwan today only account for 2% of the population, but before Dutch and Spanish rule, aboriginal tribes lived freely on Taiwan without oppression from dominant powers. As of 2014, 450,000 people in Taiwan are recognized as Taiwanese Aborigines (Cheng and Jacob 2008). Succeeding waves of colonial powers settled on their land, dictated laws detrimental to the Taiwanese natives' well-being, and forced their populations into reservations on the mountains (Cheng and Jacob 2008). During the October 10th National Day, Taiwan now problematically parades around their Indigenous populations to illustrate the multiculturalism of Taiwan.

The island of Taiwan is also commonly known as "Formosa," meaning beautiful island. The Dutch gave this name to Taiwan when they colonized Taiwan from 1624 to 1662 (Bellwood 1995). Before the Dutch came, Taiwan's southwest was the home to a Chinese population numbering close to 1,500. The Dutch set out to turn Taiwan into a Dutch colony. The first order of business was to punish villages that had violently opposed the Dutch and to unite the Indigenous peoples in allegiance to the Dutch East India Company (Chang 2008). In 1642, the Dutch ejected the Spanish from the north of the island. They then sought to establish control of the western plains between the new

possessions and their base at Taoyuan. After a brief but destructive campaign in 1645, Pieter Boon was able to subdue the tribes in this area, including the Kingdom of Middag. The Dutch East India Company administered the island and its predominantly aboriginal population until 1662, setting up a tax system, establishing schools to teach romanized script of aboriginal languages, and evangelizing Christianity (Chang 2008). Although its control was mainly limited to the western plain of the island, the Dutch systems were adopted by succeeding occupiers. The first influx of migrants were the Hakkas and Hokkiens who came during the Dutch period, when merchants and traders from the mainland Chinese coast sought to purchase hunting licenses from the Dutch or hide out in aboriginal villages to escape the Qing authorities. Most of the immigrants were young single males who were discouraged from staying on the island (Chang 2008).

Under Dutch rule, economic development in Taiwan included both large-scale hunting of deer and the cultivation of rice and sugar by imported Han labor from the Ming Empire. The Dutch also attempted to convert the aboriginal inhabitants to Christianity and to suppress aspects of traditional culture that they found disagreeable, such as head hunting, forced abortion and public nakedness. The Dutch were not universally welcomed, and uprisings by both aborigines and recent Han arrivals were quelled by the Dutch military on more than one occasion. With the rise of the Qing dynasty in the early 17th century, the Dutch East India Company cut ties with the Ming dynasty and allied with the Qing instead, in exchange for the right to unfettered access to their trade and shipping routes (Shepherd 1993). The Dutch then built Fort Zeelandia on the islet of Tayowan off the southwest coast of Taiwan (The site is now part of the main island, in modern Anping, Tainan). The colonial period ended after the 1662 Siege of Fort Zeelandia by the Koxinga's

army who promptly dismantled the Dutch colony, expelled the Dutch and established the Ming loyalist, anti-Qing Kingdom of Tungning (Shepherd 1993).

Spanish Formosa was a small colony of the Spanish Empire established in the northern tip of the island known to Europeans at the time as Formosa (now Taiwan) from 1626 to 1642. It was conquered by the Dutch Republic during the Eighty Years' War. In 1662, Koxinga, a loyalist of the Ming dynasty who had lost control of mainland China in 1644, defeated the Dutch and established a base of operations on the island (Shepherd 1993). His forces were defeated by the Qing dynasty in 1683, and parts of Taiwan became increasingly integrated into the Qing Empire. Following the First Sino-Japanese War in 1895, the Qing ceded the island, along with Penghu, to the Empire of Japan (Ching 2001).

Japanese Taiwan was the period of Taiwan and the Penghu Islands under Japanese rule between 1895 and 1945. Japan had sought to claim sovereignty over Taiwan since 1592, when Toyotomi Hideyoshi undertook a policy of overseas expansion and extending Japanese influence southward and westward (Ching 2001). A growing Imperial power, Japan had just invaded Korea in 1592 with the eventual conquest of China contemplated. To the south an initial attempt to invade Taiwan and subsequent sporadic invasion attempts spanning three centuries were unsuccessful due mainly to disease and attacks by aborigines on the island. In 1609, the Tokugawa shogunate sent Harunobu Arima on an exploratory mission of the island (Christian Daimyo, Harunobu Arima). An attempted invasion in 1616, led by Murayama Tōan, failed when the fleet was dispersed by a typhoon and the only ship to reach the island was repelled (Rath 2010).

In the Mudan Incident of 1871, an Okinawan ship was wrecked on the southern tip of Taiwan and 54 crewmen were beheaded by Paiwan aborigines (Tseng 2014). After the Qing government refused to make compensation, stating that the Indigenous peoples were not under its control, Japan launched a punitive expedition to the area in 1874, withdrawing after the Qing promised to pay an indemnity (Ching 2001).

It was not until the defeat of the Chinese navy during the First Sino-Japanese War in 1894–95 that Japan was finally able to gain possession of Taiwan, and with it came the shifting of Asian dominance from China to Japan. The Treaty of Shimonoseki was signed on April 17, 1895, ceding Taiwan and the Penghu Islands to Japan, which would rule the island for 50 years until its defeat in World War II (Treaty of Shimonoseki 1895).

After gaining sovereignty over Taiwan, the Japanese feared military resistance from Taiwanese who followed the establishment by the local elite of the short-lived Republic of Formosa. Taiwan's elite hoped that by declaring themselves a republic the world would not stand by and allow a sovereign state to be invaded by the Japanese, and therefore allied with the Qing. The plan quickly turned to chaos as standard Green troops and ethnic Yue soldiers took to looting and pillaging Taiwan. Given the choice between chaos at the hands of the Chinese or submission to the Japanese, the Taipei elite sent Koo Hsien-jung to Keelung to invite the advancing Japanese forces to proceed to Taipei and restore order (Yeh, Taipei Times).

Armed resistance was sporadic, yet at times fierce, but was largely crushed by 1902, although relatively minor rebellions occurred in subsequent years, including the Tapani incident of 1915 in Tainan County (Tseng 2014). Nonviolent means of resistance began to

take the place of armed rebellions and the most prominent organization was the Taiwanese Cultural Association, founded in 1921. Taiwanese resistance stemmed from several different factors. Some people were goaded by Chinese nationalist sentiments, while others contained nascent Taiwanese self-determination. Rebellions were often caused by a combination of the effects of unequal colonial policies on local elites and extant millenarian beliefs of the local Taiwanese and plains Aborigines (Abramson 2004). Aboriginal resistance to the heavy-handed Japanese policies of acculturation and pacification lasted up until the early 1930s. Japanese colonization of the island proceeded three stages. It began with an oppressive period of crackdown and paternalistic rule. The second stage was a dōka period which aimed to treat all people alike, as proclaimed by Taiwanese Nationalists who were inspired by the Self-Determination of Nations proposed by Woodrow Wilson after World War I. Finally, World War II, the Japanese instilled a period of kōminka, a policy which aimed to turn Taiwanese into loyal subjects of the Japanese emperor (Abramson 2004).

The Japanese ruled Taiwan for the next fifty years despite a number of small uprisings. Unlike their brutal occupation of mainland China from 1936 to 1945 the Japanese controlled Taiwan as a colony that they wished to develop. They strengthened the island's infrastructure, building schools, roads, a transportation system and hospitals, and improved the economy by introducing new agricultural techniques and some industry (Abramson 2004; Ching 2001).

Japanese rule of Taiwan ended after the surrender of Japan concluded World War II in August 1945, and the territory was placed under the control of the Republic of China

(ROC) with the issuing of General Order No. 1. Japan formally renounced rights to Taiwan in the Treaty of San Francisco in April 1952 (Ching 2001). The experience of Japanese rule, ROC rule and the February 28 massacre of 1947 continues to affect issues such as Taiwan Retrocession Day, national identity, ethnic identity, and the formal Taiwan independence movement.

In 1942, after the United States entered the war against Japan and on the side of China, the Chinese government under the KMT renounced all treaties signed with Japan before that date and made Taiwan's return to China one of the wartime objectives. In the Cairo Declaration of 1943, the Allied Powers declared the return of Taiwan to the Republic of China one of several Allied demands. In 1945, Japan unconditionally surrendered and ended its rule of Taiwan. The territory was put under the administrative control of the Republic of China government in 1945 by the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration. In accordance with the provisions of Article 2 of San Francisco Peace Treaty, the Japanese formally renounced the territorial sovereignty of Taiwan and Penghu islands, and the treaty was signed in 1951 and came into force in 1952. At the date when the San Francisco Peace Treaty came into force, the political status of Taiwan and Penghu Islands was still uncertain. The Republic of China and Japan signed the Treaty of Taipei on April 28, 1952 and the treaty came into force on August 5 (Tseng 2014).

China and Taiwan Relations

Historical context for the complex relations between Taiwan and China is needed to comprehend the conflation of Taiwanese and Chinese Americans and the paucity of

research on Taiwanese immigration before 1965. Separated only by a 110-mile wide strait, China annexed Taiwan and incorporated the island into its empire in the late 1600s. China fully declared Taiwan as an island province of China in 1885. The Kuo Ming Tang (KMT) Party under Sun Yat-Sen defeated the Qing emperor and ruled China from 1911 until their defeat in the 1949 Chinese Civil War to the Chinese Communist Party. After their defeat, the KMT fled to the nearby island of Taiwan to establish an oppositional Chinese government and installed Taipei as the capital of all of China. As of 2019, both the government in Taiwan and China uphold only one sovereign China in a policy termed "One-China." Both sides maintain the One-China Policy to avoid declaring Taiwan's autonomy and independence. In international sporting events, participants from Taiwan must don the "Chinese Taipei" flag and attire to represent their country. China has suggested an invasion of Taiwan if the government were to announce their independence from China; China also revealed their arsenal of missiles pointed at Taiwan.

As a result of the One-China policy, Taiwanese immigrants were often referred to as Chinese upon entering the United States. These Taiwanese immigrants also considered themselves Chinese. Taiwanese students in America founded Chinese Student Associations across college campuses to provide a network for students studying in America. They named the student organizations "Chinese" instead of "Taiwanese" because the KMT government in Taiwan prohibited using "Taiwan" for fear of punishment for political dissent. For example, Chiang Kai-Shek implemented a police state that banned any form of dissension towards the KMT government and any form of pro-Communist ideologies. Carolyn Chen states, "for over forty years, the KMT controlled Taiwan under an authoritarian state. The KMT repressed the usage of Taiwanese, barred ethnic Taiwanese

from important political positions, and killed people expressing political dissent" (18). Chiang Kai-Shek believed to align yourself with a Taiwanese identity meant an opposition towards his authoritarian government. In fear of a coup, he suppressed any ideologies threatening his power.

After the loss to Mao Ze Dong and the Chinese Communists, Chiang Kai-Shek, along with two million ethnic Han Chinese, fled to Taiwan and set up a new KMT government there. Chiang Kai-Shek implemented martial law on the island that disrupted any form of dissension towards the KMT government and any form of pro-Communist ideologies. Under martial law in Taiwan, a transnational surveillance network repressed activism by Taiwanese people in both Taiwan and the United States. Carolyn Chen states, "for over forty years, the KMT controlled Taiwan under an authoritarian state. The KMT repressed the usage of [the] Taiwanese [language], barred ethnic Taiwanese from important political positions, and killed people expressing political dissent" (Chen 18). In fear of a coup, he suppressed any ideologies and killed any dissidents threatening his power.

Cultural Divide

Taiwanese people are often categorized into two distinct groups, migrants pre-Chinese Civil War (pre-1949) and migrants post-Chinese Civil War. According to Dominic Meng-Hsuan Yang and Mau-Kuei Chang, "Civil War migrants and their descendants are commonly referred to as "Mainlanders/mainlanders" or Waishengren/waishengren in Taiwan" (Yang and Chang 2008). Waishengren literally translates in English to "outside people." Pre-Chinese Civil War migrants and their descendants are referred to as

Benshengren/benshengren, or “inside people.” Yang and Chang further elaborate, “The main reason why the label waishengren came to represent civil war migrants and their offspring in Taiwan can be attributed to the emphasis on a person’s “native place” in traditional Chinese society and the legacy of the civil examination system during the imperial dynasties” (Yang and Chang 112). Under martial law, the KMT government specifically targeted Benshengren and Indigenous peoples by prohibiting them from speaking any language other than Mandarin. Benshengren feel marginalized by Waishengren because of the decades of oppressive military rule. Throughout the history of Taiwan, the different eras have produced different groups. Indigenous Taiwanese, Benshengren, and Waishengren all claim to be Taiwanese. However these groups have all felt marginalized by one another. Therefore, questions of authenticity and who gets to produce intellectual knowledge remain at the forefront of Taiwanese politics and by extension Taiwanese American politics.

Nation-Building and Political Development

The February 28 massacre in 1947 was an anti-government uprising in Taiwan that the KMT-led government violently suppressed. Anti-KMT sentiments reached the pinnacle with the massacre as anger towards the oppressive authoritarian dictatorship led to a rise in civil unrest. Civil unrests and the crackdown of oppositional protests resulted in a period of White Terror, where tens of thousands of protestors were killed, jailed, or exiled (Ng 1998). An estimated 20,000 people in Taiwan died in the massacre. The incident is one of

the most important events in Taiwan's modern history and was a critical impetus for the Taiwan independence movement.

As a result of the surrender of Japan at the end of World War II, the island of Taiwan was placed under the governance of the Republic of China (ROC), ruled by the Kuo Min Tang (KMT), on 25 October 1945. Following the February 28 massacre in 1947, martial law was declared in 1949 by the Governor of Taiwan Province, Chen Cheng, and the ROC Ministry of National Defense. Following the Chinese Civil War in 1949, the ROC government retreated from the mainland as the Communists proclaimed the establishment of the People's Republic of China (PRC). The KMT retreated to Taiwan and declared Taipei the temporary capital of the ROC. For many years, in the diplomatic arena, the ROC and PRC each continued to claim to be the sole legitimate government of "China." In 1971, the United Nations expelled the ROC and replaced it with the PRC.

Anti-KMT dissent occurred both in Taiwan and in the United States. To suppress dissent overseas, the KMT government, backed by the United States government, executed a widespread transnational system of surveillance and policing. The KMT government sent student spies to observe and report on the activities of college students studying abroad (Ng 107). According to Wendy Cheng, “by the 1940s and 1950s, however, the KMT was collaborating with the FBI and CIA to assert ideological control and surveillance over diasporic [Taiwanese] organizations” (Cheng 2017). The KMT worked with American intelligence organizations to spy on congregations of Taiwanese students. The KMT feared that Taiwanese student groups were attempting to convince other Taiwanese students to

challenge KMT authority. The United States backed the KMT because they believed anti-KMT ideologies paralleled anti-capitalist and pro-Communist sentiments.

Martial law in Taiwan was lifted in 1987 and opposition groups came out of the shadows, ushering a period of "Taiwanization." This period of Taiwanization promoted Taiwanese nationalism, a Taiwan-centric identity distinct from the People's Republic of China. The government in Taiwan began allowing languages other than Mandarin to be spoken, including Hokkien, Hakka, and various Indigenous languages. Calls for Taiwanese independence became louder and the movement gained more people. The movement of Taiwanese independence wishes to establish Taiwan as a separate entity than the People's Republic of China. A series of democratization efforts gained traction, culminating in opposition parties challenging the decades-long harsh rule of the KMT. The first direct Taiwanese presidential election was held in March 1996. While the KMT held onto power, other parties ran formidable opposition campaigns. The Democratic Progressive Party of Taiwan, founded in 1986, rose as the main challenger to the KMT. With its staunch support of Taiwanese independence and the rejection of Chinese reunification, the party led by Chen Shui-Bian defeated the KMT in March 2000 (Rigger 2001). President Chen's win represented the first peaceful and democratic transfer of power in Taiwan. The Democratic Progressive Party pursued Taiwanese independence and identity but efforts to do so were continually blocked by the People's Republic of China. Because of Taiwan's ambiguous political status, the ROC has participated in several international organizations under the name "Chinese Taipei." Due to the One-China policy imposed by the PRC government, the PRC considers Taiwan an inseparable part of China and refuses diplomatic relations with any country that recognizes the ROC (Rigger 2001).

The Taiwanese government, through the Taipei Economic Cultural Representative Office in various cities in the U.S., funds events celebrating Taiwanese national pride and Taiwanese groups embarking on cultural tours. One major event sponsored by the Taipei Economic Cultural office is yearly October 10th National Day celebrations. The Double-Ten festivities celebrate the start of the Wuchang Uprising, leading to the end of the Qing Dynasty and establishment of the Republic of China. In these celebrations, Taiwanese Americans hang flags of Taiwan and sing the Taiwanese national anthem to further a sense of Taiwanese nationalist pride outside of the homeland. The Taiwanese government thus plays a large role in the formation of a Taiwanese American identity and pride for the homeland.

Figure 2.1: TECO Los Angeles Director-General Steve CC Hsia Remarks at the 107th National Day Celebrations[1]

[1] https://www.taiwanembassy.org/uslax_en/album

Figure 2.2 Taiwan National Day Celebrations[2]

Another example of the Taiwanese government having a hand in developing national pride for Taiwan and crafting a Taiwanese American identity is through the "Overseas Chinese Youth Language Training and Study Tour to the Republic of China," or known colloquially as "Love Boat." Ellen Wu states, "the Study Tour was a four- to six-week "summer camp" offering Mandarin language classes, Chinese cultural activities, and a bus tour of Taiwan to overseas Chinese youth ranging in ages from 14–26 in hopes of 'increasing their ability to use the Chinese language, to understand Chinese culture and history, and to see firsthand the achievements of the Republic of China'" (Wu 52). The

[2] https://www.taiwanembassy.org/uslax_en/album

study tour is funded and administered by the Taiwanese government through the Overseas Chinese Affairs Commission and the China Youth Corps. The Taiwanese study tour serves as a propaganda machine to instill nationalist pride in the homeland. Taiwanese Americans return to the United States after the tour with an increased appreciation for Taiwan, promoting Taiwanese pride in the Taiwanese American identity.

Chapter III

Formation of Taiwanese American Identity, Community Building, Political Activism, and Disidentification from Chinese Americans

Beginning in the 1960s, Taiwanese students travelled to the United States to pursue further education, and many stayed after securing employment. After more Taiwanese immigrated and settled in the United States, the Taiwanese slowly formed a full-fledged community. Taiwanese Americans organized themselves through residing in ethnoburbs with other Taiwanese Americans, establishing Taiwanese American organizations, and political activism. Many saw Los Angeles as the best place to settle because of its proximity and cheap direct flights to Taiwan, the presence of various Taiwanese-owned businesses, and proximity to other Taiwanese Americans. Taiwanese people in America developed organizations such as the Taiwanese Student Association, Taiwanese American Citizens League, American Citizens for Taiwan, Taiwan Chamber of Commerce, and Formosa Association for Public Affairs. These organizations focus on developing the Taiwanese American community and providing resources to facilitate adjustment to American culture. While participating in American politics, Taiwanese Americans maintain interest in transnational politics, engaging in Taiwanese politics and directly voting in their elections. The transnational politics employed mainly focus on gaining recognition for Taiwan on the world stage as a sovereign nation and admission in various international organizations, such as the World Health Organization.

Through political activism and forming Taiwanese American organizations, the Taiwanese homeland maintains a significant role in crafting the Taiwanese American identity. The Taiwanese government during martial law attempted to dismantle anti-KMT and pro-communist sentiments. After martial law, the government aided in "Taiwanization" efforts in the United States. According to Ellen Wu, "the Nationalists have sought to indoctrinate the overseas [Taiwanese] with their definitions of identity and anti-Communist nationalism through a variety of avenues" (Wu 52). The Taiwanese government places prominent Taiwanese American figures in top overseas organizations, offers scholarships to those studying outside of Taiwan, sends agents to spy on activities in Taiwanese American circles, and funds Taiwanese culture tours to the United States and other parts of the world.

Immigration and Ethnoburb

The 1965 Immigration and Nationality Act allowed for the increased immigration of Taiwanese into the United States. Starting in the 1960s, tens of thousands of Taiwanese students travelled to the United States to pursue graduate education, many of them staying in the United States after securing employment. While most Taiwanese students intended to return to Taiwan, only about 10% returned (Arrigo 2006). Highly skilled professionals along with their families constitute a significant number of Taiwanese immigrants to the United States. Taiwanese immigrants migrate to the United States generally because of the poor living standards due to rapid industrialization and pollution, harsh oppressive martial rule, and for the easily accessible education for their children (Chen 2008). The U.S.

government also collaborated with the KMT government to bring Taiwanese students to American universities as a form of diplomacy. Pei-te Lien and Jeanette Yih Harvie state, "the end of World War II and the sweeping changes that came with the exile of the KMT to Taiwan effectively made these students de facto refugees and displaced persons in need of resettlement, which they did receive through a special act promulgated by the U.S. Congress" (Lien and Harvie 37). Under the 1948 Displaced Persons Act, the U.S. Congress allowed refugees with ties to the KMT government in China into the United States. Displaced persons with ties to Communist China did not enjoy such benefits of settling in the United States. Other methods of migration to the United States include marriage to American soldiers stationed in Taiwan and Taiwanese parents sending their children to the United States as so-called "parachute children" to live with relatives and receive an American education (Chen 22).

The large-scale post-1965 Taiwanese immigration allowed migrants to experience an abundance of personal and familial resources in the United States. Particularly in the greater Los Angeles area, "the majority of these Taiwanese immigrants have been found to bypass the traditional urban ethnic enclaves, such as the old Chinatowns, and settled straight into middle-class suburbs. Over time, the (West) San Gabriel Valley of the greater Los Angeles metropolitan region has grown to become an "ethnoburb," with the highest concentration of Taiwanese American residents, banking institutions, and other businesses in the United States" (Lien and Harvie 39). Table 3.1 shows the top nine metropolitan areas with the largest Taiwanese American population. Although scattered across various regions of the United States, the largest metropolitan area by the population of Taiwanese Americans is the Los Angeles-Long Beach-Santa area.

Table 3.1 Top Nine Metropolitan Areas by Taiwanese American Population (2010 US Census)

Metropolitan Area	State	Population
Los Angeles-Long Beach-Santa Ana	California	60,478
New York-Northern New Jersey-Long Island	New York	25,573
San Jose-Sunnyvale-Santa Clara	California	17,125
San Francisco-Oakland-Fremont	California	16,549
Washington-Arlington-Alexandria	Washington D.C., Virginia	7,179
Houston-Sugar Land-Baytown	Texas	7,109
Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue	Washington	6,924
Riverside-San Bernardino-Ontario	California	5,913
Chicago-Joliet-Naperville	Illinois	5,532

Developers from Taiwan had a huge hand in creating the Taiwanese ethnoburb in Los Angeles' San Gabriel Valley. Taiwanese immigrants found this area enticing because of high-tech engineering jobs and economic connections to Asia (Tseng 2014). The reach of the Los Angeles County Taiwanese ethnoburb extends to Monterey Park, Arcadia, Alhambra, San Marino, and Rowland Heights. These areas are colloquially called "Little Taipei" for their large population of Taiwanese Americans and Taiwanese businesses. By 2000, Taiwanese Americans and Chinese Americans comprised over one-quarter of the residents in these cities (Chen 2008). Ethnoburbs are generally larger than ethnic enclaves and have larger populations with lower population densities. They are in the suburbs and have concentrated clusters of ethnic commercial and residential districts (Vo and Danico 2004). With the influx of Taiwanese Americans in the San Gabriel Valley, many white residents did not welcome their neighbors. In 1986, the Monterey Park City Council attempted to declare English the official language and forced all businesses to have English signs.

Figure 3.2 Little Taipei Los Angeles[3]

Political Activism

Taiwanese American political activism centers on gaining visibility in American society, the movement for an independent Taiwan, and disidentification from Chinese Americans. Second-generation Taiwanese Americans pushed for a distinct Taiwanese American community—as evidenced by the 2010 and more recently the 2020 U.S. Census movement to check "other Asian" and write in "Taiwanese" instead of checking "Chinese." This movement aimed to increase the visibility of Taiwanese Americans. The 2010 and

[3] https://www.latimes.com/local/lanow/la-xpm-2014-feb-13-la-me-ln-san-gabriel-chinese-tourists-20140212-story.html

2020 “write-in Taiwan” campaign prompted Taiwanese living in America to check “other Asian” and write in “Taiwanese” on their census forms. Wang Chih-Ming called this type of recognition politics “civic transnationalism.” Wang defines civic transnationalism as “the attempt to pursue a transnational political agenda through civic participation and affirmation of ethnic identity” (Wang 91). Taiwanese Americans demonstrate a civic transnationalist approach by dovetailing liberal language of civil rights with the ethnic nationalist campaign calling for Taiwanese independence from China. Wang describes Taiwanese American identity as centered on inclusion into the American fabric through participation in civic duty and capitalist production. Taiwanese Americans call on their fellow co-ethnics to involve themselves in American politics and conform to American ideals and culture.

While first-generation Taiwanese immigrants to the United States faced constant surveillance from KMT officials under martial law, second-generation Taiwanese Americans did not endure such marginalization. Second-generation Taiwanese Americans were free of surveillance and free of the fear that their anti-KMT sentiments could result in jail time or being killed. Thus, second-generation Taiwanese Americans became more vocal in their political activism. Yowei Kang and Kenneth C.C. Yang’s article, “The Rhetoric of Ethnic Identity Construction Among Taiwanese Immigrants in the United States,” examines the construction of Taiwanese American identity through communication technologies, such as internet forums. They found that “spatial and technical characteristics of cyberspace create a ‘borderless’ virtual community that further facilitates the process of constructing ethnic identity” (Kang Yang 172). Kang and Yang argue that non-immigrants in the United States utilized an alternative strategy compared to first-generation

immigrants in their identity formulation. Second- and third-generation descendants of immigrants form a Taiwanese American identity through their close cultural and ancestral connections to the motherland. Kang and Yang further state that a large part of the formulation of Taiwanese American identity stems from a rejection of the term "Chinese American." Taiwanese Americans who attempt "to step away from the dominant Chinese ethnocentrism and to create an imagined Taiwanese identification have often been deterred by government prosecution, extortion, and suppression as 'Communists'" (Kang, Yang 2011). Taiwanese Americans dis-identify with Chinese Americans through mainland politics. They paint Chinese Americans as "bad immigrants" while lifting immigrants from Taiwan as "good immigrants" who uphold capitalism and American imperialism.

In 1971, Taiwanese students formed the Baodiao Movement to resolve a territorial dispute over the Diao Yu Tai islands. The movement hoped to castigate Japanese militarism and maintain Taiwanese sovereignty over the islands. China claimed ownership of the Diao Yu Tai islands until the Sino-Japanese War in 1894, when China transferred the islands to Japanese control. After World War II, Japan returned the islands to China under Taiwan's jurisdiction. In 1968, oil fields were discovered in the region and Japan again claimed ownership of the islands. The Japanese claim to the islands was supported by the U.S. government. This caused nationwide protests resisting Japanese imperialism and American intervention in the affair. The demonstrations worried the KMT government, which sent envoys to quell the protests (Wang 2013). According to Wang, the KMT sabotaged demonstrations by "disrupt[ing] the speeches, tear[ing] down audio equipment and cameras, and physically strik[ing] the speakers" (Wang 76). The KMT often interfered with Taiwanese protests in the United States in fear of a communist infiltration. They sought to

nip these protests in the bud before the KMT regime was threatened. In 1984, the KMT hired two Bamboo Union gang members to assassinate Henry Liu, a Taiwanese American journalist and writer living in California. Henry Liu had criticized Chiang Ching-Kuo, the president of Taiwan at the time, and wrote an unauthorized biography. The KMT and the United States engaged in bilateral intelligence networks in the United States to spy on anti-KMT activists. The KMT formed the Bamboo Union as an unofficial tool to carry out spy activities and assassinate those threatening to its administration.

Chiang Kai-Shek and the KMT were correct to fear an assassination plot against the leader of Taiwan. Taiwanese independence activists Su Beng and Kim Birei inspired Taiwanese American activists to form "Free Taiwan" groups, resulting in the World United Formosans for Independence (Yeh 2016). The World United Formosans for Independence, founded in 1970, operates in Japan, Europe, Canada, and the United States. The main focus of this coalition is to advocate for an independent Taiwan, abolish the monopoly the KMT has on mass media, and support movements for Taiwan to join prominent international organizations. While the organization officially promotes peaceful protests, members within the organization carried out an assassination attempt on Chiang Ching-Kuo, the son of Chiang Kai-Shek in 1970. Peter Huang and Tzu-tai Cheng were eventually charged with the attempted assassination plot (Lelyveld 1970).

Taiwanese Americans maintain strong interest in the politics in their homeland, often heading back to Taiwan to vote in election years. In April of 1999, Chen Shui-Bian, Taiwanese presidential candidate and nominee for the main opposition Democratic Progressive Party, visited Pasadena City College in Southern California. Over two thousand

Taiwanese Americans came out to support their eventual president. (Chen 2008). This support of the Taiwanese presidential candidate by Taiwanese Americans represents a continued interest in transnational politics. The Taiwanese government allows their citizens to hold dual citizenship, allowing for easy travel back to Taiwan. In the most recent presidential election in January 2020, an estimated 6,000 Taiwanese Americans travelled from Southern California to Taiwan to take part in the election (Huang 2020). Most of those flying back to Taiwan to participate in the election voted for Tsai Ing-Wen, the Democratic Progressive Party and incumbent president. Taiwanese Americans came out in droves for Tsai Ing-Wen because many first-generation Taiwanese left Taiwan to avoid the harsh ruling of the old Kuo Ming Tang. Taiwanese Americans also felt that flying to Taiwan to vote for Tsai was worth the price because of her strong stance against reunification with China and promotion of Taiwan as a free and sovereign state.

The Formosan Association for Public Affairs (FAPA)[4] is a group dedicated to serving Taiwanese Americans that has been built from the ground up to offer international support for Taiwan while also acting as a key resource for Taiwanese Americans. The Formosan Association for Public Affairs was organized in 1982 as a non-profit organization designed to grow international support for Taiwan. The group consists of Taiwanese Americans and American citizens of all ages, backgrounds, and religions. Over the years, this grassroots organization has grown to nearly three thousand members, with chapters opening all around the United States. They have consistently directed their efforts towards two main goals: bringing together Taiwanese Americans and creating support for Taiwan to improve

[4] Formosan Association for Public Affairs (FAPA) https://fapa.org/wp/

the experience of those living in the country (Chen 2007). FAPA members have spent time over the years working closely with the U.S. Congress to improve relations with Taiwan. Members of FAPA are first and foremost focused on advocacy for their fellow Taiwanese citizens, whether they are in Taiwan or anywhere else in the world. Consistently, these devoted individuals make efforts to remain politically active in order to support Taiwan in every way possible, whether it is making requests on behalf of Taiwanese citizens or focusing on advocacy regarding local Taiwanese politics. This group comes together consistently to influence foreign politics and uses its American platform to help build up Taiwan from the outside. In addition to working with politicians to influence policy, FAPA is distinctly focused on outreach to young adults. This group offers a wide variety of resources aimed at young Americans to create an interest in politics, particularly foreign policy and local Taiwanese politics. FAPA creates an opportunity for young citizens to learn more about their fellow Taiwanese around the globe by frequently offering get-togethers and support programs aimed at educating the youth.

Since its inception in 1982, FAPA has called on the U.S. Congress for support in various campaigns to gain international recognition for Taiwan and to strengthen ties between the United States and Taiwan. FAPA has called on the U.S. Congress to abolish the ROC blacklist, to allow Taiwan to join the United Nations, and for Taiwan's full membership in the World Health Organization (Chen 2007). FAPA is also a strong proponent of the U.S.-Taiwan Defense Alliance and the selling of American military equipment to Taiwan. In 2019, the United States approved the sale of $2 billion in military equipment to Taiwan, signaling that the United States will continue to defend Taiwan if China were to attempt to gain control of the island (Horton 2019). The selling of U.S. weapons to Taiwan suggests

FAPA's perpetuation of the American military industrial complex and an overreliance on the American military.

The Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office (TECRO)[5] is an organization aimed at bringing helpful information regarding all aspects of Taiwan in order to build stronger bonds, spread knowledge, and provide an easy way to connect with the Taiwanese people. Acting as the de facto embassy or consulate offices, the Taiwanese government sends diplomat to the various offices around the world, including eleven within the United States. TECRO acts as an intermediary to help bridge the connection between the United States and Taiwanese citizens. TECRO was formed as a way for Taiwan to maintain its connection with other countries around the globe, oftentimes setting up members as replacements for what used to be embassy representatives. Over the years, this group of individuals situated themselves all around the world to maintain relations with global powers in order to ensure that their voices were heard. The de facto embassy in Washington D.C. has spent time advocating globally for the people of Taiwan, and today is currently represented by Taiwanese Ambassador Stanley Kao. Within this organization, various sub-groups focus on different connections, but their overall goal is to build strong partnerships between the United States and Taiwan. They aim not only to show the United States the great things that Taiwan has to offer, but also consistently strive to influence foreign policy through frequent communications with Congress.

[5] Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office (TECRO)
https://www.roc-taiwan.org/us_en/index.html

Community Organizations

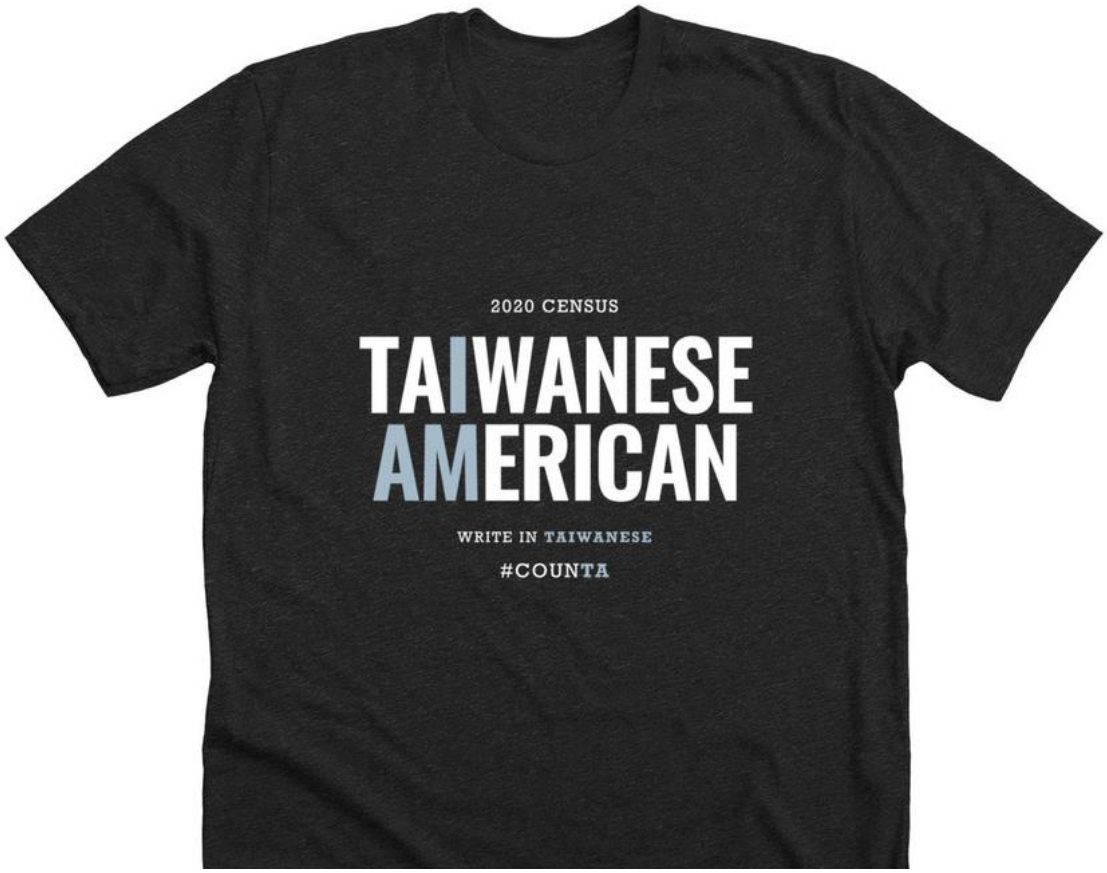
Through creating a sense of Taiwanese American cultural nationalism, Taiwanese people in the United States constructed an alternative value system to provide self-worth for their community. Immigrating to the United States was difficult for many Taiwanese who felt homesick, experienced culture shock, and lacked a community. To offset their longing to return home, Taiwanese people in the United States created festivals, promoted Taiwanese symbols, and formed organizations dedicated to serving the needs of the Taiwanese American community. The diasporic Taiwanese community created an alternative value system through "autoexoticism," or the use of symbols and signs asserting cultural nationalist pride (Savigliano 3). Soo Ah Kwon explains that the practice of autoexoticism rearticulates and redefines what it means to be Taiwanese in America (Kwon 2004). Taiwanese in America created festivals to preserve their cultural traditions. These festivals celebrated Taiwanese customs such as Lunar New Year, Lantern Festival, Dragon Boat Festival, and Mid-Autumn Festival (Ng 1998). Taiwanese foods are also eaten during these festivals, fostering a nostalgia for the homeland. The Taiwanese community promotes cultural symbols and signs, such as food, drinks, monuments, and popular Taiwanese celebrities. Boba tea, baos, and beef noodle soups are gaining popularity with the current generation. The bamboo silhouette of Taipei 101, formerly the tallest building in the world, is another source of cultural pride. Taiwanese people also enjoy celebrating their most famous athletes, such as baseball player Chien-Ming Wang, Chef and author Eddie Huang, tennis champion Michael Chang, and basketball player Jeremy Lin.

Taiwanese immigrants in the United States push for a distinct Taiwanese American identity through the creation of organizations such as the Intercollegiate Taiwanese American Students Association, Taiwanese American Citizens League, Taiwanese American Professionals, and Taiwanese American Foundation. These community organizations are integral to the formation of the Taiwanese American identity. These Taiwanese American organizations offer networking opportunities, prospects for upward mobility, and resources for navigating identity as a person of Taiwanese descent in the United States. The Taiwanese American Citizens League (TACL)[6] was established on July 13, 1985 and its overall mission is to work for better quality of life for Taiwanese Americans through leadership, identity, networking, and citizenship. It is a non-profit organization run by unpaid Taiwanese American volunteers. TACL focuses on developing leadership qualities and an ethnic identity for the Taiwanese youth, and also helps to increase their visibility as a community. It helps youth to understand Taiwanese culture and encourages them to take pride in Taiwanese American identity. It also forms a strong network among other Taiwanese citizens, Asians, and other minorities as a means of empowerment, gaining respect and equality; a strong sense of community follows which stresses building a bright future and a greater sense of citizenship. TACL forms these networks through organizing programming events for Taiwanese Americans of all ages to attend. An online source for Taiwanese American news is TaiwaneseAmerican.org[7]. The website, established in 2006 highlights interesting Taiwanese American people, events and organizations that form Taiwanese America. It is a non-profit organization as well as a volunteer-driven website

[6] Taiwanese American Citizens League https://www.tacl.org/
[7] Taiwaneseamerican.org https://www.taiwaneseamerican.org

that aims to connect and promote those who associate with the Taiwanese identity, heritage or culture. Editors of TaiwaneseAmerican.org posts daily updates surrounding the Taiwanese American community, news on Taiwanese American public figures, and events organized by Taiwanese Americans. TaiwaneseAmerican.org also sell merchandise that portray pride for being a Taiwanese American, such as t-shirts, mugs, and flags. One of their most popular items for sale is the "I Am Taiwanese American" t-shirt with term "Taiwanese American" on the front and the letters "I AM" bolded. This shirt allows Taiwanese Americans to show their cultural pride for Taiwan and the Taiwanese American community.

Figure 3.3: I AM Taiwanese American T-Shirt by TaiwaneseAmerican.org



While TaiwaneseAmerican.org is directed towards the younger generation of Taiwanese Americans, The *World Journal*[8] targets first generation Taiwanese immigrants. *The World Journal is* a global newspaper aimed at Taiwanese citizens in the diaspora. Many Taiwanese American citizens want easy access to global news but are forced to deal with limited global news aimed at the North American population. The *World Journal* offers hard-hitting global news written in Mandarin for Taiwanese in North America. This growing global publication is one of the largest Taiwanese-owned newspapers distributed outside of China. In 1976, the *World Journal* was first created in Chinatown Manhattan. At that point in time, it was a small group aimed at providing helpful news to those in North America who did not have easy access to it. Over the years, it has increased in size and has spread its influence far and wide, with many Chinese Americans and Taiwanese Americans using it as their daily news feed. It is an effective way to maintain transnational ties between Taiwan and the United States. At the *World Journal*, a vast majority of the staff and administration are Taiwanese Americans. For this reason, the *World Journal* is a helpful source of news for Taiwanese Americans and facilitates in community building.

Taiwanese American Foundation

I have attended the Taiwanese American Foundation (TAF)[9] summer camp since 2006 and as of 2020, I have returned for eleven of the last fourteen years. My experiences from my camper days are analogous with the many campers who love TAF and cannot stop

[8] *The World Journal* https://www.worldjournal.com/
[9] Taiwanese American Foundation https://www.tafworld.org/

talking about it. I met my best friends at TAF, formed relationships with mentors, and realized my interest in pursuing research on Asian Americans. At TAF I have volunteered as a coordinator, counselor, speaker, and now a program director of the high school program. A sense of Taiwanese American pride is instilled in its attendees, making this summer camp an interesting site to study. This youth subculture TAF creates is a system with its own hierarchies, set of rules, definitions of what is authentic, and set of ethnics and values. Jennifer Lee and Min Zhou describe oppositional Asian American youth culture as "a form of engagement with the dominant culture to articulate and reaffirm their own multifaceted lived experiences and identities" (Lee & Zhou 9). Members belonging to this subculture understand their second-class citizenship as Asian/Taiwanese Americans. In order to reconcile with their experiences, they deliberately arrogate and carve out a space for themselves. In this space, authenticity instilled by the dominant culture is rendered apocryphal and replaced with an alternative system of values and ideologies. TAF's hybrid consumption of both Taiwanese and American culture signifies a method to "mediate between the expectations of immigration parents and those of mainstream American peer culture" (Maira 2002). The use of food, clothing, and locations creates a unique site for Taiwanese American youths to engage in. Taiwanese American youths then can negotiate their position between dominant and subversive, Taiwanese and American, and first and second generation.

The over-assertion of flashy Taiwanese symbols leaves little room for pan-Asian coalition growth. TAFers refer to themselves as Asian Americans, but many of their symbols and signs signal a stronger affinity for Taiwan. Autoexoticizing Taiwanese-ness entangles TAF into a politics of dis-identification which, as Lisa Lowe describes, "does not

entail merely the formation of oppositional identities against the call to identification with the national state. On the contrary, it allows for the exploration of alternative political and cultural subjectivities that emerge within the continuing effects of displacement" (Lowe 103-104). In regard to the dis-identification of Taiwanese Americans, Wang Chih-Ming argues, "while successfully calling into being an alternative political subjectivity and national identity, Taiwanese American dis-identification seems contradictory to the principles of the pan-ethnic coalition on which Asian American identity and politics is founded" (Wang 108). TAFers are adept at promoting a Taiwanese American pride by the over-utilization of Taiwanese symbols such as night markets, Taiwanese food, and "Chinglish," but it comes at a price of alienating themselves from the Asian American coalition. These symbols and "dialect" produce arcane knowledge solely for Taiwanese Americans. Situating Taiwanese American dis-identification off an American context further cements the forlorn attempt at an Asian American movement.

In late July every year, many Taiwanese American parents send their children to attend the weeklong Taiwanese American Foundation summer camp. Originally established in 1966 as the Midwest Formosan Christian Fellowship, it officially rebranded itself as the Taiwanese American Foundation (TAF) in 1980. Over 300 elementary school, junior high, high school, college, and post college attendees congregate annually at Manchester College in Indiana, about 150 miles southeast of Chicago. Most campers come from a Taiwanese American background, mostly from the Midwest with a small number from both coasts. The majority attend as campers—usually the younger children— while the older young adults attend as counselors. Over the years, TAF's goal has evolved to building and connecting the second-generation Taiwanese American community. Wanting

to promote the personal development of Taiwanese American youths, the annual summer camp has a mission to "foster personal growth and develop servant leaders in the Taiwanese American community for the benefit of society." Overall, TAF has a vision "for people of Taiwanese heritage to make a profound impact on mankind in unique and compassionate ways" (tafworld.org). The Taiwanese American community generally formed after the passage of the 1965 Immigration Act, which increased the influx of Chinese and Taiwanese immigrants (Chen 2008). This renders the Taiwanese American identity a relatively new identity formation in the United States, compared to other Asian American subgroups. TAF wishes to rectify the problems within a relatively new community and buttress the Taiwanese American identity by bringing Taiwanese American youths together for one week every summer.

Attendees rave about TAF and return for multiple years. Some say their return to TAF every year is an act of homecoming. Some people have attended TAF for five years, ten years, some even have been to TAF for more than 20 years. Children often attend TAF as campers for multiple years, then graduate into volunteering as counselors. After volunteering as a counselor, some receive promotions to become program directors, who plan and organize the schedule for the week. Returning members feel obligated to "give back" to TAF by serving in leadership roles and offering the same experiences they enjoyed during their camper years. Campers boast about the lifelong friendships they made, the skills they learned to become productive people in society, and TAF being a place without judgement from their white peers.

TAF consists of five programs, each tailored to a specific age and skill demographic. The Juniors program comprises elementary school students, the Junior High program includes junior high school students, the Youth program contains high school students, the Parents program includes parents of the campers, and finally TAFlabs subsume the adults who are not counselors of the programs. TAFlabs handles projects such as taking photos and videos throughout the week, engaging in social media, and creating the end of the week slideshow. TAF changes its theme every year, rotating around four main themes: Communication, Leadership, Identity, and Ethics and Values. Speakers hired by program directors lead workshops based on the main theme of the year. On the first day of TAF, all campers are divided into various small groups across programs. Each program consists of around ten small groups, each small group with eight to ten campers. These small groups are the groups campers will stay with throughout the week; they serve as a family or a team. Small groups compete against one another, discuss various issues, and act as a support for one another. Two assigned counselors lead each small group.

Throughout the seven days, TAF has a jam-packed schedule full of events. In each specific program, the first day includes an introduction to everyone through icebreaker games and breaking up into their small groups. Afterwards, small group members play more icebreaker games within their groups as they will spend the majority of their time together. Other activities in the week include workshops, inter-programming, and performances. Campers undergo a series of workshops organized by their counselors. The most popular workshops usually involve cooking, athletics, or singing. In inter-programming events, campers interact with other campers in other programs, as a whole-TAF bonding experience. Older campers are paired with younger campers in a “big sib /

little sib" type of activity where older campers act as mentors to the younger campers. Campers in each program also undertake performance-type activities such as choir and dance. The songs and dances are performed at the end of the week at the wrap-up event called "TAF Night."

In order to increase the attendance of campers, the Taiwanese American Foundation creates numerous marketing videos attempting to persuade Taiwanese American families to let their children attend the summer camp. These videos emphasize the use of Taiwanese symbols. In one particular video released in 2011, the story pays homage to the superhero genre and revolves around three characters— Stinky Tofu, Captain BahTzang, and Tsua Bettina. The quintessential evil villain kidnaps Tsua Bettina, a play on "tsua bing" (Taiwanese shaved ice). Captain BahTzang (Taiwanese sticky rice wrapped in bamboo leaves), with the help of Stinky Tofu (Taiwanese fermented tofu), must act in accordance to the superhero trope to save her. The Taiwanese authenticity of stinky tofu, bahtzang, and tsua bing is under scrutiny, but Taiwanese Americans claim these three foods as endemic to Taiwan. TAF created t-shirts so TAFers could wear these Taiwanese symbols on their clothing. In 2014, TAFers featured Taiwanese aboriginal symbols on the 2014 t-shirts, to trumpet Taiwan's distinctive culture that is separate from Chinese culture. Taiwanese food is an evident source of Taiwanese pride for Taiwanese Americans. In 2007, Taiwanese Americans at TAF designed t-shirts with dis-identifying slogans such as, "I am Taiwanese not Chinese" and a t-shirt with the slogan "Stinky Tofu Walks Alone" printed on the front.

Figure 3.4: Stinky Tofu Walks Alone T-Shirt by TaiwaneseAmerican.org

TAFers, being comprised of Taiwanese Americans, prefer being recognized as a separate and discrete entity from Chinese Americans. Often mistaken by non-Asian Americans for Chinese Americans, Taiwanese Americans tend to over-exaggerate their distinctiveness. TAFers even wear "I AM TAIWANESE AMERICAN" shirts to further dis-identify from Chinese Americans. Dis-identifying from Chinese Americans stems from tensions between the two countries over foreign public affairs and from the desire to form a distinct Taiwanese American identity. Therefore, distancing themselves from Chinese Americans is situated both within the context of the United States and in an international context.

Figure 3.5: I’m A Taiwanese, Not Chinese bt TaiwaneseAmerican.org

Chapter IV

Developing the Taiwanese American Identity through the Usage of Taiwanese Indigenous Symbols

On August 1st, 2016, Taiwanese President Tsai Ing-Wen offered a historic formal apology to Taiwan's Indigenous Peoples, fulfilling a campaign promise to rectify centuries of abuses against the Taiwanese Indigenous population. In her speech, Tsai apologized for the invasion and seizure of Indigenous land, displacement of their peoples, and assimilation policies that contributed to the erasure of many Indigenous identities (Coolidge 2016). Indigenous leaders from the island's sixteen recognized groups donned their traditional attire to greet the president and recognize her apology. Tensions between the Taiwanese government and Indigenous groups had steadily increased since Chinese settlers first began migrating to the island. The old policy of dispossession and displacement has turned into neoliberal multiculturalism. The Taiwanese government has paraded Indigenous groups in various formal settings such as the Double Ten National Day celebrations as a simulacrum of Taiwan's multicultural inclusiveness. As a part of the project to promote "Taiwanization" and "de-Sinification" efforts, the Taiwanese government has utilized Taiwanese Indigenous groups to forge an identity separate from China (Jennings 2008). In this chapter I will argue that Taiwanese Americans have followed suit in integrating Taiwanese Indigenous groups and symbols into the promotion of a Taiwanese American identity separate from Chinese Americans. This multiculturalist incorporation by Taiwanese Americans, in their pursuit of a Taiwanese American identity, has largely ignored the centuries of oppression faced by Taiwanese Indigenous groups.

Figure 4.1: Taiwan President Tsai Offers Apology to Indigenous Groups[10]

According to the most recent census, Taiwan has a population of 23.7 million with around 530,000 claiming Indigenous ancestry, only two percent of the total population (National Statistics, Taiwan). The Taiwanese government recognizes 17 official Indigenous groups: the Amis, Atayal, Bunun, Paiwan, Pinuyumayan, Rukai, Saisiyat, Tao, Thao, Kavalan, Truku, Tsou, Sakizaya, Seediq, Kanakanayu, Hla'alua, and the most recently recognized Siraya. Official recognition from the Taiwanese courts provides Indigenous groups with national funding for "cultural preservation, education benefits, autonomous rights over local government and affairs, representation in the central government, and potentially, land rights" (Morris 2018). Each of the recognized groups practice their own customs and speak their own language. While most Taiwanese people are ethnically Han, Indigenous

[10] https://www.culturalsurvival.org/publications/cultural-survival-quarterly/president-taiwan-offers-historic-apology-indigenous

Taiwanese groups are of Austronesian origin. According to anthropologist Scott Simon, "Taiwan's Indigenous peoples belong to the Austronesian linguistic family, a language family extending from Madagascar to Easter Island and Hawaii, from Taiwan to New Zealand" (4) A recent anthropological study postulated that Taiwan may have been the origin place for the Austronesian diaspora throughout the Pacific.

The first people emigrated from China to Taiwan around the Yuan Dynasty (1271-1368); most were fishermen from the Fujian province, taking advantage each winter to catch mullet. The Dutch empire first entered the island of Taiwan in 1590 and initially named it Ilha Formosa, or "beautiful island" (Blundell 7). Until the mid-19th century, Taiwan was known to the world as Formosa. The Dutch first established their headquarters at Fort Zeelandia in the Southern part of Taiwan, now known as the city of Tainan. Fort Zeelandia came in close contact with various Indigenous groups. The Dutch East India Company recognized the rice, sugar, and deer trading potential of Taiwan and began importing cost-efficient Fujian and Guangdong Chinese laborers to Taiwan. Along with Chinese laborers, the Dutch brought in Han Chinese soldiers to protect Fort Zeelandia. Between 30,000 and 100,000 Han Chinese settled in Taiwan by 1650. The Dutch East India Company offered the Chinese settlers free land, tax-free, the use of oxen, and other inducements While the Dutch offered incentives for Chinese settlers, they placed harsh restrictions on the Indigenous communities. According to Katsuya Hirano et al, "the Dutch imposed a number of taxes on subjugated villages, limited between these, and involved themselves in village affairs by appointing chieftains" (197). Dutch and Chinese settlers frequently encroached on aboriginal territories, causing tension with the Indigenous

peoples, who found it “difficult to maintain their traditional economies, institutions, and headhunting practices” (Hirano et al 2018).

Dutch colonization of Taiwan ended when Zheng Cheng-Gong, or Koxinga, invaded Fort Zeelandia in 1661 (Idol Worship). Zheng subsequently ruled Taiwan under the Chinese Ming dynasty and encouraged even more Chinese to settle in Taiwan. The Ming dynasty ended in 1683, when the Qing took over China. The Qing began Sinicization efforts in Taiwan, forcing Indigenous Taiwanese peoples to adopt Chinese customs and forgo their own cultural practices. Under the Qing administration, Indigenous groups “ceased head hunting and ritualized warfare, abandoned their autonomous political structures, paid taxes, and performed different kinds of military service or forced labor.” The Qing continued to expand their territory into Taiwan and through periods of immigration, Han settlers became the majority ethnicity. With this expansion, Indigenous people increasingly fought with Chinese settlers. To escape high taxes and growing incursion into their affairs, various aboriginal groups migrated into the mountains and Taiwan’s east coast. The Qing Dynasty attempted to invade the mountains to control the entire island, but the Indigenous peoples in the mountains successfully deterred Qing forces. As the Qing government failed to exercise control over the Indigenous peoples on the mountains, they named these groups “raw barbarians” and those Indigenous people in the West “cooked barbarians” (Kuan 204).

In the aftermath of the Sino-Japanese War and the Shimonoseki Treaty, the Qing Chinese ceded the possession of Taiwan to the Japanese empire. The Japanese attempted to present their colonial power as opposite to the Chinese, “portraying their predecessors as

inept and incompetent and blaming them for having fueled Aboriginal hatred towards outsiders." However, although "Japanese settlement remained largely administrative and economic; no large-scale emigration project was attempted," Japanese rule was much more harsh (Hirano et al 2018). The Japanese incorporated Taiwan into their empire for capitalist production and tried to pacify Indigenous groups. This led to many tensions with Indigenous groups. In 1914, 3000 fighters from the Indigenous Truku group attempted to rebel against their colonial Japanese rulers and protect their ancestral lands" (Teyra 2019). Although their rebellion was ultimately unsuccessful, Trukus believed, "a Truku's life worth rests in the 'reciprocal' relationship with our homeland […] The Japanese wanted to force politics and economics to establish their 'right to rule,' but they cannot understand our belief system, resulting in the tragic violence" (Teyra 2019). In the 1930 Musha Incident, also known as the Wushe Rebellion, Japanese policeman Yoshimura Katsumi struck Seediq Tadao Mona with a cane during a wedding. Already angered by the brutal oppression of the Japanese government, Mona Rudao led the Seediq in an uprising that killed 130 Japanese at a sports gathering. The Japanese then retaliated by sending two thousand troops to massacre Seediq villages. The Japanese troops quelled the uprising and ultimately killed over 600 Seediq members (Barclay 2018).

The Indigenous Taiwanese faced further restrictions on their cultural expression after World War II. In the aftermath of the war, Japan returned possession of Taiwan to China under the KuoMingTang (KMT) government. When the KMT lost the Chinese Civil War (1945-1949), KMT forces, along with 1.2 million people from China, retreated to Taiwan. The KMT imposed martial law, kept harsh control over the island, and imposed a Han-centric ethnicity. The Cultural Renaissance Movement forced a Sinification policy that

repressed Indigenous expression. The KMT prohibited local dialects and culture. In 1949, Tayal physician Losin Watan, along with a group of Tayal high school students, lobbied the KMT government to return Taiwanese land to Indigenous groups. The KMT quickly repelled these expressions by executing Losin Watan in 1954 and imprisoning the high school students. The Indigenous groups were labeled "Mountain Compatriots" and continued to face discrimination in this period (Kuan 2016).

The years leading up to the lifting of martial law in 1987 and the democratization of Taiwan propelled efforts to proliferate Indigenous expression and call for reparations. Various Indigenous movements coalesced, condemning "racial discriminations, inhuman exploitation to Indigenous labor, and the human trafficking that slaved Indigenous adolescent girls." In 1984, Indigenous activists formed the Alliance of Taiwan Aborigines. This organization has attempted to highlight "unequal treatment from economic exploitation, social discrimination, political oppression, and negligence" of Indigenous groups under the various colonial rulers and "strives for economic benefits, political rights, and social position" for Indigenous groups (Mao 1993). The 1988 "Return of Our Land" movement resisted KMT oppression by issuing a statement saying, "The Aboriginal People of Taiwan are the first peoples to have lived on this island of Taiwan. Because of this, our right to the land is absolute and a prior. Those lands which have been robbed by violence or deceit by the later occupying Han Chinese, or taken by successive governments by legal force, should by right be returned to us" (Stainton 2007). Progress was achieved in 1997 when the Taiwan National Assembly passed a constitutional amendment affirming Taiwanese Indigenous groups. The amendment ensures that the state must "take aggressive measures to conserve and develop Indigenous languages and cultures, […]

protect the status of Indigenous peoples and the political participation," and "support the development of their education, communication, health, economy, labor and social welfare" (Kuan 2016). In 2000, Taipei mayor and Democratic Progressive Party presidential candidate Chen Shui-Bian launched the "New Partnership Policy" to recognize Indigenous claims to Taiwan lands. This policy affirms indigenous rights over Indigenous lands and "any land development, resources utilization, ecological conservation, or academic research project over indigenous land must consult with indigenous peoples, get their prior consent or participation" (Kuan 2016). This ushered in an institutionalization of Indigenous culture into the Taiwan government.

The multicultural inclusion of Indigenous groups into Taiwanization efforts often meant superficial government projects highlighting Indigenous culture while forgetting the oppression and discrimination they have faced. While the institutionalization of Indigenous Taiwanese groups allowed more positive representations in Taiwanese textbooks and media, these groups still have unsettled land conflicts with the Taiwanese government. For example, on June 19th, 1995, 36 men from the Tao group, in front of Taiwan's parliamentary building, protested against the dangers of dumping nuclear waste in their ancestral land of Lanyu. This issue remains unresolved. Daya Kuan lists 21 remaining unsettled land disputes in 2011. While the codification of Indigenous rights in the Taiwan constitution allowed for more representation, tensions remain between the Taiwanese government and Indigenous groups. Indigenous customs, such as hunting activities, continue to be stigmatized in mainstream Taiwanese society.

Figure 4.2: President Tsai Shakes Hands with Indigenous Representatives[11]

The Indigenous people of Taiwan remain skeptical with President Tsai's apology. Many are dissatisfied with the lack of autonomy the Taiwanese government gives Indigenous groups. Aboriginal rights activist Oto Micyang criticized the government saying, "the government says we can organize cultural events and associations, and vote. But they have not given us back the right to manage our land" (Kuhn 2016). While President Tsai has offered a formal apology and promise to rectify violence Indigenous people faced, many Indigenous Taiwanese, understanding former blank statements by the government, have reservations about her promise. Capen Nganen, a representative of the Yami group, "hoped the government will truly deliver on the promises made in this apology" (BBC 2016). One

[11] https://ketagalanmedia.com/2017/09/11/evaluating-president-tsais-apology-indigenous-people-first-anniversary/

year after Tsai's formal apology, the Global Taiwan Institute evaluated President Tsai's promises, suggesting that while the Taiwanese government has made progress on Indigenous issues through making all aboriginal languages official Taiwanese languages and increased Indigenous cultural education, Indigenous people in Taiwan still face injustices and penalties with their traditional hunting, fishing, and harvesting practices (Global Taiwan Institute 2017).

Indigenous symbols and culture are used by the Taiwanese to show the heterogeneous cultural diversity of Taiwan and to establish an identity separate from China. Because Han Chinese settlers in Taiwan shared many similar customs with the Han population in China, Han settlers in Taiwan needed to construct a national culture distinct from that of China. This period of Taiwanization instilled a nationalist pride into the population on the island of Taiwan. The spread of Taiwanese nationalism pushed Indigenous culture into the forefront. On March 12th, 1996, Taipei mayor Chen Shui-Bian promoted Indigenous culture by renaming the street in front of the presidential palace from "Long Live Chiang Kai-Shek Road" to "Ketagalan Boulevard," after the Ketagalan Indigenous Taiwanese group.[i] The *China Times* reported, "By changing the street name, one could instantly break the authority of the new and old KMT and please socially weak groups such as the Aborigines, which have been neglected by the government for a long time. It further makes clear that if the Taipei City government—at a time when Communist China continuously emphasizes its unshakeable view of 'China's sovereignty over Taiwan'—uses the name of aboriginal groups of the Taipei basin as street name in front of the President's palace, then the meaning is—on a higher level—to demonstrate the political

conviction of the DPP that 'Taiwan is Taiwan and China is China' and to make—for the sake of its national status—a demarcation from other political influences" (China Times).

On the appropriation of Indigenous symbols by the settler Taiwanese government, former Minister of the Council of Indigenous Peoples Sun Dachuan states, "the tribes were suddenly full of performing groups that gave performances at many events sponsored by government bodies for private persons, and rituals were always also part of the program. Quite often the tribes even had the opportunity to give performances in foreign countries" (Rudolph 2008). Indigenous rituals were even incorporated into Taiwan's national day (October 10th) celebrations. Indigenous customs and performances had a large role in Taiwan's multicultural nation-building and the spread of Taiwanese nationalism. Indigenous groups were even sent to other countries to represent Taiwan's separate identity under the veneer of multicultural diversity. In the United States, Taiwanese Americans are often conflated with Chinese Americans because of the common Han ancestry. Taiwanese Americans have used dis-identification methods to distance themselves culturally and aesthetically from Chinese Americans. One of these methods includes using specifically Taiwanese customs and Taiwanese celebrities to uplift the community. The other method is the utilization of Taiwanese Indigenous symbols in order to appear less Chinese. Taiwanese Americans, through their organizations, aesthetic productions, and cultural celebrations, incorporate Taiwanese aboriginal performances, rituals, and even their symbols.

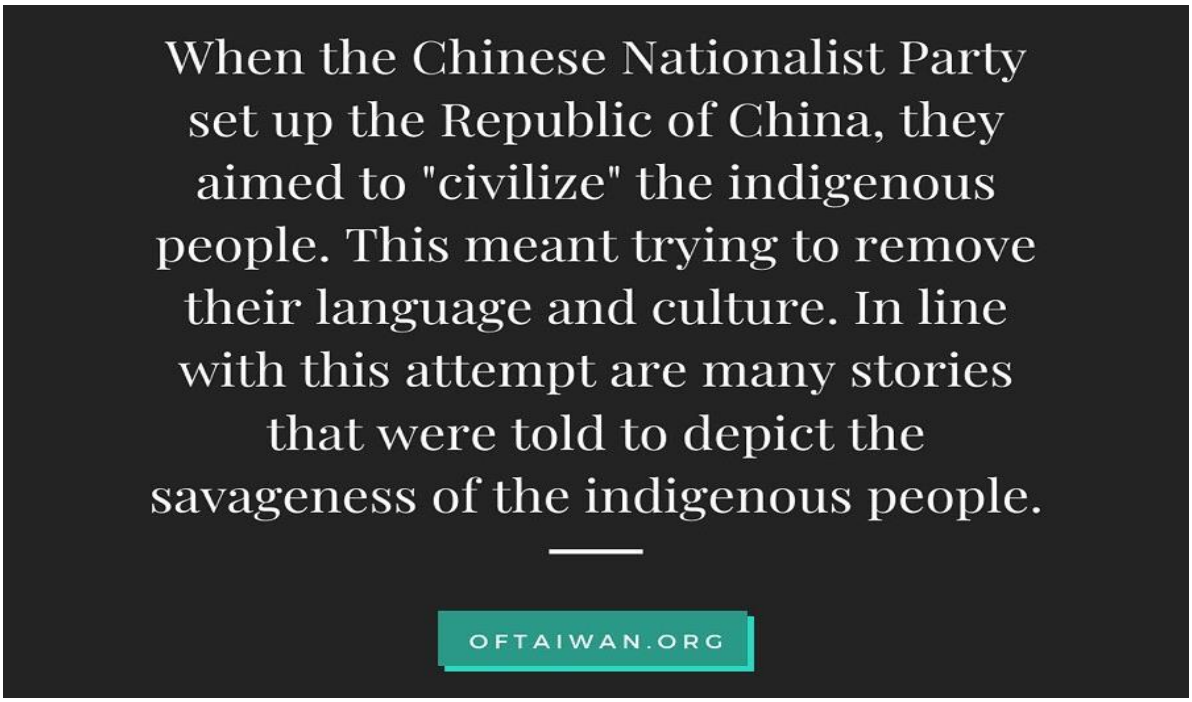
According to Cultural Studies scholar Jodi Melamed, neoliberal multiculturalism is "a central ideology and mode of social organization that seeks to manage racial contradictions

on a national and international scale for U.S.-led neoliberalism. It does this through a form of official antiracism, now often reduced to a nonracialism" (3). The ideology of neoliberalism has dominated political logic in the United States since the 1970s and "proposes that human well-being can best be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterized by strong private property rights, free markets, and free trade" (Harvey 2005). Neoliberalism places economic responsibility on the individual and advocates against governmental or institutional assistance. An individual must pull themselves up by their own bootstraps rather than receiving handouts from institutions. The concept of nonracialism promotes racial color-blindness, a post-racial society, therefore endorsing the belief that racialized histories do not factor into success or failure. In this light, the neoliberal multiculturalist policies of Taiwan's assimilation of Indigenous groups become a strategy implemented by the current Taiwanese government to pacify and contain discord from the Indigenous communities.

Through multiculturalist discourse, the autoexoticism of Taiwanese-ness prevents Taiwanese Americans from critically analyzing the Taiwanese American identity through a deeper, less superficial lens. Taiwanese Americans, therefore, forsake learning about the histories, struggles, and literature of Taiwanese Indigenous groups in favor of inefficacious symbols that do not promote further understanding or knowledge. Scholar Lisa Lowe states, "to the degree that multiculturalism claims to register the increasing diversity of populations, it precisely obscures the ways in which that aesthetic representation is not an analogue for the material positions, means, or resources of those populations" (86). Overemphasis on Taiwanese-ness obscures deeper understanding of the struggles of being

Taiwanese/Asian American and Taiwanese Indigenous people. Lowe contends that multiculturalist discourse perpetuates a superficial understanding of identity, causing a propagation of struggle because of the perceived inclusion into the American society. Taiwanese Americans forsake learning about histories, struggles, and epistemologies of Taiwanese Indigenous peoples in favor of aesthetic production. The emphasis on aesthetic production of Taiwanese-ness obscures the understanding of marginalization of Indigenous Taiwanese groups and issues affecting other marginalized groups.

Figure 4.3: Outreach for Taiwan Indigenous History (OFTaiwan.org)



Outreach for Taiwan, a newly formed Taiwanese American organization "strives to educate other about Taiwan by providing information and understanding about the political atmosphere, current events, and historical relevance of Taiwan."[12] As part of

[12] Outreach for Taiwan https://oftaiwan.org/about/

Taiwanese American Heritage Week in 2020, the organization highlighted the Indigenous people and their history through a Facebook post. In the post they shared, they chided the Chinese Nationalist Party, the KMT, for their erasure of Indigenous traditions. However, this does not tell the entire history of settler colonialism and violence against Indigenous peoples of Taiwan. This instead shifts blame onto the most recent influx of Chinese settlers onto Taiwan instead of the four centuries of Dutch, Japanese, and Chinese colonialism. The Dutch brought Chinese settlers over to Taiwan, who later became the BenShengRen (settler before the Chinese Civil War). This shows the lack of understanding Taiwanese Americans have with the history of Taiwan Indigenous groups. All Chinese settlers benefited off settler colonialism and the dispossession of Indigenous lands by the Dutch and the Japanese, but are pawning their responsibilities off on the WaiShenRen (settlers after the Chinese Civil War). This lack of knowledge towards Indigenous history is also evident in other Taiwanese American organizations.

Taiwanese Americans participate in furthering the erasure of Taiwanese Indigenous groups. In 2014, the Taiwanese American Foundation summer camp chose “Pidgin” for that year’s theme, with the hope of developing better communication skills for the attendees. The t-shirts designed in 2014 must be analyzed for their use of Taiwanese aboriginal symbols. All attendees were given red t-shirts to commemorate their week at the camp. In the middle of the t-shirt was a shield with the word “pidgin” on top of the shield and a silhouette of a bird with outspread wings on top of the letters. The designers of the shirt had incorporated Taiwanese aboriginal symbols into the shield. Taiwanese Americans at TAF do not claim ancestry from Taiwanese aboriginal groups. The designers said they

added aboriginal designs to add to Taiwanese culture but were not sure which specific Taiwanese Indigenous group's symbols had inspired them.

Figure 4.4: Taiwanese American Foundation 2014 Shirt Design

Another TAF activity in 2019, "Family Time Theatre," involved all the campers reading Taiwanese legends and then performing a skit about the legends. This activity was intended to teach Taiwanese Americans about Taiwanese history. Three of the eight legends used in this activity were Taiwanese aboriginal legends. The first legend was about the Thao Indigenous group hidden in the mountains near Sun Moon Lake. Another story involved the Atayal Taiwanese Indigenous group and their legend of two brave Atayal hunters travelling west to slay one of the two suns and to bring back the nighttime. The third story involved the Rukai people's legend of how leopards and bears became partners in providing for safety and hunting for food. TAF's usage of Taiwanese aboriginal symbols while claiming aboriginal culture as their own is a clear act of appropriation. As the

Taiwanese American population increases in the United States, understanding of Taiwan's history and prior colonial rule is further erased. TAFers claim Taiwanese aboriginal culture to be subsumed under the umbrella of Taiwanese culture. Most Taiwanese Americans at TAF do not consider themselves to hold aboriginal ancestry but continue to attribute aboriginal symbols to Taiwanese culture.

The Taiwanese American Students Club at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (TASC at UIUC) offers another example of Taiwanese Americans utilizing Taiwanese aboriginal symbols without fully understand the historical erasure and displacement of the various Indigenous groups. TASC at UIUC was first organized in the spring of 1992, with the mission of connecting Taiwanese Americans in the Champaign-Urbana community and the Midwest and spreading awareness of Taiwan and Taiwanese American history. The TASC at UIUC website states, "our goal is to develop a family-like community that emphasizes openness to discussing topics such as Asian American identity, topics concerning Taiwan, multiculturalism, and relevant APIA issues" (Taiwanese American Students Club UIUC). The TASC leadership team aims to reach these goals by organizing workshops to discuss relevant issues, culinary events to learn how to cook Taiwanese food, and a capstone night market event with food, drinks, and games, simulating night markets in Taiwan. From 2010-2012, TASC at UIUC wanted to demonstrate their Taiwanese heritage by choreographing a Taiwanese aboriginal dance to perform at their functions. Jennifer, the student president of TASC at UIUC, said she and the main choreographers watched Taiwanese aboriginal dance videos online and incorporated many different Indigenous groups into their performance. They thought performing an aboriginal dance would bring forth a sense of Taiwanese pride within the student members

of TASC at UIUC, especially because native mainland China does not have Taiwanese aboriginal groups. The performance group even bought Taiwanese aboriginal clothing to perform in, not understanding which specific group their clothing was from.

Figure 4.5: TASC at UIUC performing Taiwanese Indigenous Dance

In the Spring of 2014, TASC at UIUC participated in the Mr. Asian UIUC pageant with eight other Asian American student groups. Participant groups include the Taiwanese American Students Club, Philippine Students Association, Vietnamese Students Association, Asian American Association, Indian Students Association, Korean American Students Association, and Asian American fraternities such as Beta Chi Theta, Chi Sigma Tau, and Lambda Phi Epsilon. Each of the Asian American organizations nominated one male to compete with other nominees in a pageant that included a question-and-answer portion, cultural expression, and a talent show. The winner of the pageant would be crowned "Mr.

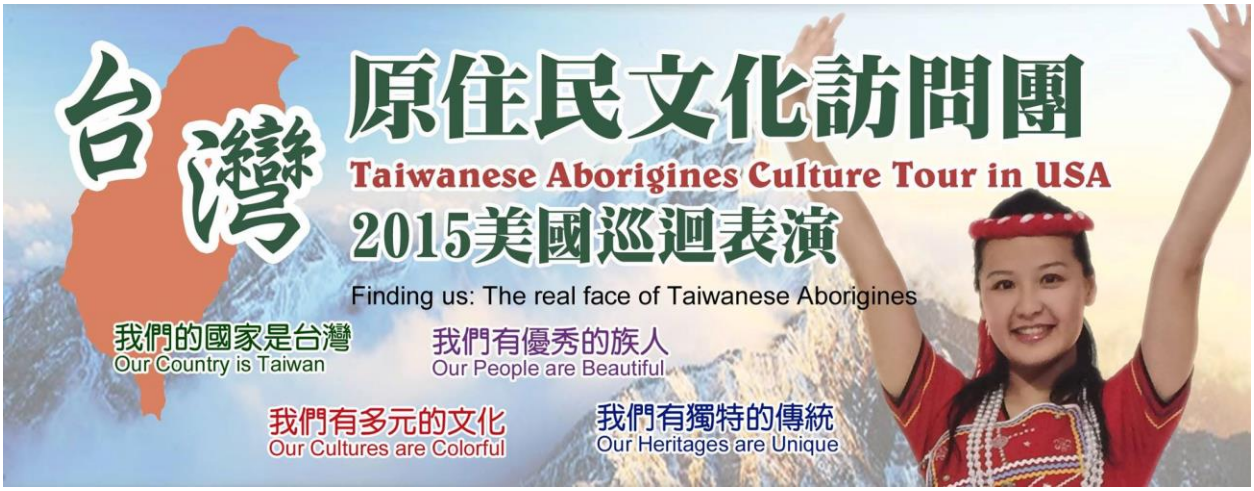
Asian UIUC" for the year. For the cultural expression section of the pageant, the candidates had to find clothing appropriate for the ethnic student group they represent. In order to show Taiwanese culture, the representative of TASC, an ethnically Han Chinese, wore Taiwanese aboriginal clothing, again not fully aware of which specific aboriginal group's clothing he was wearing and of the centuries of oppression faced by the aboriginal groups.

One way of building a Taiwanese American identity utilizing Taiwanese aboriginal culture is inviting Taiwanese aboriginal groups to tour throughout the United States. In 2015, the Taiwanese Aborigines USA Cultural Tour Group, with the theme "Finding Us: The Real Face of Taiwanese Aborigines," toured through nine cities in the United States: Houston, Austin, San Diego, Los Angeles, Las Vegas, San Jose, San Leandro, Beaverton, and Bellevue. This tour coincided with Taiwanese American Heritage Week, celebrated annually beginning on Mother's Day weekend in May. Organized by the independent Taiwanese Aborgines Culture Tour, the Taiwanese government did not provide governmental government for the tour group. The group, however, was funded by official Taiwanese organizations and Taiwanese Americans organizations in the various cities they toured, including The World United Formosans for Independence USA, Taiwanese Association of America, Professor Chen Wen Cheng Memorial Foundation, Taiwanese Heritage Society, Friends for Taiwan, the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan, Alliance of Referendum for Taiwan, and Taiwanese Association of University Professors.

The group embarked on this tour across nine cities as a transnational attempt to promote Taiwanese culture, lumping traditional customs from seven different Indigenous groups in Taiwan. The Taiwanese government and organizations play a significant role in

facilitating transnational ties between Taiwan and Taiwanese Americans. The tour group is funded and brought to tour in American through Taiwanese organizations and received by Taiwanese American organizations in the nine cities. Through this event, the tour group also wished to showcase that Taiwanese aboriginal groups' "country is Taiwan," "people are beautiful," "cultures are colorful," and "heritages are unique." The specific Indigenous group names are not mentioned in the event flyer, furthering the erasure of Taiwanese Indigenous peoples. The event flyer ignores the specificity of Taiwanese Indigenous groups, assuming all groups are the same. This extends superficial, multiculturalist understanding of Taiwanese Indigenous peoples, without addressing settler colonialism in Taiwan and the historical displacement of Indigenous groups.

Figure 4.6: 2015 Taiwanese Aborigines Culture Tour in USA Flyer[13]



Other chapters of Taiwanese American groups also contribute to the erasure and parading of Taiwanese Indigenous groups to create a distinct Taiwanese American identity. As part of the Taiwanese American Heritage Week festivities, the Atlanta Taiwanese

[13] http://www.taiwaneseamerican.org/2015/05/taiwanese-aborigines-culture-tour-throughout-america/

Association of America organizes an annual concert featuring Taiwanese folk songs and aboriginal dances. According to the event description, “we will begin with a dance parade along with an outdoor cultural exhibition, followed by folk songs and aboriginal bamboo dance performed by professional Taiwanese groups” (2017 Taiwanese American Heritage Week). The Atlanta Taiwanese Association of America hopes to develop cultural awareness and networks among Taiwanese Americans in Atlanta, Georgia. This concert does not explicitly state which aboriginal Taiwanese groups would be performing and lumps together all aboriginal groups without showing the intricacies of each group. Similarly, the 2013 “Museum Day Live Taiwan Celebration” in New York City also featured aboriginal dancing without specifying which group inspired the dance. The Smithsonian Museum and Taiwan Tourism Bureau collaborated to celebrate Taiwanese culture at Museum Day Live! The event featured Taiwanese food samplings, bubble tea samplings, an artist demonstration of Chinese calligraphy, a fashion show by Taiwanese designers, and an aboriginal dance performance. Once again, the event description did not go into detail about which aboriginal groups inspired the dance.

Chapter V

Conclusion

With this project, I hope to add to the limited scholarly work about the Taiwanese American community. The Taiwanese American community, in recent years, has begun to establish itself as a community distinct from the Chinese Americans. This is especially evident through the 2010 and 2020 Census campaigns to write in "Taiwanese" instead of checking "Chinese," the patterns of residing in ethnoburbs instead of ethnic enclaves within larger cities, and the use of Taiwanese aboriginal symbols. The Taiwanese Americans have created social, political, and economic organizations to serve the needs of their ethnic community. Much of the research on Taiwanese Americans is often conflated and categorized with research on Chinese American community formation. Wendy Cheng explains that Asian American Studies scholars treat Taiwanese Americans as within the Chinese American umbrella and as well-off, apolitical migrants. This renders Taiwanese Americans regularly invisible in Asian American Studies scholarly work. However, being a newer immigrant community and with the growth of the Taiwanese American second generation, we are seeing a need to conduct distinct research on Taiwanese Americans.

Since the fall of the Qing Dynasty of China in 1911, the United States has recognized the Republic of China and its ruling party the Kuomingtang (KMT) as the sole and legitimate government of China. When Mao Ze-Dong won the Chinese Civil War, the KMT, led by Chang Kai-Shek, fled to the island of Taiwan in 1949. This began a period of martial law, otherwise known as "White Terror." The KMT prohibited people in Taiwan from speaking languages other than Mandarin, from harboring anti-KMT and pro-communist

sentiments, and put the island under military rule. Until January 1st , 1979, the United States maintained full diplomatic ties with the Republic of China (ROC, Taiwan) instead of the People's Republic of China (PRC). With the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 2758 in 1971, the United Nations voted to terminate the ROC's membership in the United Nations. However, it was not until eight years later that the United States decided to establish diplomatic ties with the People's Republic of China. In 1972, Richard Nixon changed U.S. foreign policy by becoming the first U.S. president to travel to Beijing in an effort to strengthen ties with the PRC. In 1973, the United States established a de facto embassy in China called the United States Liaison Office, hoping to work towards diplomatic and trade relations with the PRC. Finally, on December 15, 1978, the United States announced to the world that they would establish full diplomatic relations with the PRC and sever ties with the ROC beginning January 1st, 1979. Martial law was lifted in 1987 and began a period of "Taiwanization." In this period, Taiwan gradually implemented democratization efforts and saw the first peaceful transition of power from the KMT to the Democratic Progressive Party in 2000.

The period of Taiwanization allowed Taiwanese Americans to freely show their political attitudes towards the KMT and China. Protests against the KMT occurred while the KMT kept Taiwan under martial law, even though Taiwanese immigrants knew the Taiwanese government sent spies to monitor their political activities. The lifting of martial law and Taiwanization efforts encouraged the second generation of Taiwanese Americans to fully support the Taiwanese independence movement, create and reinforce a Taiwanese American identity, and call for recognition of Taiwan in international organizations.

Taiwanese Americans maintain transnational ties in formulating a Taiwanese American identity.

I argue that the Taiwanese American community has formed through disidentification from Chinese Americans, establishing concentrations of Taiwanese ethnoburbs, developing Taiwanese American community organizations, and using Taiwanese aboriginal symbols. Taiwanese Americans lobbied their community in the 2010 and 2020 United States Census to check "other Asian" and write-in "Taiwanese." This came from the frustrations of Taiwanese Americans being conflated with Chinese Americans. Taiwan is a smaller country in terms of population, size, and recognition in international affairs. China is ubiquitously known, while Taiwan remains largely unrecognized. Taiwanese Americans also settled in residential areas outside of large Chinese American and Chinese immigrant concentrations. Taiwanese Americans settled in ethnoburbs outside of metropolitan cities while most Chinese Americans resided in Chinatowns and ethnic enclaves within metropolitan cities. This reflects Taiwanese Americans wanting to live in areas away from Chinese Americans and because Chinese Americans spoke Cantonese and Taiwanese Americans spoke Taiwanese and Mandarin. Taiwanese Americans developed an extensive network of political, economic, and social organizations. These organizations allow Taiwanese Americans to find other co-ethnics, learn about their heritage, and seek professional opportunities.

The utilization of Taiwanese aboriginal symbols to establish a distinct Taiwanese and Taiwanese American identity needs more scrutiny. Although Taiwan has been under the control of several imperial powers, Taiwan itself is a settler colonial nation. The

aboriginal population in Taiwan continues to fight for their land and recognition within Taiwanese politics. Ninety-eight percent of Taiwanese are of Han ancestry and most Taiwanese immigrants do not claim aboriginal heritage. Yet, Taiwan and Taiwanese Americans appropriate aboriginal rituals and symbols and parade them in celebrating a distinct Taiwanese and Taiwanese American culture. The appropriation of aboriginal symbols comes from ignorance on the part of Taiwanese Americans. Taiwanese American Student Associations across American campuses utilize Taiwanese aborigine customs while not fully understanding the history of violence enacted by the settlers against Native Taiwanese people. More education on the history of Taiwan and the history of Native Taiwanese people is needed.

While Taiwanese American identity formation is based on the politics of recognition on the world stage and disidentification from Chinese Americans, a question of solidarity amongst Taiwanese and Chinese Americans remains. Wang Chih-Ming terms this type of recognition and disidentification politics as "civic transnationalism." Civic transnationalism allows for transnational Taiwanese Americans, demonstrating involvement in both Taiwan and American political affairs. However, Wang elucidates the drawbacks of civic transnationalism, as Taiwanese American identity is contingent on inclusion in American society through civic duty and capitalist production. This can cause friction between Chinese Americans and Taiwanese Americans as Taiwanese Americans are politically aligned with the United States, rather than the nation-state directly to their West. The liberalization of American immigration laws after World War II allowed for the influx of Taiwanese immigrants to the United States and created a dichotomy of "good" Taiwanese Americans and "bad" Chinese Americans. Chinese Americans were associated with the

communist People's Republic of China, while Taiwanese Americans were perceived as anticommunist. Cold War policies allowed Taiwanese immigrants and Taiwanese Americans to enjoy the status of being "good" immigrants. With the onset of COVID-19 in 2020, will Taiwanese Americans stand in solidarity with Chinese Americans now that China is once again perceived as the enemy? Andrew Yang, a Taiwanese American politician who ran for President of the United States in 2019-2020, calls on Asian Americans to act more patriotic towards America. Yang may cause further friction between Taiwanese Americans and Chinese Americans because of Taiwanese reliance on the United States.

In addition to the friction between Chinese Americans and Taiwanese Americans, we also have to consider the divide between Taiwanese Americans and Taiwanese Indigenous peoples. The lack of education about Taiwanese Indigenous peoples by Taiwanese Americans perpetuates the violence and dispossession Indigenous faced in their history and continue to suffer through. Since Mainland China and much of the world does not recognize Taiwan as a sovereign, Taiwanese Americans engage in "Free Taiwan" and Taiwanese independence movements. This political activity is based on international recognition and affirmation of identity and painting China and Taiwan as opposites, China as communist, Taiwan as free and democratic and capitalist. However, we have to consider who is being "freed" in these self-determination movements? There is a big dispute on who the "Taiwanese" people really are. Taiwan includes the Indigenous peoples, who have lived in Taiwan longer than anyone else. BenShengRen, settlers who came before the Chinese Civil War and after Dutch settlement. And the WaiShengRen, Chinese settlers after the Chinese Civil War. Since Taiwan is a settler colonialist nation, in the discussion of

Taiwanese independence and “Free Taiwan” movements, who is receiving independence and freedom?

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