

RECENTERING TAIWAN: COLONIALISM, THE NATION, AND IDENTITY
IN TAIWANESE FICTION AND FILM

By

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Abstract

The purpose of this thesis is to examine the variety of factors that have influenced Taiwanese identity formation since the latter half of the twentieth century. This was done with a particular focus on the influence of Taiwan's various colonial relationships that have been developing at least since the Japanese occupation. This thesis also points to the power of historical narrative in identity formation and the negotiations that take place between "official" government sponsored attempts at creating historical narrative as opposed to the attempts we see by authors and filmmakers to expose crucial events in their own identity formation that has been previously been neglected or ignored. The results of this thesis illustrate how Taiwan's colonial relationships with Japan and China continue to impact Taiwanese identity, particularly due to the influence of the Cold War. Taiwanese have responded to the influence of the Chinese by creating and propagating an image of a multi-cultural Taiwan. However, this multi-cultural Taiwan still is largely Han Chinese dominated and uses the image of the Indigenous peoples of Taiwan to fit this official historical narrative thus to some extent repeating the ills of earlier regimes.

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A final note on Romanization. The majority of words have been translated from Chinese into English using the pinyin system. However, since me Taiwanese still use the Wade-Giles system, I have left their names in that Romanization.

-W. Z. Hill

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Introduction

“The discourse of Taiwan consciousness and Taiwan identity has proved its power and effectiveness in less than two decades, and it is still in the process of continuous (re)construction and (re)writing. There are many indications that Taiwanese are living in a time of change, from the rewriting of history books to the renaming of streets and parks. A large-scale transformation of consciousness is underway, even though it appears to be gradual. The refashioning of Taiwaneseess is undergoing its due process in all its contestatory and contradictory ways, as the official discourse increasingly comes to adopt a multicultural, multiethnic, and multilingual orientation. What can Taiwan’s culture do, then? Rather, how has Taiwan’s culture done?”¹

-Shu-mei Shih

November of 2015 was a seminal moment in Taiwanese history as Tsai Ying-wen (1956-) was elected as the first female president. Tsai’s career will not only be defined by her gender, however as it is also the gains of her party the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) that could very well be the beginning of a new era in Taiwan. Unlike the Nationalist party (Kuomintang or KMT), which imagines a future where Taiwan and China are reunited as one country under democracy, the DPP’s stance is officially much more ambiguous towards China, and unofficially appears to be in favor of a Taiwan independent of China.

The KMT has historically been the dominant party of Taiwan, largely due to the fact that they were an authoritarian regime that did not allow presidential elections until 1996. The first election resulted in the KMT’s Lee Teng-hui being elected. However, Lee’s position within the KMT was very much an outlier, one due to his strong desire to see an independent Taiwan. After

¹ Shu-mei Shih, *Visuality and Identity Sinophone Articulations Across the Pacific*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), 170.

that, from 2000 to 2008 Chen Shui-bian (1950-), a member of the DPP, acted as president. Although he only won with 39% of the vote, his victory seemed like a clear sign leading towards Taiwanese independence. However, his eight years in office were full of scandals involving his family, and by the end of term his approval rating was at 21%. The scandals of Chen Shui-bian's administration left ample room for the KMT to come back to power as Ma Ying-jeou (1950-) was elected president in 2008.

Ma won his first term with over 58% of the vote, as the DPP seemed to lose credibility with Taiwanese voters. Although he will go down in history for his 2015 meeting with Xi Jinping as the first president of the Republic of China on Taiwan (henceforth ROCT) to meet with the president of the People's Republic of China (PROC) in over seventy years, the end of his term was met with protest and outrage at some of his policies. In particular, his decision to sign a trade agreement with China led to the creation of the Sun Flower Student Movement (*taiyanghuaxueyun*). These students argued that the KMT pushed the agreement through the Legislative Yuan in order to focus on any perceived benefits, while also ignoring any negative consequences.² The protesters believed that the agreement would hurt Taiwanese economically while also making them more dependent on China. Along with that, under Ma's guidance, school textbooks once again focused on Taiwan's relationship with China. This led to more protests throughout the summer of 2015 as students occupied various government buildings. By the time of the presidential elections the DPP was set up to see clear gains in support throughout Taiwan. This proved to be true as Tsai Ying-wen won with 56% of the vote. Tsai had come a long way from her first attempt at the presidency as the DPP candidate in 2012, after which she resigned

² The Legislative Yuan is the Taiwanese version of a parliament and makes up one of the five branches of Taiwanese government.

from her position after losing to Ma. It was not until the presence of the Sun Flower Movement in 2014 that she came back as party chair leader.

Although these elections point to a number of issues including Taiwanese trust in their government, the crisis of identity seems to be key to understanding contemporary Taiwan. The revolving dominance of particular parties in the last sixteen years suggest that it is not simply a matter of Taiwanese independence, as much as it is that whoever is president must fight for the rights and voices of the Taiwanese above all else. However, this leads us to questions of who actually are the Taiwanese and what do they want? Since the ROCT and PRC have focused on maintaining the status-quo of the One China policy, other issues have at least temporarily overridden both the KMT and DPP's stance on Taiwanese independence. Therefore, issues such as the corruption scandals under Chen Shui-bian appear to have outweighed either parties' position towards China. At the same time, maintaining the status-quo has added a layer of ambiguity to each party's position, allowing them to defer practical action on the issue until a more suitable time. However, as the DPP reaches a majority in the government for the first time it is logical to wonder how close fighting for the rights of the Taiwanese is to ideas of Taiwanese independence. Not only that, but in this context it seems an appropriate time to reflect on the process of *bentuhua* (Taiwanization) that has taken place since the last few decades of the twentieth century.

This thesis is a study of nativism and nationalism in the film and literature of Taiwan since the 1970s, both of which reveal the internal and external factors that have influenced Taiwanese identity formation. This study focuses on these questions: How has the legacy of colonialism in Taiwan manifested itself in cultural products such as film and literature? How has globalization influenced nationalist and nativist movements within Taiwan? Who are the

dominant (neo)colonial powers influencing Taiwan currently? What is the role of Taiwan indigenous peoples in contemporary identity formation? And what are the external factors influencing the development of the *bentuhua* movement? By focusing on these questions, I will show a number of things. First, the legacy of colonialism remains a dominant factor in Taiwan's identity formation. Also, that globalization and a Cold War geo-political structure are a dominant influence on Taiwanese nativism and nationalism, especially in the case of *bentuhua*. Finally, the indigenous peoples of Taiwan have been co-opted as part of a multi-cultural message, even as there is a refusal to recognize colonialism under the Qing dynasty. Answering these questions will provide insight to the current political and cultural situation within Taiwan as it rests somewhere between independence and subordination to China.

Throughout this thesis fiction and film are examined as both sites of culture and history. I agree with Edward Said when he argues that narrative is “the method colonized people use to assert their own identity and the existence of their history.”³ Although fiction and historical writing often have different goals, they both assert a narrative of the past that whether or not they are entirely accurate provide a sense of what is culturally important at particular moments in a society's history. Literature and fiction thus offer an insight into the cultural consciousness of a particular time. In the case of Taiwan, if we want to understand colonial culture or in this case (post)colonial culture we must not only look at “official reports and texts related directly to the process of governing colonies and extracting wealth, but also a variety of travelers' accounts, representations produced by other colonial actors such as missionaries and collectors of ethnographic specimens, and fictional, artistic, photographic, cinematic, and decorative

³ Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Vintage, 1993), xii.

appropriations.”⁴ It is not only the traditional historical documents produced by governments that can provide insights into the temporal period they emerged from. As Michael Berry has argued “Fiction, film, and other popular media play an important and fundamental role in shaping popular conceptions and imaginations of history.”⁵ As people are more likely to come into contact with a work of popular culture than a history text, the perception of the historical moments captured in fiction and film plays an increasingly important role. Beyond that, they help to express earlier periods in a different way than traditional historiographical texts. Fiction presents a narrative that “comes alive and articulates human experience in ways that traditional historiography is incapable of speaking.”⁶ This form of historical narrative does not aim to displace other historical narratives, only to enhance them by offering a different perspective on the events through a variety of techniques and mediums. Examining historical narrative or “the past” in fiction and film not only shows how the importance of “the past” lies in its ability to influence the present, but how the perception of an historical narrative can change over time due to a variety of outside influences including who holds power at a particular moment.

As artistic freedom has continued to change in the last few decades, Taiwanese artists have created new cultural spaces that allow them to address issues that were taboo under martial law. Many of these issues are prominent in the stories and films that will be discussed in this thesis, particularly the Japanese period of occupation, an independent Taiwanese identity, and the history of the indigenous peoples in Taiwan. These products of popular culture have not only echoed and subverted social, political, and cultural trends, they have also had a wide-ranging

⁴ Robert Tierny, *Tropics of Savagery: The Culture of Japanese Empire in Comparative Frame*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010), 1.

⁵ Micheal Berry, *A History of Pain: Trauma in Modern Chinese Literature and Film*. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), 3.

⁶ *Ibid.*,

influence on other forms of popular imagination as well as societal dialogues that continue to help define identities and cultures in Taiwan.

The rest of this chapter is broken down in the following way. First, there will be a discussion of the *bentuhua* movement and its development since the 1990s. Then, I will provide an explanation of some of the key terms relating to colonialism that I will discuss throughout this paper. This will be followed by a further exploration of the changes that have taken place in Taiwan over the last half of the twentieth century, as I will look at history textbooks in Taiwan and the debates that have surrounded their contents. This will be followed by a section on the role of nativism and nationalism in Taiwan. Finally, I will end this chapter with an outline and organization of the rest of this thesis.

***Bentuhua* Nationalism**

Since the period of Japanese occupation, there have been attempts by Taiwanese to define themselves through a local identity. The most recent iteration of this, *Bentuhua*, has been crucial to the revelation of identity in contemporary Taiwan. Although *bentu* literally means “this earth,” the term is usually translated as “localization” or “indigenization.” However, as scholars have pointed out, in this context “Taiwanization” best encapsulates the meaning, because localization “fits too closely with the Chinese view of Taiwan as a ‘local’ government,” while other terms are either vague or misleading.⁷ Since the lifting of martial law in 1987, *bentuhua* has been at the forefront of large scale attempts for the Taiwanese to interact with their particular past and put the historical pieces together as they see fit. Part of the movement has thus included preserving

⁷ J. Bruce Jacobs, ““Taiwanization” in Taiwan's politics,” *Cultural, Ethnic, and Political Nationalism in Contemporary Taiwan: Bentuhua*, ed. John Makeham and A-chin Hsiao (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005) 18.

artifacts from non-Han groups in Taiwan, even including many of the relics left by the Japanese during the colonial period.⁸ By preserving these artifacts, *bentuhua* supporters aim to differentiate themselves from the Chinese by focusing on Taiwan's unique history.⁹ As I will discuss later on, indigenous peoples' history and culture has been increasingly pushed to the forefront of Taiwanese identity in order to emphasize these differences. As the debate over the Chineseness of Taiwan continues world-wide, and China continues to influence Taiwan's relationships globally, resistance against Chinese (neo)colonialism, or China's geopolitical and economic dominance that influences Taiwan's global standing as well as their internal politics, clearly is the most influential factor in the movement's agenda. For instance, only a small number of countries maintain formal diplomatic relationships with Taiwan, because according to the UN, the People's Republic of China has sovereignty over Taiwan. This in part explains how *bentuhua* is able to frame the Japanese occupation so favorably, unlike in South Korea where spite over the Japanese aggression and occupation remains strong. *Bentuhua* has also particularly emphasized the history of Taiwan's indigenous peoples who have lived on the island for centuries if not millennia before any Chinese occupation.

As other scholars have already pointed out, *Bentuhua* has also been heavily associated with the democratization movement in Taiwan. In this regard, Lee Teng-hui (1923-) possibly plays a dual-role as the father of both Taiwanization and democratization in contemporary Taiwan. Lee first came to power after the death of Chiang Ching-kuo, the son of Chiang Kai-shek. Many at the time believed Lee would be a quiet president mainly holding down the fort for

8 Jeremy Taylor, "Reading History Through the Built Environment in Taiwan," *Cultural, Ethnic, and Political Nationalism in Contemporary Taiwan: Bentuhua*, 175.

9 John Makeham, "Introduction," *Cultural, Ethnic, and Political Nationalism in Contemporary Taiwan: Bentuhua*, 3.

whoever would be brought in next.¹⁰ This possibly had to do with Lee being a Taiwanese-born (*benshengren*) unlike the vast majority of the others in the KMT who were born on the mainland (*waishengren*), or the fact that many were just unsure of what to expect at the end of forty years of Chiang rule. However, Lee took his job very seriously and quickly moved to promote policies of democratization through Taiwan eventually succeeding. All of this largely stems from Lee's belief in Taiwanese self-determination. As Lee once said: "What is actually the goal of Taiwan's democratization? Speaking simply, it is the 'Taiwanization of Taiwan.'" ¹¹

He also clearly recognized the role of Japan in Taiwan's history. Having grown up during the Japanese occupation, Lee was fluent in Japanese and had much respect towards them, a point he did not hesitate to acknowledge. It is difficult to say how his open admiration for the Japanese affected Taiwanese voters' perception of him, but it clearly was not a disadvantage. Lee enjoyed great popularity and won the first ROCT presidential election in a landslide. It would be naïve to argue that all Taiwanese similarly admired the Japanese and thus supported Lee. However, it is interesting to note that the face of *bentuhua* and democratization was a member of the "Do-san" generation, who vividly remembers Japanese occupation and who so openly flaunted his respect of Japan.¹² Even more than that, Lee has openly stated that he has always viewed the KMT, the party he was a member of, as a foreign regime.¹³ After being elected in 1996, four years later, in accordance with constitutional term limits he helped impose, he did not run again and peacefully left office. After being a member of the KMT for decades, Lee finally left in 2001 to form the

¹⁰ J. Bruce Jacobs, 35.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 17.

¹² Leo Ching, "Colonial Nostalgia or Postcolonial Anxiety: The Dosan Generation In-Between "Restoration" and "Defeat"" *Sino-Japanese Transculturations : From the Late Nineteenth Century to the End of the Pacific War* ed. Richard King and Katsuhiko Endo (Lanham, Md: Lexington Books, 2012), 212.

¹³ June Yip, *Envisioning Taiwan: Fiction, Cinema, and the Nation in the Cultural Imaginary* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004), 6.

strongly pro-independence group the Taiwan Solidarity Union.¹⁴ At the age of 93, Lee still plays the role of elder statesmen, however his role has diminished with his advanced age. Regardless, Lee was a key player in the promotion of both *bentuhua* and democratization and his legacy will remain highly influential. Due to the importance of *bentuhua*, I will refer to contemporary nationalism in Taiwan as *bentu* nationalism. As *bentu* nationalism is directly tied to the legacy of colonialism in Taiwan, the next section will address some of the key terms related to “colonization” and their use throughout this thesis.

Colonialism and Its Variations

Before going further I would like to spend some time discussing the various forms of “colonialism” that I will continue to discuss throughout this thesis. Colonialism itself refers to an outside power occupying and ruling over land that was not their own. Of course, claims over land can be quite complicated making it difficult to understand whether or not a government is an outside power. In the case of the KMT, which was given Taiwan by Allied Power (particularly the US) after World War II, although China did have a previous claim over Taiwan after fifty years of Japanese rule and the fall of the Qing in China the relationship between Taiwan and China could not return to its earlier form. Even if there was an expectation among Taiwanese that the KMT’s arrival in 1945 was a homecoming of sorts, the KMT’s harsh rule, national promotion of “traditional” Chinese culture, and dismissal of Taiwanese culture and history easily aligns with other colonial forces. Simply put, the KMT were not Taiwan, they arrived and asserted their power, projecting onto Taiwan the image of just yet another province in China. This attitude, in effect, largely ignored Taiwanese who had been living on the island

¹⁴ Scott Simon, “Multiculturalism and Indigenism: Contrasting the Experiences of Canada and Taiwan,” *Politics of Difference in Taiwan* ed. Tak-wing Ngo and Hong-zen Wang (New York: Routledge, 2011), 21.

for possibly hundreds of years if not thousands in the case of the indigenous peoples in the name of future success over the PRC.

As the direct occupation of land has largely ended since the end of WWII, the period of time since the 1950s is often referred to as (post)colonial. (Post)colonialism suggests that while colonization has largely ended colonial relationships still continue to shape geo-political and economic relationships around the world. Rather than use the term colonialism, (neo)colonialism is used to express this relationship. (Neo)colonialism refers to the assertion of power by an outside group that is not directly occupying land or running the government. This can take form in a number of ways most notably through economic or geo-political methods. For instance, countries with stronger economies such as the US or Japan can take advantage of countries with weaker economies by suggesting that their investments into the weaker country will not continue unless the weaker country follows their demands. This kind of relationship can also exist geo-politically as a country with a more pivotal role in the world can assert their power by making demands of a weaker country or else the weaker country may face geo-political restrictions such as their involvement in an international group. The key to understanding (neo)colonialism is that although the dominant power may not be directly occupying a colony, they are continuing earlier colonial relationships by asserting their power through various means such as the ones I have just discussed.

Finally, (de)colonization is the attempt by the former colony to address its colonial history and culture. By understanding the influence colonialism has left in their country, they can move beyond that period of their history and enjoy a more equal relationship. However, (de)colonization was and continues to be a complicated process informed by a number of factors. In order to truly (de)colonize, not only must the (ex)colony deal with the legacy of colonialism

within their country, but former empires must (de)imperialize. The (de)imperializing of the former colonizer involves examining “the content, motives, desires, and consequences of the imperialist history that has formed its own subjectivity.”¹⁵ This can take form in numerous ways such as Japan’s recent donation to “comfort women” as form of apology. Whether or not this is a substantial enough apology is difficult to grasp, but it is an attempt by Japan to address their past as opposed to just ignoring. To sum up, the relationship between (ex)colonized/(ex)colonizer can only truly transcend their colonial history once both sides have addressed the issues of power between them. Many of the texts analyzed here are attempts by Taiwanese to (de)colonize, although as I will discuss later these attempts are often influenced by various outside factors that can alter the relationship between (ex)colonized/(ex)colonizer before they have truly (de)colonized. However, in order to understand how these texts are different it is important to have a point of comparison.

Official views of history offer a view onto other conceptions of historical narratives from the same time periods. The contents of history textbooks will thus be an important match point into what kind of societal, cultural, and political situation these stories and films emerged from and were competing against. To provide more context in regard to the state’s view of Taiwanese identity, I will first introduce Taiwanese history textbooks and the debates around them as indicators of change in state-based identity formation. One of the clear indicators of the reevaluation of Taiwan's identity in the last twenty years can be seen when considering how the official view, or the view offered by the Taiwanese government, of Taiwan's place in the world has changed in history textbooks. The public education system of any country is a strong tool used by the state to help impose an identity on its young citizens. History education in particular

¹⁵ Kuan-hsing Chen, *Asia as Method: Towards Deimperialization* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010), 4.

is often used to build a community bonded by a single past.¹⁶ Edward Vickers asserts that this is especially the case in East Asian countries, because of a traditional obsession with the state that has been influenced by the practice of ancestor worship.¹⁷ Since history education is critical to the development of national identity especially in East Asian countries, it is important to understand what is being taught in history textbooks, and how these texts have changed over time. The changes in material being taught in history textbooks allows for a different perception of Taiwanese identity. I will start with the textbooks written in the martial law era and then move to recent debates surrounding textbooks of the late 1990s. The differences between the content of the two periods will provide insight into the goals of *bentuhua* as well as negotiations of Taiwanese historical narratives and identities in general.

KMT Propaganda and Japan in History Textbooks of the Martial Law Era

To better comprehend the changes and re-evaluations of Taiwanese identity that have taken place in contemporary Taiwan it is important to first examine the official view of Taiwan's identity and what aspects have changed such as attitudes towards the Japanese in Taiwanese history, as well as the propaganda system that was in place during the martial law era. After gaining power and silencing their critics, the KMT made propaganda a priority in hopes that they would not have to resort to extreme measures as they did during the February 28th incident. Although the KMT continued to resort to more extreme measures, propaganda was still a powerful tool in projecting their image of the ROCT. An image founded on the

16 Edward Vickers, "Introduction: History Nationalism, and the Politics of Memory," In *History education and national identity in East Asia* ed. Edward Vickers and Alisa Jones (New York, NY: Routledge, 2005), 7.

17 Ibid., 10.

progression/development of modernity in Taiwan and a Sino-centrism that projected Taiwan as the true modern “Chinese” state.

Many Taiwanese and Mainlanders who were ideologically opposed to the KMT were harshly punished to set an example throughout the island. For instance, in 1964 National Taiwan University professor Peng Ming-min was jailed for “pro-independent activities,” and the Mainlander intellectual Lei Chen was placed in prison for ten years after attempting to form a new political party.¹⁸ Any beliefs that could be seen as pro-independence or communist were quickly and harshly punished.

The KMT also relied greatly on mass media and the education system to invent new traditions in order to build a national Taiwanese identity. The invention of tradition, most famously explained by Eric Hobsbawm, explains how the state creates new cultural events in order to build a singular identity.¹⁹ As Shelly Rigger writes: “Cinemas opened each show with the national anthem, during which movie-goers were required to stand at attention. The 10 October National Day celebration was an annual extravaganza of patriotism, complete with displays of military hardware, parades of uniformed men and women, and enthusiastic crowds.”²⁰ Beyond that, the KMT had strict regulations on all media including newspapers. From 1951 until 1988 only thirty-one newspaper licenses were made available and the KMT owned approximately a third of them, while the rest were under strict supervision.²¹ The KMT had similar dominance in the realms of broadcast television and radio as well.²²

¹⁸ Shelly Rigger, *Politics in Taiwan: Voting for Democracy* (London: Routledge, 1999), 71.

¹⁹ For more on this concept see: Eric Hobsbawm, *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

²⁰ Rigger, 72.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 73.

²² For more information on KMT dominance in the media see: Shelly Rigger, *Politics in Taiwan: Voting for Democracy*.

Finally, the education system was a major part of the KMT's plan to "Sinicize" the Taiwanese. History textbooks were focused almost entirely on the history of China as well as the inventions and accomplishments of the Chinese.²³ As Taiwan moved further into the twentieth century, the KMT strengthened their hold and pushed their identity and beliefs by enforcing their historical narrative. History textbooks, in particular, are great sources for understanding the historical narratives that the KMT tried to promote throughout the island in order to bond everyone to a single past.²⁴ In addition to producing anti-communist propaganda after coming to Taiwan, the KMT's other main goal was "cultural restoration" (*wenhua fuxing*) campaigns, which would "de-Japanize" the Taiwanese and make them "Chinese" once again.²⁵ The KMT also "simply transplanted the educational institutions, curricula, and textbooks of the ROC in China to the island of Taiwan" with slight modifications to account for the passing of time. However, particularities of Taiwanese history were often pushed to the side.²⁶

Although Japan's presence is often glossed over if not ignored, when Japan is mentioned it is often as one of the main antagonists to China.²⁷ In the pre-modern periods, Japan is portrayed as either taking ideas from the Chinese during the Tang dynasty, acting as pirates who consistently attacked the coasts of China and Korea, or trying to invade the Korean peninsula.²⁸ Moving to modern history, several chapters within these texts are focused on the "War of Resistance against Japan" (*kangri zhanzheng*) where Japan is again seen only as an antagonist to

²³ Mei-Hui Liu, Li-Chung Hung, and Edward Vickers, "Identity Issues in Taiwan's History Curriculum," In *History Education and National Identity in East Asia*, ed. Edward Vickers and Alisa Jones (New York, NY: Routledge, 2005), 118.

²⁴ Edward Vickers, introduction to *History Education and National Identity in East Asia*, 7.

²⁵ Alisa Jones, Japan's Place in Taiwan's Textbooks," in *Imagining Japan in Post-war East Asia: Identity Politics, Schooling and Popular Culture* ed. Paul Morris, Naoko Shimazu and Edward Vickers (London: Routledge, 2014), 173.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 174.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 175.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 174.

China and is seemingly absent from any other historical events that may have happened, such as the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki that ended the war.²⁹

The few instances that were specific to Taiwanese history focus on Taiwanese resistance to the Japanese with images of “patriotic ‘compatriots’ (*tongbao*), ‘preferring to die rather than to become Japanese subjects.’”³⁰ For the most part, however, Alisa Jones argues that “history simply stopped between 1895 and 1945, when Taiwan ‘returned to the motherland’s embrace.’”³¹ This quote emphasizes how the KMT spent so little time on the Japanese occupation that without alternate sources it would be difficult to realize it had taken place let alone the wide ranging impact it would have on Taiwan. Starting in the 1970s, textbooks began to include more about the Japanese period but these sections still focused on Taiwanese resistance as well as highlighting “economic exploitation under ‘Japanese occupation.’”³² Any accomplishments that may have taken place under the Japanese as well as most specifics about daily life during the occupation were left out as seemingly unimportant.

Throughout all of these historical accounts, identification with China and national continuity were the most critical. As often as possible, these textbooks portrayed Taiwan as merely a province of China that is now the base for recovering the mainland.³³ Almost all national heroes, historic accomplishments, and matters of cultural importance took place on the mainland. Occasionally local historical “heroes” such as Koxinga (Zheng Chenggong) would be included into the historical narrative, but this was only to celebrate his loyalty to the mainland as

²⁹ Ibid., 175.

³⁰ Ibid., 177.

³¹ Ibid.,

³² Ibid., 178.

³³ Ibid., 177.

he forced the Dutch out of Taiwan in name of the Ming dynasty.³⁴ China's spirit, therefore, continues on in the "province" of Taiwan.

It was not only primary education, but also academia that was effected by this desire to promote "Chinese" continuities. Megan Greene notes that "in 1955, Academia Sinica undertook to construct a second historical research institute, the Institute of Modern History, which focused on late Qing and Republican history, and in particular on topics relating to diplomatic history and the history of China's modernization."³⁵ Along with other programs that the KMT started during this time, this institute kept the focus on the mainland, while any scholars who mentioned Taiwanese separatism or independence "risked being labelled subversives."³⁶ As it became almost immediately obvious that it would be unable to recover the mainland, the evolution and accomplishments of the KMT on Taiwan became more and more important. The importance of these accomplishments can be seen in how the parts in textbooks most often and substantially revised dealt with the KMT's ongoing "national construction" (*fixingjidi*).³⁷ Overall in the martial law era, history education tried to gloss over the Japanese presence in Taiwan, while simultaneously focusing on the history of mainland China as a means to connect the Taiwanese to Chinese culture. Since the end of martial law, the opposite has taken place as more and more Taiwanese strive to differentiate Taiwan from China.

Re-centering Taiwan since the 1990s

At the onset of the 1990s, the increasing influence of the *bentuhua* movement allowed for deeper discussions of what it meant to be Taiwanese. For the first time, there was official talk of

³⁴ J. Megan Greene, "The Historical Narrative and Taiwan Identity: The State Sponsored Historical Enterprise in the 1950s and 1960s," in *The Chinese Historical Review* 13, no. 1 (2006) : 82.

³⁵ Ibid., 87.

³⁶ Ibid., 84.

³⁷ Jones, 177.

a Taiwanese identity that could be portrayed outside of the context of China completely, and how this identity should be taught. These conversations, however, were not isolated. They had wide-reaching influences inside of Taiwan even now having impacted official areas such as the history textbooks used in the education system.

These new discussions over identity for the most part emerged after the Lee Deng-hui led KMT ended martial law in 1987.³⁸ Many scholars have positioned Taiwanese nationalism as a “historical latecomer compared to other (ex)colonies.”³⁹ If Taiwan were more similar to other (ex)colonies, then a nationalist movement such as *bentuhua* should have occurred much earlier in its history. Although this type of temporalizing does not tell us much on its own, it does beg the question about decolonization and nationalism within Taiwan. Due to the colonialism of the KMT who promoted their own brand of nationalism, Taiwanese were unable to grapple with issues central to their decolonization process such as the remaining legacy of Chinese and Japanese colonialism. However, decolonization was and continues to be a complicated process informed by a number of factors. In order to truly decolonize, not only must the (ex)colony deal with the legacy of colonialism within their country, but the former empire must deimperialize. The deimperializing of the former colonizer involves examining “the content, motives, desires, and consequences of the imperialist history that has former its own subjectivity.”⁴⁰ Alongside that, nationalism can also be spurred as a reaction to the development of globalization. As uneven development continues, nationalism appears as a form of resistance to the more powerful country that appears to be taking all of the profits. Since the end of World War II, Taiwan has

38 J. Bruce Jacobs, 33.

39 A-Chin Hsiau, “Epilogue,” *Cultural, Ethnic, and Political Nationalism in Contemporary Taiwan: Bentuhua*, ed. John Makeham and A-chin Hsiau (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 272.

⁴⁰ Chen, 4.

felt pressure from the world to define its political and cultural identity against China.⁴¹ This is due to a number of reasons, the most prominent being the KMT claim that they were the “true” Chinese government. If ROCT was the “true” Chinese government, what was the PRC? As the PRC began to be more widely recognized in the 1970s, the KMT’s claims no longer made any sense, if they ever did in the first place, and Taiwan needed to form a new identity. However, due to the *waishengren* majority within the KMT, maintaining a Chinese identity remained critical. Thus, defining Taiwan against China remained a central aspect of Taiwanese identity. The dominant geo-political influence of the PRC possibly explains why so much focus in Taiwan, especially from the *bentuhua* movement, has been on distancing themselves from China, which I would argue is the most dominant (neo)colonial power to Taiwan.

Conceptions of Taiwanese identity have become increasingly important in politics as well. While many still support maintaining a status-quo in regard to their relations with China, more and more people are showing their desire to separate Taiwan’s links with China. For example, during the first presidential elections in 1996, students who supported independence from China burnt official textbooks on subjects such as the “History of Chinese Culture” and “National Language” (Mandarin Chinese) in front of the Ministry of Education; they chanted “We want to be Taiwanese, not Chinese!” and “Study Taiwanese History, not Chinese History!”⁴² Clearly the role of China in Taiwan’s history and identity has become a essential point of debate.

The question of history became key for the Taiwanese in the 1990s. As mentioned earlier, going back to when the KMT first took over Taiwan after World War II there was a great

41 Hsiao, 264.

42 A-Chin Hsiao, *Contemporary Taiwanese Cultural Nationalism*, (New York: Routledge, 2000), 1.

concern by its leaders that Taiwan had lost its “Chinese consciousness” due to fifty years of Japanese rule.⁴³ Thus, the government had a great desire to help Taiwan regain their “Chinese consciousness,” and “school textbooks were seen as one of the most fundamental tools to disseminate in Taiwanese society a new 'Chinese consciousness:' a feeling of belonging to a cultural and historical China.”⁴⁴ Since the end of the martial law era, many of the discussions around Taiwanese identity have centered on how to treat Taiwan's relationship to China. One of the key changes is the place of China in terms of its influence on Taiwan. There is a focus within KMT-approved textbooks, which from as late as the 1980s understand Taiwan as a province of the sovereign Chinese state. By the 1990s as dialogue about Taiwanese identity increased due to the lifting of martial law, the focus began to shift to the view that China is only a historical ancestor that has greatly influenced Taiwan; this could be possibly be seen as similar to how the United States thinks of England.⁴⁵ As the role of China has begun to be downplayed, the role of Japan on the other hand has started to become more prominent in differentiating between Taiwan and China.

Japan's occupation has taken on a much larger role in these later textbooks, and unlike in the earlier period the information is not heavily skewed to represent Japan as a historical enemy. Of course, there is mention of rebellions against the Japanese, but modernization has played a key part in understanding the time period.⁴⁶ The emphasis on modernization could be seen in a number of ways. Firstly, it allows for the historical fact of Japanese-led modernization in Taiwan

43 Stephane Corcuff “History Textbooks, Identity Politics, and Ethnic Introspection in Taiwan: The June 1997 Knowing Taiwan Textbooks Controversy and the Questions It Raised On the Various Approaches to 'Han' Identity,” In *History Education and National Identity in East Asia*, ed. Edward Vickers and Alisa Jones (New York, NY: Routledge, 2005), 133.

44 Ibid., 134.

45 Mei-Hui Liu, Li-Chung Hung, and Edward Vickers, 114-115.

46 Haruo Tohmatsu, “Japanese history textbook in comparative perspective,” In *History Textbooks and the Wars in Asia*, ed. Gi-wook Shin and Daniel Sneider (New York, NY: Routledge, 2011), 128-129.

at the beginning of the twentieth century, which was previously absent from the earlier martial law era textbooks. Focusing on anything beyond occupation under the Japanese could also be seen as balancing the negative portrayals of the Japanese seen in the earlier texts. Not only that, but Taiwan has also been heavily influenced by the Cold War, which has redefined Japan and Taiwan as democratic allies. Modernization under the Japanese highlights the progress made in Taiwan by non-Chinese, which is important as Taiwan continues to define itself against China. Sections on the Japanese occupation place emphasis on many of the modern ideas that had become prevalent such as “self-determination and rule of law” while also mentioning the removal and prohibition of outdated practices such as foot-binding and opium use.⁴⁷ Along with that, the image of Japan in general has been softened. There are even some examples of Japan as a victim, particularly in the case of the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.⁴⁸ The softening of Japan’s image allows for empathy with the Japanese who have not only been an aggressor but a victim. In sum, there has been a general revision in regard to the representation of Japan as largely negative or just unimportant in Taiwanese history.

Perhaps the most interesting change in these textbooks has taken place on the level of language. For instance, words such as “our own country” (*benguoshi*), which was formerly equated with China has taken a more ambiguous meaning. Other terms such as “Japanese occupation” (*rishi*) have been replaced by “Japanese possession” (*riling*).⁴⁹ Using the term “Possession” (*ling*) seems to be another step towards equating the imperial history of China and Japan’s as the term has also been used to describe the Qing dynasty’s occupation of the island.⁵⁰

⁴⁷ Alisa Jones, “Triangulating identity: Japan's place in Taiwan's textbooks,” *Imagining Japan in Postwar East Asia: Identity Politics, Schooling and Popular Culture*, ed. Paul Morris, Edward Vickers and Naoko Shimazu (London: Routledge, 2014), 184.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*,

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*,

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*,

Since martial law era textbooks simply understood Taiwan as a province of China, there was no use of terms suggesting colonialism or occupation to explain the relationship between Qing China and Taiwan as these new terms suggest. Historical interactions with Japan have become a key way for Taiwanese to place emphasis on history outside of Taiwan's relationship with China. However, scholars have pointed out that the image of Japan is still not necessarily one of a friend. Instead, both China and Japan are positioned equally as occupiers of Taiwan who have displaced indigenous peoples.⁵¹

Identity is always defined against some "other," and in the case of Taiwan those others have been China and Japan. However, there has been a new emphasis on internal differences within Taiwan. Nationalism in general tends to essentialize identities and ignore differences from within specific collectives, and KMT nationalism was no different. More recent textbooks have also put an emphasis on looking inward as a way to define Taiwan. One way was to focus on the different ethnic groups in Taiwan. In the past, a lot of attention has been paid to the Han demographic, which makes sense because they are a large majority of the population. However, within the Han identity there are multiple groups including the Hakka and Hoklo, the largest in Taiwan. Beyond that, there are numerous indigenous tribes that predated any Chinese influence on the island. Because of this, there has been a large desire from pro-independence-from-China groups for an emphasis on multiculturalism within Taiwan, and a focus on Taiwan as a plural society.⁵² The lack of official acknowledgment on minorities within Taiwan was a major criticism of many of the textbooks used in the Martial Law era. The Nationalist government not only ignored minority groups they tried to erase "the plurality of historical experience and what

⁵¹ Ibid.,181.

⁵² Lung-Chih Chang, "Telling Histories of an Island Nation," In *Designing History in East Asian Textbooks: Identity Politics and Transnational Aspirations*. (London: Routledge, 2011), 130.

this meant in terms of Taiwanese identity.”⁵³ Since the late 1990s, new textbooks have added sections focusing on “the narration of pre-historical cultures and archaeological sites in Taiwan, followed by a synopsis of different ethnic groups of Taiwanese indigenous people” which will help Taiwan become a “life community,” or a community that values “social integration, community building and plural value.”⁵⁴ Looking inward has been a prominent trend in discussions of Taiwanese identity since the 1990s, but this has come with some consequences.

Both an internal fear of China’s response and conservative influence from some members of the Ministry of Education did not allow for a complete rejection of Chinese influence as pro-independence groups wanted. Even though the new internal focus was seen as valid by all, Taiwan’s larger relationships with the rest of the world were still heavily debated. These debates led to the idea of concentric circles (*tongxin yuan*).⁵⁵ In 1996, the Taiwanese Minister of Education described the idea:

If we look at things from the point of view of the structure of school textbooks, a student book must start by presenting knowledge from the immediate environment, before extending step by step the domain studied: first to the local culture and to the ethnic groups that influences [most] the society, then to knowledge of the cultures of the various ethnic groups and of the territory of the nation; last, to the world's culture In consequence, the *Curriculum References* for primary and junior high schools have been modified following a strategy of “Standing on Taiwan, having considerations for Continental China, opening our eyes to the world.”⁵⁶

This concept of concentric circles would start with textbooks on Taiwan, followed by textbooks on China, then finally with textbooks on the rest of the world. Though the importance of China

53 Corcuff, 141.

54 Lung-chih Chang, 130.

55 Corcuff, 141.

56 Ibid.,

to Taiwan is still clear, this move was indeed revolutionary as it paved the way for a future slowly transitioning away from China.⁵⁷

The changes in history textbooks since the martial law era demonstrate that processes of decolonization in Taiwan are focused on Chinese cultural imperialism and not Japanese. Decolonization from the Japanese era has thus twice been interrupted. First, under the KMT as they refused to recognize the history and influence of Japan in the martial law era, in effect not allowing Taiwanese to deal with the legacy of Japanese colonialism. Then, US (neo)colonialism forced Taiwan into a cold war structure that has made democratic allies out of Taiwan and Japan. At the same time, China has been “othered” even more as a communist country. This democratic friendship between Taiwan and Japan has heavily influenced the *bentuhua* movement in Taiwan and can only be dealt with after US (neo)colonialism has been confronted. However, this will remain up in the air until Taiwan either is recognized internationally as nation-state or is absorbed by China. Until then, these issues will continue to influence contemporary Taiwanese nationalism and the cultural products that stem from it.

Nativism and Nationalism in the Age of Globalization

Throughout its history, the narrative of Taiwanese identity has consistently been depicted as one of constant occupation due to the arrival of numerous colonial forces. As Guo-Juin Hong points out, “Taiwanese identity—after waves of colonizations, from the Dutch, Spanish, Japanese, to 'Chiang Kai-shek's displaced Nationalists'--is one of 'indeterminacy: people, places, and eras caught always in the flux of becoming something else.’”⁵⁸ This perception of

⁵⁷ Ibid., 142.

⁵⁸ Guo-Juin Hong, *Taiwan Cinema: A Contested Nation on Screen*. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 121.

indeterminacy and its effect on identity in Taiwanese history has played a large role in how scholars have discussed Taiwan. This is not only an issue focused on by scholars outside of Taiwan as Leo Ching has argued that for the (ex)colonized “identity struggle becomes an overly invested spectacle, a colonial tragedy, that both satisfies the (ex)colonized’s desire to melodramatize its historical emergence and redeems the (ex)colonizer of its colonial guilt.”⁵⁹ Thus, identity formation has become a dominant area of study for it satisfies a number of desires including the (ex)colonized’s wish to restore importance to their history. Whether or not scholarship has been overinvested in this field is hard to say. However, issues of national and cultural identity formation are clearly important areas of study as they provide insight into how peoples have lived and what influences have impacted their way of life. Also, which (ex)colonizer’s history is focused on at a particular point in time allows for an understanding of contemporary values and issues as they are negotiated in various cultural arenas.

In the case of Taiwan, numerous occupations have had numerous influences on the island including colonization under the Qing dynasty. Because of this, scholars are beginning to reconsider Taiwan as a former settler colony of China that has displaced indigenous peoples and will never revert back to an indigenous-led society. Some scholars have even begun to argue that Taiwan has never been (post)colonial.⁶⁰ In any case, along with these displacements, there have been numerous instances of both nationalism and nativism that have occurred within modern Taiwan in hopes of forging an “authentic” Taiwanese identity. However, as Ernest Gellner has famously argued, “Nationalism is not the awakening of nations to self-consciousness; it invents

⁵⁹ Leo Ching, *Becoming "Japanese": Colonial Taiwan and the Politics of Identity Formation*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 194.

⁶⁰ Shu-mei Shih, “Against Diaspora: The Sinophone as Places of Cultural Production” *Sinophone Studies: A Critical Reader*. Ed. Bernards, Brian, Shumei Shi, and Chien-hsin Tsai (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013), 27.

nations where they do not exist.”⁶¹ This is certainly the case in Taiwan as various groups have aimed to “invent” a new Taiwan, participating in an active process of negotiation with one another that plays out through every facet of society, especially within cultural products. However, nationalism is not the only way collective identities are invented as nativism often is merely the inverse of nationalism as opposed to going beyond it. In the following paragraphs, I will explore some of the ways nationalism/nativism has impacted discourses of identity in Taiwan.

As I have already mentioned, the KMT’s nationalism revolved around sinizing and modernizing Taiwan. However, a major consequence of KMT occupation has been the emphasis of “ethnic” difference between mainlanders and those who are generally referred to as Taiwanese, even though these are also ethnically Chinese peoples who happened to migrate to Taiwan at an earlier time, generally seen as arriving before the Japanese occupation in 1895. Although there are real differences between these two groups, and they provide a clear example of how identity is mainly formed through social and cultural interactions, this is not really an issue of ethnicity. Thus, this tension has been constructed as one of ethnicity, and in effect has dominated over other issues of ethnicity that exist within Taiwan. It has also led Taiwanese politics “to be locked in a vicious circle of increasing polarization of ethnic differences” that is then exasperated by party politics, which largely follow these ethnic lines.⁶² Thus, ethnicity has been a defining factor in Taiwan’s contemporary politics pushing aside a whole host of other issues.⁶³

⁶¹ Ernest Gellner, *Thought and Change* (London: Weidenfield and Nicholson, 1964), 169.

⁶² Tak-wing Ngo and Hong-zen Wang, “Cultural Difference Social Recognition and Political Representation in Taiwan,” 6.

⁶³ Including LGBTQ and class struggles.

The focus on ethnicity in Taiwan can make it easy to criticize issues of identity in general, as it could be argued that they simply become identity politics. However, I agree with Shu-mei Shih that “identities are not arbitrary, but are theories that help us make sense of experiences and turn them into knowledge, as we simultaneously draw from experiences as resources for the construction of identities. Most importantly, identities are theoretical claims that are evaluatable: some are empowering, others are oppressive, some are self-produced, and some are imposed.”⁶⁴ By focusing on issues of identity, we are able to explore a number of areas that could otherwise be subsumed into other various issues. Not only that, but as Shih is suggesting here, identities are not fixed: They are constantly in flux and thus evaluating them within different contexts can allow for a deeper understanding on how they are being influenced and how they are influencing events around them. As long as people claim to be Taiwanese, Chinese, or anything it will be critical to understand what that identity actually means and how it is effecting societies. Contexts have changed since the beginning of the twenty-first century as there has been movement away from the *waishengren/benshengren* divide. However, ethnicity continues to be a defining factor between Taiwanese of various backgrounds. At the same time, China continues to loom in the background as some Taiwanese hope to reunite with China one day, while others are in favor independence. Both nationalist and nativist movements have and continue to deal with these issues, and these processes remain vital to identity formation within Taiwan.

The ethnic division between *waishengren* and *benshengren* plays a pivotal role in possibly the most critical form of nativist resistance in Taiwan: the aptly named *Xiang-tu* (nativist) literature movement of the 1970s. Nativism as a form of resistance in general

⁶⁴ Shih, *Visuality and Identity*, 21.

“highlights the centrality of a place of origin and attachment in its articulation of local particularities against the abstraction of global forces of modernity and capitalism.”⁶⁵ Nativist writers were not only resisting abstraction by global forces, but by the internal colonialism of the KMT in particular who had wiped out large portions of Taiwanese history in order to assert their power over the Taiwanese. However, even as this movement played a critical role in opening a dialogue on a native Taiwanese identity it still had a number of shortcomings. As Lai Ming-yan points out, a majority of these authors remained confined to patriarchal ideals that did not allow them to truly express an alternative vision of modernity.⁶⁶ Not only this, but the debate essentially became how were the “Taiwanese” different than the “Chinese,” which wiped out the differences that exist within Taiwan. This is particularly true for the plight of Taiwan’s indigenous peoples who were largely ignored by *Xiang-tu* writers who did not seem ready to reflect on their role in the colonization of Taiwan. Lai argues that nativism is defined by the cultural context of the time period: “Of the many local beliefs, customs, and practices, what comes to define the native depends on perceived differences from received notions of the outside and the foreign.”⁶⁷ Due to the hegemony of the *waishengren* KMT over Taiwan, it was possible to frame *benshengren* as “natives” who were being ruled by a foreign occupier. However, this still subsumes the indigenous Taiwanese into a culture that was forced upon them. All of this has played a pivotal role in contemporary nativism, as the role of indigenous peoples has increased in importance.

Since the 1990s, the status of the indigenous peoples of Taiwan (*yuanzhumin*) has made great strides. Although Taiwan’s modern history has been full of occupation, indigenous peoples

⁶⁵ Lai Ming-yan, *Nativism and Modernity: Cultural Contestations in China and Taiwan Under Global Capitalism* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2008), 3.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*,

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 4.

lived for centuries if not longer on the island with their own societies and cultures. As I will discuss later, indigenization has become an important part of *bentuhua*, which has led to the increasing importance of *yuanzhumin* throughout society. Although this has come with benefits to the indigenous peoples of Taiwan such as name rectification, or the proper naming of separate tribes, many indigenous peoples have claimed that their people are being used as a part of identity politics. In fact, one might expect indigenous peoples to support political groups such as the DPP. However, almost all of the indigenous legislators have been linked to “pan-blue” parties such as the KMT, which generally favor a future “re-unification” with China.⁶⁸ Scholars have argued that this is largely due to the manipulation of indigeneity at the local level that leads to presidential candidates who do not actually favor them in their policy-making.⁶⁹ The positioning of indigenous peoples in Taiwanese society is critical to the attempts of re-centering Taiwanese identity. After being neglected for the first forty years of KMT occupation, the indigenous peoples’ representation in news media and film offers an alternative identity for Taiwanese. This identity is not focused on the ethnic Chinese who are “forever” tied to the Chinese mainland one way or the other, but on the indigenous peoples who offer an alternative culture/society to Taiwanese who are seeking independence from China.

Due to the increasing influence of globalization, many have started to disregard the nation-state as it supposedly loses its importance.⁷⁰ However, the nation-state has persisted and in fact has only re-asserted its importance as nationalist movements unfold across the globe. A discussion of the global circulation of film can offer insight into the dominant influence of the nation-state. Visuality and identity play a pivotal role in its ability to persist despite transnational

⁶⁸ Simon, 15.

⁶⁹ Simon, 28.

⁷⁰ Iwabuchi notes a number of these scholars in: Koichi Iwabuchi, *Resilient Borders and Cultural Diversity: Internationalism, Brand Nationalism, and Multiculturalism in Japan* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2015), 8.

connections seemingly becoming more powerful every day. Visuality and identity will be key in this study as well because as Shu-mei Shih argues: “It is because more than any time before in human history, our contemporary moment marks the culmination, and perhaps final victory, of the continuous ascendance of the visual as the primary means of identification.”⁷¹ In discussing the connection between these two factors, Shih continues:

“In regards to non-Western cultural products, the turn to visuality has augured an unprecedented degree of translatability and transmissivity, as translinguistic visual works and dubbed or subtitled films seem to cross national markets with greater facility than ever. The rise and popularity of Asian cinema in the global scene and the success of Asian-inspired cinema in Hollywood are testimony to the notion that visual work seems to have a lower linguistic threshold and hence is more easily decipherable and consumable across geocultural spaces.”⁷²

In this age of globalization and “nation-branding,” the image has come to be the focal point of representations of identity. Images have numerous advantages over other mediums that can be more easily experienced than written or aural mediums making them marketable to various places around the world. One indicator of this is the box office success of Hollywood around the world. A majority of the world does not speak English, but that does not stop audiences from going to see Hollywood films. Identity is not only how we perceive ourselves but how others perceive us, and therefore with the rise of the visual, identity becomes “a question of representation and occurs in and through representation.”⁷³ Through the visual, or specifically in this case through film, both portrayals and perceptions of identities can and will be made. As filmmakers have become more conscious of international markets and film festivals, there is a desire by some to represent the “authentic” identity of their nation. This can be particularly true

⁷¹ Shu-mei Shih, *Visuality and Identity*, 8.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 8.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 16.

for filmmakers from a quasi-nation such as Taiwan, where soft power is needed in order to gain support and fight Chinese domination.

Resistance against China and the effects of uneven globalization has also led to the development of a new nationalism within contemporary Taiwan. This new nationalism has particularly thrived due to Taiwan's status as not quite a nation, which has reinforced the need for a collective "national" identity. Mark Harrison argues: "It is the appeal to the nation that remains the key geopolitical formation with which the Taiwanese are resisting the hegemony of the People's Republic of China and their geopolitical marginalization."⁷⁴ The nation is not only a unifying factor for the sake of uniting Taiwanese. As uneven globalization continues to favor the already wealthy and dominant, ties to the nation-state have been renewed in many parts of the world. Nations are now specifically investing in cultural industries so as to promote the nation and ideally increase their soft power even though research has not really proved that this is possible.⁷⁵ Taiwan is no different, as the film industry has seen an increasing amount of investment from local governments in order to promote more generally the nation, but also tourism.⁷⁶ In this way, the desire for the nation continues on and will be a prominent factor in identity formation for years to come. However, nationalism in Taiwan has taken a decidedly different route than other East Asian countries, which still tend to focus on ethnic ties.

Unlike earlier forms of nationalism or nativism, *Bentu* Taiwan is openly pluralistic and inclusive to all who would call Taiwan home. As Emilie Yeh explains: "With Democratic

⁷⁴ Mark Harrison, "How to speak about oneself: theory and identity in Taiwan," *Cultural Studies and Cultural Industries in Northeast Asia: What a Difference a Region Makes* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2009), 70.

⁷⁵ Iwabuchi, 10.

⁷⁶ Emilie Yeh, 2014. "Bentu: Marketplace and Sentiments of Contemporary Taiwan Cinema," *Asian Cinema*. 25, no. 1, 12.

Progressive Party's rise to power and with pluralistic cultural policies in place, *bentü* works as a renewed sentiment from the [*x*]iangtu principle, inclusive of disparate identities and sometimes, conflicting interests, all under the roof of Taiwan as a permanent domicile."⁷⁷ It is in this multicultural way that Taiwanese society strives for new modes of resistance to escape the oppressor/oppressed binary of colonialism. Nativism like nationalism has been criticized for simply splitting the oppressed from the oppressor and creating essentialist identities by ignoring internal differences. Some have argued that nativism is "ultimately merely a response to or a product of colonization, framed by the politics of colonialism so that ultimately the nativist pursues an authentic identity that is merely the mirror of the colonizer, as a form of colonial mimesis."⁷⁸ Scholars such as Chen Kuan-hsing have reiterated this critique of nativism. He argues that to go beyond the self-other paradigm set up by colonialism, new methodological approaches must be undertaken. In particular, Chen has been one of the proponents of critical syncretism:

The intent is to become others, to actively interiorize elements of others into the subjectivity of the self so as to move beyond the boundaries and divisive positions historically constructed by colonial power relations in the form of patriarchy, capitalism, racism, chauvinism, heterosexism, or nationalistic xenophobia. Becoming others is to become female, aboriginal, homosexual, transsexual, working class, and poor: it is to become animal, third world, and African. Critical syncretism is a cultural strategy of identification for subaltern subject groups.⁷⁹

Rather than promote a single collective identity in the way that nationalism or nativism does, critical syncretism pushes for the open acknowledgement of the various differences within particular societies. Only by reflecting on how all of these differences exist simultaneously can the colonial structure of oppressed/oppressor be overthrown. Although Taiwanese society is still

⁷⁷ Ibid., 9.

⁷⁸ Harrison, 67.

⁷⁹ Chen, 99.

held back by the influence of power relations such as patriarchy and capitalism, *Bentu* Taiwan's attempts to be pluralistic and inclusive show a clear path to what could be an escape from the dregs of colonial power structures. Until then it is critical to understand how ideas of nationalism and nativism are continuing to influence "(post)colonial" societies and particularly how these influences are playing out in cultural products of particular nation-states.

Outline and Organization

By focusing on various cultural sources such as film and literature, this thesis aims to explore how negotiations of identity take place within various areas of society. These negotiations, taking forms as widely separated as political policies and short stories, will provide insights into the inner-workings of nativism and nationalism in the formation of a Taiwanese identity. In my first chapter, I will look at the work of two "nativist" writers Huang Chun-ming and Chen Qing-wen who both explore issues of "the nation." Huang's piece "*Sayonara/Zaijian*" (1973) is focused on the contemporary issues facing (post)colonial Taiwan as it deals with the new influence of global capitalism. This piece is not generally talked about as much as Huang's other work, but is equally demonstrative of his ability to portray a complex set of issues in a layered society. Chen's piece, "Three-legged Horse" (1978) reflects on the period of Japanese occupation in effect critiquing the KMT regime's call for the national. Chen is not always considered to be a *Xiang-tu* writer, and so through his inclusion I will demonstrate an example of how in the 1970s localist and nativist literary trends merged together as Yvonne Chang has previously argued.⁸⁰ Chang explains that since the arrival of the KMT in Taiwan, there have

⁸⁰ Yvonne Sung-sheng Chang, *Literary Culture in Taiwan: Martial Law to Market Law* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), 7.

been four main literary trends: popular, localist, nativist, and modernist.⁸¹ At different time periods, these trends have had various places in society including acting as resistance to the KMT approved status-quo. Although Chen is generally considered to be a localist writer, his work from the late 1970s and particularly “Three-legged Horse” provide a different context for Chen’s work to be considered in.

In the next chapter, I will explore the “re-centering” of Taiwan that has taken place since the early 1990s. Through film, I will argue that Taiwan’s indigenous peoples have been moved to the forefront of the *bentuhua* movement as the new center of Taiwanese identity. This is largely due to the numerous attempts that have been made to define Taiwan as specifically not Chinese. However, this has ended up usurping indigenous identities into battles of identity politics that they often do not want to be a part of. Finally, I will explore three films by Wei De-sheng and Umin Boya. All of these films redefine the meaning of the “Taiwanese experience” that has largely been portrayed through the experience of the *benshengren* until now. Wei’s *Cape No. 7* and *Warriors of the Rainbow* challenge the Chinese identity of Taiwan by focusing on the influence of the Japanese, while also portraying stories of the indigenous peoples. This trend is then continued in the Wei-produced, Umin-directed *Kano*. All three of these films answer a critical question of Taiwanese cultural products: “Without the cache of ‘China’ as cultural capital, how do Taiwan artists enter the transnational terrain? What decipherable local cultural elements do they ‘own’ to mark their nationality and ethnicity in particular, or uniqueness in general?”⁸² By representing Taiwan as a multicultural society, something that is largely unrepresented in earlier Taiwanese films, particularly popular ones, bringing the history and

⁸¹ Ibid., 5-6.

⁸² Shu-mei Shih, 179.

culture of indigenous peoples to the forefront, and dealing explicitly with Japanese occupation these films are staking their claim to the uniqueness of Taiwanese society. In effect, these films aim to announce Taiwan as a multicultural nation to the world in order to distinguish it from merely being “Chinese.” Whether or not Taiwan will ever escape from the shadow of China is still undecided. Until then we can only explore how Taiwanese have situated themselves in the age of global capitalism and reflect on the legacy of colonialism that continues to haunt them.

Chapter One: Taiwanese Nativist Literature and Historical Memory of Japanese Aggression

I laughed along with him. ‘Tanaka *kun*, who’s being sensitive? But you make it sound improper to be sensitive about things. Besides, since you’re Japanese, under certain circumstances or in certain situations you can’t avoid representing Japan. But I agree—everyone should speak for himself.’¹

--Huang-kun, “*Sayonara / Zaijian*”

In-between colonial domination and the current surge of the *bentuhua* movement, the relationship between Taiwan and Japan has been just as complicated and telling of contemporary issues. Colonial relationships were made all the more difficult by the coming of the KMT to Taiwan after World War II. The retrocession of Taiwan “returning” to China, or in this case the KMT, quickly became strained due to mistrust of both the local Taiwanese (*benshengren*), which includes earlier Hakka and Hoklo immigrants from China and the rapidly growing number of Chinese mainlanders (*waishengren*) moving to Taiwan. The Mainlanders immediately questioned the loyalty of the Taiwanese, suspicious of the influence Japan may have had on the Islanders.² Originally, many Taiwanese were glad to see the Japanese go, as they hoped to become more than second-class citizens in their own home. However, KMT misrule and corruption were “particularly offensive to the Taiwanese, who came to recall fondly the rule of law under the strict, yet predictable, police state of the Japanese.”³

The tension between Taiwanese and Chinese boiled over on February 28th, 1947 in what is now referred to as the 228 Incident (*ererba shijian*). In what was a simple and probably

¹ Huang Chun-ming, , “Sayonara/Zaijian” in *The Taste of Apples* ed. Howard Goldblatt, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), 244.

² Steven Phillips, *Between Assimilation and Independence: The Taiwanese Encounter Nationalist China, 1945-1950* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003), 9.

³ Phillips, 67.

everyday event, police officers tried to arrest a woman for illegally selling cigarettes. However, this evolved overnight into 2,000 to 3,000 Taiwanese angrily marching to the Monopoly Bureau Headquarters.⁴ The Taiwanese protested not only this arrest, but also the other problems the community recognized, such as: “unemployment, food shortages, inflation, political repression, and corruption.”⁵ After a few days, the protests had mostly stopped and the Taiwanese had gone back to their daily lives, until March 8th when thousands of KMT military officers came in through the port cities of Jilong and Gaoxiong. These soldiers came and silenced any and all protest by randomly shooting any Taiwanese that happened to cross their path. The following weeks were filled by the KMT getting rid of any persons they saw as in opposition to their goals.⁶ The results of the incident were terrifying as scholars tend to agree that roughly 10,000 people were killed and 30,000 more were injured.⁷ From then on, the KMT continued to assert their dominance over the Taiwanese particularly in reference to Japanese cultural items. For instance, Japanese-language publications and phonograph records were outlawed, and the KMT denounced any residual influence left over from the Japanese era.⁸ Martial law was then put into place and would stay in effect until 1987, in what has become to be known as the era of White Terror.⁹ All excitement for the arrival of the KMT was destroyed as they remarked: “that the dogs (the Japanese) left, but the greedy and uncultured pigs (mainland Chinese) had come.”¹⁰

Domestic and international influences are both key to understanding the constant redefinition of Taiwanese identity that has persisted along with the *bentuhua* movement. Due to this, reevaluating *Xiang-tu* (nativist) literature is key to understanding the larger role of nativism

⁴ Ibid., 75.

⁵ Ibid.,

⁶ Ibid., 81-82.

⁷ Ibid., 83.

⁸ Ibid., 83-84.

⁹ Ibid., 147.

¹⁰ Ibid., 74.

as an alternative vision of modernity in Taiwan. Although *Xiang-tu* literature was not able to fully reach an alternative modernity, partly due to its reluctance to include multi-ethnic voices in its literature, it is still a crucial part of understanding later nativist works from Taiwan. I will argue that Huang Chun-ming's "*Sayonara / Zaijian*" and Cheng Ch'ing-wen's "Three-legged Horse" are sites of resistance against the dominant KMT historical narrative that was being taught in the public education system. Huang's story uses black humor to critique the KMT's vision of modernity through following one intellectual who is heavily identified with Chinese history, but is caught in the postcolonial reality of Taiwan. At the same time, Cheng's story is able to critique the complete disregarding of the Japanese colonial period by the KMT simply by mentioning the Japanese presence and also by showing how for a number of Taiwanese Japan really was their "nation" for a significant amount of time.

This chapter will be divided into four sections. The first section will explore the context leading up to the debate over *Xiang-tu* literature at the end of the 1970s. Then, the next section will look at the historical narrative that was promoted by the KMT in the martial law era, which will set up the rest of the chapter for comparison with the literary works I will write about. The next section will analyze Huang Chun-ming's "*Sayonara / Zaijian*" looking at how historical narrative has influenced the main character's idea of Taiwan, while the postcolonial reality is much more complicated. Huang Chun-Ming (1935-), a major author of the *Xiang-tu* literature movement, reflects the critical theory of nativism as an alternative to modernity in his short story "*Sayonara / Zaijian*." By poking fun at the main character who so heavily relies on the official views of the KMT, Huang is more generally critiquing the development of Taiwanese society under the KMT and questioning Taiwan's place in the world as it becomes more integrated with the rest of the world through globalization. Thus, Huang's story is heavily representative of not

only the complicated history between Japan, Taiwan and China, but also issues of (neo)colonization across the globe.

Then, the final section will focus on Cheng Ch'ing-wen's "Three-legged Horse" and the historical memory of Japanese occupation in Taiwan. Cheng Ch'ing-wen, another important localist writer, offers a different context for the role of Japan in Taiwanese history. Born in 1932, Cheng had just graduated from elementary school when the Japanese surrendered to the Allies in 1945.¹¹ Although a native speaker of *minnan* (the "Taiwanese" dialect), Cheng spent the first six years of his education learning to write in Japanese.¹² As the KMT took over, he initially felt much alienation due largely to the changing from Japanese language learning to Chinese. However, soon after the retrocession Cheng's family moved to Taipei where he eventually attended and graduated from a Chinese language college.¹³ The Japanese occupation may not have lasted very long in Cheng's life, but it left a lasting influence on his memories of Taiwan. Unlike Huang Chun-ming, who is more focused on Taiwan's contemporary relationship with the world and Japan in particular, Cheng's story refers to the period of Japanese occupation as Taiwan's pivotal interaction with Japan. Cheng's piece, *Three-legged Horse* (1979), reflects a clear example of the Japanese occupation and the memories left behind to partially define and even haunt the Taiwanese. Before examining the texts, I will start by going through the background of the *Xiang-tu* literature of the 1970s, and the scholarly works that have arisen from them.

Xiang-tu Background and Debates

¹¹ Cheng Ch'ing-wen, *Three-legged Horse* ed. Pang-yuan Chi (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), x.

¹² *Ibid.*,

¹³ *Ibid.*,

After the grave intensity of the early years of KMT rule, Taiwan underwent decades of economic growth and governmental stability. However, in the 1970s Taiwan suffered a number of political setbacks. The United States' slow removal of support in the United Nations was the most critical of these setbacks - this was motivated by the U.S. formalizing relations with the People's Republic of China in 1971. Another important setback that strongly affected the Taiwanese in this time period was the loss of the Diaoyu (Senkaku) Islands to Japan.¹⁴

These international setbacks inspired new calls for political reform among many Taiwanese. Journals such as, *Intellectuals (Ta-hsueh tsa-chih)* were organized by young scholars and entrepreneurs of both Mainland Chinese and Taiwanese origin. *Intellectuals* was a short-lived journal with limited influence in society as a whole. However, it was popular among many younger college students and made focus more of their concern to the lower classes of society.¹⁵ This created what A-chin Hsiau argues was a “back to [x]iang-tu” (*hui-gui xiang-tu*) cultural trend that was interested in the realities of the lower classes and local cultural resources.¹⁶ Many *Xiang-tu* writers followed the idea of *yan-wen yi-zhi* (言文一致) and worked to weave “the Taiwanese languages into their Chinese writings in order to make writing conform with speech.”¹⁷ As Lee Yu-lin points out it is not until the 1970s that “the once silenced voice of the colonized reappear.”¹⁸ Language is a core ingredient in determining cultural identity and is thus a major point of contention among the (ex)colonized generally. All over the world the formerly colonized have had to debate the oppression of their culture through the language of the

¹⁴ Hsiau, *Contemporary Taiwanese Cultural Nationalism* (London: Routledge, 2000), 68.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 68-69.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 69.

¹⁷ Lee Yu-lin, “Writing Taiwan: A Study of Taiwan’s Nativist Literature” (Ph.D dissertation, University of Georgia, 2003), 95.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 94.

oppressor.¹⁹ By attempting to weave in some of the spoken languages of the Taiwanese, *Xiang-tu* writers were trying to more specifically define their identity against their former and current colonizers. Since all of the *Xiang-tu* writers during this debate were of Chinese descent, they did not give much credence to Taiwan's indigenous peoples. Even if some of the authors were sympathetic to the plight of the indigenous peoples, indigenous representation from these authors and indigenous authors remained minimal. Indigenous voices largely remained repressed until the late 1980s, which I will go into in the next chapter. Regardless, these writers saw a need for change in their society and set out to bring issues of oppression to the forefront of Taiwanese society.

Oppression not only came internally, though, as “Western” modernism had heavily influenced the literature of Taiwan. Thus with the calls for nativism increasing, the criticism of modernist-style writing, in particular the modernist poetry that was being written in the late 1960s and early 1970s was also increasingly attacked. Modernist writing was viewed more and more as too detached and “Westernized” to contribute anything to Taiwanese society. Common attacks on both the form and content of the modernist style included “semantic ambiguity, overuse of Western imagery and syntax, overindulgence in individual sentiment, and evasion of contemporary social reality.”²⁰ Many of these issues would then be directly addressed by the nativist writers.

Wanting to move away from the styles that had been brought to them through Imperial powers, nativist writers instead focused on their own language and the social realities of local Taiwanese. They turned an eye towards the lower classes of Taiwanese society that were

¹⁹ Prayod Nayar, *Post-Colonialism: A Guide for the Perplexed*. (London: Continuum, 2010), 9.

²⁰ Hsiau., 69.

previously neglected in earlier literary works and how they were affected by the many socio-economic changes ongoing in Taiwan. Many of the stories are located in fishing ports, farming villages, and declining towns that were in sharp contrast with the modern and successful Taipei. By focusing on the lower classes, the authors are claiming that Taiwan has reached economic success at the expense on the lives of the common man and “that the excessive dependency on Japanese and American investment had made the island an ‘economic colony’”.²¹ Rural villages and towns were particularly crucial areas, as they were believed to be a “locus of simpler and harmonious existence in the rural past.”²²

In the late 1970s, *Xiang-tu* literature began to come under attack by KMT associated intellectuals (who were largely Mainlanders). In 1977, one of these intellectuals, P’eng Ke, wrote a series of articles criticizing the anti-imperialist themes and class analysis, maintaining that such a way of explaining social change existed only in Communism.²³ Then in 1978, the KMT organized a meeting they called “the National Symposium of Art and Literary Workers” in order to accuse *Xiang-tu* writers of “corrupting society by instilling in the reader subversive ideas, namely, Communist art and literary heresy.”²⁴ Also, the “strong localism” of the texts was seen as promoting “separatism,” because they focused “exclusively with the socioeconomic reality of the island.”²⁵ This focus put more attention on Taiwan as its own entity as opposed to the view that Taiwan is simply a part of China that the KMT continued to promote. In response to these claims, many of the *Xiang-tu* writers avoided the idea of separatism all together, whether through their own beliefs or a fear of being jailed as it was completely taboo to mention independence at

²¹ Ibid., 69-70.

²² Lee, 97.

²³ Hsiau, 71.

²⁴ Ibid.,

²⁵ Ibid.,

the time.²⁶ Authors such as Huang Chun-ming instead argued “that because Taiwan is part of China, Taiwan’s problems are also China’s problems. To portray the life and problems on the island, he maintained, was to produce Chinese national literature.”²⁷ The KMT continued to express their anxieties in these debates for about a year before ending them in early 1978. Strangely and for reasons that are still unclear the KMT did not try to officially suppress any of the writers, and *Xiang-tu* became a widely accepted literary trend.²⁸

Scholarly works on *xiang-tu* literature have largely focused on whether or not it is Taiwan’s “national literature.” In her book on Taiwanese cultural nationalism, A-chin Hsiau includes *Xiang-tu* literature in her discussion of 20th century Taiwanese intellectuals and their underlying “concern, if not obsession, with the *uniqueness* of ‘Taiwanese culture’ set against ‘Chinese culture.’”²⁹ This does not necessarily mean that they believed Taiwan and China should be independent, only that Taiwan had its own particular circumstances that needed to be addressed as opposed to simply fitting Taiwan into the larger narrative of “China.” KMT concerns about *Xiang-tu* stem largely from the National/local divide in Taiwanese society, and Hsiau concludes that while it may be misleading to treat this literature as a “Phase A” of national cultural development, “it may well be argued that [*x*]iang-tu literature paved the way for the development of Taiwanese nationalist literary discourse.”³⁰ Meaning that while Hsiau is hesitant to pinpoint any one moment as the beginning of “national cultural development,” she does believe that *Xiang-tu* was a seminal moment that heavily influenced later attempts to define a Taiwanese cultural identity.

²⁶ Mei-hui Liu, Li-ching Hung and Edward Vickers, 116.

²⁷ Hsiau, 72.

²⁸ Hsiau, 74.

²⁹ A-chin Hsiau, 2.

³⁰ Hsiau, 75.

Other scholars have specifically looked at the use of language as a means of identity differentiation. Having broken free from imperialist and western influence, Taiwanese were able to focus on their own language and local culture. As June Yip argues: “At the heart of the struggle to define a Taiwanese ‘community’ has long been a confrontation of languages — a linguistic battle between the languages of a colonizer and a colonized.”³¹ In the case of the Taiwanese, this linguistic struggle continued into the postwar when the KMT enforced Mandarin as the national language (*guo-yu*). Yip uses examples from *Xiang-tu* writers such as Huang Chun-ming to show how their inclusion of Taiwanese language writing into their stories is “one of the earliest attempts to articulate a distinctly Taiwanese cultural identity.”³² Lee Yu-lin’s study of Nativist literature from its beginning in the period of Japanese occupation to the late 1990s also focuses on the use of language in *Xiang-tu* literature. Looking at the influence of *Yen-wen yi-zhi* (the unification of spoken and written language) on writers of the 1970s, Lee looks at how these writers wove the Taiwanese language into their texts so that they “accentuated further the opposition of the colonized to the colonizers, formulated a dualist structure of Self/Other, and sought to relocate [*xiang-tu*] literature in the center of mainstream ideologies by constructing a [*xiang-tu*] literary tradition.”³³ Basically, Lee sites the methods of resistance used by the *Xiang-tu* writers such as *yen-wen yi-zhi*, and emphasizes their main goal of creating an independent cultural Taiwanese identity though not necessarily a national one.

Finally, scholars such as Sung-sheng Yvonne Chang use the point of view of *Xiang-tu* literature as a perspective on earlier Modernist literature in Taiwan in order to address some misconceptions on the *Xiang-tu* and modernist dichotomy that has been created. She asserts that

³¹ June Yip, “Colonialism and Its Counter-Discourses: On the Uses of “Nation” in Modern Taiwanese Literature and Film” (Ph.D dissertation, Princeton University, 1996), 188.

³² Yip, 3.

³³ Lee, 94.

“this binary mode of thinking has caused many people to perceive writers of the sixties and seventies as two antagonistic groups, a perception that must be held largely responsible for some serious misconceptions about the real nature and scope of the Modernist literary movement.”³⁴ Using pieces of *Xiang-tu* literature, she argues that there are actually stylistic overlaps between Modernism and *Xiang-tu* that benefit our understanding of both styles.

Scholars have done a lot of work on *Xiang-tu* literature, but there has not been enough emphasis on the KMT historical narrative and the literary memory of the Japanese being invoked to resist it. This has led to a critical part in understanding what role this literature plays in Taiwanese cultural nationalism being left out. It is not enough to focus on the influence of the internal colonialism of the KMT in their attempts to control history and thus define Taiwanese identity as part of China. The influence of (neo)colonizers as they assert their power over Taiwan must also be assessed to bring an understanding of how nativism resists against global colonialism, and what possible limitations come along with the nativist model. In the next section, I will argue that Huang Chun-ming’s “*Sayonara/Zaijian*” was a critique of the national identity being pushed forward by the KMT.

Huang Chun-ming and the Role of the Intellectual in Postcolonial Taiwan

Postcolonial Taiwan was not only influenced by the internal colonialism of the KMT, but by global politics. Huang’s “*Sayonara/Zaijian*” explores the complexity of postcolonial Taiwan primarily through the role of the intellectual, but Huang’s layered writing allows for multiple views of society from a wide range of areas including people of various social classes and nationalities that other *Xiang-tu* writers have been criticized for ignoring.³⁵ These different

³⁴ Sung-sheng Yvonne Chang, *Modernism and the Nativist Resistance: Contemporary Chinese Fiction from Taiwan* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1993), 153.

³⁵ Lai Ming-yan, 96.

viewpoints reflect how global and domestic politics not only show that Taiwan was a heterogeneous society with multiple identities contained within it, but also that the KMT's attempt to subsume all of society into one national identity was inherently flawed. Instead, Huang's writing is an argument that differences in society need to be acknowledged and addressed. Only then can Taiwan stand up against economic colonizers such as Japan.

In "*Sayonara / Zaijian*" the main character, Huang-kun³⁶, is a former intellectual turned office worker. He was a teacher in his hometown of Chiao-hsi receiving a great deal of respect from the local townspeople, however he was not making enough money as a teacher and was forced to move to the capital. However his time in Taipei had not made his life any easier: "Since coming to Taipei ten years ago, I've changed jobs at least twenty times...during that period I didn't even have money to pay the rent, and there were occasions when I had to pawn things to get money to take my sick baby to the doctor".³⁷ Huang-kun in this case is a stand in for Taiwan as a whole. Modernization has made living much more difficult, and so Taiwanese have become much more dependent on money in order to survive. This will be a constant theme throughout the story as Huang-kun is sent to show around Japanese businessmen.

At the beginning of the story, Huang-kun receives a phone call from his general manager asking him to show around seven Japanese businessmen: "He told me repeatedly and in no uncertain terms to treat them well, as they had close business ties with our company".³⁸ Immediately, it becomes clear that this Taiwanese company relies heavily on Japanese business, and that they must do whatever they can to keep the Japanese happy. This leads to the general manager's request for Huang-kun to take the Japanese men to a hot spring in his hometown,

³⁶ 黄君 (for distinction from the author)

³⁷ Ibid., 212.

³⁸ Huang, 209. Chinese text 281

Chiao-hsi. However, the hot spring is really a code word for a brothel, and the general manager becomes saddened as “he was turning pimping into ‘important company business’”.³⁹ This brings out a number of issues here. First, there is the exploitation of the local in the name of some imaginary “national,” by which I mean the manager is saying it is okay to exploit local areas if it brings about economic opportunities for the larger whole. Also, economic colonization, in this case by the Japanese, has forced Taiwanese to break their own morals even to the extent of sexually exploitation.

Huang-kun is clearly conflicted by this assignment not only due to his reputation as being “the most principled and straitlaced person among [those in the office],” but that he had just gone on a rant about the Japanese “in a fit of nationalistic zeal”.⁴⁰ This situation brings about a lot of contradictions in Huang-kun who is forced to deal with his role in postcolonial Taiwanese society. He wants to be the intellectual who maintains his principles through anything. However, this is not his reality. As he is forced to continually compromise his principles due to his family’s economic needs. Contradiction is another recurring theme throughout the story as Huang-kun debates whether or not he should quit.

After some reflection, Huang-kun decides he should quit his job, but the company is no longer the only one that is economically dependent on the Japanese businessmen. If Huang-kun quits to save his principles, his family will be unable to support themselves financially. This is an early turning point for him as he criticizes himself over his principles that in reality are not helping anyway.⁴¹ Plus, even if he does not “take those seven Japanese today, someone else will”.⁴² He then equates prostitution with national development: “You know that the price of

³⁹ Ibid., 210. 282 dagai ta xiang dao ba...

⁴⁰ Ibid., 211. 283 tamen mianqian wo...

⁴¹ 286

⁴² Ibid., 213.

women is a gauge of national development—the cheaper the women, the more backward the place”.⁴³ Then, he says, “In the eyes of the Japanese we’re a backward nation...when I see them coming to Taiwan with all their airs of superiority, it makes my blood boil!”.⁴⁴ Finally, Huang-kun tries to take a courageous stand by deciding to help his countrywomen take advantage of the Japanese: “Since I’m going to be a pimp, I’ll show them how to bleed those Japanese”.⁴⁵ The Taiwanese may rely on the Japanese, but Huang-kun plans to manipulate them using their arrogance and lack of Taiwanese language skills. This is a very ironic idea though, because he is really just emphasizing their dependence even further, and also suggesting that if the women were getting paid more money it would be ok to let them be exploited. Huang-kun reflects little on the viewpoint of the women and instead makes it all about financial gain, which is exactly what this larger economic system wants. By trying to promote it as some kind of morally superior position, Huang-kun is just making himself a joke as he does not realize the bad habits this as one of the bad habits (*buqi de xiqi*) the business world (*shangye shehui de gongzuochang*) has given him.

On the way to the hot springs in Chiao-hsi, the Japanese complain about the trouble they had at the airport. Almost all of them had to go through an extensive process, which they were offended by because they felt it was only because they were Japanese. Huang-kun then points at an incident that had happened a few months prior in Tel-Aviv. The Japanese quickly say they recall that and do not dwell on the subject. The event Huang-kun mentioned was based on real life when four Japanese members of Japan’s Red Army bombed the Tel-Aviv airport.

Interestingly Huang-kun does not at all consider the Red Army’s communist politics. Instead, he

⁴³ Ibid., 214.

⁴⁴ Ibid.,

⁴⁵ Ibid.,

only focuses on this event as another example in the long history of Japanese aggression. This at the very least seems to suggest that Huang-kun does not believe communism to be the enemy of Taiwan. It is the use of violence by imperial powers that continue to assert their power over third world countries. The fear of the (ex)colonizers dominance continues on in the next scene.

After a break in the conversation, one of the businessmen points out how it almost feels like they are in Japan. He points out the song playing on the radio, which is a Chinese version of Japanese pop song, and Huang-kun's perfect Japanese. This is followed by another one of the men who has been looking out the window pointing out how the mountains in this area look just like those in Aomori in Japan.⁴⁶ Huang-kun takes offense to these remarks thinking to himself: "I couldn't help thinking that in their subconscious they still considered Taiwan one of their colonies...Japanese who come to do business in Taiwan, with their haughty, disdainful attitude, strut around as if Taiwan we're their economic colony".⁴⁷ As they make it to the hot springs, Huang-kun starts to realize that it is the rural areas of Taiwan that are the most dependent on the Japanese: "Naturally, before me was not society in its entirety, only that portion under the control of Japanese economics".⁴⁸ This quote brings out one of the key ideas of not just Huang Chun-ming's work, but *Xiang-tu* literature as a whole, that is, the lower classes of Taiwan are most heavily impacted by the dominance of economic colonizers. The urban areas that continue to modernize are a sign of the progression of Taiwanese society, a society that is benefitting from Japanese economic investment. However, the rural areas are stuck with low wages and rising prices that force them into exploitative situations such as the one Huang-kun and these women are in now.

⁴⁶ Looks just like Aomori

⁴⁷ Ibid., 223.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 227.

The arrogance of the Japanese as well as their economic power continues to be shown as they start to interact with the women at the hot springs. As an argument breaks out among other people in the springs, the Japanese comment on the different sounds of their languages saying, “Japanese is still the best-sounding language, especially when spoken by women”.⁴⁹ Thinking to himself, Huang-kun postulates: “I’m afraid that even if an enlightened Japanese were to come to visit Taiwan, one of his ex-colonies, it would still be difficult to keep from exposing his feelings of superiority”.⁵⁰ Huang-kun is saying that the Japanese are so arrogant they do not even have the ability to hide their feelings of superiority. This general attitude continues as Huang-kun makes a joke and one of the Japanese responds with a back-handed compliment: “Huang-kun, you’re the wittiest person we’ve met among the locals”.⁵¹ After this comment, however, Huang-kun starts to gain some power from the Japanese. Perhaps finally realizing that he is not as inferior to them as they once believed. However though they start to act a little intimidated by him as they ask the price of the girls. They still trust him completely to tell them the truth. By still placing him “among the locals” the Japanese still clearly show their feelings of superiority, which allows them to believe that he would never trick them. From this moment though Huang-kun has sensed the change in their attitude and begins to feel more confident.

The girls⁵² and Huang-kun begin to discuss the price, and the girls say that their price changes depending on the person: “If it’s one of our own people, its two hundred. . .For Japanese it’s four hundred”.⁵³ This points to an already ingrained system of resistance against the economic colonizers, however Huang-kun goes even further telling the Japanese, who cannot

⁴⁹ Ibid., 229.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 230.

⁵¹ Ibid., 232.

⁵² I will refer to the prostitutes as girls to emphasize their young age.

⁵³ Ibid., 233. Also, the currency is never given in the text, but New Taiwan Dollars seems to be a safe assumption.

understand their conversation, that the price is “one thousand for the night, and that’s not a bad price. You can use your revalued yen and enjoy both convenience and economy”.⁵⁴ The Japanese readily accept the price, and Huang-kun is pleased that he was able to overcharge them. However, when he walks to the front desk to have the girls sent up to the rooms of the Japanese, he starts to experience “the stirrings of national consciousness—the illusion of serving [his] fellow Chinese”.⁵⁵ Huang-kun felt he had been reduced to “a bona fide pimp”.⁵⁶ Unable to deal with his conflicting emotions, Huang-kun continues to trick the Japanese into offering more money than asked for. For the girls to immediately come the room of the Japanese businessmen, they would need to pay an additional two hundred. Instead, Huang-kun talks with the girls: “Let’s tell them five hundred. After all, the Japanese are so rich they won’t miss a few hundred”.⁵⁷ The Japanese are repeatedly represented as being arrogant and wielding their economic power over the Taiwanese. Huang-kun’s only advantage over these Japanese men is his language ability, which he uses to continually overcharge them in a small attempt to help his people. As mentioned earlier, this situation is once again full of contradiction and irony. Huang-kun realizes that he is still just acting like a pimp, but instead of stopping he just doubles down on being an even better pimp by asking for more money from the Japanese. Not only that, but Huang-kun faces his own role as a former colonizer in his interactions with one of the girls who has a tattoo on her face, most likely suggesting that she is from an indigenous tribe in Taiwan, though it is not explicitly stated. She is the only girl that Huang-kun seems to have any sexual desire for, and he even gets to the point where he pays her even though they do not go through with any sexual activities. This situation shows the clear relationship between sexual desire and

⁵⁴ Ibid.,

⁵⁵ Ibid., 236.

⁵⁶ Ibid.,

⁵⁷ Ibid., 238.

imperial desire that has not only affected the Japanese. Although the woman herself is not given much of a role, this seems to be a clear attempt by Huang to include the indigenous peoples as part of Taiwan's heterogeneous society even if at present they do not have much of a voice. Her lack of a voice and the interactions between her and Huang-kun emphasize his Chineseness, which is pointed in other areas of the text as well.

Unlike the influence of Taiwan's former colony of Japan status that is presented much more subtly, it is Huang-kun's identification with Chinese history that is the real source of his disdain for the Japanese. This shows how the "nation" as Huang-kun sees it is a Chinese Taiwan. Taiwanese history is a part of Chinese history as the KMT history textbooks portrayed it, however within the story this comes across more as parody of a nationalism. Early in the narrative, Huang-kun mentions his difficulty in having to go through with this assignment. One of the main reasons for which this is so hard for him is the way he views himself "as an individual and someone who has a pretty good grasp of recent Chinese history has led me to abhor the Japanese".⁵⁸ (基於個人與一個中國人對中國近代史的體認的理由, 我一向是非常非常仇視日本人的).⁵⁹ He continues by talking about his education, while only glossing over the story of his grandfather who was beaten by the Japanese as a young man, instead focusing on his "middle-school history teacher, an unforgettable man we all respected, who had tearfully related to us episodes from the 1937-1945 War of Resistance against Japan," who told them stories of the rape of Nanjing.⁶⁰ That the story of his grandfather is mentioned only in passing comes across as further looking over of Taiwan's particular history in the name of focusing on Taiwan's role in Chinese history. This critique shows how focusing on local incidents in Taiwan's history

⁵⁸ Ibid., 211.

⁵⁹ 黃春明, 莎莎莎 in *kanhaiderizi*. (Taipei: *Huangguanwenhuachubanyoulanggongsi*, 2000), 284.

⁶⁰ Ibid.,

could be just as powerfully included in the larger history of China, but instead the Nationalist have repressed it to almost a second-class history. Negative interactions with Japan in Chinese history had been used by the curriculum built by the Nationalist government to influence Huang-kun. At school, he was so moved by stories of past aggression by the Japanese that he regretted that he could not go back and fight against them: “We hated ourselves for being too young to have participated in the war, searching out the ‘Jap devils’ and avenging our countrymen”.⁶¹ One history teacher in particular was well respected for his tearful stories of Japanese aggression, and made it clear that Japan was their historical aggressor: “在初中的時候，有一位--我們同學尊敬和懷念的歷史老師，他曾經在課堂上和著眼淚，告訴我們抗戰的歷；說日本分明是侵略我們中國”。⁶² References to the Rape of Nanjing can be found in the Japanese businessmen’s nickname, “the thousand beheadings club”.⁶³ To the Japanese this is a reference to the number of women they want to sleep with, but this also brings up memories to the numerous beheadings that took place during the rape of Nanjing.

Chinese identity also comes up repeatedly in the exchange between the prostitutes and the Japanese businessmen. When one of the prostitutes, Xiaowen, makes an interesting remark about being only one man’s wife, Huang-kun thinks to himself: “*Xiaowen is, after all, Chinese, and though she may be a prostitute, in a contest to see who was more civilized—her or the Japanese—they’d lose. Maybe that’s why we Chinese deride the Japanese by calling them ‘dogs’*”.⁶⁴ Huang-kun’s own feelings of superiority toward the Japanese then play into his belief that he can manipulate them through language. However, he still feels a great amount of guilt

⁶¹ Huang, 211.

⁶² 黃春明, 284.

⁶³ Ibid., 210.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 226.

towards “pimping” out his countrywomen and remarks that “even plunging into the Yellow River could not wash the stains away”.⁶⁵ Once again Huang-kun references important markers of Chinese culture such as the Yellow River.

In one of the final scenes of the story, Huang-kun and the Japanese men are travelling to another city by train. A young Taiwanese man comes up to Huang-kun to ask him questions about the Japanese men he is travelling with. The student is studying Chinese literature, and his father wants to send him to Japan for “advanced study”.⁶⁶ Huang-kun is angered that the student would go to Japan to learn about China, but decides to use this opportunity to ask the Japanese men some questions. He then tells the Japanese that the student’s “field is history, and since he’s writing a thesis on the War of Resistance, he’d like to discuss a few things with some Japanese”.⁶⁷ Huang uses this opportunity to ask the Japanese about their involvement in the War, while trying to get the student to have more respect towards Chinese history and literature by telling him that the Japanese men are professors of Japanese literature. He continues by saying how knowing about China is necessary for understanding Japan as well: “anyone in Japanese literature has a solid foundation in sinology”.⁶⁸ The student mentions how his father really wants him to study in Japan because he feels that it is a more advanced place. However, Huang-kun counters that “it’s understandable that your father has good feelings about Japan, because people of his age grew up under a Japanese educational system that kept them ignorant”.⁶⁹ The power of education with regard to identity and perception being critical once again, however, unlike Huang-kun’s education, the Japanese were being valorized instead of demonized. Huang-kun

⁶⁵ Ibid., 239.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 245.

⁶⁷ Ibid.,

⁶⁸ Ibid.,

⁶⁹ Ibid., 247.

then warns of “today’s youth and their dissatisfaction with reality, which makes them all want to run off to a better country that exists only in their imagination”.⁷⁰ Finally, after some discussion Huang-kun asks the young man if he has been to any of the museums of Chinese history in Taipei where “a magnificent race of people that was able to produce the cultural treasures in the museum could in recent years have dried up so completely”.⁷¹ The student is ashamed and thanks the Japanese men and Huang-kun for the thought-provoking conversation. As he leaves, the student bows and says “*Sayonara!*,” as the Japanese respond “*Zaijian!*”⁷² Huang-kun is thrown off-guard for a moment as he did not expect either party to know any of the other language. After the student has left, one of the Japanese men says, “There’s a Chinese youth you can be proud of”.⁷³ This whole scene comes across as an intellectual fantasy of Taiwanese finally able to gain some ground over the Japanese by confronting them with history. However, as in the rest of the story the rewards of this fantasy are marginal. Huang-kun has in his mind successfully made the Japanese deal with their past and has convinced a young Taiwanese student that he should not study in Japan, but this is really a hollow victory which changes nothing. Even as the Japanese accept their historical actions, it does not change the fact they are still economic colonizers of Taiwan, and while the young man seemed to take Huang-kun’s word seriously, who is to say what he will do? As the Japanese and the young Taiwanese man speak to each other directly for the first time, Huang-kun seems to snap out of his fantasy and back to reality, a reality with Taiwan’s postcolonial situation the same as ever.

Huang Chun-ming’s “*Sayonara/Zaijian*” reflects Taiwan’s postcolonial experience as a rapidly developing third world “nation” which has heavily influenced various parts of Taiwanese

⁷⁰ Ibid., 248.

⁷¹ Ibid., 250.

⁷² Ibid., 251.

⁷³ Ibid.,

society. Along with development has come a dependence on (neo)colonizers such as the United States, but Japan and arguably China more specifically in this case. The influence of the Japanese dominates throughout particularly in the section headings, which separate the narrative into four sections each named after a popular Japanese movie: *The Human Condition*, *Seven Samurai*, *Yojimbo*, and *Japan's Longest Day*. Though the films are never mentioned in the narrative, these sections reflect the narrative of each part. For example, *Yojimbo* is about a ronin who pits two crime families against each other and then charges them more and more money to help them. This matches Huang-kun's actions in the section as he continues to take advantage of the Japanese by up-charging them. In terms of Chinese (neo)colonial influence, Huang's parody of the main character's nationalist pride suggests a critique of the over-influence of China on Taiwan. This does not go so far to suggest that Huang is in favor of Taiwanese independence, but at least suggests there needs to be a balance of emphasis on Taiwan as it has its own local specifics. (Neo)colonization affects various areas of society differently as Huang is clear to point. There is an urban/rural divide that has forced many lower class people into difficult situations, while the urbanites seem to enjoy the success of modernization.

Cheng Ch'ing-wen and Memories of Japanese Occupation

Unlike Huang Chun-ming's piece that is more concerned with Taiwan's placement in the postcolonial world, Cheng's work is more concerned with the KMT's push for modernity and how the standardization of modernity has white-washed aspects of Taiwanese history, particularly the Japanese occupation. In his most well-known piece, "Three-legged Horse", Cheng explores Japan's lasting influence on the memory and identity of the Taiwanese through the character of Chi-hsiang (sometimes referred to as Ah Hsiang). Chi-hsiang is living in a small

village a few hours away from Taipei, when he is visited by the narrator who is unnamed throughout the story. The narrator, who now lives in Taipei, is a generation younger than Chi-hsiang but is from the same small town, Old Town. Now a collector of wooden horses, the narrator has come to visit his friend's (Lai Kuo-lin's) wood-carving factory. Searching around through the factory, the narrator notices a strange but enthralling three-legged horse wood carving. This is the first run in with the negative aspects of modernization. The factory is full of horses that have all been standardized (規格化); the process of making them has never been easier, but they have lost emotional quality in the process. Chi-hsiang's horses are the exception, however, as he makes them in his little wood shop by hand and always makes them with three legs. Looking them over, they not only show the wear and tear of knife marks that actually reveal the process of their creation, but they are able to express an "authentic" emotional quality that the other horses are lacking. This reflects on the process of modernization and nationalism that was encouraged at the time, which focused on making everyone the same or as similar as possible. However, as Cheng is pointing out here, so much is lost in terms of history and identity in the process of standardization. Having seen these unique horses, the narrator urges Lai to take him to meet Chi-hsiang. Lai is confused at why anyone would want to meet the maker of such different carvings but agrees to take him to wood shop, which is a decent ride away.

Once they meet, the narrator is only able to remember Chi-hsiang through his memorable trait, "a band of white skin stretched from between his eyebrows to his nose" that lead to him being nicknamed, the "White-nosed Raccoon."⁷⁴ This nickname plays a pivotal role throughout the story in Chi-hsiang's development as an outsider and directly effects his

⁷⁴ Ibid., 159.

interactions with the Japanese and their culture as opposed to the other villagers. Soon after he is recognized, Chi-hsiang begins reflecting on his life in Old Town during the Japanese occupation.

Starting with his early childhood days, Chi-hsiang talks of skipping school due to his fear of a new Japanese teacher, Mr. Inoue, who was a “fair-skinned, chubby man, a stark contrast to the dark and emaciated residents of the village.”⁷⁵ This contrast from the villagers obviously suggests that he did not have to do the manual labor many of the Taiwanese villagers had to do, while also suggesting he lived on a much more comfortable salary. Mr. Inoue is almost immediately hostile to his Taiwanese students, often calling them “uneducated beasts and savages.”⁷⁶ On top of that, on the second day of school, Mr. Inoue forced all of the students to bend down on the floor. As he walked by, he smacked each of them once with his bamboo cane. However, Ah-hsiang was hit twice after “Mr. Inoue noticed the bridge of his nose.”⁷⁷ Inoue haunts Chi-hsiang’s elementary school days, for even when Chi-hsiang was not in class, simply walking around made “his heart beat faster again, just as it did when he thought of Mr. Inoue’s stick.”⁷⁸ Inoue’s domination over Chi-hsiang’s thoughts set an early stage for the role of the Japanese in his life.

Once graduated from elementary school, Chi-hsiang decides to move to Taipei, which acts as another clear marker of modernity throughout the text. Before he makes his way there, Chi-hsiang notices the steel train tracks that lead directly to Taipei.⁷⁹ Steel seems to be the opposite of the traditionalism associated with wood throughout the story. When he arrives in Taipei, he takes a job working for his uncle’s restaurant delivering noodles. While making his

⁷⁵ Ibid., 164.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 165.

⁷⁷ Ibid.,

⁷⁸ Ibid., 166.

⁷⁹ Train tracks

deliveries, he quickly learns a lot about the geography of Taipei as he becomes more efficient at his job. As he delivered noodles across town, people would make fun of him for his white nose, even going so far as to ask, “Who was the raccoon, your father or your mother?”⁸⁰ These types of experiences convinced Chi-hsiang that “there were only two types of people in the world: the bully and the bullied. Mr. Inoue belonged to the first type. He belonged to the second.”⁸¹ Chi-hsiang’s hatred for these people led him to inform the police (who were largely Japanese) of any type of illegal activity, they may have been doing, making him begin to feel that he was joining the powerful. Chi-hsiang’s experience has defined who he was, and thus led him to protect himself by associating with the most powerful, in this case the Japanese. Chi-hsiang’s continued informing leads to reinforcement from the Japanese as they ask him to work at the station as a janitor because he was “a good citizen, a good Japanese citizen, in fact.”⁸² The emphasis on his Japanese citizenship is the marker of a new identity for Chi-hsiang. The more he equates himself with the Japanese nation, the more he can get rid of his old identity as the bullied. As he worked at the police station, he made note that “nobody inside a prison cell ever called him ‘White-nosed Raccoon.’”⁸³ This led to Chi-hsiang’s desire to become a police officer, which many of the Japanese officers at this station supported and even helped him with. In fact, the Japanese often made use of Taiwanese police officers in the colonial period as their knowledge of the local area as well as their language skills were beneficial to the police.⁸⁴ As Steven Phillips writes: “Demonstrating one of the many moral and political dilemmas of colonialism, some Taiwanese

⁸⁰ Ibid., 168.

⁸¹ Ibid., 169.

⁸² Ibid.,

⁸³ Ibid., 170.

⁸⁴ Taiwan was often referred to as a police state due to the heavy involvement of the police in the general administration of colonies such as Taiwan. For more specifics on the police system in Japan’s colonies see: Ching-chih Chen, “Police and community control systems in the Empire,” in *The Japanese Colonial Empire, 1895-1945*, edited by Ramon Meyers and Mark Peattie (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 213-239.

obtained low-level positions in the police force – where they often earned a reputation for bullying their fellow islanders. Such participation planted the seeds of future conflict over their role as collaborators.”⁸⁵ As Phillips suggests here, later in the story Chi-hsiang’s collaboration will come to directly affect his life.

After a few years have passed, Chi-hsiang has become a police officer and is now courting a woman, Wu Yu-lan. Yu-lan and Chi-hsiang are trying to arrange plans for their wedding, but Chi-hsiang insists they “follow the Japanese rites” of marriage.⁸⁶ However, Yu-lan’s family will not allow this because as she says “we have our own wedding rites.”⁸⁷ Unlike Chi-hsiang who has tied his identity to “Japan,” Yu-lan’s family continues to resist by preserving their own “Taiwanese” traditions. Chi-hsiang’s desire to follow Japanese rites largely stems from his desire to maintain a place of power in society. He blames “suspicious characters” like Yu-lan’s brother who have studied in Mainland China and wish to follow Chinese traditions as the reason he has decided to follow the Japanese rites. This appears to force the blame on all “Chinese” who have picked on Chi-hsiang his whole life.⁸⁸ Beyond that, whether through propaganda or his own experience, Chi-hsiang believes that the ways of the Japanese are the future for Taiwan. As he tells Yu-lan:

Don’t you know that government is about to launch a campaign toward Japanization? In the future, it won’t only be weddings that have to be done the Japanese way. We’ll be asked to worship their gods and adopts Japanese names. In my case, for example, my surname Tseng would be changed into Katsute. Your surname, Wu, is also a Japanese surname, although it’s not very common, and it’s pronounced differently. Adopting Japanese names is necessary for thorough Japanization. Japan has already occupied much of Southeast Asia. Some day, we’ll go there and become leaders ourselves.⁸⁹

⁸⁵ Phillips, 19.

⁸⁶ Cheng, 171.

⁸⁷ Ibid.,

⁸⁸ Ibid.,

⁸⁹ Ibid., 172.

As far as Chi-hsiang knows, the Japanese are the powerful and they will continue to be. If he wants to maintain and possibly enhance his position in society, he must follow their ways. The issue of “Japanization,” is portrayed here as a reflection on the tactics of the KMT during the era of White Terror. The KMT placed so much emphasis on “the nation” and becoming part of “the nation” that for those who lived in the Japanese period must have felt like they were having *déjà-vu*, particularly when you consider some of their policies such as enforcing a national language or even the focus on modernization, which was also one of the major goals of the Japanese occupation.

Later, when Yu-lan asks what his parents think of following Japanese rites, Chi-hsiang tells her: “My parents are rural folk. They won’t have an opinion at all.”⁹⁰ Class thus plays another role in any decision to follow a particular tradition. While Yu-lan’s father’s profession is never stated, it is clear that he has an education, and he must have some money because he was able to send both her and her sister to school, and even send her brother to the Mainland China to study.⁹¹ After meeting Yu-lan at a tennis court, Chi-hsiang could immediately tell she was educated, and he acknowledges that: “Although she didn’t go to one of the famous schools, the school she attended was a private and exclusive one for girls.”⁹² The relatively high status of Yu-lan’s family has left them with a choice to make a decision about which cultural traditions to follow, while Chi-hsiang’s low status and noticeable defect have forced him to follow the powerful.

Finally, in his last memories of the occupation, through muted voices that gradually grow in volume, the phrase “Japan has lost the war” is repeated over and over again throughout the

⁹⁰ Ibid., 174.

⁹¹ Ibid., 171.

⁹² Ibid., 173.

city.⁹³ Yu-lan and Chi-hsiang, now married, discuss their shock at the turn of events and what is to happen next. Worried that Chi-hsiang will want to commit suicide like many of the Japanese stationed in Taiwan, he tells her: “We’re not Japanese.”⁹⁴ Now that the Japanese have lost their power there is no need for Chi-hsiang to hold onto them or their beliefs, but his reputation as a police officer for the Japanese still directly affects his life. As more and more of the villagers fully realize that the Japanese are gone, they start to go after certain individuals including police officers. “A few policemen were dragged to the temple square and forced to kneel down before the gods as a punishment for their sins.”⁹⁵ One police officer is even beaten to death as the villagers as they call him a “three-legged dog.”⁹⁶ Chi-hsiang fled the town before anyone could reach him, leaving his wife and child behind. Unable to learn anything from Yu-lan, the villagers eventually gave up, but Chi-hsiang never returned.⁹⁷

Returning to the present, Chi-hsiang admits to the narrator that he “learned how to capitalize on the power of the Japanese.”⁹⁸ A couple months after the Japanese surrender, Yu-lan died, and Chi-hsiang admits that “My heart died with her. Actually, I should have died as soon as the Japanese surrendered. That’s when many Japanese committed suicide. I wasn’t as brave. I said I wasn’t Japanese. I am a people’s sinner. I should have died to win forgiveness for my sins.”⁹⁹ His embrace of the Japanese during the colonial occupation led to not only his shame and guilt, but it also caused “his people, his relatives and friends, his own parents” all to desert him.¹⁰⁰ So he fled to escape other people’s perceptions of him and live the only way he believed

⁹³ Ibid., 175.

⁹⁴ Ibid., 177.

⁹⁵ Ibid., 177.

⁹⁶ Ibid., 178.

⁹⁷ Ibid., 178-180.

⁹⁸ Ibid., 181.

⁹⁹ Ibid., 183.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.,

he could. Chi-hsiang's continues to label himself as a collaborator through the three-legged horses he endlessly carves. As he explains, "In my time, the Taiwanese called the Japanese 'dogs,' 'four-legged dogs.' Those who worked for the Japanese were called 'three-legged dogs.'"¹⁰¹ However, the people buying his carvings "only wanted horses. I kept on carving horses, and all of a sudden one day I saw myself in them. So I included myself in my carvings."¹⁰²

The image of the three-legged horse suggests that looking back, Cheng Ch'ing-wen did not see Chi-hsiang as a bad person or a dog, but as someone who was forced to live a certain way to survive and was left with a mark because of his past decisions. The presence of the Japanese in Taiwan is clearly seen here as something that not only happened, but as an event that influenced Taiwanese lives well beyond the end of the Japanese occupation and cannot simply be erased. Not only that but this piece critiques various aspects of the modernity pushed forth by the KMT, even equating them with the Japanese. Cheng emphasizes the local in order to critique the "national" as an oppressive concept that has done considerable damage to the people of Taiwan. Only by re-evaluating the role of the national can Taiwanese escape un-scarred.

Conclusion

Taiwan's situation at the end of the 1970s left much to be desired for *Xiang-tu* writers such as Huang Chun-ming and Cheng Ch'eng-wen. Through their work both aimed to critique the message of modernization and nationalism that had been pushed by the KMT. In his short story, "*Sayonara / Zaijian*," Huang explores the postcolonial situation Taiwan has found itself in, including the various layers of society that are affected by not only the internal colonialism of the

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 184.

¹⁰² Ibid.,

KMT, but also the (neo)colonialism of Taiwan by countries such as Japan. As Huang points out, modernization unevenly affected different parts of Taiwan, particularly the rural areas that were undergoing drastic changes that made just living difficult. In the story, Huang-kun continuously has to deal with the Japanese on economic terms, even having to “pimp out” his own countrywomen so that his family is able to support themselves. Though Huang-kun is able to take some economic advantage from the Japanese thanks to his language ability, they will never share the dependence on him as they seemingly have infinite amounts of wealth. Instead, his choice to take advantage of them economically merely perpetuates the system Huang-kun is stuck within.

Cheng Ch'ing-wen's writings offers a different approach to critiquing the KMT's quest for modernization and nationalism. By portraying a historical memory tied to the period of Japanese occupation Cheng accomplishes two goals. First, he is able to once again include the memory of Japanese occupation in Taiwan that had all but been erased by the KMT. Secondly, he was able to reflect on the colonial situation Taiwan was in under the KMT by showing how these messages of nationalism and modernization were also prominent under the Japanese. Specific instances of rural life under the Japanese occupation allow for an understanding of Japanese rule and its influence on the Taiwanese, an influence that must not be forgotten or neglected. Chi-hsiang's life was greatly influenced by the Japanese and the part he played under their occupation. Though Chi-hsiang's collaboration largely appears to stem from his outsider status, the legacy of Japanese influence is still being made apparent directly opposing the KMT's historical narrative. In the next chapter, I will continue to address issues of the Japanese colonial legacy and national identity by exploring issues faced by Taiwan's indigenous peoples, and how their experience has increasingly been moved to the forefront of Taiwanese identity politics

Chapter Two:

Re-centering Taiwan and the New Cinema of Multi-ethnicity

“In winter, after the offerings to the ancestors’ souls, the Japanese set up a huge painting canvas on the Mountain of Great Restraint. A black brush filled it with red colors, I saw them splash and sprinkle on our tribe at will. In winter, after the offerings to the ancestors’ souls, all of the sky was filled with a splendid brilliance and in the distance, about the Mountain of Giant Despot Peak, there rose a seven-colored rainbow bridge.

In winter, after the offering to the ancestors’ souls, the Japanese quietly wept for Kamiya Isaburo, assistant officer of the Military Police who had died in battle. Set off by the light of the moon, Yava’s head was on the top of the left corner of the canvas; our people’s legs were the grass on the prairie, their bodies were stones piled upon each other. It looked terribly like a torn-up painting, and I saw our people smile and set foot on the rainbow bridge.”¹

-Walis Nokan

Although Taiwan’s population is predominantly Han Chinese it is now composed of a variety of ethnicities. This was not the case prior to Qing colonization starting in the 17th century, as the island was largely made up of various indigenous tribes. However, due to their relatively small population and repeated colonizations, their place within society has been displaced, an issue many Taiwanese in general are now grappling with due to the influence of the *bentuhua* (taiwanization/localization) movement. This movement has also led to many Taiwanese of various ethnicities defining their identity against a specific Chinese one. As *bentuhua* nationalism takes a hold of Taiwan, the indigenous peoples have increasingly played a pivotal role in Taiwan’s contemporary identity formation. The indigenous peoples’ history has been portrayed as an “authentic” and distinctly Taiwanese one, which help makes Taiwan culturally distinct from China. However, even as this has led indigenous tribes to political success on some issues

¹ Walis Nokan. “Picturesque Rivers and Mountains (Beishiqun, 1912),” *Frontier Taiwan: An Anthology of Modern Chinese Poetry*. ed. Michelle Yeh and N. Malmqvist (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), 451.

such as name rectification, the narrative being told under *bentū* nationalism does not deal specifically with the legacy of Chinese colonialism under the Qing. Instead, the focus on indigenous peoples reveals how *bentūhua* has largely been influenced by the geo-political structure set up during the Cold War, which scholars such as Kuan-hsing Chen have argued has played a much larger role in East Asia where physical divides still exist between countries such as North Korea/South Korea and Taiwan/China.² The Cold War has thus “intercepted, interrupted, and invaded” processes of decolonization as well as third world nationalism.³ The Cold War structure has made friends of former enemies and drastically influenced geo-political relationships across the globe.

Simply put, the Cold War structure is the geo-political dividing of communist countries as opposed to democracies. Within this structure then, Taiwan is more politically allied with the U.S. and Japan. The U.S. in particular has been vital to Taiwan’s “independence,” while also helping to create the sense of ambiguity of Taiwan’s nation-state status. This is due to the fact that the U.S. has claimed that it will protect Taiwan’s independence from China, even as it continues to not recognize Taiwan as its own country. Thus, Taiwan is left on its own to either seek nation-state status, become part of China, or maintain this status-quo. This has had a huge impact on political and cultural movements in Taiwan, including the *bentūhua* movement.

As *bentū* nationalism is seeking independence from China it has looked for ways to re-define Taiwanese identity against the Chinese. This has led to Taiwanese not only promoting an image of multiculturalism, but also adopting Japanese (another former colonizers) cultural artifacts. Dependence on another former colonizer seems quite strange in a movement focused on

² Chen

³ Kuan-hsing Chen, 121.

localization. However, I would argue that Japan's cultural influence is more easily incorporated for a couple of reasons. First, although Taiwanese relationship's with Taiwan can vary widely by ethnicity, the image of China overall is not a positive one. The indigenous peoples consider China as the main imperial aggressor in regards to the distant past when the Qing arrived in Taiwan. Then, those of Han ancestry consider China as the imperial aggressor in the middle of the twentieth century when Chiang Kai-shek's nationalist government was given control of Taiwan. Finally, in the present when China continues to hold geo-political sway both domestically and internationally. The second main reason Japan's influence is more easily incorporated is due to this Cold War structure, which has moved the emphasis away from former colonial ties between Taiwan and Japan, and instead pushed them into ties between pro-America, democratic allies who are against communism. Both of these factors help to explain the continued preservation of the legacy of Japan in Taiwan, however the emphasis is clearly on the negative aspects of Chinese (neo)colonialism, or their ability to influence Taiwan through economic or geo-political means. If being democratic allies were enough, then perhaps South Korea too would be preserving the legacy of Japanese colonialism, but that is not the case.

In order to more fully understand the complexities of *bentuhua*, a number of issues must be taken into account. However, for the purpose of this paper, I will focus on the experience of Taiwan's indigenous peoples over the past few decades, and how they continue to be used for political purposes. By looking at three hugely popular films from the past decade, it is possible to see a reflection of the changes that have been inspired by the *bentuhua* movement and particularly the continued influence of the Cold War. These films deal with a number of intertwining issues such as history, ethnicity, and colonization, while also bringing forth issues of globalization and decolonization that allow for a deeper understanding of not only contemporary

Taiwanese identity, but can hopefully shed some light on how these issues in general are influencing other former colonies.

This chapter will be split into two sections. The first section will focus on the experience of Taiwan's indigenous peoples since the 1980s and show how the plight of the indigenous peoples has been interrupted in multiple ways. These trends will then be picked up in the final section, which will analyze Wei Te-Sheng's *Cape No.7* (海角七號, 2007) and *Warriors of the Rainbow* (賽德克·巴萊, 2012), and Umin Boya's *Kano* (嘉農, 2014). As Shu-mei Shih asserts: “more than any time before in human history, our contemporary moment marks the culmination, and perhaps final victory, of the continuous ascendance of the visual as the primary means of identification.”⁴ Due to the predominance of the visual, films cannot merely be ignored as entertainment, instead they must be analyzed closely as complex works that help to identify national identity. These films bring a new dimension to the idea of the “Taiwanese experience,” which has been heavily tied to the films of Hou Hsiao-hsien, while also reflecting the larger cultural trends of *bentū* nationalism. However, they also expose the limits of *bentū* nationalism in their inability to address both the influence of Chinese and American imperialism as well as showing the limits of multi-culturalism.

Re-Experiencing Taiwan

As mentioned in the introduction, the films of Hou Hsiao-hsien have been tied heavily to the “Taiwanese experience,” or simply the experience of living in Taiwan as a Taiwanese.⁵ This

⁴ Shih, *Visuality and Identity*, 8.

⁵ James Udden, *No Man an Island: The Cinema of Hou Hsiao-hsien* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press,

is particularly due to his “fascination with the sociohistorical specificities of the modern Taiwanese experience and [his] attempts to formulate a sense of Taiwanese cultural identity.”⁶ However, the experiences portrayed in Hou’s films are often if not always based on Taiwanese of Chinese ethnicity. This is not to say Hou’s films do not reflect the experience of “real” Taiwanese, only that his films cannot be expected to encompass every aspect of contemporary Taiwanese identity, and in fact the experience of the indigenous peoples (*yuanzhumin*), among others, has been overlooked. Hou’s films have often focused on the divide between the Taiwanese (*benshengren*) and the mainlanders (*waishengren*), which was one of the dominating tensions of the martial law era and remains an important aspect of Taiwanese society to this day. However, the focus on this ethnic tension has diverted the conversation away from a number of other issues in Taiwan including, but not limited, to the indigenous peoples⁷.

Over the past twenty years many *yuanzhumin* have worked hard to try to rectify this. Since the 1990s, a number of Taiwanese filmmakers have addressed various issues in Taiwanese society and culture, but indigenous peoples’ rights and identity had seen little exploration in film over this period.⁸ However, throughout the rest of society, Taiwan’s indigenous peoples’ history had become a critical debate not only to the indigenous peoples, but to many Taiwanese of various ethnicities as they look to secure a more inclusive, less Chinese identity. Looking at the history of the indigenous peoples’ struggles for equal rights is key to understanding their representation in the films of Wei Te-sheng and Umin Boya.

2009), 13.

⁶ June Yip, *Envisioning Taiwan: Fiction, Cinema, and the Nation in the Cultural Imaginary*, 9.

⁷ As well as LGBTQ, gender, and class struggles.

⁸ LGBTQ issues including Ang Lee who has continued to explore these matters in his films made in the United States. The perception of Taiwan as one of the most LGBTQ-friendly countries in Asia has remained strong and has already been a site of exploration for many scholars

1984 is considered to be a landmark year for the indigenous rights movement largely due to the passing of two cultural milestones: the first special issue of indigenous literature in the poetry magazine *Spring Breeze* and the founding of the Association for the Promotion of the Rights of the Indigenous People in Taiwan.⁹ Since then, as Kuei-fen Chiu argues, the indigenous rights movement has gained in importance not only to Taiwan's indigenous peoples, but to many proponents of *bentuhua* who see the reclaiming of the indigenous identity as a key part of reclaiming Taiwan's identity as a whole.¹⁰ The indigenous literary movement has echoed some of the cultural trends mentioned earlier, particularly in resituating Taiwan geographically. Indigenous authors such as Syaman Rapongan are known for their "geographical imagination of the ocean," which emphasizes the islander identity of the Taiwanese and has been used by some to show that Taiwan is a "country of the ocean" unlike China.¹¹

The beginning of the 1990s saw the indigenous rights movement move from mainly nativist circles into mainstream discourse as it was increasingly used as a way to separate Taiwanese identity from China.¹² As Melissa J. Brown points out, the reclassification of indigenous peoples that took place in the 1990s was a complicated affair for a number of reasons. Younger generations of Taiwanese often had no idea that they had any indigenous blood, which was largely because older generations at some point had claimed a Han identity, usually Hoklo, in order to escape harassment such as bullying or being shunned.¹³ After years of people claiming a Hoklo identity, the government started to reclassify them into indigenous

⁹ Chiu Kuei-fen, "The Production of Indigeneity: Contemporary Indigenous Literature in Taiwan and Trans-Cultural Inheritance," *The China Quarterly* 200, 1073.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 1073.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 1076-1077.

¹² Melissa J. Brown, *Is Taiwan Chinese? The Impact of Culture, Power, and Migration on Changing Identities* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), 2.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 68.

peoples' status.¹⁴ This happened along with the official renaming of indigenous peoples from “mountain people” to “original people” (*yuanzhumin*).¹⁵ However, this seemingly positive time for indigenous peoples still left many feeling conflicted. Fearing the harassment that they experienced when they were younger, the elder generation was resistant to taking on this identity, but by the early 2000s many of the elder generation had passed away and the younger generation was much more open to accepting this identity, having never faced the harassment their elders suffered through.¹⁶

There has been widespread support for Taiwan's indigenous peoples as their movements have become more mainstream. New tribes continue to be recognized, and indigenous peoples are starting to play a central role in defining what it means to be “Taiwanese.” However, there are still negatives both domestically and internationally. The mainstream media has been a culprit in multiple ways. First, since there is not a large presence of indigenous peoples in the media production industry, negative stereotypes such as being of lower intellect, more physically gifted, and alcohol addiction are still emphasized resulting in “misinformation, negative stereotypes, and public dissention.”¹⁷ Beyond that, the plight of the indigenous peoples often get taken up in the agendas of political parties. As previously mentioned, indigenous peoples' identities have been used as a key divide between Taiwan and China, which some indigenous people are sick of hearing since they believe it makes them merely a pawn in this battle of imperialist forces.¹⁸ This is largely because Taiwanese of Han descent continue to complain about imperialist forces without directly addressing the history of Qing imperialism that

¹⁴ Ibid., 33.

¹⁵ Jolan Hsieh, *Collective Rights of the Indigenous Peoples: Identity-Based Movement of Plain Indigenous in Taiwan* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 49.

¹⁶ Brown, 128.

¹⁷ Hsieh, 52.

¹⁸ Brown, 126.

originally brought many ethnic Chinese to Taiwan. Newspapers have also used the plight of the indigenous peoples to score political points. In their linguistic study of three major newspapers in Taiwan, Sheng-hsiu Chiu and Wen-yu Chiang argue that newspapers often use the indigenous plight to attack their political opponents. The self-construction of an identity including the indigenous peoples then acts as a manipulation tool that is used to gloss over the paper's real intentions, scoring political points.¹⁹ The *United Daily News* is one key example, as their connection to the KMT leads many of their articles on indigenous peoples to push blame on to the Japanese and off themselves.²⁰ While these domestic issues are critical to understanding the place of indigenous peoples in Taiwan today, because of Taiwan's quasi-nation status it is the international issues that will have the largest impact in the long run.

The beginning of Taiwan's indigenous peoples foray into the international realm begins in 1988 when a Taiwanese activist attended the sixth session of the UN Working Group on Indigenous Populations (WGIP). From then until 1997, Taiwanese annually participated in these events standing in solidarity with indigenous peoples from all over the world.²¹ However, in 1997, the "Delegation from Taiwan" status was taken away from them as China aimed to strike out at the Taiwanese in the light of their first presidential election in 1996.²² Taiwan's indigenous peoples have their own issues domestically, but in the international arena their calls for rights and cultural respect become much more restricted due to the powerful influence of China. Chinese influence can be seen in Chinese claims of sovereignty over Taiwan, and their official refusal "to acknowledge the status of indigenous peoples, and refer to indigenous peoples

¹⁹ Sheng-hsiu Chiu and Wen-yu Chiang, "Representations of the Name Rectification Movement of Taiwan's Indigenous People: Through Whose Historical Lens?," *Language and Linguistics*, v 13, no. 3 (2012), 559.
²⁰ *Ibid.*, 557.

²¹ Hsieh, 47-48.

²² Hsieh, 48.

exclusively as “ethnic minorities.”²³ The status of “indigenous peoples” offers a historical projection of Chinese colonialism that China hopes to avoid by instead using “ethnic minorities,” a much more vague term. China’s policy aims to deter any indigenous resistance to Han dominance. If there are no indigenous peoples in China, then the Han Chinese have never occupied land that was originally another groups. In spite of this policy, there is still resistance from, most notably, people in Tibet and Xinjiang. However, little can be done about this unless, as Jolan Hsieh suggests, the WGIP starts to recognize individual indigenous peoples on their own as opposed to only nation-states.²⁴ This would mean recognizing individual tribes outside of any national attachment they may have. This international context brings to the forefront how Chinese (neo)imperialism is possibly the most critical issue influencing Taiwanese identity today. China’s ability to control the image of Taiwanese identity through geo-political means directly impacts how Taiwan interacts with the rest of the world, and how the rest of the world views Taiwan. There is another way to gauge the perception of Taiwanese identity, which is through film.

Wei Te-Sheng and a New Taiwan Cinema of Multi-ethnicity

Since the mid-2000s, mainstream Taiwanese cinema has taken part of an important cultural trend in Taiwanese society, by including the plurality of voices that had often been ignored in earlier periods. In particular, this has meant adding the voices of the many indigenous tribes in Taiwan and incorporating them into the mainstream narrative of Taiwanese history.

These films have proven successful not only in addressing Taiwan’s historical relationship with

²³ China’s policy has forced official documents to have indigenous peoples listed as 高山 (*gaoshan*), which some indigenous peoples consider to be an offensive term, as opposed to their preferred “indigenous peoples” (*yuanzhumin*, 原住民). See: Jolan Hsieh, 48.

²⁴ Hsieh, 49.

Japan, but they have also been hugely popular as all three films are included in the top ten highest grossing domestic films of all time in Taiwan. This popularity can largely be ascribed to the influence of globalization and localization, although each film is its own particular case. For instance, I would argue that the popularity of *Cape No. 7* is largely due to its co-opting of the style of Japanese idol dramas that have been extremely popular in Taiwan since the 1990s.²⁵ *Warriors of the Rainbow* and *Kano* on the other hand combine nativism with Hollywood style big budget productions.

The filmmaker Wei Te-Sheng 魏德聖 (1969-) is largely responsible for this cultural turn in Taiwanese cinema. Born and raised in Tainan in the southwest of the island, Wei did not have much interaction with the cultural hotspots of Taiwan as a child. After a stint in the army, in the mid-1990s Wei joined a film studio owned by the internationally renowned director Edward Yang. By 1996 Wei worked for the first time as an assistant director on Yang's *Mahjong*. Wei has given a lot of credit to Yang's mentorship and attention to detail as an influence over his work.²⁶

Wei's success is so far an anomaly within Taiwan. Before 2007, Taiwan had a reputation for having a collection of strong art-house directors, such as Tsai Ming-liang, Ang Lee and Hou Hsiao-hsien. However, these films did not turn a big profit in Taiwan, and the Taiwanese box office was dominated by Hollywood films. The weak domestic industry in Taiwan can largely be attributed to the KMT's restrictions on "the media imposed under martial law [which] continued to place restraints on the public expression of local Taiwanese cultural forms."²⁷ In the absence

²⁵ Koichi Iwabuchi, *Recentering Globalization: Popular Culture and Japanese Transnationalism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2002), 121.

²⁶ Sonia Kolesnikov-Jessop, "The director Wei Te-sheng's long road to fame" *New York Times*, Nov. 7, 2008, accessed April 4, 2016, <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/11/07/arts/07iht-jessop.html>.

²⁷ I-yun Lee and Christine Han, "Images of Japan in Taiwanese popular culture," in *Imagining Japan in Post-War*

of local cultural products, Western popular culture, especially Hollywood films and American television shows' were circulated widely and became very popular as they presented a "remote and unfamiliar fantasy world."²⁸ Beyond that, in terms of Sinophone cinema, Hong Kong's strong film industry has done well in Taiwan since the 1950s. All of this combined led to a preference for Hollywood films among Taiwanese audiences that continues to this day. Chinese language cinema still dominated by Hong Kong left little opportunity for Taiwanese filmmakers and little desire for them from Taiwanese media outlets. However, the films of Wei and his use of global styles from Hollywood and Japan have opened up new possibilities for Taiwanese-made films.

After working with Yang, Wei started to make his own films in the late 1990s. However, it was not until his 2007 film *Cape No. 7* (henceforth *Cape*) that his work began to have a large influence on Taiwanese society. After years of domination by Hollywood films, *Cape* became the highest grossing domestically made film in Taiwanese box office history.²⁹ *Cape* reached new commercial heights for a Taiwanese film despite the fact that it was made on a small budget and mostly cast with amateur actors.³⁰ Because of the film's popularity in Taiwan, Wei has become known for single-handedly saving the Taiwanese domestic film industry. *Cape* is an excellent example for examining the role of globalization in Taiwanese cultural products, while also analyzing the multi-layered relationship between Taiwan and Japan. I will argue that Wei has had such success by largely adopting the style of the Japanese idol drama, including Japanese actors in his film, and localizing the narrative to Taiwan. This style has led to *Cape* being met

East Asia (New York: Routledge, 2014), 55.

²⁸ Ibid.,

²⁹ Chiaoning Su, "Beyond South of the Border: A Textual Analysis of the Taiwanese Blockbuster *Cape No.7*," *Asian Cinema*. v 20, no. 1 (2012), 176.

³⁰ Ibid.,

with a fair amount of criticism that the film showed such a friendly relationship with the Japanese, particularly through nostalgia for the Japanese colonial period.³¹ While these criticisms may have something to them, the relationship between Taiwan and Japan is far more ambiguous throughout the film.

Before jumping into the film, I'll explain a little more about the Japanese idol drama and its popularity in Taiwan. As Koichi Iwabuchi showed in his well-known work *Recentering Globalization: Popular Culture and Japanese Transnationalism*, Japanese dramas became very popular in Taiwan starting in the 1990s attracting larger audiences than American, Hong Kong, and Taiwanese dramas that aired on cable channels.³² This desire for Japanese cultural products is part of a larger generational divide in Taiwan as younger Taiwanese are more likely to be “pro-Japanese” as opposed to their parent’s generation.³³ Iwabuchi smartly sidesteps the debate of who has the largest audience by focusing on the cultural value these idol dramas have. He accomplishes this by looking at daily gossip about the show among the show’s largest demographic, young women. From this he identifies the main attractive qualities of these shows which include: attractive stars, food, fashion, consumer goods and music that is played in the show.³⁴ It is not only these qualities that attract viewers, as Iwabuchi points out the storylines themselves are very popular. As he notes: “their plots, settings, and subgenres, ranging from urban love stories and family dramas to detective series, are diverse, but the most popular programs are those that deal with the lives and loves of younger people in an urban setting.”³⁵

31 Ying-Bei Wang, “Love Letters From the Colonizer: The Cultural Identity Issue in *Cape No. 7*,” *Asian Cinema*. v 20, no. 2 (2012), 260.

32 “Free for air” or regular channels were still dominated by Taiwanese programming. Iwabuchi, 141.

33 *Ibid.*, 126.

34 He also notes that Japanese magazines became popular among this demographic for the same reasons. Many young Taiwanese girls would buy Japanese magazines that they could not read just to get a better sense of the style trends. Iwabuchi, 142.

35 *Ibid.*, 143.

These narratives allowed for a place of identification for young Taiwanese who were tired of watching dramas about older housewives that dealt specifically with family life and had little to do with their day-to-day lives. As I will show in the next section, Wei's ability to make use of these attractive qualities and localize them is a large part of *Cape*'s popularity.

The film actually starts with the inverse of the urban modernity that was so popular in Japanese idol dramas as the audience first is introduced to a struggling musician, A-ga, who is leaving Taipei to return to his hometown, Hengchun, which is located at the southern tip of the island miles away from any major city. However, A-ga's youth and good looks easily put him into idol territory. Once home, A-ga takes a job as a mailman while mostly trying to forget about music. One day while making his deliveries, he comes across a bundle of letters that are to be sent to an address that is based on the old Japanese system, Cape Number 7, Koshun District, Takao Prefecture. He eventually opens the letters to look for clues to discover that they are in Japanese.

At the same time, a local resort is planning to put on a huge concert in order to promote tourism in Hengchun. Localism is a major theme of the movie, particularly in this narrative which wishes to show off Taiwan to the world through the celebration of this town and its new luxurious hotel. The concert will be headlined by a Japanese pop star who is played by Kousuke Atari. The casting of Atari plays well with the rest of the film, because not only was Atari a new emerging pop star from Japan, but he was also known for the traditionalism of his songs which paid a great deal of respect to his local roots. After the headliner has been decided, A-ga's stepfather is able to convince the town city council that the opening band should be made of locals. The search for and growth of this small band acts as the main narrative of the story. It is also key to our understanding of a multi-ethnic Taiwan as the band is made up of Han, Hakka,

Japanese, and Rukai (an indigenous tribe). The manager of the band, Tomoko, is a former model from Japan who is sent to make sure the opening band does not mess anything up for the Japanese popstar. The leader of the band is then A-ga, whose Taipei music credentials give him the most experience of actually being in a professional band, while the actor who played A-ga, Fan Yichen, also has roots with the Amis tribe though that is not explicitly played up in the film. Five other members then make up the band. Old Mao, who lived through the Japanese colonial period and can still speak Japanese, Rauma, a policeman, who is from the Rukai tribe, Malasun, who is a salesman of Hakka ethnicity, and finally, two more, Frog and Dada, whose ethnicity is never explicitly stated, but whose local credentials mesh well with the rest of the group.

Another key quality that many of the members of the band share is a troubled past that is still haunting them in the present. As already mentioned, A-ga was unable to make it in Taipei, and he brings that frustration with him to many of the early band practices. Tomoko used to be a model in Japan traveling to the fashion hotspots of the world. Now she is stuck in a small town in Taiwan babysitting an amateur band with no career prospects in sight. Rauma was left by his wife due to his short temper. Just before they separated, he quit his job in the Special Forces division of the police department in order for them to stay together. She left anyway, and now he feels as though he has lost everything. Malasun appears to have a strong work ethic, however he has been unable to make any sales putting serious financial pressure on him. By the end of the film, many of these issues are resolved or on their way to being resolved. By confronting their pasts and working together these characters of different ethnicities are able to come together and help one another.

The narrative surrounding the band allows for ample opportunities to play music similar to the Japanese idol drama, which could generally be described as a modern pop-rock sound.

However, influence from Edward Yang's work is visible here as well. As Emilie Yeh has pointed out, Yang has used music, in his case American rock, to explore (neo)colonial influence in Taiwan.³⁶ The dominating presence of American rock music in Yang's film helps amplify the presence of American power in Taiwan, and while there is not a direct colonization, the assertion of US political power to influence Taiwan is very much still colonial. However, the role of music is more layered in *Cape* as the film seems to be asserting a dual identity for the Taiwanese. Almost all of the members of the band are first discovered playing an acoustic or traditional instrument such as the *yueqin*.³⁷ As they begin to practice, they all switch to electric instruments. The electric instruments signify a modernizing attempt, something that will make them more popular as it is more similar to what Japanese and American bands use. This cannot be simply equated with being more Japanese though, because the Japanese musician is only ever seen playing the piano, and his folk pop does not match with what the band later plays. When they finally have their concert they appeal to both of these identities. First, they play a modern rock song which hints to the influence of America and Japan. After that, they grab their original instruments and play a slower more traditional song about being "South of the Border." This appears to be the revealing of their true selves, as it is once they have performed their "modern" song that they can throw away their shackles of modernity and return to the instruments that are more natural to them. This move is greatly appreciated by the crowd, who is always seen cheering and chanting. Interestingly, the crowd seems to appreciate both songs equally as though both of the genres are perfectly natural to Taiwan, which by that time they would be. Taiwan

³⁶ Emilie Yueh-yu Yeh, "American popular music and neocolonialism in the films of Edward Yang," *Chinese Connections: Critical Perspectives on Film, Identity, and Diaspora*. Ed. Tan See Kam, Peter X Feng, and Gina Marchetti (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2009), 130.

³⁷ A stringed instrument similar to a lute that originated in China.

may have its own cultural traditions, but outside influences cannot be ignored as they are readily accepted throughout the society.

By the end of the film, A-ga stumbles upon someone who knows the address the letters need to be sent to. He finds the address and is finally able to deliver the letters. When he delivers them, the woman at the house explains that before the end of the Japanese occupation she had been planning to marry a Japanese teacher. However, once Japan lost World War II, the teacher was forced to return home before they were able to marry. Over the years, he continued to write her love letters without ever sending them. After he passed away, one of his children found the letters and thought they should be sent to the woman if she was in fact alive.

Romance is also a key part of the narrative, both between the A-ga and Tomoko and the older Taiwanese woman and the Japanese teacher. The romance between A-ga and Tomoko is developed throughout the film, though it is largely antagonistic in the beginning, with neither seeming to care for the other. However, by the end of the film they are in each other's arms. While the appeal of romance alone could explain these relationships, I would complicate them both focusing on what they say about the relationship between Taiwan and Japan. Some have seen these relationships as Taiwan wanting to be "reunited" with Japan once again. However, I believe it is more complicated than that. Keeping in mind the KMT's attempts to push the Japanese occupation out of the Taiwanese historical narrative and the goals of *bentuhua* to reincorporate what had been lost or ignored, I would argue that the letters represent a piece of history that Taiwanese felt they had lost but has now been restored to them. If the romantic relationship between the Taiwanese woman and the Japanese man act as metaphors for Taiwan and Japan as a whole, then the fact that the man died before these letters were sent is very important. His death means that this relationship can never return to what it was, as Taiwan and

Japan's relationship cannot. However, through these letters at least the past can be known or at least some of it can be. The romance between A-ga and Tomoko can be further pushed to stand for the friendly relationship that defines Taiwan-Japan relations today. As mentioned earlier, in the Cold War structure Japan and Taiwan have been democratic allies that for now have pushed aside much of their colonial past in order to focus on the present. However, Wei Te-sheng's next film aims to complicate the Japan-Taiwan relationship even further.

Warriors of the Rainbow (2012), Wei's follow-up to *Cape*, makes it clear that Wei does not want Japan to colonize Taiwan once again, but that he is interested in Japan's role in Taiwanese history and culture. Although *Warriors* never quite matched the box office heights of its predecessor, possibly due to the fact that it was cut into two parts, it did break many records for a Taiwanese made film such as the highest opening day box office.³⁸ The film was also the highest budgeted in Taiwanese film history, becoming an irritating point of conversation to Wei in interviews.³⁹ Unlike *Cape*, both *Warriors* and *Kano* do not follow the style of Japanese idol dramas as closely. Instead, they are more heavily influenced by the big budget Hollywood films that remain extremely popular in Taiwan, particularly films such as *Avatar*, which is the highest grossing film in Taiwanese history.⁴⁰ Wei has even gone on to say that James Cameron, the director of *Avatar* is one of his filmmaking role models.⁴¹ Besides being a popular success, the film's focus on a critical point of Taiwanese history that had previously been overlooked help to raise awareness about the plight of the many indigenous peoples. For instance, before 2008 the

38 Staff Writer, "Seediq Bale' breaks box office records in Taiwan," *Taipei Times*, September 12, 2011, accessed April 2, 2016. <http://www.taipetimes.com/News/taiwan/archives/2011/09/12/2003513099>.

39 Staff Writer, "Wei De-sheng," *Time Out Hong Kong*, November 23, 2011, accessed April 3, 2016. <http://www.timeout.com.hk/film/features/46851/wei-te-sheng.html>.

40 2012 台灣電影年鑑= *2012 Taiwan cinema yearbook* (Taipei Shi: Cai tuan fa ren guo jia dian ying zi liao guan, 2012), 128.

41 Georg Szalai, "Taiwan's Foreign-Language Oscar Hopeful: Wei Te-sheng," *Hollywood Reporter*, November 13, 2011, accessed April 3, 2016. <http://www.hollywoodreporter.com/news/taiwan-oscar-awards-wei-te-sheng-warrior-rainbow-seediq-bale-261001>.

Seediq were not officially recognized by Taiwan, instead they were included with another group, the Atayal.⁴² This happened before *Warriors* was released, but it points to the overall trend in Taiwanese society of pushing a positive multi-ethnic message. Nativism is a key theme in these films, as the filmmakers are “returning to” or in this case redefining their cultural roots. By emphasizing the role of the Japanese and indigenous peoples in Taiwan they are also downplaying the role of China in Taiwanese identity formation. This also points once again to the Cold War structure that has defined political relationships in East Asia, as the relationship between Taiwan and Japan has been that of democratic allies, while Taiwan has dealt with colonialism from the KMT and the battle with the communists in China. Before getting deep into the global system, let us first look more closely at the films themselves.

The film follows members of the Seediq tribe as they adjust to life under the Japanese with events building up to the Wushe Incident in 1930, one of the largest rebellions during the colonial period. In interviews Wei has pointed out how little he had learned about the indigenous peoples of Taiwan from his school days. It was not until he came across a couple of articles in mid-1990s that he really became interested in the topic.

“The first was about Taiwan’s indigenous people, who arrived at Taipei from the east to demand the government to return their lands. The other news was – funnily enough – about Hong Kong: it’s on the question whether Hong Kong should be returned to [the People’s Republic of] China or the Republic of China (Taiwan). I found it very interesting that both were connected to land, as if it’s the only thing we’ve lost in the past. I wondered, indeed, if there isn’t anything else? I started to research about the aboriginal people and eventually came across a comic book on the Wushe Incident. I thought: oh wow, who’d have thought that there’s a brilliant story like this in Taiwanese history and I’d never heard of it?”⁴³

⁴² Shih Hsiu-chuan and Loa Lok-sin, “Sediq Recognized as 14th Tribe,” *Taipei Times*, April 24, 2008, accessed April 1, 2016. <http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/taiwan/archives/2008/04/24/2003410107>.

⁴³ Staff Writer, “Wei De-sheng,” *Time Out Hong Kong*.

This quote brings out a number of interesting point. First, the almost complete absence of Taiwan's indigenous peoples from Wei's youth education.⁴⁴ This absence clearly was a major motivating factor for Wei, who wanted to bring this story to a larger audience. The question of Hong Kong is also very interesting, because Wei seems to be questioning place-based identity. As becomes clear in the film, identity for the Seediq is not only about their land, but about their culture and the traditions they wish to pass on to later generations.

Throughout the film, the tribes split time attempting to rebel against the Japanese, while also adjusting to the new laws imposed on them. Most of the tension between the Taiwanese indigenous peoples and the Japanese derives from the indigenous peoples' desire to maintain their traditions, which the Japanese often deem as barbaric, and to protect their homeland. Wei works to show Taiwan and the tribes within it as a pluralistic society. For instance, there are numerous tribes that have their own territories and compete against one another for food and occasionally land, showing that it was a much more complicated situation than the "aborigines" or just the Seediq versus the Japanese.

The main character of the film, Mona Rudao, is a leader of the Seediq. Early in the film, Mona goes through the rites of passage for becoming a man in Seediq culture, while being told that it is now his job to protect their homeland in honor of their ancestors. After he has gone through this rite of passage, there are numerous interactions with other aboriginal tribes, such as the Toda. While the film does not go into the distinct rituals for all of the different tribes, there is a clear understanding that they are distinct from one another. They are not just one people, but different groups with different cultures.

⁴⁴ He often adds that his history textbooks explain the Wushe Incident "in only two lines." *Time Out Hong Kong* Interview.

The occupation by the Japanese has led these various tribes to unite in order to fight off the Japanese and protect their homeland. Not only are a plurality of tribes shown, but Wei is able to add even more depth to colonial Taiwan's pluralistic society by including ethnic Han Chinese characters. These Han Chinese characters can often be distinguished by their “cue” hairstyles, which were mandatory for males in Qing China.⁴⁵ Many of the Han Chinese characters in the film are shown as shopkeepers of some kind and are really only background characters. This is an important distinction from earlier Taiwanese films, where peoples of Chinese descent appear to be the soul of the culture, and this story may have very well been told from their perspective.

The end of the film depicts the rebellion against the Japanese by these tribes. After fifty days of fighting, there is almost a complete annihilation of the tribes. Not only were the warriors killed in battle, but many of the women committed suicide as an act of support to the men who were giving up their lives to protect their land. After the battle, the Japanese general in charge admires the tribes' warrior spirit and compares it to the old Bushido values of Japan. The general seems to be showing his respect to them, while also pointing out their failure to modernize as the Japanese had. This is an interesting moment, because it seems to give the Japanese credit for at least realizing they were facing a “pure” culture. If this small section were admitted, the portrayal of the Japanese would be much more negative. As if they were completely lacking in remorse, however, Wei chooses to save some face for the Japanese, which seems in line with the generally positive attitude towards the Japanese that other films I have discussed show. In the final scene, there is a glimpse of hope that the tribe members who did survive will carry on their culture. As a young indigenous boy is seen exploring the woods, he climbs to the top of a hill

45 Patricia Ebrey, Anne Walthall, and James Palais, “The Creation of the Manchu Empire (1600-1800),” in *East Asia: A Cultural, Social, and Political History*, (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2009), 263.

and watches as a rainbow washes over Taiwan, suggesting that the spirit of the Seediq lives on in Taiwan even if they have lost this battle.

While the spirit of the Seediq is often shown as pure and worth fighting for, the film complicates the representation of both the Seediq and the Japanese. This is part of Wei's desire to represent the complexity of history where everything is not black and white: "In history, it is important to try to understand the motives of the people involved. If we look at a person's action only to decide if that person was right or wrong, then we really are thinking about humanity on too small a scale."⁴⁶ Wei accomplishes this by not only focusing on the oppression of the tribes by the Japanese. One Japanese police officer, Kojima Genji, is very friendly throughout the film, and he even attempts to learn a little bit of their languages. However, by the end of the film he is fighting with the tribes because they have killed his family. At the same time, Wei also does not only focus on the positives of the Seediq as they fight for themselves. In fact, the beginning of the major battle is filled with sneak attacks by the Seediq that move their actions to an area of moral ambiguity. Wei's desire to represent the complications of history also represent the complications of contemporary times. The relationship between Taiwan and Japan has drastically changed since the Wushe Incident as the two countries have become much friendlier since the Cold War. This reality is also reflected in the filmmaking teams used for the film, as many filmmakers from Japan and South Korea were also brought in to help during production.⁴⁷ Overall, Wei's focus is on Taiwanese identity and culture, but through his attempts to complicate history he also ends up reflecting current political realities in Asia, a reality that promotes friendships among various peoples, particularly, it seems, if they are fellow democracies. The

⁴⁶ Jake Chung, "Director Wei talks about 'Seediq Bale,'" *Taipei Times*, October 4, 2011, accessed April 3, 2016. <http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/taiwan/archives/2011/10/04/2003514896>.

⁴⁷ Loa Lok-sin, "Filming of Sediq Resistance Epic Completed," *Taipei Times*, September 6, 2010, accessed April 4, 2016. <http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/taiwan/archives/2010/09/06/2003482200>.

spirit of multi-ethnicity and Taiwan's historical relationship with Japan continue to be an important factor in the Wei Te-sheng produced film *Kano* (2014).

Kano, Baseball, and Multi-ethnicity

Focusing on baseball is an obvious choice when considering Taiwan's historical relationship with the game. Baseball is seen as the "all-but-official national game of the island," and its connection to memories of the Japanese occupation remains strong.⁴⁸ In the early 20th century, baseball was not only the game of Japan or Taiwan, it was the game of the Japanese empire, and a key tool of assimilation.⁴⁹

During the first twenty-five years of Japanese rule, non-Japanese were unable to play baseball as they were deemed too un-civilized.⁵⁰ However, following an instance of colonial resistance in 1915, the Japanese began to allow "Taiwanese" to join in a variety of previously forbidden activities such as emperor-worship, baseball, and new policies of "racial coeducation" were started.⁵¹ Following their arrival to the game, baseball allowed for new spaces of identity formation for the "Taiwanese." As more "Taiwanese" joined the game, Japanese began to marvel at the ability of the aborigines, and aborigine success in baseball has lived on to become part of an "ethnic mythology."⁵² Not only that, but "Taiwanese" players were often told that they were "not Japanese, and were not Chinese either."⁵³ Andrew Morris argues that quotes such as this "clearly show how baseball was a corporeal way to create such a purposefully ambivalent

⁴⁸ Andrew Morris, *Colonial Project, National Game: A History of Baseball in Taiwan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011), 1-2.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 6.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 10.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 17.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 24.

⁵³ Some former players and coaches, such as Jian Yongchang, who grew up in the colonial period specifically mention that they enjoyed baseball because of the ambiguity of their identity. See: Morris, 27.

identity for two generations of young people in Taiwan.”⁵⁴ The period Morris is referring to is the *Doka* or assimilation period of Japanese rule that aimed to bring Taiwanese into the Japanese empire. However, the colonial legacy on baseball is clear to this day. For instance, Taiwanese often refer to baseball as “*ia-kiu*” (from the Japanese *yakyu*) as opposed to the Mandarin “*bangqiu*,” and translations from English to Japanese to Taiwanese remain strong as words like “*sutoraiku*” (strike) and “*a-u-to*” (out) remain in use.⁵⁵

Issues of modernity also arise when considering the role of baseball in colonial Taiwan. Japanese rule on the island is often associated with modernity, efficiency, and progress, perceptions that baseball has also carried.⁵⁶ In fact, it has been argued that the game was a kind of technology for making the colonized modern and fit.⁵⁷ Baseball’s role as a key part of the colonial legacy of the Japanese in Taiwan makes it an important area for exploration. I would argue that *Kano*’s focus on multi-ethnicity and modernization in the colonial period make it extremely relevant to discussions of the decolonization process. A process that involves the addressing of issues from the period of colonization issues in order to disassociate them from their colonial roots and thus ideally be able to move on, and a process that has only happened so late due to Taiwan’s colonization under the KMT.⁵⁸ The KMT’s push for a “traditional” Chinese culture in Taiwan, and so their dismissal of the Japanese period, did not allow for Taiwanese to deal with the influence and legacy of Japanese culture in Taiwan.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 27.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 2-3.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 44.

⁵⁷ During the 40th anniversary of Japanese rule, an expo was held in Taipei containing all of the latest technologies of the empire. The expo was capped off with a baseball tournament between teams from Taiwan, Manchuria, and Korea. Morris, 46.

⁵⁸ This is similar to how Arjun Appadurai has viewed cricket in former British colonies such as India. Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1996).

Directed by Umin Boya (馬志翔 1978)-, one of the stars of *Warriors*, *Kano* continues and improves upon the legacy of Wei Te-sheng by not only focusing on the themes of multi-ethnicity and the Japanese occupation, but by actually having a representative of the indigenous peoples, Boya being half-aborigine, speak for himself. The film also extends on the popularity of Wei's earlier films, as it is the sixth highest grossing domestically made film in Taiwan.⁵⁹ *Kano* has two main narrative strands. The first takes place in 1944, as a Japanese soldier goes to Taiwan for the first time. On his journey there, he remembers a baseball team from Taiwan that he played in an empire-wide competition about ten years prior. The other part then follows the Taiwanese team, Kano (short for Kagi Agriculture and Forestry Institute), as they train and make it to the Koshien games, which are a "national" competition for the Japanese empire's youth baseball teams that takes place in Nishinomiya, Japan.

The team consists of Japanese, "Takasago" (how the Japanese referred to the indigenous tribes at the time), and "Taiwanese" which the film does not define exactly but probably means Han Chinese such as Hakka, and Hoklo.⁶⁰ Throughout the film, it is repeatedly mentioned how each of these groups brings something different to the team that in the end makes them greater than the sum of their parts. The Japanese are great at defense, while the "Takasago" have great speed, and the "Taiwanese" are great hitters. Comments such as these are very obvious, but definitely sell the image of the benefits of multi-ethnic unity.

⁵⁹ 2014 台灣電影年鑑= 2014 Taiwan Cinema Yearbook (Taibeishi: Caituan faren guojia dianying ziliaoguan, 2014, 106.

⁶⁰ As Andrew Morris points it, "'Takasago' was a complicated term that referred both to the Aborigines' mountainous home regions and also to the pine tree spirits in Japanese mythology; it constituted at once an attempt to assert both an Aborigine marginality *and* an organic 'East Asian' ethnic ties between Japan and the islanders." Morris, 18.

Kano also stresses the various uses of language in Taiwanese society. Numerous languages are used throughout the film. In fact, a large majority of the film is in Japanese, which seems quite odd for a domestically made and hugely popular Taiwanese film. For the time period of the film, at least, this makes a good deal of sense. The Japanese players would be unlikely to have spent time learning any of the Taiwanese languages, while the other players took part in the Japanese education system in colonial Taiwan. The film does switch between various languages though, especially outside the context of the team. When the “Taiwanese” return home for instance they will speak in their native Hakka or Hokkien. In one moment in the film, after the team has reached the Koshien, a Japanese reporter openly makes fun of the team for their multi-ethnicity and asks “can the Takasago savages speak Japanese?” This of course is an affront to their coach, who stands up for his players as great people regardless of ethnicity.

Coach Kondo is portrayed throughout the film as only caring about whether or not members of the team compete on the field and bring all they have, which has been a popular representation of him in Taiwanese history books as well. These books tend to be written by *bentuhua* writers who aim to represent that Japanese period as more positive than it was in reality. This representation has been highlighted in the film as well, as he is portrayed as strict but fair. However, in reality, Kondo was much more critical to the “Taiwanese” players. During practices, if a “Taiwanese” player were to make a mistake, Kondo was known to shout either, “Go back to China!” or “Go back to the mountains,” and their instances where he chewed out “Taiwanese” players so much over little mistakes that they would quit the team.⁶¹ It is possible that the writers and producers of the film were only aware of Kondo’s image from a select number of history texts. However, to portray him as much more critical towards other ethnicities

⁶¹ Ibid., 36.

in the film would clearly take away from the message of multi-ethnicity that it is trying to promote.

In the end, the same reporter is moved by the spirit that Kano players bring to the game. After Kano loses in the finals, the reporter starts to cry along with a number of others and begins to chant “Kano is the world! Heroes of the field!,” showing the power and influence multi-ethnicity can have if just given a chance. The plurality of voices in Taiwanese society is not the only cultural trend from *bentuhua* that can be seen in *Kano* though.

In the reincorporating of the Japanese back in to the Taiwanese historical narrative, one of the critical themes has been modernization in the colonial period. Throughout the film, one of the background narratives is the construction of a giant canal through the city of Chiayi where the team lives. This canal would bring water through the center of the city and make it much easier for farmers to obtain water for their fields. Agriculture is repeatedly shown as being extremely important to the town. As the team would jog around, they would often run past farmers working in the field either cheering them on, or in some cases telling the team that they should give up baseball and focus on agriculture for their families. In fact, the players all attend an agricultural school that teaches them the ins and outs of maintaining crops and experimenting with new breeds of fruits and vegetables.

Many of the townspeople are excited for the finishing of the canal, and the Japanese architect who designed it and is overseeing its completion is treated as a rock star whenever he appears. At the end of the film, once the team has returned from Japan a parade is thrown for them to celebrate how well they played and represented Taiwan. During the parade, water is finally released into the canal. Someone tells the players, and they immediately leave and run to see the result. Everyone is confused at first as they see the players running away, but once they

hear the news the townspeople also go to see the canal. At the canal, the players wonder at its beauty and think of how much easier it will be for the farmers now. They run across the Japanese architect, and he tells them how proud he is of the way they played at Koshein.

One of the larger problems that arises in all of these films stem from the limits of multiculturalism or what is called the “double bind” of multiculturalism.⁶² As Jonathan Nagle argues, “multiculturalism is characterized by a paradoxical injunction that limits, but doesn’t completely negate the possibility for ‘ethnic minorities’ to withdraw from their circumscribed status.”⁶³ The concept of the double bind argues that, although multiculturalism opens up a space in society for a particular ethnicity, they are then bound to this place in society and their image/identity is unable to escape it. For example, in *Cape Rauma* is unable to escape some of the stereotypes of indigenous peoples in Taiwan such as having a short temper and having a drinking problem. The double bind is more obvious in the case of the other two films though, as the indigenous peoples’ history appears stuck in the period of Japanese occupation. It seems they can be Taiwanese, but only in the most beneficial way for those who are not Japanese. In the same way the newspapers used the issues of the indigenous peoples to score political points through identity politics, these films use the image of the indigenous peoples to promote one version of Taiwanese identity. The *bentuhua* movement’s focus on Taiwanese identity as separate from China while also connected to Japan strongly shapes the identity of the indigenous peoples in these films. Their identity has yet to be extended beyond this one vision of Taiwanese identity. Because of this, other aspects of the history of indigenous peoples’ in Taiwan remain left out, such as resistance against Qing

⁶² John Nagle. *Multiculturalism's Double Bind: Creating Inclusivity, Cosmopolitanism and Difference* (Farnham, England: Ashgate, 2009), 5.

⁶³ *Ibid.*,

imperialization. Until these issues are addressed the identity of indigenous peoples' in Taiwan will be tied to the vision put out by those influenced by *bentuhua*.

Throughout these films, cultural trends from the *bentuhua* movement are clearly evident. The focus on a positive multi-ethnic Taiwan and the reincorporation of the Japanese back into Taiwan's historical narrative are the most obvious, but the focus on modernization in *Kano* stems from these trends as well. As I have pointed out already, these representations of the past bring out the complexities of the present especially in regard to Taiwan's relationship with Japan. In both *Cape No. 7* and *Kano* multi-ethnic groups are overseen by Japanese, Tomoko as the manager of the band and Kano's Japanese coach. While the portrayal in *Warriors* is much more negative, that attempt to add ambiguity to both the Japanese and the Seediq is still there. Part of this can be answered by the Cold War structure that remains strong in East Asia as I have mentioned. It also speaks to Japan's image as a political and economic leader in Asia. However, since Wei's popularity has skyrocketed in Taiwan, his films have become much more interesting to the Japanese. In fact, Japan has been a key market for Wei's films since *Cape*.⁶⁴ Thus, Wei's desire for ambiguity also acts as a way to keep distribution doors open. These films all point to the multiple layers of influence that are involved in the filmmaking process, and how these influences can end up shaping perceptions of identity.

Conclusion

National and cultural identity is constantly changing due to a complicated number of influences. This is especially true in Taiwan, as it has gone through many political and cultural shifts in the last century. First, the occupation by the Japanese until the end of World War II,

⁶⁴ Noriko Sekihara, "Taiwan's New Auteur: Wei's Trilogy Brings Him Fame in Japan" *Nikkei Asian Review*, January 23, 2015, accessed April 5, 2016. <http://asia.nikkei.com/Life-Arts/Arts/Wei-s-trilogy-brings-him-fame-in-Japan>.

followed by the takeover of Taiwan by the Chinese Nationalist government following the Chinese Civil War, and even within the reign of the Nationalist government as Martial Law did not end until 1987. Not only that, but the Cold War and the (neo)colonial power America has used to influence Taiwan through investment and geo-political clout (such as protecting Taiwan's "independence") have all worked to shape Taiwan's relationships with the rest of the world, but particularly in Asia. With the further development of the *bentuhua* movement in the 1990s, Taiwanese have shifted their identity away from simply being a part of Chinese identity to becoming a more independent, yet multicultural identity.

Looking at cultural trends in Taiwan since the 1990s, there has been a clear attempt to re-center Taiwan outside of China's domain, while China remains the main "other" that Taiwanese define their selves against. Both the focus on Japan's colonial legacy and the history of Taiwan's indigenous peoples continue to be used as a way to assert a non-Chinese identity. However, historical complexity has turned more and more into identity politics as the images of the Japanese period and the indigenous peoples continue to be manipulated. Even as the movements for equality and proper identification of the indigenous peoples of Taiwan have begun to succeed after decades of work, many political parties and newspapers still use the indigenous right's movement to score political points domestically, while indigenous peoples are under pressure from China as they attempt to join political groups internationally. Finally, the films of Wei Te-Sheng and Umin Boya introduce a new period of filmmaking in Taiwan, one that has been heavily influenced by the goals of the *bentuhua* movement. Unlike many past films, these do not focus on the ethnically Han Chinese as the center of Taiwanese identity. Instead, Wei uses the indigenous peoples and their interactions with the Japanese during the colonial period as a way to explore this multicultural society. Wei may be aiming for historical complexity, but he is also

reflecting on contemporary relationships, particularly the almost friendship between Taiwan and Japan. Though Chinese influence in Taiwan can be seen through his films, China itself is only mentioned in passing. It is unlikely that Taiwan will be completely separated from Chinese influence anytime soon, if ever, but Wei's films are a clear attempt to try and will continue to be a topic of discussion for years to come

Conclusion

Although the widespread victories of the Democratic Progressive Party in the 2015 elections suggest that a Taiwanese identity related to China through ancestry alone has become the dominant mode of identification in Taiwan, the factors leading to this moment in Taiwan's history continue to be complex and negotiated through both domestic and international geopolitics. The intent of this thesis has been to explore the web of influences effecting identity formation through analyzing film and fiction since the end of the twentieth century. By tying these cultural products to their historical, social, and political context, it is possible to not only trace the development of localization movements such as *bentuhua*, but also explore the factors that lead to the movement's creation, sustainment, and influence on later cultural works. These works also provide insight into how the legacy of colonization by the Japanese and KMT have remained a crucial area of Taiwanese history, and that Cold War (neo)colonialism has also shaped Taiwanese identity in the twenty-first century. This thesis has also sought to claim that indigenous identities have been used by numerous political groups in Taiwan to support their own vision of national identity, while continuing to neglect the historical experience of colonization experienced by the indigenous peoples.

In my first chapter, I examined issues of "the nation" in Nativist literature. Huang Chunming's piece "*Sayonara/Zaijian*" focused on the contemporary issues facing (post)colonial Taiwan as it deals with the new influence of global capitalism. Huang connects contemporary issues of globalization with the historical legacy of colonialism in Taiwan asserting that Taiwan continues to be colonized only through different means such as Japan's economic or (neo)colonialist tactics. At the same time, Huang is able to critique the KMT's notion of Taiwan

as culturally Chinese by continuing to link Taiwan to its Japanese past. Next, in Chen Qingwen's piece, "Three-legged Horse," he reflects on the period of Japanese occupation in order to point out issues with the KMT regime's call for "the national." Not only is Chen's direct mentioning of the Japanese period against the KMT's notion of Taiwanese history, by focusing on how the Japanese used calls for "the nation" in order to build a national identity in Taiwan he is able to point out how the KMT is in effect occupying Taiwan just as Japan did.

In the next chapter, I explored the "re-centering" of Taiwan that has taken place since the early 1990s. I argued that Taiwan's indigenous peoples have been moved to the forefront of the *bentuhua* movement as the new center of Taiwanese identity. This is largely due to the numerous attempts that have been made to define Taiwan as specifically not Chinese. I highlighted the increased importance placed on Taiwan's indigenous issues, by first discussing many of the challenges faced by indigenous peoples both domestically and internationally. Then, I focused on how these issues have been used by various political movements in Taiwan, including *bentuhua* in order to assert their preferred notion of Taiwanese national identity. By focusing on three films by Wei De-sheng and Umin Boya, I argued that these films redefine the meaning of the "Taiwanese experience" that has largely been portrayed through the experience of the *benshengren* until now while also showing off the influence of identity politics around indigenous peoples. Wei's *Cape No. 7* and *Warriors of the Rainbow* challenge the Chinese identity of Taiwan by focusing on the influence of the Japanese, while also portraying stories of the indigenous peoples. This trend is then continued in the Wei-produced, Umin-directed *Kano*. These films represent a new way for Taiwanese filmmakers to represent a Taiwanese identity that is both commercially successful and separated from a notion of Chineseness. By representing Taiwan as a multicultural society, something that is largely unrepresented in earlier

Taiwanese films, particularly popular ones, bringing the history and culture of indigenous peoples to the forefront, and dealing explicitly with Japanese occupation these films are staking their claim to the uniqueness of Taiwanese society. In effect, these films aim to announce Taiwan as a multicultural nation to the world in order to distinguish it from merely being “Chinese.” Whether or not Taiwan will ever escape from the shadow of China is still undecided. However, these films also portray an example of the double-bind of multiculturalism by keeping the indigenous experience within a certain frame such as the Japanese colonial period. The success of these films is also tied to methods of globalization used by the filmmakers such as elements of Japanese dramas as well as Hollywood-style techniques that can help account for how these films were able to succeed when so many Taiwanese films have failed.

This study could be benefitted or expanded in a number of ways. For one, including more works of *Xiang-tu* literature would make a much stronger case for the importance of Japanese literary memory in Taiwan. Along with that, providing more details on KMT cultural policy and any type of censorship that was imposed in the martial law era would help us to understand why this historical narrative is different in these texts and possibly others. I also believe looking into the publishing industry may allow for some insight into what could be published and what could not. Also, including an analysis of cultural writings from the time period on both *Xiang-tu* literature and the representation of the Japanese in Taiwanese society would allow for a clearer understanding of what context these works of literature are in conversation with. Finally, comparing these writings with more contemporary works of fiction from Taiwan that include memories of the Japanese occupation could lead to a notion of how ideas of the Japanese period have changed since the lifting of martial law.

Another area for future research is related to current policies regarding film production in Taiwan and throughout East Asia. In recent years, as the Taiwanese government has aimed to increase tourism through film, the content of the film as well as the image of Taiwan's national/cultural identity and history is bound to be changed as well. As these changes occur it would be interesting to see how content is effected by the markets that each film is planned to be released into. As discussed in this thesis, Wei De-sheng was aware of his film's rising popularity in Japan, which possibly influenced his decision in representing Japan in a certain way. Japan will continue to be a large potential market for Taiwanese films of a certain type. However, due to a common language the Chinese market will also become of increasing importance or at least opportunity. Even as tension remains between China and Taiwan it will be interesting to see if/how global capitalism is able to redefine their relationship through cultural products such as films and television shows.

Finally, there is much more work to do on the cultural identity of the indigenous peoples' of Taiwan, which continued to be displaced by the influence of international geo-politics. Hopefully, indigenous peoples will encounter more opportunities to make films. In the meantime there is a good amount of indigenous literature that can offer insights into their perception of Taiwanese identity. Since the early 2000s there has also been an increase in Indigenous pop music as well as a radio station for it specifically.¹ The content of this station as well as the opinions of it by non-aborigines could lead to useful insights to Taiwanese identity formation.

¹ Liu, Alexandra, "New Wave of Indigenous Pop—The music of Pur-dur and Samingad" *Taiwan Panorama* (Aug 24, 2000).

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