Living Through Change – Taiwan 2004 - 2013

Taiwaneseness: history and cultural heritage the right approach?

Master Thesis Asian Studies:

Critical Approaches to Heritage Studies of Asia and Europe

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Study: MA Asian Studies
Academic year: 2016 – 2017
Leiden University
Submission date: 11 December 2016
Word count (excl. bibliography): 14,961

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1 Introduction

In 1987, Taiwan's martial law, imposed in 1948, was lifted. Reality had caught up with the Kuomintang (KMT) government, and claims to mainland China were dropped in 1991. The government's focus turned to Taiwan as a country in its own right. Taiwan found itself in the predicament of, on the one hand, being an internationally acknowledged economic powerhouse, recognised as a developed country, while on the other hand denied the status of an independent country by the international community. This to appease the People's Republic of China (PRC) who maintains its claim on Taiwan, considering it a renegade province. This background frames my research. As politicians claimed the stage in the dispute between Taiwan and the PRC, the population of Taiwan was subjected to dramatic changes in position taken over time. How did they cope? For answers I will focus on the period, 2004 – 2013, the period I lived and worked in Taiwan, experiencing change first-hand. I approach the subject from the perspective of critical heritage studies, looking for answers in history and cultural heritage.

Two interrelated issues dominate Taiwan's politics, and with this Taiwan's society. Externally this is the standoff between Taiwan and the PRC, internally it is the sharp divide within Taiwan's society on many issues, explicit in the rivalry between the two main political parties, the KMT and the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP). At the heart of these issues lies defining the Taiwanese identity. The PRC's claim is based on Taiwan's Chineseness, on Taiwan being an integrated part of China's history and culture. Internally the KMT and DPP carry the discussion on Chineseness or Taiwaneseness through to the extent that the public debate is immersed in the issue of identity.

With this dispute on Chineseness or Taiwaneseness as object, and critical heritage studies as approach, I will research the effects of the absence of a nation-building tradition based on Taiwan as a country, set off against the strong nation-building history of China. This positions a

strongly promoted Chinese identity against a repressed Taiwanese identity. I will look for answers as to what constitutes Taiwan's history and where to look for heritage and culture relevant to Taiwan's identity. I will question whether history and cultural heritage is the right approach to determine sameness or otherness.

Relevance

Regarding the PRC's claim for unification: the KMT is averse to controversy and is on a course towards reconciliation, but with an unclear endgame. The DPP on the other hand, in power from 2000 – 2008 and again in 2016, opts for continued factual independence while shying away from claiming sovereignty altogether. In 2016, Taiwan's identity was the ticket on which the DPP won the presidential elections. This reconfirms that Taiwan's identity will remain a dominant issue.

The standoff between the PRC and Taiwan is not an isolated dispute. Tensions in East Asia are mounting with conflicting territorial claims affecting most countries bordering on the South China Sea, and Japan on the East China Sea. Taiwan's geographical location in the centre of this area adds a new dimension to the Taiwan – PRC relationship. Will the PRC go down the road of confrontation and physically domination or will they, building on their new economic clout, go down the contemporary route of neo-imperialism, where decisive influence is the goal? These are questions very much in play in the situation between Taiwan - PRC, meriting renewed international attention for Taiwan.

Source material

The thesis topic is content rich. My main approach is through critical analysis of Taiwan's history and heritage discourse. Background readings include the Qing dynasty colonisation (1683 – 1895), Japanese colonisation (1895 – 1945), China's Nationalist government (1927 – 1948) and the martial law period (1948 – 1987). I do not enter into discussions on individual historical topics but focus on the heritage

derived from these periods that have become part of Taiwan's identity. This is complimented by interviews and with my personal experiences when living and working in Taiwan. I have visited most of the sites mentioned in this thesis, historical or other, including the Southern Branch of the National Palace Museum and twelve potential world heritage sites selected by Taiwan's Counsel for Cultural affairs, discussed in more depth.

Thesis outline

The thesis is built up in three distinct sections. The first section provides context, historical and political background, and recent events that have had an impact on Taiwan's society immediately before and during the period under review. This section starts with chapter 2, which is a theoretical study on history, nation building and national history serving as a basis for the following chapters. Chapter 3 focusses on Taiwan's earlier history as part of the Qing Empire, the main historical basis of China's claim to Taiwan. Chapter 4 describes the situation of two Chinas, the China of the PRC and the China by proxy of the KMT, the controversy that lies at the heart of Taiwan's situation today. In chapter 5, I discuss Taiwan's democratisation process, which ignited an ambition for independence. As mentioned, Taiwan is internally heavily divided, of which the KMT and DPP rivalry is symptomatic. In chapters 6 and 7, I examine their respective characters and which Taiwan they represent. Chapters 8 describes events that had an impact on Taiwan's society directly before 2004-2013, the period under review.

The second section, is about Taiwan's identity. Chapter 9 describes events, incidents and developments in the period 2004-2013 that provided collective experiences. Chapter 10, consolidates the historical periods, events and incidents mentioned in section 1, and captures memories of these. Chapters 11 and 12 deal with institutionalises forms of memory creation and conservation. I examine the politics of museums and analyse the selection of potential World Heritage sites by the Taiwan

government. In chapter 13, I turn to alternative sources for symbols and expression of identity.

The third and final section, chapter 14, serves as a mirror for the results of my study. It is a compilation of three interviews with foreign representatives, de-facto ambassadors, active in Taiwan in the period 2004-2013, sharing their knowledge and insight of Taiwan gained and used in their professional capacity.

Section 1

2 History and nation-building

As far as the PRC is concerned, there is no dispute on nationhood between the PRC and Taiwan. The 1992 'One China two interpretations' is as far as an acceptable statement on the subject goes. China's borders are not up for debate. The question is confined to who represents China, including Taiwan. Reality is however that Taiwan functions as a nation, demonstrating that nationhood does not require sovereignty (Duara 2009, 28). There are more such nations. Examples are Abkhazia's and South Ossetia's breakaway from Georgia and Transnistria's secession from Moldavia. What is exceptional in Taiwan's case is the political isolation of the island on the one hand and its strong economic status on the other. Taiwan matters. The isolation, with which the people of Taiwan are confronted on a daily basis, has become formative for Taiwan's national identity. So, contradictory, the PRC politics of isolation strengthens Taiwan's nationhood. Where nations within nation states are weakened over time by assimilation, isolation by the contesting nation state has the reverse effect (Harrison 2008, 128).

Nation states are a relatively new phenomenon; they are products of modernity. As dynastic realms, based on divine authority and mutual alliances, waned, the nation as an entity emerged. The 19th century saw a world system of nations develop. Spurred by the industrial revolution, a

sense of regional competition took hold. With this, wealth, geography and population became powerful competitive assets. The Qing dynasty was a victim of these changes. Encroachment by nations threatening de facto colonisation and internal challenges to authority and the resulting chaos, brought the dynasty down. Geographically, the Qing empire also fell apart in the process. Taiwan was ceded to Japan as spoils of war in 1895, Tibet and Outer Mongolia brook away at the time of fall of the empire in 1911 and disputed border areas with surrounding countries were resigned to.

The Republic of China's (ROC), and later the PRC's, claim to be the successor of the Qing dynasty justifies today's territorial claims. Taiwan was ceded to China in 1945 after World War II, Tibet was annexed in 1950, and tension over disputed border areas have not fully receded. In view of the sensitivities surrounding the geographical integrity of China, the exclusion of Taiwan after the civil war in 1949 is an affront.

History is the safest and most secure route to success, and on both sides of the Taiwan strait different versions of recent history emerged. Events do not unfold into a narrative. Quite the opposite. Narratives select events. Narratives are made by an authority who has the prerogative of interpretation and of determining significance, morality and message (White 1990, 19). In a nation state, the state claims this authority. Depending on the state form, the state can either impose authority or influence the narrative. The education system is a powerful influencing tool. Museums too are institutes through which a chosen history is told. Repression and influencing of alternative means of conveying history, such as art, music, film and social media compliments acceptance of the chosen history (Anderson 2006, 163-164). Changing the historical narrative is apparent in Taiwan and is both a source and a result of external and internal tension. History is fluid and therefore holds no authority for the future. Here heritage comes into the equation. As Harvey puts it, heritage is the history of the present (2008, 23). So it is the chosen heritage, reflecting a chosen future that lies at the core of the

Taiwan – China stand-off. History, heritage and agents of change are discussed in the following chapters.

3 Taiwan enters history

Nations claims are not benign. They lay claim on territories through essentialist criteria. Sun Yat Sen described the Han nation as the perfect nation combining, in his view, all criteria: race, language, custom, religion and livelihood (Duara 1995, 32). A view he altered when he set his ambitions for republican China higher to include other Qing dynasty territory. The enlarged territory came with changed criteria, providing space for multi-ethnicity within the nation state. Shared history and culture became the new criteria.

The Qing empire had little nationalistic traits. The dynasty centred around the Manchu court. Retaining the power of the court took precedence over geographical and social considerations. Economical relevance and strategic importance trumped defence of land for the sake of land. Borderlands were peripheral areas with little military and administrative resources allotted. This was also true for Taiwan. The colonisation of Taiwan by the Qing in 1683 was a by-product of the Qing campaign against the Ming loyalist forces. Opponents saw no value in the ‘ball of mud’. It was barbarian country and would only be a drain on the empire’s resources. Arguments on Taiwan’s strategic importance eventually swayed the emperor towards colonizing the island (Teng). This sense of being in the periphery and isolated is a common thread in Taiwan’s identity, continued through the Japanese colonial period till today, with the active international isolation of Taiwan by the PRC (Duara 2003, Teng 2004).

With the transformation of China into a nation state, cumulating into the fall of the Qing in 1911 and the start of the Republican period, a national history, focussed on China as a country and on the integrity of its borders, became important. As Tibet and Outer Mongolia broke away, an ethnic Han-centric historical narrative arose. Soon, inspired by the May

Fourth Movement, a reaction by intellectuals on, in their view, unfair treatment of China at the 1919 Versailles conference settling state affairs after the ending of the first World War, a dominant Chinese culture replaced Han ethnicity as motivation for territorial claims. As a result of this change of historical narrative, these claims now included borderlands (Duara 2003, 191). An effect of Chinese nationalism is that there is a stronger sense of injury inflicted to sovereignty by the Taiwan situation today than there was at the time Taiwan was ceded to Japan in 1985.

4 Two Chinas?

When the KMT retreated to Taiwan in 1949 and continued the ROC, Taiwan was used as a blank sheet on which China by proxy was projected. China's administrative institutions, culture and history were imposed on a population with only memories of the Japanese colonial period. This was aided by the approximately two million influx of mainland Chinese in the period 1945 -1949, on an original population of five million at that time, representing a dramatic change of demography (Reynaud 2003, 19). Tensions between the population groups erupted in 1947 when an incident, now known as the February 28 (2/28) incident, led to the killing of a bystander. The following days the Taiwanese turned on Mainland Chinese migrants. The KMT lost control. A week after the start of the violence, a large detachment of KMT troops arrived on the island and immediately started randomly massacring the population (Lin 2007, 8-9, Berry 2008: 228-229). The incident was buried in history for a long time. In 1992, pressured by the DPP, the Taiwan KMT government issued a report estimating the casualties of this episode to be between 18,000 to 28,000 native-born Taiwanese (Lin 2007, 12, Renaud 2002, 48). This incident, and repression in the following martial law period, also referred to as the period of White Terror with its unspecified number of casualties, contributed to an internally-oriented disposition of the population. Martial

law was only lifted in 1987, at which time it was the longest period of martial law in modern history.

While the KMT continued the nationalistic version of China on Taiwan, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), drastically disposed of many Chinese traditions after taking over power. The Marxist, class-based view of society identified internal enemies, standing in the way of the socialist ideal state. The traditional society was, in the view of the CCP, the conduit for the higher classes to collect and maintain wealth at the expense of the lower classes. So while in Taiwan Mainland Chinese society was superimposed on a population with a considerably different modern history, in China the CCP set out to deconstruct the existing social fabric. The apex of cultural destruction was the cultural revolution with the call of destruction of the 'four olds': old customs, habits, culture and thinking. These were standing, according to representatives of the CCP, in the way of modernity. Chinese cultural heritage, both tangible and intangible, was archaic, serving an undesirable social structure. Ancient Chinese philosophers were discredited and religions severely repressed or banned. Any philosophy or doctrine outside the realm of the CCP was an obstruction to the development of the country (Denton 2014, 20, Kuo 2000, 86).

So ironically it was the KMT that was the guardian of a common Chinese culture, transforming Taiwan into a Chinese heritage protection area. This is where Chinese culture, history, religion, language and art were conserved. This constructed image was imposed at the expense of local culture and history. With Mandarin replacing Japanese as the administrative language, the use of local languages such as Hoklo and Hakka was, contrary to the Japanese period, suppressed. Japanese influence on Taiwanese art was ridiculed, describing Taiwanese artists as "worshippers of other's ancestors" (Kuo 2000, 74) and Shinto temples demolished or put to alternative use (ibid, 28). Dealing with the Japanese cultural period in general was problematic for the KMT. World War II is referred to, in both Taiwan and the PRC, as the second Sino Japanese war

and this war was, the KMT claims, won by the KMT at great expense and with little help from other parties. Taiwanese however fought in the Japanese imperial army. This was completely ignored in the history text books used in the martial law period. The war history portrayed as national history was that of mainland China and Taiwanese resistance to Japanese occupation. Only in the 1990s were the China centred history textbooks replaced by a Taiwan centred curriculum approaching Taiwan's history from a successive colonial rule. (Jones 2013, 174-177).

As the historical narrative changed once again in Taiwan, so too in China. In the 1990s we see a rehabilitation of Chinese culture as the CCP moved away from the communist, class based, universalism towards capitalism, creating an employ for Chinese nationalism and so moving towards the KMT's version of China during the martial law period. Taiwan's movement towards recognizing a multi-cultural society should therefore not be disassociated with the political need to be different.

5 Taiwan nationhood

Taiwan does not have a democratic heritage, and yet a home grown democracy emerged out of repression. When in 1971 the PRC replaced the ROC as representative of China in the United Nations (UN) and with the simultaneous expulsion of the ROC from the UN, Taiwan being a synonym for China was internationally recognised for the façade it was. When the US switched recognition of the government of China from the ROC to the PRC in 1979, international isolation was complete.

Important changes were taking place in Taiwan during this time. The island's economy took off. Taiwan derived a status as one of the Asian Tigers, on par with Hong Kong, Korea and Singapore. Also around this time, in December 1979, the Kaohsiung incident took place. A demonstration by political activists on Human Rights Day, demanding democracy, resulted in the arrest of the leading activists. The crackdown and harsh treatment of the arrested activists met with condemnation both in Taiwan and abroad. Ultimately, the aftermath of the incident led to the

KMT's recognition that justification of Taiwan's existence as a nation is found in a favourable comparison against the PRC. Taiwan's image must become its strength. With economic success, the effects of political isolation were alleviated by the fast expanding contacts international trade brought, but Taiwan's repressive politics were hurting its reputation. Another consideration was that with the curtailing of recognition by the US, the US regulated their relationship with Taiwan by its unilateral Taiwan Relations Act (1979), with which the US committed itself to the defence of Taiwan (Columbia). For continued domestic support in the US, the moral high ground compared to the PRC on issues such as democracy, human rights and the rule of law became an important incentive (Copper 2009, 470).

Local developments were also moving towards change. A Taiwan consciousness was emerging, feeding off ethnic tension between the Mainland Chinese, who had arrived with the KMT and, in particular, the Taiwanese from Fujian origin, and the largest population group, the Hoklo. The KMT started on a process of redefining itself. President Chiang Ching-kuo, son of Chiang Kai-shek, in office from 1978 to 1988, supervised this period. Responsible for the harsh actions against the political activists of the Kaohsiung incident, he changed course in the early 1980s. He prepared the route towards democracy. Opposition parties were allowed to form. The political activists of the Kaohsiung incident formed the DPP in 1986, and became the main opposition party. Martial law was lifted during President Chiang Ching-kuo's term in 1987, entering Taiwan into a new phase and earning him the title of Taiwan's democratiser. He was succeeded by President Lee Teng-hui, not a Mainlander but from Taiwanese Hakka decent. Lee Teng-hui completed the democratisation process. His re-instalment election in 1996 was the first presidential election. In 2000, DPP candidate Sen Sui-bian won the presidency, sealing Taiwan's 'democratic miracle'. This turn of events brought on a volatility to Taiwanese politics, setting the stage for the vast changes in the period

under review in this thesis (Copper 2009, 470-471, Liu et al. 2005, 105-106).

6 KMT transformation

Taiwan is heavily divided internally. Handling the Mainland's claim to the island is an overriding cause of contention but by far not the only one. Because of demographic differences between the North and the South of the island, with the Mainland migrants predominantly settling in the North resulting in a mixed population, and the Hoklo population traditionally with a large concentration in the South, the North-South division puts stress on the cohesion of the country (Hsieh and Niou 1996). As in many other countries, a different pace of development between the regions brings on accusations of exploitation. Feelings of exclusion due to ethnic origins adds to the mix. This social division translates politically into a 'pan blue alliance' of which the KMT is the main representative, and a 'pan green alliance' led by the DPP. Insight into the KMT – DPP rivalry is important for an insight into the debate on Taiwan's identity.

A question outsiders remain with when getting to know Taiwan, is the source of the vitality of the KMT. Whereas in other countries democratisation led to the end or marginalization of autocratic parties in power, most notably the democratisation of Eastern Europe, the KMT not only survived but remains dominant in Taiwan. The 2/28 incident, memory of which was revived by the DPP, and the repression of the martial law period, did not lead to taking vengeance on the KMT. As early as 1989, only two years after the lifting of the martial law, 'City of Sadness', a film by Hou Hsiou-hsien was released and shown in Taiwan, reviving the memory of that period without noticeable repercussions for the KMT (Renaud 2002).

A number of factors will have had an impact on the KMT's resilience. First, because of the sheer period of forty years of martial law, many had little or no memory of life without the KMT. The party's authoritative rule was associated to the larger than life personage of Chiang Kai-shek,

deflecting party accountability. Second, next to direct military suppression, culture is an indirect means of controlling a colony. The imposed Mainland culture, such as mandatory use of Mandarin, assuming China's history as Taiwan's history and discouraging non-Chinese influences in arts, served disciplining purposes. Third, the Mainlanders who had arrived in Taiwan in the wake of the civil war and represented the new rulers, served as cultural reference. A reflex to colonisation is matching the cultural level of the coloniser. This is an act of liberation by becoming peer instead of remaining subject which, paradoxically, serves the interest of the coloniser, in this case the KMT (Kuo 2000, 60).

Sinification however was not all about suppression. The Chinese nationalists were genuinely convinced that Sinification led to the betterment of borderland people (Duara 2003, 193). However, with labelling Taiwanese culture inferior to the Chinese, the KMT laid the seed for ethnic identification, in particular for the Hoklo majority. This ethnic tension later played a role in the continued relevance of the KMT, providing the KMT with an powerbase when democracy arrived (Copper 2009: 466, Hsu 2009, 298).

To counter pariah state status, KMT leadership realised that it also needed to shed its authoritarian character. After the false start with the Kaohsiung incident, the democratisation process was set in with little violence or social upheaval. Freedom of speech, association, movement and political party formation were introduced. The KMT also democratised from within. Native Taiwanese entered cadre ranks, reflecting the assimilation of population groups that had set in. The KMT no longer was solely associated with those arriving from the Mainland. The chosen history shifted, evidenced by the new Knowing Taiwan textbooks. National history became limited to Taiwanese history only. Taiwan is presented as an emerging nation, geographically limited to the main island of Taiwan and neighbouring small islands under Taiwan's administration. An immigrant country with an history of successive colonisation. The revaluation of the Japanese colonial period was particularly controversial.

The image of Japan as arch enemy was exchanged for a more favourable image, in line with existing public sentiment. Economic growth, bringing the rise of a large middle class and a generally broad wealth distribution, the KMT-led democratisation process and the adoption of a Taiwanese history resulted in an apologetic disposition towards the KMT at a considerable part of the population, going a long way in explaining the KMT's continued powerbase. The KMT had real achievements to claim (Bernstein 2008, 926, Corcuff 2005, 138-139).

7 The emergence of the DPP

With the question on the KMT's vitality, a second question outsiders have is why the DPP, founded in 1986 and with its roots in protests against infringed liberties, did not emerge as the dominant party when democracy arrived in 1987. As already mentioned, the DPP is linked to the Kaohsiung incident of 1979. The oppositional Formosan Magazine, established in that year, was instrumental to the incident. The human rights protest leading up to the incident was organised by this magazine. The severe crackdown on KMT opposition following the incident was accompanied by fierce accusations by KMT controlled press, linking the protest movement to PRC subversion aimed at destabilizing the country. These accusations had its effect on the image of the movement (Lin 2007, 5). After the initial suppression, the KMT realised that times had changed and started the democratisation process. While the Kaohsiung incident certainly was a catalyser, the DPP, evolving out of the protest movement, could not claim revolutionary victory (Copper 2009, 470-471).

The DPP emerged as a populist party. Not based on top-down realisation of political principles but rather on localism; on bottom-up initiated advancement of target constituencies, largely based on ethnic group. This ethnic group was the Hoklo majority. Illustrating this is that at the 2000 presidential elections, upwards of 95% of the DPP votes came from the Hoklo community (Hsu 2009, 305). However, although the Hoklo population form about 64% of the population (Central Intelligence

Agency, Ministry of Foreign Affairs), not all identify themselves with the DPP. Assimilation has blurred ethnic lines. The KMT, which had developed into a more inclusive party with vastly more governmental experience, financial means and with a track record in economic development and political reform, managed to appeal to a majority of the population in the early years of democracy.

It is easy to be judgmental of DPP populism, but resorting to populism was inevitable. All governmental and political structures had been introduced by the KMT and the KMT manned the key positions coming out of the martial law era. Disregarding these structures and going straight to the base infringes on the KMT's head start.

As for China's claim to Taiwan, the main point of contention between the KMT and the DPP is Taiwan's independence. The DPP has expressed independence as ultimate goal, antagonizing the PRC. The KMT's policy is to retain the status quo incorporated in the 1992 consensus of 'One China, two interpretations'. A peculiar implication of this is that this consensus requires a continued claim by the ROC on all of China. The risk involved with the DPP ambition for independence serves as deterrent to risk-adverse voters. Intimidation by the PRC drives home this risk, which reached a high with the missile crisis in the Taiwan Strait in the run-up to the Taiwan's first presidential elections in 1996. The PRC conducted a series of naval exercises, staging a military attack on Taiwan. US muscle flexing in the form of detaching a large navy taskforce to Taiwan's waters, served as added decorum, providing Taiwan's population with a reality check. So it could happen that at the first presidential election in 1996, incumbent KMT president Lee Teng-hui won the election with 54% of the votes.

The real watershed moment arrived in 2000, with the next presidential election. Chen Sui-bian, the DPP candidate, won the election, against polling predictions, in a three-way contest with Lien Chan, the incumbent vice-president running on the KMT ticket and James Soong, a KMT power house who resigned from the party to run on an independent

ticket. Chen won with 39.3% of the votes, only 2.5% ahead of Soong. Lien trailed with 23.1%. With a minority of the votes, 55 years of continued KMT rule came to an end.

With the peaceful transition of power, the PRC now had a functioning Chinese democracy on its doorstep, a subversion with the potential of serving as a role model for an alternative to CCP authoritarian rule. Taiwan's internal politics became relevant to the PRC, favouring its historical rival the KMT for which eventual unification, at least formally, is not precluded. The PRC's interference with internal politics is a disstabling factor to Taiwan's democracy.

8 Two major incidents affecting Taiwan at the turn of the century

Entering the 21st century, Taiwan was emerging as an nation. Democracy, together with freedom of press had brought inclusion and empowerment to the people with the outcome of the 2000 presidential elections as tangible result. The nation was now geographically limited to Taiwan, providing for clear boundaries. The Knowing Taiwan textbooks provided a unique Taiwanese history of successive colonisation, setting it apart from China. The missile crisis was an affront, strengthening the sense of 'self' and 'other'. However, nation building is not all about politics. The political developments described coincided with two national disasters with high impact. In 1999, Taiwan was struck by a major earthquake with many casualties, great destruction and in central Taiwan, the epicentre, actual change to the landscape. The death toll exceeded 2,400 and more than 10,000 people were injured. The economic loss estimated at that time was over USD 10 billion (Risk Management Solutions Inc. 2000).

Between March and July 2003, Taiwan was in the grip of the SARS epidemic, a highly contagious pneumonia-like disease that ignited a global health scare. The disease originated in Mainland China but through travel cases of SARS were diagnosed in 32 countries by July 2003. The high

mortality rate of those infected was a particular concern. The mortality figure is debated. The Taiwan SARS Response team puts this at 27%. Of the 668 cases, 181 were fatal. The WHO, using a stricter norm for diagnoses, puts the number of confirmed cases at 346 with 73 deaths of which 37 directly related to SARS. The WHO mortality rate of 10.7% is based on these directly related deaths (Chen et al. 2005). Although the fatalities were less than with the 1999 earthquake, the impact was major. Social life was greatly affected. More than 150,000 people were quarantined during the epidemic. Compared to the number of fatalities, SARS exerted a disproportionately large psychological impact (Smith citing Liu et al.: 3117). Intrusive government measures reinforced this. An example with lasting effect was the requirement to wear face masks on the underground system, enforced with a penalty of TWD 3,000. Masks are still widely worn today. In this health crisis, international politics remained in play. Because of Taiwan's exclusion from UN institutions, Taiwan is not a member of the World Health Organisation (WHO). It took the WHO seven weeks to react to Taiwan's first SARS case and this only after permission from China. This delay has reinforced Taiwan's insular character, that of a nation thrown back on itself.

The two natural disasters had a binding effect on the population. The solidarity felt as a country encouraged nation building. On top of the empowerment reached through the democratisation process and the common threat of the PRC to the way of life on the island, the determining a Taiwan identity took centre stage in the public debate.

Section 2

9 2004-2013

In the period 2004–2013, I lived and worked in Taiwan. In the previous chapters, I built up a history of Taiwan featuring the relationship with China and Taiwan's internal divide, made explicit through the rivalry between the KMT and DPP. This chapter is about developments and events that were significant or made a particular impression on the people living through this period.

Disappointment with DPP presidency

DPP president Chen Sui-bian came into office in 2000. With the 2001 elections for the Legislative Yuan, Taiwan's parliament, the DPP became the largest party. However the KMT, through allying itself with a KMT spin-off, could still assert power through the 'Pan Blue Alliance' providing for a rough political environment for the new president. By 2004, much of the euphoria of the democratic shift in power had died down. President Chen Sui-bian had revoked his call for independence, conforming to the status quo, giving up a major election issue. The Chen Sui-bian presidency was further weighed down by powerful allegations of favouritism and corruption (Bernstein 2008, Copper 2009). Still, Chen Sui-bian was re-elected in 2004, be it with the smallest of margins, less than 0.5%. On the day before the election, Chen Sui-bian and his running mate Annette Lu were shot at while campaigning. Injuries were minor but the incident gave cause to extensive speculating in the press and social media on which interests were behind the shooting. One of the accusations was that Chen Sui-bian had staged the assault to win sympathy votes (Tan and Wu 2005, 522-523). This accusation resurfaced from time to time in the following years. In the second term, Chen Sui-bian's presidency deteriorated further. Allegations of large scale corruptions affected his family, and finally himself too. When the KMT regained the presidency in 2008, cashing in on disappointment with DPP rule, Chen Sui-bian and his

wife faced charges of corruptions and were sentenced to long prison terms. Their harsh treatment in prison has been a point of contention in Taiwan and has drawn criticism from human rights groups (Economist 2012, Healey 2014).

Increasing economic dependency on China

The buzz word of the time was ‘going China’. China’s economy was growing rapidly. This is where the business opportunities where. As in many other developed countries, Taiwanese businesses were attracted to China’s huge reservoir of cheap labour and land. Not only large companies but also SMEs and skilled workers, attracted by higher salaries offered. (Hsu 2009, 299, China Post 2015). Estimates of Taiwanese living in China vary around one million (Shih 2014). The interaction between the population of Taiwan and China is no longer mainly based on family ties of Mainlanders arriving in Taiwan with the KMT, but on new contacts made. As the development gap between Taiwan and China closes, Taiwan loses its economic prosperity as justification of its independent route. Quite the contrary. Economic development slowed and, as did local businesses, foreign investors increasingly pulled out of Taiwan in favour of investing in China. China became Taiwan’s major trade partner (National Development Council 2015). An already existing process of economic dependency accelerated.

An important change was the introduction of cross-strait flights. Realisation of these flights happened under considerable controversy. Even the expression ‘cross-strait flights’ is a political compromise settling the issue whether these are domestic or international. Direct transport, trade and postal links, the so called ‘three links’, had been halted since 1949. Most connections went through Hong Kong and Macao which served as transportation hubs between Taiwan and China. A flight from Taipei to Shanghai for instance, a 1 hour 45-minute direct flight, would take over seven hours. The increasingly stronger economic ties between Taiwan and China rendered this a situation that needed to be resolved. In 2003,

direct charter flights during Chinese New Year were introduced. Discussions on expanding this got bogged down on the issue who should be negotiating this, government agencies as the Taiwan's DPP government insisted or private parties, stressing the domestic nature of the flights, as was the PRC's stand. Consequently, in 2004 there were no charter flights. Later in 2004 the KMT regained control over the Legislative Yuan and involved themselves directly in direct flights with the PRC government. The PRC took the opportunity to warm up to the oppositional KMT, receiving KMT dignitaries and so stirring in the muddy waters of Taiwan politics. In 2005, charter flights during Chinese New Year resumed and soon expanded to include other festivals. The issue remained linked to Taiwan sovereignty and attracted extensive media coverage over the years. In 2008, when the KMT reclaimed the presidency, cross-strait flights became direct commercial flights almost instantly (Jacob 2007). The number of flights expanded rapidly. By 2013, this had gone up to 550 a week (CCTV-News 2013).

With direct regular cross-strait flights, Chines tourists were permitted into Taiwan and started arriving, 300,000 in 2008 (Mishkin 2012). By 2013 this was 2.9 million. In 2015 the number burgeoned to 4.1 million (Tourism Bureau). With the opening-up of Taiwan to Chinese tourists, these tourists became a fixture in Taiwan. The Taiwanese made them feel welcome although there were also complaints of crowding out of popular sites. The tourist came as guests, not conquerors, and if anything, the role of guest and host reinforced the different national identities between Mainland Chinese and Taiwanese.

Religious renaissance

Taiwan is experiencing a religious renaissance, in particular with Buddhism. Modern Taiwanese Buddhism is moving away from popular religion which incorporates many Buddhist elements with focus on rituals aimed at personal fortune, towards religious ethics and social responsibilities (Madsen 2008, 295). This movement appeals to the

greatly expanded Taiwanese middle class who, freed from material predicaments, seek purpose in life. Although based on Chinese religious traditions, the worldlier Japanese Buddhism is an important influence as is, on an operative level, Protestant Christianity (ibid, 320 -321). A building spree of huge modern temple complexes, efficient and relatively sober compared to traditional temples, are tangible expressions of this modern Buddhism. With the Ciji monastery in Hualian on the East coast, Foguangshan near Kaohsiung, Fagushan to the north of Taipei and the Chung Tai Chan monastery in Puli, Central Taiwan, the monasteries are well spread over the island.

Figure 1: Chung Tai Chan Monastery – 2001 (background) and Museum – 2016 (author's photo)

Charities are an important part of the social responsibilities taken on by these organisations. They run hospitals, schools and other social services and coordinate relief efforts for calamities both at home and abroad. These organisations have also branched out abroad, including to Europe and the US, so making Taiwan an important religious centre for Buddhism. Although these Buddhist organisations can be traced to ethnic

origins, they have served to reconcile ethnic groups and so contribute to the stability of the country (ibid, 316 – 319).

Projects and exhibitions

In 2004, two mega projects were in progress: The High Speed Rail (HSR) and the construction of the world's highest skyscraper, the Taipei 101. The HSR, when completed, changed the geography of the island. Kaohsiung, Taiwan's southern metropolis, and in many facets Taipei's rival, came under commuting distance. Train travel was slashed from 4.5 – 6 hours to 1.5 hours while traveling by car takes over 4 hours at the best of times. The HSR connects all major cities on the West coast, where the vast majority of Taiwan's population live, and this with a high frequency. A train driver described the HSR to me as the fastest metro system in the world. This captures the impact the rail system has. Taiwan has become smaller, more interconnected. With this the distance between the North and the South is bridged in more ways than distance alone, the HSR contributes to smoothing out the rough edges of the cultural and ethnic division between the regions.

Looking at reasons for building the Taipei 101 is a study by itself. Why decide to build the world's tallest building in a city with a modest skyline? To date the 508-meter-high building sticks out as a phallus symbol, unrivalled by other structures. Rivalry will have been a motive for building. Having the tallest building in the world fits in with promoting Taipei as a model city and with this Taiwan's modernity, sending a message of success, especially to the PRC. A factor will also have been that Kaohsiung had the tallest building in Taiwan, the 378-meter high 85 Sky Tower, completed in 1997. With politics out of the way now, the iconic Taipei 101 building, no longer the world's tallest, dominates the Taipei skyline and is a major tourist attraction.

Taiwan's political exclusion from the international community limits its possibilities to organise high-exposure sports events and exhibitions. Reason why events outside of the range of vision of world politics are a

welcome opportunity to present Taiwanese hospitality. Two events illustrate this: the 2009 Summer Deaflympics and the 2010 Taipei International Flora Expo, both in Taipei. These were organised and held with a grandeur which would have well served top-tier international events. At the Taipei City Hall, a clock counted down to the opening of the Deaflympics, starting 365 days before opening (Sports Administration). Sports venues were built or thoroughly renovated and the event was opened and closed with spectacular ceremonies. The theme of the opening ceremony was Taiwan's natural beauty and culture. The fireworks at this ceremony symbolised, as recorded in the Taipei Yearbook 2009, that "Taipei will join the world, and the world will join Taipei". This needs no further interpretation (Taipei City Government 2010). The Taipei International Flora Expo was on an even bigger scale. This 171-day long floral event, held on 92 hectares of inner city park lands, was visited by more than 8 million people. These, over 93% Taiwanese, visitors were not only drawn to the flower displays and pavilions, but also to the international setting of the exposition (China Post 2011). Again, the Taipei Yearbook captures the ambition served, mentioning records set by the event, and concluding:

> "The international standards and the world records established by the Taipei Flora Expo are convincing proof to the world that Taiwan and Taipei City are most suitable as a country and as a city to host international events" (Taipei City Government 2011).

Both events were an outreach for international recognition and about breaching imposed isolation. Next is the 2017 Summer Universade. The City Hall clock is counting down.

In hindsight, the political, economic and social developments and events described above resulted in quite a different Taiwan in 2013, when I left, compared to 2004, when I arrived. Clues to Taiwan's identities are not only found in the past but also, and more importantly, in the way the

present is shaped. Heritage is about the present, looking for reassurance on who we are or want to be, so providing direction for the way forward. This makes influencing the perception of heritage such an important political tool. With this in mind I look for Taiwan's heritage in the following chapters.

10 Reconstruction and consolidation of memories

Museums and heritage sites are institutionalised forms of memory creation and conservation and will be discussed in the next two chapters. First let us look at impromptu symbols, concretising memories. The aboriginal population, long time in the margins of Taiwan society with a frowned-upon lifestyle, found new appreciation. With Taiwan's heritage now sought in multiculturalism, aboriginal villages have become tourist destinations. Driving into an aboriginal village, this is easily recognised by the stylistically painted walls of the mountain roads and invitations to share their folklore. At the centre of government in Taipei, streets have now been renamed after aboriginal tribes in recognition of Taiwan's precolonial roots. The government buildings along these streets are homages to the Japanese colonial period, in particular the Presidential Office. Renaming streets is a continuum in Taiwan. The street map of Taipei reads as the map of China, all major cities are represented, a legacy of the martial law period (Kuo 2000, 28). To emphasise the Chineseness of Taipei, huge Qing Dynasty style buildings were erected in this period. The Chiang Kai-shek and Sun Yat-Sen memorials, the National Palace Museum building and the ominous Grand Hotel, conspicuously built on a bluff overlooking the city and one of the world's tallest Chinese style buildings, do not fail to provide visitors with the impression that they have arrived in China (Harding 2010).

What the memorials above have in common is that they are statements of success. Controversy sets in when a period has been closed and history is rewritten. The achievements of the Japanese colonial period for example compete with those of the martial law period. Who laid the

seed for Taiwan's economic miracle? Was the basis of Taiwan's development laid in the latter days of the Qing period (Speidel 1976, Teng 2004, 207-208), or was this a period of revolts and repression in 'a mere outpost' never fully under control as Vickers describes the gist of the 2002 National Palace Museum (NPM) exhibition, *Into the Wilderness* (2008, 90). An especially strong symbol of new times is the removal of Chiang Kai-shek statues from the public space and put out to graze in a field at his mausoleum near Taipei after the DPP took over government in 2000.

Figure 2: Cihu Sculpture Memorial Park (author's photo)

Buildings constructed as monuments are of all times. The sentiment on the building spree of huge modern Buddhist temples is mixed. Although generally sober in style, with the notable exception of the Chung Tai Chan temple in Puli, the sheer size of these buildings do not fail to impress and there are ongoing discussions on the conflicting message of austerity and power they convey. The 101 building in Taipei and the

Kaohsiung 85 are monuments of modernity, so is the sleek High Speed Rail with its futuristic stations and, not unimportant, its high functionality. Large scale organised events also do not fail to leave their mark. Next to the statements made, the 2009 Summer Deaflympics have left Taipei with sports facilities to boast with, which is sure to be eclipsed by the 2017 Summer Universade. The 2010 Taipei International Flora Expo has provided Taipei with excellently equipped parks.

Memorials for accidents and natural disasters lack triumphalism. They do not have the assertiveness of symbols of success and are less visited. In Nantou County, Central Taiwan for example, in an area still vividly showing the marks of the 1999 earthquake, an intact farmhouse knocked into a sharp angle serves as monument and brings the earthquake to life today.

Some symbols are quite subtle. The face masks still worn widely in public to protect others from contagious diseases, which became common during the SARS epidemic, are a reminder of the solidarity felt at that time. Even more subtle is street-life. With the opening of cross-strait flights, Chinese tourists have become a fixture in inner cities and tourist sites. Never a major tourist destination, these tourists reaffirm the charm of Taiwan. Although there is no lack of complaints on the inconvenience caused by the influx of tourists, their appreciation strengthens love of country.

Symbols for heritage can be found everywhere and are powerful because they are part of everyday life. Some are constructed with a deliberate message, such as buildings, others are casual but they too have agency. It is this agency, this intangible value, that makes them symbols of heritage.

11 Museums as political institutions

The stories told by symbols in daily life above are not explicit. For museums this is quite the opposite. They are exhibits of artefacts isolated

from everyday life to support a narrative. There are many types of museums but here I focus on historical and human rights museums. The historical museums tell the story of those in power and the human rights museums that of the oppressed. Saying so, even human rights museums have a power aspect. They point to a shift in power, giving the oppressed a voice.

Historical museums

The by far most famous museum in Taiwan is the National Palace Museum in Taipei. With 20% of the Qing dynasty treasures, including many of the most prized ones, it is the most important Chinese artefacts museum in the world (Elliot 2005, 94-97). It is also the most politicised. Brought over from Mainland China by the KMT with its retreat to Taiwan in 1949, possession of the treasures is branded as theft by the PRC. The Taiwan treasures served a dual purpose. It was an important tool in juxtaposing Mainland Chinese identity onto Taiwan but also served as legitimation of power. A more than 3,000-year old Chinese custom has it that legitimacy of succession to power is symbolised by confiscating the treasures of the predecessor (Elliot 2005, 5-9). The relevance of this is apparent with the stance of DPP hardliners who agreed with the PRC that the treasures should be returned as they have no connection to Taiwan. This prompted the PRC to take a more pragmatic outlook. The position now is that ownership taken by Taiwan of the NPM collection as representing Taiwan's Chinese heritage amplifies the PRC's claim that Taiwan and China are one nation, a point the KMT does not wish to dispute. The DPP, once in power, also took a pragmatic position. The point made is now that the arrival of the NPM treasures on the island are part of Taiwan's recent history and represent an important contribution to Taiwan's multicultural mix. (Wang 2004, 805-806).

Today the NPM collection also includes Taiwanese artefacts, but the most significant attempt to move away from China centricity is the initiative to establish a NPM branch museum dedicated to Asian arts and

culture in Chiayi in Southern Taiwan. With these evident effort to put some distance between Chinese culture and Taiwan's identity it is remarkable that the designation 'National' for the NPM has not featured more prominently in discussions. Changing or dropping this, as the PRC did in 1951 for the Palace Museum in Beijing and so in effect distancing itself from the pre-communist values the museum represents, would fit in containing Chinese culture to its allotted place in Taiwan's cultural mix (Elliot 2005, 112).

The Southern Branch of the NPM has been a controversial issue from the start of construction in 2004. As an initiative of the DPP administration of that time it was, perhaps surprisingly, carried through by the KMT administration despite its program of intensifying ties with the PRC when they regained government in 2008. A factor for this will have been economic reasons. With the cross-strait flights burgeoning, bringing in a flood of Chinese tourists, Southern Taiwan was looking to take advantage of this. Cancellation of the large scale project would not sit well with KMT's Southern constituents. The project was seriously delayed, but the ground-breaking ceremony for the museum building was eventually performed by KMT president Ma Ying-jeou in February 2013 (Southern Branch).

The soft opening of the museum was in December 2015 amidst considerable controversy, stressing the political sensitivity. In the centre of this controversy was the acceptance of replicas of the Zodiac heads looted from the Yuanming Yuan, the gardens of the Imperial Summer Palace outside Beijing, in 1860 by British troops. The PRC has made it a quest to see to it that all the still existing heads return to China as a symbol of inflicted injustice by Western colonialists and China's return to power today. The art credentials of the heads are questionable. These heads, constructed in 1759 as ornaments for a fountain clock, were designed by the Italian Jesuit priest Giuseppe Castiglione who introduced Sinified Western styles to the Chinese court. The Zodiac Heads are more emblems than art. They are easily recognised by the public and their

agency of return to power and dignity is a simple one (Kraus 2010, 201, 206). The metaphor of the unification of all twelve heads at the new museum bringing closure to a painful episode of separation, is not lost on Taiwan politics. Adding to the controversy is that these replicas were donated by the Hong Kong action movie star Jackie Chen who is a member of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, a political advisory body in the PRC, and is publically dismissive of Taiwan's democracy (China Post 2016).

I visited the Southern Branch in March 2016. The building and the grounds are spectacular and, with explanation to fall back on, the architectural symbolism of reaching out to all neighbours is convincing. The museum exhibits themselves sent no such message. Instead of telling the story of Taiwan's multicultural origins, with influences from different regions and ethnic groups, Taiwan was hardly featured, if at all. The exhibits were about Chinese influences on other cultures and, to a lesser extent, outside influences on Chinese culture. The replicas of Zodiac heads, designed by an Italian and prominently displayed at the entrance of the museum building, fitted the display seamlessly. However, change was in the air. At the time of my visit DPP, candidate Tsai Ing-wen had just won the presidency, but not yet taken up office. The NPM was still operating under the tenure of KMT appointed director Fung, Ming-chu. In line with the politics involved with the museum, she was replaced in May 2016 by Lin Jeng-yi, a DPP cabinet level appointment (Hsiao 2016).

Human rights museums

Human rights memorial museums are a recent development in Taiwan. The 2/28 and Kaohsiung incidents and the martial law period as a whole are traumatic events that have found their way into Taiwan's heritage, in these cases dark heritage. They do not celebrate human rights achievements but rather episodes that many would choose to forget (Wu 2016, 8). The 2/28 incident is widely commemorated. Next to the Taipei 228 Memorial Museum, opened in 1997 and located in the 2/28 Peace

Memorial Park, there is the National 2/28 Memorial Museum which opened in 2011, also in Taipei, and more than 20 other memorials spread over Taiwan. Since 1995, 28 February is National Peace Memorial Day, a public holiday and official remembrance ceremonies are held on this day (Tsao 2006, 4-5, Ko 2011)

The martial law period and the Kaohsiung incident receive much less coverage. Two sites are operated by the National Human Rights Museum, established in 2011: The Green Island Human Rights Memorial and Cultural Park and Jing-Mei Human Rights Memorial and Cultural Park in a Taipei suburb. Green Island is the site of a prison holding political prisoners and was dedicated as memorial on December 10, 1999, Human Rights Day, a reference to the Kaohsiung incident on the same day in 1979. Jing-Mei was the site of the military court where the major trials against dissidents were held. This is the site where those involved with the Kaohsiung incident were tried.

The establishment of human rights museums by itself does not imply that painful history has been dealt with. The International Committee of Memorial Museums in Remembrance of Victims of Public Crimes (ICMEMO), a committee of the International Council of Museums (ICOM), has published a list of aims which go beyond remembrance. The core breaks down to questions as: How could it happen? What are lessons learnt? What is the relation of these past events with modern social, political and democratic developments? (Tsao 2006: 3). In Taiwan, the objectivity required for this is clouded by political distrust. Through superficial routines of honouring victims, the KMT's martial law history is contained. The KMT's continuous existence is a show of resilience, while the DPP is inclined to recede into the victim role and claim history on its side (Wu 2016). No truth and reconciliation commission has been set up, as have been in other countries, working towards the aims of ICMEMO (Tsao 2006, 6). Through oversimplification, different versions of the truth circulate, compromising the basis for opinions held. An example of missing the point of a human rights site is the haggling over the name of

the Jing-Mei Human Rights Memorial and Cultural Park. When designated a human rights site in 2007, it was named the ‘Taiwan Human Rights Jingmei Park’. When the KMT took over government in 2008, the park was renamed ‘Jingmei Cultural Park’ due to party sensitivities. Human rights was dropped. Opposition against this resulted in changing the name of the site again to its current name, but the result of this bartering is that reference to Taiwan was dropped, so localizing the site (National Human Rights Museum 2015).

The political message of museums is as volatile as politics itself. The artefacts displayed may be isolated from daily life, their agency is not. As with the symbols of heritage discussed in the previous paragraph, it is the intangible value of artefacts, the relationship of people with objects, that is relevant. Museums influence this. The museums discussed above are no exception. With absence of closure, the human rights museums will not bring population groups together. With questions of who, why, what happened to the victims and where are their remains not answered, the ‘mainlander’ as a group will remain stigmatized, with ‘mainlander’ not restricted to Taiwan. This is a factor in both the relationship with the PRC and the internal divide.

12 Story told by potential world heritage sites

A nation’s institutes can be categorised as civic-territorial or ethno-cultural. Civic-territorial institutes are, amongst others, a constitution, armed forces and the administrative bureaucracy. Global citizenship is also a national institute (Wang 2004, 789, 805). Reason why Taiwan is keen on membership of international institutions and China denies Taiwan this. Ethno-culture denotes elements that define a country. For ethno-cultural institutes, Taiwan defines the following categories: antiquities, historical sites, national arts, folkways, and national-cultural landscapes (Ministry of Culture). This is the terrain of Taiwan’s potential World Heritage sites.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) mandate includes conservation of sites of outstanding cultural or natural importance to the common heritage of humanity. These are the World Heritage sites. Recognition of heritage sites is highly political. Although UNESCO's stated role is to be a defender of 'cultures' against globalisation and it allies itself with NGO's and local communities, nomination remains the prerogative of UN member states and admitted Associated Members (Askew 2010, 39). Invitation for association needs to come from the UNESCO General Counsel, comprised of the member states. Without PRC consent this will not be forthcoming any time soon for Taiwan.

In 2002, Taiwan's Counsel for Cultural affairs set the selection of Taiwan's first 11 potential World Heritage sites in motion. By 2016 this was 17. Five sites are natural parks or reserves. One site, the Lo-sheng leprosy sanatorium, is a human rights site. When analysing the remaining potential sites set against historical periods, we see cultural diversity emerging as a theme.

Table: Potential world heritage sites shown per period

Austronesian	Beinan Archaeological Site & Mt. Dulan	2500 – 300 BC
Western	Fort San Domingo & Surrounding Historical Buildings, Tamsui	1644
Japanese	Shuei-Jin Jiou Mining Sites	1895 – 1987
	Old Mountain Line Railway	1908
	Alishan Forest Railway	1912
	Wushantou Reservoir & Chainan Irrigation Waterway	1920 - 1930
Marshal Law	Kimen Battlefield Culture	1949 - 1992
	Matsu Battlefield Culture	1949 - 1992
Aboriginal	Orchid Island and Tao (Yami)	-
	Paiwan & Rukei Settlements of Slate Constructions	1500 - present
Hakka	Taoyuan Tableland and Ponds	1920
Penghu Island Fishing Community	Penghu Stone Fish Weirs – Twin Hearts Stone Weir	1937

Taiwan's prehistoric people are linked to Austronesia through the Beinan Archaeological site. The Dutch colonial period is represented by Fort San Domingo in Tamsui, near Taipei. The Japanese colonial period is acknowledged by four infrastructural and industrial sites and the KMT

martial law period by the battlefields of the outlying Kimen and Matsu islands. Orchard Island and the Paiwan & Rukei Settlements are dedicated to Taiwan's aboriginal tribes. Hakka culture is represented by the Taoyuan Tableland and Ponds and for the Penghu islands fishing community this is done by the Penghu Stone Fish Weirs (Ministry of Culture).

Conspicuously not represented is the Qing dynasty period (1683 – 1895). There is no potential heritage site celebrating achievements of the Qing administration, a statement by itself. This while in the martial law period only Qing dynasty heritage was recognised as Taiwan's heritage.

13 Contemporary symbols and expressions of identity

The term 'Cultural Turn' depicts the recognition of a movement towards a multidiscipline approach to history, particularly the inclusion of cultural anthropology. Looking for Taiwan's identity, focus is turned to characteristics contributing to identity such as variances in social structures, language, politics, religion, film and technology. History, originating in social sciences, interested in studying, interpreting and understanding events and developments, has moved closer towards humanities, which is interested in the unique character of human interaction. Culture is not static, it changes over time, and with this identity changes. A common heritage, the domain of conventional history, does not imply a common culture and even less so a common future (Corcuff 2005, 154).

Taiwan's identity is not fossilised; it is a living organism. Looking for contemporary symbols and expression of identity, a wide field presents itself. Arguably the most powerful symbol is the map of the main island of Taiwan used as logo. The logo is instantly recognizable. It is a fixture in virtually all visible media in Taiwan. Used for promotional materials, merchandizing, branding, and much more, it stands for Taiwan and all things Taiwanese. It shows

Taiwan in isolation, with borders recognizable from space resembling the peaceful form of a leaf. It is a message of self-determination, widely broadcasted (Anderson 2006, 175).

Films provide an insight on popular level to trending subjects and Taiwan has a vibrant film industry. In the period under review, 2004-2013, more than 400 films were produced, including over 300 feature films and over 60 documentaries (Taiwan Film Institute). As in the film industry in general, the majority of the films are social realism movies featuring crime, sex and violence, romantic comedies and high school movies; films with short shelf life. Still, over 20% of the films are screened at film festivals, many receiving awards or honours. Analysing the synopsis of the films, we see that for almost all films the scene is Taiwan, with a disproportional number playing in Taipei. The films are primarily for a local audience and tap into the Taiwanese way of life. Taipei represents modernity. It is the model of a 21st century mega city, on par with cities as Hong Kong, Shanghai and Tokyo, showcasing Taiwan's modern urban lifestyle.

Looking for themes in Taiwan's film oeuvre, Aboriginals, baseball and LGBT stand out. Films and documentaries on Aboriginals and baseball are released almost annually. The Aboriginals represent the exotic Taiwan, a lifestyle that is more myth than reality. These films are a detox for the raw urban life films.

Baseball is an element that distinguishes Taiwan from China, where it is not a national sport. The sport is very much part of Taiwan's identity. Introduced by the Japanese, the KMT government, when taking over control of the island, tried to eradicate baseball, seeing it as a remnant of colonial occupation. However, the game was rooted in Taiwanese society and the government soon gave up. International baseball successes are national achievements. A daily exhibition of this are the 500-Taiwandollar bills which carry the image of Taiwanese Little League baseball players celebrating victory (Harmsen 2009).

Recurrence of the LGBT theme in feature films testify to Taiwan's liberal society. Taiwan has come a long way since democratising in the 1980s. It is now one of the most progressive places in Asia in terms of LGBT rights. Taiwan's yearly gay pride parade is the largest in Asia. A bill raised in 2012 to legalise same sex marriage failed to pass, but with the DPP now in government, being more sensitive to the issue, such a bill is expected to pass the next time round (Nylander 2016).

Historical films are rare, which relativises the importance of history in daily Taiwanese life. The most notable example in the period analysed of actually recreating a memory using film is 'The Straight Story' (2005) directed by Yu-shan Huang. The film tells the story of the Takachiho Maru, a Japanese passenger liner torpedoed by an American submarine off the coast of Taiwan in 1943, claiming more than 1000 lives. Many were from Taiwan. The Japanese governor in Taiwan at that time forbade any reference to this tragedy, another example of denied history. Two films on resistance to Japanese colonialism were also released. 'Blue Brave' (2008) directed by Chih-yu Hung on Hakka resistance in 1895, when Japan took over Taiwan, and 'Warriors of the Rainbow: Seediq Bale' (2011) on an Aboriginal uprising in 1930, tapping in on the revisionist version of the Japanese colonial period. The most frequent historical theme is that of fleeing to Taiwan due to the events in 1949, the relapse into poverty this brought on, grief of separation and exposure to authoritarian repression. These films bring nuance to the narrative of Mainland Chinese colonisation of Taiwan after the war.

The local themes of the films show a living heritage. They show a way of life rather than explaining this, providing insight into heritage rather than being an instrument to impress an authorized heritage on the audience as museums often do. Anthropology brings this perspective to history, deflating claims based on history and formalized cultural heritage.

Section 3

14 View of foreign representatives to Taiwan

After all is said and done, how does knowledge of Taiwan's history and cultural heritage affect the insight of those for whom such insight is an important professional attribute? For this link to practical application of the topic of this thesis, I had the opportunity to interview three country representatives and mirror my understanding with theirs and so complement my study. There are no embassies in Taiwan, save the very few countries left that still recognise Taiwan as representing China. Embassy services are provided by trade offices. Representatives of these trade offices function as de-facto ambassadors. Through individual interviews, the three former representatives, in function in the period 2004 – 2013 when I lived and worked in Taiwan, shared their thoughts with me. They do this explicitly on a private title basis. The representatives are Henrik Byström, Swedish Trade Council – Taipei September 2001 to December 2009, Menno Goedhart and Hans Fortuin – Director Netherlands Trade & Investments Office Taiwan – August 2002 to August 2010, and August 2010 to July 2015 respectively. Below is a compilation of their opinions. Factual information is verified and reference shown. Two interviews were performed and recorded using Skype, the third interview was face to face and recorded through written transcript. The interviews were free format interviews addressing Taiwan's identity, the China – Taiwan relationship, international politics affecting Taiwan, internal politics and economy. From the responses, detached from nationalist sentiments, a country in transition emerges, determined by its recent history but threatened by its old.

Identity

Taiwan is open to other cultures. Western, Japanese, and other cultures blend into the Chinese culture. Ethnic restaurants, popular in Taiwan, are a common way of sharing culture in ordinary life. Consumerism in general

is a form of cultural interchange as is tourism and study abroad. A younger generation is leading this cultural openness. When looking for agents of change in Taiwan, do not look at traditional segregation between elite, middle and lower class. The change is generational determined. An important development is that of the mentality of the new generation. While Taiwanese students studying abroad had the reputation of being diligent students, they were not known for participating in student activities. The new generation students is different. They do participate, are actively involved in academic discussions and take the opportunity, whilst abroad, to travel extensively. They have a new assertiveness.

The 2014 Sunflower movement, in which students resisted further economic integrations with China, is a symptom of the new assertiveness. Students protested against ratifying the Cross Strait Service Trade Agreement (CSSTA) with China, which would open up Taiwan's services market to China's industries. In their view, the agreement was the result of an undemocratic process and would lead to economic annexation of Taiwan, jeopardizing Taiwan's political and economic autonomy and with this their freedom. These concerns were dealt with poorly by the ruling KMT, who insufficiently realised the shift in sentiments due to the shift in demographics. The Sunflower movement was a factor in the loss of the 2016 presidential elections.

As for Taiwan's Chinese cultural heritage, similar culture does not imply shared identity. An example the DPP likes to use to underline this statement of similar cultures but separate countries is Germany and Austria. For outsiders they may look similar, but the inhabitants recognise different identities. While China takes the ethnic approach of a nation based on a common, dominant, culture, the Taiwanese recognise a difference between cultural kinship and that what determines a society. This is Western influence in Taiwanese thinking. E.g. Anglo-Saxon countries share a common heritage and language and yet are independent and recognise and celebrate a unique identity. The same

applies to Spanish-speaking Latin America. A distinct, and encouraging, characteristic of the relationship between the Taiwanese and the Chinese, as neighbours, is the absence of the animosity often found between people of neighbouring countries. Opening up Taiwan to China through trade and travel has brought appreciation for the 'other', but at the same time this recognition as 'other' strengthens Taiwan's identity. The political establishment has insufficiently realised the impact of this. This also applies to Taiwan's influence on China. The success of Taiwanese performing artists in China for instance, may also be attributed to the aura of freedom these artists have for the Mainlanders. Taiwan, and to this respect also Hong Kong, are windows to China's future. They are China's Trojan horse.

China – Taiwan relationship

The KMT comes out of a situation of unaccepted loss of the civil war. This denial has formed the situation Taiwan is in today. Denial goes both ways. Taiwan links its history to the establishment of the ROC in 1911 while nothing happened that year in Taiwan. It was a Japanese colony. In 2005 China held a big celebration to commemorate the 60th year of liberation of Taiwan (Xinhua 2005). In China, thinking of Taiwan as a separate country is a non-issue. To the PRC government it is completely obvious that it is a part of China, there is no discussion on this. Culture, language and history cement this. Taiwan is a 'pirate province'. A wrong that needs to be set right. Only at that time there will be full closure to the civil war. In Taiwan on the other hand, similar culture and language is acknowledged, but also that Chineseness in Taiwan and China have taken different routes. During the cultural revolutions developments even went opposite ways. While Mao Zedong was combatting China's four olds, culture, customs, habits and ideas standing in the way of modernity, the KMT was installing these as Chinese virtues in Taiwan. Taiwan's democracy has set Taiwan and China further apart.

Politically, the relationship between the CCP and the KMT has changed dramatically. In the period of China's transition towards a market economy in the 1980s and 1990s, KMT's successful development of Taiwan's economy served as example for the CCP. China has become more like Taiwan was during the latter years of the martial law period. From adversary in the civil war, the KMT now has a preferred status for the CCP when dealing with Taiwan. China offers Taiwan autonomy in China's 2005 anti-secession law (art 5). Problem here of course is lack of recourse. There is no way back to reclaim autonomy if agreements are not met (BBC News).

A successful and democratic Taiwan is a threat to the legitimacy of the CCP. The need for autocratic leadership to manage success becomes less obvious. This increases domestic tension and weakens CCP support. On level of the population, it is increasingly difficult for the Chinese leadership to maintain the image of Taiwan as the enemy. Notwithstanding the elaborate censorship, it becomes hard to portray Taiwan as being in need of liberation. The warming up of relations between the Taiwan and China when the KMT retook the presidency in 2008 did little to lift the military threat and Taiwan's international isolation. To the contrary. China's military build-up against Taiwan continued. A barrage of rockets is aimed at Taiwan. International manoeuvring room became even less. China did not yield a single concession. With the liberalisation of the Chinese economy, the cost of a military conflict with Taiwan will be enormous. China therefore may have lost momentum for use of force to resolve the conflict. The long term future remains uncertain but looking at the next 10 years, the status quo will hold.

International Politics

The main adversaries in North-East Asia are the United States and China. This slates US neo-imperialism, based on power and influence, against China's territorial claims. The US claims the moral high ground through

advocating democracy, human rights, free trade and personal freedom. The UN, heavily influenced by Western standards at time of establishment, echoes these values. China's claim is based on prevailing Han Chinese culture and an assertiveness as rebound to inflicted injustice in the past. This Han domination leads to an ethnic-based nationalism which is an element of the continuous claim on Taiwan. Political influence on countries outside of China culture is not a priority.

Next to the issue of Taiwan, there is the issue on sovereignty of the South and East China Seas. Taiwan is geographically strategically positioned, forming the division between the two seas. Still, a coupling of the two territorial claims should not be supposed. The claim on the seas should be seen in the perspective of 19th-20th century humiliation of China by Western and Japanese imperialism. China, in a reversal of the power balance, is reclaiming its political clout. The situation in the South and East China seas is potentially more dangerous than the situation with Taiwan. It is more combustible. The tension must be seen in relationship to the Obama administration's announcement to concentrate foreign policy and military policing of the Pacific region. This brings the US in confrontation with China. Taiwan is keeping a low profile in this conflict although it also stakes claims to South China Sea islands. The KMT does not actively oppose China on their claims, while the DPP with its pro-independence agenda, has even less affinity with territorial claims originating from the One-China policy.

Taiwan has had the opportunity to be much better positioned than it is, but poor choices were made. Insisting in 1949 that the KMT government remained the sole representative of China blocked the possibility to formally divide the country, such as Germany, Vietnam, Korea. Also, in 1971, with the replacement of the Taiwan by the PRC in the UN, the US apparently offered to lobby for Taiwan to stay in the UN if they gave up their seat in the security council for the PRC, but Taiwan refused upfront. The US did put this up for vote but the motion was defeated (United Nations 1974). In the 1980s and 1990s, at the time of

Taiwan's rapid economic development, the government resisted opening up the country to free trade and liberating its internal market. Had they done this, this would have drawn substantial foreign investments and foreign professionals to the island. This internationalisation would have served as a deterrent against isolation.

A concern for Taiwan is the movement in the US to retreat into itself, changing geopolitical dynamics, obvious in the 2016 presidential campaign. The right wing of the Republican party and the left wing of the Democratic party question the cost of American defence responsibilities taken on abroad not obviously benefitting the American people. This affects the security provided by the Taiwan Relations Act of 1979, accepted when the US switched recognition of the government of China from the ROC to the PRC. A particularly worrying scenario is agreeing with China for China to neutralise North Korea in exchange for dropping the defence agreement with Taiwan. Reviewing the situation, we may expect China's position in respect to Taiwan continuing to strengthen, both economical and politically. On the other hand, the tension in the region caused by China's claim to the South and East China sea provides an opportunity for Taiwan to tighten ties with surrounding countries.

The KMT versus the DPP

In broad strokes, the KMT is led by business interests while for the DPP local politics takes priority. In foreign policy, the KMT has always been preoccupied with China and US relations. The KMT government showed little interest in contact with European representatives to Taiwan. This in contrast to the DPP, with its focus on acceptance in the world community at large. Ethnicity remains an important factor in Taiwan politics. Looking at the statistics, only 14% of the Taiwanese are direct decedents of Mainland Chinese, arriving in Taiwan in the wake of the KMT. As a result of the Sinification program of the martial law period, there are more that identify themselves with China, but still they remain a minority. It does explain why the DPP, with its base in the Hoklo majority, cannot count on

a majority based on ethnicity alone (Central Intelligence Agency, Ministry of Foreign Affairs). This ethnic factor in politics has led to cultivation of Taiwan being a multicultural society. Especially the Aboriginal and Hakka communities have gained prominence and are acknowledged as contributing to a unique Taiwanese culture.

With the acceptance of a multicultural society, politics based on ethnicity became less relevant. The KMT was already an inclusive party and the DPP too has moved in this direction. Appealing to a younger generation, grown up in a democratic Taiwan, is now key for support. The DPP is more successful in this. With the 2016 election loss, a definite end may have come to KMT's majority rule. A singular focus on China no longer suffices as political guideline. The DPP however consists of fractions with very different outlook. As does the KMT, the DPP has an 'old hands' fraction that is driven by rancour, not necessary leading to the right political decisions, while there is a younger generation in the DPP, with increasing influence, not affected by this. If not addressed, the DPP is at risk of splitting up. The future therefore may well be ruling through coalitions which may be a good thing for Taiwan. With negotiations the rough edges of Taiwan politics will smoothen.

Economics

Growth of Taiwan's economy has slowed down considerably since the boom of the 1980s and 1990s, but Taiwan is still economically relevant in the global market. In 2015 it had the 5th largest foreign exchange reserve and was 22nd on the list of largest economies (Central Intelligence Agency, Knoema). Looking at Taiwan's industry, growth is mainly concentrated in a small number of industries, most notably semiconductors and electronics. Taiwan's innovative strength is concentrated in these industries. The smaller, often family-owned businesses in other sectors have lost their competitive edge.

Looking at business interests in the context of the unification question, the image is diffuse. Large companies eyeing the Chinese

market may profit from unification, but equally, Taiwanese companies, both large and small, dependent on the Taiwanese market, will suffer from unhindered competition from often much larger mainland companies. The KMT, acting on the importance of Taiwan's growth industries to its economic development, committed itself to opening up the Taiwanese market to Mainland China industries, and entered into reciprocal trade arrangements with China to accommodate this. This sparked grass roots concern which in 2014, with the KMT pushing for acceptance of the cross-strait Services Agreement, was given shape by the Sunflower movement.

The KMT did little to deflate reliance on China through trade arrangements with other countries, although they did enter into trade agreements with New Zealand and Singapore in 2013, this being the first time with countries Taiwan holds no official diplomatic relations with (Central Intelligence Agency). Taiwan could improve accessibility to its own market unilaterally, befitting its neoliberal approach to business internally. However, professed trade liberation is countered with excessive regulatory requirements. The auto and food industries are examples (European Chamber 2015). Also public outcry for largely constructed issues is an instrument. An extended issue on perceived health hazards with US and Canadian beef products illustrates this (Kastner 2015).

Because of persistent protectionism, Taipei's ambition to be a global economic and financial centre will not happen. It will remain a national hub. This is not to say there were no chances. If Taiwan, in its heydays, had opened itself up to foreign businesses and truly liberalised its economy, this may have attracted a surge of foreign talent into Taiwan, especially in the IT-sector. This would have been the catalyst for further internationalisation. As it is, it is now Taiwanese talent that is moving to hubs abroad, invoking a brain drain restraining developments.

Reflection

A primary function of European representative offices is to facilitate business contacts between Europe and Taiwan. Additionally, their clients, European businesses and Taiwanese businesses with interests in Europe, represent themselves towards the Taiwanese government in the European Chamber of Commerce and Trade (ECCT). This provides a platform to solicit policy advice towards the improvement of Taiwan's investment climate without the political restrictions the European representatives face. The ECCT does this through issuance of 'position papers'.

The 2016 position paper addresses issues also mentioned by the trades representatives interviewed, such as enabling the benefits of globalisation through trade agreements, cutting down on excessive regulatory requirements hindering imports, and opening up the job market to foreign workers. What stands out in the advice given is the explicit mentioning that this often goes against public opinion, which is reluctant to accept immediate and short term cost of globalisation and the loss of national control that needs to be accepted, but to go against this and manage resistance (European Chamber of Commerce 2015). Considering the surge of populism in world politics, with the UK Brexit and the US presidential election victory of Donald Trump in 2016 standing out as examples, this is poor advice. The populist DPP's return to power in Taiwan in 2016 underscores this. Democracy, Taiwan's prize, will always function in a field of tension, this should be accepted, not restrained.

15 Summary and conclusion

History is the surest way to success. Nations, a product of modernity, choose their history to support their image and ambitions and take their place in the world system of nations in which they are recognised as entity and accepted as counterpart. Occasionally this is denied, as is the case with Taiwan. This implies isolation and generally marginalisation. Here Taiwan is an exception. With a strong economy, extensive trade

relationships and well established government institutions, Taiwan proves that sovereignty does not require formal recognition.

Changing history is central to both claim and denial of Taiwan's nationhood. With its retreat to Taiwan after losing the mainland to the CCP, the KMT used Taiwan, under martial law, as a blank sheet on which a China by proxy was projected, eradicating Taiwan's own history and heritage in the process. In 1987, when martial law, a public debate started on a unique Taiwanese history of successive colonisation, opposing a common Chinese history and cultural heritage.

With democracy, heavily divided Taiwan became apparent. The KMT, with its history of suppression, remained dominant. Deflection of responsibility for the martial law period to Chang Kai-shek, the effects of Sinification, Taiwan's economic success and credit for initiating democratisation are reasons for the party's resilience. The KMT keeps reunification with China open.

The pro-independent DPP, with its roots in the protest movement, emerged as populist party, with an ethnic base in the Hoklo majority. The KMT's administrative experience, influence in the bureaucracy and extensive financial means, put the DPP in a disadvantage. Also the KMT's status quo policy regarding China attracted the more cautious voters.

Nation building is not all about politics. Illustrative are two major incidents directly before 2004 – 2013, the period under review. The 1999 earthquake with its high number of casualties and collateral damage, and the SARS epidemic that disrupted social life in 2003 both had its impact on Taiwan coming together as a country

In hindsight, 2004 – 2013 was a period of important changes. The first DPP presidency, that of Chen Sui-bian, was a disappointment, succumbing to charges of corruption by the presidential family. Economic dependency on China increased. China was seen as the land of opportunities attracting Taiwanese businesses and skilled workers. Economic ties with Taiwan became even closer in 2008, when the KMT regained presidency and cross-strait flights, ceased in 1949, resumed,

allowing Chinese tourism to Taiwan. Next to these political and economic developments, a Buddhist renaissance resonating abroad, the sophistication of the high speed rail, the attention for the world's tallest building and the prestige derived from hosting international events, all point to a society defying isolation, demanding recognition as a modern country.

In the early chapters, Taiwan's past and present passed in review with different versions of history and cultural heritage attached. These are captured in memories; constructed, passed-on or original. This through impromptu symbols in daily life or institutionalised in museums and heritage sites.

Buildings, street names, parks, ruins, habits and more passed as symbols and all are memorials, reminding of Taiwan's history and heritage, allowing a personal interpretation. In contrast, museums and heritage sites have predetermined narratives. The NPM and its Southern branch in Chayi are examples of highly politicised historical museums, with narratives changing with the party in power. They are at the centre of the debate Taiwan's Chineseness, both in the stand-off with the PRC and internally. The discussed human rights museums, commemorating the 2/28 incident and the atrocities of the White Terror period have not shed partisan interest. They have not gone past remembrance, falling short of answering, in depth, how it could happen, lessons learnt and relationship of events leading up to the incidents with current developments.

As for Taiwan's potential world heritage sites; in the current political environment, there is no chance that any these will be nominated by UNESCO. The selection, determined at a time of DPP rule, therefore is primarily a political statement. The cultural heritage sites selected are done so to emphasise Taiwan's multi-cultural heritage. Conspicuously absent are sites from the Qing dynasty period; a clear denouncement of that period.

Taiwan's film industry in particular provides an insight on a popular level to trending subjects. Aboriginals and baseball are popular themes, in line with the attention they receive in other media. Recurrence of the LGBT theme mirrors Taiwan's liberal approach to this, which includes a road towards gay marriage, which would be a first in Asia. What all these themes have in common is their Taiwaneseness. There were very few historical films in the period analysed, indicating that the living heritage of film may be a more reliable source of identity than the history of the politicians.

It is the interviews with foreign representatives to Taiwan that link theory with practice. Taiwan's identity, the China – Taiwan relationship, international politics, the differences KMT and the DPP have and Taiwan's economic development all have tangible impact on Taiwan's functioning in the world system of nations, regardless whether formally recognised or not. Developments in Taiwan cannot be seen in isolation or merely in context with the relationship with the PRC. The differences between the KMT and the DPP can also be traced to tension between globalism and populism that is playing out around the world.

In this thesis I set out to research the effects of the absence of a nation-building tradition in Taiwan as a country, set off against China's strong nation-building tradition. Social space for a search for Taiwanese identity only opened up after 1987 when, with democracy, unrestricted public debate became possible. 1987 was not a revolution. The KMT stayed in power and proved to have a democratic base while the young DPP, with its base in activism for democracy and drive for independence, did not appeal to a majority.

The question on Chineseness or Taiwaneseness proved to be as much an internal debate as an external one. The political debate gave authority to history and cultural heritage as determiners for Taiwan's identity, concentrating on arguments for a common Chinese heritage or for a multi-cultural heritage. The latter has gained considerable ground since, and found its way into national institutions. The Knowing Taiwan

textbooks now teaches children a Taiwanese history outside of Chinese history and many museums and heritage sites express the new narrative. The divide on this issue no longer coincides with the differences between the KMT and the DPP but has moved to that between KMT hardliners and pragmatics.

Is history and cultural heritage the right approach? Will changes to the past make people distinctly Taiwanese? I do not believe so. With this line of reasoning identity can be dismissed by simply rejecting a nation's history. A common starting point does not imply a common path and a slight change in direction can put a lot of space between people. It is the changes people live through together and cope with that shapes, in this case, Taiwaneseness. Dealing with isolation and living under threat are determinants. Ultimately it is not history or a formalised cultural heritage, such as the PRCs Chinese heritage or the Knowing Taiwan textbooks that determine Taiwan's identity, but the heritage the Taiwanese, individually, wish to be associated with and the diversity choice allows.

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