

## Prologue

This volume deals with the transformation of Taiwan, particularly during the latter half of the twentieth century, from a historical perspective. I would like to begin with two key words: *Taiwan* and *transformation*.

### 1.

*First*, in terms of its culture and society “*Taiwan*” must be regarded as a Chinese community *par excellence*. Hence, we can analyze her “transformation” first in the cultural arena. The majority of “Taiwanese” are descendents of immigrants from coastal regions of Fujian and Guangdong. Taiwanese initially regarded the Mainland as their cultural and spiritual homeland. Chapter 1 deals with the vicissitudes of Taiwanese nostalgia for cultural China from 1895, when Taiwan was ceded to Japan. The feelings of cultural nostalgia in Taiwan were aroused by Japanese oppression and dissipated by the abuses of her mother country, China. Ironically, the nostalgia was dissipated precisely at the moment when Taiwan's desire to be enfolded in the mother country was realized. This drastic change in Taiwanese sentiment was due largely to the corruption, discrimination and abuses of power of the Nationalist government in 1950s. In the first chapter, we consider this historical process. The rise of cultural nostalgia in Taiwan was due to Japanese political oppression. Taiwanese naturally sought strength in their homeland culture. Taiwanese intellectuals, however, did not carry out any in-depth study of the Chinese cultural heritage. They only felt a yearning to land a foot on the soil of Mainland China, which turned out to be something remote and obsolete from what they had imagined. At the same time, the immediate occasion for the dissipation of cultural nostalgia in Taiwan was Chinese political corruption. This rapid dissipation was possible because the Taiwanese nostalgia was just a vague yearning for the historical

heritage of Chinese culture.

The transformation in the cultural arena occurred primarily through Confucianism. In Chapter 4, I identify three approaches to the study of Confucianism in postwar Taiwan: historical, philosophical (“history of ideas”), and sociological. Drawing on questionnaires and statistical data, the latter approach was concerned with the actual contemporary situation and the survival of Confucian values in modern society. The propagation of Confucian values in postwar Taiwan took place at two levels: official (through schools, government-sponsored publications and social movements), and popular (through moralistic pamphlets issued by folk religious sects). At the official levels, the propagation of Confucian norms was strongly politicized; it was combined with modern nationalist sentiments, and was posed partly in response to anti-Confucianist movements (especially during the Cultural Revolution) in Mainland China. Despite these limited official aims, it can be said that Confucian scholars in Taiwan have been able to think and write free from obvious official constraint.

Among the “Contemporary New-Confucians” in postwar Taiwan and Hong Kong, Hsü Fu-kuan (1902–1982) stands out as a prominent figure. Chapter 5 examines the role of Hsü Fu-kuan in the intellectual history of China and Taiwan. Pondering China’s prospects for the future, Hsü Fu-kuan identified himself as: (1) of the people; (2) practical-minded; and (3) agrarian-based. He formulated this identity in light of his study of Chinese culture. “Of the people” meant that he believed in setting up the *people* as the main political body, and he felt that China’s future lay in democratic government. By “practical-minded,” he meant that he approached China’s Confucian tradition *critically*, with a view to putting its principles into practice and was not interested in formulating a transcendental or for-

malistic philosophy; By “agrarian-based,” Hsü referred to his vision of China’s future politics as being established by the owner-cultivator class. Hsü regarded these three aspects of his identity as complementary and not mutually opposed. He believed that China’s hope for future development lay in establishing the people as the main body of government. The development and practice of Confucian principles had to go hand-in-hand with democratic rule, and he felt this practical development could make up for flaws found in contemporary Western democracies. Hsü also stipulated that the “people” set up “as the main body of government” should not be limited to the urban middle class but should include the rural masses, particularly the ranks of toiling farmers and workers. In any case, democratic government had to be built upon the practical Confucianism implemented by the rural owner-cultivator class.

*Second*, the historic *transformation* of postwar Taiwan can be observed in Taiwan’s transition from an agrarian to an industrial society. Chapter 2 discusses the transformation of Taiwan’s infrastructure. We indicate three key phenomena in Taiwan’s postwar development: (1) the emergence of the owner-cultivator class; (2) the rise of the middle class; and (3) the expansion of middle-class intelligentsia. These three social phenomena all revolved around Taiwan’s transition from an agrarian to an industrial society. The emergence of the owner-cultivator class came earliest, and gave rise to the middle class and the expansion of middle-class intelligentsia in the 1970s.

Postwar agricultural renewal and the resulting economic development began with a series of land reform policies: the first was the 37.5 percent rent reduction policy implemented in 1949; next came the policy of offering of public lands for sale initiated in 1952. Then, in 1953, the Land-to-the-Tiller policy was launched. This series of land reform measures had a far-reaching effect on Taiwan’s rural society. It reformed the old

system of land tenure, boosted the owner-cultivator class, transferred land investment to industry and commerce, and stimulated increased agricultural production, thus laying the foundation for industrial development.

Beginning in 1953, the new agricultural policy in Taiwan was based on the principle of using agriculture to nurture industry and, in turn, industry to develop agriculture. Under this guiding principle, the agricultural policy during the twenty years between 1953 and 1972 could be described as a “developmental squeeze” in the sense that measures were adopted to promote the expansion of agricultural production while creating a surplus of manpower and materials. This surplus was transferred to non-agricultural sectors. From 1895 to 1960, most capital flowed into non-agricultural sectors, paving the way for rapid industrial expansion in the late 1960s. The development shift from agriculture to industry in postwar Taiwan set into motion a number of social and cultural changes such as: rapid urbanization, population growth and shifts, increased social mobility, expansion of educational opportunities, and expanded women’s rights and opportunities.

Some scholars hail these major postwar transformations as hallmarks of the “economic miracle.” This “miracle” has resulted in—as has been demonstrated in Chapter 3—the loss of folk traditions by shifting farmers’ collective social consciousness from its traditional moral economy orientation, which was imbued with interpersonal, social feeling, to a profit-oriented individualistic approach. This shift in values, as measured by attitudes toward landlords and toward the Farmers’ Associations, resulted from the penetration of outside forces, first under Japanese colonial rule and later under Kuomintang (KMT) rule, into a basically self-sufficient farming community. On the one hand, this transformation was a natural part of Taiwan’s overall shift from agriculture to industry. On the other hand, the transforma-

tion was not entirely positive. Something was lost with the passing of the peasant community, and individual farmers were cast adrift in the unknown waters of capitalist society, without a clear compass of cultural values.

To sum up, the so-called “miracle” in postwar Taiwan led to chain reactions associated with the shift in mode of production. Culture, attitudes and thoughts changed, and Taiwan leaped from a traditional hierarchical society into a twentieth-century individualist, egalitarian society.

## 2.

Part Two of this book examines culture, attitude and thought. The most remarkable facet of the awakening of the “self” in Taiwan has been the volatile eruption of Taiwanese consciousness. A cluster of ideas branching out in many directions, Taiwanese consciousness is the product of various inter-related quests for cultural and political identity. In Chapter 6, we examine developments and metamorphoses of Taiwanese consciousness in unfolding political context. Early Taiwan featured local Chiong (漳, Zhang) consciousness and Chuan (泉, Quan) consciousness. Under Japanese rule, Taiwanese consciousness became broadly ethnic, a stout Chinese self-awareness against the oppressive Japanese imperialist tribe, ramified by the protest consciousness of the ruled against the rulers. History repeated itself during the Kuomintang regime, especially during the 228 Incident in 1947, when Taiwanese consciousness took the form of virulent provincial self-awareness against the Mainlanders, who now were the rulers. After the repeal of the martial law in August 1987, the concept of a ‘New Taiwanese Consciousness’ emerged to unite all residents in Taiwan, regardless of provincial origin in protest of the oppressive Communist regime on the Mainland. Thus, we see a clear element of protest throughout the unfolding Taiwanese consciousness.

The rapid awakening of individualism in Taiwan has led to the problem of excessive individual self-assertiveness. The eruption of self-assertiveness in Taiwan that followed the lifting of Martial Law in 1987 can readily be observed in every area, be it agriculture, politics, industry-commerce or education. Now, as we face Taiwan's "growth problem" of selfhood, I wish to urge that we see a maturity problem in the Taiwanese refusal to acknowledge the "fellowship of beings" that constitute the center of the self. This can be stated as a problem of mutuality and of intersubjectivity which forms not only the major challenge that Taiwan has to face, but can be seen as a key to paving the way to a more constructive Taiwan-Mainland relationship in the twenty-first century. The last chapter analyzes the basic weaknesses in the two quick-fix proposals for cross-strait relations: quick unification with Mainland, and quick independence of Taiwan from Mainland. Only a solid understanding of the historical experience of both Taiwan and the Mainland can ground a successful solution to bringing about peaceful coexistence. The mutual thriving of Taiwan and Mainland will be the *sine qua non* for resolving the Taiwan-Mainland relationship in the twenty-first century. It is on this note of hope and confidence that I close this venture to entwine the future of Taiwan and Chinese communities.