
Introduction: Change and Contention in Taiwan's Cultural Scene

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The Taiwan "miracle" (Gold 1986) is well known; it involves the successful economic development of the island from a poor periphery of the Chinese empire in 1895, a heavily exploited colony of Japan in 1935, a territory partly destroyed by war and partly pillaged by Nationalist mismanagement in the late 1940s, to the world's thirteenth largest trading economy, a producer and exporter of high-technology as well as ordinary consumer goods, a per capita income of over \$8,000, and a populace whose education resembled the developed countries more than the developing (Sheu 1989) by 1990. This story has been told from an economic perspective (Ho 1978; Galenson 1979) as well as a sociopolitical one (Gold 1986; Winckler and Greenhalgh 1988), but as yet there is little systematic analysis of the story of cultural change during the postwar period.

Indeed it is difficult to find a general approach that can capture the paradoxes, the conflicts, the uncertainties, and at the same time the undoubted tide of change that has washed over Taiwan's culture in the last four decades. No matter how we define culture—whether we adopt an anthropological, "small c" definition that deals with collectively held systems of meaning or customary patterns of thought and behavior or restrict ourselves to the humanities' "big C," including artistic, literary, and other expressive products of the mind and spirit—we find Taiwan is both the same and different from what it was. It is both traditional and progressive; continuous with its imperial, Japanese, and early postwar past and moving rapidly away from that past; unique and related to the Mainland Chinese, Japanese, and American cultures with which it interacts.

Perhaps one way to characterize the cultural scene in Taiwan at the beginning of the post-postwar era is as a series of interlocked and cross-

cutting struggles, sometimes conscious and committed, sometimes unconscious and inevitable, sometimes hesitant and confused. The first of these is a struggle between what is perceived as tradition and what is perceived as modernity. What is perceived as tradition is very likely not the same as what Taiwan was like at any particular time in the past, much less an unchanging ancient heritage of a changeless and ageless China. It is rather those aspects of the culture of the present day or the recently remembered past that can be interpreted as the legacy of a tradition native to the island, or perhaps native to Chinese society in general.¹ The second struggle involves tension between what is seen as native and what is seen as foreign. (Again, the perception of nativeness or foreignness is more important than the reality.) This opposition often coincides with the first one—native is traditional and foreign is modern—but not always; in particular there are “native” forms of modernity. The third struggle or tension pits the local against the cosmopolitan, and thus inevitably involves the question of Taiwan’s place in the world, something that is usually seen as a political question but in fact has an important cultural dimension. Is Taiwan autonomous? Is it Chinese? Is it significantly Japanized after fifty years of colonial domination? All these questions of local versus cosmopolitan are played out in every sphere of culture as well as in arguments about constitutional reforms, political party platforms, and proposed new modes of relating to Mainland China.

These three related axes of tension, we believe, are a fruitful framework for analyzing the striking variation, the palpable uncertainty, the conscious and unconscious critiques and self-critiques that are so evident in all the areas of culture described in the various chapters in this volume. The current period is not the first one, of course, in which Taiwanese culture can be seen as organized (or torn) along similar lines of division. In imperial Ch’ing times, there was the cosmopolitan bureaucratic tradition of high officials and the many local traditions, originally inherited from ancestral communities in Kwangtung and Fukien but themselves modified in the move to the island and the consequent semiautonomous development of culture there (Wang Shih-ch’ing 1972; Pasternak 1972). There were also, of course, a series of aboriginal cultural traditions, themselves changing or disappearing in interaction with the immigrant Chinese. In the Japanese colonial period, the literati high culture became less important and the local cultures began to blend together, so that the major tensions were between the Japanese and what was considered native, as well as between perceived tradition (different already, of course, from what had been culture in “traditional” times) and the modernity brought by Japanese industry, education, and bureaucratic-colonial domination.

In both those earlier periods, cultural differences and tensions within the island had important local components. The cosmopolitan high cul-

ture of each era (literati or Japanese bureaucratic-capitalist) was opposed to a series of native traditions that were rooted in attachment to local communities of various levels, organized along a variety of principles such as Mainland origin (a form of ethnicity), agnatic kinship, and geographical contiguity usually expressed in worship of local deities (Wang Shih-ch'ing 1972; Hsieh Chi-ch'ang 1978). If we use the polar ideal types of high and low, the high was cosmopolitan and the low was local, subnational; as such the low had many varieties. During the Japanese era (and perhaps even during the several decades that preceded the colonial takeover), the boundaries and loyalties of local communities were somewhat weakened and the cultural differences that expressed and reinforced those differences were correspondingly blurred at the edges (Lamley 1981; Harrell 1990). But as late as the 1970s, there was still a local rural culture in any Taiwan village, a local culture that both signaled its own low position by its parochial nature and proclaimed its uniqueness in the face of similar, but still not identical, cultural traditions in neighboring and more distant communities.

Locality and class thus defined the axes of cultural variation from the Ch'ing to the middle postwar period; both were intertwined with a significant ethnic component in each era—Chinese vs. aborigines and various local varieties of Chinese in the Ch'ing; Taiwanese vs. Japanese (and both vs. aborigines) in the colonial era; Taiwanese vs. Mainlanders (and both vs. a dwindling aboriginal population) after 1945. In the most recent decades, however, the whole social matrix in which cultural differences play themselves out has altered. Ethnic differences are still there—Taiwanese, Mainlander, and aborigine are the main categories, with Hakka perhaps best seen along with Hokkien as a subgroup of Taiwanese, at least until the emergence of a Hakka movement in the early 1990s. With the exception of aborigines, however, they are no longer definitive in cultural terms. Local organizations still exist, but the cultural divide between villages has almost disappeared, and the rural-urban cultural distinction seems relevant only for middle-aged and older people. Class has thus become the most important social cleavage, serving as a background for the three axes of cultural tension. But classes are well-known for being mutable and fuzzy-bordered groups, all the more so in a society like Taiwan, where the proletariat and the petty bourgeoisie are sometimes as much life-cycle stages as groups of people (Gates 1979, 1981; Stites 1985). Even class, though more salient than many other social variables, is not determinative of cultural preferences (big C) or practices (small c) anywhere, as the statistical nature of Bourdieu's findings (1984) shows so clearly.

The result of this dynamic social situation is that, while cultural differences are not a complete free-for-all, cultural styles may themselves come to exert more influence on the membership of moral communities (Bellah

et al., 1985). In this situation, any individual's position on the scale from traditional to modern, native to foreign, and local to cosmopolitan, rather than being determined by that person's position in the ethnic, class, and local community structure of the island is now in complex reciprocal interaction with that person's membership in moral communities of various sorts, from classes to political parties to styles of youth culture (Shaw 1988). In other words, culture is more autonomous than ever before, and at the same time it is less certain and more open to individual and group discussion, debate, doubt, and change.

The articulation of these three axes of tension is treated at a general political level in Edwin Winckler's chapter on cultural policy, which shows that the interplay between supra-national, national, and sub-national levels of cultural policy and planning reflects not only concerns about the degree of cosmopolitanness (Taiwan as part of China or part of the modern world) or localism (Taiwan as a distinct cultural unit), but also the contention (Winckler and Greenhalgh 1988) between conservative and liberal approaches to culture within the policy-making apparatus, and the parallel contention among conservative, liberal, and sometimes radical cultural agendas among the intellectuals and the general public.

In more specific areas, every aspect of Taiwan's culture—literature and the arts, political culture, tourism and recreation, moral values, even the consumer preferences and diurnal habits of individual lives, all express and reflect the uncertainty and fluidity of culture today, as well as the tension and struggles along the traditional-modern, native-foreign, and local-cosmopolitan axes. And each chapter in this volume, without exception, illustrates the tension and dynamism of contemporary Taiwan culture along at least one of these aforementioned axes.

Tradition and Modernity— The Search for Grounding

Tradition, as seen in today's Taiwan, has two separate but interrelated aspects: moral tradition and folk tradition. Moral tradition (which can be characterized as cultural-conservative, in Winckler's terms, or as traditionalistic, in Levenson's terms [1968]), is the perception that Chinese history and culture, only loosely defined in themselves, have left an enduring legacy of strict values and prescriptive norms that allow for the establishment and retention of a stable social order and a cognitive and emotional anchor in deeply-held beliefs among the swirling streams of social and cultural change. This moral tradition is most deeply embodied in the conservative school curriculum that requires knowledge of a reworked Cheng-Chu Neo-Confucianism as the groundwork of morals and ethics. On the most explicit level, moral traditionalism is a descendant of the

Kuomintang's (KMT's) New Life Movement of the 1930s (New Life Road still winds through old Taipei from north to south), in which a Confucian tradition was invented (Levenson 1968; Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983)—now that the living Confucian order of imperial times was safely in the past—as a moralistic defense against the undesirable cultural by-products of material modernization. In today's world, moral traditionalism is a discourse that assumes a cultural and national unity held together by an assumed moral agreement based in an (unconsciously) reworked Confucian morality. Politically, this discourse is embodied in the law, order, and morality turn of the Hao government, and in the critique, mentioned in Chu Yen's chapter in this volume, pervasive among almost the entire population of the island, of the all-too-technocratic management of the seventies and early eighties.

The overall problem with moral traditionalism, pointed out by several chapters in this volume, is the inherent contradiction between the very real problem of a fast-paced, industrial society without strong ethical or moral anchors and a prescription that recycles age-old truths (many of them invented by KMT educators and propagandists in the 1930s) instead of facing the current moral and ethical crisis head-on.

Various of the authors in this volume treat different aspects of this contradiction. The current predicament of moral traditionalism is illustrated most graphically and somewhat sympathetically in Chu Yen's chapter on recent short fiction. The characters described in the stories he analyzes are caught between the lure of the modern and the moral habit of the traditional, with the result that they often end up in anomie, despair, or destruction. While the official discourse of moral traditionalism continues to dominate cultural policy and the instruments of such policy in the school curriculum, the television networks, and much of the mainline press (see Winckler, page 34–35), it becomes more and more difficult to apply these moral lessons to the increasingly chaotic world of the post-postwar era, while at the same time there seem to be no moral alternatives easily available. In this light, Chu's chapter can be read in two ways. Superficially it is a cry from the heart against shortsightedness, hedonism, selfishness—the discarding of conservative morality without anything to replace it. On another level, his chapter is a critique of moral tradition itself, for continuing to advocate the same rigid formulae in the face of overwhelming social and cultural changes.

Other chapters in this volume present more direct critiques of the contradictions inherent in today's moral traditionalism. Huang and Wu's chapter on Confucian aspirations and the prospect for 21st century Taiwan does this by questioning the traditionality of the purported moral tradition. Drawing inspiration from a direct reading of pre-imperial Confucian texts (the unadorned classics, without their layers of what Huang

and Wu see as dynasty-serving commentary), the authors propose that the current moral vacuum (so poignantly illustrated by the short stories Chu analyzes) should be filled not by some slavish or diluted version of "modern" Western values, which have had their own problems on their own turf, but rather by a Confucianism that, stripped of its imperial-bureaucratic component as political philosophy, is freed to implement its humanistic component as moral philosophy, preserving an order that is enabling rather than fettering, humanistic and ecological rather than structuralist and bureaucratic. In advocating this new (or old-old) Confucianism of the future, Huang and Wu of course present a critique not only of the imperial-bureaucratic tradition that has dominated Confucian thought for the last two thousand years, but also of the traditionalist reading of Confucianism that is so much a part of the New Life moral discourse.

Another direct critique of moral traditionalism comes from one of the new moral communities of interest that have replaced the old, local-and-ethnic, moral communities in the process of postwar cultural change. Although many such communities have their critiques of traditionalism (see Shaw 1988), one of the most wide-ranging of these comes from Taiwan's incipient feminist movement (Lu Hwei-syin 1991). Sung Mei-hwa's chapter for this volume analyzes the literary aspect of the feminist critique. In reviewing recent literature both by explicitly feminist writers and by others who write from a woman's viewpoint with a less explicit ideology, Sung points out once again the contradictions in the moral-traditionalist view, this time between the ideal of feminine virtue and the reality of an highly-educated populace in an industrialized society, whose female members claim entitlement to full-scale participation in all social spheres as well as freedom from direct abuse and exploitation in their own personal relationships. Here again it is the inadequacy of the traditionalist view that these authors point out—opposing modernity with a call for a return to virtue rather than with a realistic program.

The other aspect of cultural tradition as perceived in today's Taiwan is folk tradition, a less conscious, less systematic tradition that grows not out of the conscious formulations of propagandists, ideologues, and educators, but out of the everyday life of villages and (to a lesser extent) old urban neighborhoods where the postwar social and cultural transformations have proceeded most slowly. This folk tradition has always been in tension with the literate tradition of each succeeding age, but it has usually been perceived as less changeable but at the same time less coherent than any conscious elite ideology.

The chapters in this volume that treat folk tradition explicitly handle it much more gently and with less explicit criticism than the chapters dealing with moral traditionalism; they argue over whether it has changed, how much, and in what direction, but they do not look for contradictions

or weaknesses, perhaps because by the early 1990s, even though people recognize that folk tradition still exists, few people in positions of cultural power consider it very important, or think that it will resist change much longer.

On the other hand, there is a disturbing feeling among some Taiwan intellectuals that the folk tradition, like the moral tradition, is disappearing without anything solid to replace it. Scholars like the ethnomusicologist Ch'iu K'un-liang and the historian Huang Chün-chieh point out the strange phenomenon of hiring striptease dancers with microphones and speaker systems to perform at funeral processions and graveside rites. Instead of the voluntary cooperation of the village community, these authors point out, the rituals of mourning are lurid extravaganzas bought from funeral companies. Is this, the authors ask, what folk tradition has come to?

Huang Chün-chieh's chapter in this volume points out the loss of folk tradition in terms of the transformation of farmers' social consciousness, described in "admittedly romantic" contrasts, as the shift from "traditional moral economy imbued with social feeling ... [to a] modern capitalist mentality of profit-oriented individualism." This shift in values, as measured by attitudes toward landlords and toward the Farmers' Association, is seen as an inevitable concomitant of the penetration of outside forces, first under Japanese colonialism and later under KMT rule, into what was a basically self-sufficient farming community. On the one hand, this transformation seems natural and inevitable, part of Taiwan's shift from agriculture to industry. On the other hand, the transformation is not entirely positive, in Huang's view—there is something lost with the passing of peasant community, and the farmers in his article, like other Taiwanese treated in other chapters, are cast adrift into modern capitalist individualism without a clear rudder of cultural values.

The third chapter that deals explicitly with the folk tradition, David K. Jordan's chapter on changes in folk religion, takes a different point of view, and asks us implicitly to reconsider how total and how inevitable is the collapse into irrelevance of the folk tradition and its concomitant values. Jordan eschews any analysis of values themselves, or even of religious beliefs, what he calls the "theological" side of community-based religion. But he points to several phenomena that demonstrate that, on the institutional and behavioral levels at least, the religious aspect of the folk tradition is not only alive and well, but adapting to other social and cultural changes by becoming in some ways bigger and more spectacular than it was twenty or thirty years ago. Specifically, Jordan points out that temples are wealthier, processions more lavish, small shrines more common on the landscape, the more wealth is poured into local communities. It is what G. William Skinner in his lectures used to call "the efflorescence

of tradition" but it is not just that. Jordan also points out that the folk tradition itself is becoming increasingly commercialized, both in the hiring of professionals to replace community participation that becomes more difficult with the time demands of industrial workers and managers, and in the development of an urban tourist industry to *view* the more spectacular and lavish festivals of the folk tradition. Taking a somewhat less negative view of this adaptation than Ch'iu and Huang, Jordan's analysis suggests that, even as local communities become less central to many people's lives, even as their ethical orientations become more "individualistic" and "capitalist," the religious aspects of the folk tradition are not rendered irrelevant, as some might have predicted, but simply adapt to the new order. Whether the resilience of folk religion means resistance to aspects of the new order, whether continued participation in its rites and festivals indicates either a folk conservatism or a subtle critique of modernity and its problems, are questions that should be addressed in future research that includes attitudes and values as well as institutional analyses.

The conceptual opposite of "traditional" is, of course, "modern," and if Taiwan has problems with traditional culture as unadaptive to today's conditions, it has not embraced modernity without reservation either. In fact, the things we usually think of as "modern"—industry, urbanization, rising living standards, mobility—are seen by many as the root of a current cultural crisis, in which not only the moral inadequacy of traditionalism, alluded to above, but also such physical problems as the pollution caused by industry and modern transport, the despoiling of the environment, and the dangers caused by nuclear power. At the same time, movements in favor of labor rights, women's rights, and even political democracy can be seen as arising from the loosening of social bonds that comes with the move from the "traditional" village into the "modern" city (Gold, Chapter 2 this volume).

Thus Taiwan is re-evaluating the assumption that all things modern are desirable. People in Taiwan are now increasingly suspicious and critical of growth, modernization, and the "economic miracle" in which they are swallowed. Caught in the conflict between traditional and modern styles of thinking, they realize that the rise and fall of Anglo-European experience—social, cultural, ecological—essentially belongs to humanity as a whole. Taiwan intelligentsia are convinced that Taiwan must struggle out of the trans-national, industrial, technological, and entrepreneurial maelstrom, and specifically out of dependence on capitalistic nations such as the United States.

For instance, a free-lance writer, Cheng Chung-hsin (who writes under the name Hang Chih) bewails that the "all for export" mentality has developed industries that systematically destroy Taiwan's limited natural resources on which hang the island society's survival. Recent exposés of

pervasive and varied pollution have nevertheless only exposed a small portion of the problem; they are also closely connected to many social, economic, political, and cultural problems, and they rot away the value-structure, the social spine of Taiwan. Most lamentably, according to Hang Chih, people in Taiwan do not even realize the danger, much less quietly and critically evaluate the situation for a viable alternative.

Many thoughtful people share Hang Chih's concerns. In the summer of 1986, students at National Taiwan University protested DuPont's plan to set up a chemical factory in the countryside outside Chang-hua. Their *Comprehensive Investigative Report on the Tu-Pang Event by Students of National Taiwan University* exemplifies the critical attitude toward the blind pursuit of economic growth and modernization.

The several chapters discussed above—by Chu, Hang and Wu, Sung, Hang, and Jordan—do not simply decry the inadequacy of moral and folk tradition in the face of recent transformations; they do so because all of them retain at least a little bit of nostalgia for the simpler, more morally straightforward world of the past. They do so, we propose, not on entirely objective grounds; none of the authors mentions with any regret (or even mentions at all) the passing of such aspects of traditional culture as foot-binding, armed feuds (*hsieh-tou*), or epidemics. Rather the authors are concerned with a critique of modernity, and such nostalgia as they display for the traditional must be seen in this context.

The nature of this critique is graphically illustrated in Sun Chen's chapter on education and human resource development. Sun's contribution is, on one level, purely economic—a straightforward analysis of the relationship between the provision of education and the march of economic development, as well as a defense of the proposition that more investment in educational opportunity will contribute to preserving economic growth in the future. At another level, however, the chapter examines a more explicitly cultural thesis, namely Herman Kahn's assertion that it is Confucian values of hard work, loyalty, considerateness, etc. that have enabled the spectacular recent economic progress of several East Asian areas, including Taiwan. Insofar as this is true, Sun points out, it may partially be a case of Taiwan undermining its own advantage—the competitive nature of the present educational system, along with the mobile and individualistic society that is being created, have eroded those Confucian values that are purported to have brought about the advantage in the first place.

A rather different critique of modernity is described in Stevan Harrell's chapter on rural recreation, in which people who have all the benefits of industrial, urban life, including private cars, are thus moved by just this kind of nostalgia to develop interest in such "primitive" recreational activities as camping, hiking, and barbecuing in remote, scenic areas, where

they can explicitly escape pollution, noise, crime, and all the worries that come with the modern condition. It is not so much an idealized version of the past that they find in their scenic refuges; it is rather a series of things more directly opposed to specific features of today's fast-paced urban life. This is not a return to tradition, but a critique of modernity based on modernity itself.

All these chapters thus explicitly discuss the dialogue between tradition and modernity that is going on in Taiwan today, a dialogue that at one level is concerned with such concretia as cars and pollution, community and individualism as they exist today, but at another level has created ideas of "the traditional" and "the modern" as polar ideals that tie together whole clusters of related positions in a current debate over what the island should do next. This debate also continues along the other two axes of tension set out above; we turn now to the axis of native and foreign.

Native and Foreign—The Search for Authenticity

A question that has been argued in both China and Japan since major social and cultural change began to seem inevitable in the late 19th century is the degree to which "modernization" implies "Westernization," or conversely, the degree to which alternative forms of modernity are possible. Taiwan, with its social origins in the 16th and 17th century trade among empires, its cultural legacies of imperial China and colonialist Japan, as well as more recent rule by a KMT whose official Sunist ideology is an avowed combination of all the best from East and West, is no newcomer to this debate. In the late postwar and post-postwar periods, however, the question has become much more acute. This sharpening of the question is evident in several aspects of culture.

First and most obvious (and perhaps least troubling) is the incursion of the technical products of 20th century European civilization, often modified once when passing through Japan and once again locally in Taiwan. Since the early seventies, when store-bought clothing, as well as vehicles and machines, were already made more or less on the Western model, the foreign visitor to the island has noticed a much greater intrusion in the area usually thought to be most impervious to cultural change—that of food. Whereas a more-or-less genuine Western meal was obtainable in 1972 only at the United States Military Assistance Advisory Group officer's club and the Foremost Dairy hamburger joint on Taipei's Tun-hua Road, by the 1980s expensive steak houses abounded all over Taipei, Kentucky and Church's sold fried chicken in every medium-sized town on the island, and the supermarket run by the Farmers' Association in San-hsia sold M&Ms alongside the dried squid and candied winter melon wedges.

Han-pao and *je-kou* stands proliferated as well, and fresh milk, two decades earlier again to be had only at the aforementioned Foremost outlet, was available in any village store. Clothes were no longer culturally-adapted imitations of Euro-American styles; they were now the latest versions of those styles, adapted through Japan and Hong Kong. And of course there was the family car, something that only the wealthy had possessed until recently.

The incursion of Western-style consumer goods was of little concern on the cultural front, however: the deeper question was one of Western values, thought patterns, and styles of social interaction. Chapters in this volume address many ramifications of this question, ranging from the suitability of Western democratic political forms in an era in which KMT authoritarian control is softening, and popular political movements are gaining the opportunity to make themselves heard, to the debates about which styles of poetry (Yeh, this volume), painting (Kuo, this volume) or other forms of "big C" culture are best able to express the nature of and the conflicts in Taiwan's culture and society today.

These dilemmas of how much to take from those who have earlier traveled parallel roads to modernization are common to all late-developing countries, of course, but they are particularly acute, perhaps, in Taiwan, where the situation is not simply a dichotomous one of native and Western. Taiwan's political culture, Gold points out in his chapter on civil society here, must be understood with regard to Taiwan's popular history, encompassing, as Hsiao (1989) also shows, not only a period of flourishing and then repression under the Japanese, but periods of extreme repression in the early decades of KMT rule. And at the same time, within the KMT itself, there are arguments about what position it ought to take, remembering that it is not only the party of the nativistic New Life Movement, mentioned above, but a party *all* of whose four paramount leaders (Sun Chung-shan, Chiang Kai-shek, Chiang Ching-kuo, and now Lee Teng-hui) have been Christians. And the nucleus of the much more locally-oriented Democratic Progressive Party grew out of the Presbyterian Church's long-time opposition to authoritarian rule over the Taiwanese.

In light of this continuing paradox of strong native and strong foreign influences showing up at the same time and in the same institutions, one must, we believe, devote more thought to the question of exactly how universal and how particular Taiwan's modernization is. Students of Japan (Rohlen 1974, 1983; Edwards 1989) have made a convincing case for that nation's recent cultural change as a native road to modernity, different from the way previously trod by Euro-American industrial societies. Education, collective action, work relationships, gender roles all have been shown to be profoundly altered by the last 120 years of Japan's culture change, but to remain very different from their counterparts in the West-

ern countries. Is Taiwan similarly following its own path to modernity? Or, as Harrell's chapter very provisionally suggests here, are the similarities of capitalist society more important in Taiwan's case than the differences stemming from different cultural legacies? This is a subject for empirical research, and some of the chapters here, while not formulating answers, at least suggest directions such research might take.

Local and Cosmopolitan— The Search for Identity

The question of the uniqueness of Taiwan's culture change leads us to this, the third axis of tension in Taiwan's society. Thomas Gold's essay in this volume neatly sums up the problem in a phrase of its title: "Taiwan's Search for Identity," while Edwin Winckler's essay helps organize our thinking on the issue when it analyzes questions of cultural policy into supra-national, national, and sub-national levels. Both writers point out that there is no consensus, in state or society, over what Taiwan is—where it fits into an international scheme—or over what the constituent sub-units of the society ought to be. This problem is most acute in its political dimension, but the political dimension cannot be separated from the cultural, and the cultural sphere has both ethnic and literary aspects to it.

The proper and the future political status of Taiwan is of course a subject of much discussion and debate. Though it still remains illegal to advocate outright independence (as evidenced by the November, 1990 arrest of Huang Hua, a proponent of that view), the law is enforced selectively, as evidenced by the Democratic Progressive Party's September, 1991 call for a referendum on Taiwan independence (a position long articulated by the party's Hsin Ch'ao Liu faction, which tends to be about one-third of that party's membership in legislative bodies) as well as by the reaction by the government and the ruling KMT, which strongly condemned the DPP proposal in words, but took no concrete action against the DPP for making it, and by the common opinion that advocating independence cost the DPP votes in the December, 1991 National Assembly elections. For those who do not go so far as to advocate independence, there is still a controversy, reaching clear to the top official level about what the status of the island should be—if the "one country, two systems" formula of Teng Hsiao-p'ing is unacceptable, Lee Teng-hui first proposed "one country, two governments," and then settled on an official policy of "one country, two areas," while quasi-official trade offices have been established and an end to the state of emergency was declared in May, 1991. The situation is clearly still in flux, but the direction of change seems to be toward ever greater contacts with the Mainland, whose overseas trade is already heavily dependent on Taiwan capital. More than this, with constitutional reform

proposed for the next two years, more than just a formulation of legitimacy is at stake: there are the mechanisms for choosing the government, which bring with them the distribution of political spoils, including the proposed direct election of the President.

This kind of political flux makes the question of the cultural status of Taiwan with respect to other entities, something that has been an important part of the background of cultural change in Taiwan since the declaration of the Taiwan Democratic State in 1895, once again a part of the foreground, and the ethnic question of "what is Taiwanese" is once again in everyone's mind. Is Taiwan a part of China (no matter which China, as implied in the various "one country, ..." positions of the CCP and KMT)? Have fifty years of Japanese colonial influence and forty-seven more of separate development under KMT rule meant that Taiwan is culturally separate from China, and thus ought to be independent? Is Taiwan more different from the rest of China than is, say, Shanghai or Yunnan or, pointedly, the future "Special Administrative District" of Hong Kong? The cultural answer would appear to have important political consequences, since much of the discourse of ethnic nationalism (Murray and Hong 1988) depends on belief in cultural distinctiveness.

In this debate, does language make a difference, and if so how? Is Taiwanese "Hokkien" the same as the Minnan language spoken in Fukien, with just a few Japanese words mixed in, or is it a separate language? And since education in Taiwan is exclusively in a modified form of the Peking dialect (more rigorously and exclusively used in Taiwan's schools than on the Mainland), does this give Taiwan any claim to linguistic separateness? Does the exact way the languages are used make a difference? What about the prosody and vocabulary differences between "Kuo-yü" and "P'u-t'ung-hua?" The language policies of both KMT and CCP governments have been based on the idea that there is a single language called "Chinese" or "Han Speech," and that local variations, in many cases greater than those between respective national languages of Europe, for example, are but dialect variations, in both cases assuming that language communities are congruent with ethnic and national communities.

If not language, what about other aspects of culture? Certainly separate development in the last ninety-five years has given rise to distinctive practices in manners and etiquette, in food and drink (and the styles in which they are served and consumed), and above all in literary and artistic expression. Since the assumption that cultural difference equals ethnic difference equals national difference goes virtually unchallenged (Murray and Hong 1988), disputes about cultural difference implicitly or explicitly turn into disputes about political unity or separation. But more than that, such disputes are an integral part of "Taiwan's Quest for Identity."

Juxtaposed to the supra-national level "Quest for Identity," the attempt to find Taiwan's place with regard to the rest of the world, particularly Mainland China, is the sub-national level issue of unity and diversity within Taiwan itself. This is particularly acute in considering the relationship between what are usually thought of as the four main kinds of people in Taiwan—Hokkiens, Hakkas, Mainlanders, and aborigines (Gates 1981). We think it is fair to say that of the divisions among these groups, the one between Hokkiens and Hakkas is the least problematical; both are peoples of Chinese origin long established on the island. Such cultural differences as remain (and language is but the most obvious) do not challenge the fact that both these groups are Taiwanese people, unchallengeably belonging to the island (unlike the Mainlanders) and part of its cultural mainstream (unlike the aborigines).

The other relationships, between Taiwanese and Mainlanders, and between Han Chinese (Taiwanese and Mainlanders considered together) and aborigines, are much more problematical and contentious. In 1945, most Taiwanese, Hokkien- or Hakka-speaking, probably assumed kinship with the Mainland Chinese who first came to take over from Japan's defeated colonial bureaucrats, but that assumed kinship was severed by the local uprising and subsequent government massacre of Taiwanese local elites in February 1947, and re-emphasized by the arrival of over a million bureaucrats, soldiers and refugees fleeing the Communist rout of the KMT armies in 1949 and 1950. There was thus born an ethnic division that had linguistic, cultural, class, and political aspects. But over the almost two generations between the retrocession and now, the gap has narrowed. By now there is a whole cohort of people of Mainland origin who are nevertheless the second generation to be born on Taiwan, and there are even some Mainlanders three generations removed from their home provinces. Inter-marriage has become increasingly common, and although most people probably still identify unequivocally with one group or the other, there are now some who do not, who think of themselves simply as Chinese from Taiwan. It will take generations longer for the distinction to disappear altogether, but it seems likely that it will lose much or all of its political salience with the forthcoming constitutional reforms, and as fewer people live in villages and old city neighborhoods, being Taiwanese will lose its association with living in a particular place. And linguistic barriers are breaking down as well. Not only do schools make sure everyone knows Mandarin, but even rural Taiwanese in the north of the island now often talk to their children in Mandarin exclusively, reserving Taiwanese for conversation with the monolingual grandparental generation. At the same time, in the south of the island, Taiwanese appears to be gaining ground again ideologically, with even children of Mainland parents using

it as their primary language outside of official contexts where Mandarin is still required.

Any political settlement that recognizes any kind of *de facto* separate status for Taiwan will also tend to weaken the Taiwanese-Mainlander distinction, because it is clear that the "Mainlanders," despite their origin, are not going to return to the Mainland except as tourists or outside investors, and that almost no Taiwanese have any intention of driving them out. A Taiwan government that no longer claims to be the legitimate government of all China will have to be a government indiscriminately of all the people of Taiwan, and that will make for a very different ideological basis for ethnic relations than is still present in the waning days of the constitution that remained unmodified for so long because of the now officially ended state of emergency to meet the Communist rebellion.

The other internal division of identity is that between Han Chinese (both Taiwanese and Mainlanders) and the aborigine (*yüan-chü-min*) groups living in Taiwan's mountainous interior. Though composing only one or two percent of the island's population, the descendants of Taiwan's original inhabitants take part in an ethnic division that is less likely to be overcome or rendered irrelevant than that between Mainlanders and Taiwanese. As Hsieh Shih-chung's chapter in this volume illustrates through the case of the Atayal people at Wulai in Taipei County, for many aborigines trading on their ethnic identity is the only way to either make a living or retain a place of self-respect in a society that retains a strong prejudice against them. For the Atayal of Wulai, being Atayal (Daiyan in their own language) is a source of tourist income as Taiwan and foreign visitors seek the ethnic other, but it is more than that, it is a source of local pride and of a sense of belonging, in this case very directly to particular places they can claim as ancestral homes. For other groups, living in more remote areas, subsistence livelihood is still possible and the native material culture is not entirely gone, but it is again in these markers of ethnicity that the group finds whatever strength and cohesiveness it still has.

One result of the continuing encroachment of Han settlers and business people on aboriginal communities and livelihoods has been the formation of a pan-aboriginal political and cultural revival movement, which seeks to do two things: to counter Han prejudice and exploitation, and to forge out of a series of locality-based ethnic identities a larger identity as aborigines, one that transcends the local tribal identities and confronts the overwhelmingly richer and more powerful Chinese in a unified manner (Hsieh 1987). It is still too early to know what the long-term effect of this pan-ethnic movement will be, but it too is a concomitant of the drawing of aborigines into the island-wide society in which local identity is increasingly unimportant, and drawing them in on the lowest level of the class system and the system of status prestige. Rather than be simply the

poorest of Taiwan's people, the coal miners and prostitutes and day laborers, the *yüan-chiu-min* may choose to stand together as the island's original inhabitants.

The other cultural sphere into which the "search for identity" reaches so prominently is that of literature and the arts. As chapters by Winckler and Gold in this volume demonstrate, the state has always been concerned that literary expression does not form a nucleus for political opposition, as demonstrated by their suppression of a series of magazines from *Free China* to *Literary Star* to *Ilha Formosa*. But if the regime was authoritarian in its cultural policy, stifling direct dissent, it was, as Winckler points out, less likely to take the lead itself in dictating what was to be published, and the search for identity has thus gone on from the early days of Pai Hsien-yung's stories about sad and wistful Mainlanders through the *hsiang-t'u* or "village" fiction of the seventies to the frank literary examination of the whole question from a myriad of viewpoints in the late 1980s, epitomized in Hou Hsiao-hsien's award-winning *City of Sadness*.

This collection contains two chapters that deal with the literary and artistic side of the local-cosmopolitan tension directly. Michelle M.H. Yeh's chapter on poetry deals with the predicament of the contemporary poets, who must deal with the three-thousand year history of Chinese versification in one way or another, while at the same time speaking to readers of today. Classical poetry is now not much but a pastime for retired generals and perhaps an exercise for composition students, but its shadow looms over the modern poet not only as an "other" that stands in opposition to today's poetry, but as an inexhaustible source of spectral images alternately exorcised and embraced in modern forms. At the same time, the question arises as to the extent of the local voice, the extent to which modern Taiwanese poetry is something besides just modern Chinese poetry that happens to be written in Taiwan or by Taiwanese living outside the island. As with other types of literature, poetry is both cosmopolitan, showing foreign and classical influences, and local, evolving its own style and its own problems.

As with literature, so with the arts, as displayed in Jason Kuo's chapter on painting. Kuo traces the history of painting in postwar Taiwan, documenting its struggles in the fifties and sixties to be something more than the continuation of empires, as represented by classical landscape painting for the earlier empire and Japanese-filtered oil painting, for the later, or just another locus of modernist trends originating and concentrated in the West. Out of this dilemma, Kuo shows us, has come an original, local style, which Kuo calls "new Taiwan painting," which "reflect[s] ... the development of a 'Taiwan consciousness.'" While somewhat distinctive in style (these paintings certainly do not look much like either traditional landscapes or most Western oils), these paintings possess their most

distinct individuality in their subject matter, which reflects the complex reality of postwar life on Taiwan. It is significant that these painters are of mixed ethnic origin; together they are seeking a Taiwan consciousness rather than a narrowly Taiwanese consciousness.

We thus see in a wide variety of cultural forms, big C and little c, the beginning of the emergence of Taiwan as a cultural entity, as its purported external ties to China, its claims to represent China as a whole, become increasingly irrelevant (at the same time, paradoxically, that there is direct contact with Mainland China for the first time in 40 years), while internal divisions of ethnic groups begin to break down. It is as if there is a convergence zone of influences from the outside retreating and divisions on the inside loosening, meeting at the shore of the island, which is becoming, more clearly than ever, a cultural unit in its own right. In today's world, that cultural unit is perforce cosmopolitan, but an increasing self-confidence means that Taiwan, not Free China or Mainlanders or Ch'üan-chou people, is the unit that takes its place in the world's cultural interactions.

This consolidation of the border (or shoreline) of the island is manifested in the general Taiwanese identification with "this island of ours," which has surfaced with the recent gradual democratization and loosening of the strictures on free expression. For example, in philosophy many Taiwanese intellectuals are growing dissatisfied with postwar Taiwan contributions to Chinese philosophy by such figures as Fang Thomé, Hsü Fu-kuan, T'ang Chün-i, Mou Tsung-san, etc., because these thinkers are Mainland oriented and have completely ignored Taiwan. Young thinkers, such as Yang Ju-pin, now insist that Confucian scholars in Taiwan ought to develop a "Taiwan Confucianism" that fully takes into account their own cultural environment.

This new appreciation of locality is also apparent among literary writers, who insist on the distinctiveness of Taiwan literature, different from that of the Mainland. What Taiwan literature should record, they maintain, is the great impact of Taiwan's rapid change from an agrarian to an industrial society. Every writer has felt tremendous upheavals, wrought by the breath-taking political and economic twists and turns, often beyond anyone's understanding. The consensus among writers today is that writers who neglect this situation are merely deceiving themselves and others; Taiwan literature must, in this view, orient itself within this situation.

Taiwan's culture, like its politics, is in an extreme fluid state in 1991. Freed in the late 1980s from the retardant shackles of KMT policy and ineffective, fragmented opposition, along with local apathy and inertia, it now has the opportunity to reshape itself in a form more congruent with the enormous economic and social changes of the last two decades, as well as the anticipated political changes of the next. To return to oneself in

this way is authenticity, which we see as good. The imminent danger in this situation is that all cultures will be rejected and that the society will develop a vacuum of values in which people will be lured unthinkingly to immediacies, be they sex, money, food, or violence. Against this danger, we hope this volume alerts thoughtful cultural rebels toward a sane and critical authenticity, seeing that the threefold tension outlined here is not a permanent fix, but an opportunity to develop a genuine creative cultural synthesis.

This volume is thus an interim report more than a definitive statement, and we expect the next few years of cultural change to be as fast as the last few. This volume is destined to be superseded; we can only hope that it offers some insights that will still be useful to the authors of its successor.

Notes

1. The discrepancy between tradition and the actual past is of course not unique to Taiwan; since Hobsbawm and Ranger's 1983 volume, the phrase "invented tradition" has become commonplace. Taiwan's traditions are probably no more or less invented than those of other places.