

## **The Repositioning of "Taiwan" and "China": An Analysis of Patriotic Songs of Taiwan**

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### **Introduction**

Should Taiwan be called "Taiwan" or considered part of China? From the time Japan took Taiwan from the *Qing* Dynasty (1895-1945), to the Nationalist government's move to Taiwan (1949), to the change of power to the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP, a local Taiwanese party) in 2000, choice of what to call Taiwan has always presented challenges inextricably connected to polity and history.

Beginning with their seizure of the island in 1949, the Nationalist government viewed Taiwan as a base from which to launch an offensive to reclaim Mainland China. Thus people in Taiwan were construed as "Chinese," which subsumed "Taiwanese." The situation underwent significant change after martial law was lifted in 1987. Since then, Taiwanese consciousness has continued to grow rapidly. Especially following the 2000 national election, which saw the DPP take control from the Nationalist Party (KMT [*Kuomintang*]), the government has vigorously tried to move "Taiwan" to the center stage and gradually push "China" out of Taiwan's political discourse.

Issues of how the concept *taiwan* [Taiwan] may be related to *zhongguo* [China], and how Taiwanese consciousness and Chinese consciousness have evolved over Taiwan's history, can be observed in the lyrics of patriotic songs popular in Taiwan, roughly since the 1950s. As a genre, patriotic songs have unique historical significance in Taiwan. Each song chooses different reference points upon which to anchor its message and articulate specific ideologies. Some songs reinforce an image of a grand China, while others promote a Taiwan-centered perspective; thus, whether a song is in Mandarin Chinese or one of the Taiwanese dialects carries profound political implications. This study explores how development of these songs reflects and facilitates the transformation from Chinese to Taiwanese consciousness, given each song's unique history.

### **Song Lyrics as Rhetorical Vehicles**

The importance of music as a means of communication has been well documented. Music has rhetorical power to reflect, influence, or mold social realities. Various types of music have been used to facilitate social, religious, and political movements; persuade attitudes and cultivate identities; and articulate unique visions and voices (Sellnow & Sellnow, 2001). As forms of rhetoric, songs serve both instrumental and consummatory goals that persuade audiences while entertaining them, leading them to ascribe meanings to mediate possible tension or reach consensus (Gonzalez & Makay, 1983). Much research using various methodologies has been conducted in this area, including studies on the art of lyrics (Booth, 1976); lyrics of work songs (Conrad, 1988); Bob Dylan's gospel songs (Gonzalez & Makay, 1983); football songs in England (Hoy, 1994); World War II music in America (Mohrmann & Scott, 1973); and so on.

To analyze the rhetorical force of music and capture its full meaning, some argue we must consider the interplay between the discursive lyrical message and the non-discursive, aesthetic musical accompaniment that is also a didactic message (Sellnow & Sellnow, 2001; see also Gonzalez & Makay, 1983). Lyrics are subject to the influence of the accompaniment in different ways (Booth, 1976) and the relation between lyrics and music can be complementary or congruent (Sellnow & Sellnow, 2001).

While we do not deny the impact of musical accompaniment, nor the rich rhetorical potential in interplay of music and lyrics, here we focus on metaphorical analysis of song lyrics about "China" and "Taiwan." We also consider issues concerning rhetorical devices or patterns of word usage that create specific effects<sup>1</sup> helping to sustain the meanings of the two metaphors. Song lyrics provide a rich field for exploring social change (Zeng, 1998) and the construction of political identity. The analysis thus achieved is nevertheless different from an analysis that might consider lyrics and music together.

The songs we examine can be called patriotic songs, since they appeal to the audience's identification with a nation, whether an extant political entity or a constructed one yet to be realized. In patriotic songs, national sentiments can be consolidated, passions elevated, and spirit energized, making the experience of singing or hearing them not just a matter of individuals conceiving their own destiny, but a destiny intimately connected with their fellow countrymen. These songs may be designed to motivate soldiers and others to defend the country, or used as political tools. They may emerge as folk songs and enter into popular media, to inspire patriotism, particularly in crises.

Rather than present a comprehensive analysis of all patriotic songs throughout Taiwan's history, we will, through closely looking at representative songs, analyze the transition of people in Taiwan from Chinese to Taiwanese centered identity. Aside from exploring metaphors, we also integrate insights from related textual analysis. Given Taiwan's unique history, patriotic songs endorsing "Chinese-ness" tend to come from military sources. Songs supporting "Taiwanese-ness" tend to emerge from civilians.

### **A Dream Yet To Be Fulfilled:**

#### **Inspiring Patriotic Songs for a Grand China and Chinese-ness**

Since the Nationalists took control of Taiwan in 1949, and until about the 1980s, Taiwan was seen as a base for reclaiming the mainland from the Communists. People in Taiwan have been construed as "Chinese," which minimizes the significance of being "Taiwanese." While Taiwan became the "reclaiming base" (*fixing jid*) or the ROC (the Republic of China, the official name of the Nationalist government), it was not seen as a locality with its own destiny. This vision is clearly revealed in a widely known military song, "Counter Attack the Mainland (*fangong dalu qu*)"<sup>2</sup>:

*Counter attack, counter attack, counter attack the Mainland*  
*Counter attack, counter attack, counter attack the Mainland*  
*The Mainland is our territory, the Mainland is our home. ...*

Prior to the 1980s, military song lyrics consistently situate the "good" ROC government against the "evil" Communists, thereby legitimizing having Chinese fight other Chinese (M.-z. Chen, 2002). The call to reclaim the Chinese mainland was a forward-looking, though unrealistic vision. At the same time, the illusion relies on a poetic, backward-looking

view lamenting the loss of the mainland to the Communists. Themes alternate between the vision of an invigorating spirit to preserve the KMT and a sense of KMT's failure at having lost the mainland, leaving its people to suffer at the hands of the Chinese communists (cf. Sellnow & Sellnow, 2001).

An example (1970s) is "I Love the Chinese" (*wo ai zhonghua*)<sup>3</sup>:

*I love the Chinese, I love the Chinese  
The culture is long-lasting, and it has rich resources and vast territory.  
It has been five thousand years since it is established;  
All five ethnic groups belong to the same family.  
Chinese offerings are the greatest.*

Here the authenticity of Chinese-ness is represented by the word *zhonghua* (Chinese). Both *zhonghua* and *zhongguo* refer to Chinese. They share the word, *zhong*, center, but complete the phrase differently: *zhongguo* is *zhong* (center) with *guo* (nation), whereas *zhonghua* is *zhong* (center) with *hua* (Chinese or Han people). These phrases create a symbolic world in which people in Taiwan can reassert Chinese-ness as key to their identity. Taiwan has gone from being a land to which immigrants, with little sense of the island as a final destination, fled to escape harsh life elsewhere, to being a colony of Japan where Taiwanese identity was overshadowed (as in the popular metaphor "orphan of Asia" [H.-c. Chang & Holt, 2001]). The Nationalist government urged people in Taiwan to forge a new "Chinese" identity and answer the call to help "other Chinese."

Through repeatedly listening to, rehearsing, and uttering these words, people joined the government's program, constantly reconfirming and renewing their sense of Chinese identity.<sup>4</sup> Such practices prioritized Chinese-ness and rendered it sacred, while denigrating Taiwanese-ness as earthy, uncultured, and less desirable. Such systems of practices (Gramsci, 1971) are pervasive; aside from song lyrics that directly pointed to the need to construct a Chinese identity, promotion of the Mandarin Chinese language while prohibiting use of local Taiwanese dialects sustained an officially sanctioned, China-centered system of meaning. Other familiar patriotic melodies, such as "The Song of Hot Blood" (*rexie ge*) and "The Song of the Great Wall" (*changcheng yao*) express similar sentiments (see Voice of Han Broadcasting Network, 2005).

After their move to Taiwan in 1949, the Nationalists continued to use military songs to motivate soldiers. Military songs were used to inspire patriotism, given the Nationalist government's goal to fight Communist China. While these may have been military songs, they were well known to civilians. The Nationalist government imposed military education in all middle schools, where selected military songs were taught and competitions held to promote their performance (M.-z Chen, 2002). This practice continues today, even though KMT is no longer the ruling party. Indeed, some (e.g., M.-z. Chen, 2002) view patriotic and military songs (*junge*) as somewhat interchangeable--they are military songs when sung by soldiers, patriotic songs when sung by civilians.

Hence, even though their status as propaganda and ideological tools seemed obvious, in the hands of an authoritarian government working through the educational systems--institutions of ideological state apparatuses, to use Althusser's concept (F.-z. Yang, 2000)--these songs propagated important messages, telling people how they should *think* about and *define* their identities. Such messages are so pervasive that we can detect anti-Communist

ideology in the lyrics of other popular Mandarin Chinese songs from the 1950s to the 1970s (Zeng, 1998). Their power cannot be underestimated since people

... have a strong impulse to attend to song words as if they were spoken words, spoken to us in particular ... passing through the consciousness of the listener, it fosters some degree of identification between singer and audience ... we are drawn into the state, the pose, the attitude, the self offered by the song. (Booth, 1976, pp. 246-247)

These songs told stories about the KMT and the communists, a selective version of history from KMT's unique "place for seeing" (Bakhtin, 1986). Taiwanese with little experience of the interaction between the political parties were invited, persuaded, even forced (Ye, 2000) to join the pursuit of a grand Chinese state. This strong identification (Booth, 1976) connects those on Taiwan and the mainland through blood and emotional ties, and ROC's national identity is thus imagined and constructed (Anderson, 1991).

That this view marginalizes Taiwan is also clear. Of 248 military songs listed by the Voice of Han Broadcasting Network,<sup>5</sup> only one contains "Taiwan" in its title. Rather than claiming Taiwan's own legitimacy, the lyrics of "The Good about Taiwan" (*taiwan hao*) marks Taiwan's significance by its role in helping reclaim the mainland:

*Taiwan is good, Taiwan really is an island for reclaiming [the mainland]....*

*We cannot forget mainland fellows from the same womb.*

*Struggling with death, suffering in the concentration camp.*

*They are asking for help, they are crying....*

*We will soon fight back to the mainland.*

*We are coming back, soon coming back.*<sup>6</sup>

There may of course be other Taiwan-related military songs not posted on this website. Of 258 songs collected by M.-z. Chen (2002), ten are about Taiwan. However, lyrics about Taiwan invariably reflect how its prosperity is due to how it has been built as a model for the ROC, whose goal is to reclaim the mainland. Popular songs in Mandarin promote a similar view. Songs like "Taiwan is Good" and "Little Melody of Taiwan," even as they praise Taiwan, see it as a temporary residence. In popular folk songs of the late 1970s, Taiwan is mentioned but subsumed under the idea of China (Zeng, 1998).

These symbols shape, organize, and interpret Taiwanese experience as tied to the fate of people on the mainland. Within Taiwan, the unifying power of these symbols also erases the distinction between early and late Chinese immigrants (only the late immigrants who came in 1949 have direct blood connections with those on the mainland), promoting a vision of common history and destiny and hence shared identity.

These songs were later joined by civilian songs composed in the 1980s. The sense of anomie and need for reassurance were intensified by Taiwan's declining international status, including cutting ties with Japan (1970), expulsion from the United Nations (1972), and severed diplomatic relations with the United States (1978) (Ye, 2000).

These and other events sent shock waves disrupting Taiwan's comfort and security. In such depressing times there was a need to fortify patriotic spirit. Chinese national identity, inculcated since the 1950s, was perfect for capitalizing on the widespread discontent. To counteract the feeling of being abandoned and betrayed by the international community, people fell back on the idea of Taiwan as the true representative of the only "real" Chinese country and culture. Along with decreased emphasis in military songs on taking back the lost mainland (an increasingly obvious impossibility) (M.-z. Chen, 2002), the new popular songs emphasized

ethnic pride and asserted a China-centered national identity (Zeng, 1998). The song "Plum Blossom" (*meihua*), referring to the national flower of the ROC, was composed in 1973 by J.-c. Liu, a prolific song writer and movie producer, after Taiwan was expelled by the United Nations:

*The plum blossom is everywhere; the colder it gets, the more the flowers blossom.  
The plum blossom's hardiness symbolizes us, the great Chinese!  
The plum blossom is everywhere; wherever there is land, there is the flower.  
It is not afraid of ice, snow, wind, or rain; it is my national flower!*

Qualities of the flower--persistence and hardiness--were transformed and fashioned as virtues of patriotism, loyalty, and nationalism. The song helped people cope with political insecurity by giving them confidence and reassuring their sense of Chinese-ness. It was popular in the 1970s, inspiring a movie, "The Plum Blossom."<sup>7</sup> Unlike ROC military-sponsored songs aimed at promoting specific ideological agendas, these popular songs are more persuasive and clever in conveying their intent. Particularly through soft, simple melodies, aided by expanded circulation and dissemination through copying and reproduction, "Plum Blossom" entered the hearts of many in Taiwan, even earning nicknames like "special national anthem" or "popular national anthem" (Ye, 2000).

This song was later revised by General W.-g. Chiang, son of Chiang Ching-kuo, as "Parade of the Plum Blossom" (*meihua jinxing qui*), with a more military-style rhythm and melody. Serving official ends, the revised song became the key melody in various national celebrations. On these occasions, Ye (2000) notes, participants had to sing the song after finishing ROC's national anthem (p. 75).

Another symbol that has come to stand for Chinese-ness is the dragon, the imaginary animal representing the essence of Chinese-ness. This image was vividly brought to people's imagination in the lyrics of the extraordinarily popular "Descendants of the Dragon" (*long de chuanren*), a 1978 nationalistic campus folk song<sup>8</sup> (*xiaoyuan minge*) popular during the 1980s:

*The ancient Orient has a river. Its name is called the Long River.  
The ancient Orient has a river. Its name is called the Yellow River.  
Although I have not seen the beauty of the Yangtze River,  
I have always dreamed I traveled on it.  
Although I have not heard the strong wave of the Yellow River,  
Its powerful currents are in my dream.*

*The ancient Orient has a dragon. Its name is zhongguo.  
The ancient Orient has a group of people. They are all descendants of the dragon.  
Growing up under the feet of the giant dragon, I became the dragon's descendant.  
Black eyes, black hair, and yellow skin, forever I am the descendant of the dragon.*

*One quiet night one hundred years ago,  
The deep night before the immense change,  
Gunfire broke the quiet night, and everywhere there are enemies but no support.  
So many years have passed, and the gunfire is still loud.  
So many years, so many years.  
Giant dragon, giant dragon, please wipe your eyes clear,*

*Forever wipe your eyes clear.*

Inspired by Taiwan's severing diplomatic ties with the United States, the song provokes strong Chinese ethnic emotion, indicating, as Zeng (1998) put it, "a collective hysteria of Taiwan" (p. 164). The song resonated with many Taiwanese, making it the most popular song on *Minsheng* newspaper's list for fifteen weeks. This passion was particularly intense, given the struggle between identifying with cultural China as the motherland while despising the Chinese communists who governed it (Zeng, 1998).

The lyric's discourse is in three sections, each building on another to make a complete image of China. The first section is geographic discourse, referring to the locality, "China." This is followed by ethnic discourse, since anyone growing up in this land is Chinese. Finally, the lyric encapsulates a hundred years' history and hints at the connection of an idealized vision of China and ROC (established in 1912). This last is also nationalistic discourse connecting land, people, and history. Thus "China" is not simply a symbol of ethnicity and culture but a fully realized political entity (Zeng, 1998).

The image of the dragon touches the essence of being Chinese, reinforced by geographical features such as the Long and Yellow Rivers. Although when the song was popular, most in Taiwan had never visited the mainland, the sites are firmly lodged in their collective memory. There is no mention of places in Taiwan. The descendants of the dragon, as Zeng (1998) notes, do not care where they are located, but, through connection of history and blood, have become Chinese of the past. Ironically, one would rather entertain such images in one's dreams, but pay no attention to the here-and-now. The constructed image of China is infused with ancient, historical, geographical, and cultural discourse, whereas Taiwanese culture is shown as having lost roots, geographically a guest locale, where one can think about the motherland from a distance (Zeng, 1998).

This persistent appeal to pride in being Chinese and to the special qualities of the motherland (*zuguó*) (Liu & Lin, 1999) connects people on both sides of the strait in the same spirit and emotion. For example, this song was selected as one of the PRC's "Golden Melodies" in 1988<sup>9</sup> (Zeng, 1998). Regardless of the differing histories lived by people who grew up in Taiwan and on the mainland, through the unifying image of the dragon, the sense of the hegemony of Chinese-ness maintains its firm grip.

The campus folk song, a genre popular in the 1980s, resulted in part from Taiwan's falling international status. Campus folk songs were seen as ways to reject the long-time domination of Taiwan's music by Western popular music (Wang, 1986). As Taiwan saw the need to be more politically independent, its desire for cultural independence also increased. Further exacerbating the situation was the fact that at that time, popular Mandarin songs, their lyrics often concerned only with romance, were considered *mimizhiyin* (meaningless sounds that destroy people's higher spiritual yearnings) (Zhou, 1996). At a time when media were conceived as vehicles to serve the goals of national unity and security, it is not surprising to find complaints that popular songs did not perform an "educational and guidance function" (*jiaohua gongneng*) by elevating society. N. Zhuang (1979), for example, advocated "making popular songs patriotic" (*liuxing gequ aiguo hua*): "We hope artists with conscience will expand their patriotism and work together, to make popular songs the instrument of positive social change, and be armed to take the battle mission of the present time" (p. 17).

Another song, "Praising the Republic of China" (*zhonghuaminguo song*), continues in the same spirit and pushes its audience further by asking people to identify themselves with a

political entity, the Republic of China. This nationalistic song and lyrics are also by J.-c. Liu ("Plum Blossom"):

*The prairie of the Qinghai....  
The Himalayan mountain....  
Ancient saints and wise people came here to build their homes.  
Under the wind or under the rain, they have persisted five thousand years.  
The Republic of China, the Republic of China, it can stand the test of time,  
'As long as the water in the Yellow River and the Long River are not disrupted....'*

This song's focus on membership in the ROC presents a unity appealing to many audiences. In some ways the song is illogical; for example, the ROC never ruled territory bordering the Himalayan Mountains. Nevertheless, like "Plum Blossom," today "Praising the Republic of China" is sung by the blue camp<sup>10</sup> at political gatherings.

The song follows the same pattern of three discursive stages--geography, people, and ethnicity--as "Descendants of the Dragon." However, this lyric moves one step further: while "Descendants of the Dragon" hints at the connection between an ideal China and the Republic of China, here the discourse of ethnicity is clearly identified as belonging to the ROC. Chinese nationalistic discourse has therefore been transformed into ROC discourse and the five thousand years of China's history conveniently replaces ROC's history of one hundred years. The cultural, historical China is concretely realized by the political entity, Republic of China (Zeng, 1998).

Again, with exclusive focus on mainland locales, such as Qinghai prairie or Himalayan Mountains, there is in these lyrics not a word, even a hint, about Taiwan. This is ironic, since the song refers to a concrete Republic of China located in Taiwan, rather than a future, idealized conception of China. The image of the ROC is thus in a state of conflict and confusion. It is at the same time extant in Taiwan and yet to be realized.

Here images of an ideal China (*zhongguo*) and the ROC (*zhonghuaminguo*), with Chinese and the dragon, are intertwined. The PRC's China is separated from Taiwan's imagined China and reduced to geographical markers. The ROC, on the other hand, cannot directly assume to represent an ideal China but is in the process of becoming. Finally, Taiwan remains an unknown, unimportant place, or at best a stage in achieving a larger goal. Regardless of how these symbols are positioned, *zhongguo* (China)--not the PRC's China--is *imagined*, and the reality of *taiwan* is set aside and rendered irrelevant.

China-centered patriotic songs have become less popular in the contemporary Taiwan of the new millennium, accelerated by increasing local consciousness and the removal of anti-Communist principles and censorship (see B.-y. Chang, 2004). Their symbolic implications must also be revised. They have become occasional forms of protest for pan-blue supporters and pro-unificationists in Taiwan, especially when they position themselves against pro-independents during election campaigns. Particularly with respect to whether Taiwan's official title, "The Republic of China," should be changed to "Republic of Taiwan," the song "Praising the Republic of China" can still be heard at pan-blue gatherings. These patriotic songs continue to represent the authenticity of a Chinese nation, except that their opponents are no longer the communists in the mainland, but more likely the supporters of Taiwan's independence.

### Call for Identifying with the Land, Here and Now: Tender Melodies for Taiwan

Taiwan's political situation changed significantly after martial law was lifted in 1987. Taiwanese consciousness has continued to expand rapidly and popular songs lamenting loss of the mainland have almost entirely disappeared (Zeng, 1998). For some, the one-China policy enforced by KMT was nothing more than a crafted political myth offering justification for not wanting to become part of Taiwan. Particularly following the DPP's victory in 2000, the government has vigorously tried to move "Taiwan" to center stage, an act that unavoidably drives the symbol "China" out (or at least reduces its significance), leading to charges of de-sinicization (*quzhongguohua*) by some critics in Taiwan's political milieu (B.-y. Chang, 2004; Chuang, 2001).

These lyrics show that the sacred, authentic Chinese world represented by the mainland no longer is valid, and its fables need to be dismantled (cf. Chuang, 2001). Dismantling, however, requires a new symbol such as "Taiwan" to fill the void and support the new system. Despite the rhetorical power of these songs as they embrace Chinese-ness--whether manipulated by governments or arising spontaneously among citizens--they must contest voices, however feebly they may register at first. Here we see a gradual shift in song lyrics from *zhongguo* to *taiwan*, a transition of symbols redefining alternate political realities and orchestrating new meanings for Taiwanese identity.

The loosening of control by China-centered discourse, however, has a rocky history. Particularly during the early years of KMT's rule, "Taiwan" could not be uttered in the public sphere as a label for national identity without severe sanctions. Government-propagated slogans like "Taiwan's independence is Taiwan's poison" effectively stifled any possibility that Taiwan's independence would be seriously considered (H.-c. Chang, 2005).

Additionally, beyond the KMT government's focus on China while deprecating Taiwanese cultures, on the international stage the symbol *taiwan* also occupied a minor position. "Taiwan" came to stand for the locality of an island and a state whose name could not be officially recognized (Cho, 2002). A theme song for Greenpeace, an underground radio station, titled, "Our Mother is Called Taiwan" (*muqin de ming jiao taiwan*<sup>11</sup>), says in Taiwanese dialect the following:

*Mother is mountain, mother is ocean, mother is river. Mother's name is Taiwan...  
Two million children of the sweet potato<sup>12</sup> dare not call the name of their mother.  
Is "Taiwan" that ugly a name?  
It makes me so chilled in my heart....  
Two million children of the sweet potato, please don't keep silent.  
Bravely mention your Mother's name.  
Taiwan! Taiwan! You are the name of Mother.<sup>13</sup>*

This song is by W.-d. Wang, a truck driver.<sup>14</sup> According to radio host Nian-Zhen Wu, an elderly man called saying he had written a song for Taiwan, which he sang. Listeners were moved, asking the station to play it repeatedly. The composer said he did not know how to write it down, but sang and recorded it, then sent the tape to the station, and the radio station hired a professional musician to compose and produce the song.<sup>15</sup>

The song's slow tempo, as if sighing in relating a tragedy, evokes strong emotion from listeners. It poses the question of why people cannot address Taiwan, as Taiwan, and the



constant reference and interplay between "Taiwan" and "mother," even using the nickname, "sweet potato," poignantly center on the locality of Taiwan and its legitimacy.

Sorrow at not being able to say the name "Taiwan" comes not only from political constraints imposed on Taiwanese identity, but the banning of Taiwanese popular songs from roughly the 1950s to the 1980s. As they promoted Mandarin Chinese as Taiwan's official language, the government banned singing some Taiwanese songs, purportedly because of their pessimistic, sorrowful air. An example is "Repair the Broken Net" (*bu po wang*; lyrics by L.-q. Li and music by Y.-f. Wang) (Zhou, 1996):

*See the net, and my eyes turn red; It broke such a big hole.  
Wanted to repair, but I have nothing. Who would know my suffering?  
If today I use this net, there will forever be no hope.  
For the future, I will look for tools to repair the net.*

Written in 1948 after the Japanese left Taiwan, leaving it to the Nationalists, this song was banned during the 1950s. It was at first a love song, using the metaphor "love net." Since "net" in Taiwanese sounds similar to both "hope" and "dream," it came to symbolize Taiwanese suffering and the nation's search for hope. At a time when life was difficult--material shortages were common and prices rising--there was hope, however dim, for a better future (Y.-m. Zhuang, 1995). Perhaps the real reason for banning it is that it addresses the government's failure after taking over Taiwan. At the government's request, the lyricist added a third section giving the song a happy ending. It was released when it was classified as "love song" (Yilan County Local Educational Materials, n.d.).

Rebellion continued, aided by the masses singing folk songs. The then-illegitimate DPP was quick to adopt music to advocate its agenda, fortifying Taiwanese consciousness to protest the domination of "the KMT regime from China" (Zeng, 1998). After the *Formosa* event in 1979,<sup>16</sup> ironically, previously banned folk songs such as "Repair the Broken Net," "Looking for the Wind of Spring" (*wang chunfeng*; lyrics by L.-q. Li, music by Y.-x. Deng [1933]), "Hope You Will Come Back Soon" (*wang ni zao gui*; lyrics by K.-n. Na, music by S.-l. Yang [1946]), and so on, have been used to protest the suffering of the Taiwanese people and assert their wish to be their own masters (Zeng, 1998; Zhou, 1996; Y.-m. Zhuang, 1995).

This sadness later turns more optimistic. Rather than weep about not mentioning *taiwan*, people are urged to care for the land and its people, to make them strong. This is the message of campaign music, pioneered in the early 1990s by the then-legitimate DPP.

In contrast to "Praising the Republic of China," Zhi-ren Zheng's "Praising Formosa" (*fuermosa zong*), sung in Taiwanese, captured many hearts:

*Formosa, our dream, our love. Just like my mother is calling my name.  
Rock and cherish, forever hold a beautiful dream...*

This song was played frequently on Taiwan's then-underground radio station, Voice of Southern Taiwan (*nan taiwan zhi sheng*) and given wider currency by D.-j. Lin when she ran for the Kaoshiang City Council in 1993. It is now a modern Taiwanese classic included in primary-, middle- and high-school music textbooks (E. Lin, 2002).

In these lyrics Taiwan's image as mother is clearly articulated. Since Taiwan is "mother," there is no need to look elsewhere, but merely appreciate that one was born and raised

in Taiwan. One's ancestors are people from Taiwan, *not* those on the Chinese mainland. Taiwan, as the island of *Formosa*, has its own history, fate, and destiny.

To consolidate Taiwan-centeredness, DPP has recently used the term *Formosa* (*meilidao*) extensively in its campaign songs. Lyrics of four of nine songs for the 2004 presidential election contain *Formosa*, including one titled, "Believe Yourself, Believe Formosa."<sup>17</sup> KMT expressed reservations about the term, since it relates an account of Taiwan's history and identity at variance with their view of "China" (V. Lee, 2004). Despite the dispute over *Formosa*, Taiwan-centeredness remains the dominant ideology.

Among the most recent and popular songs is, "She is Our Baby" (*yishi zande baobei*). This song is by M.-z. Chen for the 2004 presidential campaign and was sung for the 228 Hand-in-Hand Rally held on February 28, 2004:

*A flower grows from the ground, she is cherished most by her father and mother.  
If the wind blows, be sure to cover her with a blanket and never let her fall to the dark.  
Before the flower blossoms, she needs the care of you and me.  
Give her good earth to grow.  
Let's hold our hands, and let our hearts be connected--we are all together.  
She is our baby.*

Although the song does not mention *taiwan*, a personified "she"<sup>18</sup> implies Taiwanese identity, given that the rally was titled *ererba shou hu taiwan* (*ererba*, 2, 2, 8; *shou*, hands; *hu*, protect; *taiwan*: Taiwan). In a dramatic departure from KMT's Chinese consciousness, this song refocuses people's attention on here-and-now Taiwanese-ness. Despite internal contesting voices concerning whether Taiwan should claim official independence, most agree that it should prioritize itself rather than having its eyes on the Chinese mainland, particularly given the ongoing military threat China poses to Taiwan.

Another song written for the 2004 election, "Believe in Taiwan" (*xiangxin Taiwan*, lyrics by H.-x. Lu and melody by H.-t. Zhan), focuses on Taiwan:

*Mountain is the shore of the ocean, and ocean sings for the mountain.  
We are all Taiwanese, cherishing each other dearly.  
Our affairs are cared for by ourselves, no need for outsiders to worry.  
Believe in our Taiwan, believe in our Taiwan. There will be no limit to our improvement.  
Taiwan is our name, Taiwan is our name. We shall strive hard for her.<sup>19</sup>*

A shift in ideology is revealed in Taiwan's patriotic song lyrics. These songs, however, were inspired through active political measures. Some view commissioned campaign music as a uniquely Taiwanese phenomenon; its successful use by the DPP paved the way for President Chen to win the 1994 first direct Taipei mayoral election<sup>20</sup> and DPP continues to be productive in campaign music even today. It has been noted that DPP's campaign music albums include a variety of Taiwanese languages, including Taiwanese, Hakka, and aboriginal languages, a way for the party to show its respect for the diverse cultures of Taiwan (V. Lee, 2004).

These songs continue to be sung on various political occasions. Protesting against China's recent anti-secession law targeted at Taiwan, the DPP sponsored a mass demonstration, the "326 March for Democracy, Peace, and Defending Taiwan." For this march, both "Our

Mother is Called Taiwan" and "She is Our Baby," along with other songs, were sung by participants to unite their spirit (Million's Chorus, 2005).

The KMT has been compelled to adopt similar strategies. In January 2005, both the DPP and the KMT-PFP released albums of campaign music. What is particularly noteworthy is that the KMT's first campaign music album is titled, "Bring Taiwan Together!," a refocusing on Taiwanese-centeredness from its earlier position advocating Chinese-ness. No longer simply recycling old patriotic songs, the KMT album uses Taiwanese language lyrics in all six original compositions.<sup>21</sup> Taiwan-centeredness is now in vogue; thus, KMT's album contains songs such as, "The Wishes of Taiwanese" (*taiwanren de yuanwan*). An example of DPP's music is "Believe in Taiwan" (*xiangxin taiwan*) (V. Lee, 2005; see also E. Lin, 2002).

The division between Mandarin Chinese and Taiwanese marks songs sung in these languages with different contents, audiences, locations, and marketing (Jiang, 1996). These Taiwan-centered songs are often sung in Taiwanese, a language that for a long time was considered merely a dialect inappropriate for official occasions and spoken by people who were less educated and cultured. Singing songs in Taiwanese is an act of protest aimed at prioritizing and elevating the image of Taiwan.

While earlier songs mentioning "China" referred to an idealized, authentic China, they now self-evidently refer to the PRC. DPP legislator T.-r. Cai asked the ROC military to "rectify its music" (*zhengyin*) by removing all songs with words *zhongguo* and replacing them with *taiwan*.<sup>22</sup> Just after China announced its anti-secession law to claim its authority over Taiwan, Cai asked how soldiers in Taiwan today could still sing "China Will Be Strong" (Y.-c. Chen, 2005). Booth (1976) seems to precisely describe such a situation: "The mechanism of identification fails if the state offered us is not acceptable: the song may seem repugnant, or more likely simply uninteresting" (p. 248).

Perhaps this is why the Voice of Han Broadcasting Network (*hansheng guangbo diantai*), a KMT-allied radio station, maintains two military song websites. One seemingly informal site, last updated December 3, 2004, has 256 ROC patriotic songs,<sup>23</sup> while the other, more formal, official site<sup>24</sup> has only 248. The difference is due to eight songs with *zhongguo* (China) in the title, although songs with *zhonghua* (Chinese) remain intact. Possibly the eight songs were removed to avoid the pressure of demands for de-sinicization, although we have not been able to confirm how these two sites have changed since the official site's launch in 2000 (M.-z. Chen, 2002).

The emergence of campaign songs advocating Taiwanese identity can also be better understood by tracing the development of Taiwanese popular songs. The singing of Taiwanese songs was severely impaired when Japan's colonial policy promoted the speaking of Japanese in 1939, along with the singing of Taiwanese music with Japanese lyrics, ending a seven-year period of relative prosperity of Taiwanese popular songs (1932 to 1939) (Y.-m. Zhuang, 1995). In 1949, the government implemented Mandarin Chinese as the official language and restricted broadcasts using various local dialects, an act that accompanied a ban on several Taiwanese songs. It was not until the 1970s that there were calls for the revival of Taiwanese songs (Q.-y. Zhou, 1996).

From early themes of sentimentality, bitterness, and suffering (*beiku*) leading to a music occupying only a fringe position, Taiwanese songs are now in the mainstream. Even as it struggled against disapproval, the rise of Taiwanese music since the 1980s has paralleled the opening of society, nativism, and calls for democracy (E. Lin, 2002). Although in the late 1970s Taiwanese consciousness had infiltrated literature and politics, Taiwanese folk songs were still

classified as "Chinese ethnic music" and did not join the nativist trend until later (Zeng, 1998; Zhou, 1996; Y.-m. Zhuang, 1995). Social activism begun in the 1980s culminated in the seminal album, *Songs for Going Wild* (*zhuakuang ge*), produced by Blacklist Workshop in 1989. Album liner notes pose these provocative questions:

You know foreign and Chinese history and geography so well, but have you ever asked yourself how much you know of Taiwan's history? You prize Mandarin and foreign songs like family treasures; how about showing a little more interest in songs in your mother tongue? With Taiwan in turmoil, have you considered what role you should play? Do you know where to find Taiwan's history and its music? (E. Lin, 2002)

Producers had songs sung in Taiwanese to protest the former high status of Mandarin Chinese; the accompaniment is also clearly ethnically Taiwanese. This moves Taiwanese songs from early themes of bitterness and suffering, and destabilizes any status differential between Mandarin Chinese and Taiwanese songs. It is the first such album produced in Taiwan and its success is a milestone (Jiang, 1996).<sup>25</sup>

In 1989 the Golden Melody Awards made a new category for Taiwanese language songs, bringing them into public cultural discourse. These songs now experiment with music styles/elements, instrumentation, parody/satire, and so on, creating a spirit moving in many directions (E. Lin, 2002). As music for working people, with strong elements of social criticism, Taiwanese songs join the climate of political reform and shape elections.

### Conclusion

The fact that over seventy-five percent of Taiwanese residents migrated from China has made Taiwan a settler society. It must face the issue of how the culture of the original motherland (i.e., China or Chinese-ness) can be transferred to the settled place so a new national identity can be fashioned (i.e., Taiwan or Taiwanese-ness, or Taiwanese Chinese) (cf. Stratton & Ang, 1998). This issue is complicated by the divergent histories of Chinese immigrants to Taiwan and how they interact among themselves and with aboriginals. The struggle to change from "China" to "Taiwan"--or to embrace both--involves reinventing and redefining the meanings and boundaries of these two symbols, within their evolving complex interplay of connectedness and separation.

Interaction among these songs reflects and facilitates transformation from Chinese to Taiwanese consciousness. Agents responsible for these songs reveal diverse trajectories of development in Taiwan's politics. Those cultivating Chinese-ness have been primarily governmental agencies, particularly the military, later joined by civilian composers. Taiwanese-ness first emerged at the grassroots, later to be promoted in campaign songs. Moving by alternate routes, each type of song fashions unique political discourse and orchestrates conflicting senses of national identity for people in Taiwan.

Emotions inspired by these songs continue to reconfigure themselves as Taiwan's uncertain identity evolves. Although it is hard to measure these songs' impact, that they have participated in Taiwanese political life for the last fifty years makes them part of Taiwan's fabric. Even if some songs go out of vogue or disappear from public awareness, they have already spoken to us, telling us about what Taiwan is and ought to be.

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<sup>1</sup> See Booth (1976) for a good analysis of various rhetorical devices used in song lyrics.

<sup>2</sup> Composed in 1956 by Z.-h. Li, lyrics by Q. Ye (M.-z. Chen, 2002).

<sup>3</sup> Composed in 1970 by J.-z. Chen, lyrics by J.-z. Lin (M.-z. Chen, 2002).

<sup>4</sup> Images of war and cruelty in the lyrics of these military songs changed in the 1980s to lyrics emphasizing the unity of the military unit (M.-z. Chen, 2002).

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- <sup>5</sup> The website (<http://www.voh.com.tw/page01all.htm>, no date identified [accessed June 10, 2005]), specializing in military songs, went online October 2000, to inspire those in the military as well as retirees. It has been highly successful (M.-z. Chen, 2002).
- <sup>6</sup> This song is composed by Z. Pei, lyrics by J.-I. Luo (National Music Institute, 1959).
- <sup>7</sup> "The Plum Blossom," produced by the song's author, portrays (in fact, fabricates) Taiwan's war against Japan. The film was very popular in the 1970s, not only winning many awards but doing well at the box office. For further analysis, see Ye (2000).
- <sup>8</sup> This song was written and composed by D.-j. Hou. Ironically, after writing this song, in 1983 Hou emigrated to the PRC, inciting a great deal of controversy (Ye, 2000).
- <sup>9</sup> Since the PRC considers Taiwan its territory, their selection of Golden Melody Awards automatically includes songs composed in Taiwan.
- <sup>10</sup> "Blue camp" includes KMT and PFP (People's First Party), who favor unification with China. The other side is the "green camp," comprising DPP and TSU (Taiwan Solidarity Union), advocating Taiwan's identity as separate, or at least different, from the PRC. The blue camp elevates a sense of Chinese-ness, the green camp a sense of Taiwanese-ness.
- <sup>11</sup> To permit easy identification of Chinese characters, the romanization for this and other songs in Taiwanese dialect is based upon Mandarin Chinese.
- <sup>12</sup> Early immigrants nicknamed Taiwan "sweet potato" because its shape. This contrasts with images of late immigrants, called "taro." When Chen was elected, he was called "Taiwan's son" (*taiwan zhi zi*, or 台灣之子) and also "the son of the Sweet Potato."
- <sup>13</sup> Translated from: <http://icool.myweb.hinet.net/loveTaiwan.htm> [accessed 1/17/05].
- <sup>14</sup> Retrieved Jan. 17, 2005 from [http://www.taiwan-info.de/html/chinese/Mu\\_chien.htm](http://www.taiwan-info.de/html/chinese/Mu_chien.htm). We can also infer that the song was composed no later than the end of 1994.
- <sup>15</sup> This touching story was told by Nian-Zhen Wu, serving as host for the 2005 Lunar New Year Celebration of the Vancouver Taiwanese Association, January 12, 2005 (H.-x. Chang, personal communication, January 24, 2005). Zhen-nan Cai also sang the song.
- <sup>16</sup> In the 1970s, under martial law, forming political parties was illegal. On December 10, 1979 (International Human Rights Day), those at an underground political magazine, *Formosa*, met to protest KMT. Police arrested organizers, trying them in military court, accusing many of treason. This provoked resistance, leading to DPP's founding in 1986.
- <sup>17</sup> This contrasts with nine songs for the 1996 presidential election and four for 2000 that do not contain "Formosa." Retrieved from [www.dpp.org.tw](http://www.dpp.org.tw), on May 28, 2005.
- <sup>18</sup> Since neither Taiwanese dialect nor written Chinese characters use gendered pronouns, "baby" could be "she" or "he." We choose "she" to be consistent with "motherland."
- <sup>19</sup> Lyrics to this song from DPP's website: <http://www.dpp.org.tw/> on May 28, 2005.
- <sup>20</sup> Chen invited Hanxiu Lu, a Taiwanese-language poet and musician Hongda Zhan to write songs like "Spring Flower" (*cuntian de huarui*) and "Happy New Hometown" (*kuai le xin guxiang*). "Spring Flower" was very popular and is still sung (E. Lin, 2002).
- <sup>21</sup> The KMT album is in a variety of music styles and melodies from Taiwan's different ethnic groups, to emphasize the importance of ethnic harmony and solidarity (V. Lee, 2005). Since this paper focuses on song lyrics, we need not go into these other facets.
- <sup>22</sup> These songs are also seen as inappropriate if their lyrics advocate fighting against Japanese; idol-worship of former president Chiang Kai-shek; or inappropriate portrayals of private male-female affairs (<http://www.atchiniese.com/2005/03/0330s3.htm>).
- <sup>23</sup> <http://freeman2.net/listfnet.htm>
- <sup>24</sup> See footnote 6.
- <sup>25</sup> These albums go beyond using Taiwanese to protest the domination of Mandarin Chinese, to co-existence and combination among multiple languages. There is no longer a one-to-one relationship between a language and an ethnicity; multilingualism is the norm (Jiang, 1996).