

Disciplining Taiwan: The Kuomintang's Methods of Control during the White Terror Era (1947-1987)

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Abstract

During the White Terror Era in Taiwan, there were only two significant public uprisings that can be considered as disturbances to the reign of the Kuomintang. This article scrutinizes the much neglected theoretical question on Taiwan: how does the Kuomintang dominate the Taiwanese society for more than 50 years without any major coup or revolution attempts? What are the mechanisms of control exercised by the KMT after its retreat from China? This article argues that the theories of discipline, punishment and domination in Michel Foucault's *Discipline and Punish* and Timothy Mitchell's *Colonizing Egypt* serve as good elucidation to this important theoretical question and concludes that the success of the KMT domination in Taiwan was due to the party's capabilities to achieve the kinds of changes in society through coercion, education, restructuring the society and creating of a new "identity" and character for the Taiwanese.

Keywords: Taiwan, Kuomintang (KMT), Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), White Terror, democratization, Michel Foucault

Introduction

The democratization of Taiwan has been labeled as an interesting phenomenon by the scholars of the field. The Chinese Nationalist Party, or the Kuomintang (KMT), had been the hegemonic political power on Taiwan since its forced retreat to the island after losing the Civil War to the Chinese Communist Party. For more than 50 years, Kuomintang dominated virtually every aspect of Taiwanese society from the grass-roots level to the Presidency without major coup or revolution attempts. Democratization scholars have identified Taiwan as an important and fascinating case study, because the initial liberalization process of Taiwan was led by the hegemonic party itself. The Kuomintang ultimately decided that it is to the benefit of the party to relinquish its political control and grant the citizens more political and social freedom; therefore marked the beginning of the liberalization then democratization of Taiwan.

Even though the democratization of Taiwan has already inspired a significant amount of literature and publications, there is one specific subject area that has been neglected by the academics but deserves much further scrutiny. Since the February 28th Incident (1947), there were two other gatherings of the crowd that were considered by the Kuomintang authoritarian regime as significant and disturbing.¹ KMT dissidents gathered as a strong enough force to create the 1977 “Chung-Li Incident.” Two years later in 1979, the KMT oppositions, or “Dangwai” as they were called, meaning “outside of

¹ The February 28th Incident was an island-wide revolt caused by the mismanagement of a corrupt KMT governor and the scavenging KMT troops that took over the island after the surrender of the Japanese after World War II. The KMT was still battling the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) in 1947, however after the Cairo Conference (1943), Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin raised no objection to the action by Chiang Kai-Shek’s attempt to send troops to take over the island and to claim Taiwan as part of the Republic of China.

the Party,” showed greater strength by calling for another large-scaled protest against the KMT regime on December 10th, International Human Rights Day. The incident would later be called the “Formosa (or Kaohsiung) Incident.” The violent protest was sparked by the government’s arrest of more than 60 individuals who were involved in an opposition magazine called “Formosa Magazine.” As a result, “The Kaohsiung Eight,” the most prominent leaders of the protest, were tried in military court and received 12 years or life in prison. In 1980, another group of protest organizers who attended the Human Rights Day gathering were tried in civil court and received prison sentences ranging from 2 to 6 years.

Thirty-two years have lapsed between the February 28th Incident and the Formosa Incident. The KMT governance of Taiwan, on the other hand, did not come to an end until the Democratic Progress Party (DPP) captured the presidential election in 2000. The KMT has managed to rule the island with its strict hands for more than fifty years, and the period of the KMT rule from 1947 to 1987 is widely known as the “White Terror” era. Under the rule of the KMT, civil and political liberties of the citizens were restricted. According to Christian Schafferer (2003: 5), “the number of people executed during the martial law period for violating the laws of the KMT is uncertain. Estimates go far beyond tens of thousands.” Even though the KMT arrested and executed many of its political oppositions, it was reasonable to argue that a political party does not achieve and maintain consistent top-down domination of a society by merely executing its political adversaries. Therefore, it is the goal and the purpose of this paper is to investigate this much neglected puzzle of Taiwanese politics – how did the KMT managed to maintain its dominance for more than 50 years without any major coup or revolution attempts from the Taiwanese majority? And more importantly, what are the mechanisms of control exercised by the KMT government to retain this dominance and what are the affects of the KMT methodology of domination?

According to political party scholar Tun-Jen Cheng (2006: 367), “the KMT in Taiwan was a venerable party with an unusual record of longevity among political parties in developing nations.” This paper argues that the KMT was successful in dominating and assimilating the civil society of Taiwan to the Party’s Chinese origin by methods of (1) coercion, (2) education, (3) restructuring the social status and (4) creating of a new “pro-Chinese” identity for the indigenous population. This paper contends that according to the theory of discipline and punishment by Michel Foucault, in his seminal book *Discipline and Punish*, and in Timothy Mitchell’s *Colonizing Egypt*, the success of domination by the KMT of Taiwan’s society for more than fifty years was no accident. The resilience of the KMT domination was due to “the capabilities of states to achieve the kinds of changes in society that their leaders have sought through state planning, policies and actions” (Migdal, 1988: 4). The paper focuses on the specific time period from the KMT retreat from mainland (1949) until 1987. The reason for this paper to focus the years from 1947 to 1987 is because with the adoption of the Reagan administration’s foreign policy to promote democracy abroad, and the increasing international presence of China, the KMT leaders began to liberalize Taiwan in order to gain support from the U.S. to prevent military attacks from China. The year 1987 marked the abolishment of the *Martial Law* and the end of the White Terror Era in Taiwan.

Another hope for writing this paper is to be able to contribute to the existing texts and researches on Taiwan. Many scholars have argued that the KMT authoritarianism was soft-core or “mobilizational authoritarian” (Rigger, 2001: 6). This paper contends that the KMT authoritarian governance was deliberate and carefully structured and as hard-core as other authoritarian regimes in the world, such as Chile under Pinochet and China. In addition, this paper seeks to provide those who are unfamiliar with Taiwanese politics a more political philosophical explanation to the KMT’s fifty years of

authoritarian governance in comparison to other historical and descriptive literature on Taiwan.

The Structure and Nature of the Kuomintang

Before one could understand the effectiveness of the KMT hegemonic dominance on Taiwan, it is imperative to understand the nature and the structure of the KMT. The Nationalist Chinese Party (KMT) was founded by Sun Yat-Sen based on an odd mixture of several contradictory political ideologies which included: Leninism, Confucianism, and “San-Min Chu-I.” “San-Min Chu-I” is translated literally as the “Three People’s Principles.” San-Min Chu-I is the political philosophy created by Sun, which incorporates the teachings of some variants of Confucianism such as benevolence and filial piety but also advocates the rights of the citizens to life, property and governance. According to Cheng (2006: 367), “the KMT played a central role in China’s national revolution, and continued to govern China until its defeat by the Chinese communists in 1949.” Interestingly, after arriving Taiwan, the KMT government led by General Chiang Kai-Shek, abandoned the party’s principle of Confucianism and San-Min Chu-I altogether. The KMT conglomerates were comfortable with setting aside the principle that the party was built on in order to obtain regime stability and to fulfill the goal of recapturing China.

With the experiences of the February 28th uprising in mind, Chiang and his cohorts sought to emphasize and elaborate on the Leninist top-down characteristics of the KMT. According to Yangsun Chou and Andrew Nathan, the unique components of a Leninist-style party include: (1) selective membership recruitment; (2) a revolutionary and nationalist ideology; (3) a centralized decision making structure under a central committee; (4) a policy making central standing committee and a policy-implementing secretariat with organization, intelligence, and propaganda departments; (5) control of the army

through a political cadre system; (6) maintenance of a youth league; (7) leadership over the policies and personnel of the state apparatus and (8) intolerance for the existence of any opposition party (Chou & Nathan, 1987: 277). In short, the political party is the state, and the state is the political party. The structural premises for the KMT can be considered as more formidable to democracy than any non-Leninist authoritarian regimes. And, because of this tightly constructed party structure, the KMT was able to maintain the coherence of the party and extend its tentacles into the local Taiwanese society. The iron-clad party structure of the KMT is not the focus of this paper. It is the party's systematic mechanism of domination and control that the author finds interesting. These mechanisms are discussed and analyzed in the following sections.

The Foucaultian Theory and the KMT

Discipline and Punish should be considered as Michel Foucault's most seminal work. Overall, the book provides a detailed description of the history on the development of modern penal system. On the other hand, one should realize that Foucault had a bigger project in mind when writing this book. As he stated at the onset of the book, "this book is intended as a correlative history of the modern soul and of a new power to judge; a genealogy of the present scientificolegal complex from which the power to punish derives its bases, justification and rules, from which it extends its effects and by which it masks its exorbitant singularity" (Foucault, 1977: 23). In sum, the grand purpose of Foucault's writing is to undermine and replace the classical liberal and Marxian formulations of the nature of power politics (Philip, 1983: 29). In other words, Foucault attempts to develop his own theory of modernity, the human science and the modern soul, through his investigation on the reasons for the great transformation from public torture (or the punitive city) to prison. More importantly, Foucault intends to elucidate and offer what he considers as the

most adequate perspective and interpretation on the power relationship between a dominating state and society.

This Foucaultian derivation of the relationship between the dominate state and society is significantly different from that of Marx and Habermas. Foucault's *Discipline and Punish* began with a graphic description of Damien the regicide, who was condemned "to make the *amende honorable* before the main door of the Church of Paris" (Foucault, 1977: 3). Damien was placed in a cart and hauled to the public square where his flesh was torn from his chest and body, and his thighs and legs burned with hot pincers. Not only did they pour boiling oil, wax and sulphur over Damien's wounds, his body was ultimately torn into four pieces by six horses (Foucault, 1977: 3-5). The gruesome public display of Damien's torturous death was what oppressive regimes initially employ to instill fear and summon allegiance from the general public. According to Foucault, modern power does not reveal itself spectacularly in forms of the executioner and bodily dismemberment; rather, the modern domination operates in conjunction with the human science, and proceeds by means of continual authoritative categorization, grading, and monitoring of human behavior (White, 1986: 420-21).

The hallmark of modernity, said Foucault, is the expansion of this new mode of power-knowledge combination. Foucault proposed that rather than admitting that power produces knowledge; the relationship between power and knowledge should be: "power and knowledge directly imply one another; that there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations" (Foucault, 1977: 27). As a result, the human sciences are able to control the citizens because the emergence of human sciences claimed both knowledge and power. When one examines the history of Taiwan, the 228 massacre and the initial capture and execution of Taiwanese community leaders solidified Taiwan's Damien experience, whereas the

consequential KMT oppressive control methods fits with the Foucault's over all theory on successful management to oppress by modern authoritarian regimes. The Taiwanese learned through gaining the knowledge from the collective experience that the consequence of violating the power of the KMT was either imprisonment or death.

After Japan's defeat in World War II, Chiang Kai-Shek and the KMT deemed themselves the rightful ruler of Taiwan. Soon after, civil war broke out in China. Chiang was forced to retreat to Taiwan after being defeated by the Chinese Communists in 1949. The years of failed recovery attempts of China forced the KMT government to realize that their stay on Taiwan was permanent. As a result, the KMT's "emergency regime" took on the task of becoming the absolute governor of Taiwan; thus, the ruling-verses-ruled power relationship emerged between the KMT party-state and the Taiwanese. Similar to what Foucault identifies and describes the public torture and execution of Damien, there were systematic public executions of the party's political adversaries and indigenous elites at the banks of major rivers in Taiwan and the parade of prisoners with their hands pierced together by wires.² The bodies, the sounds of the gun fire, and the blood soaked river banks all served as warning for those who are planning to revolt against the KMT regime. As Foucault indicates, the initial punishment and coercion is always directed at the body of the governed, and the purpose of the punishment is to seek compensation from the person who has committed what the sovereign considers as the unforgivable crime (Foucault, 1977: 32-37). Not only did the KMT conducted public executions, many of the arrests and subsequent killings were done in the middle of the night or on the countryside. The disappearances of family members or neighbors further reinforced the fear of the Taiwanese and warned against attempts to revolt against the sovereign (Lee, 1998).

² Witness testimonies shown from documentary film "228 Incident – 60 Years On" (Ouyang, 2007).

In the chapter titled “The Spectacle of the Scaffold,” Foucault (1977: 32-37) offers the logics of the judicial and punitive system. In that time, the sovereign’s (or state’s) power is over the person’s body. The punishment and torture is always directed at the body, and the purpose of the punishment is to seek truth to the crime the person has committed.

Furthermore, political punishment is also a “performative” display of the sovereign, in this case, the KMT. In addition, what is considered as the most effective method to restore the power of the sovereign, lost due to the commitment of the political crime and uprising, is to display the power of the sovereign on the perpetrator’s body (Foucault, 1977: 47-54). Foucault contends, “The sovereign was present at the execution not only as the power exacting the vengeance of the law, but as the power that could suspend both law and vengeance” (Foucault, 1977: 53). In the case of Taiwan, the indigenous population learned that the only way to secure one’s life and freedom is to submit to the sovereign that possessed the power to destroy or be merciful.

Coercion through the Act of Surveillance

As Foucault points out, while the public torture and execution might have some deterrence for the further commission of crime, the power of the sovereign only extends to the bodies of the citizens. The modern sovereign, in this case the KMT, must then develop other methods of control that are more penetrating than to intimidate citizens with bodily harm. As public punishment disappeared in the late seventeenth century around the world, public executions stopped in Taiwan as well. Nonetheless, mysterious disappearances of citizens continued to generate the fear necessary to keep the population in line to prevent uprisings against the regime.

The Garrison Command, an affiliate of the National Security Council, was used to identify “criminals” or individuals who might pose potential threats to

the regime. The KMT government used this extra-constitutional institution to servile the citizens' behavior and exclude those who could possibly disturb the order imposed by the KMT. In addition, the government also enacted the *Criminal Code*. Article 100 and 101, often referred to as the *Sedition Law*, of the *Criminal Code* was often used by the KMT to imprison its political oppositions. Article 100 states that,

Any person who committed an overt act with the intent to destroy the organization of the state, seize state territory, change the constitution by illegal means, or overthrow the government, should be punished with imprisonment for not less than seven years. A ringleader should be punished with imprisonment for life. Moreover, any person who prepares or conspires to commit an offense specified above should be punished with imprisonment for not less than six months and not more than five years (Schafferer, 2003: 5).

Those who were identified by the Garrison *secret police* in violation of the *Sedition Law* were sent to prison. The most infamous prison in Taiwan during the White Terror Era was located on the Green Island near Taiwan. It was an effective political prison for the KMT, due to the location of the prison and the capabilities for the regime to keep the prisoners off Taiwan with no means of escaping, thus excluding the prisoners from the rest of society. In addition to the *Criminal Code*, Article 23rd of the *National General Mobilization Law* also states that "Upon enforcement of this law, the government may, whenever necessary, impose restrictions on the people's freedom of speech, publication, writing, correspondence, assembly and association" (Schafferer, 2003: 6). In the chapter on Panopticism, Foucault made reference to Jeremy Bentham and his design of the modern prison and explained to his readers that one of the most effective ways of controlling the rest of the society is to remove those "trouble-making" individuals from society and reeducate and discipline them (Foucault, 1977: 195-208). According to Foucault, the first principle to

control an individual was “isolation.” “The isolation of the convict from the external world, from everything that motivated the offence, from the complicities that facilitated it” (Foucault, 1977: 236). KMT’s jailing of its political dissidents serve as example of the modernization of Foucault’s discipline and punish theory.

Furthermore, the hallmark of modernity, according to Foucault, is the engagement of the human sciences to dominate the individual over both his body and soul. On the Green Island prison, the political prisoners were routinely being subjected to psychological therapies, re-education, and forced composition of confessional letters. To the KMT, the psychological bombardment of the prisoners should serve as an effective tool for the reconstruction of the individual. While contemporary political theories tend to situate tremendous importance and focus on people as individuals, Foucault, on the other hand, argues that the individual is merely a device constructed by the state (or whomever holds the power) to manipulate and control (Foucault, 1977: 187-92). The individual is the result of the established norm. The norm is the guideline for the state to differentiate those citizens who follow its rules and those who do not. Of course, some of the imprisoned individuals on Green Island Prison eventually broke under the strict life style and schedule of the prison and began to regurgitate the teachings of the KMT. However, the real effectiveness of the KMT psychological reeducation was unknown, because it was nearly impossible to measure if the prisoners truly believed what was being taught to them, or they were merely voicing the words in order to prevent further bodily harm or gain an earlier release date. It is the goal of the KMT to turn not only the political prisoners but the Taiwanese population as a whole to “docile bodies” (Foucault, 1977: 135-37), where individuals are rendered unable to conjure their psychological strength to turn against the regime; therefore releasing the government from having to dedicate as much resources to servile citizens individually.

The KMT Panopticon

After decades of coercion, discipline and harsh punishment of imprisonment, the KMT was able to turn Taiwan into what Foucault explicates as the “Panopticon.” Foucault described Jeremy Bentham’s design of the panoptical prison as:

The architectural figure [which] at the periphery, an annular building; at the centre, a tower; this tower is pierced with wide windows that open onto the inner side of the ring; the peripheric building is divided into cells, each of which extends the whole width of the building; they have two windows, one on each side, corresponding to the windows of the tower; the other, on the outside, allows the light to cross the cell from one end to the other. All that is needed, then, is to place a supervisor in the central toward and to shut up in each cell a madman, a patient, a condemned man, a worker or a schoolboy (Foucault, 1977: 200).

Foucault provided detailed descriptions of the Panopticon in order to elucidate the purpose of the prison. Foucault was attempting to develop his own theory of the modern governing State through his investigation on reasons for the great transformation from public torture (or the punitive city) to prison. In the case of Taiwan, the KMT has turned the island of Taiwan into the Party’s Panopticon, where the individuals living on the island felt the gawking eye of the big brother and the surveillance of his neighbors. The KMT Panopticon makes the individual adjust his own behavior to suit the pleasure of the sovereign, in this case, the party-state of the KMT. The most important psychological effect of the Panopticon, according to Foucault, is to:

Induce in the inmate a state of conscious and permanent visibility that assures that automatic functioning of power. So to arrange things that the surveillance is permanent in its effects, even it is discontinuous in its

action; that the perfection of power should tend to render its actual exercise unnecessary...in short, that the inmates should be caught up in a power situation of which they are themselves the bearers (Foucault, 1977: 201).

The power relations theory between state and society presents by Foucault in *Discipline and Punish* proves to be extremely applicable to the KMT case. It explicates the answer to the question posed by this article: how did the KMT manage to assert its dominance over the Taiwanese society for more than fifty years with only two incidences of public uprising? For fifty years, the KMT implemented its domination mechanisms systematically as Foucault has theorized. It is doubtful that the KMT elite conjured the party's iron clad ruling machine based on Foucault's writings; however, this paper contends that Foucault investigation of the modernity and the oppressive state provide more than adequate explanation for the KMT's domination over the Taiwanese society during the White Terror Era.

Colonizing Taiwan

In the past four hundred years, Taiwan has always been under the governance of foreign powers. The colonizers included: Spain, Portugal, the Netherlands, and Japan. The political and social impacts of the Europeans and the Japanese on Taiwan were similar and comparable with the colonial relations between Egypt and Europe, as identified by Timothy Mitchell in *Colonizing Egypt*. *Colonizing Egypt* was Mitchell's examination on the colonial control and influence over Egypt. The KMT government with its Chinese roots has attempted to adopt similar measures as Mitchell points out in his book in order to colonize and control Taiwan.

Mitchell, inspired by Foucault's Panopticism, makes the important argument that "the panopticon, the model institution, whose geometric order

and generalized surveillance serve as the motif for this kind of power, was a colonial invention” (Mitchell, 1988: 35). In other words, not only is the Panopticon an invention of an oppressive state as identified by Foucault, Mitchell further contends that it is also implemented by colonial powers to rule the colonized. Historians and KMT adversaries have always made the argument that the KMT should be considered as another colonizer instead of the decolonizer of Taiwan due to the regime’s treatment of Taiwan’s residents after the Party’s arrival. The surveillance and the usage of *secret police* to penetrate every orifice of Taiwanese society and the regime’s encouragement to report and inform family members and neighbors on anti-government activities were only the tip of the iceberg. In addition to the Foucaultian Panopticon and surveillance techniques, Mitchell’s illustration of the behavior of a colonial state further explains the behavior of the KMT. Mitchell states (1988: 35), “the method was no longer simply to take a share of what was produced and exchanges, but to enter into the process of production...[the] political power attempted to discipline, coordinate and increase what were not thought of as the ‘productive powers’ of the country.” The KMT government offered special social and political privileges to those who it considers as the productive powers of Taiwan, namely, the military, public servants and educators. Most importantly, “These modern strategies of control were not to expand and dissipate as before, but to “infiltrate,” “re-order” and “colonize” [emphasis added].” The KMT government adopted similar strategies of infiltration, reorganization and their own variant of colonization of Taiwan. Examples of the different methods of the KMT colonization are discussed in the following sections.

1. Land Reform

The KMT regime launched a series of land reform starting on April 14th, 1949.³ The KMT regime forcibly took away land owned by the Taiwanese and

³ Note: the KMT had just lost the civil war in China and was forced to retreat to Taiwan two months prior.

rewrote the deeds to the land. The KMT government then redistributed most of the land amongst the Mainland Chinese, Taiwanese farmers and landowners. The KMT carved the large pieces of land into more than 6,000,000 small individual areas and established a payment system to collect “rent” from the “tenants” every month to profit the state. The KMT government decreed a rent reduction to a top limit of 37.5 percent of the crop for the tenants (Walker, 1959: 129).

In addition, the government also promoted the guaranteed-security of the renters, which also meant that the KMT government would invoke the local Garrison Commend Centers to prevent the Taiwanese from taking their land back. Furthermore, the KMT implemented a national rent price, which was significantly lower than what land owners were previously charging; and instead of the land owner getting the profits, the state did. The explanation for such land reform, according to the KMT, was to extract as much resource as one can in order to fund the war against the Chinese communists and retake the mainland. The KMT government also forced the landlords to rent their land to the private citizens as the government did. In 1953, four years after the initial land reform, the KMT government went further by requiring the land owners to sell the tenants the land they have been renting (Walker, 1959: 130).

The benefits gained by the KMT government from the land reform were two-fold: first, the State ultimately made profits by charging the tenants rent and then from the selling of the land; and secondly, the land reform also meant the relocation of the 2 million Chinese populations to virtually all areas in Taiwan. The Chinese were able to infiltrate and establish households amongst the Taiwanese population and inadvertently bringing their culture and practices with them. The Chinese soldiers and military personals often marry Taiwanese and indigenous women. Mrs. Chien, a Taiwanese woman married to a former Chinese military official stated that rule of the house from her Chinese husband was that she wasn’t allowed to cook Taiwanese dishes, and the

children would only learn to speak Mandarin Chinese.⁴

In addition to the farm land reform program, the KMT reallocated urban spaces as well as rural areas. “Military Family Sections” or some called “Military Villages” were created by the government in order to house the families of Chinese soldiers and military personals. As a result, there were Military Villages and housing projects throughout the island from the most prosperous Chung-Hsiao East Road in Taipei to the country side of Chiayi and Yunlin. Even when the Military Villages were mostly demolished after Taiwan’s democratization, there were still numerous buildings and apartments where the decedents of the Chinese soldiers still retain ownership and reside.

The *land reform policy* implemented by the KMT has proven to be extremely fruitful for the Party’s quest for control. By taking the land away from the Taiwanese land owners, the Party inadvertently dismantled influences the land owners had on the local communities, peasants and farmers. This is one of the unintended consequences of the land reform, which shift the power struggle further to KMT’s favor. In addition, the land reform also freed the peasants who were tied to the land and allowed the populations to move more freely to bigger cities where the factories were located and employment opportunities presented themselves. Even though those who stayed on the farm had the option of continue to rent or purchase the land from the government, the Party required the farmer to contribute a percentage of the crops produced by the land to the government. Today, one often hears the KMT commending itself for freeing the peasants from the rich land owners; however, the fact was that the government merely shifted the land ownership from Taiwanese residents to the central government. The *land reform policy* should be deemed as one of the most significant policy implementations that fundamentally changed the make up of Taiwanese societies.

⁴ Subject was interviewed in June, 10th, 2007 for the author’s dissertation on Taiwanese identity and Kuomintang’s campaign strategies.

2. Education and Language

To both Foucault and Mitchell, education and language are very effective tools for a sovereign or state to secure its power and prevent future outbreak of rebellions. Education can be seen as the extension of government's power over the person's soul and psyche. Education can also be used to construct a new individual, uncontradictory to the newly established regime. As Foucault points out, once the sovereign has power over the individual's body, it begins to extend its control over the human soul. In fact, Foucault contends that the human soul opens up more possibilities for punishment and control (Foucault, 1977: 104-14). Timothy Mitchell uses the term "enframing" to describe the European colonialists for ordering and controlling the "reality" of its others (Mitchell, 1988: 34). Part of enframing is to teach the colonized that the new order should be the better and the only way to operate one's daily life. In Egypt, enframing took the form of the model villages that were "run like barracks... [people] would to be inspected, supervised and instructed" (Mitchell, 1988: 34). There was the creation of a disciplined army through the mobilization and regimentation of thousands of Egyptians, and the eventual establishment of prep schools. The similarities of the colonized Egypt were tremendous to the case of Taiwan during the White Terror Era.

In Taiwan, during years of the White Terror, 93.82 percent of the children were schooled. Those who were teachers in China were assigned to both the old and newly established public schools in Taiwan. School administrators were also replaced by Chinese with Taiwanese acting as secondary assistance. Mitchell explains, "The order and discipline of modern schooling were to be the hallmark and the method of new form of political power" (Mitchell, 1988: 75). In the 1957-1958 academic years, there were 1,471,407 students in elementary schools, 270,523 in secondary schools, and 21,259 in colleges and universities (Walker, 1959: 132). The usual school curriculum included daily flag-raising

ceremonies,⁵ military training courses, and music lessons on military anthems. Children in the public school system from age 6 to 18 were taught military songs such as “Fight our way back to the Mainland,” “I am a Chinese,” “China will be Strong,” “I love China,” and “The Plum Blossom.”⁶ Regular military anthem competitions were held to reward those who can memorize and sing the songs the best.

Another important aspect of the KMT promotion of national education was the publications of new text books. Between 1949 and 1957, over 19,000 text books were published (Walker, 1959: 132). Many of the old texts in both Taiwanese and Japanese were confiscated and destroyed. The National Institute for Compilation and Translation was then created by the KMT to take on the task of developing new textbooks where the party determined as suitable for the island’s population. An exhibition at the Taiwan Democracy Memorial Plaza in 2007 showed that the textbooks written during the White Terror Era bear the central theme of promoting a new Chinese identity, the celebration of Chinese culture, and the legacy and history of the Republic of China.⁷ Moreover, during the KMT education reform, Taiwanese literature, geography and history were abandoned, while Chinese history, geography and writings were glorified and promoted. In addition, the KMT also utilized the printing press as another tool for them to enact the Party’s propaganda machine. By the year 1958, the KMT has already jump-started 28 newspapers and 498 journals and magazines while Article 23 of the *National General Mobilization Law* prevented others to publish (Walker, 1959: 132; Schafferer, 2003: 6).

In addition to strictly monitored textbooks, the KMT also carefully restructured the education system in Taiwan. As Mitchell states, “by

⁵ There was a deliberate campaign launched by the KMT to introduce the national flag of the Republic of China to the Taiwanese, who were used to the Japanese Raising Sun as its national flag.

⁶ The Plum Blossom is the national flower of the Republic of China.

⁷ Author’s attendance of the exhibition in June, 2007 at the Taiwan Democracy Memorial Plaza.

specifying the separate ranks of people eligible for each successive stage of schooling, a social order was represented in the exact form of a *pyramid* of social classes” (Mitchell, 1988: 77). The Taiwanese population has the tendencies of focusing the subject their studies on sciences and medicine instead of social sciences and law for the simple reason what Taiwanese has less employment and career opportunities in the latter areas than their Chinese counterparts. In addition, under the new examination system, students were distributed to high schools and universities were based on the individual’s provincial origin, which ensures more Chinese spots at better schools and universities. The Republic of China had 35 provinces before the civil war. For example, if 35 individuals were admitted to a school, 34 of them would be from provinces in China and only one person would be Taiwanese since Taiwan was treated one of the provinces.

Another part of the education reform of the KMT was new *national language policy*. Feng-Fu Tsao has labeled the policy as “unidirectional bilingual” (Tsao, 2000: 287). The “unidirectional bilingual” language policy, according to Tsao, means that the language policy is a one-way affair where the indigenous population was required to learn Mandarin, and the Chinese population was not required and therefore less likely to learn the languages of the indigenous groups (Tsao, 2000: 287). Before 1945, Taiwan was under the colonial rule of Japan. Most individuals in Taiwan were bilingual. They were able to converse in one of the indigenous Taiwanese languages and Japanese.⁸ Soon after the establishment of the KMT regime, all indigenous languages and Japanese were banned from use in public. As a result, many public offices were given to the Chinese population since most Taiwanese could not speak the national language (Tsao, 2000: 288). In addition to the secrete police from the Garrison Command, the KMT had “language police” as well,

⁸ The indigenous languages referred by this paper are: Hakka, Holo and the Aboriginal tribal languages.

mainly situated in schools. If the language police or the teachers, who are mostly Chinese, discovered individuals conversing in Taiwanese, the individual would be issued a citation and would have to pay a fine. In addition, school administrators and teachers were instructed to make signs that displayed “I spoke Taiwanese” for students to wear around their necks after they were caught speaking Taiwanese. The signs and ticketing, thus, created the general attitude amongst the younger generation that speaking Taiwanese was shameful, ungraceful and lower classed. Moreover, Chinese children who already spoke Mandarin had an advantage over children who did not speak Mandarin when they entered school. Non-mandarin speaking children not only had to learn Mandarin from scratch but also had to learn the correspondence between the linguistic system and the writing system (Tsao, 2000: 291). Psychologically, since children who were non-native mandarin speakers were often punished for speaking their home language, he/she “automatically becomes a second-class citizen” (Tsao, 2000: 291). Even though there attempts by the Taiwanese intellectuals to resist the invasion of the Chinese language as the Egyptian did to the Europeans, the coercive mechanisms of the KMT were overpowering. The indigenous languages thus eroded rapidly and some languages of the aboriginal population are on the verge of extinction (Tsao, 2000: 291). According to linguistic surveys conducted in the 1990s, every survey showed that while the proficiency in the mother tongue, e.g. Holo, Hakka or an Aboriginal language has deteriorated, proficiency in Mandarin has improved considerably over the generations (Tsao, 2000: 293).

It is not until after the democratization of Taiwan that the indigenous languages finally made a come back due to the heavy usage of those languages by the DPP politicians. Some of them would only speak in their native tongue and refused to use Mandarin in public. Debates also started to emerge amongst politicians and academics on whether the indigenous languages of Taiwan should be taught as national languages in Taiwan. As of today, Mandarin is still the official national language of Taiwan.

3. Cultural Assimilation and Domination

In the years between the 1940s and 1960s, the KMT regime had successfully reorganized and enframed Taiwan into different model villages, counties and magistrates. At the same time, the KMT also exercised what Foucault and Mitchell have labeled as cultural imperialism through its control of the media in replacement of the multi-cultural Taiwanese tradition with the creation of a new ethnocentric Chinese identity for the residents of Taiwan.⁹ The KMT regime banned public performances of Taiwanese songs, music and theater. The Taiwanese opera was a type of theatrical art very popular amongst the indigenous population. It was usually performed on an outside stage in the town square. The KMT prohibited the performance of Taiwanese opera and replaced it with the Peking Opera, which was the favorite of Chiang Kai-Shek. In addition, since the introduction of television in 1962 in Taiwan, TV programs have always been used as the primary tool in promoting the Mandarin language. According to Tsao, before the introduction of the television, there were radio stations in Taiwan that broadcasted their programs in Holo only. However, since television was introduced, there were “no one single station which broadcasts completely in any of the dialects” (Tsao, 2000: 288). The Taiwanese actors were also forced to perform in Mandarin. The performances of Japanese songs, which were very popular amongst the senior generations, were eliminated altogether. In 1972, the Ministry of Education further announced that “dialect” programming must be reduced to one hour per day. It is not until 1987 that the restriction of use of “dialects” in mass media was lifted (Tsao, 2000: 288).

Today, almost all individuals in Taiwan are able to understand and

⁹ Because of the various colonial legacies, the Taiwanese have adopted practices, rituals and food from different cultures. In combination of the aboriginal population, Taiwan has always been multi-cultural and multi-ethnics until the attempts of the KMT to assimilate the population to Chinese.

converse in Mandarin. Furthermore, research show those who were born after the third generation bracket are more fluent in Mandarin than in his/her native tongue (Chang & Wang, 2005: 29-49).¹⁰ Due to the success of the KMT national language policy, it is difficult to say if any of the indigenous languages will ever be used exclusively by any of the ethnic groups in Taiwan. However, this does not mean that the indigenous languages are not making a come back. Since the early 1990s, more youngsters are now using Holo and Hakka to express themselves. In the old days, being labeled as “Taiwanese” or being called “Tai” used to be taken as a put-down, conversely, Taiwanese has become a hip and endearing way of calling someone who is Taiwanese and is considered as cool by the younger generation in Taiwan. For example, a popular dance named “Tai-Ke-Wu,” literally means the “Taiwanese dance,” became extremely popular amongst high school and college students in Taiwan last year, when the term “Tai-Ke” used to be considered as an offensive by the indigenous population.

The land reform and redistribution program, the restructuring of the education system and the promotion of Mandarin as the national language have all proven to be very effective mechanisms for the KMT to control and assimilate the Taiwanese society to its Chinese origins. As Tsao and other linguistic scholars have shown in their studies, younger generation Taiwanese are able to converse in Mandarin more eloquently than their mother tongue and would prefer to communicate in Mandarin instead of the mother language. In addition, the success of the education system can be seen in surveys conducted by major research institution such as the National Chengchi University’s Election Study Center. According to the center survey, in 1992, 26.2% of the population identifies themselves as Chinese and 17% of the population identifies themselves as Taiwanese only. In 2007, however, only 5% of the

¹⁰ The third generation Taiwanese are those who were born between 1954 and 1968 and entered the formative years between 1972 and 1986.

subjects surveyed identify themselves as Chinese and the percentage of subject who identifies themselves as Taiwanese increased to 43.7%.¹¹ Since democratization, many DPP politicians and now as well as KMT politicians have chosen to deliver their public speeches in Holo or in Hakka, however, Mandarin Chinese is still the official national language of Taiwan. Although TV stations in Taiwan today have separate news broadcasts and entertainment programs that are in the indigenous languages only and speaking one's mother tongue is no longer seen as embarrassing or ungraceful, the success of the KMT language and cultural programs still lingered and will continue to play a tremendous part in the lives of the population on Taiwan.

Conclusion

As stated at the onset, the argument of this paper is the fifty-year KMT domination of Taiwan was no accident. This article has demonstrated the methods of domination and the policy programs enacted by the KMT government for the purpose of domination of the Taiwanese society. This article contends that total domination was a carefully planned out process involving almost all aspects of society. The paper showed that the success of oppression of the Taiwanese by the KMT was further explained and supported by the theories of Foucault and Mitchell. The leadership of the KMT understood the aspects of society they have to penetrate in order to establish hegemony and control. The creation of the strong state takes strategic planning with harsh and penetrating methodologies targeting individual's body and mind. The paper also showed that Foucault and Mitchell's theories not only are applicable to European cases, they can also be used to explain the

¹¹ Survey data on Important Political Attitude Trend Distribution: Taiwanese/Chinese Identification Trend Distribution in Taiwan (1992/06-2007/12). The National Chengchi University, Election Study Center.

behavior of the KMT regime in Asia as well.

Lastly, theoretical papers that link important state-society theories to the case of Taiwan should be encouraged. It is the linkage of theories and case studies that is more capable in providing the stronger explanation of political behavior of a government or a political party. It is the ultimate goal of this article to contribute something unique to the existing literature on the political development of Taiwan.

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規訓台灣——白色恐怖下國民黨對台灣的控制方法

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摘 要

本文主要目的是檢視及解釋為什麼在國民黨五十年統治下幾乎沒有大型的群眾反抗或革命運動？及國民黨規訓和懲戒台灣人民的方法又是什麼？在國民黨威權統治下的白色恐怖時期，對台灣社會有所影響的羣眾運動似乎只有兩件。這篇文章引用傅科及米秋之政治理論，針對這種現象加以解釋與分析。本文發現國民黨政權可以成功的完全統治台灣人民與社會五十多年，是因為國民黨政府使用傅科及米秋理論中的恐嚇、懲戒、教育、改變社會形勢，及重新打造台灣人的意識形態所達成的。

關鍵字：國民黨、白色恐怖、台灣、傅科