

Taiwan's Colonial Experiences and the Development of Ethnic Identities: Some Hypotheses¹

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Common wisdom argues that Taiwan currently has four ethnic groups: (1) the indigenous or aboriginal ethnic groups (原住民); (2) the Hokkien (福建) or Hoklo (福佬), who speak the Southern Fujian or Minnan (閩南) language; (3) the Hakka (客家); and (4) the Mainlanders (外省人). Such a characterization is too simple. For example, the aboriginal groups are categorized officially as belonging to fourteen different tribes, which vary considerably both in language and in culture, but these fourteen tribes do not include such aboriginal groups as the Siriya, Luilang and Pazeh, which have yet to obtain government recognition.²

During the Manchu Qing (滿清) Dynasty the Hokkien group was actually divided into two major groups, the Quanzhou (泉州) and the Zhangzhou (漳州), who came from different parts of southern Fujian province and engaged in very serious ethnic conflict. Part of this paper analyzes this ethnic divide within the Hokkien group. The intra-Hokkien ethnic conflict ameliorated during the Japanese period and has much less importance today.

Finally, the Mainlanders came from very diverse parts of China after 1945, and especially during 1948–1949, when the Chinese Nationalist regime lost out to the Chinese Communists. These divisions among the Mainlanders were especially important during the authoritarian rule of Chiang Kai-shek (蔣介石) and Chiang Ching-kuo (蔣經國). As Taiwan has democratized, the second-generation Mainlanders born in Taiwan have become less aware of the differences among the Mainlanders who came from China. In addition, democratization means that the formerly political powerful Mainlanders have lost power and status and, thus, become more defensive. As a result, they now play the ethnic card in electoral politics. In the words of Cheng and Hsu:

[C]ollective action by the ethnic minority in Taiwan has always created high instrumental value. Democratization in Taiwan has inevitably

¹ An earlier version of this article was delivered to the panel on 'Ethnicity, Nationalism and the Modern State' at the 1st World Congress of Taiwan Studies, Academia Sinica, Taipei, 26–28 April 2012. The author wishes to express appreciation both to the Congress and to the Australian Research Council for a Discovery Grant on 'A History of Taiwan', which supported the research for this article.

² For the latest in government recognition of Taiwan's aboriginal groups, see *Republic of China Yearbook* (2011: 29–35).

reversed the preexisting imbalance of power between an ethnic majority that used to be in a subordinate position and an ethnic minority that used to be in a dominant position. Hence, it is utterly rational for mainlanders in Taiwan to undertake calculated collective actions if only to avoid being marginalized in a new political game. Playing ethnic politics is simply smart politics, as it minimizes costs that the new political game may impose while also ensuring or even enhancing group benefits that the new political game no longer confers automatically.

(Cheng and Hsu 2002: 152)

This paper does not attempt to discuss the modern politics of ethnicity in Taiwan, as this has been done by many others including Wang Fu-chang (e.g. 2004, 2012, and his paper in this current volume), Chang Mao-kuei (e.g. 1994), Wu Nai-the (e.g. 1994) as well as the current writer (e.g. Jacobs 2005, 2012). Rather, the writer attempts to use his current research on Taiwan's history – which is still in a preliminary stage – to raise hypotheses about ethnic groups in Taiwan's history.

The next section of this paper raises three hypotheses about Taiwan's history which have relevance to ethnicity. The final section examines ethnicity in Taiwan's history. *One final note:* even though the paper uses such terms as 'ethnicity' or 'ethnic group', it does not attempt to define either term. Trying to define these terms remains extraordinarily complex and it seems that little is gained through such efforts.³

Three Hypotheses with Relevance to Ethnicity in Taiwan's History

First Hypothesis: Taiwan Was Ruled by a Succession of Six Colonial Regimes from 1624 to 1988

In recent years, the writer has argued (Jacobs 2008, 2013) that from the establishment of the Dutch colony in 1624 until the death of Chiang Ching-kuo in 1988, Taiwan was ruled by six colonial regimes: (1) the Dutch (1624–1662); (2) the Spanish (1626–1642), who ruled in north Taiwan simultaneously with the Dutch; (3) the Cheng family (1662–1683); (4) the Manchu Qing empire (1683–1895); (5) the Japanese (1895–1945); and (6) the authoritarian Chinese Nationalist regime (1945–1988). In fact, this analysis was not new. Su Beng (史明) made this very point in his path-breaking history of Taiwan first published in Japanese in 1962 (Shi 1962) and later published with revisions in Chinese (M. Shih 1980) and again, in a greatly abridged version, in English (Su 1986).⁴

What is a colonial regime? The writer simply defines the term: *a colonial regime is rule by outsiders for the benefit of the outsiders*. This definition fits all of the six cases in Taiwan. Colonial regimes may also include migrants from the colonial motherland. Thus, from about 1909 until independence in 1962, ten percent of

³ For an example of the difficulties, see S.-M. Huang *et al.* (1994).

⁴ Shi Ming himself romanizes his name as Su Beng, the Hokkien pronunciation. Born in 1918 and originally named Shih Chao-hui 施朝暉, Su remains active even though he is now over 90 years old. See H.-C. Shih (2009).

Algeria's population were French *colons*.⁵ In Taiwan during the Japanese colonial period, Japanese accounted for six percent of the population (E. I-T. Chen 1970: 144n35) and under the Chinese Nationalists, Mainlanders accounted for ten to fifteen percent of the population.

When the Dutch arrived in Taiwan in 1624, Taiwan was an island of Austronesian aboriginal peoples.⁶ At that time, Taiwan had no permanent Han Chinese communities. Han Chinese came to Taiwan temporarily for trade with the aborigines, for fishing and for piracy. Dutch estimates suggest these Han Chinese at most totalled from several hundred to about 1,500 persons (Blussé 1984: 177; Shepherd 1993: 85; Chiu 2008: 128). When the Spanish came to northern Taiwan a few years after the Dutch, they found virtually no Han Chinese there (Andrade 2008: 83). The aboriginal population of Taiwan at the time was about 100,000 (Shepherd 1993: 7, 14; Andrade 2008: 30).

Almost fifty years ago, one of the earliest Western scholars on Taiwan history, Laurence G. Thompson, noted: 'The most striking fact about the historical knowledge of Formosa is the lack of it in Chinese records. It is truly astonishing that this very large island... should have remained virtually beyond the ken of Chinese writers down until late Ming times (seventeenth century)' (Thompson 1964: 163). An early text from about c.1350 may refer to Taiwan, but it mentions no Han Chinese there and states 'the foreign countries start with this one' (Thompson 1964: 169).

Around 1600, Japanese pirates used Taiwan as a base to attack Fujian. Thompson translates an account of Chen Di (陳第), who visited Taiwan in 1603 as part of an expedition to drive out Japanese pirates. Chen Di's account of Taiwan's aborigines is very close to the accounts of the Dutch who came (and stayed) two decades later.⁷ Thus, both Chen Di and the Dutch mention the uxorilocal family system, the marriage system whereby the husband lived in men's quarters and visited his wife's house without being announced, the long hair of the men and the fact older women broke their eyeteeth, headhunting by the men, and the proliferation of deer on the island.

Few readers will have difficulty with characterizing the Dutch and Spanish or the Japanese regimes as colonial. This leaves the Cheng family, the Manchus and the Chinese Nationalists under Chiang Kai-shek and Chiang Ching-kuo as potentially more interesting cases. For this paper, we will deal very briefly with these three cases.⁸

Cheng Ch'eng-kung (鄭成功), also known as Koxinga (國姓爺), and his father, Cheng Chih-lung (鄭芝龍), also known as Nicolas Iquan, had run huge trading empires from their bases in southern Fujian. With the fall of the Ming, Cheng Ch'eng-kung remained loyal – at least on the surface – and helped the Southern

⁵ For the population of Algeria in 1909, see *Answers.com* (n.d.); for the population in 1962, see *Global Security* (n.d.); and for the population in 1966 after the French left, see *Country Studies* (n.d.).

⁶ This and the following two paragraphs are from Jacobs (2011: 196–197).

⁷ For the translation of Chen Di's 陳第 *Dongfan ji* 東番記 [*An Account of the Eastern Barbarians*], see Thompson (1964: 172–178).

⁸ For more detail, see Jacobs (2013: 570–575).

Ming continue its rebellion in southern China.⁹ In other words, Cheng Ch'eng-kung did want to 'restore the Ming' and he did have some successes fighting against the Manchus until his failure to take Nanjing in 1659.

The last Ming pretender, the Yung-li (永曆) emperor, died in Yunnan probably on 19 or 25 May or 11 June, 1662 (Struve 1986: 69). The Dutch surrendered to Cheng Ch'eng-kung on 1 February, 1662, so the last Ming pretender was still alive when Cheng Ch'eng-kung took over Taiwan. Cheng Ch'eng-kung died of illness at the age of thirty-nine on 23 June 1662 (Crozier 1977: 16), just a short time after the last Ming pretender died. The cause of his death remains unclear, but Tonio Andrade (2008: 214, 224n42) makes a good case that it might have been from tertiary syphilis. In any case, Cheng seems to have become insane before he died (see also Wills 1974: 27–28).

The successors of Cheng Ch'eng-kung basically lost control of all their Mainland territory except for a small area around Xiamen, but they continued to build a commercial empire that traded widely (Wills 1999: 100). In the words of a well-known Taiwan historian, the Cheng family operated 'with the status of an independent nation and conducted foreign relations with Japan, Holland, Spain, England and other countries' (F.-S. Huang 2005: 18). The Cheng regime also used Dutch colonial institutions, though they raised taxes. (The Chinese Nationalists did a similar thing following the defeat of the Japanese in 1945) Finally, the Cheng regime at most doubled the population of Chinese in Taiwan, from 30,000–50,000 to 50,000–100,000 (Wills 1999: 98). With an aboriginal population of about 100,000 (Shepherd 1993: 7, 14; Andrade 2008: 30), the Cheng regime constituted a minority of outsiders who ruled Taiwan.

Most people who assert that Taiwan is 'Chinese' focus on the two centuries of Manchu control from 1683 to 1895. The Manchu empire was administratively and ideologically very complex. Its rulers were all Manchus, as were many of its high officials. Manchus, for example, dominated the Grand Council (Crossley 1999: 14n24). As Han Chinese accounted for over ninety percent of the empire's population, many high officials were naturally Chinese, but the ultimate sources of power rested with the Manchus, not with Chinese:

At the end of the eighteenth century the Qing empire encompassed an area twice the size of Ming China...The court handled this expansion in a range of fashions without any one model of incorporation and administration. Differentiation and heterogeneity came to be the keys to the division of space within the empire. As a conquest dynasty, Qing political culture and institutions derived as much from the traditions of Inner Asia as they did from traditional Confucian political theory.

(Tighe 2005: 21)

China, like Taiwan and many other places in East and Central Asia, had become part of the multinational Manchu Empire. And, Manchu rule in China differed from

⁹ For a useful, recent biography of Cheng, see Clements (2005).

Manchu rule in Taiwan in at least a few respects, such as the terms of office of local officials.¹⁰

Qing attitudes toward Taiwan remained ambivalent over their two centuries of rule. According to John Shepherd:

even after paying a high price to defeat the rebel Cheng regime, the court still had to be convinced that the strategic importance of Taiwan justified retaining the revenue-poor island within the empire... [In Taiwan] the state was saved the expense of initial pacification of the natives... because it inherited the system of taxation and control created by the Dutch and continued by the Chengs.

(Shepherd 1993: 408, 409)

This substantially reduced the costs of administering Taiwan, yet in its first century of rule, Qing administration remained limited to the western plains of Taiwan (Shepherd 1993: 178–214, especially maps 7.1 [page 188], 7.2 [pages 192–3], and 7.3 [pages 196–7]).

In summary, two key points about Manchu control of Taiwan need to be made. First, Manchu control was – at best – loose, ‘minimal’ and partial. Substantial parts of Taiwan remained outside of Qing control throughout whole period of Qing rule in Taiwan (1683–1895). Secondly, this partial Qing control was not Chinese, but Manchu. Thus, despite administration by some officials of Han Chinese ethnic origin, for Taiwan the Qing period was another period of foreign colonial rule.

As noted earlier, few would have difficulty characterizing the Japanese regime (1895–1945) as colonial.¹¹ Comparing the Japanese colonial regime with the Chinese Nationalist colonial regime (1945–1988) that replaced it, we find that the two regimes shared at least six characteristics in terms of their nature and in terms of the timing of their policies.

First of all, both regimes considered the Taiwanese natives to be second-class citizens and both systematically discriminated against the Taiwanese. Under the Japanese, for example, a Taiwanese never held a position above head of county (*gun* 郡; see E. I-T. Chen 1970: 134). In October 1934, after almost 40 years of colonial rule, the Japanese finally unveiled their ‘long-awaited reform of local autonomy’, but this ‘outraged the Formosans... because what had been granted was, in essence, a rigged system in favor of Japanese residents’ (E. I-T. Chen 1972: 493–494). Similarly, when the Chinese Nationalist Party took over from the Japanese in late 1945, Taiwanese were excluded from many jobs in both central and local government. In addition, under both Chiang Kai-shek and his son, Chiang Ching-kuo, Mainlanders, who account for less than fifteen percent of Taiwan’s population, always had a majority in the Cabinet and in the Chinese Nationalist Party’s Central Standing Committee (J.J. Wu 1995: 44, 103). Right until the death of Chiang Ching-kuo, no Taiwanese ever held the position of Premier or Minister of Foreign Affairs, National Defense, Economics, Education, Finance or Justice (*Nianbiao* 1994: 231–233), Director of the Government Information Office,

¹⁰ Personal Communication from R. Kent Guy, 24 October 2007.

¹¹ This and the following seven paragraphs draws upon Jacobs (2008: 41–42; 2012: 23–26; 2013: 573–575).

Chairman of the Economic Planning Commission or any senior military or security position. At least until 1983, no Taiwanese had ever held such key Kuomintang positions as Secretary-General or Director of the Organization, Youth, Policy or Culture Departments (Lan 1983).

Secondly, both regimes clamped down very hard at first, killing tens of thousands of Taiwanese. Davidson (1903: 365–366) estimated that close to 8,000 Taiwanese died resisting the Japanese in 1895; Lamley (1999: 207) says that the Japanese killed 12,000 Taiwanese ‘bandit-rebels’ during 1898–1902; while a Japanese source (Ito 2004: 138–139) states that the Japanese colonial regime executed over 32,000 ‘bandits’, more than one percent of Taiwan’s population, in the same period. In March 1947, as a result of the 28 February 1947 Uprising, Kuomintang armies came from the Mainland and slaughtered from 10,000 to 28,000 of Taiwan’s leaders and educated youth.

Third, both regimes continued to rely on oppression for about twenty-five years. During the Japanese colonial period, this was a period of military governors, strong rule through the police, and continued repression. From 1907 to 1915, more than eight hundred Taiwanese were executed (Lamley 1999: 211). According to official figures, during the White Terror of the 1950s, the Kuomintang executed 1,017 people and during the whole period of martial law from 1950 to 1987 some 3,000 to 4,000 people were executed for political offenses (Qiu 2005: [1] xiii).

Fourth, owing to international and domestic circumstances, both colonial regimes ‘liberalized’ after about a quarter century. Towards the end of World War I, Woodrow Wilson gave his speech about ‘self-determination’ and the Koreans had a major revolt, called The March First (1919) Movement. The liberalization under ‘Taisho (大正) Democracy’ at this time enabled public discussion in Japan of various policies. These discussions began to influence Japan’s colonial policies in Taiwan and led to the appointment of civilian governors from October 1919 until September 1936. While police repression continued, this was also the period when Taiwanese, often in cooperation with liberal Japanese, began their political movements (E. I-T. Chen 1972). Similarly, under the Chinese Nationalist Party, in the early 1970s, with Taiwan’s defeat in the United Nations, the Diaoyutai (釣魚台) Movement, the activities of *The Intellectual Magazine* (*Daxue zazhi* 大學雜誌) and the promotion of Chiang Ching-kuo to the premiership in 1972, Taiwan began to liberalize (Jacobs 2010: 440–456; 2012: 47–68).

Fifth, as both regimes came under pressure, they again stepped up repression. Under the Japanese, repression came with the appointment of military governors in 1936, and the push toward assimilation under the *kōminka* (皇民化) movement, and World War II. Under the Kuomintang, repression occurred following the Kaohsiung Incident of 10 December, 1979.

Finally, both regimes tried to make Taiwanese speak their ‘national language’ (Japanese *kokugo*, Chinese *guoyu* 國語) of Japanese and Mandarin Chinese respectively, as part of their larger cultural attempts to make Taiwanese second-class Japanese and Chinese.

Ultimately, the Allied Powers defeated the Japanese and forced them to leave Taiwan. The reforms in the last eighteen months of Chiang Ching-kuo’s life, the accession of Lee Teng-hui to the presidency, and cooperation between the moderate elements in the Chinese Nationalist Party and the moderate elements in the new opposition Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) led to the end of the

Chinese Nationalist Party's colonial dictatorship and to the island's democratization.

Thus, we can see that from the arrival of the Dutch in 1624 until the death of Chiang Ching-kuo in January 1988, Taiwan was ruled by a succession of six colonial regimes.

Second Hypothesis: Colonial Regimes are Essentially Racist

In the words of Albert Memmi:

Racism appears then, not as an incidental detail, but as a consubstantial part of colonialism. It is the highest expression of the colonial system and one of the most significant features of the colonialist. Not only does it establish a fundamental discrimination between colonizer and colonized, a *sine qua non* of colonial life, but it also lays the foundation for the immutability of this life.

(Memmi 1965 [1957]: 74)

While Memmi talks about European colonization, it is quite relevant that the writer first saw reference to Memmi's work in a discussion of Japanese colonization of Korea (Eckert *et al.* 1990: 319). All six colonial regimes in Taiwan's history – all of which came from outside of Taiwan – discriminated against each and all of Taiwan's ethnic groups. Such discrimination contributed to a sense of ethnic difference.

Third Hypothesis: Colonial Regimes often Use Strategies of 'Divide and Rule' to Control the Colonized

In looking at Taiwan's history, we note numerous cases in which the colonial authorities applied 'divide and rule' tactics¹² to further divide and control different ethnic groups.¹³

Ethnic Groups in Taiwan's History

The Dutch Period

When the Dutch arrived in Taiwan, the island was divided among several different aboriginal groups. Clearly, the Dutch used 'divide and rule' tactics: 'Divisions among the aboriginal population worked against a united response to the Dutch presence. Dutch methods of administration maintained the isolated aboriginal villages in a posture of weakness' (Hauptman and Knapp 1977: 176; see also Chiu 2008). The Dutch also clearly maintained a sense of superiority over both the various aboriginal groups and the Chinese whom they brought to Taiwan for labor.

¹² The common Chinese translation of 'divide and rule' is '分而治之'.

The Chinese, whom the Dutch had imported, and the aborigines also came into conflict. In a move with parallels to later Manchu rule, the Dutch used the aborigines to help put down the Chinese rebellion of 1652 (Andrade 2008: 182).

The Manchu Period

Ethnic conflict between various aboriginal groups and between the aboriginal groups and immigrants from China continued under Manchu rule. However, under the Manchus, ethnic divisions among the Chinese immigrants also developed and led to quite substantial armed struggles (*xiedou* 械鬥) between these groups. The earliest Chinese ethnic group came from the Quanzhou (泉州) area of southern Fujian. They often came as shop keepers, factory owners or workers and they settled along the coasts or in ports. The immigrants from Zhangzhou (漳州), also in southern Fujian, came later and tended to settle on the inland plains and engage in agriculture. The Hakka (客家), mainly from eastern Guangdong, came later and settled in upland areas. After the Hakka, much smaller groups came from other areas of Fujian such as Fuzhou (福州) and Xinghua (興化). These groups tended to live in cities and engage in the three trades concerned with the three knives (三刀): tailors who used scissors (剪刀), cooks who used kitchen knives (菜刀), and barbers who used razors (剃刀). Even in the 1970s, Quanzhou people tended to be in commerce and industry, while Zhangzhou people engaged in agriculture (C.-L. Chen 1972: 130).

The three big ethnic groups – the Quanzhou, Zhangzhou and Hakka – engaged in substantial armed struggle. Of these, only the largest group, the Quanzhou, who accounted for about 45 percent of Taiwan's population at the end of the Manchu period (calculated from C.-L. Chen 1972: 129–130), fought among themselves on the basis of origins from different counties (縣) (Lamley 1981: 283). The Zhangzhou Hokkien, who accounted for about 35 percent of Taiwan's population, and the Hakka, who accounted for about 13 percent at the end of the Manchu period (calculated from C.-L. Chen 1972: 129–130) remained much more united as groups (Lamley 1981: 283). Yet, even the two Hokkien groups could unite when faced with a large Hakka opponent, as in the Hsia-tan shui river basin (下淡水溪) (now the Kaoping River [高屏溪]) on the border of modern Kaohsiung and Pingtung in southern Taiwan (Lamley 1981: 294).

In China, the existence of these ethnic groups did not lead to armed struggle. There was no widespread Hoklo–Hakka armed struggle 'in areas of mixed habitation along this socio-linguistic boundary' (Lamley 1981: 286). Similarly, there was not widespread conflict between the Quanzhou and Zhangzhou peoples in Fujian. In addition, they lived peacefully together in such places as Xiamen (Lamley 1981: 286). However, when these groups came to Taiwan, 'they tended to form discrete communities and perpetuate the diverse customs of their native subcultures' (Lamley 1981: 282).

What divided these three main ethnic groups with origins in China? Between the two Hokkien groups and the Hakka, at least six factors divided the two groups. First, the Hokkien and Hakka languages are quite different. Second, Hakka women did not bind their feet. Third, Hakka women had distinctive hairstyles. Fourth, the two groups had religious differences in festivals, temple names and deities. Fifth, the two groups had different architecture. Finally, they ate different foods (Lamley

1981: 292). Among the Quanzhou and the Zhangzhou, the key differences were religious as the two groups had different deities, made offerings at different times and offered the gods different meats and delicacies (Lamley 1981: 293).

The armed struggles between the three major ethnic groups led to separate settlements in Taiwan. Even as late as 1926, in 50 percent of districts on Taiwan's west coast, over 80 percent of the population came from just one of the three main ethnic groups. In 81 percent of the districts, at least 60 percent or more of the population came from just one ethnic group (Shepherd 1993: 315; see also his map on page 314 for the distribution of these three main ethnic groups in Western Taiwan).

These armed struggles on occasion caused people to move. Near where the author has conducted considerable field research, the Zhangzhou people left Pei-kang (北港) in modern Yunlin County, where the Quanzhou dominated, and moved east to found Hsin-kang (新港) in contemporary Chiayi County. Quanzhou in Pei-kang would not marry their daughters to Hsin-kang, though they would accept brides from the latter. Similarly, in what is now southwestern Miaoli County, feuds among the three main ethnic groups during the mid-nineteenth century led to the formation of three separate port towns (Lamley 1981: 301).

The major rebellions in Taiwan during Manchu rule also involved ethnicity (Lamley 1981: 307). The leader of the great rebellion of 1721, Chu I-kuei (朱一貴), was from Zhangzhou. Early on, the local military commander mobilized 'civilized' aborigines to fight the rebellion with a bounty for each rebel killed. The 'aborigines proved overenthusiastic and started killing innocent Chinese and looting commoners' homes', thus driving 'large numbers of Chinese into the rebel camp.' (Shepherd 1993: 309). Ultimately, the recruitment of Hakka militia was crucial to defeating Chu I-kuei and the grateful commander lifted restrictions on Hakka migration to Taiwan (Shepherd 1993: 316–317). The leader of the Lin Shuang-wen (林爽文) rebellion of 1786–1787 was also of Zhangzhou origin, and both Quanzhou and Hakka militia helped put down the rebellion (Li 1999: [1] 64, 65). Aborigines too seemed to have been involved with both the government and the rebels (Shepherd 1993: 324–328).

Since Taiwan was administered as part of Fujian province, local civil and military officials considered the Hakka from Guangdong as 'outsiders'. Sometimes the local civil and military officials actually exacerbated the Hokkien–Hakka conflict (Lamley 1981: 308). In fact, the Manchus often used 'divide and rule' tactics to control the ethnic groups. As Lamley has said, 'Ch'ing [Qing] authorities fully understood this kind of competition among rival elites and attempted to make use of it' (Lamley 1981: 311).

Some writers argue that frontiers are often violent. In fact, whether or not frontiers are violent depends upon settlement patterns. In the United States, settlers often preceded the government and the American frontier was often characterized by violence. In Australia, on the other hand, government often went to the frontier with the settlers (or even before) and Australian frontiers tended to be peaceful. Some historians argue that Taiwan as a frontier followed the American pattern, but Lamley, who has read an extensive amount of documentation, argues that the frontier did not contribute to violence in Taiwan: 'Ch'ing [Qing] records also serve to refute the commonly accepted idea that

subethnic dissension prevailed only among frontier settlements adjusting to a new environment' (Lamley 1981: 316).

Ethnic conflict in Taiwan declined, according to Lamley, with an increase in Taiwan identity beginning in the 1860s. Lamley argues: 'Taiwan's gentry leaders began to foster a wider sense of provincial identity that tended to override local prejudice' and that Japanese rule 'hastened the growth of a more distinctly Taiwanese perspective among the island's Chinese [sic] inhabitants. This perspective greatly reduced the significance of subethnic divisions' (Lamley 1981: 312, 314). This led to a 'peaceful merging' of the Quanzhou and Zhangzhou ethnic groups. But Hokkien-Hakka discord continued, based on language, customs and attitudes.

The Japanese Period

Taiwanese of all ethnic groups remained subordinate to the Japanese during the Japanese colonial period. As noted above, the Japanese systematically discriminated against the Taiwanese politically, and held all of the key positions. The Japanese also maintained separate schools for Japanese in Taiwan and only a very few Taiwanese were able to gain admission and, even then, the Taiwanese graduates remained under Japanese administrative control in their careers.

The Japanese also engaged in 'divide and rule' through the use of ethnic groups in particular ways. Thus, for example, Hakka were given special roles among the police and among railway workers.

The Kuomintang under Chiang Kai-shek and Chiang Ching-kuo

As noted above, the Kuomintang under Chiang Kai-shek and Chiang Ching-kuo also systematically discriminated against Taiwanese politically. This regime also used 'divide and rule' maintaining, for example, the important Hakka role in the police and the railways. Under this regime, the aborigines too were separated and suffered much discrimination (see, for example, Williams 2005).

Conclusions

This short survey suggests that our three hypotheses help explain the origins of Taiwan's ethnic groups. The first hypothesis explains that from 1624 until 1988 Taiwan was ruled by a succession of six colonial regimes in which outsiders controlled the Taiwanese people and their various ethnic groups. The second hypothesis argues that colonial regimes are racist in their very nature and discriminate against the colonized, in this case the Taiwanese and their various ethnic groups. Finally, the third hypothesis argues that these colonial regimes used 'divide and rule' methods to control the Taiwanese during 1624–1988.

As we have noted, the huge ethnic divisions within the Hokkien group began to break down from the 1860s and now the Hokkien group is more united. Similarly, the Mainlanders, who ruled the Taiwanese under Chiang Kai-shek and Chiang Ching-kuo, have become a defensive minority as Taiwan has democratized. As noted at the beginning of this paper, this has brought some solidarity to a group

which was formerly somewhat disunited. How Taiwan's ethnic groups continue to evolve remains to be seen.

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