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Problems of the China-Taiwan relations

How did the Taiwanese identity influence the reunification project
since 1992 ?

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Statement of ethics	3
Abstract and keywords	4
Introduction	5
1. Methodology and theoretical framework	7
2. National transformation during The Lee Teng-hui presidency	19
2.1 Policy-making analysis	19
2.2 Discourse analysis	26
3. National transformation during the Chen Shui-bian presidency	32
3.1 Discourse analysis	33
3.2 Policy-making analysis	40
4. Attempt of re-sinicization under the Ma Ying-jeou administration	47
4.1 Discourse analysis	47
4.2 Policy-making analysis	55
5. Return of Lee- and Chen's heritage under the Tsai Ing-wen administration	61
5.1 Discourse analysis	62
Conclusion	70
Bibliography	73
Index	79

Statement of ethics:

Je déclare sur l'honneur que ce mémoire a été écrit de ma plume, sans avoir sollicité d'aide extérieure illicite, qu'il n'est pas la reprise d'un travail présenté dans une autre institution pour évaluation, et qu'il n'a jamais été publié, en tout ou en partie. Toutes les informations (idées, phrases, graphes, cartes, tableaux, ...) empruntées ou faisant référence à des sources primaires ou secondaires sont référencées adéquatement selon la méthode universitaire en vigueur. 17 Ecole des Sciences Politiques et Sociales - Place Montesquieu 1 L2.08.05 - 1348 Louvain-la-Neuve Tel. 010/47.41.31 - Fax 010/47.27.36 © Université catholique de Louvain – PSAD – Vade Mecum Mémoire - Master 120 SPOL Je déclare avoir pris connaissance et adhérer au Code de déontologie pour les étudiants en matière d'emprunts, de citations et d'exploitation de sources diverses et savoir que le plagiat constitue une faute grave.

Abstract and keywords :

The relation between China and Taiwan has been changing a lot since the end of the Martial Law Era. Indeed, the Kuomintang (KMT) and the Minjintang (DPP) installed a dance of presidential alternations every eight years, thus alternations between two radical views of the cross-Strait relations: sometimes pro-unification, sometimes pro-independence. The most extreme cases were: 1) the first alternation when Chen Shui-bian of the DPP made a radical shift at the domestic level, favouring a Taiwanese-centered society which was still in majority “Chinese” and “Both Chinese and Taiwanese” in the people’s identity; 2) the second alternation when Ma Ying-jeou gave the executive power back to the KMT party. With Ma, we saw a “re-sinicisation” attempt by linking both territories’ economies together. In this work, we will see how the Taiwanese national identity will be transformed in a first time by domestic political elites with discourses and policies, in order to transform in a second time the nature of the cross-Strait relations.

Keywords: national identity, discourses, cross-Strait relations, taiwanization, constructivism.

Introduction :

To introduce the topic, we will start by reminding the research question which is “How did the Taiwanese identity influence the reunification project since 1992 ?” As we will use the constructivist theories, for reasons explained later, we will not make hypothesis as we will try to understand the influence during the analysis process. Before explaining my motivations to chose this research, we will first see the limits of that research. As part of this project on the “problems of the China-Taiwan relations”, only the Taiwanese perspective will be studied in order to be able to go deeply into the subject. The methodological limitations are: 1) the limited access to information as some researches and information. On the one hand, some documents or people that could provide me information may be only geographically available in Taiwan and on the other hand, these documents may have been written in Mandarin, which leads to the following limitation; 2) my own knowledge of Mandarin. Concerning this knowledge, it does not allow me to understand a full scientific article; however it is sufficient for me to check if translations made by authors of some words/phrases are correct or not, which is a great advantage for the reliability of the sources. A solution for the global language problem is that, Taiwan being more democratic and open to the Western world, more literature is available in English even if “natives” are the authors. This is a one of the reasons I decided to take the Taiwanese perspective in the first place.

In order to explain the choice of my research question, I will say that to measure the willingness to reunification or independence, the original idea of this paper is to look at the level of “taiwanization” and to link both variables, both on the policy-making field as in speeches from political elites. Indeed, leaders in the international relations base their decision-making on the domestic public opinion; the example of the European Council give us a great illustration of this principle as every State representative wants to have a benefit for his country in the end. We thus assume that national identity constructs the foreign policy. In the cross-Strait relations, we can imagine that an independentist head of State as Chen could not proclaim a complete autonomy if the domestic opinion on the island is still attached to a Chinese identity. In this sense, a great work of “taiwanization” had to be done by some leaders as Chiang Kai-shek created a great sentiment of Chinese belonging among the population, after coming on the island. The aim of the work thus consisted in seeing how the political elite –more

precisely the President most of the time— attempted to transform the national identity in order to reach either reunification, either independence.

As mentioned, the originality and the contribution of this paper to the topic is: firstly to link both the national identity and the cross-Strait relations, in the sense that they are not analysed separately, but to show an influence of one on another; secondly to look at this link also through discourse analysis beside policy-making analysis. My motivation to make this link started with the observation that the “Taiwanese” identity steadily increased while the “Chinese” and “Both” identities decreased to some point, and a wondering what effect this change in identities could have on the reunification project. The “Taiwan” topic is really vast as it started since the election of Lee Teng-hui; a lot of researches thus have been made. However, few of them effectively make this linkage between national identity and its consequences on the relations; indeed since the end of the Martial Law Era, a lot of researches only concentrated themselves on the “taiwanization” of the island only. As the cross-Strait relations cannot be analysed solely on the realist perspective, mainland China being way more powerful than the island to feel a threat, the constructivist perspective will be more than appropriate. Hence, the national identity playing a major role on Taiwan’s foreign policy seems relevant; furthermore, as we will use constructivist theories to look at the national identity, a special attention will be put on discourse analysis. Indeed, the shift in identities can also vary according to what powerful political figures can tell to the population; a lot of signals can be send during a national day speech or a new year speech with a large audience, or even in special occasions like seminars or party assemblies. Identity, linked to culture, can thus be perceived even through words.

While being on the same line with the majority of the literature, I diverge from a famous researcher on the China-Taiwan relations, Stéphane Corcuff, on the question of national identity. Even if he will reveal himself to be very pertinent in analysing Lee Teng-hui and Tsai Ing-wen’s policy-making, he has a standpoint I did not agree with while preparing Tsai’s chapter. Indeed, when asking what changes would occur with Tsai’s administration, he stated that the victory of the DPP wasn’t due to an anti-China sentiment and that the Taiwanese identity question was not the main topic anymore. Rather than being an identity-election, the 2016 elections has been divided under the economic topic, the social topic and a bit of cross-Strait relations topic. I strongly disagree as, as shown with the help of other documents, we will see that Tsai and the

DPP benefited a lot of famous anti-“China rapprochement” demonstrations in 2014 following Ma Ying-jeou’s policy of economic reunification. In this sense, the national identity remained the most important topic/*topos* (see definition later in the methodology) during the 2016 elections and Tsai will continue to place importance in it with her policy-making and discourses. Other than that, this work will prove to be very complementary to the actual literature in adding a symbolic perspective to the debate. Indeed, it will be explained why, for example, it was a mistake for Ma to concentrate only on the economic field and leaving the socio-symbolic perspective aside; why the replacement by Lee of the political figures in the party changed the party’s core essence; why it is so important in the people’s imaginary that Chen Shui-bian placed the 228 Incident as a central narrative of the island, etc. This article aims at going into details, analysing the successive presidencies on both discourses and policy-making.

Chapter 1 : Methodology and theoretical framework :

A focus will be put during this research on the political elite of the island as starting point, as they are the sovereign and deciding actors vis-à-vis external policies and the representatives of the country in interstate relations. Furthermore I choose to use the domestic level as the main influent level during the biggest part of the writing. Therefore the concepts –further cited and explained– will be mainly concerning the Nation. The reason why the domestic level is used is because, and it will be shown with the theories and concepts, the decision-makers often base and justify their external policies on domestic support and interest. It is particularly the case with Taiwan regarding the question of the reunification with mainland China, as the Taiwanese society is deeply involved with this choice.

The main theory that will be used here is the constructivism. Before explaining which branches of this approach will be mobilised, I will first explain why this theory was taken. Let us take a materialist theory to explain the cross-Strait relations: for Taiwan, it would be normal to be guarded vis-à-vis mainland China as the military imbalance is blatant. Thus, the national security of Taiwan would be under permanent threat, even more with the presence of rocket launchers and missiles stationed at the Chinese borders. However, a materialist interpretation could not be possible concerning China’s policy at its borders, as the mainland military outnumbers by far the island. There is thus

something missing in the materialist's framework on that important point. Furthermore, Taiwan's external policies could not be understood as well, as the island long promoted itself as the true *traditional* China from the end of the Second World War until the late 60's, then putting a lot of importance to democracy and the economy instead of its material security. Thus, even if there are material (military, alliances,...) factors and demonstrations, they cannot be understood without immaterial factors. These immaterial factors are prior because they give sense, plans, organisations and guide the material means. Without the historical bonds that both side of the Strait have with one another, the armed and political conflicts do not have any logic¹. As I focus on the Taiwanese domestic level particularly, the constructivism has even more sense as, I think, the Taiwanese society plays a major role in the external decision-making concerning the relations with the mainland. To not take into account the general opinion would thus have the same effect: the decisions taken by the elite would not have any sense. The public opinion matters, but is also –socially– constructed; this gives one more argument in favour of the use of the constructivist theory in this research.

Constructivism is, although, a very broad theory with different branches, some putting more importance on the international system to explain societies' construction, others privileging discourses analysis, etc. I will mainly use two branches that I will now explain: 1) the domestic constructivism of Peter Katzenstein, as his work is widely accepted in the constructivist –and other IR theories'- community. Katzenstein is particularly helpful in our subject as he is specialised in the questions of culture, identity and regionalism which will be central in our topic; his work "Norms, Identity, and Culture in National Security" will be crucial in the justification and explanation of the chosen concepts later. Along with "Katzenstein's constructivism", the use of the critical constructivism (especially David Campbell) will then be useful as well, as in this doctrine's view, history, social, culture and politics play a central role in the identity-making of a Nation, which coincides with Katzenstein's argument that norms, identity and culture are the main factors of a State's construction, and thus its decision-making; 2) The second one will be the critical discourse analysis. It is important to specify that what will be taken from that school is their idea that discourses have a big role to play in the construction of identities, norms, meanings, etc. The discourses can be through

¹ JACKSON, R., « Social Constructivism », in: *Introduction to International Relations Theories and Approaches*, 3rd edition, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2006, p. 165.

talk and text; here we will especially try to collect and use broadcasted speeches of political leaders, written speeches if no audio can be found, as well as newspaper articles². The concepts that will be explained here, like culture, etc., will be explained by some authors like David Campbell, that will be very useful as well as Ghica, Luciana Alexandra from the Leibniz-Institut. Authors like Fairclough, Wodak, etc. played a big role in the critical discourse analysis movement and will be very important in our empirical analysis. The discourse analysis usually is divided under three schools: 1) The first generation focuses on the semantic aspects of a sentence, analysing the vocabulary chosen and the psychology of the speaker that lies behind the words; 2) The second generation is inspired by Foucault, but mostly developed by Fairclough. The idea is to add more abstraction to the first generation by taking into account the social environment. This generation gives importance in the relation between discourses and power. In other words, power is central, because there will be a dominant ideology that will try to maintain its power position in the institution, by creating identities and interests through the discourse; 3) The third generation, inspired by Jacques Derrida, Jacques Lacan and mostly structured by Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe. They aimed to surpass the second generation –although it relies on the same base in my opinion– by saying that all the reality can be explained and created by the discourses. It means that everything can be socially created, deconstructed and recreated. Everything is created around a central ideology and a dominant politics. It then also means that this ideology will try to neutralise opposite ideas, as institutions are not independent^{3,4}.

We see it, the two last generations are the most close to our subject as there is an ideological contest against the two major parties in Taiwan. It is even more important for our subject as the very recent democratisation on the island has put a big importance on the role of the medias and institutions. It is said that during presidential campaigns, this ideological contest is so high that it brings couple –who share different ideas– to break up. Taiwan is thus a perfect example of these theories, and it could be interesting to see more in detail the role of the news institutions in the continuity or caesura of the dominant ideology under the KMT dictatorship era. The main topic that will be

² GHICA, L. A., “Discourse Analysis and the Production of Meaning in International Relations Research: a Brief Methodological Outline”, in: *Annals of the University of Bucharest / Political science*, Vol. 15, No. 2, Bucharest, University of Bucharest, 2013, p. 4.

³ *Ibidem*.

⁴ PEDERSEN, O. V., “Discourse analysis”, in: *Working Paper no. 65 International Center for Business and Politics*, Copenhagen, Lita Lundquist, 2009, p. 6.

examined in the creation of an identity through discourse, is the symbolic concept of “the One” versus “the Other” that will often (re)emerge⁵. The discourse analysis will show how these concepts were *constructed*, possibly *deconstructed* before being *reconstructed* by the elite.

The central concepts that will be used and tested in this paper with the two theories are thus: *identity* (national, State), *norms*, *culture*, *interest*. Each interact with another; we will present these concepts respectively:

- *Identity*: it is a structure with different categories that help describing stimuli and help actors –here groups– decide how to think, feel, evaluate and behave vis-à-vis external stimuli⁶; Campbell also notes that a nation-State is aligned with a primary form of identification such as territory, language and a symbolic sense of Self⁷. The definition given by Kowert will approve the definition of this concept by Campbell, with the following quote: “To say that a group of people has a particular identity is to suggest both that they share certain qualities and also that these qualities somehow set them apart from others.⁸” A national identity is thus an imagined community with its narratives⁹. The shared beliefs help thus sustain the “We-ness” of the said community. This creates a link with the discourse analysis explanation we made above, as we see a return of the creation of a “Us” versus an external “Them”, via discourses. Identities are stable for few reasons: 1) the mental schema’s/categories must be a minimum resistant to external elements that would try to change the paradigms; 2) an identity is based on the size of its group, its race and its language, which are elements that normally remain the same in the –very– long run¹⁰. Katzenstein

⁵ NEUBERT, S., REICH, K., *Toward a Constructivist Theory of Discourse: Rethinking the Boundaries of Discourse Philosophy*, Cologne, University of Cologne, 2002, p. 12.

⁶ YANG LU, M. A., *Dynamics of National Interest and National Identity: A Constructivist Approach to the India-China Relations (2003-2012)*, Heidelberg, Heidelberg University, 2013, p 23.

⁷ BTEDDINI, L., *Writing Security: United States Foreign Policy and the Politics of Identity [online]*, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/215570278_Writing_Security_United_States_Foreign_Policy_and_the_Politics_of_Identity (consulted on November 22th 2017), p. 115.

⁸ YANG LU, M. A., *op cit.*, p. 24.

⁹ ALEXANDROV, M., “The Concept of State Identity in International Relations: A Theoretical Analysis”, in: *Journal of International Development and Cooperation*, Vol.10, No.1, Higashi Hiroshima, Hiroshima University, 2003, p. 36.

¹⁰ *Ibidem*.

even says that history is a process that leaves an imprint on the identity¹¹; identity is thus a product of a long series of elements that happened in history, and thus base it on a strong base. However, even if an identity would resist big changes, it does not mean that it cannot vary; Katzenstein thereby adds that nationalism is socially constructed¹², it can thus be changed as well. In this paper, I will assume that identities have to be continuously (re)created through interactions in order to survive, be it in a continuity or in a caesura. These identities are internalised by the institutions and therefore represented by the decision-makers¹³; afterwards, the institutions themselves cannot be separated of the culture internalised and thus also have to be connected to the process of continuous production. The institutions, as the two last generation of discourse analyst declare as well, are thus powerful agents in this matter¹⁴. In our case, the interaction between the elite and the society of Taiwan thus plays a major role. Campbell explains it too: “it is the ‘stylized repetition of acts’ that should act as a referent for the identity of a state, rather than a specific “founding act.”¹⁵” For him, the State precedes the Nation; nationalism is merely a tool for the State in order to maintain its legitimacy on the territory¹⁶. I agree with him on the case of Taiwan as the island was first constituted of different “tribes” (Hakka, Hokkien, Han,...) even with different languages; it was only with the newly placed ROC on the island that the population started to be standardised through –nationalist– schools, where language was standardised as well. Two points: 1) The relation self-other is very important in the creation of an identity. In our case, we could think that the “Self” would be Taiwan, whereas the “Other” would be represented by mainland China. It could be like that, but Zehfuss tells us that the relation can also be the Taiwan of the present as a “Self”, versus the Taiwan of

¹¹ KATZENSTEIN, P. J., *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics [online]*, <http://www.fb03.uni-frankfurt.de/45503391/Introduction-from-Katzenstein-1996---The-Culture-of-National-Security.pdf> (consulted on November 15th 2017), p. 12.

¹² *Ibidem*.

¹³ JACKSON, R., *op cit.*, p. 172.

¹⁴ JEPPELSON, J., WENDT, A., KATZENSTEIN, P. J., “Norms, identity, and culture in national security”, in: *Culture and National Security*, New York: Columbia University Press, ed. Katzenstein, 1996, p. 47

¹⁵ CAMPBELL, D., *Writing Security: United States Foreign Policy and the Politics of Identity*, Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1998, p. 10.

¹⁶ BTEDDINI, L., *op cit.*, p. 115.

the past as the “Other”¹⁷. This is particularly interesting as the DPP often criticises the KMT and the ancient island’s regime by referring to the February 28 incident caused by the nationalists. It means that there is a detachment of today’s administration towards the ancient regime of 1945-1988, as well as all the values that were attached to it; 2) Campbell tells us about the use of danger discourses in order to build a nation. In this sense, the “Other” becomes dangerous and every element linked to it becomes a threat as well. He ends by saying that the discourse of danger consists in the use of invented or inflated threats by the ruling elite in order to form a peaceful “Us” vis-à-vis a dangerous “Them”¹⁸. Katzenstein supports this second assumption, by saying that the identities are the main factors of threat representations¹⁹. These two elements gives us more enlightenment on the use of discourses and it could be even more useful as we already have several discourse pieces. For example, the actual President Tsai Ing-wen referred to the 228 incident in order to “transform Taiwan into a Nation with real freedom and democracy”²⁰; she also said Taiwan “will not bow to pressure, and we will of course not revert to the old path of confrontation [...]”²¹ when referring to the relations with mainland China. In both cases, we can see that the “Self” of the past as well as mainland China are seen as not respectful of the Human Rights, etc., that are seen as guarantees of security. A last element that is constitutive and that legitimates a national identity for Campbell is the identity of individuals²². Because the individuals are the actors which perpetuates the identity through constant social practices, they are the reflect of what the identity of the Nation is. It can thus be searched if, by promoting the “native” side of some individuals in Taiwan, with for example some elites making speeches in Hakka languages, among other means, these same elites have a project of modifying the national identity with this *modus operandi*. Finally, Katzenstein identifies the *Realpolitik* to be the key factor in

¹⁷ ZEHFUSS, M., *Constructivism in International Relations: The Politics of Reality*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2002.

¹⁸ ALEXANDROV, M., *op cit.*, p. 37.

¹⁹ JEPPEPERSON, J., WENDT, A., KATZENSTEIN, P. J., *op cit.*, p. 47.

²⁰ Taipei Times, 228 REMEMBERED: *Transitional justice is Tsai’s top priority* [online], <http://www.taipetimes.com/News/taiwan/archives/2016/02/29/2003640483> (consulted on November 27th 2017).

²¹ News24, *Taiwan president says won't bow to Beijing, calls for talks* [online], <https://www.news24.com/World/News/taiwan-president-says-wont-bow-to-beijing-calls-for-talks-20161010-3> (consulted on November 27th 2017).

²² BTEDDINI, L., *op cit.*, p 116.

China's foreign policy, as it was so internalised that it defined the strategic culture of the country²³. In my opinion, what can be said about Taiwan for the same matter in order to have a concrete central point on what the national identity bases itself, is that democracy is the key element in the island's behaviour in the domestic and international level. I have already noted the importance of democracy in the domestic affairs as freedom remains a new value acquired, and it is notably translated in the island's behaviour as the term "democracy" is very often invoked by the political elite during interviews, speeches, when asked for a justification of their acts. We already have an example of it above, as President Tsai again justified Taiwan's identity and remote position vis-à-vis mainland China in general by saying the island will become a true and peaceful democracy. It has to be emphasised that Taiwan knows a profound change in all of its since the end of the dictatorship and that shapes its identity, interest, etc.;

- *Interest*: Synonyms of national interest could be public interest, common interest, common good²⁴. The definition of it could be : the preferences of a Nation for a certain policy. The interest is an idea, and therefore is subject to perception and interpretation. Charles Beard thereby says: "Interest, subjectively considered, may take the form of an idea, and every idea pertaining to earthly affairs is attached to some interest considered as material thing and is affiliated with social relationships²⁵." We thus see there is a link between the interest of a nation and the identity of this nation, as this identity is constructed by social interaction, relationships. Furthermore, to support this argument, we see that the domestic support is often mobilised by the decision-maker in order to justify the interest for some decisions²⁶. Hence, as the national identity changes, so does the behaviour and interest too. So, the mass society can be influenced by a context and in turn influence/constrain the deciders afterwards. However, it is also important to note that the context makes sense with meanings and descriptions attached to it and created by the decision-makers in the first place²⁷. This is what we will try to see in the case of Taiwan. More precisely, we will see if the ruling elite has had an effect

²³ JACKSON, R., *op cit.*, p. 171.

²⁴ YANG LU, M. A., *op cit.*, p. 18.

²⁵ BEARD, C. A., *The Open Door at Home*, New York, Macmillan, 1935, pp. 157-158.

²⁶ YANG LU, M. A., *op cit.*, p. 18.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 20.

on the problematisation of the cross-Strait relation through discourses, therefore changed the perception of the mass and hence switching the national preferences from reunification to status-quo or independence. In the process of creation of these perceptions, the cultural and linguistic resources are important²⁸; hence the study of the identity and discourses will enlighten us to understand the (changes of the) Taiwanese interest as they shape it^{29,30}. Katzenstein supports that theory even more by saying that interest can change because it is constructed, adding that the end of the Cold War made it possible for cultural, identity and norms problematic to emerge as the end of the C.W. ended purely dichotomic ideological conflicts³¹. There are new types of war after the C.W., which are ethnic, technological, etc., but also new types of issues that concern the cultural identity in the international politics. With the rise of the importance of culture (probably soft power in general), Katzenstein tells us that the human rights also gain more importance³²; therefore our subject and main context, that is the importance of democracy in the forging of Taiwan's new identity, is completely legitimated. Here, the national interest will thus objectively be defined as the search of security (survival and autonomy) and of the national self-esteem (the well-being of the national group)³³;

- *Culture and norms*: We could say it is a synonym of norms and (shared) values/beliefs. Identity could be seen as the sum of all the culture and norms, which are divided into categories. For example, Thomas U. Berger in the international relation field, focuses on the political-military culture defined as a “subset of the larger historical-political culture that encompasses orientations related to defence, security, the military as an institution, and the use of force in international affairs³⁴”. In our case, we will also focus on the culture of law and communication/medias, as Taiwan most focuses on a liberal policy in general, and thus promotes the rule of law and democracy in politics and the media. As Wendt presents the international relations' anarchy to be Hobbesian (Other = enemy), Lockean (Other = rival) or Kantian (Other = friend)³⁵, we could say with the explanations in the previous

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 24.

²⁹ *Ibidem.*

³⁰ WENDT, A., *Social Theory of International Politics*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1999 p. 231.

³¹ KATZENSTEIN, P. J., *op cit. [online]*, p. 1.

³² *Ibidem.*, p. 4.

³³ WENDT, A., *op cit.*, pp. 235-236.

³⁴ ALEXANDROV, M., *op cit.*, p. 35.

³⁵ *Ibidem.*

paragraphs that the culture of the “Self” would be the opposite of the culture of the “Other”, the “Other” being thus more of an enemy/rival. The challenge here is to see how Taiwan’s culture is shaped, and thus if it is that different of mainland China’s one, in order to define if China is seen as an enemy, rival or a friend, which could greatly influence the preference for the reunification, status quo or independence. Katzenstein defines culture as “collective models of Nation-State authority or identity, carried by custom or law.”³⁶ It, with norms too, is once again the result of social process, *purposeful* political action and differences in power capabilities³⁷. We again see the importance of the elite and political structures in the shaping of a domestic culture, even more when Katzenstein says “they (the domestic and international environment) are the arenas in which actors contest norms and through political and social processes construct and reconstruct identities³⁸.” The actors are explicitly cited and rejoins the actors I have identified for this paper, as he adds: “These models are constructed and contested by politicians, leaders of political movements, groups and parties, propagandists, lawyers, clerics, and even academics³⁹.” The culture in place is thus the culture of the ruling elite. It is promoted afterwards by this same State⁴⁰. *Norms* are divided by Katzenstein into “thin” and “thick”; the difference is that the first is regulatory while the second is constitutive of the national identity and shapes the national interest. The first crystallises the collective expectations in rules in order to publicly declare what a standard, good behaviour is supposed to be. The second is more sensible and broad, as it is constituted of general norms that define the State; Katzenstein uses the example of Japan defining itself as a trading State in pursue of economic prosperity, which eliminates all references to a military objective⁴¹. As I already explained what was the central point of Taiwan’s identity in my opinion, I think democracy is the norm that defines the identity of Taiwan the most. It already implies a lot of consequences, starting with the differentiation vis-à-vis mainland China that remains a communist dictatorship, but it also implies the consequence of bringing other representations of the Taiwanese island. Namely, the democratic principle of Self-determination for the people could lead to an entire autonomy. It is these

³⁶ KATZENSTEIN, P. J., *op cit [online]*, p. 4.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

³⁹ JEPPEPERSON, J., WENDT, A., KATZENSTEIN, P. J., *op cit.*, p. 44.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 46.

⁴¹ ALEXANDROV, M., *op cit.*, p. 36.

consequences that will be examined through the discourses, policies, etc. that constitute the “thin” side of the norms, which are the results of the “thick” norm. Once more, Katzenstein notes the conflicts that occur when a new norm emerges, as it has to compete with already existing, countervailing ones. It implies domestic coalitions⁴², for example between institutions as the political elite and the informational elite.

The *theoretical framework* will thus be constituted of one part by the political elite combined with the juridical and informational institutions, that will be the dependant variable here. The second part will be represented by the national identity as independent variable, constituted by its multiple parts presented above (norms, culture, symbols,...). The purpose is to see the actions of the first (translated into policies, laws, articles, speeches, etc.) on the second (identity, interests, etc.) in order to find out how it has affected the general approach of Taiwan vis-à-vis the idea of reunification between the two territories. As said, the identity and interests of a Nation define the behaviour that this State will have towards other actors/ideas, but these said identities and interests are forged by the actors; therefore it has to be tested if different administrations essentially affect the reunification project by influencing the identity.

The *applicability* of this test would be the same that was formulated by Maxym Alexandrov⁴³, which is the requirement a lot of empirical data notably interviews/articles/discourses, policy decisions, concrete manifestations of the Taiwanese culture and values, etc. The good side is that Taiwan’s freedom of speech facilitates the access to information, but as it is a recent democracy, maybe there will be a lack of information concerning the transition period, more precisely during the 90s – which are paradoxically the most important in my opinion–. There is also a point that could act as a barrier in the research, is the mastering of the foreign language, mostly the Taiwanese dialect of Mandarin that I do not really master, and maybe of the native languages that I do not master at all. However, as Taiwan also becomes more involved in the international system due to globalisation, news in English become more and more available and popular, notably with the newspaper Taiwan News.

⁴² JEPPELSON, J., WENDT, A., KATZENSTEIN, P. J., *op cit.*, p. 43.

⁴³ ALEXANDROV, M., *op cit.*, p. 44.

We will now explain the methodology for discourse analysis a bit further, with the help of two figures, namely Norman Fairclough and Ruth Wodak. The first give us some keys to analyse what he calls “political text⁴⁴”. Indeed, some strategies are often used in the political talks, and we will discover the use of some in our empirical researches ! The first one explained by Fairclough is the use of metaphors and more importantly the process in which it is used⁴⁵. We will focus on the process much more, because it is the use of premises that matters. The process is simple: in order to reach a specific goal or to advocate for a specific means in order to reach a conclusion, a decider can make up specific premises that will lead to this goal. In other words, creating a situation with certain premises will favour certain solutions and exclude others⁴⁶. This is what Foucault called the “problematization⁴⁷”. Four elements are here at stake: 1) the *circumstance premise*, which means the existing state of affairs, thus current situation; 2) the *goal premise*, which is the possible and desirable conclusion; 3) the *value premise*, which is composed of underlying values and concerns; 4) finally, the *means-goal premise*, which are the means to achieve the goal. The process is thus codified as: an action A will take us from the problematic state of affairs C to a desirable future G in accordance with values V; Fairclough uses an example consisting in a State being in debt (state of affair), that should diminish the public spending (short run goal) in order to increase the economic growth (long run goal), with everyone contributing including richer people (values). Here, the cut in public spending and no other alternatives is the means-goal factor⁴⁸. Fairclough provide us with three critics when this strategy is used: 1) the consequences of the means that are advocated will undermine the state of the goal rather than achieve it; 2) the coherence of the process is incorrect due to other factors not taken into account; 3) the correctness of the premises is not available as the problem is set in a subjective way⁴⁹. Indeed, starting in the example by a problem of public spending leads to cuts in the spending in order to achieve growth. With this “problem-solution” structure, we see the importance of the construction and reconstruction of some situations, in order to achieve some goals, which will be further explained with Wodak’s theory. As we will work with the constructivist theories, representations will

⁴⁴ FAIRCLOUGH, N., FAIRCLOUGH, I., *Textual Analysis [online]*, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/283124219_Textual_analysis (consulted on March 6 2018), p. 1.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

⁴⁷ *Ibidem.*

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 6-7.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

play a major role. As Fairclough notes it, representations are elements of actions⁵⁰; people have some representations because it will provide them arguments in order to legitimise means and goals. In our case, it can be illustrated by the claim of belonging to a certain socio-ethnic group (mainlander or native); both have their vision of the ROC's future and the means to achieve it, hence the battle for identity has a big importance.

Before approaching Wodak's theory, a second key concept noted by Fairclough has to be explained. This concept is the one of "topos"⁵¹. A topos is an arsenal of arguments, a specific topic; it is also defined as "commonplace". Fairclough rightly used the example of "we/other" in order to illustrate this concept. It is very relevant as in our case, the (in)voluntary technique of "otherisation" of mainlanders and "their" culture vis-à-vis the island's population and culture will play a big role in the discourses and policy-making of the subsequent leaders. It can be illustrated by the will of creating a "new Taiwanese" for one, creating a Taiwanese-centered history for another, etc. Even if the concept of a "new Taiwanese", different from the Taiwanese people coming from the mainland, was very much criticised during Lee's presidency, it became a commonsense nowadays after years of "otherisation" of the mainland. The "otherisation" process will be present through all the administrations, hence this topos is of most importance !

To conclude, we will present Wodak's theories on the different strategies used concerning the national identity. As we said, the representations of the national identity is crucial as it advocates for specific means and goals concerning the island's future, thus its position concerning a reunification, endless *status quo* or independence. For Wodak, the national identity can be produced, reproduced, transformed and destroyed⁵². Each of them is related to a strategy that we will present. Firstly, the *constructive strategy* is one composed by persuasive devices in order to create an identification and solidarity of an individual vis-à-vis other persons of the "we-group". At the same time, it highlights the differences with the "others" and make them distance themselves. Secondly, the perpetuation or justification strategy is used to maintain and support the national identity. The metaphor of "being on the same boat" is a way to assimilate individuals to the group. Thirdly, the transformation strategy aims at modifying aspects of national identity into others. As mentioned, the use of "new Taiwanese" by Lee

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

⁵² DE CILLIA, R., REISIGL, M., WODAK, R., "The discursive construction of national identities", in *Discourse & Society*, Vol. 10, No. 2, p. 153.

Teng-hui can illustrate this strategy, as the concept of being “Taiwanese” is changed from what it meant since the KMT arrival at the end of the civil war. Finally, the destructive strategy is the one that “de-mythologises” some symbols⁵³. As Nations are based on mythical symbols, legendary narratives, to erase these representations means to erase a certain aspect of the Nation. In order to transform the national identity as in the third strategy, the destruction of some symbols can be a pre-condition.

Chapter 2: national transformation during the Lee Teng-hui presidency :

Some say Lee Teng-hui distanced himself from the reunification idea only after his Presidential mandate was over, as the mandate chained his true intentions and obliged him to take a moderate position. However there are hints that let us think that, when Lee Teng-hui became President of the Republic of Taiwan, as well as Chairman of the Kuomintang in the same year, a *taiwanization* process was already starting. Even though it has not been largely accepted at that time, this *taiwanization* seems normalised nowadays; we will illustrate that point with an example of a concept now taken for granted among the population. We will also illustrate some rhetoric used by Lee Teng-hui in the 90s vis-à-vis mainland China, that is now used by the DPP administration under Tsai Ing-wen, in order to show the continuity of the process. The chapter will exceptionally be divided firstly into policy and law, followed by a part on explicit discourses, in order to keep a chronological coherence and see Lee’s political evolution.

2.1. Policy-making analysis:

Lee Teng-hui has had an important impact within the KMT as well as in the national politics, before being President and Chairman of the party. Indeed, he has been Minister without portfolio in May 1972, then member of the KMT Central Committee on November 1976, had a close relationship with Chiang Ching-kuo, who selected him to be the mayor of Taipei on June 1978. Furthermore, he had also been chosen to be the Governor of the Taiwan province in 1981 and became a member of the KMT’s Central

⁵³ *Ibid.*, pp. 160-161.

Standing Committee on December 1979. It thus goes without saying that, at the death of Chiang Ching-kuo in 1988, his Vice-President Lee Teng-hui had many resources to become the new major figure of the nationalists. This point is very important as, being in control of the most important political party of the country in addition to having been elected as President, it created a situation where Lee concentrated a lot of power. He was the one who could choose which person would get the key posts in the party, which policies should have been implemented. He thus had the power to decide in which direction the ROC had to evolve, and it was in his personal orientations that he directed.

Indeed, Lee being originally an island native himself, having been born on the territory of Taiwan during the Japanese Colony, the importance of the native people has grown during his mandate. It started with the representation inside the party, entering a majority of Cabinets and being part of the KMT Central Standing Committee; it is this Committee that decided to make him chairman in 1988⁵⁴. Concerning the general policies vis-à-vis mainland China, Lee created the National Unification Council (NUC) in 1990 in order to manage the reunification between the two territories. It seems to be a step forward towards the mainland, however there are some issues concerning the NUC and the 1991-1992 encounters which will be discussed later. Indeed, the NUC released “Guidelines for National Unification” in 1991, that prescribed for a gradual reunification under the principle of rationality, peace, equality and mutuality. This reunification must be in the interest of – as well as respecting the rights - the “people in the Taiwan area” and ensure their security and welfare, according to its forth principle⁵⁵. The linguistic choices will be discussed later on; we will now see how the Guidelines have created problems in the relationship between the island and the mainland during their first meetings for reconciliation.

In order to create a contact without being direct, the ROC decided to create the NGO “Taiwan Straits Exchange Foundation” (SEF) on November 1990. Mainland China afterwards made an agency on their own, the ARATS, on December 1991. First communication began in Beijing on November 1991 for the prevention of piracy across the Taiwan Strait. However, the first talks - concerning the strengthening contacts and

⁵⁴ JACOBS, B., “Lee Teng-hui and the Idea of “Taiwan””, in *The China Quarterly*, Vol. 190, No. 190, 2007, pp. 379-380.

⁵⁵ *Guidelines for National Unification [online]*, https://web.archive.org/web/20071226044848/http://www.mac.gov.tw/big5/rpir/2nda_3.htm (consulted on March 2nd 2018).

cooperation - took place in Beijing on March 1992, where the topic concerned notarised documents and lost mails. However, before starting to work on it, both parties had to agree to say that the functional issues were domestic, thus of one country. There is thus a following to the one-China principle, meaning there is only one country, but represented by multiple bodies. Before the Beijing talks, the ROC State listed five principles concerning cross-Strait relations; the second one was the following: “In dealing with affairs relating to contacts between the two sides, we should adhere to the one-China principle and oppose any form of ‘two Chinas’ or ‘one China, one Taiwan’ and oppose ‘one country, two governments’ and other similar proposals or behaviour⁵⁶.” However, after the start of the Beijing talks, the SEF and its supervisory body, the Taiwan Mainland Affairs Council (MAC), said the technical issues discussed at that moment were not domestic, thus failing to reach a consensus on this principle. The SEF used terms of international relations in order to qualify the object of the meeting, using “the authentication of documents⁵⁷.”

The ARATS insisted on the applying of the one-China principle for these matters, which led Ma Ying-jeou, vice Chairman of the MAC, to feel “regretful” about it. This point will have to be remembered for Chapter 4. In the end, he acknowledged that the ROC recognised the one-China principle. However, the next challenge was not about applying the one-China principle or not, but rather how to interpret the principle. Mainland China did not want to define what “China” meant, although Taiwan wanted to define the essence of the principle. It wanted to define and differentiate the two sides, in order to stress the sovereignty and jurisdiction authority of the island, seeking the status of “equal political entities.”⁵⁸ In order to do so, the SEF based itself on a document of the NUC which gave a meaning of “One China.” The document stated that both the mainland and the island are part of China, but each side have their views: for mainland China it is the PRC with Taiwan being a special province; for the island, China is the ROC founded in 1912 but now only sovereign on Taiwan and another few islands⁵⁹.

The answer of the ARATS was that, both sides had their different views, but it did not matter for the case of the functional affairs that would be discussed. Hence, only an

⁵⁶ XU, S., “The 1992 Consensus: A Review and Assessment of Consultations Between the Association for Relations Across the Taiwan Strait and the Straits Exchange Foundation”, in *American Foreign Policy Interests*, Vol. 23, No. 3, 2010, p. 123.

⁵⁷ *Ibidem*.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p 124.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 125.

adherence of the one-China principle was necessary, subscribing to the wording “both sides of the Taiwan Straits adhere to the one-China principle⁶⁰.” The decision had been made in a following talk, this time taking place in Hong Kong. The topic was about eliminating the differences concerning the principle, in order to start discussions on the functional affairs. The ROC accepted to adhere to the principle if mainland China reformulated the wording. Five alternatives were proposed, but a counter-proposal was made by Taiwan, composed of five written wordings and three orals⁶¹. The third oral was accepted in the end. However, the ARATS concluded that in routine affairs, the meaning of “China” needn’t be discussed, although the Taiwan State still based itself on the NUC definition. We can see the endless issue that emerged for months every time progress was made. Eventually, on November 1992, a consensus was found –commonly named “1992 Consensus”– and policies could be applied.

It is without the versatility of the ROC State, as Lee Teng-hui later reiterated his will for one China, separately expressed by each side. In other words, each territory was “speaking for itself⁶².” Before continuing on the international side, we will see what was happening in the meantime in domestic politics. In 1991, the government passed Constitutional amendments, which bothered the Democratic Progressive Party. The party wanted new elections before passing the amendments. Because it was denied, the parliamentarians walked out and started a 10, 000 people protestation. After the release of the Guidelines for National Reunification by the NUC on March 1991, the DPP called for the independence of the territory in August. The party went also on an island-wide drive to promote a new application for admission to the UN under the name of “Republic of Taiwan⁶³.” On September 7 and 8, 8,000 to 10,000 people demonstrated in Taipei for that proposition.

In order to discuss independence, Lee called for an appointment with eleven people, among whom four were members of the DPP and two were independent. Lee presumably told them that the island has been sovereign for a long time, adding that an eventual reunification was far from reached. Hence, there was no need to declare

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 126.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 126-127.

⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 131.

⁶³ DOMES, J., “Taiwan in 1991: Searching for Political Consensus”, in *Asian Survey*, Vol. 32, No. 1, 1992, pp. 47-48.

independence for Taiwan⁶⁴. It is worth mentioning that this reunion took place between September and October 1991, thus only one month before the first Beijing talks on November 1991 concerning piracy, and a few months before the Beijing talks of March 1992 concerning cooperation. Soon before the first reconciliation talks started, 30.000 people were demonstrating in Kaohsiung, bastion of the DPP since 1998, for a referendum on the independent access of Taiwan to the UN. Finally, there was a meeting between the Prime Minister Hao and deputies of the DPP in order to reach a compromise. It consisted in the fact that the government would not restrain the DPP on the question of independence, as the DPP agreed that the PRC threat in case of independence would be considered as a serious issue⁶⁵. It can be seen as a compromise in order to avoid creating tensions with the mainland on the eve of the Beijing talks; however the position of the government and the head of State not clearly reprehending, even approving sometimes with Lee's statements, the willing of the independentist party is very suspicious. Indeed, how can one pretend to initiate talks for reconciliation and, *in fine* reunification, if one declares that the ROC has been sovereign for too long and cannot reach a soon reunification ? As proof, we have seen it during the talks, as the Taiwanese side has been bargaining for a year (March to November) in order to maintain a different view on what China meant: a differentiation.

In 1991 and 1993, two important things happened with the judicial system, concerning the cross-Strait relations. In the first year, the Constitutional amendments were passed in order to reform the Taiwanese political and institutional system. As elections had been developed, it was written in these amendments that legislative elections would take place in the ROC's "free area", prior to the reunification⁶⁶. We thus see a legal shift in the way that the ROC's regime looks at the mainland, as now two systems are developing themselves more and more apart from each other ! One will have "free" elections, whereas the other remains in a dictatorship system of one-party rule. The differentiation process based on law continued on the 26th of November 1993, as the ROC Constitutional Court was asked to define the scope of the Republic's territory, following the one-China principle that had been adopted the previous year. The question

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 48.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 49.

⁶⁶ HSIEH, P. L., "The Taiwan Question and the One-China Policy: Legal Challenges with Renewed Momentum", in *Die Friedens-Warte: Journal of International Peace and Organization*, Vol. 84, No. 3, 2009, p. 66.

was thus to determine the “legal boundaries⁶⁷.” The Court refused to answer, the reasoning being that “to delimit the national territory is a purely political question⁶⁸” and not subject of political review, respecting the separation of powers. Only one month later, on the 24th of December 1993, the members of the Congress asked for an interpretation and meaning of “treaty” in the Constitution. It was furthermore asked what international agreement should be deliberated in the Legislative Yuan, and what depended on international bodies. This obviously pointed to the agreements between the ROC and the PRC in 1992, discussed above. The answer of the Court was: anything that has “treaty”, “convention” or “agreement” in their name, adding ratification clauses, should be send to the Legislative and Executive Yuan, as the ratified matters have an important effect on national affairs. What is not send to the Legis. and Execut. Yuan should be treated by agencies. However, the Court specifies that the 1992 agreements are not part of what was described here above, as it is not an international agreement⁶⁹. In the end, even though the Constitutional Court did not make a judgment on the question of China-Taiwan relations, we can see that the members of the Legislative Yuan wanted to reinforce a clear separation between the two areas. It can be a result of the replacements of the key members of the KMT by Lee Teng-hui, described earlier, as “native” deputies could have motives for a distance between the ROC and the PRC in all perspectives, even in the law. Lee himself would later declare, in 1999 to the Deutsche Welle radio, that the PRC has legitimacy on the mainland territory, adding that both sides of the Strait are equal and have a (special) State-to-State relationship. This will be further explained in the discourse analysing part. We can already say that this statement, very popular, created a *de facto* legal separation in the minds of the people. Proof of it is the confusion of both sides’ legal relation, even –especially– nowadays.

Let us return to the changing of political personalities inside the party, initiated by the chairman Lee Teng-hui. In an interview in 1994 with a Japanese writer, Lee talked about the fact that the island was always ruled by outsiders, from the Southern Ming to even the KMT regime ! His statement was that the KMT *came to rule* the Taiwanese,

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 67.

⁶⁸ Justices of the Supreme Court, Judicial Yuan , *Interpretation No. 328 [online]*, http://www.judicial.gov.tw/constitutionalcourt/EN/p03_01.asp?expno=328 (consulted on March 12 2018).

⁶⁹ Justices of the Supreme Court, Judicial Yuan , *Interpretation No. 329 [online]*, http://www.judicial.gov.tw/constitutionalcourt/EN/p03_01.asp?expno=329 (consulted on March 12 2018).

and that it had to become a KMT *of* the Taiwanese⁷⁰. As previously stated, opening more doors to the “native” people inside the party and in the institutions as following, was the key to “Taiwanise” the political bodies. It is not a bad thing to open the political field to 85% of the island’s population; however the very core of the nationalist party inevitably had to change if its key-posts are distributed to particular persons. As a matter of fact, Lee said in September 1995 that “the KMT chairman is a Taiwanese, its secretary-general is a Taiwanese, its director of the Organisation Department is a Taiwanese. The KMT long ago Taiwanized. It would only be correct to call it the Taiwan KMT⁷¹.” One could even hear the party cadres talking in Hokkien during informal reunions⁷². The search is not to know if important roles are impersonated by Chinese immigrants or Taiwanese natives, but to know the motives of the persons holding these roles. We will see it, although some elements were already highlighted with the meeting in 1991, the intentions of Lee through his speeches clearly revealed his intentions to differentiate the island from the mainland. Thus, knowing the political intentions of the leader, we can say that in order to implement them in the best way in the country and in the party, this leader would select cadres that share the same values. Ma Ying-jeou was no exception, as he ran for the mayorship of Taipei in 1998 using the council of Lee to be represented as a “New Taiwanese⁷³.”

In April 1995, a definitive rupture occurred between the ROC and the PRC after a mainland proposal of “one country, two systems”, as Lee Teng-hui proposed an answer in six points⁷⁴. The six points consisted in the fact that both areas are separately governed and should be treated on equal footing. These points contradict the one-China principle, as there cannot be two separate and equal political bodies for only one country, by definition. The political caesura was launched with this declaration, and would only be increased over time. The one-China principle was even more abandoned by the Taiwanese side when in 1996 the Ministry of Foreign Affairs published a document, on the participation of the ROC in the UN, stating that “only after the two sides are unified will there truly be ‘One China⁷⁵.’” Under the China threat, though, Lee would win the Presidential elections. However, it was under his actions and sayings that

⁷⁰ JACOBS, B., *op cit.*, p. 129.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 131.

⁷² *Ibidem.*

⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 134.

⁷⁴ SHENG, L., *China's Dilemma: The Taiwan Issue*, I.B. Tauris, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore, 2001, p. 105.

⁷⁵ XU, S., *op cit.*, p. 132.

both sides moved away progressively. The final examples used here will be: 1) The new vision of culture posed by Lee during his inauguration speech. During this speech, he proposed a new Taiwanese culture that would be a mix of the traditional Chinese heritage and new liberal, Western values gained with democracy⁷⁶. There is thus more and more distance created and even advocated by the Head of State; 2) The infamous interview for the Deutsche Welle radio, where Lee increased even more equalisation, and thus a paradox in the one-China principle, by initiating the (special) State-to-State relationship. However, one has to understand and remember that the Beijing talks started with the basis of the one-China principle in order to develop cooperation in a unique way for both sides concerning the discussed affairs. The future events showed that, indeed, a differentiation on this core principle led to less and less collaboration, and even a looming crisis during the Chen administration.

A. Discourse analysis:

Let us now examine some phrases that Lee Teng-hui, in particular, said during his two mandates, chronologically and ending with the Deutsche Welle interview, in order to support the idea of a separation between the two sides of China, a “we” and a “them.” This analysis will also put a particular light on the creation of a new Nation through the use of discourse. The Deutsche Welle interview is used in this part of the work because it is probably the most important verbal material we can have of Lee concerning the cross-Strait relations, as it will clearly indicate the shift in his political stance. The other quotes will mainly show that, even if Lee seemed to have a favourable Chinese-policy until 1999, the field was already prepared to arrive to the “State-to-State” conclusion.

We start with a statement that Lee made, in his early years of presidency and repeatedly afterwards. He said both sides of China should eventually reunite; however, and it was confirmed in his six points, that mainland China had to democratise and be reformed in order to achieve a reunification⁷⁷. It can be linked with his quote in 1996 “Avoid haste, be patient⁷⁸” towards China, in order to refrain too many investments to the mainland’s technology and economy. The point here is that a clear differentiation was made

⁷⁶ JACOBS, B., *op cit.*, p. 386.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 383.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 387.

between the two territories, by repeating multiple times that the mainland had to progress with reforms. The difference that was tried to be made was: one territory was more developed than the other. For instance, the Taiwanese seemed to be more integrated in the international economy. The idea that follows is that one side was also politically advanced, beside economically. The Taiwanese side made it clear, in Lee's statements and in the NUC's Guidelines, there would be reunification - but only democratically. The argument and reasoning is: as "our" economy provide more wealth and security for the citizens, "they" have to adapt in order to be compatible. In the end, this argument proved to be strong as the regime type counts a lot in the consent of the ROC people to reunite. Furthermore, the human rights and democratic values are still one of the most important topics of the DPP, as we will see it later.

Another separation occurred and followed the development one, although the quote could have led to think otherwise. Lee answered a journalist's question on Taiwan's status, saying that both the mainland and island are constitutive of one China, but that the situation was one of division, a divided Nation: "Under a situation of divided rule, we must have our own development direction. When in the future China truly wishes to unify, then there will be a much greater result⁷⁹", Lee added. However, there is are contradictions to this statement. The first one is a problem of coherence in the process for achieving the goal⁸⁰. In other words, the context in which Lee makes his statement and the context in which there would be reunification would not be the same, taking into account a divergent development of the two regions. Indeed, how can two areas reunite if their political, economic, cultural development diverge sustainably over time? As a matter of fact, North and South Korea developed each on their side in an extreme opposite way and reunification seems even more difficult for this case. This problem was well perceived during the 1992 meetings, hence the trying to develop the one-China policy in order to keep a broad consensus and a unique path.

Developing a new path, as advocated by Lee, thus means a new relationship to the politics of the country. In 1994, we saw that Lee made a diagnostic on the rulers of Taiwan. The conclusion was that these rulers have always been foreigners. The quote is: "In the past, those who controlled Taiwan all came from the outside. [...] Even the Kuomintang was also a regime that came from the outside. It was simply a party that

⁷⁹ JACOBS, B., *op cit.*, p. 383.

⁸⁰ FAIRCLOUGH, N., FAIRCLOUGH, I., *op cit.*, p. 7.

came to rule the Taiwanese. So it was necessary to make it a KMT of the Taiwanese⁸¹.” This quote is extremely important as there is a process of “otherisation.” It means that there has to be a difference between “we”, here the *Taiwanese*, from the “others”, thus the Chinese dynasties but also the KMT domestic regime of the past decennials ! There is here a strategy that Wodak calls a destructive strategy⁸², as there is a “de-mythologization” of even the founder of the ROC in Taiwan, in particular Chiang Kai-shek and his regime. Hence, as the previous regime was different from the Taiwanese – we have to stress the use of this particular term too, as *Taiwanese* is not the same as *Chinese*, the latter being only a citizen of the PRC in the imaginary–, a transformation strategy is immediately put in place. This strategy consists of transforming some aspects of the nation into another; here it is completely the case as the KMT has been transformed into a “KMT of the Taiwanese.” The strategy was followed by acts, as we have seen it, the cadres were rapidly replaced by “native” citizens, with the same idea as Lee Teng-hui, and even brought native languages with them. Once again, it is a good thing that the majority of the island’s people (85% of “natives”) are represented; however it was done here in a specific political purpose: to destroy and reshape the very essence of a structure. It seems to have an impact on the identity of even the KMT supporters, as nowadays 41% of them identify themselves as only Taiwanese, as shown on table 1 of the annex.

We talked about a change concerning the political nature of the ROC, and explained what concerned the political party. However, there is also the question of the culture of the country. We will briefly present a reunion on August 1994 made between Lee and members of the World United Formosans for Independence, which had the name of the ROC as topic. Lee said: “Our name is the Republic of China and, at present the ROC is Taiwan. We needn’t discuss changing the national name during my term of office⁸³.” There are several elements that have to be noted. Looking at the words, we can see that there is a nuance in what we could see as a moderate position from Lee. Indeed, he mentioned that the name did not have to be changed during his term of office, which does not close the door to future changes. This thought can be supported by a quote that followed, Lee saying: “Discuss the issue slowly, have a good think and look a bit more

⁸¹ JACOBS, B., *op cit.*, p. 383.

⁸² DE CILLIA, R., REISIGL, M., WODAK, R., *op cit.*, pp. 160-161.

⁸³ JACOBS, B., *op cit.*, p. 383.

to the future⁸⁴.” Linking it with the “avoid haste, be patient” policy, there are no doubts that, when the time has come and “Taiwan” would *de facto* replace “ROC” in the common usage, there could be a debate for a change, thus growing even further away from the Chinese identity.

What is even more notable in Lee’s speeches, applying once again to the destructive and a constructive strategy, are his quotes about what it means to be a Taiwanese, a “new Taiwanese”, a new culture. The quotes are the following: “[...] One only needs those who identifies with Taiwan and sympathise with Taiwan, who are willing to strive and struggle for Taiwan, it is they who are Taiwanese. We must encourage a concept of “New Taiwanese.” [...]”⁸⁵”, Corcuff also notes that society textbook manuals claimed “We are all Taiwanese”, affirming that the citizens of the island inherited a “Taiwanese soul” from their ancestors, which formed a “Taiwanese consciousness⁸⁶.” It has to be noted that the use of “We are (a Nation, here Taiwanese)”, is a very strong means to activate national pride. As a matter of fact, the “national we” is used by everyone, even those fighting against it⁸⁷. To conclude, Lee noted that Taiwan’s culture “has not only maintained its cultural tradition, it also has had wide contact with Western democracy, science and contemporary industrial and commercial social culture⁸⁸.” The goal was thus to create a new culture, being the mix of both. A lot has to be said concerning these three quotes. First, we can see a total destruction strategy concerning the old, foreign Taiwanese culture. The creation strategy⁸⁹, however is very interesting. Even though there is a part of Chinese culture that remains, there is a completely new project proposed by the President and the institutions through manuals. Here, the identity that is advocated by the Head of State is completely inspired by Ernest Renan’s description of a Nation. It means that, to be part of the *Taiwanese* Nation, one has to have “the will to perpetuate the value of the heritage that one has received in an undivided form⁹⁰.” To have “common glories in the past” and “to have a common will in the present”, it means “to have performed great deeds together, to wish to perform still more⁹¹.” All the

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 384.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 385.

⁸⁶ LAMS, L., LIAO, X. L.-W., “Tracing “Taiwanization” Processes in Taiwanese Presidential Statements in Times of Cross-Strait Rapprochement”, in *Journal of Current Chinese Affairs*, Vol. 40, No. 1, pp. 72-73.

⁸⁷ DE CILLIA, R., REISIGL, M., WODAK, R., *op cit.*, p. 164.

⁸⁸ JACOBS, B., *op cit.*, p. 386.

⁸⁹ DE CILLIA, R., REISIGL, M., WODAK, R., *op cit.*, p. 160.

⁹⁰ RENAN, E., *Qu’est-ce qu’une Nation ?*, Paris, Mille et une nuits, 1997, p. 31.

⁹¹ *Ibidem*.

conditions are fulfilled, as manuals share the history of the Formosan “natives”, sometimes creating a difficult situation for immigrants of the civil war⁹². The Chinese heritage is thus put in the corner in favour of a new society based on “native” culture. This society would be activated by new codes, characterised by both Asian and Western values; proof of this mechanism is seen today with the political question of the importance of *zhuyin* and *pinyin* in the learning of language⁹³. In this society, the Nation would be based on political values more than historical culture, as the “New Taiwanese” is one who simply loves and works for Taiwan. The Republic of Taiwan advocated by the institutions here thus really has a different essence from the actual ROC, as the genesis of the territory (its myths, eg. Founder of the Taiwan ROC Chiang Kai-shek) and the activation of the national pride⁹⁴ are not the same. The ROC is based on Chinese history and culture, whereas the ROT is based on the natives’ history, based on political broadness. This society could be viable, however it could definitely not reunite with the mainland, as the Taiwan “we” would be too distinct from the mainland, seen as a far and threatening “them.”

Finally, we will interpret the 1999 interview at the Deutsche Welle⁹⁵ in order to enlighten certain elements. There are three remarks that have to be done after having read the questions and answers. Fairclough explains that political strategies are used through linguistic realisation, for example through *topoi* or the use of pronouns (eg. “we/us” and “them”)⁹⁶. The latter was already shown to be used a lot in order to create a new Nation distinct of the mainland. The first one is here used during throughout the interview. A *topos* (pl. *topoi*) is an argumentative arsenal, based on a specific topic that becomes commonplace in the imaginary of the people once the topic is repeated over and over. The main topic that has been used during the interview on the side of the journalist was a supposed aggressive attitude from mainland China. Examples of this *topos* in the questions are: “Taiwan is considered by Beijing's government as a "renegade province." This is a cause for permanent tensions and threats against your island from the mainland. How do you cope with these dangers?⁹⁷”, “[...] Isn't this a

⁹² LAMS, L., LIAO, X. L.-W., *op cit.*, pp. 70-71.

⁹³ Taiwan News, *Taiwanese politician triggers linguistic debate on the merits of pinyin vs. zhuyin* [online], <https://www.taiwannews.com.tw/en/news/3377887> (consulted on March 7th 2018).

⁹⁴ DE CILLIA, R., REISIGL, M., WODAK, R., *op cit.*, p. 158.

⁹⁵ *Interview of Taiwan President Lee Teng-hui with Deutsche Welle radio* [online], <http://www.taiwandc.org/nws-9926.htm> (consulted on March 7th 2018).

⁹⁶ FAIRCLOUGH, N., FAIRCLOUGH, I., *op cit.*, p. 5.

⁹⁷ *Interview of Taiwan President Lee Teng-hui with Deutsche Welle radio* [online], *op cit.*

tempting idea for the outside world--by solving the Chinese problem that otherwise poses as a great long-term danger to your region?⁹⁸”, “If everything goes wrong [...], to the effect that military actions start, by what means and on whom, aside from the Taiwanese themselves, would you rely for your defence in such a war?⁹⁹”, “[...] This kind of involvement in the mainland makes Taiwan prone to economic blackmail by Beijing.¹⁰⁰” It is here obvious to the readers and listeners of that time that that the mainland China was presented with adjectives from a conflictual lexical field. Be it on the economy or diplomacy, Beijing is seen as the source of regional troubles, danger for the island, both threatening and militarist. This poses a question of neutrality from the German public service through its media, obviously playing the game of the independentist elite of Taiwan by making a commonplace of both sides’ differences. This proves Fairclough’s theory on the ideological motivations of the media¹⁰¹. We continue with Fairclough’s theory, saying that the problematisation of a question naturally advocates for a certain solution. In other words, the presenting of mainland China as a danger naturally leads for a solution of separation. That is why Lee advocated a special State-to-State relationship between the two territories and a reunification only when the PRC is democratic. However, reforms are easier to say than to apply. Until then a Taiwanese transformation can be applied with the use of distinctions and Nation-building. Examples are: “[...] Beijing authorities ignore the very fact that the two sides are two *different jurisdictions* and that the Chinese mainland continues to pose a military threat against *us*¹⁰²”, here creating a distinct separation between the two sides and a threat from one group to another; “[...] the president and [...] shall be popularly elected by the *people of the Taiwan area*. Thus, the reconfigured national agencies represent only the *people of the Taiwan area*. The legitimacy of the rule of the country comes from the mandate of the *Taiwan people* and has nothing to do with the people on the mainland¹⁰³”, here mentioning repeatedly the existence of

⁹⁸ *Ibidem*.

⁹⁹ *Ibidem*.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibidem*.

¹⁰¹ SHEYHOLISLAMI, J., *Critical Discourse Analysis [online]*,

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/228921006_Critical_discourse_analysis (consulted on March 7th 2018).

¹⁰² *Interview of Taiwan President Lee Teng-hui with Deutsche Welle radio [online]*, *op cit*.

¹⁰³ *Ibidem*.

“Taiwanese people”, again distinct from the mainlanders; “The crucial question is the Chinese mainland’s overemphasis on nationalism¹⁰⁴”, thus again a separation of Nation.

What we can conclude concerning these analysis, is that mainland China is considered to be a different, threatening group to the new Taiwanese people. This making of commonplaces and premises are very dangerous for a reconciliation process as it divides both territories rather than bringing them together on a common ground. The international opposition took place at the same time, and often because of the internal politics that already posed certain ideas of a Taiwanese exception, growing different from the mainland. The problem is that there is a spill-over effect, as more changing in internal politics worsen the international relations, which in turn gives an argument in favour of divergences in the domestic level. In the end, we have seen that even during his presidential mandate, Lee Teng-hui did influence the public opinion about certain ideas of a new Taiwanese society, through some of his expressions but also replacements in his party and through political acts. Even if all these acts were, and are still, not seen as expressively opposed to the Chinese reunification on the first sight, I think I have shown proofs that the true purpose was to create a separation with the mainland and the current ROC, in order to create a new, independent society.

Chapter 3: national transformation during the Chen Shui-bian presidency :

The previous presidency ended with the controversial interview of Lee to a German radio, advocating for a bilateral State-to-State relationship between the ROC and the PRC. With Chen’s election as President, the national identity on the island will know a great shift after lots of symbolic transformations and recreations, as it will be presented. These changes are probably the most important, as a lot of topics and controversies created during Chen’s presidency will re-emerge in the current Tsai presidency, such as the question of the 228 Incident, the question of symbols of Chiang Kai-shek, etc.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibidem.*

3.1. Discourse analysis:

Here, quotes and rhetoric strategies will be used from a document using the critical analysis on Chen Shui-bian's national speeches in order to reveal a construction of a Taiwanese identity¹⁰⁵. The fact that this thesis uses the same theoretical school (critical discourse analysis, mainly referring to Fairclough and Wodak), adding that our subjects are very close to each other -thus a possible transformation of Taiwan's identity and its consequences on the cross-Strait relations- make this analysis very interesting to look into. Furthermore, quotes and other materials are taken from speeches during important events, like national days, national days rallies, inaugural speeches, etc. These events were thus receiving a lot of attention, hence Chen's discourses could have had a lot of impact on the auditors.

We start the analysis with quotes selected by the authors, on Chen's victory speech and on his inaugural speech. The first quote is the following: "May Heaven bless Taiwanese people, may Heaven bless Taiwan ! our forever Mother¹⁰⁶!"; the second quote being : "Taiwan Stands Up: Toward the Dawn of a Rising Era¹⁰⁷", noting that it was the title of his inaugural speech. Two elements are important here: 1) The using of the metaphor of the mother; 2) The important use of the name "Taiwan", which will be further explained after the first point. Concerning the metaphor of the "mother", I suggest that it is part of an "activation" strategy explained by Wodak¹⁰⁸, used to construct the identity of a Nation. She associates this activation with emotional ties and national pride. I will show a few more quotes during Chen's first term in office in order to illustrate this strategy, then explain it. Chen said: "[...] each citizen of Formosa is a "child of Taiwan" just like me [...]"¹⁰⁹, "In whatever difficult environment, Taiwan will be like a selfless, loving mother¹¹⁰", "All grace and glory belongs to Taiwan ! our eternal Mother¹¹¹", "Taiwan is our common mother¹¹²." This metaphor used by the Head of State is a good rhetorical strategy as it seems to me to be a very strong activation of national pride. It is strong for

¹⁰⁵ CHANG, H.-c., HOLT, R., "Taiwan and ROC: A critical analysis of President Chen Shui-bien's construction of Taiwan identity in national speeches", in *National Identities*, Vol. 11, No. 3, 2009, 301-330.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 301.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibidem.*

¹⁰⁸ DE CILLIA, R., REISIGL, M., WODAK, R., *op cit.*, p. 158.

¹⁰⁹ CHANG, H.-c., HOLT, R., *op cit.*, p. 311.

¹¹⁰ *Ibidem.*

¹¹¹ *Ibidem.*

¹¹² *Ibid.*, p. 320.

two reasons: the first one, as the authors explain it well¹¹³, is that Chen created an image of “Taiwan” with the qualities of warmth and loving care. By using the image of a most important person in one’s life in order to associate with the political structure “Taiwan”, the latter gains immediately an appearance of great, glorious sympathy. The second reason is the use of trigger words broadening the lexical field of the family. Indeed, Chen said that each citizen is a “child of Taiwan”, that “Taiwan” would act like a selfless, loving mother in case of trouble. With this kind of formulation, where a political body/institution is humanized, one can almost imagine or remember a case where one was in need and where one’s family was present to provide help. The aim was to transpose this concrete case to a more abstract idea; it means that the citizens feel they are all part of a grand family under the benevolence of the State, represented by Taiwan, as mother. This makes the image of “Taiwan” much less frightening than it could appear in the collective imaginary due to a threat from the mainland if the island would officially adopt this new name. This sense of national family could even give a feeling of power among its members, thus a tendency of affirming the Taiwan identity. Chang and Holt, the authors, indirectly approve this statement as they noted that the use of “Taiwan” by Chen was for emotional purpose, whether the use of “ROC” was more for historical purpose¹¹⁴.

There has been a practice of interchangeability between the name “ROC” and “Taiwan” in Chen’s speeches. The emotional-historical dichotomy here above is not the only explanation of this double-using of names, but it relied much more on a transformation strategy. What was changed was the meaning of the ROC, which is illustrated by Chen’s four-stage theory¹¹⁵. It consists in the evolution of the Republic: first it was the ROC of 1912 on the mainland, then it moved to the ROC on the Taiwanese island in 1949, until the ROC *in* Taiwan from 1988-2000, and finally the ROC *is* Taiwan. Chen even said it clearly: “Taiwan is ROC and ROC is Taiwan¹¹⁶.” This rhetoric could remind us of an evolution used by Lee, concerning the Kuomintang becoming a “Taiwanese KMT.” In both cases, there is a transformation from an old representation to a new one, be it with the KMT or with the ROC. The new definition given by Chen is not a “Taiwan (island)” being part of the Republic of China –among other potential

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 311.

¹¹⁴ CHANG, H.-c., HOLT, R., *op cit.*, p. 311.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 302.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 312.

territories—, but both “Taiwan” and the “ROC” being at the same level. This strategy of juxtaposing both political entities was used in order to continue the “One country on each side”, and Chen proved it with the following quote: “[...] in the future, the Republic of China and the People’s Republic of China -or Taiwan and China- can seek to establish relations in any form whatsoever¹¹⁷.” This quote can seem appealing for a reunification project, however there is a problem in the phrasing that undermines all the coherence. The authors have put a right attention on it, but did not explain the incorrectness of the premises fully; the problem is the precision “or Taiwan and China.” Indeed, this precision invalidates all the rest of the sentence as the 1992 Consensus advocated for a “One China on both sides”, as seen in chapter 2. Hence, how can there be a “one China”, if “China” only designates the mainland ? If Chen limited himself to the “ROC” and “PRC” in his speech, a true reunification/rapprochement project could have been credible as the last letter “C” in both acronyms would have been a common denominator for both sides. However, as the names change and separate from each other, for emotional purposes, a sincere rapprochement could not have been credible.

Progressively, Chen abandoned the equal footing of “ROC” and “Taiwan”, to make a reversal and to create a full Taiwan-centered perspective. In other words, Taiwan became the subject and the ROC became the object, instead of the opposite. It is proven by the following quote: “A half century of toil and labour by the people of this land has culminated in what is now known as the “Taiwan Experience”, the fruits of which validate the existence of the Republic of China¹¹⁸”, “[...] the Taiwanese people have toiled hard to ... lay the foundation for the survival and development of the Republic of China¹¹⁹.” We can clearly see an attempt to create a ROC that is empowered by “Taiwan”, through its people. Both the Taiwan-centered perspective and the “Taiwan people” are very present in Chen’s global politics. Concerning the first one, we can confirm the fact that “Taiwan” became a subject on its own as it was linked with peoples, a territory and an identification¹²⁰. As we can see on the famous table 2 in the annex, the tendency to the “Taiwanese only” identity grew more or less steadily during Chen’s two mandates, starting at 36.9% in 2000, to 41.1% on 2004 and finally 43.7%

¹¹⁷ *Ibidem.*

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 312-313.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 311.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 316.

on 2008¹²¹. Chen delimited the territory of Taiwan in his National Day speech in 2004, after his re-election, beside other important sentences in the following quote: “Although Taiwan is a small island, we must aspire to reach high goals. Despite meeting with relentless and unjustifiable suppression in the international stage, our efforts and strengths have finally enabled us to pass the test of competition and capture these medals that belong to all of us¹²².” Beside the opposition of an “us”, which points to the Taiwanese people, versus the “other” (here actors of the international stage, maybe other political entities like mainland China), characterised by the use of inclusive pronouns like “*our* efforts [...]”, “all of *us*”, etc., Chen also used an idea of Ernest Renan. More explicitly, during his speech, Chen advocates for the people including himself to reach high goals. This perfectly fits Renan’s definition of a Nation, which is the following: “To have common glories in the past and to have a common will in the present; to have performed great deeds together, to wish to perform still more-these are the essential conditions for being a people¹²³.” As Lee Teng-hui advocated for a new political destiny for the island through his “New Taiwanese”, so did Chen Shui-bian the year of his re-election. With a reframing of the island’s history, that will soon be exposed, Chen followed Lee’s work in order to create a new Nation based on the French definition, thus a political community with a common goal for the future, distinct from the goals fixed by the mainland. This distinction and willing to go on a separate path is characterised by the number of use of “ROC” and “Taiwan” in Chen’s speeches since the National Day Speech of 2004: the use of “ROC”, except during the National Day Rally of 2004, was pronounced three times at the highest occasions, but mostly a single time. On the contrary, the use of “Taiwan” reached nineteen times at minimum in 2006, to ninety-four times in 2007¹²⁴ ! We can see the an attempt to introduce a feeling among the population that would be translated as following: “We (thus the Taiwanese), as an independent Nation, will be the only ones to decide for the destiny of the island.” It will be proven during the dissolution of the NUC, that the Taiwan authorities did not tolerate a foreign interference. It is the proof of a collective empowerment.

Finally, the use of “Taiwanese people” is frequent in Chen’s speeches and it is very interesting to take a look at the use of the government of the PRC to label the people of

¹²¹ Taiwan Corner, *REPORT ON THE NATIONAL ELECTION IN TAIWAN* [online], <http://taiwancorner.org/?p=1167> (consulted on April 3rd, 2018).

¹²² CHANG, H.-c., HOLT, R., *op cit.*, p. 317.

¹²³ RENAN, E., *op cit.*, p. 31.

¹²⁴ CHANG, H.-c., HOLT, R., *op cit.*, p. 308.

the ROC. Indeed, when reacting to the dissolution of the NUC, the government of the PRC very often used the term “[Taiwanese] compatriots¹²⁵.” In the same document, the people of the ROC were even called “brothers and sisters.” This shows an attempt of the PRC government to keep a family link that was starting to be broken, as showed on the first page of the chapter. We can see a true battle of family link between each side, in order to create a broad, inclusive Chinese family promoted by the mainland side, versus an exclusive Taiwanese group of population promoted by the island’s Executive Yuan. This is made with a strategy, that we have seen, of “motherization” of Taiwan, but also with a strategy of Chen praying the people like in our first quote: “May Heaven bless Taiwanese people, [...]”, the empowering of the ROC by the labour of the Taiwanese people, also already showed above. We can add two last quotes from Chen’s victory speech in 2000: “This moment is a dignified and sacred one in the history of Taiwan ! because the courageous people of Taiwan, with love and hope, have conquered fear and darkness¹²⁶”, “[Taiwanese people are encouraged to] ... use their noblest souls ... to ratify the advancement of our country and society successfully¹²⁷.” In these two quotes, we can identify a praising through the “mystification” of the people by creating an epic battle scenery: the victory of Chen is described as dignified and sacred thanks to the noble souls of the people against fear and darkness. By these means, we can maybe identify Wodak’s constructive strategy, as it seems a new national identity is built and established with a new foundation event. Legendary events with its heroes are obviously important activation of nationalism as a whole history is build around it and takes a great place in the common imaginary. We will see how this new Taiwan-centered imaginary tended to replace the Chinese-centered history soon, with the use of the 228 incident. The last remark on the last quote of the victory speech in 2000 is that, again, Chen advocated for the people to join the (future) advancement of the “country”, which send us once again back to the condition of Ernest Renan in order to create a Nation.

We will see the 228 Incident in two perspectives: a part with discourse analysis and a part of concrete, symbolic policy-making. The current analysis will concentrate on a few quotes only, which will reveal to be very interesting for the destructive strategy of Wodak. The sayings of Chen Shui-bian will indeed have a great impact on the relation

¹²⁵ Chen Shui-bian proves to be troublemaker: official [online], http://www.gov.cn/english/2006-02/08/content_182890.htm (consulted on April 3rd, 2018).

¹²⁶ CHANG, H.-c., HOLT, R., *op cit.*, p. 309.

¹²⁷ *Ibidem.*

between the people and the genesis of the ROC in Taiwan, through Chiang Kai-shek. In order to deconstruct the myth that founded the ROC in Taiwan, Chen used the 228 Incident in order to discredit the ancient KMT leader Chiang. Instead, by creating this controversy on the Incident, Chen tried to create a new symbolic mythology for the island¹²⁸; this is why this topic is very important to analyse as founding myths are in a great part constitutive of a Nation. In 2007, Chen said at a forum for remembrance that Chiang was a murderer, as in the following quote: “[History] shows clearly that former Chinese Nationalist Party leader Chiang Kai-shek was the true murderer behind the 228 Incident¹²⁹.” Chen often qualified the ancient leader as a murderer and also insisted that the Incident was not only of the historical domain, but has also a judicial perspective, as perpetrators “should stand trial for their crimes¹³⁰.” The “judicialization” of the Incident was very present in Chen’s speech, maybe in order to criminalise the case and make it a State incident, thus a very popular topic. We can even wonder if this strategy of extreme focusing on the legal perspective was also to discredit the current KMT, moreover seeing that the second referendum in 2008 directly pointed to the party for having “inappropriately acquired” properties (from the people)... Chen indeed insisted in his speech at the forum on that “judicialization”, seeing the following quote: “The people responsible for violating human rights should be prosecuted and stand trial¹³¹.” We thus see once again, as during the Lee Teng-hui administration, an attempt of the Executive Yuan to use the judicial power in order to attain its goal of deconstruction. It means that, if a trial had been opened and would have given credit to the pan-green side by condemning high KMT figures and old associates, it would have been a major political and symbolic defeat for the pan-blue side.

Once again, Chen also used and called for the “Taiwanese people” in order to join the initiative. This part is particularly important as the people will play a major role in this issue. I will explain it after two quotes said at the same forum: “We hope the people will make the right choice and help us build the country into a more normal, complete, beautiful and advanced nation¹³²”, we can see a new call for the population to “perform great deeds together, [and] to wish to perform still more” as Renan advocated for the

¹²⁸ SMITH, C. A., *Taiwan’s 228 Incident and the Politics of Placing Blame*, 2008, p. 1.

¹²⁹ KO, S.-I., SHIH, H.-c., *Chen blasts Chiang over 228 role [online]*, <http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/front/archives/2007/02/27/2003350190/1> (consulted on April 4th, 2018).

¹³⁰ *Ibidem*.

¹³¹ *Ibidem*.

¹³² *Ibidem*.

creation of a Nation; “The 228 Incident was not merely a misunderstanding, as some people claimed, but was part of a deliberate policy by a “foreign, authoritarian regime” to suppress the people of Taiwan¹³³.” This last quote is particularly important as it introduces a strong division of group: on the one hand, a “them” composed by a “foreign, authoritarian regime” –thus the mainland KMT–, that came to deliberately suppress an “us” composed by the people of Taiwan. The use of strong words associated with the division strategy has to be noted as Chen specifies a “deliberate” suppression, which is the worst case of a killing. In the common sense, a deliberate killing is called an assassination; in the case of a larger (ethnic) group, it leads to an ethnic cleansing, with all the imaginary that is associated with this practice. I have mentioned it, there has been an attempt by Chen, through his discourses, to create ethnic tensions. It was confirmed by an assistant professor of sociology at the National Tsing Hua University, that the majority of the public opinion thought ethnic tensions was a serious problem¹³⁴. It is understandable, as put in that way, being “Taiwanese” thus meant that one had to remember the event of the Incident and place oneself on the side of the victims; inevitably, it puts one in an opposition to the “waishengren” and to the mainland in general. What we can say is that Chen greatly impacted the identity of the Taiwanese society by putting the agenda topic on the 228 Incident around the year 2007, hence creating two sides facing each other: the waishengren and the benshengren, as showed above. The objective was to deconstruct the myth of the founder of the ROC, through discourses and through acts. Chen even said it himself during the forum as he vowed to “gradually tackle” the legacy of authoritarian rule¹³⁵. Wodak describes the destructive strategy as the following: “Finally, dismantling or destructive strategies serve to de-mythologize or demolish existing national identities or elements of them¹³⁶.” Here, the national element that has been demolished was the figure of Chiang Kai-shek, as he was labelled to be a “true murderer” due to having been the one ordering the ethnic cleansing according to Chen¹³⁷. It seemed to have worked, as Chiang has been recognised as being an antagonist figure in the imaginary of the people in Taiwan. In a poll conducted by the Taiwan ThinkTank, nearly 61% of the polled individuals said it

¹³³ *Ibidem*.

¹³⁴ KO, S.-l., *Survey suggests Chiang should take blame for 228 [online]*, <http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/front/archives/2007/02/26/2003350051> (consulted on April 4th, 2018).

¹³⁵ KO, S.-l., SHIH, H.-c., *op cit*.

¹³⁶ DE CILLIA, R., REISIGL, M., WODAK, R., *op cit.*, p. 161.

¹³⁷ KO, S.-l., SHIH, H.-c., *op cit*.

was acceptable to put the blame on Chiang, while 28% did not¹³⁸. We will finish this part of discourse analysis with a last intervention by Chen, who said it was time to debunk the myth of Chiang; “Roads or buildings named after him should be renamed and statues of the former dictator removed¹³⁹.” Indeed, even a part of the name had been removed of the Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Hall and replaced as “Taiwan Democracy Memorial Hall” under the Chen administration¹⁴⁰, before being reintroduced under Ma¹⁴¹. The figure of Chiang, and even Sun Yat-sen whose bronze bust had been replaced by a flower pot in the Presidential Palace on March 14 2007¹⁴², nevertheless suffered of a bad image since this controversy; hence the traditional ROC myth could have left more space to a Taiwan-centered narrative. It means, though, that the island distances itself from the mainland as common denominators between both are destroyed.

3.2. Policy-making analysis:

We thus continue to analyse the 228 Incident controversy under Chen’s presidency, looking at the policy-making that had been decided. Continuing on the figure of Chiang Kai-shek, after he became the “antagonist” of the Taiwan narrative, there had been modifications in his Memorial Hall. We already saw the changing of name of the Hall, but there was also a cease to play “The Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Song” at the opening and closing hours¹⁴³. In official stores, it was even prohibited to sell Chiang merchandises¹⁴⁴. This could seem anecdotic, however the culture also comes out of songs and goodies as these elements are part of the everyday life. As a matter of fact, there has even been a song about the mother of the people being called Taiwan¹⁴⁵. Culture is something that is repeated by the people days after days, hence the fact of stopping to play the Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Song and selling merchandises stopped practices that the people in general could do repeatedly over time. Hence, after several

¹³⁸ KO, S.-l., *op cit.*

¹³⁹ *Ibidem.*

¹⁴⁰ SMITH, C. A., *op cit.*, p. 144.

¹⁴¹ WANG, F., *Chiang Kai-shek plaque to return to memorial hall [online]*, <http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/taiwan/archives/2009/01/22/2003434392> (consulted on April 4th, 2018).

¹⁴² SMITH, C. A., *op cit.*, p.160.

¹⁴³ SHATTUCK, T. J., *Taiwan’s White Terror: Remembering the 228 Incident [online]*, <https://www.fpri.org/article/2017/02/taiwans-white-terror-remembering-228-incident/> (consulted on April 5th, 2018).

¹⁴⁴ *Ibidem.*

¹⁴⁵ CHANG, H.-c., HOLT, R., *op cit.*, p. 311.

years of non-practice, the image of the ancient figure does not shine as bright anymore. It is proved by the debates that still occur on whether to keep his statues in public places or not in our current time. For example, the public National Chengchi University passed a measure calling for a nationwide removal of Chiang's statues¹⁴⁶. The question of the removal of Chiang's statues emerged during the 228 controversy under Chen, as the DPP took the responsibility of removing statues all over the island¹⁴⁷.

Beside the symbolic renaming, there has also been a true research for unveiling the Incident's history as it had been kept secret under the authoritarian regime. Therefore, researchers and historians had the task to dig into the documents in order to declassify them, supported by the Executive Yuan¹⁴⁸. The year 2006 was said to be the most heavy concerning the research made by the Academia Sinica¹⁴⁹, adding the 18 books compiled by the Academia Historica's president and his staff¹⁵⁰. Six more books were added after the project was relaunched in 2016 with the victory of the DPP; the Taichung City Government and the Presidential Office helped the Academia Historica produce this work¹⁵¹. The implication of the public sector on this topic is thus still very important. What has to be looked at, though, is the structure of the Academia Historica in 2000-2008. Indeed, Chang Yen-hsien had been appointed as the head of the public institution in order to start the 228 Incident investigation. Recognised as having been a great historian, we have to note that Chang also seemed to be very close to the DPP. Indeed, Tsai Ing-wen praised him on her Facebook account, at the moment of his decease, as giving him the quality to have built a Taiwan-oriented view of the Incident, which is a good thing for the young generation. Former DPP chairman Su Tseng-chang also praised him for having built a Taiwan perspective¹⁵². It is thus more than clear, with the comments made by two important figures of the DPP, that the researches on the Incident during the Chen administration were driven by a Taiwan-centered perspective, attempting to put the Chinese perspective at the periphery. This idea can be supported as, we have seen it in the Lee Teng-hui presidency, the President of an

¹⁴⁶ SHATTUCK, T. J., *op cit.*

¹⁴⁷ SMITH, C. A., *op cit.*, p. 144.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibidem.*, p. 159.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibidem.*

¹⁵⁰ YANG, S., *Document unearthed shows double-dealing of Chiang behind 228 Incident [online]*, <https://www.taiwannews.com.tw/en/news/3103356> (consulted on April 5th, 2018).

¹⁵¹ *Ibidem.*

¹⁵² LOA, L.-s., *Nation mourns death of great historian [online]*, <http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/taiwan/archives/2014/10/05/2003601334> (consulted on April 5th, 2018).

institution/organisation creates the big direction that has to be followed in the concrete acts, researches, speeches, etc. This reversal of Taiwan being at the centre and “China” at the periphery is very important as we come back to the definition of Ernest Renan once more in order to build a Nation; there are two conditions: 1) To have a common legacy received and undivided from the people, 2) A willingness to make more great deeds together. In the discourse analysis part, we have seen how Chen stimulated the population to act in a certain way in order to make a new, beautiful, etc. country. Now, we see that it can be based on a powerful narrative centered on Taiwan, namely a history of Taiwanese people having been the victims of “a systematic slaughter and organized suppression, carried out by a foreign administration and authoritarian regime to consolidate its power¹⁵³.” This narrative achieved to be taken very seriously by a part of the population, as some families related to the victims decided in the early 2000 to create local memorial museums¹⁵⁴. This is particularly interesting to note as we see the creation of a collective remembering through social practices made by the people themselves. By these acts, we can see a translation of Chen’s discourses and policies into practices among the population. This was a core moment in the creation and the viability of the new Taiwan identity. The division between the Taiwan people and the waishengren, even more with the mainland China, seemed very important. The idea of a reunification with such a controversy and collective memory seemed heavily far away from the Taiwanese imaginary. It was also difficult for the KMT afterwards to be credible again to the people, as the DPP literally tied itself with the side of the victim of the Incident¹⁵⁵; hence a political rapprochement with the Chinese mainland coming from a KMT administration could have been done at a big cost. This could be an explanation why Ma Ying-jeou chose economic rapprochement with the mainland mostly.

As a separation between “Taiwanese” and “Chinese” was being created, the dissolution of the National Unification Council in 2006 seemed inevitable. By this act, Chen has been criticised by the pan-blue coalition on the domestic level, but also by the mainland. In an article published by the PRC government, Chen has been labelled as a “saboteur of the cross-Strait relations¹⁵⁶.” His behaviour has been qualified as secessionist in the

¹⁵³ SMITH, C. A., *op cit.*, pp. 155-156.

¹⁵⁴ CHANG, L.-c., *A Tragic Beginning Remembered: Reflections on the Dual History of the February 28 Incident in Post-Martial Law Taiwan*, Stockholm University Press, Stockholm, 2007, pp. 9-10.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 154.

¹⁵⁶ *Chen Shui-bian proves to be troublemaker: official [online]*, http://www.gov.cn/english/2006-02/08/content_182890.htm (consulted on April 3rd, 2018).

same article. Once again, the domestic support for a more defensive position vis-à-vis mainland China from a part of the society, proven by the 2004 referendum later discussed, and the general exclusive Taiwanese identity gave Chen an argument to behave more distantly towards the mainland. It also gave him the opportunity to qualify the NUC as being an “absurd product from an absurd era¹⁵⁷.” It sends us back to Chen’s “Four Noes and One Without¹⁵⁸” promised during his 2000 inauguration speech, which represent five policy-making that would not be done under Chen’s administration: no Taiwan independence, no creation of “State-to-State relations” in the Constitution, no name changing, no referendum on independence and no abolishing of the NUC. We will discuss these points; the fourth one will open the last topic that will be discussed in this chapter. We will take each “no” successively: 1) No official name change. It is true that “Taiwan” has not replaced the “ROC” in the Constitution. However, there are two remarks that have to be done. The first one is that the name “Taiwan” still was added to some official websites; it appeared as a “(Taiwan)” next to the official name of the island on the website of the President, it also appears to be the name of the island’s website (namely Taiwan.gov.tw). Hence, even if there has not been a constitutional change, the name of “Taiwan” was still used in and by the public authority in its administration and discourses. This led to an interchangeability between the two names and also in the imaginary of the people; 2) No declaration of independence. As Lee Teng-hui already noted it, with the fact of being *de facto* more or less independent, there was no necessity of proclaiming it. Chen had the same reasoning; he said that referendums on independence were unnecessary as “Taiwan” is already a sovereign State¹⁵⁹. It is particularly important to look at the behaviour rather than the law in this “China-Taiwan” case, the following point will illustrate why; 3-4) No referendum on independence and no official “State-to-State relations” established. We have to note that the 2004 referendum, in its first proposal, put the mainland China as an aggressive actor as the proposal asked whether Taiwan should acquire self-defence weapons if the peaceful negotiations were dropped by the Chinese Communist Party. As in Lee’s interview in the Deutsche Welle, the mainland is depicted as bad. It *de facto* creates two fronts facing each other through violent means as there is mention of weapons. Hence,

¹⁵⁷ *President Chen to scrap unification council [online]*, <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/President-Chen-to-scrap-unification-council-5500.html> (consulted on April 6th, 2018).

¹⁵⁸ *Chen Shui-bian proves to be troublemaker: official [online]*, http://www.gov.cn/english/2006-02/08/content_182890.htm (consulted on April 3rd, 2018).

¹⁵⁹ KAO, M. M.-T., “The Referendum Phenomenon in Taiwan: Solidification of Taiwan Consciousness?”, in *Asian Survey*, Vol. 44, No. 4, 2004, p. 594.

even if there are no name changes, no constitutional changes on the nature of the cross-Strait relation, practices still create a State-to-State relation. Through practices that change the essence of the population of the island, through the discourses that are held by the official ROC authorities, it influences the relationship concretely. The problem is that when the reality becomes too different from the principles, it would be the reality that would prevail. Indeed, how can a whole society be attached to another if the habits of both sides are not the same anymore ? We will take the case of Belgium and Luxemburg to briefly illustrate this case: when the Belgian Revolution started in 1830, Luxemburg joined it against the Netherlands and merged with the territory of the new State. When the Revolution was officially finished in 1839, the sovereignty of the current territory of Luxemburg went back to the Netherlands. In 1919, a referendum was held in Luxemburg in order to choose for its destiny: to join the French Republic or to join the Belgian monarchy once again. At 73%, the people of Luxemburg chose to join France¹⁶⁰. What is illustrated with this example is the fact that if societies are/feel too alienated from one another due to separate identity building, as it was the case with Belgium-Luxemburg after eighty years and was starting to be with the PRC-ROC, then the legal aspect does not matter at all ! If *de facto* exclusive identities are created, then two States relations are also created; 5) No dissolution of the NUC. Once again, the practices matter more: since Chen took office in 2000, no meetings had been made¹⁶¹. Therefore, officially keeping the NUC “alive” would not have changed the Taiwan-centered identity-making. Chen even said himself that “sometimes certain phrasing is used for appearance’s sake, while the crucial factor is whether the objective has been attained¹⁶².” We can interpret this by the legal aspect being for appearance’s sake, while the crucial factor is about the social practices, concerning an identity-making.

To conclude, we will make some comments about the Referendum Act and more specifically about the 2004 referendum. This referendum was constituted by two questions: 1) “If China refuses to withdraw the missiles it has targeted at Taiwan and to openly renounce the use of force against us, would you agree that the government should acquire more advanced anti-missile weapons to strengthen Taiwan’s self-defence

¹⁶⁰ *La crise politique et le référendum de 1919* [online], <http://www.luxembourg.public.lu/fr/le-grand-duche-se-presente/histoire/histoire-mots/referendum1919/index.html> (consulted on April 6th, 2018).

¹⁶¹ *Taiwan’s Chen Shui-bian abolishes unification council, guidelines(02/27/06)* [online], <http://www.china-embassy.org/eng/xnyfgk/t237219.htm> (consulted on April 6th, 2018).

¹⁶² *President Chen Shui-bian Meets With Pepperdine University Professor, Vice Chancellor* [online], <https://english.president.gov.tw/NEWS/2689> (consulted on April 6th, 2018).

capabilities?"; 2) "Would you agree that our government should engage in negotiations with China about the establishment of a "peace and stability" framework for cross-Strait interactions in order to build consensus and for the welfare of the peoples on both sides¹⁶³ ?" There are interesting remarks to make concerning the questions, some of them will concern the phrasing. The first remark is about the use of a strategy of agenda setting¹⁶⁴. In other words, during a vote, multiple modalities can be used in order to chose a final winner among the choices. Here, the strategy is to place certain choices in the right order to make one of them win in the final scenario. For example, in question 1, the choice is being in favour for a "self-defensive Taiwan" or for a "China having missiles targeting Taiwan." Obviously, the second choice will be much less popular among the citizens of the island as they are subject of potential attacks from these missiles. The problem is that the people will then vote for an increase of the Taiwanese self-defence mechanism, even though they potentially do not support the idea if there would have been a third choice advocating for a status quo for example. There is thus a manipulation that can happen concerning the agenda making, thus the selection of the two choices; this manipulation can occur even more when the representative body (here the President) sets the modalities of the vote. On a contrary, people-initiated referendums show a better choice between two options as they are made by the voters themselves. There would be less a risk of manipulation in that case, that would have served a certain policy. It is important to note that, even if not enough voters participated to the referendum, still 91.80% voted yes on the first proposal, against 21.20%. Based on that result, even if the majority wasn't achieved, it still could give a certain legitimacy for Chen's government to purchase self-defence weapons. This would have as an effect to create two camps facing each other, as described earlier. I will also make a brief remark on the phrasing of the proposals: the choice of words matter in order to create a national, collective sentiment. Indeed, the first proposal put Taiwan as a victim of threat vis-à-vis China's missiles and hence a feeling of danger, be it real or not ! In the second proposal, the use of inclusive phrasing like "our government", "the peoples of the two sides" matter a lot as explained in Lee Teng-hui's chapter. We see a creation of a national community in the beginning through the common "Taiwanese" government, and this community as being opposed to the "other

¹⁶³ KAO, M. M.-T., *op cit.*, p. 603.

¹⁶⁴ LIN, J.-w., *TAIWAN'S REFERENDUM ACT AND THE STABILITY OF THE STATUS QUO* [online], <http://www.ipsas.sinica.edu.tw/image/ipsas/1/27.pdf> (consulted on April 7th, 2018).

side” at the end of the proposal. This other side has already been described as dangerous in the first proposal. This could be an explanation for such results, as the second proposal has been approved by 92.05% of the voters, even if once 50% of the entire voting population did not participate.

In 2004, though, with his re-election and the “high approval” for the referendum, Chen talked about a “rising Taiwan consciousness¹⁶⁵.” It is not very surprising as, in the referendum, “Taiwan” has been opposed to “China”, and it seems that “China” has been alienated even harder in Mandarin as the phrasing and the use of “Taiwan” -instead of ROC- seemed to create an image of independent Nation and individual political entity. Second, “Zhongguo” (literally China) has even been replaced by the word “Zhonggong” (Communist China)¹⁶⁶. As there is a great aversion for communism on the island, the “other side” thus seemed even more different from “us.” Hence, with such a technique of agenda setting coupled with the phrasing game, a “no”-vote would have been impossible to imagine. On the other hand, a “yes” would have given Chen’s government and presidency even more legitimacy to apply a separatist, or at least an estrangement policy as the deciders in international relations base themselves on their domestic public opinion. It is very important to note as a referendum made by the President would also take the role of a plebiscite at the same time. A plebiscite is a vote by the people with the goal only to determine whether the population is in favour or not of the political regime. As Chen Shui-bian’s government based itself on identity questions rather than economical topics –the island’s growth rate went down of 2.2% in 2002–, having the approval of the population on identity-based referendums would be like a plebiscite.

In conclusion, the DPP had all the benefits of introducing the referendum as: it could bypass the Legislative Yuan composed in majority of KMT members from 2000 to 2008, it could give more credit and legitimacy to the Executive Yuan’s policy on identity and the party gained an image of progressive and democratic vis-à-vis the representation-favouring KMT. The first point could be argued favourably as, since 2016 the DPP has a majority in the Legislative Yuan, no referendum has been initiated by Tsai Ing-wen. The last point is also important as the DPP acquired an image favourable to the Taiwanese population and history: first because it gave a great importance to the Taiwanese perspective of the 228 Incident and also because they gave

¹⁶⁵ KAO, M. M.-T., *op cit.*, p. 592.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 603.

more democratic rights to the people of the island through the referendum. The KMT on the other hand could have suffered of being against political progress if they were too opposed to the DPP referendum initiatives, which was the case in the first talks about the Referendum Act. They would also have suffered from the image that island's natives had of being ruled by mainlanders if the Nationalists based themselves too much on political representation only once in power. This point is very important concerning the exclusive identity-making of Taiwanese, as being ruled by "foreigners" is a strong factor. What we can say about the reunification project is that it would have been more and more difficult to imagine for the population of the island as they were growing more distant vis-à-vis the mainland. As the identity of the population became steadily more Taiwanese exclusive, both sides lost some common grounds even if their culture remained more or less the same. Hence, how could there have been peaceful reunification if the ROC citizens were greatly divided on identity questions ?

Chapter 4: Attempt of re-sinicisation under the Ma Ying-jeou administration :

Ma Ying-jeou is known for having ended the Taiwan-centered policies set in place by his predecessor, in order to "re-sinicize" the island and make a rapprochement with the mainland. However, we will see in both Ma's discourses and in the consequences of his policies, that the re-sinicization did not enjoy a lot of support, and even reinforced the exclusive Taiwanese identity among the population. As a result, it led to a feeling of being against further rapprochement with the mainland, during the second term of Ma's administration. We will see how this process has been developed, continuing on Chen's premises of a divided population.

4.1. Discourse analysis:

The quotes that will be used in this section come from a document called "Tracing "Taiwanization" Processes in Taiwanese Presidential Statements in Times of Cross-Strait Rapprochement." This document covered the Lee, Chen and Ma administrations concerning the "taiwanization" and already provided us with interesting information in

the previous chapters, notifying us of important factors improving the Taiwan identity with the first two Presidents (eg. Lee's "New Taiwanese", Chen's use of the 228 Incident, etc.). It fits our present study as the document approaches the problem of "self and others", the ethnic and cultural dimension, a political dimension (divided in political economy, regional peace and the island's role in the cross-Strait relations) in Ma's discourses. As these topics fit the critical discourse analysis, it constitutes a good material for analysis; moreover, some quotes are extracted from Inaugural speeches, new year speeches, etc., so directed at the people of the island. It is important to note as the goal of speeches treated here is to have an impact on the population in order to change their identities.

First of all, we can note an immediate change in some official names when Ma took office. We had noted in the third chapter how the names of official web pages (Presidential web page, etc.) have been added a "(Taiwan)" after the name "ROC", the replacement of "Chunghua Post Company" to "Taiwanese Postal Company". With Ma, all these changes have been removed and replaced with China that had been forgotten, objectified under eight years of Chen presidency. However, some nuance will have to be made concerning this will to "re-sinicize" the island, and the problems that will follow. The authors note how Ma, as Chen in a sense, used both "Taiwan" and "ROC" references in order to promote the island¹⁶⁷. It can seem natural as Ma also used the "New Taiwanese" reference during his Taipei mayor campaign, as seen in chapter 2. We will see a quote of Ma, destined to a large domestic public, that will give us a first example of the use of "Taiwan" references beside his "sinicization" renaming: "[...] Taiwan's new journey has just begun. But, it makes me proud to stand here before you and say with great certainty that this journey has started on the right path. From the first day of my inauguration, I had one grand vision for Taiwan and its people, which is to establish Taiwan at the forefront of global trends. This means taking a responsible stake in upholding international peace and security, revitalizing our economy and re-infusing it with some of the most innovative technologies, and re-strengthening the political and social fabric of our society for the benefit of our people and those who would look to us for inspiration¹⁶⁸." There are two interpretations that will be explained concerning this quote. First, the authors note that this "grand vision for Taiwan" suggests that Ma wants

¹⁶⁷ LAMS, L., LIAO, X. L.-w., *op cit.*, p. 79.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 81.

to differentiate the island under his own presidency, compared the island under the eight years of the DPP in office. Chen Shui-bian already used this technique of “othering”, not only vis-à-vis the mainland, but also concerning the island’s past. This othering was illustrated by a reinterpretation of the past, creating a Taiwan-centered history of important events, instead of one favouring the mainlanders. By this process, we saw that this Chinese-centered past had been presented as “bad”, hence replaced by a “good” alternative, as it was the history of “them” (waishengren) versus “our” (benshengren) history. With Ma, the same sort of technique has been used in order to put the eight years of the DPP management between brackets. The quote shows it: under Chen, the island did not have a lot of technological development, a strong politics and social corpus, thus no benefit for the people and for the island’s international prestige. There had been an attempt of Ma to create a “positive self¹⁶⁹”, thanks to an economic revival, a rapprochement with mainland China and a strong commitment on sovereignty and identity¹⁷⁰. Indeed, Ma launched a campaign on the Taiwan’s sovereignty as the ROC, with the future of the island decided by its 23 million people only¹⁷¹. This campaign was based on his own “Taiwanese identity¹⁷²”, which echoes to his mayor campaign once again. This is very strong and it leads to the second interpretation, more personal this time. This one adds a reflexion that goes further, as we will interpret the sense of the words used by Ma in the quote, as well as the ones used during his campaign. The main issue is that, whilst having restored the ancient ROC names in the public services, Ma did not do the same in his speeches, as he only mentioned “Taiwan” and his Taiwanese identity during and shortly after election-periods. Furthermore, he promoted Taiwan’s economic and politic wealth, its sovereignty decided by the 23 million people living on the island. Regarding a reunification policy, these terms and ideas do not really lean to it, but rather to a continuing status quo. Indeed, Ma promotes a development on all points for Taiwan, not for the ROC or for China, the latter could also have been an option as Ma promoted the 1992 Consensus during his two terms. As the authors noted, the President used both radical sides (pro-Chinese camp and pro-Taiwanese camp) in order to create a unified, objective administration that would tackle economic development and cross-Strait complementarity rather than divisive ethnic and cultural issues. However, the problem is that, when using both sides, Ma creates a

¹⁶⁹ *Ibidem.*

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 82.

¹⁷¹ *Ibidem.*

¹⁷² *Ibidem.*

confusion as the policies are leaning towards a Chinese rapprochement, while the discourses are still mentioning Taiwanese identities, etc. It then seems very complicated to believe in an entire commitment for reunification in that case. Moreover, two points can also be noted. First, when using references as “Taiwanese identity”, Ma continues a DPP-policy in a certain way, as it legitimises the existence and rise of this identity, be it dual or exclusive. As a matter of fact, even when the people were supportive of his economic plans during the first four years, the exclusive Taiwanese identity continued to progress at the depend of the “both” identity and the Chinese exclusive one, as shown in table 3 of the annex. Second, as already mentioned slightly in the previous chapters, subordinating the ethnic and cultural issues to the economics and international relations proved to be a wrong strategy. Indeed, what makes an identity and the opinion of a Nation its culture, the imaginary of this society. These were being transformed by the dynamic launched by Chen Shui-bian. Hence, how can a political economy directed at the mainland be accepted by the island’s population, if its culture is gradually shifting from the mainland¹⁷³ ?

This point can be further illustrated and explained with the quotes in the “Ethnic and Cultural dimension” part of the source. The notion of “homeland” will be used here, thus a very important concept constituting the identity of a Nation. Two quotes will be presented: “Taiwan is not my birthplace, but it is where I was raised and the resting place of my family. I am forever grateful to society for accepting and nurturing this post-war immigrant. I will protect Taiwan with all my heart and resolutely move forward. I will do my very best¹⁷⁴”, concluded by “My dear compatriots, from this moment on, we must roll up our sleeves to build up our homeland¹⁷⁵.” We can see that for Ma, the homeland is thus the land that hosts and that is forged by the “natives” on the one hand and by the “immigrants” on the other hand. This theory echoes strongly the one suggested by Lee Teng-hui concerning the New Taiwanese, being native or coming from the mainland and working to make the island a greater place. Therefore, we can once again continue to make a link with the theory of Ernest Renan, especially when Ma used the phrasing “to build up our homeland”, as it tends to create a dynamic of making common great deeds, suggested by Renan. Following the construction of a Nation, the authors note Ma’s initiatives to create an “ethnic harmony”, illustrated in the

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 85.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 83.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibidem.*

following quote during his Inaugural speech: “[...] endeavour to create an environment that is humane, rational and pluralistic, one that fosters political reconciliation and coexistence. We will promote harmony among sub-ethnic groups and between the old and new immigrants¹⁷⁶.” We clearly see that Ma promotes a certain peace among the population through a peace between the different sub-groups, thus leading to a communitarian society. However, this creates multiple problems. Indeed, using the communitarian strategy divided the population more than it brought them together ! Be it a political- or an ethnic-based, a Nation implies that a society forms a unitary group, in order to achieve great deeds together ! With a fragmented society, it is impossible for a State to take great decisions, and it will be proven in the next part of this chapters with the rise of several social movements against the rapprochement with the mainland led by Ma. Once again, the problem in the re-sinicization process of Ma was that he was too unclear concerning his symbolic view of the island’s society. This process had indeed been too obstructed by Ma’s references to Taiwan, making it insufficiently strong enough to change the identity of the people to a more Chinese side. Unsurprisingly, and as the authors noted it too, Ma stayed too close to the definition of New Taiwanese implemented by Lee, as it is once again proved with the following quote: “We should not try to tackle the Taiwan identity issue based on political stance or a sense of ethnic belonging, since our future as well as our descendants’ futures will lie on this soil¹⁷⁷.” By refusing to tackle the symbolic aspect of “being part of the Taiwanese island”, and linking the people’s future to the island’s soil, how could Ma promote a rapprochement with the Chinese mainland afterwards ?

A researcher cited in the paper noted that Ma’s Chinese-leaning rhetoric had not been well received by the society as it went against the evolution of the Taiwanese exclusive identity. Furthermore, he stated that the contacts made between both societies following the rapprochement policies made this exclusive identity increase¹⁷⁸. The latter will be proved, indeed, by the explanation of the rise of the social movements ; however, I must make a remark about the first explanation. It is true to say that the more the KMT showed a proximity with the communist mainland, the more the people were growing a Taiwanese exclusive identity, as they felt estranged from their State and from the mainland. However, I think that this increase of exclusive identity also happened

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 83.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 85.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibidem.*

because Ma kept an equal footing between the Taiwanese side and the Chinese side in his discourses, and that he did not go far enough in promoting the “Chinese-ness” of the island. Indeed, if Ma intended to implement a “re-sinicization”, then it was crucial to tackle the cultural aspect as well, rather than staying in a centrist position, not convincing enough. As a matter of fact, Lee and Chen moreover did embrace this extreme symbolic transformation, and it resulted in a divisive society, leaning to an exclusive Taiwanese identity in 26 years. This shows that, even if a discourse is supported by the public authority, it becomes accepted in the end no matter what controversy has been created.

A big part of Ma’s policies has been the political economy field. In order to achieve a “better Taiwan’s democracy¹⁷⁹”, Ma indeed put the importance on objective matters, even when it comes to justice. For example, his sense of “justice” and “democracy” is approached with a legal sense, whereas Chen had put the emphasis on the social aspect, a social justice¹⁸⁰ –especially on the victims of the 228 Incident–. Therefore, Ma’s “sinicization” went through a rapprochement with the mainland on the economic field, as having objective policies. He stated that “Taiwan must grasp hold of current trends in the global economy, participate in the regional economic integration of East Asia, and explore and develop new markets¹⁸¹ .” Indeed, “Taiwan” had to “upgrade its international competitiveness and recover lost opportunities¹⁸²”, lost during the previous administration. The idea is thus to lead people back towards a Chinese identity, after seeing the benefits that it could bring the people when cooperating with the mainland. Once again, though, Ma encountered a great scepticism among the population especially in his second term, leading to big demonstrations from social movements, as it will be explained in the next part. How can we explain that ? Once again, the reason lies in the fact that there was no symbolic that backed these economic initiatives. Indeed, Ma’s discourses were still referring a lot to Taiwanese symbols; how can a rapprochement be supported, even on the economic field, if both sides do not share the same symbols and values ? The people cannot be linked to each other only through money. A good example of this can be the European Union which, even after a common market and common currency, does not enjoy support from several nations. Proof of this is the

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 87.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibidem.*

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 88.

¹⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 87.

failed 2005 referenda in France and in the Netherlands, making a failure of the European Constitution. The economic field had not been backed by a political support, concluded the famous Guy Verhofstadt and Daniel Cohn-Bendit in their book “For Europe”¹⁸³. Same for Ma, if a referendum had been held on whether or not the people were supporting the economic rapprochement, it probably would have been a failure as well for the same reasons.

A question can also arise on the will of Ma to launch a process of reunification, even as a final goal, regarding his speeches on Taiwan’s position in the international relations. Several quotes will be presented, then the question can be explained. Ma often used the concept of “credibility” and “dignity” that have to be restored, as it is illustrated with as following: “At the same time, we are committed to cross-Strait peace and regional stability. The ROC must restore its reputation in the international community as a peacemaker¹⁸⁴”; he also hoped that “the two sides of the Taiwan Strait can seize this historic opportunity to achieve peace and co-prosperity¹⁸⁵”, linking the concept of “peace” with the concept of “status quo” according to the authors. The problem that arises here is that, for Ma, it seems that Taiwan is again acting in order to maximise its benefit by regaining a place on its own among other States on the international scene. Indeed, the ROC has to restore its reputation by becoming a peacemaker, by achieving *co-prosperity* with the mainland, thus becoming an actor on the international scene. Two things have to be noted: 1) How can there be reunification after a rapprochement with mainland China, if it is for the island’s reputation’s sake, as this was the justification used ? 2) The international laws do not recognise Nations, etc. beside States as legitimate actors in the international field. Hence, this will to preserve status quo and to act as an actor can be seen as a strong symbol of keeping a Taiwanese sovereignty and autonomy, beside the mainland China.

To conclude this part, Ma’s policies and discourses can be resumed in the next quote, that had been pronounced at a presidential press conference the next day of his inauguration: “As I stated in yesterday’s inaugural address, the most important things for me to do are to revitalize the economy, rebuild a clean government, and promote social harmony and cross-Strait peace. As for our foreign relations, we will work to

¹⁸³ *Debout l'Europe: Debate avec Guy Verhofstadt et Daniel et Cohn-Bendit [FULL VIDEO HD] [online]*, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2Ikt_CsRQek (consulted on April 26th, 2018).

¹⁸⁴ LAMS, L., LIAO, X. L.-w., *op cit.*, p. 89.

¹⁸⁵ *Ibidem*.

renew mutual trust with countries like the United States and to achieve peace and co-prosperity with mainland China by resuming the interrupted negotiations with the mainland on the basis of the '92 consensus¹⁸⁶.” Our biggest remark on Ma’s discourses will be repeated, and make an echo to our theoretical part. Indeed, Ma tried to reverse the “Taiwanese” *topos* by using a constructivism promoted by Wendt and Finnemore; in other words, his bet had been that the identity of the island would change back to a more Chinese-side after cooperating more with the mainland on the international field. Indeed, it leads us to the theory that domestic identities change and adapt themselves to international systems, here on the regional level as Ma advocated for more participation in the regional peace-building. However, it did not happen as the “Taiwan exclusive” identity rose from 48.4% in 2008, to 54.3% in 2012, 60.4% in 2014 and finally back to 58.2% in 2016, as showed in table 3 of the annex. The problem was that, even if the economic reforms were more or less supported during Ma’s first term, it only worked for a moment but led to a domestic deadlock with the social movements¹⁸⁷ as, once again, the socio-politics had not been tackled by Ma on the domestic level in order to support his economic reforms, as it is the case in the European Union according to the two (ex)euro-deputies.

A last proof that Ma did not approach the “Taiwanese problematic” will be shown subsequently. The first is his renaming of the “national identity” into “national benefit¹⁸⁸”, in order to avoid stressing the “security” aspect of the concept. However, if Ma wanted to make a greater symbolic change in the domestic level concerning the “national interest”, then the word “national” should have been replaced instead ! Indeed, by keeping this word in the rephrasing, Ma kept a sense of “Nation”, thus separate from the other on the mainland; people could still feel attached to some sort of Taiwanese Nation if the official authorities kept using this reference. In Belgium, the separatist President of the Chamber understood this well, for example by raising a possibility to suppress the term “national” in “national defence commission¹⁸⁹”. In the end, we can say that Ma opted for softer themes and phrasings, a contrary to Chen that completely tackled the question of identity with extreme words: “Taiwan is part of the world but

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 91.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 88.

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 91-92.

¹⁸⁹ RTBF, *Chambre: la N-VA veut rebaptiser la commission de défense "nationale" [online]*, https://www.rtbf.be/info/belgique/detail_la-defense-nationale-echauffe-les-esprits-au-parlement?id=8399691 (consulted on April 26th, 2018).

absolutely not part of China. Taiwan should wipe out the narrow-minded “One China” or “cross-Strait” framework in order to reconfirm/ reaffirm Taiwan’s appropriate status and international personality¹⁹⁰.” However, it seems that Chen had the best tactic in order to change the population’s identity in order to create a distance with the mainland, hence moving towards independence –even in the long run–, as claiming to be “Taiwanese” exclusively became something common nowadays, but impossible to imagine during the Chiang period.

4.2. Policy-making analysis:

In this section, three matters will be presented: Ma’s political-economic reforms towards the mainland, their effects on the socio-political field (identity, change or not of the political culture,...) and finally the reaction of social movements.

The relations with the mainland stabilised with the new KMT administration, after Chen exacerbated the Taiwanese identity¹⁹¹. Indeed, Ma promoted Taiwan’s status-quo with his slogan “no unification, no independence, and no use of force¹⁹²”, thus calming down the tensions that existed during the last decade. The goal was to build a stable relationship, based on the 1992 Consensus abandoned by Lee after his interview in the Deutsche Welle. After winning the Legislative Yuan as well, nothing could oppose the island’s- and mainland’s administrations to launch a series of meetings between the SEF and the ARATS, to discuss and open direct flights between the two areas –which were connected by Hong-Kong concerning flights– and the promotion from tourist group tours from the mainland¹⁹³.

On the second meeting between the SEF and ARATS, the stress had been put on transport, as four agreements had been concluded: 1) Air transportation such as cross-straits daily operation of charter flights; 2) Marine transportation, including direct cross-straits voyages; 3) Postal mail services, including direct cross-straits delivery. During the meetings in the 90s, the postal services were already at stake, as the ARATS already advocated for direct deliveries by the postal services, while the SEF wanted to keep an

¹⁹⁰ LAMS, L., LIAO, X. L.-w., *op cit.*, p. 92.

¹⁹¹ YASUHIRO, M., “Cross-Strait Relations under the Ma Ying-jeou administration: From Economic to Political Dependence?”, in *Journal of Contemporary East Asia Studies*, Vol. 4, No. 2, 2015, p. 7.

¹⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 8.

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

indirect link through themselves¹⁹⁴; and 4) Food safety, such as the establishment of an immediate cross-Straits reporting system¹⁹⁵. On the third meeting in 2009, both sides made an agreement on widening the flight accesses, beside talks for financial cooperation¹⁹⁶. Concerning the broadening of flight transportation, only seasoned travels to Taiwan were available until then. A policy of “Three Links” had been achieved, being: telecommunication, transportation and commerce. Ma even proposed further talks on the latter, with the proposal of an “Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement (ECFA)” in 2010, consisting in a sort of free trade agreement with the abolition of custom duties¹⁹⁷. The second great free trade agreement, called CSSTA, will be the one igniting the civil society and start riots from social movements, discussed later..

I would like to make a particular remark on these agreements, before going further on. Indeed, it is said that the details of the agreements were not different from what is necessary for regular bilateral agreements¹⁹⁸ [between two countries]. A problem that could arise for a reunification perspective is that, these agreements could be re-interpreted in order to make them of international matters. Indeed, as some deputies tried to reinterpret the 1992 agreements as being made by two distinct countries to the Constitutional Court, the same could happen once again with these new accords. Once again, concrete matters are more important than principles, which means that even if for the KMT and CCP administrations these agreements are under the “one-China principle”, it can still be questioned because of the concrete way the agreements were made. The risk is even more credible as, compared to the Lee administration, the Taiwanese exclusive identity rose considerably, hence the Constitutional Court could not avoid the matter as it did before due to public pressure if it were to happen.

Another remark that could be interesting to know is the following: during the 2008-2012 legislature, the president of the SEF has been Chiang Pin-kung. It is interesting as, even if he promoted the “Three Links” policy, Chiang had been a Minister of Lee, first of the Economic Affairs during 1993-1996, then of the Economic Planning and

¹⁹⁴ XU, S., *op cit.*, p. 123.

¹⁹⁵ KWAN, C. H., *Improved Cross-Straits Relations under the Ma Ying-jeou Administration - A path to peaceful reunification* – [online], <https://www.rieti.go.jp/en/china/09063001.html> (consulted on April 27th, 2018).

¹⁹⁶ *Ibidem.*

¹⁹⁷ *Ibidem.*

¹⁹⁸ YASUHIRO, M., *op cit.*, p. 11.

Development during 1996-2000. As we have seen it in chapter 2, Lee had given high responsibilities to “natives” of the KMT, in order to promote his ideology of a transformed ROC. Even if Chiang did not express himself openly on this topic, we can imagine that having been part of the systemic reshuffle means he shared a part of Lee’s ideas. We can thus ask ourselves if these motives played a part during the negotiations with the ARATS or not, in order to keep a certain Taiwanese autonomy, which would have been a restriction for the prospect of reunification.

This question is even more legitimated by the fact that the ECFA, discussed under Chiang’s presidency at the SEF, had been tougher to negotiate. Indeed, the final agreement had been delayed by one year, as the crucial elements were: investment protection, industrial cooperation, and the freedom and safety of businesspeople and their families¹⁹⁹. It was preferred to reach provisory agreements points by points, before concluding a whole package at once. We can see a feeling of fear somewhere on the “Taiwanese” side concerning safety and liberty.

All these agreements led to a rising dependence of the island towards the mainland, especially as the PRC joined the WTO in 2001 and increased its economic importance in the world. Travels between the two territories increased as well, with millions of people going to the ROC; 4 million tourists were coming from the mainland in 2014, starting with only 300.000 in 2008 when the access has been opened²⁰⁰. Moreover, 1 million people from the island went living on the mainland, while 300.000 mainlanders came to live on the island as spouses. Finally, the ROC also accepted exchange students from the PRC as there has been a lift on the ban of “Chinese” students²⁰¹.

It could seem natural that, given their common culture and language, both sides were growing closer to each other, to create a day-to-day interaction between the people. However, a problem will arise following these daily contacts, related to the diagnostic made in the first section. Indeed, as seen in the table 4 of the annex, we can see the feeling of the people concerning the evolution of the China-Taiwan relations. We can see a steady 40% of “just right”, a “too fast” growing second at around 30% after 2008 and a “too slow” falling to 20% and sometimes lower. Let us see it at key dates: concerning the “too fast”, it goes from 20% in 2007, to 38% in the end of 2008 (!), 28%

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 17-18.

²⁰¹ *Ibidem.*

in 2012, and finally 38% in 2014. For the “too slow”, it starts with 35% in 2007, falling to 19% in 2008, then 12% in 2012 and finally 20% in 2015. We can see extreme changes of sometimes 10% of difference between two successive years, but in general the “too fast” opinion stays around 30% for a majority of Ma’s presidency. By this, we can sense that the rapprochement with the mainland creates a suspicion for at least 30% of the population. Looking at table 3 of the annex, we can see that these numbers are more or less the same as the people feeling exclusively “Taiwanese”. We can even notice an increase of the exclusive Taiwanese identity as time goes on, reaching 60.6% in 2014 ! The explanation could lie in the fact that, the people from the ROC having kept their “Taiwanese symbols” as Chen left them, they saw the differences of values and of political culture when frequenting the mainlander tourists. Indeed, their encounters highlighted their differences²⁰². Indeed, as Ma did not tackle the symbols of a Taiwan-centered society, these factors created a negative spill-over with the economic interdependence. Let us take an example with the French speaking part of Belgium and France: the first has symbols of monarchy and is attached to it, while the second is attached to a model of Republic. Even if both sides share a language and some common culture, if the great symbols of their antagonist political culture are not reframed in order to be compatible, this antagonism will grow instead of being lessened in case of increasing interdependence, in order to reach a reunification. We here have the perfect examples of what was explained in the first section, of the mistake that Ma did by avoiding societal questions. Especially in our current days, the societal aspect tends to become more and more important in the political questions, while the economic part is a way to express the changes in the society. Indeed, populations support trade agreements with other populations in which they tend to recognize themselves. In the 2008-2014 Taiwan, the people did not recognise themselves in the mainland.

We have to notice something, though, that may seem intriguing. Indeed, we can see a first rise of the “both” Chinese and Taiwanese identity rise since 2014, while at the same time the exclusive Taiwanese identity fell. At the same time, table 5 shows us a (slight) increase in “maintain status quo, move toward unification” in the preferences of the unification-independence stances, at the depend of the “maintain status quo, move toward independence” and “status quo forever”. Paradoxically, looking at the evolution of Presidential elections results, we can see a large fall of KMT support in 2016, which

²⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 23.

can maybe be related to these trends too. The first trends are very intriguing as the KMT had lost the 2014 local elections by having less votes and gains than the DPP; social movements also hit their peak point in 2014 with the Sunflower movement occupying the Legislative Yuan for three weeks ! My thoughts were that younger people, more globalised and detached than their elders to Taiwanese symbols, were the one supporting a rapprochement with the mainland, but the Sunflower movement riot tends to annihilate this argument as it was a student movement. Lacking information on this sudden reversal, it remains a question yet to answer. On the other hand, we have to note that the Taiwanese exclusive identity remains largely supported by the population even in 2018 and that “move toward unification later” remains more supported than “move toward unification later” too; what we see now is only a *trend* of reversal.

We will finally discuss the topic of social movements, mostly represented by the Sunflower movement as, symbolically, their actions had a big impact. In 2014, as we said, students occupied the Legislative Yuan during three weeks in order to show their opposition to the CSSTA, the second part of the trade agreements following the ECFA and concerning services. The interesting factor to notice is the support given to this movement; indeed the Sunflower movement has been supported in their occupation by: the public opinion, the opposition party DPP, but more importantly by the Assembly President²⁰³, Wang Jin-pyng ! This is particularly important as Wang was thus member of the KMT and obliged Ma to listen to the people’s claim and to not make a use of force²⁰⁴. As a result, Ma effectively did not use force to repress the movement as it was heavily followed by the public opinion. By this example, we see that the KMT has shown a terrible weakness against the anti-rapprochement supporters, as even high figures of the party wanted to compromise with the students. Such events of Parliament occupation and the sharing of power by the Executive Yuan with a private group is indeed hard to imagine in other democratic States... This was another occasion where parts of the KMT went completely against the core value of the party, which normally tends to seek unification with the mainland. Indeed, discussing the terms of a (economic) rapprochement with the mainland means there is a possibility to further the status quo, as Ma did in the end drop the trade agreement. Ma thus showed a confusing vision of

²⁰³ *Ibid.*, p. 31.

²⁰⁴ Taipei Times, *Wang promises a solution, response to students’ appeals [online]*, <http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/front/archives/2014/03/21/2003586173> (consulted on May 4th, 2018).

re-sinicization and rapprochement between the two areas, as his will seems very flexible and sometimes re-oriented to the continuing of the Taiwanese status quo.

The KMT once again lost enormous credibility as they seemed to let their core values and power drop when opposition tended to appear. It has been reflected in the 2014 local elections where the DPP had more electoral gain and gathered more popular votes than the KMT, forcing Ma to resign as party-leader²⁰⁵. We could imagine that this failure also had an impact on the 2016 Presidential elections, as the Taiwanese exclusive identity kept rising along with Ma's unpopularity²⁰⁶. This shows that, even if the ROC was experiencing a better economic situation thanks to the reforms, Ma failed to gain support of the population due to a lack of symbolic reforms too, as explained in the first part already. We still have to acknowledge the strange fact that, in parallel, the population's identity was changing towards a more "both" identity since 2014, the same year of the occupation and KMT electoral failure...

Indeed, the Sunflower movement continued to play an important role in the popular culture even after the 2014 occupation, as in the 2015 Golden Melody music awards ceremony, the anthem of the movement won the award for the best song²⁰⁷. The ceremony was even broadcasted in other countries, except in mainland China and in Singapore, which gave an even bigger audience for the Movement. Furthermore, as they came at the ceremony, the Movement held a banner with the following sentence: "Today Demolish Dapu, Tomorrow Demolish the Government"²⁰⁸. The Dapu incident is referring to a controversial case of eminent domain, thus public expropriation of private land. The "tomorrow demolish the government" is a very strong opposition and is even more powerful as the movement had the capacity to change the political agenda, the ECFA having been put aside by Ma, and afterwards to influence the civil society in their voting preferences²⁰⁹. This is why the sharing of power from the government, by making compromises, was even more tragic for the KMT as the State is supposed to have a monopoly of power. A negative spillover for the governmental administration emerged, as the more the Sunflower movement gained support, the more it diminished support for the Executive Yuan, leading to more support for the social movement, etc.

²⁰⁵ YASUHIRO, M., *op cit.*, p. 32.

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 30.

²⁰⁷ FELL, D., *Social movements in Taiwan after 2008, From the strawberries to the sunflowers and beyond*, Abingdon, Routledge, 2017, p. 1.

²⁰⁸ *Ibidem.*

²⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

Indeed, there has been a correlation between the rise of activism after 2012, and a decline in KMT support²¹⁰. The root of the movement, however, started with a fear of a growing Chinese factor with the return of the KMT²¹¹. Indeed, with the growing dependence of the island towards the PRC, the latter took more and more importance in the public life in the ROC. We can see here the impact that Lee and Chen left on the Taiwanese society, as only the election of the KMT candidate triggered a reaction from a part of society, which can be verified by the sudden rise of “too fast” evolving cross-Strait relations feelings in table 4. Only after, the different social movements evolved towards alliances between each other in order to make a great opposition to the economic trade agreement²¹². Finally, the emergence of a perception of a return of authoritarian government practices also motivated the movements to promote activism²¹³. Once again, we can see the impact of Chen’s “otherisation” of the “old Taiwan”, under the Chiang regime; indeed presented as bad for eight years, it then created a fear for a “return to authoritarian ages” when the KMT administration used police force to maintain demonstrations. Hence, the administration has also suffered from a somewhat negative image on that perspective as well, making it too hard to make a strong campaign for the 2016 elections.

Chapter 5: Return of Lee- and Chen’s heritage under the Tsai Ing-wen administration :

Tsai Ing-wen is characterised as being committed to the status quo. Also, the question of the identity will not be stressed by Tsai, as Chen did it, in favour of the question of sovereignty and democracy during her presidency. It is characterised by the following quote in her Inaugural speech: “I was elected President in accordance with the Constitution of the Republic of China, thus it is my responsibility to safeguard the sovereignty and territory of the Republic of China²¹⁴.” As we can see it again on the table 3 of the annex, more and more people are developing a “both” identity, at the cost of the exclusive Taiwanese identity that, nevertheless, stays at majority with 55.3%.

²¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

²¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

²¹² *Ibid.*, p. 6.

²¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

²¹⁴ Focus Taiwan, *Full text of President Tsai's inaugural address [online]*, <http://focustaiwan.tw/news/aip1/201605200008.aspx> (consulted on May 18th, 2018).

What will be shown here is that, even if explicit clashes of identities are not made, it does not *per se* mean that identity is not (trying to be) exploited and modified. In fact, a lot of topics and practices used by Lee and Chen will come back with Tsai. The topic of transitional justice and constitutional reforms will thus be discussed here, among other matters, as they are very important subjects. Two remarks have to be noted: 1) this chapter will be shorter than the previous ones, as only two years of Tsai presidency have passed; 2) gathering, for once, discourse- and policy-analysis will be relevant as the topics can be quickly analysed simultaneously. The discourses used will mainly come from Tsai's Inaugural speech, as it is supposed to show the guideline of the presidency. Other quotes, depending on the topic, will also be extracted of newspaper articles about the concerned topics, mainly from the Focus Taiwan and Taiwan News journals as they are available in English.

5.1. Discourse- and policy-analysis:

To begin with the roots of this presidency, Tsai benefited from the Sunflower movement dynamics of 2014 in order to win the election largely, also in the Legislative Yuan. On the 3rd of December 2016, Tsai gave a call to Donald Trump newly elected too, in order to congratulate him; followed afterwards a tweet from the US President recalling on this conversation, stating: "The President of Taiwan CALLED ME today to wish me congratulations on winning the Presidency. Thank you!"²¹⁵ We have to note here the enormous legitimacy that Tsai benefited during her first year, with a great political victory and a confirmation from the President of the US calling her the "President of Taiwan." It was even more *habile* of her to make that call, as it benefited the DPP presidency of a large visibility in the media, being the President of *Taiwan* ! As a matter of fact, the topic even reached the discussions of an international relations seminar in our faculty at the UCL. This "*habile*" characteristics should be remembered, as it will be expressed a few times more in this chapter.

Symbolic images can be created by the political structure in itself, as we saw it with the reshuffle of the personalities in the KMT under Lee. Therefore it is interesting to note

²¹⁵ TIERNY, H., *SCHOLARLY HANDLING CROSS-STRAIT RELATIONS: Tsai presidency [online]*, <http://www.iris-france.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/Asia-focus-11-20-12-16.pdf> (consulted on May 18th, 2018), p. 2.

that, after mentioning a will to have political unity in order to go forward²¹⁶, Tsai opened some ministries to KMT figures. David Lee, ancient ROC representative to Belgium under Chen, Vice Minister and Minister of the Government Information Office under Lee and member of the KMT for some time, took this opportunity to become the Minister of Foreign Affairs from 2016 to 2018 until a reshuffle²¹⁷. Chiu Kuo-Cheng, also affiliated to the pan-blue side, became Minister of the Veterans Affairs Council after the reshuffle. We said it, Tsai is a habile political figure. Indeed, by giving these positions to KMT figures, it could have been a way to show/do multiple factors: maybe offering them minister positions had been a way to taiwanize these politicians, the same way some parties tried to “belgianise” some independentist N-VA persons by giving them federal responsibilities²¹⁸. Indeed, the largely “green” State would be the one influencing the few “blue” ministers in this case, rather than the opposite. Also, we can imagine that following these adhesions, the tactic was to break some KMT symbols, as it would mean their values are compatible with some of the DPP, thus also on the cross-Strait relations. The same happened after the French Presidential elections, with the right-wing party knowing a fundamental crisis after some of their figures joined the centrist President²¹⁹.

On the economic field, where Tsai raised a big expectation, two decisions are particularly interesting to note in our subject. The first one is the commitment in the 2010 ECFA, but not in the CSSTA²²⁰ that had been put aside by Ma in 2014. We can consider that this is a sign of willingness to continue on the public supported status quo; however there is another commitment made by Tsai, in which she puts an importance, which is a need to increase the efforts in the national defence. Indeed, in 2015, she said in Washington that she would “increase Taiwan’s defence capabilities with the objective of creating a credible deterrence against the PLA and promised the creation of 1,000 jobs, especially in the missile industry²²¹.” Moreover, the creation of cyber-forces

²¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

²¹⁷ STRONG, M., *Taiwan replaces foreign, defense and China ministers in reshuffle* [online], <https://www.taiwannews.com.tw/en/news/3370030> (consulted on May 18th, 2018).

²¹⁸ RTBF, *Le "chauffeur" de De Wever chef de cabinet: la polémique enfle à la N-VA* [online], https://www.rtbf.be/info/belgique/detail_le-chauffeur-de-de-wever-chef-de-cabinet-polemique-a-la-n-va?id=8377804 (consulted on May 18th, 2018).

²¹⁹ L’Express, *La rentrée dispersée des Républicains préfigure-t-elle son éclatement?* [online], https://www.lexpress.fr/actualite/politique/lr/la-rentree-dispersee-des-republicains-prefigure-t-elle-son-eclatement_1938734.html (consulted on May 18th, 2018).

²²⁰ TIERNY, H., *op cit.*, p. 7.

²²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

against PLA espionage would also be made. Seeing this great defensive position against a named enemy, here the PLA, we can say that the previously moderate status-quo position does not seem very stable in the end... Indeed, even if Tsai did not want to polarize the domestic politics, thus keep a neutral status quo position, we can see a resurgence of demonizing the PRC through its army, depicted as aggressive. Ma's construction of the image of a friendly economic partner then was deconstructed by this old image of a hostile PRC. The heritage of Chen's imaginary coming back in the society is illustrated with this example, that will be supported by more examples when talking about the transitional justice.

To continue on the general cross-Strait relation, we will discuss the status quo position. Indeed, defending it as a DPP member means a support in the ROC's *de facto* independence, as it is commonly believed²²². One of the three basic beliefs behind this position, for Premier Lai, is that "Taiwan is a sovereign and independent country and therefore does not need to declare Taiwan independence²²³." This is one of the examples that show us the heritage of Lee and Chen. Indeed as we can remember, both of them used the habile argument of implicit independence from the island in the facts, hence no need to declare it publicly. The Prime Minister's two last basic beliefs are also very interesting in terms of heritage, as they are the following: 2) Only the 23 million people can decide for the future of the island; 3) One has to build a stronger Taiwan, more attractive to the people in order to attract support towards independence. Why are these two elements important ? Because they bring us back to Lee's and Chen's vision of what it is to be a Nation. Here, the vision advocated by Lai is the one of a political Nation, as it is based on the ROC citizens, wanting to achieve great deeds, namely to *build* a stronger Taiwan for a project: the independence. This is not far from what Lee and Chen advocated during their own mandate for the Taiwanese society, once again. This society seems however very far from the mainland China. Lai said working on the economic wealth could go through reinforced cross-Strait understanding, but also on working with Japan, South Korea and the US to ensure security²²⁴.

This leads us to Tsai's southbound policies. Indeed, in her Inaugural speech, Tsai said: "We will share resources, talents and markets with other countries to achieve economies

²²² *Ibid.*, p. 7.

²²³ Taiwan News, *Taiwan premier reiterates Taiwan-independence approach as 'pragmatic' [online]*, <https://www.taiwannews.com.tw/en/news/3406090> (consulted on May 18th, 2018).

²²⁴ *Ibidem.*

of scale and to allow the efficient use of resources. This is the spirit on which our "New Southbound Policy" is based. We will broaden exchanges and cooperation with regional neighbours in areas such as technology, culture and commerce, and expand in particular our dynamic relationships with ASEAN and India²²⁵." The goal was here to drive away from the influence that the mainland has on the Taiwanese economy, by a rapprochement with the Indian-Pacific countries. And it seems to work, as after the Taiwan Agricultural Research Institute on May 17th of 2018, some representatives of these countries stated their will for further cooperation. India, for example, is looking forward to more bilateral cooperation in the agriculture, especially in the Taiwanese expertise in bamboo processing; the Malaysian Friendship and Trade Centre was also interested in receiving Taiwanese assistance for farmers, also for their mushroom knowledge; finally Vietnam also showed its interest by proposing exchange programs after establishing research facilities²²⁶. It is interesting to see as the policy of investing in South-East Asia had been already very used by the previous President Lee²²⁷, making the island one of the first investors in the ASEAN countries. Hence, we see that, even though Tsai keeps the ECFA in order to keep a certain *status quo*, a lot of energy and resources will be used in order to favour South-East Asian countries and India as destinations for Taiwanese firms. To reach that goal, a new institution has been made, the New Southbound Policy Office, whose director is James C. F. Huang, ancient Minister of Foreign Affairs under Chen. Once again, putting some particular political figures at key places like that can illustrate, or at least question, the motives of the global policy of the institution. Like we said, Huang having been minister of Foreign Affairs under Chen could have continued his policy of distance towards the PRC in this new office, following the purpose of the Southbound policy.

We arrive on the two main topics, namely the transitional justice and the constitutional reforms. For the first one, Tsai also created a new platform, the "Truth and Reconciliation Commission" inside the Presidential Office²²⁸. Tsai addressed the topic of justice in her Inaugural speech in the following words: "The general sentiment is that the judicial system is not close to the people, and is not trusted by them. It is unable to

²²⁵ Focus Taiwan, *Full text of President Tsai's inaugural address [online]*, *op cit.*

²²⁶ HUANG, T.-t., *New Southbound Policy nation dignitaries tour Taiwan agricultural institute [online]*, <https://www.taiwannews.com.tw/en/news/3434197> (consulted on May 18th, 2018).

²²⁷ NGEOW, C. B., "Taiwan's Go South Policy: Déjà vu All Over Again?", in *Contemporary Southeast Asia*, Vol. 39, No. 1, 2017, p. 96.

²²⁸ TIERNY, H., *op cit.*, p. 6.

fight crime effectively, and has lost its function as the last line of defence for justice²²⁹.” With the creation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the meaning of the words spoken in the speech pointed out especially the feeling of lack of justice for the natives concerning the White Terror and the Aborigine tribes. Hence, once again, the reconciliation is made by using the problematic of the White Terror and blaming the image of Chiang Kai-shek. This topic of transitional justice and hence rehashing the problematic of the 228 Incident is not very keen to a national cohesion, as the KMT “urged the DPP not to use the 228 Incident as political ATM” in 2016²³⁰. Tsai said in April 2018 that it is a crucial step and the most important towards democracy²³¹, but giving as much importance to such controversial and passionate topic is maybe too risky if Tsai wants to keep a neutral, non-polarised position on the domestic level, as she said she would. Indeed, we can see the result of multiple controversies and too politicised historical topics like the White Terror period, in the vandalising of Chiang Kai-shek’s memorial even on February 28th of 2018, when an independentist activist painted Chiang’s grave with red colour to symbolise the blood of the victims²³².

As with Chen Shui-bian, we can see a new wave of deconstruction of Chiang’s symbols through vandalism from activists, to institutionalised deconstruction. Tsai said that the transitional justice was meant to uncover the truth²³³, a rhetoric already used by Chen during his presidency. Hence, as we said in the third chapter, uncovering the truth means to modify the official history that had been made too “Sino-centric”, in order to make it a true, more Taiwan-centered story. Once again, we see here the two main strategies in order to condemn the ROC’s past: 1) the “otherisation” of the KMT Regime by qualifying it as authoritarian, to “ensure that the horrors of the past will never happen again and to move towards reconciliation²³⁴”, as if the country was still in a deep crisis state until today’s presidency that would solve all the identity problems. The bad past versus good present, inherited by Chen especially is clearly revealed; 2) as shown, the history is being transformed in order to fit a new meaning, more favourable

²²⁹ Focus Taiwan, *Full text of President Tsai's inaugural address [online]*, *op cit*.

²³⁰ Focus Taiwan, *KMT urges DPP not to use 228 Incident as 'political ATM' [online]*, <http://focustaiwan.tw/news/aip/201602290012.aspx> (consulted on May 18th, 2018).

²³¹ Focus Taiwan, *Transitional justice crucial next step for Taiwan's democracy: Tsai [online]*, <http://focustaiwan.tw/news/aip/201804070013.aspx> (consulted on May 18th, 2018).

²³² STRONG, M., *Chiang Kai-shek grave daubed with red paint by Taiwan Independence activists [online]*, <https://www.taiwannews.com.tw/en/news/3373501> (consulted on May 18th, 2018).

²³³ Focus Taiwan, *Transitional justice means finding the truth: President Tsai [online]*, <http://focustaiwan.tw/news/aip/201712100012.aspx> (consulted on May 18th, 2018).

²³⁴ *Ibidem*.

and fair to the Taiwanese natives. It goes through the uncovering of a truth by commissions and research agencies –as we saw it in chapter 3– supported by the State, like the Transitional Justice Promotion Committee whose purpose is to fiend “what really happened”, but it also goes through more suppression of Chiang’s symbols. Indeed, the new transitional justice legislation could require to remove Chiang’s images from the banknotes and coins, possibly some statues in campuses as well²³⁵. Concerning the type of money that could be concerned, the rarely seen NT\$200 banknote, NT\$1, NT\$5 and NT\$10 coins could be redesigned, which proves that the measure is purely symbolic as the values are either very high, or very low. In total, the cost could arise to US\$1.7 billion, which is ironic seeing the economic status of the island... Nevertheless, a symbolic modification to get closer to a new Taiwanese-centered period would still be made in this case.

We also talked about Tsai putting importance to re-creating a link with aboriginal tribes²³⁶. These aboriginals were voting in majority for the KMT party, as the KMT played the role of arbitrator in economical conflicts between the bengshenren (natives) and the tribes²³⁷. My idea is that, also, the KMT gave much more than arbitrating when coming to the island; it also gave education to some aboriginal tribes sometimes living in the hills. Indeed, some tribes live in the central hills of the island, but what we see is that the level of Mandarin speakers is the highest in these regions, along with the New Taipei County and the Taoyuan County, as seen in table 6 of the annex. With this table, we can see that this high level of Mandarin speakers correlates with the level of adhesion to the KMT through the presidential elections, with the exception of some southern tribes. We also see that a shift has been made in the 2016 elections, Corcuff noting that it was due to a pragmatic choice²³⁸. Indeed, the aboriginal tribes saw their concrete interest in voting for Tsai as they would have more utility afterwards. This is illustrated in the example of indigenous-centered books. Indeed, the Pingtung County Government launched for the first time school books centered only on the Paiwan culture²³⁹. This initiative has won praises from teachers and parents, before gaining the

²³⁵ STRONG, M., *Taiwan could remove President Chiang Kai-shek from banknotes and coins [online]*, <https://www.taiwannews.com.tw/en/news/3383498> (consulted on May 18th, 2018).

²³⁶ TIERNY, H., *op cit.*, p. 6.

²³⁷ CORCUFF, S., *Taiwan : comprendre le vote aborigène [online]*, <https://asialyst.com/fr/2016/05/12/taiwan-comprendre-le-vote-aborigene/> (consulted on May 18th, 2018).

²³⁸ *Ibidem.*

²³⁹ STRONG, M., *Southern Taiwan county wins praise for indigenous-centered textbooks [online]*, <https://www.taiwannews.com.tw/en/news/3387192> (consulted on May 18th, 2018).

interest of Tsai. It is said that even more Paiwan schools are planning to use these books²⁴⁰. A bit more in the North, we also saw in January a gathering of some members of the Bunun tribe, in order to plan a hike through “their tribe’s ancestral lands²⁴¹.” Even if few peoples are participating in this event, the gathering nevertheless shows a strong symbolic image as this is a whole social practice with a lot of deep rituals and meanings. The objective of the hike, given by a professor of the National Taichung University of Education, is “to give young people and adults in the tribe an opportunity to reconnect with their ancestral roots.” It begins in the morning with a ritual led by elders, praying for their ancestors with specific practices for the group’s safety, before walking on a path no longer used by the public. This shows the specific signification for certain people to walk on this path, as it is not commonly used anymore ! Finally, during the trek, other rituals are put in place through habits, as the group aims to make camps and small bonfire as their ancestors did, beside visiting sites of historic and religious significance. One of the group members even said that “their (the tribe’s) child has returned²⁴².” As Corcuff notes it²⁴³, there is a game of multiple Nations that is set in place, namely a Chinese Nation, a Taiwanese Nation, a Paiwan Nation, etc. Sometimes, it is even promoted by the public authority in the case of the school books, but also in indigenous headdresses exhibitions in museums²⁴⁴. As we saw it, the transitional justice also has the ability to promote the Taiwanese culture by suppressing Chiang’s symbols, representing the Chinese mainland. We are here far from the Chinese identity of something that would link the population to the mainland, as there is a multicultural promotion of the DPP governments. Even if the recognition of some cultures can be done, in the perspective of reunification, it should be preferred to keep a central Nation somehow connected to the mainland in order to reach that goal. Indeed, it is through the promotion of the French Nation and language over regional cultures like in the Auvergne, that France could become and remain unified. In our case of Taiwanese multiculturalism, the island could distance itself from the unified Chinese identity, thus slowly move towards a future independence.

²⁴⁰ *Ibidem*.

²⁴¹ Taiwan News, *Members of Taiwan's indigenous Bunun ethnic group visit ancestral lands [online]*, <https://www.taiwannews.com.tw/en/news/3348951> (consulted on May 18th, 2018).

²⁴² *Ibidem*.

²⁴³ CORCUFF, S., *op cit*.

²⁴⁴ DEAEETH, D., *Museum in New Taipei exhibits traditional headdresses of Taiwan's indigenous people [online]*, <https://www.taiwannews.com.tw/en/news/3382075> (consulted on May 18th, 2018).

I will end this topic of “de-sinicisation” with a recent event that took place in our country: Belgium. On March 7th of 2018, the Brussels’ symbol of Manneken-Pis was dressed in Hakka garments to represent the friendship between Belgium and Taiwan, and also to promote the Hakka culture according to the ROC’s Minister of Foreign Affairs²⁴⁵. An official ceremony took place for the cloth delivery, provided by the Taiwan’s Hakka Affairs Council, before a Hakka song and dance ceremony made by pupil’s of the Pingtung County. It is anecdotal, but it shows that the Taiwanisation by cultural ceremonies even reach our small country. It also increases the importance of the question of: what is it to be a Taiwanese since 2016 ? It seems to tend more and more towards a regional multiculturalism, even though Tsai announced a non-polarised presidency...

Finally, we come to the question of the constitutional reforms. Tsai said a reform was “needed for more functional democracy”, beside calling for new narratives and policies to respond to national and international changes²⁴⁶. The question of democracy and the human rights is very much tackled in these reforms, as the human rights could be written in the new Constitution. Tsai also reminded the people of the role of the ancient DPP actions, by saying that “Veteran members of our party helped Taiwan gain democracy. The mission of our generation is to build a more functional democratic constitutional system for Taiwan²⁴⁷.” By this statement, Tsai once more puts an emphasis on the transformations done under Chen, but also maybe on the pressure that the party made during Lee’s presidency; it is indeed said that Tsai was one of the architects of Lee’s “State-to-State relationships” principle²⁴⁸. Even if the question of democracy and the human rights should benefit of a lot of attention in general, in the case of Taiwan it could pose a problem as, the more these values are instrumentalised, the more the differences with the mainland are highlighted. The new DPP power could thus deepen the gulf between the two territories and create a “bad” image of the PRC, with the benefits of promoting the human rights; the same can be done with the transitional justice, promoting the fair treatment of –legitimate– victims of the White

²⁴⁵ TENG, P.-j., *Manneken-Pis 'the peeing boy' dressed in Taiwan's Hakka clothes [online]*, <https://www.taiwannews.com.tw/en/news/3379341> (consulted on May 18th, 2018).

²⁴⁶ CHEN, W.-h., *Tsai calls for constitutional reforms [online]*, <http://www.taipetimes.com/News/front/archives/2017/09/25/2003679092/1> (consulted on May 18th, 2018).

²⁴⁷ *Ibidem*.

²⁴⁸ TIERNY, H., *op cit.*, p. 8.

Terror while repudiating the past history. In the last case, we saw that it could drive to extreme attitudes towards mainland symbols...

The fields of diplomacy and international participation, regional security, cross-strait relations and national defence, among other fields, can be tackled in the next constitutional reforms; Tsai recalled that the discussions will include “issues of broad societal concern²⁴⁹.” As the President thus said, the Taiwanese society will be changed in some of its facets, if the reforms would be approved by at least 50% of the voting people. We have seen it, the Executive’s actions are not that neutral in the identity question, certain polarisation still remain; as the party think tanks will discuss the 12 key areas of reform, can it be certain that the propositions will be effectively impartial, when some party representatives were calling for a special pardon of Chen Shui-bian sentenced to 20 years in prison²⁵⁰ ? On the key area of cross-Strait relations, despite Tsai affirming her will to stay in a *status quo* position, can it be certain that the position of Taiwan would not lean towards a future independence, when the new Premier appointed in September 2017 stated that “The two sides of the Taiwan Strait are independent of each other, with Taiwan being an independent sovereign state carrying the designation the ‘Republic of China’²⁵¹” ? With her numerous links with Lee and Chen, it is sometimes expected from Tsai to also stand moderate grounds in the beginning of her presidency, before becoming more advocating for independence²⁵², and the previous analysis of re-Taiwanisation of the society could approve this statement.

Conclusion :

What we can say as a conclusion is that a clear, uninterrupted line of symbolic taiwanization occurred in the post-Martial Law Era. Indeed, the definition what it is to be a “Taiwanese” has been changed since Lee’s “New Taiwanese”, without even an interference of the KMT comeback of 2008-2016. Indeed, Ma only tackled the economic perspective rather than, at least, considering both economic and social aspects as equal. Both on the policy-making and on discourses, I wanted to show that the steady

²⁴⁹ Focus Taiwan, *Tsai emphasizes constitutional reform at DPP national congress [online]*, <http://focustaiwan.tw/news/aip1/201709240012.aspx> (consulted on May 18th, 2018).

²⁵⁰ *Ibidem*.

²⁵¹ *Ibidem*.

²⁵² TIERNY, H., *op cit.*, p. 8.

increase in “Taiwanese exclusive” identity was due to changes on national symbols. These changes consisted in detaching the island of its Chinese identity by: changing the party structures of the KMT by replacing its key figures, hence replacing a huge mainland background that constituted the essence of the party; “taiwanizing” the party, the citizenship, the history during long periods (decades) by introducing and reminding new concepts as the “New Taiwanese”. This concept touched a deep part of the identity of the population as it changed the meaning of important factors: the KMT is no longer the representation of the mainland in Taiwan, it became a “KMT of the Taiwanese”; being Taiwanese no longer mean to be part of a broad Chinese family, but it means to work for the future of the island only and having as historical references the Taiwan-centered 228 Incident above all. The narratives of the Nation, following the multiple –and sometimes brutal– promotions for this new citizenship and history, ended to be reversed to the point that the post-Martial Law Era ROC became an antagonist vis-à-vis the past ROC under KMT regime. Indeed, the new narratives advocating for a Taiwanese-centered collective identity created a rivalry towards a Chinese identity at the same time. Indeed, the oral discourses analysed sometimes depicted key figures of the Chinese heritage as criminals, assimilating of this heritage to the White Terror and to the hostile-seen PRC. In fact, the criminalisation of the Chinese symbols in discourses was the justification to the political changes; statues and images of Chiang Kai-shek and Sun Yat-sen are removed because they are seen as bad, hence leaving space for new symbols, martyrs.

This can explain the correlation between identity and the population’s attitude towards cross-Strait relations. Indeed, we saw that in case of (economic) rapprochement during Ma’s presidency, the percentage of people feeling a “too fast” pace increased more or less at the same level as the percentage of “Taiwanese only” people. Very often have we seen cases in which discourses or policies exalted the exclusive Taiwanese identity, thus coming to a conclusion that the two sides are growing further and further away from each other. The problem for a reunification project is not that a “Taiwanization” occurs, but rather that this Taiwanization is exclusive in its essence ! Proof is that, the more Ma tried to economically make both sides interdependent, the more a negative reaction was increasing as, symbolically, this rapprochement only highlighted their differences until extreme demonstrations. The question of reunification/independence is thus deeply intertwined with the question of identity. It has to be noted that, even if both sides still

share a lot of cultural factors like language, traditions to some extent, it is not a guarantee that later reunification will occur. Indeed, political culture matter too, maybe at a higher point ! We have seen it, a lot of Presidents used the political definition of a Nation, thus only the willingness through acts in order to be part of a Nation, opposed to an essential definition of a Nation based on ethnicity, language, religion. As it has been advocated since Lee Teng-hui's "New Taiwanese", this idea is deeply anchored among the popular belief. Hence, talking about the exclusive 23 million Taiwanese people's right to decide about the island's future benefits of more echoes than talking about the shared language with the mainland. In this, we have to be very attentive to some words and phrases triggering this kind of new nationalism, not only policies as they are previously justified by the discourses, in order to understand and predict future relations.

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Index :

- ARATS: Association for Relations Across the Taiwan Straits;
- Benshengren: Taiwanese people of Chinese origins living in Taiwan before 1945, synonym of “native”;
- CCP: Chinese Communist Party;
- CSSTA: Cross-Strait Service Trade Agreement;
- DPP : Minjintang, Democratic Progressive Party ;
- ECFA: Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement;
- KMT : Kuomintang ;
- MAC: Taiwan Mainland Affairs Council
- NUC: National Unification Council;
- PLA: People’s Liberation Army
- PRC: People’s Republic of China;
- ROC : Republic Of China;
- SEF: Taiwan Straits Exchange Foundation;
- Waishengren: mainlanders moving to Taiwan after 1945, 1949.