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Taiwan's economic miracle: Presentations of culture and ideology

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TAIWAN'S ECONOMIC MIRACLE: PRESENTATIONS OF CULTURE AND IDEOLOGY

by

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ABSTRACT

Native commentators on Taiwan's recent industrialization consider culture a key factor of the nation's modernization drive. Indigenous writers present Chinese culture as not only economically fit, but also morally superior. Such presentations, I argue, have unspoken ideological goals. Legitimation of the government, paternalistic claims on citizens and workers by the state and employers, and the rhetorical war against communism are some of the tacit agendas I discuss.
This thesis seeks to explore presentations of Taiwan, especially by native commentators, as a newly industrialized island nation. Several broad themes emerge from this literature, whether from Asian or Western, academic or popular perspectives. Nearly all the writers follow the modernization paradigm, assuming that economic and social progress is equated with industrialization. Writers who follow modernization theory explicitly assume that cultural values are instruments for change, that certain values enable economic growth and industrialization while other values are prohibitive. Among the Chinese writers the modernization paradigm is especially potent, usually as an unquestioned assumption.

Western theorists, including Weber and Durkheim, have strongly influenced Asian views of economic development and social change in the last fifty years. Most writers from the region openly refer to this European theoretical heritage (Tai 1989; Tsai 1989; Ma 1987; Chen 1980). For example, Tsai cites Rostow, the writer who is most strongly associated with modernization theory in the West (Tsai 1989:79). Some others employ specific language and concepts that appear to derive from the same heritage, but leave the reader guessing as to the lines of influence (Li 1988; Yang 1981). For instance, Li offers a table showing characteristics of "modern" relationships versus "traditional" relationships, where the former is universalistic and equitable and the latter is particularistic and intimate (Li 1988:379). Although his language is reminiscent of early European social theorists such as Tonnies, Li presents this perspective as entirely his own.
To whatever degree the writers draw upon Euro-American social theory, sometimes with exact references, sometimes more obliquely, they are engaged in the legitimation of Taiwan's recent industrialization under the authority of the mainlander-dominated government, the Republic of China. The ideas of Weber and others are used by the elite, or misused, as part of a complex project: to claim the existence of a unified Chinese culture in Taiwan that is based on a humanistic version of Confucianism, which has not only enabled Taiwan's economic success, but has also produced employee/employer relations which are ethically superior to labor relations in the individualistic West.

In their presentations of Chinese culture as it converges with recent economic and social changes on the island, Taiwanese commentators reveal an obvious consciousness about their image as a modernizing Asian nation. All nations have some consciousness of themselves in relation to other nations, and nations may be more or less consumed by the nature of their image at different times. Understanding this national consciousness in Taiwan requires a recognition of broader historical trends in East Asia, including contact between Chinese and Western imperialist powers. Other factors contributing to the Taiwanese concern

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1 The ethnic dimension of power and culture in Taiwan will be discussed later. "Mainlander" refers to the Chinese who fled from mainland China after the Chinese Communist Party's assumption of power in 1949. The mainlanders transferred the Nationalist Party to the island, and imposed their own form of political order.

2 Currently the United States and Japan are engaged in a mirror-holding contest, where "true" reflections of each other are sought, and chauvinistic self-created images made.
with its national image are related to regional hegemony; particularly the on-going ideological war with the People's Republic of China and Taiwan's concern with its status in the competitive environment of capitalist East Asia.

Indigenous views of culture and industrialization also have internal goals. Here I will discuss the rhetorical production of the loyal, hardworking Chinese in the context of Taiwan's political economy. In this production of the compliant worker in particular, the imperatives of Confucian patriarchy in terms of abstract versions of culture and in practice are most clear. I understand this national dialogue about culture and industrialization to have force in the sense of Hegelian dialecticism: A continual cycle of cultural production, beginning with the traditional system (supported in this case by a rhetorical construction), followed by conflict, followed by change or synthesis. However, I cannot complete the picture as my sources almost exclusively speak for the status quo. Indeed, the missing elements of change (including contradictions to an idealized image and divergent opinions of Taiwan's experience) reflect the authoritarian management of culture and ideology in Taiwan.

As Corrigan and Sayer point out, nation-building entails cultural regulation (1985:2). The goals of such cultural regulation include the

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3 One such cycle of change with a deeply critical antithesis and far-reaching consequences was the New Culture movement in mainland China, from about 1915-27 (Grieder 1981:205). Intellectuals of the era saw China's political crisis as reflective of cultural repression, and attacked the traditional standards of social authority (ibid:207).
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perennial problem of establishing the state's legitimacy, in addition to managing culture and institutions for the benefit of the elite and creating an "illusion of community" (ibid:4). Corrigan and Sayer's conception of the intersection of culture and nation-building is realized in the rhetoric flowing from Taiwan. As in England, the "major organizing metaphor of the state" (ibid:12) in Taiwan is the family. In Taiwan the notion of family is extended through Confucian precepts, yet as in England the family is patriarchal and the practical import of this cultural metaphor is reinforcement of male dominance and female subordination.

The focus on the family has been criticized for inhibiting wider social consciousness (Li 1988), and for continuing sexual inequality (Lu 1986, cited in Farris 1989:176). Other indigenous voices warn that Taiwanese society has serious flaws, including a weak ethical system. Furthermore, some Taiwanese seem concerned that changes attendant on industrialization will debilitate the society as Chinese traditions are supplanted by anti-social ills of the West, such as alienation. However, the dominant voice in Taiwan claims that Chinese culture must above all be understood as instrumental for industrialization and as a model for other countries to follow. Such commentators are engaged in the construction of an idealized image of Taiwanese society, commensurate with its new economic success. Before looking into the rhetorical construction

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4 Lu Xiu-lian, a Taiwanese political activist, wrote "New Feminism" (Xin Nuxingzhuyi), first published in 1974. In it she writes that patriarchal values, such as "one-sided chastity," are the invisible forces that continue to control women's fate (Farris 1989:177).
of Chinese culture in the Republic of China, I will briefly examine the broader phenomena of the "Newly Industrialized Countries" of Asia.

THE NEWLY INDUSTRIALIZED COUNTRIES

"Industrialization" primarily refers to a change in the mode of production of a society, specifically from an agrarian mode of production to a manufacturing mode of production. Dependency and World Systems theories (Wallerstein 1974) have shown how a global division of these modes of production has developed, with non-industrialized countries sending their unprocessed raw materials to industrialized countries, who then process the materials and sell the manufactured products around the world. Developing countries' reliance on core markets, and other factors related to the unequal roles of the core and periphery, limits development of the periphery. The economic profits from this division of production fall mainly to the "industrialized world," which until the middle of this century referred almost exclusively to Western Europe and the United States, commonly referred to as "the West." After World War II, however, Japan, with U.S. backing, managed the feat of not only reconstructing its infrastructure but also of building up technology-rich export-oriented industries that catapulted the first Asian country into an economic league on par with the West.

From about 1965 to the present, Korea, Taiwan, Singapore and Hong Kong have made their own incursions into the international markets for manufactured goods, and their success has earned them nicknames such as
"The Four Tigers," or the "The Little Dragons." They are also known as the Newly Industrialized Countries, or NICs, and that is the term I will use here. The NICs' economies have expanded at very high rates: an average of 9.7 percent growth of GNP for Korea, 8.9 percent for Singapore, 7.5 percent for Taiwan, and 9.4 percent for Hong Kong from 1975-83 (Schlossstein 1991:9). The strategies to achieve such growth in manufacturing and exports were similar, and followed the Japanese pattern: close cooperation between business interests and government; an emphasis on expanding export markets; high savings rates that were invested in capital and research and development (R & D); and investment in public education (Schlossstein 1991). This combination of policies paid off for the NICs in terms of higher standards of living, although these countries have recently begun to question the environmental costs.

There is no doubt that NICs have taken off, but their recipe for success differs from classical economic theory in an important respect: East Asian nations have banked on the "visible hand" of the market, or the active intervention of the government in economic policy, rather than Adam Smith's "invisible hand." On the other hand, the NICs do not fit easily into the world systems paradigm either. World systems theorists have shown empirically how economic relations between industrialized and non-industrialized countries have limited the development and economic

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8 The exception is Hong Kong, which is characterized by a laissez-faire policy, although the government has been heavily involved in building up infrastructure and elite industrialists work together to plan policy (Roberts 1988:3).
growth of the latter. While Japan, Taiwan and South Korea have relied extensively at one time on loans and aid from the U.S. (South Korea is still paying back U.S. loans), and all three have export-orientated "open" economies, their policies have enabled them to position themselves as net surplus-earners (Deyo 1987a). Hong Kong and until recently Singapore were part of the British commonwealth, yet their economies have grown as rapidly, and with similar technological advances as the other two NICs. World systems has proved a useful model in explaining the underdevelopment of Latin American nations. Core-periphery type relationships have developed in East Asia as well; for example with Southeast Asia as the periphery, Taiwan as the semi-periphery and Japan as the core. However, core states (the U.S. and Japan) have not prohibited economic development in the NICs (Cumings 1987:50).

What are the specific features of East Asian development which might explain the absence of *dependencia* in this region? Perhaps the most important factor is the relative equity achieved in the NICs (and Japan). Latin American NICs, in contrast, have experienced rapid growth, but with a very unequal distribution of wealth. Korea, Taiwan and Japan all carried out successful land reform programs. Korea and Taiwan too had practical imperatives to complete this task: North Korea and the People's Republic of China offer nearby alternatives for disaffected peasants. Yet all of the NICs have managed to keep differences between the poorest and

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6 André Gunder Frank (1967) laid the basis for this influential paradigm by writing about dependency in Latin America. His ideas were expanded upon and revised under the name of "world systems" by Wallerstein (1974).
the richest segments of the population relatively small. The graph below shows the ratio of what the richest 20 percent earn compared to what the poorest 20 percent earn in various countries. Note that in all of the NICs the richest 20 percent of the population earns no more than ten times what the poorest 20 percent, although GDP growth among the NICs is higher than any of the other countries represented.

Income inequality and the growth of GDP in selected economies, 1965-89


The relative equity of incomes among the NICs contradicts conventional economic policy in industrialized countries (first achieve high growth, then worry about social equity), and indeed makes a case for the necessity of income equity to achieve growth.

Another factor often referred to as explanatory of the East Asian economic miracles is the relative stability of the NICs' governments.
Political stability in East Asia can be viewed through a variety of ideological lenses. Economists generally seem to agree that the authoritarian regimes of the NICs have benefitted economic growth and industrialization; however, some are apologists for these systems, while others address the costs.

Japan, Taiwan, Korea and Singapore share a type of government which some have called "soft authoritarianism" (Schlossstein 1991:6). Japan and Taiwan have been under institutionalized one-party systems, the Liberal Democratic Party and the Guomindang, or Nationalist Party, respectively. Korea has been under the iron fist of President Park Chung Hee, and now Roh Tae Woo, while Singapore has been under Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew. Yew is second only to North Korea's Kim Il Sung in length of rule in Asia. Cumings argues that the basis for Korea and Taiwan's strong, centralized governments was laid by the regional colonizer -- Japan. As an imposed class of political and business leaders, the Japanese relied on centralization and state direction of the economy to manipulate the colonies to their advantage (Cumings 1987:51), a model followed by the governments of South Korea and Taiwan after Japan's departure.

Some have viewed the citizens of these countries as "tolerant," others as repressed. For example, Johnson argues that rapid economic growth (and rapidly improved standards of living), and the threats posed by North Korea and Communist China legitimate the authoritarian regimes of South Korea and Taiwan (Johnson 1987:144-45). According to Johnson, East Asians tolerate the lack of political rights in exchange for a rising
standard of living and stability. I would question whether "tolerance" actually describes the populations of industrial East Asia. Demonstrations in Taiwan (and Japan and Singapore) have vented popular dissatisfaction with their rulers, while labor strikes and student demonstrations in Korea were a recurrent challenge to Park's and then Roh Tae Woo's legitimacy.

In any case, government stability in the East Asian NICs has led to another factor often cited as key to growth in the region: close ties between business and industrial interests (Deyo 1987a; Cumings 1987; Schlosstein 1991; Li 1988; Haggard and Cheng 1987). Government and business leaders of Korea, Singapore and Taiwan have worked together to formulate trade, finance and other economic policies that would benefit both the general public and industry. Cooperation between business and government has included protection of infant industries through government subsidies and import restrictions, generous research and development (R & D) credits for chosen sectors, and less savory practices such as stock tips to key politicians. The latter type of "cooperation" has a long history in East Asia: gift giving to foster loyalty has been common for centuries. Even so, the level of corruption (with the exception of Singapore) has reached such proportions at times that heads of state have been forced out of office (Schlosstein 1991:15-16). Also, as Cumings points out, the combination of authoritarianism and state intervention in business has not been unanimously supported by businessmen, for such a combination means that some corporations may enjoy benefits from
bureaucratic ties while others do not (Cumings 1989:30). For small business ventures and corporations excluded from the network a more democratic system might seem friendlier.

Other types of government-directed economic policy in the NICs include support for public savings and strict control of multinationals. Savings have been encouraged to increase investment funds, and as part of an overall strategy of production over consumption. For example, in Singapore workers at all levels are required to make monthly deposits into a public fund similar to Individual Retirement Accounts in the U.S. (Schlossstein 1991:11). This kind of policy has generated rates of capital formation much higher than the U.S.'s 12 percent in 1988. All the NICs had rates of over 20 percent that year -- Singapore's was 36 percent (ibid). The bureaucratic/business alliances in Korea and Taiwan have also manipulated multinational corporate ventures so that the national interests are best served rather than the multinationals' interests (Haggard and Cheng 1987). For example, multinationals are restricted from entering some sectors, such as defense or basic industry (Hofheinz, Jr. and Calder 1982:215).

Evans notes that as regards the state and foreign influence, the NICs do not disprove dependency theory (Evans 1987, cited in Deyo 1987a:20). That is, dependency theory holds that a weak state combined with strong foreign penetration leads to underdevelopment; but these

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7 Cumings notes that some Korean corporations have been excluded from the government/business partnership so often praised by conventional analysts of East Asia.
conditions are reversed in East Asia. The relative weakness of foreign penetration, the strength of the state, U.S. capital support and other factors enabled Korea and Taiwan to attain high rates of growth. However, as Cumings cautions, these accomplishments arose in a specific historical and regional context, and Taiwan and Korea cannot be taken as elementary models for other developing countries to follow (1987:81).

There has been a variety of ideological responses to the industrialization of the Four Tigers, from both Western and Asian perspectives. For some American analysts the success of the NICs (and Japan) amounts to an economic war against the U.S. One example from this camp is Hofheinz, Jr. and Calder, whose book *The Eastasia Edge* (1982) has strong echoes of Cold War rhetoric. Key words in this type of rhetoric, which is pervasive in the popular discourse of some Americans (especially those for whom World War II was a nationally-defining event), are "freedom" and "aggression." For Hofheinz, Jr. and Calder, Americans who fought in World War II, the Korean War and the Vietnam War, ensured "the freedom of the Asian seas" (Hofheinz, Jr. and Calder 1982: 3). Americans extended credit and assistance "to restore our former enemies to prosperity" (ibid). The implication is that East Asian nations have somehow betrayed the U.S. with their aggressive economic policies, but now that those policies have succeeded Americans must defend themselves against the threat.

Such discourse enters the ideological dialogue as part of Western capitalist hegemony. The U.S. and Europe have dominated the world economy
since they industrialized in the late 19th century. This domination, of course, comes with a cost: surplus profits, whether from goods or labor, are directed to the industrialized nations at the expense of the non-industrialized nations. The imperative to maintain the unequal system means that, for spokespeople of the status quo, the growth of East Asian economies is above all something that must be defended against. Another voice in the U.S. further embeds economic modernization in East Asia in the American experience of twentieth-century wars (Hofheinz, Jr. and Calder 1992). The allusions to war follows not only from actual war-time experiences between the U.S. and Asian nations, but also from the peculiar nature of U.S. hegemony in the Pacific Rim. As Cumings points out, security and economic considerations in East Asia are fused from the U.S. perspective (Cumings 1987:50).

The experience of Japan and the NICs may be granted some integrity as unique phenomena in world history, but the region's history as it unfolds is ultimately understood as yet another "threat" against continued U.S. domination of the global political economy. Indeed, in the capitalist world system, where the division of labor is unequally divided between countries and profit sharing skewed, more then a few hegemonic world powers cannot be supported simultaneously.

On the other hand, some Western commentators see "the threat" as internal to the NICs themselves. Writers such as Cumings (1989) and Deyo (1987a; 1987b) address the price of industrialization East Asia-style: the lack of representative democracy; intense socio-political control of
the population (excepting Hong Kong); coercion and repression of
opposition movements and labor; censorship, and its twin, nationalist
propaganda; and continued hegemony by the dominant economic and political
watch dog: the United States. Perhaps for mainstream economists the
brutal repression of striking workers and protesting students in South
Korea, and the intimidation of Taiwan's opposition, are merely
"externalities" unimportant in the consideration of East Asia's "economic
miracle." But for many Western observers, for whom popular participation
in government and the hegemony of Western industrial powers are practical
and ideological concerns, the internal oppression and external domination
of the NICs in the global configuration of power are more disturbing than
the economic threat the NICs pose for the West.

One observer from Singapore notes that a high quality of life is
not enough, people want freedom of expression and less regulation:
"Singapore's very success in providing for the material needs of its
people contains the seeds of discontent... the roots of disaffection" (Tan
1990:33). Political emancipation for the Four Tigers' citizens is the
next step necessary for the quality of life to continue improving.

HISTORY OF TAIWAN

Since the 19th century Taiwan has been a frontier society, as
mainlanders from Fujian and other provinces sought a better life on the

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8 In addition to a formidable military presence in the region, notably in
South Korea, the United States takes the largest share of exports for all four
economies. All the NICs except Singapore exported 40 percent or more of their
goods to the U.S in 1986. Taiwan and Korea are further kept in a state of
indirect dependency on the U.S. as captive markets for U.S. grain (Cumings 1987).
once sparsely populated island. Although the first Chinese settlers from China probably arrived in the 13th century, large numbers of permanent settlements were not established until the 17th century (Chang, Kuo 1973). Aboriginal people, of Malayo-Polynesian descent, practiced hunting and gathering, and headhunting (Wolf 1972:1). They raided villages, travelers and shipwrecked sailors, but were eventually pushed from the coastal areas by the Chinese (Novotny 1987:13). Today, they are a small minority of the island's population and live mainly in the central mountains as farmers. Government policy has been similar to the Anglo-American response to Indians, in that education and assimilation are seen as the solution to the "problem," with no regard for the validity of the aboriginal way of life.

Dutch and Spanish trade bases on Taiwan (formerly called Formosa, from the Portuguese for beautiful) did not last long. The Dutch ousted the Spanish in 1642, and the Dutch bases in turn fell to the Chinese in 1662.

The first prominent Chinese historical figure in Taiwan was Cheng Chi-lung. Cheng was a merchant and pirate, who had a reputation as the Robin Hood of the China Seas. He became leader of Taiwan under the Ming Dynasty in 1628, and encouraged Chinese to migrate to the island (Kuo 1973). His son, Cheng Cheng-kung (also known as Koxinga), led the battles against the Dutch. The second Cheng was also an active sponsor

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* The aborigines numbered about 300,000 in 1979 (Sinorama 1979 4[1]). The total population of Taiwan is 22 million.
of Chinese migration. Mainlanders from provinces across the strait, especially nearby Fujian, had good reason to migrate: the Manchu regime at this time was practicing a "scorched earth" policy against the Chinese peasants. By the 1680s an estimated 200,000 Chinese inhabited Taiwan (Chang 1973). Chinese settlers continued to spread and develop the land very rapidly over the next couple of centuries.

A dramatic change occurred Taiwan in 1895, when the island was ceded to Japan as part of the post-Sino-Japanese war agreements. For the Japanese, their new role as colonizer was a prized entry card into the Western imperialists' club. Their success as colonizer, writes Kublin, became a question of Japanese national honor. By this time, the population was estimated at 2 million people. Camphor, and later sugar cane, were two of the important export crops the Japanese exploited. Taiwan was also a major supplier of food to Japan, mainly rice. The primary industry the Japanese developed on the island was food processing (Kublin 1973:329).

 Taiwanese resistance against the Japanese continued throughout the colonial period, although an organized military revolt never occurred. Especially during World War II, a major student-led reform movement agitated for more native participation in the island's government (ibid). The Japanese made a few minor concessions to the reformers but basically maintained their iron grip over the island.

The flourishing agricultural economy Japan helped to engineer and plan may have also dampened radical opposition to their imperialistic
domination. The Japanese also developed Taiwan's major ports: Keelung, on the north coast, and Kaohsiung on the southwest coast. All three were linked by railway during Japanese occupation.

Meanwhile, tumultuous changes from within and without were impacting mainland China. Over the nineteenth century European powers had established dominance over regions of China. British, French, Russian and German traders carved out their spheres of influence in the major cities of the Eastern seaboard. The socio-political response of various Chinese groups to European imperialism was on the one hand anti-foreign and on the other hand pro-modernization. The Taiping Rebellion in the 1850s and the Boxer Rebellion early in the next decade, both inspired by attempts to overthrow the Ching Dynasty and "modernize China," left millions dead.

Finally, after ten attempts to overthrow the Ching, Sun Yat-sen and the Guomindang (Nationalist Party) took over on Double 10 Day (10 October), 1911 (Clark 1976:69). Sun Yat-sen's formula for success was a mix of his desire to create a new unified Chinese tradition, Western political ideals, and practicality: 1) nationalism, 2) democracy and 3) peasant ownership of the land they worked (ibid). However, he never got the chance to see these policies carried out across a united China. War, the growing following of the Communist Party in particular and other revolutionary "secret societies" which further split allegiances, kept China in disarray for almost forty more years.

World events followed in rapid sequence: a new Sino-Japanese war began in 1937, and Taiwan took on strategic importance. Taiwan was used
as a fortress, arsenal and staging base against China. With the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki World War II ended and the Japanese surrendered. For the Allied powers, Chiang Kai-shek, heir to the Guomindang, represented the legitimate leader of China. But Mao Tse-tung and his peasant revolutionaries gained increasing power, and the Nationalists began to retreat to Taiwan.

As the Nationalist military regime established themselves on the island they took over businesses and positions of authority formerly held by the Japanese. Local resistance was met with brutal oppression, and corruption was the norm in dealings between the military and the Taiwanese. In 1947 reformists protested against Guomindang mismanagement and severe corruption, as well as the treatment of Taiwanese as second-class citizens (Cohen 1988:12). General Chen Yi tricked Taiwanese leaders by signing them up for "Settlement Committees," which gave him a list of dissident leaders (ibid:11). Believing that Chen would negotiate in good faith, Taiwanese reformers presented him with a relatively modest reform program (it called for more participation of native Taiwanese in the government, but not for an independent Taiwan). The next day 50,000 troops arrived, tracked down dissidents who were killed, and attacked ordinary people with bayonets (ibid:12). As many as 20,000 people may have been killed, and memories of the rebellion still influence relations between mainlanders and Taiwanese. Fear of a future revolt promoted a declaration of martial law which was lifted only in 1987.
The influx of mainlanders and the assumption of power by the Guomindang had profound effects on the island. Mainlanders were often from the coastal cities, where Western influence was strong, and they brought their "modern" ideas with them to provincial Taiwan. Mainlanders also imposed a new class system in Taiwan, with themselves at the top. This was accomplished not only by mainland acquisition of businesses and government posts, but also by enforcing Mandarin Chinese as the standard spoken language. Most Taiwanese are Hokkein from Fujian, and speak Minnan-hua (a.k.a. "Taiwanese"). A minority are Hakka from another southern province, Guangdong. Gates (1987, 1979) has shown how these ethnic divisions still construct class identity, and how the ethnic mainlanders maintain dominance in both political and economic spheres.

Guomindang control of the island for the next twenty years relied on suppression of dissent through imprisonment, torture, censorship and propagandistic school curricula (Cohen 1988:15). In the 1970s a loosening of the system commenced under Chiang Kai-shek's son, Chiang Ching-kuo. The younger Chiang started a program of "Taiwanization," allowing more of the island's natives to enter the political system (ibid). Lee Teng-hui, a Taiwanese, was elected president in 1988. The Guomindang now tolerates some criticism, and demonstrations by students, opposition leaders¹⁰, feminists, workers, environmentalists and others are daily occurrences (ibid:iii). It remains to be seen how far Taiwanese concerns will determine the island's future.

¹⁰ Primarily the Democratic Progressive Party.
ECONOMIC CHANGES IN TAIWAN

1950 Import substitution began
1953 Land reform
1952-65 Agricultural products most important export
1970 Capital-intensive heavy industry
1979 Skill-intensive high-tech industry

Sources: Li 1988, Cumings 1987.

The table above shows the most important structural changes in Taiwan's economy. Assigning a year to these changes does not mean they were completed within a year; rather the dates (except for land reform) can be taken as approximations. What specific factors enabled Taiwan to transform its economy from primarily agricultural to an exporting powerhouse of manufactured goods? Several elements are often cited as key in Taiwan's rapid industrialization: the beneficial direction of government, U.S. aid, and cultural characteristics, such as the "Confucian work ethic." The last two are quite controversial, but commentators are unanimous in viewing government intervention as positive, even if this conclusion challenges conservative economic theory. Amsden and others have pointed to government direction as one of the main forces behind Taiwan's high economic growth rate in the last half of this century (Li 1988; Amsden 1979). An initial step taken by the Guomindang, and a crucial one, was land reform. The land-to-the-tiller program, implemented in 1953, was seen as necessary to insure social stability (Lin 1973). As
mainlander-officials were not part of the land-owing class, implementing land reform was not so difficult as in other nations where the ruling and land-owing classes are collusive.

Later, the government manipulated the economy to favor savings and growth, and invested heavily in capital formation, the building of infrastructure, and research and development (Li 1988). Such policies have been very effective. For example, the gross savings rate has been over 20 percent of GNP every year since 1966 (Gold 1986:4). Clearly political stability and an authoritarian system have enabled the government to plan economic policy to such an extent. Taiwan's development is directed according to Four-Year Plans, a method which would not be possible for nations where instability or divided power characterized the government. In addition to government support of national industrial development, economic and political policies were planned so as to control the impact of multinationals on the national economy. The first Export Processing Zone in East Asia was built in the coastal city of Kaohsiung in 1965 (Haggard and Cheng 1987:92). The average age of the workers in these foreign-owned plants was 18. Other EPZs were developed, with benefits such as customs duty exemptions, tax holidays, and contracts prohibiting union formation. But by 1975, goods from EPZs accounted for only 8.6 percent of exports (ibid:93). Also, policy has emphasized the local use of multi-national corporations' investments, for Taiwan's export development and employment goals, rather than allowing the multinationals to pursue profit at the expense of
Taiwan's interests.

U.S. aid began to flow to Taiwan in 1953, and for the next twelve years an average of 100 million U.S. dollars a year was piped into Taiwan's economy (Li 1988:162). This is not the place to draw conclusions about exactly how vital this aid was, but U.S funds certainly helped the Taiwanese economy recuperate from the chaos of World War II. U.S. aid ended in 1965, but from that year to 1972 exports grew an incredible 27 percent a year (ibid).

Taiwan in some ways seemed unlikely to experience dramatic gains in standards of living: the population density is extreme, the economy was shattered after World War II, defense has siphoned off a very large percentage of GNP, and the island lacks natural resources. However, quality of life indexes such as life expectancy and literacy have improved dramatically, while relative equity has been maintained.11 Per capita income is now close to US$ 9,000 a year. Increased income means higher labor costs, and these rising labor costs (now rising faster than in the other NICs or Japan) have planners worried about future competitiveness.

One solution has been to export industries to where labor costs are lower. Labor-intensive industries are transplanted to Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia and the Philippines (Moore 1990:84). Taiwanese businessmen take advantage of cultural and language ties by networking with Chinese communities, especially those who share the Minnan dialect (ibid). While Southeast Asia welcomes investment and jobs, Taiwanese business practices

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11 Estimated GINI coefficient in 1980 was .303. (Gold 1986:5).
have not been ideal. After Taiwan's watchful control of multinationals in its own country, it is ironic that Taiwanese suffer from a "bad image" in dealing with their neighbors (Handley 1990:87). Complaints include underpayment and mistreatment of local employees, disregard for environmental laws, and an emphasis on short-term investment (as opposed to Japan's emphasis on long-term investment in Southeast Asia). In addition to exporting its industries abroad, Taiwan has "imported" workers from the Philippines, Thailand, Malaysia and China (Moore 1990b). By ignoring regulations about undocumented workers, government and business keep the door unofficially open to exploitation of the workers. Moore writes that "Legalising the workers would increase the burden on social services, while deporting them is problematic and unpopular with local businessmen..." As in the U.S. and Western Europe, companies take advantage of undocumented workers' illegal status, paying them lower wages than indigenous workers would accept and keeping working conditions less than optimal.

Textiles have been the dominant export industry in Taiwan. By 1976, textiles earned Taiwan 2.5 billion dollars in foreign exchange, and made up 30.7 percent of total exports. The largest buyers of Taiwan textiles are U.S. department stores. Other important sectors include processed food, electronics, machinery, and petrochemicals. Although Taiwan exports a good deal to other Asian nations, particularly to Hong Kong and Japan (about 12 percent of total exports go to each), the United States remains the primary importer, taking an average of 40 percent of Taiwan's exports

Finally, I turn to what some observers have seen as the cultural side of economic growth in East Asia: Chinese ethics, religion and values as instruments for the formation of capital.

CULTURAL VALUES AS ECONOMIC INSTRUMENTS

The view that certain Chinese cultural characteristics have helped push Taiwan's (and the NICs') economic growth is nearly ubiquitous among native commentators, and is sometimes addressed by Western writers as well. The question of why Singaporean, Korean, Japanese and Taiwanese intellectuals are more likely to cite cultural characteristics as a "cause" of industrialization than Westerners is quite interesting. The necessity of citing cultural causes of development may have to do with both a tradition of nationalistic sentiment, and an awareness among East Asians of their growing economic power in the region -- ideally attributed to cultural factors rather than to other outside factors.

For both Western and Eastern-based commentators the connection between culture and economic development is often quite simplified, with no recognition of the complexity of interaction that actually enters into mediations between ethical systems and behavior. In part, this simplification of the question arises because of the writers' ideological goals, I will argue. Yet the simplification of whatever connection may exist between cultural systems and economic development is also noteworthy in its neglect of ideology. That is, none of the writers,
whether from the East or the West, examine the past (and present) uses of this connection for ideological reasons. For example, Martellaro writes "that non-economic forces (cultural, religious, and social) play a role in a nation's economic development and growth is not a point of dispute among social scientists" (1991:81). I would say that the role of culture in a society's economic development has been quite contentious. Culture has been taken up as a hegemonic tool, as the developed nations have portrayed their own cultures as key to their success, obscuring less palatable factors such as imperialism and colonialism. For those who recognize this strategic use of culture, references to "non-economic forces" are suspect.

The perspective that cultural values, or values in general, underlie economic systems is one common assumption for those who follow the modernization school of development. Thus, the United States has achieved its global economic dominance by virtue of its citizens' values: hard work, thrift and an emphasis on individual achievement (Foster 1960; McClelland et. al. 1953). And by implication, if a nation remains underdeveloped this stagnation is also due to its citizens' values. Indonesians have been criticized for being too concerned with the survival of the group, Africans for lacking initiative, Latin Americans for having too many children (Li 1988).

Modernization theory, and the view that values are instrumental as a component of the theory, have been problematic for anthropologists. The main problem with modernization theory for anthropologists is its
ethnocentrism: it offers a perspective on the European model of economic development and conceitedly believes this model to be universally applicable to all nations. The conflation of values with industrialization is a residue of modernization theory's colonialist mentality. Rostow, Foster, McClelland and some Asian writers such as Li imply that their cultures' values are inherently superior to others, and that underdevelopment is in part caused by inferior values. This notion assigns the blame for poverty between nations to cultural factors, such as "laziness," and as such is characteristic of the neo-colonialists' attitude of cultural superiority.

The writers surveyed here share the assumption that the role of instrumental values is a non-ideological question. My sources are biased in that all have been published in English and represent an elite that I believe may be more conservative than other non-represented voices. As an elite, perhaps it is not surprising that the Asian instrumentalists claim that their cultural strength arises from a philosophy of the elite -- Confucianism. Confucianism is equated with Chineseness, and credited as the source of the people's industriousness and altruistic humanism in both Taiwan and Singapore (Heng and Devan 1992:351). As I will show later, the idea that Confucianism created economically fit nations has many ideological goals; including hegemonic positioning of the NICs in the world economy, claims to moral superiority (especially over socialism), positioning of a dominant class and ethnic group, and justification of patriarchal discipline of youth and women.
One of the early modern writers on the relationship between culture and economic systems was Max Weber (1930, 1956). For Weber, a particular type of Christianity, Protestantism, was fundamental to the rise of capitalism in Europe and North America. According to Weber, Protestants were unique in their desire for profit for profit's sake (1930:4). People everywhere desire wealth, for wealth provides luxuries. Protestants were different because they did not use their wealth for luxuries, but instead reinvested profits in order to have a continual reproduction of capital (ibid).

Most of the Asian commentators I survey follow Weber in viewing specific traits in their culture as instrumental for industrialization. However, they differ notably in having a generally positive view of industrialization. Weber's moral assessment of capitalism is not positive: it is a system that forces the individual to conform to its rules, rules that form an iron cage around the individual, who is no longer allowed any spontaneous enjoyment (1930:8,54). Thus, while Weber writes that Protestant culture as unique and one cause of the capitalist creation of wealth, the result of this cultural creation is deeply negative: the loss of the individual's autonomy.

THE ORIENTAL ALTERNATIVE

Some Asian scholars have taken up Weber's characterization of both Western development and Confucian ethics to construct an "alternative model" of East Asian economic development in a recent volume edited by
Hung-chao Tai (1989). Tai notes that many Asia specialists have used the Weber-Parsons paradigm, assuming that the central feature of the modern world is "rationality," and that "the West's rational model of cultural and economic change is of universal applicability" (Tai 1989:10). However, Tai and his colleagues are among those who question the universality of the Western model. The "Oriental alternative," based on Confucianism, challenges the unilineal universalism of modernization theory.

I should mention that most instrumentalists reviewed here, including contributors to Tai's volume, consider Confucianism the dominant cultural pattern not only of Chinese societies, but of Korea and Japan as well. Yet the degree to which Confucianism is a basis of the three cultures, and which kind of Confucianism, is quite contentious. Philosophers have discussed the question of how Confucianism has contributed to development in Japan, Korea, and the two Chinas at three conferences in Tokyo and Seoul but participants' opinions varied widely (Kim Byoung-hwon, personal communication). Not only are there important differences in the three cultures, but Korea and China have adapted neo-Confucianism as developed by Chu Hsi in the twelfth century, while Japan rejected neo-Confucianism.

Traditional Confucianism, based on the Analects, is a philosophy that views humans and nature as part of a harmonious whole, although an individual's destiny is dependent upon their virtue (Chan 1963:3). Confucianists concentrate on this life, rather than spiritual beings, or

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12 The Analects are a collection of sayings by Confucius and his pupils.
an afterlife.\textsuperscript{13} Virtuousness is defined by extending human-heartedness (jen) to everyone, and by fulfilling one's proper role and responsibilities in society. Confucius himself (551-479 B.C.) called for a benevolent, righteous government to rule. Meanwhile, people should follow the "proper conduct," or \textit{li}. Filial piety should govern relationships within the family. Furthermore, Confucius believed in the perfectibility of all people.

Neo-Confucianism arose during the Sung period (966-1279), when the elite class had more leisure time for cultural activities (deBary 1985:332). The Sung period is known for the great expansion of creative endeavors in the arts and literature. DeBary notes that the elite also had a concern with reinterpreting and revitalizing tradition for practical benefits. Although more concerned with practical matters and social problems, the vision of the individual as morally responsible and part of a "larger social whole" drew on the earlier Confucian tradition (ibid). As Hansen describes it, neo-Confucianism views humans as "cosmic citizens ultimately participating... in 'transforming heaven and earth'" (Hansen 1985:380).

Asian scholars have criticized Western interpretations of Confucianism, including Max Weber's. Weber said that Confucianism lacks an internal tension that creates the desire to transform the world. Many scholars of Confucianism have noted that in fact one important tenet of

\textsuperscript{13} Here I rely on Wing-Tsit Chan's authoritative \textit{Source Book in Chinese Philosophy} (1963).
the philosophy is that one must attempt to improve humanity (Tai 1989:13). Not only did Weber incorrectly view Confucianism as "lacking" in key elements necessary for capitalism, such as a transformative motivation, but Weber (and later modernization theorists) claimed that only one type of capitalism can exist -- that based on individualism. A major point of Tai and his colleagues is that capitalism has flourished in East Asia, but based on concern for one's human relationships, not individualism (ibid:15, Wen-lang Li, Wong 1989). This difference from Western individualism is the "Oriental alternative," what Tai refers to as an "affective model" for development. Exactly how extensive this concern for human relationships is in practice is problematic, as I will show later.

THE FAMILISTIC FACTORY AND THE LOYAL WORKER

For Tai and others, East Asian culture is exemplary not only because it has enabled industrialization, but also because of its superior ethics (Ku 1975). He writes that "The Chinese do not attempt to achieve economic success at the expense of human relations" (Tai 1989:15). This statement conveys a feeling of righteousness, implying that in contrast to the West, blinded by desire for profit alone, Chinese development has always placed concern for people first. Concern for human relations is central in Confucian philosophy, and is embodied in the concept of jen, which has been variously translated as benevolence, humanity or human-heartedness. Yet is this concern for human relations always placed before economic goals? I have already mentioned the bad image Taiwanese businessmen have
earned among their Southeast Asian neighbors; later I will present examples of the all-too-familiar exploitation of Taiwanese factory workers by Taiwanese owners and managers.

I do not doubt that jen in Taiwan and a Confucian-based idea of loyalty in Japan have influenced many aspects of development in those countries; Tai correctly mentions the impact of a Confucian ethical system on business organization and human resource development. Confucianism has certainly been influential in terms of the fervent devotion to education in East Asia for example, and has sometimes influenced the development of a paternal relationship between employee/employer relationships. However, empirical evidence contrary to Tai's ideologically-motivated presentation shows that jen (benevolence) is not as omnipresent as Tai suggests.

Most of the workers in Taiwanese factories are young women (Kung 1984:109). For example, in the Kaohsiung Export Processing Zone 80 percent of the workers were women, and 60 percent of those workers were teen-agers (Cumings 1987:74). The majority of these women are not working to enjoy some independence outside of their family, or as an alternative to marriage. Factory work, rather than fulfilling some personal goals, is typically identified with obligations to repay one's family for the cost of being raised (Kung 1984:110). Young women factory workers help their natal families by relieving the family of the costs for their own support (Diamond 1979a). Typically they also send remittances home, and sometimes save money for their own dowries. Money sent home may be used
to support the education of younger brothers. Workers often live in
spartan dormitories and work six days a week plus overtime, in exchange
for wages that are "at the bottom of the heap in world scales" (Cumings
1987:74).

Yet elites like Tai create a different picture. He writes that
because of the familistic social atmosphere in a Chinese factory,"Oriental workers are willing to work hard, labor for long hours and to
receive relatively low pay" (Tai 1989:20). Does a "familistic"
description really capture the atmosphere of a Taiwanese factory, and the
humility of the Taiwanese worker? Far from it, as ethnographers who have
done extensive work in Taiwanese companies have detailed (Kung 1984, 1981;
Arrigo 1984). Kung and Arrigo found that factory workers did not expect
special treatment from their employers, nor did they feel particularly
loyal towards their current place of work. In fact, the workers often
transferred jobs because they felt the managers were too strict or
demanding. As one woman told Kung, "Well, in any case, factories are all
the same; they all use people" (1984:120). Similar examples of worker
alienation come from Singapore, where Chen notes that turnover of
industrial workers can be as high as 50 per cent a year (1980:125).

I would suggest that Asian workers will be less willing to work for
low wages and in bad conditions as their economies become more developed.
Tai and other elites construct an image of the docile, hard-working Asian
in part to justify low wages and poor conditions. The instrumentalist
argument has great significance here in the construction of power
relations. One implication is that pressure from the workers to improve conditions is not necessary, as the employer, in a paternalistic fashion, will take good care of his workers. Thus, no need for unions. Another implication lies in the portrayal of the "loyal" worker: he or she has a familistic relationship to the company and will not challenge management. The assumption that workers and management (or owners) have in practice had the same interests in Asia or anywhere else in the world, is not supported by actual experiences. In an astounding leap of faith, Martellaro seems to assume that in fact management generally has the workers' interests in mind: "In contrast to the adversarial posture assumed by management and labor in Western societies, the reciprocity of loyalty and mutual responsibilities between employer and employee continue to prevail in East Asia" (1991:86).

I believe that the rhetorical construction of a loyal worker has a tangible impact on relationships between management, labor, and attitudes. Management in particular can use descriptions such as Tai and Martellaro's as evidence that Asian workers should naturally accept minimal salaries and uncomfortable working conditions. However, there is a fine line between such rhetoric and actual feelings of loyalty among company workers. The loyal Asian worker is a rhetorical construct, but there are also some examples of company loyalty in practice that seem relatively strong compared to Euro-American norms. Self-perception and cultural rhetoric probably have complicated links. For example, a survey of Taipei-dwellers reveals that respondents indeed view themselves as
"diligent" and "long-suffering" (Hsiao 1986).

Also, a certain fatalism that arises from the complex of Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism has modern manifestations in expressions, behavior and attitudes (Butterfield 1982, Harris 1991). For example, a young factory worker interviewed by Kung said in regard to her future employment that "One can never tell about the future, so what good does it do to try and think about it?" (Kung 1984:116). Fatalism, the belief that one's destiny is beyond one's control, weakens the motivation to resist oppression and direct one's own future. For Butterfield, the fatalistic element of Chinese culture is partly a response to the weight of inept bureaucracies (Butterfield 1982:282). He notes common expressions used by friends in Taiwan when a problem arose: Suan le ba, "forget it," or mei yu fa zi, "there's nothing you can do about it" (ibid). The desire to avoid conflict may also be a cultural strategy for survival in a densely populated society, where the imperative to conform rather than rebel ensured stasis for the individual within a competitive society, if not personal betterment and change. To view the relative pliancy of Chinese workers as solely a condition of rhetorical and actual oppression would only serve to meet the ideological goals of Western liberalism.

14 Especially the Taoist ideal of wu wei, or "do nothing."
THE NATION FAMILY AND THE FILIAL CITIZEN

Tai also makes the case that the Chinese see themselves in a sense as part of one family. For Tai this familistic nation began thousands of years ago, when geographical immobility was the rule. In modern times, Tai sees proof of the continuation of this world view in the Chinese term for nation, guo-jia, or state family.15 Tai's characterization of "the Chinese," like classical ethnographies, focuses on a shared world view, rather than contradictions or anomalies within the culture. Rosaldo wrote about the ethnographic creation of a timeless culture that contrasted with the positively-evaluated "progress" of the West. The imaginative creation of cultural holism played into the ideological role16 of classical ethnographers -- including colonial control of "distant" people (Rosaldo 1989:30-31) For Said as well, the Western view of the East as a "homogenous, unchanging whole" is part of the imperialist project (ibid:42).

Ironically, Tai and indeed most of the other "native" commentators whose work I am concerned with also view East Asia as a homogenous, unchanging whole. Like Weber, Tai takes an abstract philosophical system, Confucianism, and assumes that the philosophy directs individuals to such

15 While Tai points to guo-jia, "nation family" as evidence of familistic sentiment, I would note that the term also reveals the strong nationalistic sentiments among Chinese.

16 The role of the ethnographer in perpetuating colonial and neo-colonial domination may be at times conscious and at times unconscious. The influence of authoritative ideologies in our lives is so deep that one may be a pawn of ideology without a conscious awareness of one's role.
an extent that the behavior of entire societies is determined, and predictable. Of course, Tai's attempt to present Chinese culture as holistic does not have the same ideological goals as the classical ethnographers, but I argue that they are similar. Rather than create an image of an "other" to be dominated, Tai and his colleagues create an image of a dominating culture.

On one level, the image is of a culture that dominates internationally. For example, Tai cites Hofheinz, Jr. and Calder as well, but he mentions their cry of alarm over the unsuspected challenger from the East as evidence that the economic rise of East Asia is a challenge to the dominance of the West, whose nations should feel threatened by the challenge (Tai 1989:12). Tai and others, in their presentation of Chinese culture, are jockeying for a cultural and ideological position that has been held exclusively by Western nations in modern times: that of cultural and economic standard-bearer, whose characteristics can and perhaps should be modeled by other Asian nations who aspire to higher standards of living under capitalism.

On another level, elites construct Taiwan as the repository of "pure," traditional Chinese culture. Appadurai notes that the state has a role in reducing difference, and that this internal process of homogenization is usually centered on debates over heritage (Appadurai 1990:307). Claims to the purity of Chinese culture in Taiwan have both regional and internal ideological goals.
The claim to standard-bearer and model is expressed by Li, who as I mentioned is a member of Taiwan's bureaucratic elite:

"I would like to suggest that, by virtue of the role we perform and of our cultural heritage, we are in a unique position to contribute to the strengthening of international economic relations and to the enhancement of world prosperity" (Li 1988:110).

Li is making a call for an enlarged role for Taiwan in world economic affairs, typical for a nation with a strong, expanding economy. Li's attention to Taiwan's special role and "culture heritage," however, must be understood in light of a divided China. There is an implicit challenger to Taiwan's "unique position": the People's Republic of China. In fact, on a practical level the threat posed by the PRC has been one of the Guomindang's primary legitimizing forces. The Guomindang has used the islanders' fears of a communist take-over to justify their monopoly on power, martial law and other repressive policies.

To return to Tai's contention that the Chinese see themselves as part of one family, this view can be understood on different levels in the context of ROC-PRC relations. First of all, the notion of one, big Chinese family plays into Taiwan's official policy of reunification. Secondly, the mainlander-dominated government of Taiwan has ruled according to assumptions that follow from the state-as-family notion. When the defeated Nationalists came to Taiwan, they brought traditional ideas of political culture with them. For the nationalists, filiality defines the role between the ruler and the loyal subjects (Cohen 1988:164). Two centuries-old traditions contribute to the ideological
construction of a filial subject in China: the concept of an imperial "mandate of heaven," and Confucianism. The idea that the emperor descended from gods began at about 500 B.C., and prompted scholars to invent divine genealogies for noble families (Eberhard 1950:48). In modern times, political parties have promoted a cult of their leaders, as in the promotion of Sun Yat-sen and the Chiangs as "National Fathers" of Taiwan (Cohen 1988:164). Meanwhile, the notion that citizens should be filial to the current national father is supported by Confucian precepts, as in the statement attributed to Confucius, "insubordination is more reprehensible than brutality" (Weber 1968:579). Confucian notions of filiality support the status quo; the male elite, and on Taiwan the dominance of ethnic mainlanders. While Confucianism has been expropriated by instrumentalists such as Li (1988) and Tai (1989) as the moving force behind economic success, Grieder describes how historically Confucianism has been a tool of class domination:

"Confucianism was... a curriculum of moral education, aimed at propagating certain social and political norms. As such it was also an elaborate, highly developed and durable system for monopolizing the social and political benefits derived by a minority from the mastery of the essential skills of literacy" (Grieder 1981:226).

According to Cohen, the mainland political culture (forcefully transplanted to the island by the Guomindang) is at odds with the political culture developed earlier on Taiwan. Perhaps a legacy of their frontier days, freedom and consent of the governed are important political qualities for native Taiwanese (Cohen 1988:165). While consent of the
governed may still be an important quality for Taiwanese, Cohen does not address the effect of the Japanese in constructing the island's political ideology. Like the mainland Chinese, the Japanese colonists imposed the concept of the nation as family, whose members should demonstrate filial loyalty (Cumings 1987:56). Although most Taiwanese look back on the Japanese period with revulsion, the colonialist influence on island politics and administration was extensive (Gates 1987; Kublin 1973). In any case, the Guomindang has tried to weaken manifestations of "Taiwan Consciousness," mainly through suppression of Taiwanese and other local dialects and promotion of Mandarin (ibid:165-166).

Patriarchy, Confucianism and Social Discipline

Confucianism, as a philosophy and to varying degrees in practice, entails particular relationships between the individual and the state and the individual and her or his family. The class, age and sex lines of the hierarchy are spelled out in the traditional litany: "Emperor must act as an emperor; ministers, ministers; fathers, fathers; sons, sons" (Wong 1989:123). High social rank and age dominate low social rank and youth, while women need not "act" at all -- merely obey. For Taiwanese elites these culturally-defined roles have been instruments for industrialization. For Wong, East Asians' adherence to their proper social responsibilities comes from a "sense of social discipline" which helps to achieve both "social harmony" and "progress" (ibid). As he presents it, if everyone performs their proper role the result is peace
and prosperity. Yet who disciplines who in order for peace and prosperity to flow? Discipline implies someone whose desires are curtailed, in East Asia the young and women.

A look back to ethnographies of factory life on the island reveals that Wong's idealized vision is shattered by the experience of working women. As I mentioned, most of the workers are young women, many of whom have given up furthering their education beyond primary school in order to begin supporting their family financially (Kung 1984). Kung described the experience of 19 year-old Wang Su-lan, who very much wanted to go on to lower-middle school, but instead started working. She gave all her monthly earnings from her job sewing collars onto shirts to her mother, who explained that Su-lan was not allowed to continue in school because the family needed the money (ibid:112). Su-lan's mother felt that even though her daughter could get a better job with more education, "once a girl marries, she belongs to other people" (ibid). Su-lan's younger brother is the only sibling to continue past primary school. Su-lan definitely fulfills her role as a filial daughter, but to do so must sacrifice her own future.

Heng and Devan's perspicacious analysis of state control of fertility in Singapore illustrates the essential patriarchal nature of Confucianist ideals, both in rhetoric and in practice (1992). Rhetorically, Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew, like Taiwanese elites, attributes Singapore's economic success to Chinese culture. The "social discipline of 'hard' Confucian cultures" enabled the island-nation to
industrialize, whereas the Malay and Indian cultures are "'soft'... like women, they are loquacious and theatrical, too indulgent and irresponsible" (ibid:352). The unspoken image is one of phallic strength overpowering feminine malleability, Heng and Devan argue. For Lee, Confucianism not only legitimates his own authority, but also provides ideological tools for "the efficient working of state corporatism and multinational capital" (ibid:354). That women of "no education" (mainly Malay and Indian) had more children than educated women (mainly Chinese) was the fault of women's uncontrolled sexuality, and a threat to the nation's efficiency (ibid:345). Policies were implemented to encourage educated women to have children and to discourage uneducated women to have more than two children; hence the Confucian ideal of a patriarch perfecting his "family" (here the nation) became a reality for the women of Singapore.

THE POWER OF THE TRUE CHINESE CULTURE

The Guomindang and mainlander-elites also legitimize their dominance by exploiting the question of cultural heritage. Taiwan has consciously represented itself as the last island of true Chinese culture, as communism has ravaged traditions on the mainland. Li quotes a U.S. official, who says that "... the mainstream of Chinese culture now flows on this island," which for Li is the reason why so many scholars come to Taiwan (Li 1988:164). There is some truth to Li's presentation -- the Communist Party has led ideological attacks against Confucianism and
religion. While Maoist ideology has traditional roots, Communism has perhaps led to more radical cultural changes than Taiwan has witnessed (Potter and Potter 1990).

It may be impossible to decide which China is more "Chinese." I would like to point out that Taiwan's leaders have ideological reasons to present themselves as the heirs of the purest version of Chinese culture. On a political level, claiming cultural purity legitimizes the Guomindang's goal for reunification: a united China, under the Guomindang. On a social level, claims to cultural continuity helps construct the image of Taiwan as an economic miracle by virtue of Chinese culture.

In addition to a divided China, another important backdrop to the positioning of Chinese culture as a model by virtue of its economic fitness is the centuries-old perception that the Chinese lagged behind the West in economic and technological development. The Chinese, to a certain extent, have long believed themselves superior to all other nations. Any other peoples they encountered were termed "barbarians," while their own county is the Middle Kingdom (中土), the center of the world. Yet when China encountered European traders, whose advancements in technology and economic acumen in the imperialist project enabled them to dominate China's seaboard politically and economically, it suffered a humiliation which still reverberates.

17 Obviously this is an impossibility but the Guomindang continues this line as their official policy.
While education and technology are still perceived to be more advanced in the West (Harris 1991), Taiwanese have been quite conscious that this disparity is changing. An article in the popular press notes proudly that a petrochemical plant turned away a foreign consultant who was to direct the reconstruction of the plant for four million dollars, employing local technicians instead. The project was to be under Dr. Wu Cheng-ching (Sinorama 1978 3[1]:21). The author states that Dr. Wu's achievement "has changed the attitude of Chinese investors who are no longer under the illusion that Chinese engineers are inferior to Western engineers" (ibid). One might assume that this "illusion" must be almost completely dispelled by now, as large numbers of young Taiwanese who obtain advanced technical degrees in the U.S. are heavily courted by business and government to return to Taiwan. Yet the memory of being quite far from the West's (and then Japan's) level of technology is still compelling, prompting Taiwanese commentators to slip into self-congratulatory rhetoric at times. On the other hand, the public at large seems to be more self-conscious of a perceived negative image of Chinese culture than self-congratulatory. A survey of Taipei-dwellers found that 65 percent of the participants thought that foreigners believed Chinese to be "backward, unscientific and not law-abiding," and 72 percent thought that steps should be taken to improve Taiwan's international image (Hsiao 1986).

An earlier claim to the power and truth of "Oriental" culture comes from Ku Cheng-kang, who was among those who planned an Asian Cultural
Center in Taipei, to "promote Oriental culture" (Ku 1975:1). Like the Alliance Francaise, the British Council, the American Center, and other publicly-funded cultural representatives around the world, the Asian Cultural Center has ideological goals: to present a nation's culture as unique and interesting, thereby legitimizing the existence of the nation; and to present itself as an alternative to other systems of political economy, in this case a presentation of capitalism as a superior alternative to socialism. Ku makes the latter goal clear, as he sees Oriental culture as "a spiritual stabilizing force very much needed for ... freedom, democracy and peace in Asia" (ibid). The implicit reference here is to the PRC, which has made suppression of religion a policy since its inception. Like Tai, Ku claims that Chinese culture has not changed substantially since its beginnings, when the great philosophers Lao Tze and Confucius lived and taught about 500 years before Christ. This claim is indisputably false when looking at changes in family roles in the last fifty years alone, not to mention the influence of other Asian and Western cultures over the centuries. Yet in making this claim Ku rhetorically asserts that a culture that could survive unchanged since 500 B.C. must be true and powerful.

In 1966, a state-sponsored "movement" to promote the true Chinese culture was begun by President Chiang Kai-shek: The Chinese Cultural Renaissance Movement. Chiang's renaissance was explicitly a response to Mao's Cultural Revolution (Chen 1975:27). The Renaissance Movement was also consciously built on Sun Yet-sen's "Three Principles of the People"
San Min Chu I -- nationalism, democracy and social well-being. Here we see an example of the local articulation of the global ideoscape, as Appadurai terms it (Appadurai 1990:299). Appadurai notes how certain key words, often originating during the Enlightenment, are taken up by local political and cultural economies where they serve indigenous political goals. In Taiwan, the primary goal has been the ideological use of a cultural image: a "free" China (nominally a democracy), united (nationalism) by good intentions (jen) that will resist "the forces of Communism that are bent on world conquest and human enslavement" (Chen 1975:27).

More recently, "Han culture" has been invoked as the key to Taiwan's destiny to industrialize and prosper. For Li, it's the "Han culture, with its heavy emphasis on hard work, frugality, and allegiance to the state" that has enabled economic growth not just in Taiwan but in the other NICs and Japan as well (1988:124). Li's assertion that it is Han culture, which refers to the formative period of Chinese culture during the Han Dynasty (206 B.C. to A.D. 220) is a form of cultural hegemony that no doubt Koreans and Japanese would find offensive. The implication that Chinese are more hard-working than other peoples is also a hegemonic strategy, and is reminiscent of Americans' claim that the U.S. owes its economic success to Protestant values and achievement-orientation (Foster 1960; McClelland et. al. 1953; Rostow 1956). Simply stated, for Li East Asian economies have grown faster than other economies because of cultural factors. Although he mentions that colonialism and uneven distributions
of wealth hampered development in Latin America and Africa, culture had an influence too. In Latin America Catholicism and ensuing high birth rates is a major impediment, according to Li (Li 1988:124). Meanwhile, Africans have been "unable to develop a spirit of drive and initiative," and "many African farmers have shown little interest in producing a surplus for the market" (ibid). These untutored characterizations of the diverse continent of Africa are not only empirically wrong, but also tinged with the bitter flavor of racism.

SOCIAL CONSCIOUSNESS

What about the claim that Chinese culture is ethically superior, in addition to its economic fitness? The question of social consciousness in East Asia is controversial, and not only because practice does not always match philosophical ideals. Perspectives on whether such social consciousness exists even on an abstract level vary, from unrealistic idealizations of how socially conscious East Asia is, to reformist critiques on its absence. Martellaro, for example, believes that Confucian values that emphasize harmonization rather than competitiveness, and altruism, have helped unite individuals to support a common cause, one of which has been industrialization (Martellaro 1991:85). Kim, on the other hand, speaks of a growing "dehumanization," and calls for Koreans to develop a social consciousness (Kim 1980:8). This discrepancy can be explained by the fact that one group of commentators, including Tai and Martellaro, have taken the philosophical ideal of jen as a universal ideal
and as reality in practice.

Human relationships are emphasized in East Asia, but according to a rather strict division between those individuals one knows and cares about and strangers, whom one has no concern about. For those individuals one has a relationship with, ties between them may be used for mutual advantage. For example, the maintenance of personal ties, or *guan xi*, has served a positive function in the maintenance of business ties (Hsu 1981).

A vivid counter-example of *guan xi* was brought home to me one summer in Taiwan, when I witnessed a bus run over a man on a motorcycle. The man laid on the street, bleeding, while traffic continued at a frenetic pace around him.

Li recognizes that the application of ethics such as *shu*, or magnanimity, are usually limited to specific people one knows, not to strangers (Li 1988:375). The lack of a wider social consciousness, coupled with Taiwan's industrialization, has led to severe problems with traffic, pollution, and waste disposal (ibid). Li, like Kim, decries Taiwan as "a 'normless' society," lacking a moral code for relations with those outside of one's circle of acquaintances (ibid:377). Anthropologist Li Yi-yuan puts it more poetically: "...warmth and courtesy, for a Chinese, gradually fade out like the ripples on a pond the more distant the relationship is that he has with someone" (Hsiao 1986).

Li calls for an addition to the traditional five human relationships (father-son, brothers, friends, husband-wife, ruler-subject): a new relationship between the individual and the community. President Bush has
made similar exhortations in the U.S., but Li's concept of the ties between the individual and the community are not based on the same cultural assumptions as Bush draws upon. What is most strikingly different from American assumptions is the high degree of accountability to which Li holds his compatriots.

THE STATE AS CULTURAL GUIDE

Rhetoric on culture in Taiwan is heavily influenced by ideas about the role of the state in directing society. Two master assumptions underlie such rhetoric: 1) that the state has a right to construct and guide social attitudes and practice, and 2) that it is possible for the representatives of the state to have an effect on practice. These assumptions contrast with American values, such as freedom of choice and the independence of the individual. The political values in Taiwan, at least as exemplified by the sample of elite spokesmen I survey here, seem to favor moral advice and discipline. When Li writes about the principle of an individual-community relationship, he actually offers moralistic directives to put the principle into practice, including "Never wasting public property and never yielding to the temptations of avarice and corruption" and "Preserving orderliness in all communities and eliminating urban blight" (ibid:379-380). In a cynical, heterogenous America such admonishments could not be taken seriously. Yet Li's call for social action continues the long tradition of Chinese ethical philosophers.
One influential classic which addresses the relationship between the individual and the state is the *Great Learning*. This essay gives "eight steps" for applying the Confucian principles of altruism and conscientiousness, one of which is supporting the "national order" (Chan 1963:84). The assumption that has been incorporated into modern rhetoric is that the people share common interests, and that the state has a role to play in defining those interests and in detailing how they can be met by the citizens. The relationship here is expressed succinctly by Li: "The people should be loyal to the state, and the state must exercise its power to care for and protect the people" (1988:378). Li's statement could very well be made by a Communist Party official in the People's Republic, and indeed rhetoric in the two countries draws on a common heritage.

The Chinese culture heroes of the past, the great philosopher-kings, have had modern manifestations in the form of Mao Tse-tung and Chiang Kai-shek, among others. In their role as philosopher-kings, Mao and Chiang engaged in cultural construction through their speeches and writings. Given the role of the philosopher-king in China, perhaps their views would be taken more seriously by a Chinese audience as ideals to be lived up to, compared to the cynical appraisal of political rhetoric by citizens of Western nations. Chiang's ideas about society and politics were formative in the narrative of cultural ideology in Taiwan. Chiang's promotion of a Chinese cultural renaissance was part of the ideological war against the People's Republic. When Taiwan was forced to withdraw from the United
Nations in 1971 the need to again surround the nation with the protective cloak of cultural superiority was great. Ku wrote:

"Each individual should strive as a forerunner of Oriental cultural renaissance and a pioneer in the anti-Communist campaign of self-salvation and mutual salvation. All of us will together stamp out the sources of Communist evils and see to it that Asia grows with freedom, democracy, peace and prosperity" (1975:17).

Cultural concepts Ku draws on here include the ethic of self-cultivation. The sage, or gentleman, strives to cultivate himself, his knowledge, his talents, his skills with people. This ideal is translated by Ku as "self-salvation," the religious idiom adding to the feeling that Chinese culture is under spiritual attack by Communism. The tone and language bear a remarkable, if ironic, resemblance to Communist Party rhetoric in the PRC.

Anagnost has written about state-sanctioned cultural ideals on the level of practice in the People's Republic (1990). Party organizations include a "social ethics appraisal committee," and "civilization committees" (Anagnost 1990:16). Anagnost gives excerpts of stories from the mass media in the PRC, in which "backward" individuals are transformed through the efforts of neighbors and party officials into "law-abiding" participants in the community (ibid:21). While Taiwan might not have such overt public direction of values, the similarities at the level of cultural assumption are striking in the discourse flowing from two different political systems. The People Republic's master narrative is "progress toward socialization" (ibid:17); Taiwan's is "progress toward
capitalist industrialization and modernization." Yet for both societies the state presumes to offer moral directives to guide these goals. Anagnost notes that interpretations of these stories of moral exemplars can vary; some may believe the stories, some may be cynical. Perhaps the state has not become quite as de-legitimized in Taiwan as on the mainland, but no doubt many on Taiwan would also view state rhetoric on values with a cynical eye.

WORK ETHICS AND SAVINGS

What about the image of the "hard-working Asian"? Is it supported by any empirical evidence? It seems to me very difficult to evaluate societies according to how work-oriented they are. However, the belief that East Asian societies are hard-working is certainly prevalent. The "achievement motive," according to many writers, is strong in East Asia and one cause for the region's economic growth (Martellaro 1991:86; Li 1988; Schlossstein 1991:17). Martellaro refers to the "Confucian Work Ethic," borrowing from the phrase so often used to describe North American culture, the Protestant Work Ethic. Some have even tried to apply surveys to measure the Protestant Work Ethic in Chinese societies (Ma 1987).

Actually, "work ethic" is misleading when applied to East Asia. Because the term has been so strongly associated with Protestantism it connotes the idea of work as a way to show one's righteousness towards God, an idea without meaning for most Chinese. Hard work is highly valued in Chinese culture, but as I see it, more as a way to support one's
family. Ethnographic examples of familial pressure for members to contribute to the family's purse are numerous. Chinese ethics call for individual sacrifice to the group; although who sacrifices is differentiated along age and sex lines. The young are to sacrifice for the old, and females for males. Ethnography from Taiwan shows how typical is it for a daughter, perhaps with only a primary school education, to go to work so that her younger brothers may go to secondary school or college. She might also work to help pay for bride price for the sons future wives (Gates 1987a; Kung 1981).

Another Chinese value that seems to drive the motive to work hard, to whatever degree it exists among different individuals, is the concept of the perfectible individual. There is the belief that one can do anything if one works hard enough, which has sometimes been translated into public efforts. For example, Mao declared in 1958 "I have witnessed that tremendous energy of the masses, on this foundation it is possible to accomplish any task whatsoever" (Butterfield 1982:242) Mao's vision led the Great Leap Forward, the plan that was to result in China's transformation from an agriculture into an industrialized nation, through improbable local initiatives such as backyard iron blast furnaces. The actual result of the plan was starvation -- as many as 16.5 million people may have died from malnutrition caused by Great Leap policies (ibid).

Other cultural characteristics which Tai and others view as instrumental for economic growth have been described by anthropologists and other social investigators who have more concrete examples than the
existence of a philosophical tradition. For example, the oft-cited high savings rate in East Asia is given a personal face in Tang’s study (1978). A Chinese anthropologist, Tang conducted numerous informal and formal interviews with residents of a Taipei suburb. He writes that

"They believe it is better to utilize economic resources to bolster economic security than to spend them in immediate comforts or advantages; that the accumulation of wealth within the family estate yields higher satisfactions than material improvement or display" (Tang 1978:92).

Such "accumulations of wealth" are frequently invested, and thus have been helpful in Taiwan’s development. Savings have elsewhere been described as equivalent to a "moral virtue" in that savings will ensure survival of the family in hard times (Martellaro 1991:85). Another instrumental characteristic is the structure of the family, and how marginally employed or unemployed members are put to use in family operations. This type of familial self-employment is sometimes remarked upon in the literature (Tang 1978:98; Wang 1975) as if familial use of members labor was unique to Chinese society. I would say that what may be distinctive is that Chinese family operations are often businesses run for profit, as described by Gates, rather than for subsistence activities (1987a).

Arkush makes a convincing case for the existence of an entrepreneurial ethic in Chinese culture, in a discussion of peasant proverbs of North China (1984). A contradiction to this ethic is the traditional disdain for those involved in commercial enterprises (Ma 1987). Confucianism idealizes the literary scholar as the ultimate
livelihood (for men, almost exclusively), not the successful business man. This bias in favor of scholasticism continues today. Yet while profit-making has admired or valued as it has been in the West, opening a business is seen by many Chinese families as the perhaps the most practical and convenient way to earn a livelihood, if not the ideal.

THE FAMILY AS ECONOMIC INSTRUMENT

The Chinese family has received perhaps more ethnographic attention than any other aspect of Chinese culture, and the family has been analyzed by some of the instrumentalists as well. Although the family is a popular subject of analysis, writers often erroneously speak of the "Chinese family system," as if there is a universal standard which exists in practice. The extended family, where one or more married sons and their families live with the paternal parent, has been the ideal. It is no longer always the ideal, especially in urban areas of Taiwan and certainly not usually practiced (Diamond 1969; Cohen 1976; Coombs and Sun 1981; Novotny 1987).

Assuming that the extended family has been widely, or even universally practiced, some scholars have concluded that it was a block to modernization in China (Wang 1981). Such writers claimed that certain practices in the Chinese extended family inhibited the accumulation of capital necessary to develop, including division of family property equally between sons. Also believed to inhibit capital accumulation was the sharing of wealth between richer and poorer brothers. In fact the
latter conclusion is weakened by Diamond's description of loan practices in a Taiwanese village, where people prefer to be indebted to non-kin and are reluctant to borrow from or loan money to relatives (1969).

However, Diamond and others describe a system of economic sharing between immediate relatives that has benefitted the growth of Taiwan's economy under capitalism. One common manifestation of this pooling of labor are remittances sent from city workers to rural family members. Wang, for example, cites a 1971 study which found 29% of rural families' incomes consisted of remittances (Wang 1981:31). While remittances help support family members in rural areas, urban workers can always return to their families if they lose their job. Wang says that city workers often return to their village hometown to invest in commercial enterprises, such as fish ponds. The maintenance of family ties after one or more members leave for jobs in urban areas facilitates capital flow between urban industries and the rural population.

Interestingly, Wang's implicit thesis seems to be that Chinese kin networks are "good" because they support capitalist development. As in other indigenous perspectives surveyed here, the benefits of capitalism are unquestioned, as are possible ill effects. While some of the Taiwanese writers express doubts about certain cultural changes that have followed economic modernization, none have examined the process of economic modernization itself critically. The industrialization of Taiwan's economy is an unquestioned goal beyond reproach.
CONCLUSIONS

Tai and others' insistence that modernity in Japan, or China, or Korea is not and will not be the same as modernity in the West is a point very well taken and an important counterpoint to the still-dominant view that modernity is by definition Western civilization. I agree that for East Asians social role fulfillment, for example, is more important than individual fulfillment when compared with the Western tradition. I also agree that relative importance of social links outside the self makes for a particular relationship of the individual to their job, their employer and the state. There are many cultural factors that have shaped the development of East Asia, some shared among them and others not. While the instrumentalists have many excellent points to make about the unique characteristics of development in East Asia, I find their arguments problematic in two ways. First of all, the instrumentalists (like many anthropologists) draw direct parallels between abstract philosophy, be it Confucianism, Buddhism or Taoism, and human behavior. The over-riding importance some instrumentalists assign to Confucianism in particular should be tempered by a recognition of contradictions in the Chinese ethical system, and by examples from actual behavior, especially behavior related to change and pressure from industrialization. Contradictions, change and adaptation (or resistance) not only complete the picture of culture, but make possible a cultural critique.

Secondly, underlying the Asian instrumentalists' argument are some problematic assumptions shared with modernization theory: that Chinese
(and Japanese and Korean) culture is superior to other Asian cultures, perhaps to all other cultures, and that the East Asian ethical system should be a model for others to follow. These assumptions, as I stated earlier, are part of the hegemonic rhetoric of the region's elite spokespeople. It seems that, as in the West, achievement of economic dominance necessitates the construction of an ideology of cultural superiority, specifically cultural values as instruments for capitalist economic development. This ideology often contains anti-communist rhetoric as well. East Asia, according to Tai, has succeeded economically by virtue of its cultural strengths while socialism has failed, which implies a socio-political strategy that is weak (Tai 1989:27). Tai significantly excludes the People's Republic of China from discussion. The existence of the PRC, however, is no doubt one reason why Tai feels it is necessary to claim the superiority of Han culture over socialism.

Beyond rhetorical posturing, what has been the response of the Taiwanese to rapid industrialization? A curious mix of pride in modernization (almost entirely understood in terms of the Western experience) and dismay at the new materialism and other ills seems to characterize an ambivalent response to changing values and behavior. For example, Wei sees modernization as generally positive, as people become more self-determined and find more choices available to them (1973:440). Yet Wei also notes that generational conflicts have appeared, as children reject being treated by their parents as possessions whose primary value is economic (ibid). Yang found similar trends, except his studies reveal
only positive changes (Yang 1981). For instance, Yang notes a new emphasis on achievements rather than moral cultivation (ibid:268). People have a more active and easy-going nature, compared to the previous "shy and suspicious" nature he says once characterized Chinese people (ibid:268).

It appears that within less than a decade views of such changes have become less positive. In the survey mentioned previously (reported by Hsiao), respondents describe Chinese as materialistic, individualistic and neglectful of spiritual values (1986). Other writers bemoan increasing commercialization and consumerism in Taiwanese society (Chen 1988:27; Li 1991:95). While such commercialization is "inevitable" as Taiwan cannot avoid the capitalist path, Li recommends a solution common among the instrumentalists -- state intervention. She writes that "Government, society and cultural workers should reduce the ill effects of capitalism and keep the profit motive to a minimum" (ibid).

For many native commentators, cultural traits are instrumental to economic growth. But there is also the assumption that society can actively shape cultural traits, that individuals have conscious control over these "instruments." Deeper underlying assumptions about national unity and perfectibility inform the philosopher Shen, who in writing about the Information Age, advises that:

"To readjust the informational concept of our people, correct the bad inclination of utilitarianism, strengthen the creativity of our own culture... and further strengthen the self-consciousness of the people and humanistic discipline, we must first get rid of the shortcomings and develop the good points of the culture and integrate the characteristics of the informational age" (Shen 1988:79).
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