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NATIONAL IDENTITY, COLLECTIVE MEMORY, AND MNEMONIC ENGINEERING
—INVENTING A CHINESE NATIONALITY FROM 1949 THROUGH 1987

by

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

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Nation is an imagined collectivity, but the establishment of a state apparatus does not automatically resonate with publics. Nationbuilding is the extra effort required to lead people to imagine they are members of a specific nation. This dissertation argues that nationbuilding should be regarded as an ongoing social process of leading people to remember their national identity through *mnemonic engineering*. As an intentional effort, mnemonic engineering strategically employs mnemonic techniques not only to lead its audience to commemorate a standardized shared past, present, and future, but also to refresh people's collective memory on a regular basis. The invention of a Chinese nationality by the Kuomintang (KMT) government serves as the case to unravel the process of nation-remembering and the characteristics of mnemonic engineering.

Occupying only a tiny portion of the physical territory, via synecdoche, the KMT government negated the legitimacy of People's Republic of China governance and maintained itself as *the* legitimate government of the Chinese nation and *the* authentic descendant of "The 5,000-Year Chinese History." In addition to detailing the mnemonic techniques involved in the invention of a Chinese nationality and the formation of *mnemonic sediments*, how the KMT government continuously modified its mnemonic engineering to counter challenges from its mnemonic rivals, the legacy of the official Chinese nationalism appearing in the following waves of nationbuilding in Taiwan, and the distinction between *mnemonic revolution* and *mnemonic reform* are also discussed. Furthermore, this dissertation suggests that its findings on mnemonic engineering can be applied to apprehend identity-remembering processes and how people conduct their boundary work mnemonically in various social fields.

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Table of Contents

Title Page.....	i
Abstract.....	ii
Acknowledgment.....	iv
Table of Contents.....	viii
List of Tables.....	x
List of Illustrations.....	x
Preface.....	1
Chapter 1: Nation, Memory, and Identity.....	5
Nationalism as a Greedy Identity.....	6
The Remembered National Identity.....	8
The Constructed Collective Memory.....	13
Mnemonic Engineering and Nation-Remembering.....	18
The Invention of a Chinese Nationality.....	23
The Role of Double Tenth Day.....	30
Data and Methods.....	32
Chapter 2: A National Celebration Day for the Chinese Nation.....	37
Double Tenth Day as a “Crowded” Day.....	41
Double Tenth Day as a “Memorialized” Day.....	46
Double Tenth Day as an “Accepted” Day.....	50
Double Tenth Day as a “Heroic” Day.....	54
Double Tenth Day as a “Familial-ized” Day.....	60
Double Tenth Day as a “Blessed” Day.....	62
Double Tenth Day as a “Pivotal-ized” Day.....	64
A Remembered “Sacred” Day.....	66
Chapter 3: Narrating a Shared Past.....	69
1911 as a “Big” Beginning.....	72
The “Eventful” and “Hot” KMT History.....	77
Creating the Continuity with Sun Yat-sen.....	81

Accentuating “The 5,000-Year Chinese History”	85
Delegitimizing Counter-Narratives.....	90
The Remembered Nostalgia.....	96
Chapter 4: Controlling the Past, Controlling the Future.....	101
The 1949 Retreat as a Turning Point.....	103
The “Abnormal,” “Temporary,” and “Traumatic” Shared Present.....	109
The “Bright” Shared Future.....	114
Collective Amnesia.....	121
The Broadly Included National Members.....	126
The Invented Organic Whole.....	130
Chapter 5: Idiosyncrasies of Mnemonic Engineering.....	133
Remembering and Forgetting.....	138
Continuity and Discontinuity.....	140
Beyond the Political Field.....	143
The Nonmetric Aspect.....	144
The Challenges.....	146
Ongoing Modifications.....	154
Mnemonic Sediments.....	160
Mnemonic Revolution versus Mnemonic Reform.....	164
Mnemonic Engineering as an Ongoing Accomplishment.....	167
Chapter 6: The Legacies of Chinese Nationalism.....	169
Mnemonic Boundary Work.....	171
The Legacies in Official Taiwanese Nationalism.....	173
The Further “Braided” Memory.....	183
Making Communities More Imaginable.....	188
Conclusions.....	190
References (I)	195
References (II)	207

List of Tables

Table 2.1: The Announced Number of “Returned” International Chinese.....	56
Table 4.1 Narratives on Past, Present, and Future from Different Mnemonic Visions...	125

List of Illustrations

Figure 1.1: The Multi-Linear Historical Developments.....	28
Figure 1.2: The Selection of Historical Events.....	28
Figure 1.3: The Official Promoted National History.....	28
Figure 3.1: Genealogical Marginalization of the PRC Government as a “Bad Branch”	116
Figure 5.1: The “Zigzag” Emplotment of Collective Memory in Taiwan.....	134

Preface

Communities...have a history—in an important sense they are constituted by their past—and for this reason we can speak of a real community as a “community of memory,” one that does not forget its past (Bellah et al. 1985:153).

Losing the Chinese Civil War caused the Kuomintang-led Republic of China (ROC) government to “retreat” to its long-term marginalized province Taiwan in 1949 to continue its sovereign power and to try to regain its ruling power in mainland China. The transformation caused a tremendous “rupture” in the national history from the ROC government’s perspective and an acute legitimacy crisis. This dissertation describes how the defeated side in a civil war alleviated a dramatic trauma, degraded its opponents, and claimed itself as *the* legitimate regime of a whole nation—despite its considerable disproportion in controlled territory and population—via the invention of a preferred collective memory. The ROC government’s invention of a Chinese nation illustrates that a defeated and thus shaky regime can still tell stories to claim its own legitimacy by employing various mnemonic techniques. This dissertation therefore is located at the intersection of a wide range of sociological issues: identity formation, narrative construction, nation-building, nationalism as a religion, remembering, and post-war trauma healing, to name a few. Below is a short story that I believe highlights the significance of the current study.

In 1989,¹ a theatrical company came up with a stage drama entitled ‘This night, who will do the Chinese comic dialogue?’ The theatrical company was famous, and this drama created a huge sensation in Taiwan. Tickets sold out quickly, extra shows were scheduled, actors in the play were invited onto TV shows, lines in the show were broadly quoted and repeated in society, and tapes and CDs of the show were bestsellers. The basic story of this stage drama is that a master of Chinese comic dialogue from mainland China is invited to join a talk show at a small restaurant in Taiwan; when the Taiwanese host meets the guest from mainland China, their dialogue of “what happened during the past decades” (mainly after 1949) forms hilarious cross-talk. At that time, restrictions on interaction between Taiwan and mainland China had just been lifted; the communication between the Taiwanese host and the Chinese guest therefore demonstrated the enormous differences between each side’s memory of the past. In addition, sarcastic remarks jabbed at the people who were guided to remember their circumstances under the ROC government. For instance, the Taiwanese host mentioned that for decades after the 1949 Retreat people had believed their status of “staying in Taiwan” was temporary. This gave rise to numerous jokes about people never seriously “settling down” in Taiwan because they always supposed their stay was temporary and, ironically, this so-called “temporary” condition turned out to be a permanent state. Moreover, when the Chinese guest learned that the “national goal” of the ROC had been to “recover the mainland,” the Taiwanese host reassured him by saying, “No worries! ‘Recover the mainland’ is a noun instead of a verb for us.”

¹ Just two years after the end of “pure” official Chinese nationalism (from 1949 through 1987). I call the nation-building effort from 1949 through 1987 “pure official Chinese nationalism” due to its aim to invent a great Chinese nationality and because there was no explicit objection or “noise” inside the Kuomintang government.

This show was popular because it treated with humor issues that had not been touched publicly in decades, and it resonated strongly with audiences. The designed conversations between the Taiwanese host and the guest from mainland China (who indeed was a Taiwanese actor) in this stage drama extensively foregrounded the collisions between two distinct mnemonic communities. Additionally, the success of this stage drama reveals the ambivalent emotions in Taiwan toward the instilled collective memory and people kept silent on the tough national status issue for decades. In short, this play illuminated a collective tension that originated from people's collective memory that needs to be investigated, understood, and theorized. This dissertation is an effort to accomplish these goals.

The arrangement of this dissertation is as follows: Chapter 1 explains the tight relationship between national memory and identity, introduces the constructedness of both collective memories and people's identifications, explains the significance of the case I am examining, and lays out the key concepts and framework of this study. Chapter 2 discusses the various mnemonic techniques that were employed in inventing a National Celebration Day and thus a Chinese nationality. Chapter 3 details the master commemorative narrative and plot structures in the official Chinese nationalism, which contributed to guiding people to remember that their 'sameness' was rooted in a shared past. Chapter 4 elaborates how the shared present and thus the shared future of a Chinese nation were narrated, which worked to motivate the intended national members to work toward the same national goals. Chapter 5 goes further to illustrate not only the specific traits that I observe in the official Chinese nationalism but also the general characteristics of mnemonic engineering. Finally, Chapter 6 emphasizes the path-dependency of

mnemonic engineering by demonstrating the legacy of official Chinese nationalism in the following waves of nation-building and recaps the main theme of this study.

Chapter 1

Nation, Memory, and Identity

The birth of the nation is undoubtedly a real historical development, but it is not a purely spontaneous one. To reinforce an abstract group loyalty, the nation, like the preceding religious community, needed rituals, festivals, ceremonies, and myths. To forge itself into a single, firm entity, it has to engage in continual public cultural activities and to invent a unifying collective memory. Such a novel system of accessible norms and practices was also needed for the overarching consciousness, an amalgamating ideological consciousness: namely, nationalism (Sand 2009: 39).

The importance of the term *nation* and vocabulary derived from it in the modern era cannot be overstated, and researchers have argued that the last two centuries of human history are inconceivable without some understanding of such terms (Hobsbawm 2009 [1990]: 1). That the current map represents the world as a world of nation-states (Calhoun 2004 [1997]: 16) simply illuminates that nation is a prevalent way to classify people. The nation can be regarded as a fictive “super-family” that provides a social bond between individuals (Smith 1993: 12); moreover, whereas the burgeoning of nationalism can cause secularization (Bell 2003), nationalism itself replaces the role that traditional religions have played, and it has become a civic religion in the modern era (Bellah 1970: 168-186; Hobsbawm 2009 [1990]: 85). Therefore, whereas evoking people’s solidarity through traditional social basis has withered due to the characteristics of modernity (Berman 1982: 15-36), national identity has become a robust source for collective identity. According to Ernest Renan,

Man is a slave neither of his race nor his language, nor of his religion, nor of the course of rivers nor of the direction taken by mountain chains. A large arrogate of men, healthy in

mind and warm of heart, creates the kind of moral conscience which we call a nation (Renan 1990: 20).

Nationalism as a Greedy Identity

National identity is regarded as a salient attribute of individuals and indeed a sort of “trump card” in the game of identity (Calhoun 2004[1997]: 46), even in a highly globalized and transient world. National identity is a collective cultural phenomenon (Smith 1993: vii; Spillman 1997: 6-11) that not only goes beyond a political doctrine but also heavily influences how people talk, think, and act (Calhoun 2004 [1997]: 11). To a great extent, national identity should be defined as a “greedy identity” that absorbs a great proportion of people’s commitment (Coser 1974: 1-18). Thus, climbers commonly erect their national flag and take a photo with it on the peaks of high mountains; the Olympics is an event to boldly express the excitement and love of country of athletes who represent various nations; and when filling out forms and surveys, people feel offended if their country is not listed among the options. Under extreme circumstances, it is not surprising to know that more than a few people would sacrifice their lives to show their patriotic emotions.

Many have sought to peek into the black box of national identification to unravel why it resonates so strongly among publics (Hutchinson & Smith (eds.) 1994). Whereas viewpoints on the origins of national identification can be summarized into contested approaches, the debate over heterogeneous explanations gradually converges into a compromise argument (Smith 2004; Dawisha 2002).² That is, nationality is no longer

² Three main approaches can be observed: primordialist, constructivist, and instrumentalist. For a detailed comparison of these approaches and their convergence, see Dawisha (2002).

seen as a natural and God-given way to classify people, and scholars of nationalism now broadly accept its constructed dimensions (Hobsbawm 2009 [1990]; Ranger 2008 [1983]). More importantly, researchers have claimed that people's national consciousness is by no means the automatic product of a state machine, and extra effort in a nationbuilding process is needed to lead common people to imagine their shared membership in a nation-state (Eley and Suny 1996; Anderson 2006 [1983]).

Weeding out several possible elements as the “inevitable” shared properties of national members – such as race, language, material interests, religious affinities, geography, and military necessity – has led scholars to conclude that the only universal “essence” of nationalism is national members’ belief in their “sameness” (Renan 1990: 19; Gillis 1994: 3). Hence, it is not going too far to say that nationbuilding is an ongoing process intended to make people buy into their constructed commonalities (Kimmerling 2001). As Ernest Gellner put it, “It is nationalism which engenders nations, and not the other way round” (cited in Sand 2009: 40): Only having the state machine is too “thin” to sustain a nation and nations need people’s patriotic emotions to validate their existence. The way to assure the persistence of a nation is to successfully receive continuous support from national members. Thus, a nation can be described provocatively as “a daily plebiscite” (Renan 1990: 8-22). Even so, how is it possible to lead people not only to deem their invented “sameness” as inherent and unavoidable but also to imagine they are members of one nation? People indeed *remember* their invented sameness and therefore their nationality. More importantly, the invented contemporary sense of “sameness” all too often originates from the bridged continuity with the historic past (Halbwachs 1992 [1925]): That is, intended national members are led to perceive that their “unmistakable”

coeval solidarity can be traced to their commonalities rooted in the communal past. Thus, any nationbuilding process should be understood as a nation-remembering process that guides its intended national members to remember their national identity.

The Remembered National Identity

Most communities are “imagined” communities because people usually do not have a chance to directly acknowledge and interact with every other person in their specific community. Whether people can identify with other group members and their communities is determined by their capacity to imagine their shared membership and groupness (Ranger 2011[1993]: 278). Only when individuals can imagine the social bonding between themselves and other group members does a sense of collective consciousness emerge and in turn consolidate the solidarity among members (Irwin-Zarecka 1994: 55). In his landmark work *Imagined Communities*, Benedict Anderson articulated how social infrastructures – such as printing technologies, educational systems, maps, censuses, and museums – enabled modern people’s imagining of their shared membership in a nation-state (Anderson 2006 [1983]). His argument illuminated the fact that societal elements make a community imaginable: By no means can people’s imagining of their groupness be exerted groundlessly.

While finding his discussion fruitful, I nevertheless suggest the need to distinguish between “hard” and “soft” social infrastructures with regard to making a nation-state imaginable. The elements that Anderson mentioned should be seen as hard social infrastructures that serve as “carriers” and “vessels” of messages to facilitate people’s

imagining of their social bonds and sameness. The messages conveyed through these hard infrastructures are what I define as “soft” infrastructures of imagining nation-ness.³ Whereas Anderson provided a thorough discussion of hard infrastructures, he dealt with soft infrastructures only implicitly. I am not suggesting that hard infrastructures that facilitate shared-membership imagination are less important than soft infrastructures. Rather, I point out that, on the one hand, soft infrastructures deserve more attention and, on the other, it can be problematic to lump different aspects of community-imagination facilitators together (Sand 2009: 40). After all, it is impossible to comprehend a railroad system by merely observing the tracks and ignoring the trains that run on them.

Briefly, messages transmitted via hard infrastructures are meant to inculcate and repeat the collective memory of a specific community. The suggestion to foreground the significance of “soft” infrastructures that make a community imaginable therefore leads us to a proliferating study area: social memory studies. Perhaps the most significant finding of the “memory boom” across various academic disciplines is the unraveling of the tight relationship between identity and memory. In contrast to the belief that memory is unavoidably a subjective issue, scholars of social memory have generally regarded memory as an intersubjective topic (E. Zerubavel 2003a). Maurice Halbwachs – the retraced founding father of collective memory studies – maintained that people in fact remember collectively: “It is in society that people normally acquire their memories. It is also in society that they recall, recognize, and localize their memories” (Halbwachs 1992 [1925]:38). In contrast to the idea that memory is an extreme personal field of individuals,

³ Like all conceptual classifications, the dichotomy between hard and soft infrastructures can be too simplified a description. Between the hard and soft ends, we can still observe some “semi-soft” or “semi-hard” – either label will do – infrastructures that situate in between. For instance, to facilitate the imagining of membership in a nation-state, official language and education can be located in this “semi” status.

society (or, say, the situated collectivity) heavily shapes people's memory. Hence one person's oblivion cannot undermine collective memories because "memorable" issues are preserved collectively in various forms and sites (Barthel 1996; Assmann 2010:97-107). Therefore, we usually witness and thus remember our first birthday party through pictures or videos taken by our parents. Snapshots plus storytelling constitute our memory of early childhood. In addition, people very often recollect past events collaboratively. Taking the reunion as an example; it is common to see several old pals collaborate to recall an event they happened to experience together years before, with each one contributing a portion to piece up the whole story (Vinitzky-Seroussi 1998:1-16). In the process of remembering the past, all the provided information is under scrutiny and unconvincing information is "corrected" by others. On a larger scale, many sites of memory in society – such as statues, museums, textbooks, architecture, art, and folklore – preserve memories for people in different fields (Nora 1989). It is the "brains of society" (despite the variation of scale) that do the memorizing work, and an individual's memory is usually the reflection and representation of collective memories.

The sharing of memories greatly facilitates the conceiving of social bonding (Irwin-Zarecka 1994: 55; Olick & Robbins 1998: 123-124; Hsiau 1997). Consider the reunion example again: Through collaboratively adding details of an event that happened in the past, old friends once again revisit their school days and thus confirm their shared membership (Vinitzky-Seroussi 1998:78-89). As a way to represent the invisible bonding by searching in the shared past, the remembering process equals a "re-member-ing" process. Refreshing the memory of a "shared" past rekindles people's collective consciousness and breeds solidarity. Collective memories hence are effectively markers

of people's distinct identities (Olick & Robbins 1998: 111), and people who are members of the same community share the same collective memories (Halbwachs 1992 [1925]: 38; Irwin-Zarecka 1994: 47-65; Olick 1999: 333-335; Gillis 1994: 3-24). For instance, Americans may tell you a very different story of the Pearl Harbor incident than Japanese; the nostalgia for the Carpenters' music symbolizes an older person's location in an age group, and an adolescent may remember nothing about these artists; and people who are against the fast food culture (and support the slow food culture instead) may provide a totally different narration on the prevalence of fast food restaurants than people who enjoy consuming fast foods (Andrews 2008; Harris 1985).

Bound together by shared memories, any group should be understood as a mnemonic community (Bellah et al. 1985: 153-155) that leads its mnemonic members to commemorate the past of this very group through mnemonic socialization (E. Zerubavel 2003a). By telling and retelling stories of the shared past, mnemonic socialization is a continuous process to immerse members in the standard way of commemoration. As a result, mnemonic socialization familiarizes members with the commemorative patterns and makes them take these patterns for granted and regard them as given and inevitable. The memorability in a specific community is hence socially constructed and reproduced (E. Zerubavel 2003b: 320) and results in the "mnemonic normalcy" that most members stubbornly follow to indicate their normalness mnemonically. Desired and undesired memories are regulated by collectivities, and mnemonic socialization works as a filter to screen them.⁴ Thus, almost without exception, orientation is the first event that students or newly hired employees are required to attend when they are admitted to a new school

⁴ This is not saying that individuals cannot retain memories that specific communities do not approve of, otherwise, it is impossible to explain the emergence and existence of alternative memories.

or company. During the orientation, new members of the school or company receive intensive mnemonic socialization to acknowledge the (usually honored) past of the organization and to evoke their commitment to it. Nevertheless, “successful” mnemonic socialization, I argue, must go beyond leading people to remember their shared past; it also needs to guide people to recognize that they face a shared present and project a common future. That is, community members are expected to not merely be passive receivers of the shared past; they should also become actors who maintain or improve the shared present and create the projected shared future. Following the same logic, not believing in the same past, present, and future simply implies a change of identity.

People remember their identity (E. Zerubavel 2003a: 7-8): Collectively invented and remembered memories act as the key element to explain the solidarity and thus identification in a community. Not only may forgetting one’s past cause a loss of identity, but also people’s conversion leads to change of one’s past. In movies that deal with Alzheimer’s disease, we see the protagonists try to use photos, texts, and recorded narration to “grasp” memory to avoid losing their identity. In contrast, separated couples may put aside items that remind them of their shared past. In addition, whereas most first-generation immigrants remember and thus identify with their original country, second-generation immigrants usually suffer from identity crises because they receive double mnemonic socialization from two communities – even though the socialization from the immigrant country is more formal and constant and that of the original country rather informal and sporadic.⁵ Consistent with this logic, illegal immigrants may intentionally

⁵ Nonetheless, it is still possible that the first-generation immigrants left their country because they no longer identified with it (and would like to forget everything about it) and it is not impossible that the

avoid talking about their past to cover their identification, and victims of traumatic events wittingly remaining silent about their past is yet more evidence of the relationship between suppressing memory and creating identity (DeGloma 2010:519-540).

The nationbuilding process is therefore a nation-remembering process: Just as in all other imagined communities, people indeed remember their national identity. People are convinced that the sameness between themselves and other members of their specific nation is rooted in a shared past and, therefore, a shared present and even a shared future (Halbwachs 1992 [1925]). More importantly, while the nationbuilding process leads people to remember their nation-ness, more often than not, it simultaneously guides people to forget the invented and constructed nature of their nationality. As a result, the memorized “inevitable” sameness between national members facilitates the perception of social bonding, enables the nationality imagination, breeds the collective consciousness as a member of a nation-state, and at the same time ingrains an impression of the sacred nature of one’s nation.

The Constructed Collective Memory

More intriguingly, people’s remembrance of the past is also a social invention. Scholars of social memory studies have declared that “remembering the past” is no longer the innocent activity it was once taken to be (Burke 1989: 97). To facilitate an understanding of the constructiveness of collective memory, four aspects are mention-worthy: the inherited selectiveness of collective memory, the relationship between power

second-generation immigrants may resonate especially with their original country and be attracted by its mnemonic engineering.

and collective memory, the invented traditions, and the employment of mnemonic techniques.

First, while communities such as a nation-state need to narrate a shared past for members to imagine their sameness and membership, events that occurred in the past are not always selected “in” the collective memory. It is impossible for people to remember limitless events that occurred earlier, and there is an inevitable selectiveness in establishing a collective memory (Halbwachs 1992 [1925]; Schwartz 1982; Irwin-Zarecka 1994; E. Zerubavel 2003). The reconstruction of the past is always a dual process of collective memory and collective oblivion (E. Zerubavel 2003a): Whereas some aspects of the past are remembered, other aspects are forgotten (Y. Zerubavel 1995). Thus, to remember a happy vacation at Disneyland, travelers must “filter” out some not-so-happy experiences, such as bad weather, long waiting lines, and overpriced food; to disseminate the story that the director of the company is a sagacious entrepreneur, discussion of his/her failed investment is taboo; to recall a family as being strongly tied, the father’s affair must be forgotten; to promote a society as a “melting-pot” into which multiple ethnicities can easily assimilate, discrimination and racial inequality have to be muted.

Second, selection and interpretation of past events by no means involve a neutral process; rather, power and memory go hand in hand (Halbwachs 1992 [1925]; Trouillot 1995; Olick 1999). Similar to the idea that “history is written by the victors,” the prevalent and thus dominant collective memory is a reconstruction of the past from the elite’s viewpoints. In other words, the dominant group wants to construct the hegemonic memory. Not everyone has a say in determining which event is “memorable”: Usually it

is the adults who decide which picture of the Disney vacation can be put in the album; the organizational history of a company is not democratically decided; and minority groups find it difficult to voice their own experiences in the mainstream media. Certain past events are preferred over others by powerful people and institutions; these preferable past events are selected “in” the present narration to serve particular needs (Schwartz 1982). Whereas counter-memories — memories that provide an alternative commemorative narrative that directly opposes the master commemorative narrative — can be observed in various social fields and their existence does symbolize multiple ways to select and interpret past events (Y. Zerubavel 1995:10-12), under the politics of memory, powerful people have more resources to propagandize their version of the shared past and better opportunities to ensure that their story is broadly accepted and maintained as the dominant and hegemonic version. In short, mnemonic battles that are fought over what is the “correct” way to interpret the past or what ought to be collectively are no less serious than real wars (E. Zerubavel 1997: 97-99).

Third, many traditions are newly invented to cope with novel conditions and establish continuity with a historic past through symbolic force and “quasi-obligatory” repetition (Hobsbawm 2008 [1983]: 1-14). Whereas traditions are supposed to be based on something old, with origins in the ancient past, transmitted from generation to generation, and respected as sacred heritage, researchers have argued that traditions are artificial inventions that aim to substitute for older shaky traditions (Shils 1981; Ranger 2011 [1993]). Traditions are expected to symbolically unite people to commemorate a selected past (or even to represent a selected past by people’s bodily repetition of certain rituals). In other words, “tradition” is yet another site from which to investigate collective

memories and identification (Wenger 1997: 2-27; Cronin & Adair 2002). Abiding by traditions is one way to display one's identity. For instance, observing Passover reveals one's Jewishness and wearing a pink ribbon symbolizes one's concern about breast cancer. The assertion that traditions are invented assumes inventors of traditions and the strategic deployment of traditions. The abandonment of old traditions and the burgeoning of newly invented traditions are indicators of social change and/or the establishment of new social identity. It is common for the proliferation of national movements to increase the density of newly invented traditions. In reality, a close examination of traditions usually demonstrates that they are under continuous modification and sometimes replacement due to changes in social context (Y. Zerubavel 1994a: 105-23).

Fourth, diverse mnemonic techniques are employed to facilitate the instillation of selected historic past and suitable current versions of collective memory. For example, commemorations, ceremonies, and activities are held to help produce bodily sediments of collective memory (Connerton 1989: 72-104; Spillman 1997: 1-16). To crystallize the abstract national identity, a special set of symbols (e.g., anthems, capital cities, coins, flags, heroes, holidays) is actively designed (Cerulo 1995: 1-33) as well as tacitly repeated (E. Zerubavel 2003b: 315-38). Creating a thicker and more crowded calendar is another way to strengthen collective consciousness: Additional national holidays are invented to deal with identity crises that come with great social/political transformations (Bodnar 1992: 15-20). In commemorative activities, it is through a "vocabulary of celebration," such as noise, flowers, and specific colors, that the intended message is transmitted (Cressy 2004[1989]: 67-92) and people's patriotic emotions are enacted (Spillman 1997: 17-56). Moreover, similar "emplotments" in all national stories can be

observed as the result of mnemonic editing: Beginnings and turning points are highlighted; a unilinear historical story is narrated; certain historical moments are exaggerated; specific periods are “hot” as many events are selected within the narrative while other periods are “cold” because no event is selected; periods are equalized via historical analogies; periodization occurs by lumping and splitting otherwise continuous time; collective amnesia is created by cutting off the entire period before the constructed beginning (Y. Zerubavel 1995: 7; E. Zerubavel 2003: 101-110; E. Zerubavel 2011: 77-103). The plot structures that can commonly be found in the commemorative narrative give meanings to the past based on a specific mnemonic lens.

As Peter Burke put it, “It is important to ask the question, who wants whom to remember what, and why? Whose version of the past is recorded and preserved” (1989: 191): Memory determines identity, and memory itself is a social construction that needs to be examined. Students of memory studies have used terms such as “memory project” and “commemorative effort” to describe the witting exertions of guiding people to remember their identity (Corney 2003: 17-42) and concepts such as “memory organizers” and “memory entrepreneurs” to refer to actors who invent preferred collective memories (Spillman 2003: 161-92). This current study is an endeavor to theorize the social process of inventing and ingraining collective memory and explain the mnemonic techniques possibly employed to do so.

Mnemonic Engineering and Nation-Remembering

A theoretical framework that synthesizes the aforementioned characteristics of both nationality and collective memory is developed to sensitize an understanding of the nationbuilding process. I argue that nationbuilding should be regarded as an ongoing social process of leading people to remember their national identity through *mnemonic engineering*. To put it simply, mnemonic engineering is an effort to erect community boundaries, to legitimize the existence of a community, to evoke solidarity, and to motivate members' coordinated actions with a preferred collective memory through various mnemonic techniques. Memory is a process, not a thing (Olick & Robbins 1998). Leading people to commemorate a shared past and therefore their identity is never a once-and-for-all-time event (Ranger 1993: 62-111). A selected historical past may (a) be forgotten and therefore need to be refreshed from time to time, (b) require modification due to changing context, and (c) face challenges from counter-memories and thereby need to be revised or strengthened. The inventing of national identification through construction of a collective memory is an ongoing accomplishment (Berger 1963: 53-65), and I suggest that mnemonic organizers need to launch mnemonic engineering to manage this very process. That is, nationbuilding is a ceaseless and becoming process of nation-remembering.

While aiming to evoke people's sentimental loyalty to a specific community, mnemonic engineering is a social process highly loaded with strategic skills. Mnemonic engineering as an intentional effort that strategically employs techniques to "bridge" historical continuity not only leads its audience to commemorate a shared past, present, and future (Wilson 1996: 1-27; E. Zerubavel 2003a: 37-54), but also refreshes and

reinforces people's collective memory (Y. Zerubavel 1995: 217; Spillman 1997: 17-56). Furthermore, I suggest that *mnemonic alignment* and *mnemonic refreshment* are two primary goals of mnemonic engineering. Scholars of social movement studies employ "frame alignment" to refer to a process of linking differential interpretative orientations (Snow et al. 1986: 464-81); that is, it is a social process of calibration. Consistent with such usage, mnemonic alignment involves an effort to link various interpretative orientations of the historical developments among the population: Despite members of communities always having different pasts and experiences, mnemonic engineering is launched as an intentional attempt to lead its intended audience toward the same memories by actively narrating a unified and standardized history. Moreover, mnemonic refreshment, as another crucial goal in mnemonic engineering, entails tacitly scheduling a refreshment of people's memories on a regular basis (E. Zerubavel 2003b: 318). In addition, the scheduled refreshment is an opportunity to include the newly added elements and the ongoing modifications as well. In mnemonic engineering, a master narrative of the dominant collective memory is redundantly transmitted through telling (and retelling) the story of a preferred national past at every possible occasion and through repetitive bodily performative practices in commemorative ceremonies.

A rather long-term consequence of mnemonic engineering is the formation of *mnemonic sediment*. To put it simply, mnemonic sediment is the taken-for-granted memory: It is more like an unconscious latent rubric to commemorate the shared past. Whereas under most circumstances, mnemonic sediment does not exert its influence and individuals do not sense its existence, once the remembered "orthodox" past is challenged by alternative memories, an uncomfortable feeling of being offended emerges.

Thus, the distinct ways of commemorating the past may develop into serious contestations. That is, mnemonic sediment works to establish the morality of remembering the past for a mnemonic community. Effective mnemonic engineering can broadly diffuse its own memory, delay challenges that come from alternative collective memories, and thereby form thick mnemonic sediments that are hard to eradicate. While Spillman was correct in noting that some collective memories are just too “meaningful” to be forgotten either because of their functional character or their charismatic character (2003: 161-92), I add that collective memory attaches meanings to various past events and occurrences and creates their persistence.

Path dependency is a crucial element to consider when observing the nation-remembering process. Differing from the intended consequences of aligning and refreshing memory, and even the forming of sediment, path-dependency is an unintended consequence of mnemonic engineering. Although the constructiveness of collective memory has been discussed, it by no means indicates that collective memory is totally fluid and free from any constraint: *Rather, it is a path-dependent process*. While the ongoing renewal of the master commemorative narrative can be assumed, the malleability of collective memory should not be overestimated. Trajectory matters: Previous versions of the selected, narrated, and remembered past are profoundly significant to the subsequent versions. The later versions of memory are always a response to early versions (Olick 2005: 3-6). Instead of replacing the previous narrative with a new discourse, piggybacking, superimposition, and juxtaposition are more commonly employed when it is necessary to modify a shared past or narrate a new shared past (Y. Zerubavel 1995: 216-21). To avoid confronting the mnemonic sediment directly, the

newly added elements are skillfully represented in the narrative through ambiguity, coexistence, order changing, superimposition, and even subtle subversion. I claim that considering the path dependent-ness and the ways new modifications and adjustments are maneuvered in mnemonic engineering can facilitate our comprehension of the enduring tension between continuity and change in a single nation-remembering project or even between subsequent nation-remembering projects (Zhang & Schwartz 2003: 101-27; Aguilar 2003: 128-60).

Yet another element in the proposed framework is counter-memories. The emergence of counter-memories is again an unintended yet inevitable consequence of mnemonic engineering. The existence of official nationalism (or, say, the dominant way to remember the national history) implies the existence of counter-memories. More interestingly, even an “all-out” official nationalism allows room for popular memories (Y. Zerubavel 1995: xviii; Spillman 1997: 35): The inevitable selectiveness of constructing a collective memory explains the almost unavoidable emergence of alternative ways to tell the shared past. Although some events that occurred in the past may be seen as irrelevant and selected “out” by the dominant collective memory and therefore its mnemonic engineering, these very events may be regarded as significant and highly relevant in counter-memories (Popular Memory Group 1998: 43-53). Hence, counter-memories are challenges to the dominant collective memory.⁶ The narratives of counter-memories may damage the validity of official nationalism; thus, mnemonic engineering usually has to address them. While ignoring them is a strategy to cope with counter-memories when

⁶ Counter-memories may have various origins and differentiated forms, such as individual memories, popular culture, memories of subgroups, and external memories from outside groups.

they first emerge and during the initial stages, suppression and denial of the alternative memory of the past and modification of the dominant memory's own version of the shared past are more common strategies adopted by dominant collective memory when counter-memories gradually assume their own stage.

Nevertheless, researchers have argued that, regardless of the fact that powerful people can harness collective memory as their instrument to serve their present purposes, the pitfalls of the presentist position should be avoided. On one hand, collective memory can never be totally manipulated due to its path-dependent-ness and the unanticipated consequences of promoting a collective memory. In other words, even the most powerful memory organizers cannot control everything. On the other hand, the presentist position tends to reduce collective memory to politics despite collective memory indeed generally acting as a meaning-conferring cultural system that goes beyond the political field (Schwartz 2000: 17-23; Olick 2005: 333). That is, representing (at least) a significant portion of the collective memory of a given society, nationalism behaves as a filter of meanings that heavily influences people's ideas and actions in multiple social fields. Hence, to understand the nationbuilding process, all the elements in the proposed framework should be examined: Not only the intended goals of mnemonic engineering but also the interplay between different elements, the dynamics across different time periods, and the unexpected aspects should be investigated. In short, to grasp the mentioned ongoing construction of collective memory (or, say, the becoming process of nation-remembering), an emergent approach is suggested.⁷

⁷ For differences between the emergent approach and the traditional non-emergent approach, see Pickering (1993: 559-589) and Yeh (2013:298-309).

The Invention of a Chinese Nationality

Mnemonic engineering is the most significant mission when a regime faces a legitimacy crisis. Actually, it is not going too far to say that behind all the mnemonic engineering is an issue of legitimacy with which it aims to cope (Corney 2003:17-42; Olick 2003: 259-88). In this study, the inventing of a Chinese nationality is a case in which to apply the proposed framework, unravel the process of nation-remembering, and demonstrate how mnemonic engineering is employed to solve a legitimization crisis.

The revolutionary activists who founded the Kuomintang (KMT) overthrew the Qing dynasty and established the Republic of China (ROC) as the “latest” era of China in 1911. Whereas the country was torn by warlordism for decades after 1911, the KMT-led ROC government was broadly acknowledged as the official regime that legitimately represented the nation of China. For instance, the ROC government was the government with which international society interacted after 1911, the KMT-led ROC was one of the founding nations of the United Nations and became a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council in the 1940s, and the Republic era was and is recognized as one part in the Chinese succession. However, the conflict between the KMT and the Communist Party of China (CPC) did not stop after the CPC was established in 1921 due to competing ideologies and social positions, and this conflict finally turned into the Chinese Civil War in 1945. Regardless of the reasons – the CPC claimed that the KMT government was so corrupt that it could no longer earn public support and the KMT

government maintained that the CPC employed malicious strategies to deceive the public – the KMT-led ROC government steadily lost in battles.⁸

After being defeated by the Chinese communists in the Chinese Civil War, Chiang Kai-Shek — the most influential political leader of the Kuomintang and the “claimed” direct and authentic successor of the ROC’s founding father Sun, Yat-sen — and his KMT government retreated to Taiwan in 1949. The great social and political transformations during this time created a serious national identity crisis: Among others issues, there were two governments – the People’s Republic of China (PRC), which was led by the Chinese communists, and the ROC, which was led by Chiang Kai-Shek and his KMT government; both claimed to be *the* legitimate government of the Chinese nation. Inventing a Chinese nationality that treated the ROC government as the authentic regime and the PRC government as the fake regime was, therefore, a critical issue for Chiang Kai-Shek and his KMT government in the decades after 1949. Consequently, I maintain that the official Chinese nationalism from 1949 through 1987 was the most substantial effort in “Chinese history” to reconstruct a Chinese nation and Chinese nationality.

Although all national identity is artificially constructed (Hobsbawm 2009 [1990]: 9-13; Anderson 2006 [1983]: 141-154), the KMT government nevertheless confronted an extraordinarily tricky situation. On the one hand, while occupying only a tiny portion of the whole territory (Taiwan and its surrounding small islands),⁹ the KMT government negated the legitimacy of PRC governance and maintained itself as *the* legitimate

⁸ See Roy (2003), Manthorpe (2008), Chou (2009), and Shao and Wang (2011) for the historical background of the Republic of China, the Chinese Civil War, and the 1949 Retreat.

⁹ Mainland China has an area of 4,000,000 square miles and the island of Taiwan has an area of only 13,855 square miles.

government of the Chinese nation and *the* authentic descendant of “The 5,000-year Chinese History.” On the other hand, despite the fact that its intended members – which included two million mainlanders in retreat who had come to Taiwan with the KMT government in 1949, six million Taiwanese who had just experienced 50 years of Japanese colonization (1895 to 1945), most of whom had never set foot in mainland China, thirty million overseas Chinese who left the mainland at different times and were living in many foreign countries,¹⁰ and four hundred and fifty million people who still lived in mainland China – had very different historical experiences, the KMT government faced a significant challenge in convincing all the factions that they were all members of the Chinese nation. To compete with the PRC government, the KMT government undertook a wave of official Chinese nationalism starting in 1949 aimed at inventing a Chinese nation.

Official Chinese nationalism from 1949 through 1987 led its national members to remember that they have a shared past (“The 5,000-year Chinese History”), a shared present (defeat by the Chinese communists and temporary residence in Taiwan), and a shared future (recovering mainland China). Treating the establishment, maintenance, and reproduction of a national identity as an ongoing social process intended to make people memorize their nation-ness (Olick & Robbins 1998: 105-140), I argue that the mnemonic engineering of official Chinese nationalism from 1949 through 1987 accomplished both

¹⁰ “Overseas Chinese” is indeed a general and vague label to include *all* the “Chinese people” who lived in foreign countries regardless of the various times and reasons that caused their departure from mainland China. That is, no matter whether it was “Chinese people” who left the mainland for economic considerations hundreds of years before 1949 or “Chinese people” who left the mainland due to political disturbances before, around, or after 1949, they were all lumped into this category. That is, “overseas Chinese” by no means is a neat and strict category; nevertheless, I believe that its vagueness allowed room for mnemonic work to include the maximum numbers of possible national members and to attempt to evoke their resonance via mnemonic techniques. See Pan (1994; 1999) and Ma and Cartier (ed.) (2003) for more discussion on the rich history of “overseas Chinese” and the Chinese diaspora.

mnemonic alignment (the standardization of memories) and mnemonic refreshment (the refreshment of memories) among national members of the Chinese nation. Even though Chiang Kai-Shek and his KMT government faced tough circumstances, official Chinese nationalism from 1949 through 1987 effectively achieved its goal. Not only did many “national members” of the Chinese nation begin to take their Chinese nationality seriously, the subsequent waves of official nationalism in Taiwan that were intended to promote alternative national identities confronted the persistence and mnemonic sediments (taken-for-granted memories) of Chinese nationality.

In the case of official Chinese nationalism from 1949 through 1987, although the supposed national members of the Chinese nation – the two million mainlanders in retreat, the six million living in Taiwan, the overseas Chinese, and the people who lived on the mainland and were ruled by the PRC government – had distinct historical experiences, the mnemonic engineering facilitated mnemonic alignment. Figure 1.1 shows the factual multi-linear historical developments. Instead of a neat and uni-linear historical development, the factual developments were rather messy. Three main lines of development are shown in Figure 1.1: The first line contains events that occurred on Taiwan island; the second line involves occurrences that took place in mainland China; and the third line comprises happenings overseas. Figure 1.2 indicates the selection and suppression of historical events so as to edit a singularized and simplified national story for the intended audiences. In the narrative of official Chinese nationalism, events occurred on the Taiwan island and overseas before 1949 and happenings in mainland China and overseas after 1949 were either remarkably downplayed and muted or generally regarded as “invalid.” Figure 1.3 represents the officially promoted uni-linear

national history in the master commemorative narrative of official Chinese nationalism. Through “cutting” and “pasting,” an edited national history led members of the Chinese nation to memorize a shared past (“The 5,000-year Chinese History”), a shared present (defeat by the Chinese communists and temporary residence in Taiwan), and a shared future (recovering the mainland). Hence, it is not surprising to know that national members’ collective oblivion of certain historic events and periods in the past was primarily the result of mnemonic editing under official Chinese mnemonic engineering.

Figure 1.1: The Multi-Linear Historical Developments

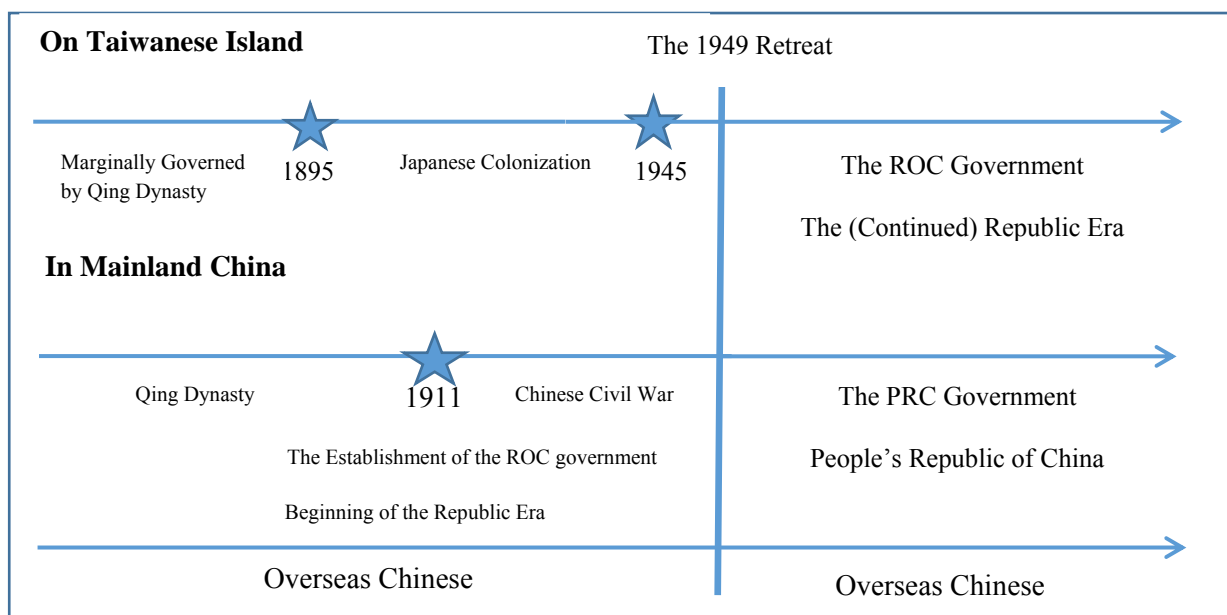


Figure 1.2: The Selection of Historical Events

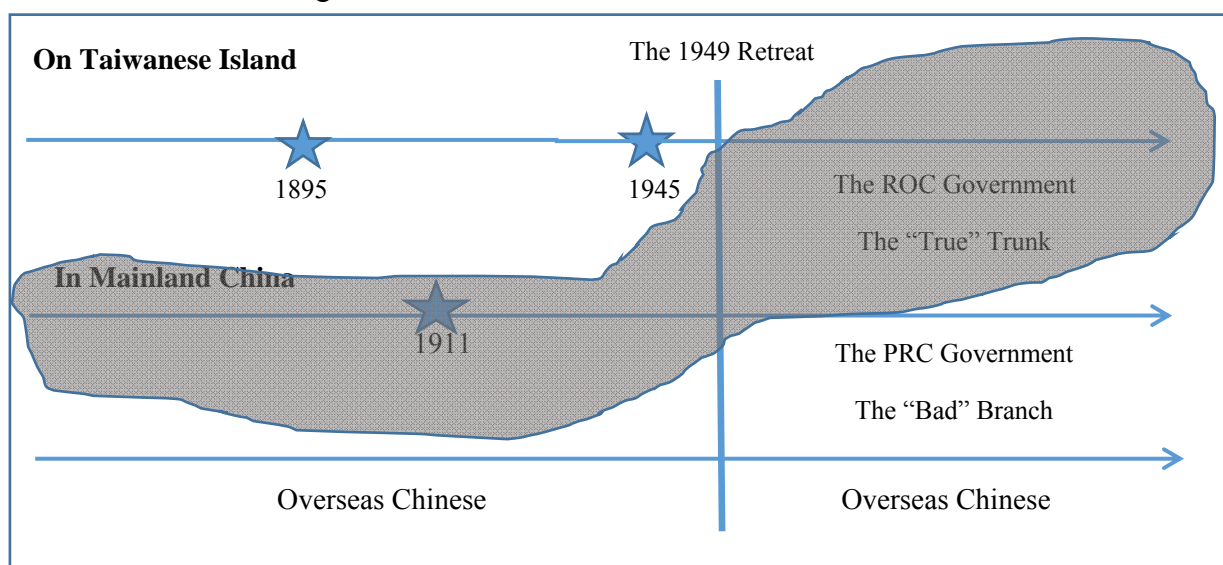
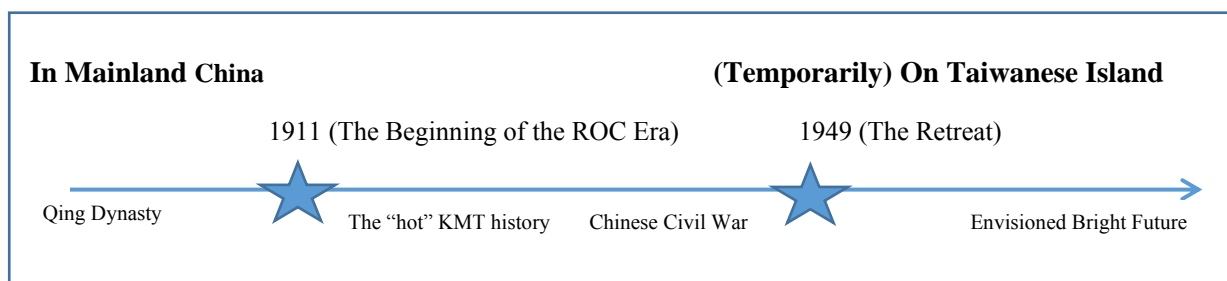


Figure 1.3: The Official Promoted National History



The inventing of a Chinese nationality from 1949 through 1987 as a case also provides a chance to observe the conducting of mnemonic engineering through *synecdoche*.

Synecdoche means that, despite the ROC government seeming to be a dwarf compared to the giant PRC government, Chinese nationalists narrated that the ROC government was in retreat and that its national members represented the whole idea of Chinese-ness. That is, the ROC government analogized itself as the “trunk” of the tree of “The 5,000-year-old Chinese History” and marginalizing the PRC government as a “bad branch” that needed to be pruned (Zerubavel 2011: 95-97; 129-130).¹¹ Detailing the historical process of inventing a Chinese nationality hence illuminates how a small and shaky political entity could prolong and retain its legitimacy for decades through mnemonic work.

Furthermore, the case of official Chinese nationalism from 1949 through 1987 reveals the necessity of distinguishing between *mnemonic revolution* (dramatically deleting and erasing previous memories) and *mnemonic reform* (gradually revising and superimposing upon previous memories) when dealing with previous collective memories and mnemonic sediments. The inventing of a Chinese nationality from 1949 through 1987 should be located near the pole of *mnemonic revolution*: Due to the enormous national identity crisis that came with the 1949 Retreat, official Chinese nationalism adopted a “zero-tolerance” policy toward alternative nationalities and their mnemonic sediments. Previous collective memories that might have hindered the propaganda of Chinese nationalism or contained narratives contradictory to Chinese nationalism were suppressed

¹¹ For further discussion of the metaphor of the tree, trunk, and branch in terms of the way people envision both biological and non-biological co-descents, see E. Zerubavel 2011: 34-35.

to a minimum, at least in the public sphere. Dramatically decreasing “noise” facilitated the nationbuilding effort of the KMT government.

Nevertheless, although mnemonic engineering is an intended effort to invent identification, unintended consequences can always be observed, as in the case of official Chinese nationalism. For example, the mnemonic engineering in official Chinese nationalism in the early decades influenced the nation-remembering process in later decades. The degree of flexibility of mnemonic work shrank: The early version of collective memory gradually turned into a straitjacket to constrain its later versions.¹² Moreover, the narrated uni-linear national past of official Chinese nationalism stimulated the emergence of counter-memories (to bring up the alternative past, present, and future) and had to confront their challenges, especially in the later decades.

The Role of Double Tenth Day

An analysis of the observance of National Celebration Day (observed on October 10 and therefore also called Double Tenth Day) in Taiwan from 1949 through 1987 facilitates our understanding of the mnemonic engineering in official Chinese nationalism.¹³ Double Tenth Day is an official national holiday observed since 1912 in mainland China to celebrate the birth of the Republic era and the great transformation from a traditional China to a modern China. Interestingly enough, after retreating to

¹² Yet, as we will see in the following chapters, exceptions existed: Official Chinese nationalism did sometimes employ modifications that “overcame” the path-dependency of collective memory by either including contradictory elements in its narrative or skirting the previously highlighted elements without evoking uncomfortable feelings in its audience.

¹³ I use the terms “National Celebration Day” and “Double Tenth Day” interchangeably.

Taiwan in 1949, instead of canceling the observation of Double Tenth Day due to the “abnormal” situation (i.e., the whole mainland being “stolen” by the PRC government), Chiang Kai-Shek and his KMT government decided to celebrate the day on a larger scale than ever before, and it was officially announced as a national holiday in 1953. National holidays in general and National Celebration Day in particular play a significant role in leading people to perceive themselves as members of the nation, thereby resulting in patriotic sentiments (Bodnar 1992: 15-20; Y. Zerubavel 1995: 216-221; Spillman 1997: 17-56). National Celebration Day commemorates the birth of the nation, which is a focal point in any national story (Schwartz 1982: 374-402; E. Zerubavel 2003: 101-110). For Chinese nationalists, the celebration of Double Tenth Day played a crucial role in *mnemonic engineering*: It provided a chance to define and/or redefine the history and fate of the nation (Cressy 2004 [1989]: 34-66). Thus, Double Tenth Day was imported to Taiwan with the 1949 Retreat so as to produce a Chinese nationality: The invention of Double Tenth Day is one of the determinants of whether a Chinese nationality can be successfully invented (or, say, remembered).

This analysis of the production of a Chinese nationality begins in 1949 as the 1949 Retreat brought about the need for Chiang Kai-Shek and his KMT government to align the memory and to refresh the memory on a regular basis for intended national members. The analysis stops in 1987 because Chiang Jing-Kuo (Chiang Kai-Shek’s son) died in January 1988 without formally assigning a “successor,” which left the KMT government in internal contention and symbolized the end of a “pure” official Chinese nationalism. Aiming to detail the production side of a Chinese nationality, I intentionally leave out the

reception (or, say, consumption) side.¹⁴ Furthermore, though the emergence and development of alternative nationalisms during this period are acknowledged, the story of the invention of a Chinese nationality and the employed mnemonic techniques occupy the main stage. Nevertheless, alternative narratives (e.g., the PRC government's narration in the early decades after 1949 and Taiwanese nationalism in the late 1970s and 1980s) have been mentioned in various places to highlight the selectiveness of collective memories; in addition, challenges from alternative memories, the responses of official Chinese nationalism, and mnemonic sediments of official Chinese nationalism are discussed in chapter 5.

Data and Methods

The case of official Chinese nationalism perfectly exemplifies the media's indispensable role in mnemonic work.¹⁵ From 1949 to 1987, Taiwan was under martial law, and the state-controlled media were harnessed as an avenue for releasing an official narrative. Mainstream media became the mouthpiece of official Chinese nationalism. More or less from 1949 through 1987, information in the media was designed and censored to shape the ways people remember the shared national past. Only in the 1980s were more alternative voices allowed to appear in the media. The mainstream newspapers

¹⁴ This by no means indicates that the reception side of the nation-remembering process is less important than the production side. As Bodnar articulated, "Leaders continue to use the past to foster patriotism and civic duty and ordinary people continue to accept, reformulate, and ignore such messages" (1992: 20). The interaction between production and consumption of the national identity is an intriguing topic to be investigated.

¹⁵ For more discussion on journalism and memory, see Zelizer (2010: 379-388).

thus have been referenced for reconstructing the mnemonic engineering of the official Chinese nationalism in general and the invention of Double Tenth Day in particular.

The UDNdata, an electronic database that has systematically collected reports from several mainstream and leading newspapers in Taiwan since 1951, served as my main data source. A search of the keywords “double tenth” and “national celebration” returned around 7,500 results, providing valuable materials on official Chinese nationalism and its mnemonic sediments in Taiwan. Among these 7,500 results, about 4,400 were published from 1951 to 1987, and about 3,100 were published from 1988 to 2012. In addition, to obtain data on the topic published prior to 1951, I search two additional electronic databases (although these two databases contain far fewer and generally less complete materials): the Central Daily News (which provides reports from 1928 forward) and the TTS Web (which provides reports starting in 1950). Yet another supplementary source I refer to is Digitalarchives.tw, which preserves hard-to-find documentaries, short clips, photographs, and official files on National Celebration Day. Moreover, establishing an understanding of alternative collective memories is also critical for foregrounding the constructiveness and selectiveness of mnemonic engineering. To get an idea of how the PRC government narrated a distinct “Chinese national history” and defined the status of the ROC government and Taiwan, I gather related newspaper articles in *People’s Daily* (Renmin Ribao) – a mainstream newspaper in mainland China – from 1949 to 1987. To represent how Taiwanese nationalists promoted their version of national history and how they challenged the official Chinese nationalism, I refer to oral histories and newspaper

articles (especially topics published after 1987).¹⁶ Secondary research on Taiwanese history (Masahiro 1994; Rigger 1999; Corcuff 2002; Ma & Cartier 2003; Roy 2003; Brown 2004; Manthorpe 2008; Wang 2006 [2003]; Rubinstein 2006; Chou 2009) also serve as critical material guiding my efforts to represent the complicated social process.

Most of my referenced sources are either in traditional Chinese or in simplified Chinese;¹⁷ thus, I translate excerpts from Chinese to English. Content analysis was used to analyze the collected Chinese texts, which means that the translation occurred after the analysis. I coded the materials into five main categories to foster the representation of various aspects of the nation-remembering process of a Chinese nationhood from 1949 through 1987. The first category is consist of **presidents' speeches**. National Celebration Day has been such a significant commemorative national holiday that each year the president gives an official speech at the public ceremony held on this day. Comparing the presidents' speeches year by year illuminates how the government narrated and (re)defined national history (and the position of National Celebration Day) in order to refresh people's collective memory. The second category is constituted by **narratives on the national celebration**. In addition to the presidents' speeches, from late September to mid-October, many articles and reports strongly related to National Celebration Day have routinely been published. For example, it is not unusual to see stories explaining the origin and spirit of National Celebration Day, narratives that encouraged people not only to remember the sacredness of National Celebration Day but also to strive to recover mainland China, and discourses that articulated the international environment in which

¹⁶ Oral history usually works to preserve alternative collective memories; see Popular Memory Group (1998:43-53).

¹⁷ Traditional Chinese is used in areas governed by KMT-led ROC government and simplified Chinese is seen in areas directed by PRC government. The Cultural Revolution (in the 1970s in mainland China) is a social event that worked on abandoning traditional Chinese.

Taiwan was situated (such as the “friendly” attitude of other countries that either conceded that the Taiwanese are the genuine descendants of “The 5,000-year Chinese History” or acknowledged the threat coming from the PRC government). Moreover, articles and reports mentioning National Celebration Day as a “referential point” on the calendar were often published throughout the year. All these different types of narratives are coded under this category.

Texts related to invented traditions form the third category of my data. Many traditions were invented – though some were successful and some failed and were obliterated – from 1949 through 1987 to make National Celebration Day a hotspot on the calendar. For instance, encouraging participation in a group marriage on Double Tenth Day can be regarded as an invented tradition from the early 1950s. I examine traditions that have been invented and argue that they encouraged intended national members to observe Double Tenth Day and thus the invention of the Chinese nationality. The records and descriptions of **public events and commemorative ceremonies** are compiled as the fourth category. Many public events and commemorative ceremonies were arranged to celebrate Double Tenth Day by the central government, local governments, and overseas official (or semi-official) institutions. These events and ceremonies are important because they introduced Chinese national identification and attached rich symbolic meanings to it through “vocabularies of celebration.” Last, I categorize **materials on the alternative national narratives** as the fifth category. Since National Celebration Day was an important commemorative day, oppositional nationalisms saw the day as a perfect opportunity to challenge official Chinese nationalism. I suggest that the forms and

discourses that *mnemonic activists* adopted to promote their counter-memories influenced the ongoing modification of official Chinese nationalism and thus need to be investigated.

As we shall see, the process of nation-remembering in official Chinese nationalism in Taiwan from 1949 through 1987 enriches our understanding of the strong relationship between collective memory and identity, the role of power in collective memory, and the inevitable selectiveness of memory. Moreover, the proposed framework of mnemonic engineering guides my investigation of these phenomena. More importantly, the seemingly nation-specific idiosyncrasies of mnemonic engineering that the invention of a Chinese nationality demonstrates indeed are transnational and can be generalized to reveal the logics beneath the social construction of memorability.

Chapter 2

A National Celebration Day for the Chinese Nation

What, then, is being remembered in commemorative ceremonies? Part of the answer is that a community is reminded of its identity as represented by and told in a master narrative...A ritual is not a journal or memoir. Its master narrative is more than a story told and reflected on; it is a cult enacted (Connerton 1989: 70).

The Kuomintang (KMT) government was defeated by the Chinese communists in the Chinese Civil War, forced to “retreat” to Taiwan, and lost its direct control over its most claimed territory. The government of the People’s Republic of China (PRC) was established by the Chinese communists in 1949 and asserted its own legitimacy as *the* Chinese regime. Whereas before the 1949 Retreat the KMT government did not see the need to make a systematic effort to lead people to remember their Chinese nationality, the failed Chinese Civil War created a significant change. Hence, from 1949 on, to deal with the issue of legitimacy, the KMT government prioritized the mission of making its supposed national members memorize their Chinese-ness by launching mnemonic engineering.¹⁸ The broad celebration of Double Tenth Day played a crucial role in this effort: Since Double Tenth Day commemorates the birth of the Republic of China (ROC)

¹⁸ Before being “imported” to Taiwan in 1949, Double Tenth Day had surely been celebrated in mainland China. However, on the one hand, due to internal turmoil such as wars among warlords, the KMT government did not have a chance to observe it on a large scale; on the other hand, before the 1949 Retreat, there was no such identity emergency to push Chinese nationalists to conduct nationbuilding with great intensity. See the documentary “The Glorious October: Revisiting the National Celebration Commemorative Ceremonies” for details of the observance of Double Tenth Day before 1949 (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RCIyNxA2o3Q&feature=endscreen&NR=1>, retrieved Jan 21st 2013). In the documentary, it is mentioned that the turmoil sometimes caused the skipping and cancellation of the commemoration of National Celebration Day before 1949. Moreover, from the documentary, it is also obvious that there were not so many commemorative ceremonies and activities on Double Tenth Day. Nevertheless, to construct a sense of continuity, the commemorations of Double Tenth Day before 1949 were occasionally brought up in decades after the 1949 Retreat; among others, the first celebration of October 10 was especially significant.

era, its general observation indicates not only that people agree on the beginning of national history but also that people's national identity can be refreshed annually. As a result, while Double Tenth Day had been commemorated from 1912, it was celebrated on such a grand scale right after the 1949 Retreat that, to some extent, it is still experienced just as a new tradition for the intended national members.

However, the unique circumstances of supposed national members increased the difficulty of official Chinese nationalism's mnemonic engineering. For six million islanders who had lived in Taiwan before 1949 (and most of them had never set foot on mainland China), Double Tenth Day was an imported national holiday that arrived with the Retreat. Before the 1949 Retreat, political elites in mainland China treated Taiwan as a marginal and insignificant province and, therefore, no effort was made to encourage islanders to celebrate Double Tenth Day. The result was that after 50 years of Japanese colonization and before the 1949 Retreat, even though Taiwanese islanders understood the return of mainland rule (Roy 2003: 55-75), people did not publicly celebrate Double Tenth Day to any extent (Wu 1993: 34-35). In terms of the two million mainlanders in retreat in Taiwan, while they might have been familiar with National Celebration Day, they had just experienced the trauma of being forced to leave their hometowns. Furthermore, with the overseas Chinese scattered in many different countries, determining how the mnemonic engineering of official Chinese nationalism could reach them was another tough task. In addition, the 400 million people who still lived on the mainland and enjoyed "spatial continuity" of the Chinese nation¹⁹ were, from the KMT

¹⁹ Staying in the same geographic area allows memory organizers to enjoy "spatial continuity" when arguing that the proposed audience has a "shared" historic past that occurred in this space. Whereas spatial continuity facilitates mnemonic engineering's bridging attempts, spatial discontinuity increases its

government's perspective, "mnemonic hostages" who were directly ruled by the PRC government and experienced the intensive propaganda of an alternative national identity.

In short, it should not be assumed that leading people to broadly commemorate Double Tenth Day was an easy job for Chinese nationalists. Various mnemonic techniques that the Chinese nationalists strategically employed to encourage people to celebrate Double Tenth Day and thereby produce the Chinese nationality can be observed.

To establish Double Tenth Day as a "mnemonically significant" day on the calendar (Bodnar 1994:74-89), in the mnemonic engineering of official Chinese nationalism, the annual repetition of the performative bodily experiences served to magnify the mnemonic weight of Double Tenth Day. According to Connerton (1989: 41-71), the "sacred" commemorated event needs to be re-presented and given a ceremonially embodied form in ritual performances. As a result, at least some parts of the official master commemorative narrative of the past can be conveyed and stored as habit memory in intended national members' bodies through the commemorative ceremonies. Differing from memory that connects to the thinking process, habit memory (or, say, performative memory) is a type of deeply embodied memory that preserves sensations, physical imprints, and memory of senses (Hirsch & Spitzer 2009: 151-170).

Seven main aspects have been identified from an analysis of how official Chinese nationalism made people broadly celebrate Double Tenth Day and synchronized them to the commemoration. These identified aspects are that Double Tenth Day was invented as

difficulties. Being forced to "retreat" from mainland China thus deprived the KMT government of "spatial continuity" for claiming that its intended national members had a "shared" past which happened in mainland China.

a crowded day, a memorialized day, an accepted day, a heroic day, a familial-ized day, a blessed day, and a pivotal-ized day.²⁰ Certain articles and reports have been quoted as evidence, yet what has been quoted are just typical examples and these seven aspects indeed were found in almost every year from 1949 through 1987. As a consequence, the deployment of mnemonic techniques contributed to construct Double Tenth Day as an insurmountable national holiday that (re)introduced the intended Chinese national members to their aligned past, present, projected future, and thereby their nationality. As we shall see, crossing different aspects, numerous traditions were newly invented after 1949 to reinforce the process of Chinese nationalization. Multiple layers of invented traditions were found, and lower level traditions were introduced to foster general acceptance of the higher level traditions: To boost the invention of a Chinese nationality, Double Tenth Day was invented as a designated national holiday and, to facilitate establishment of Double Tenth Day, various new “traditions” appeared. Although the initiation of new “traditions” does not guarantee their success – some traditions did not last long and other traditions turned into “robust” traditions²¹ – the multi-layered invented traditions symbolized the desperation to legitimize the KMT government as *the* genuine regime of the Chinese nation.

²⁰ For the sake of analysis, these seven aspects are introduced as completely separate dimensions. However, they are interwoven and mutually influenced in reality.

²¹ See also Assmann (1995: 125-33) for his distinction between communicative memory and cultural memory.

Double Tenth Day as a “Crowded” Day

First, through a series of scheduled ceremonies and organized public festivals, Double Tenth Day was made a “crowded” day. Since 1949, Double Tenth Day has been an eventful national holiday that includes a military parade, the marching of students, a flag-raising ceremony, the presidential speech, exhibitions of national heroes and the KMT history, a floral parade, a masquerade parade, traditional Chinese performances, fireworks, and an evening party with performances by celebrities and famous entertainers. A rubric to make any day a special day on the calendar is to interrupt its normal routine; thus, Double Tenth Day was made a special day with scheduled commemorative events. A “crowded” Double Tenth Day distinguished itself from other “profane” days and reminded national members of its “sacredness.” Additionally, a warm-up period can be observed in the days ahead of Double Tenth Day: Starting in early October, various events are held as pioneer events to prepare people for Double Tenth Day. For instance, numerous races and contests in a wide range of genres are held (*UDN* [1], 4 Oct. 1951; *UDN* [2], 5 Oct. 1953; *UDN* [3], 12 Oct. 1955; *UDN* [4], 6 Oct. 1980) and all are related to the celebration of Double Tenth Day. Moreover, from the 1980s on, a newly invented “tradition” was introduced; about five or six days before Double Tenth Day was a cleanup day and people were required to tidy up their environments to welcome the arrival of the special day (*UDN* [5], 20 Sep. 1982).

The following excerpt illustrates how “crowded” a typical Double Tenth Day can be (and can be remembered):

In Taipei city on Double Tenth Day, the national flags were everywhere and it could be regarded as a splendid flag sea. Waves and waves of people were on the street with their happiest smiles. The great weather at the beginning of the fall season added even more excitement to one point two million citizens in Taipei city. ...today, more than two hundred thousand people participated in the National Celebration ceremony and parade held in the square before the presidential palace. Moreover, there were over four hundred thousand people who, regardless of the burning sun and the jam-packed crowd, ran to the nearby site to observe the public ceremonies...As early as twilight, crowds went to the square in front of the presidential palace to find a good spot...8:55, five airplanes from the army flew across the sky above the presidential palace with their colorful mist...which earned acclamations of the audience. This was the prologue of the public ceremony. 9:00...the representatives of overseas Chinese...and anti-Chinese-communism heroes gave talks...The cheering of the heroes after their speeches was followed by a ten-minute silence. The square where gathered several hundred thousand people was quiet: Everyone in the ceremony raised their neck and looked for the beloved leader and the first lady to appear on the balcony in the presidential palace...when the gracious leader and his wife waved to the crowds, people hurrahed for them...

After the audience's hail, President Chiang, who wore the suit of a general, gave a speech...When the presidential speech finished, President Chiang and the first lady left the balcony. At the same time, thousands and thousands of colorful balloons rose gradually; two thousand doves flew in the sky; and the daytime fireworks which were made by the military also displayed their beauty and magic. What a chromatic world! The large-scale parade which more than two hundred thousand people joined began. Every place where the parade passed through was full of crowds...The honor guard from the military led the parade: their steps were neat and tidy, and their excellent performance of mock rifles earned people's cheer...Returned overseas Chinese...minority ethnic groups from the frontier areas...the movie stars...and the young students...all joined the parade...The vitality of these participants affected all the surrounding bystanders: they all clapped and shouted out the slogans together.

The parade dismissed around 12:00...Yet even in the afternoon and at night, there were many great places to go. In the afternoon, many folk performances and parades were arranged. Military units were scheduled to have fireworks...all of these events attracted thousands and thousands of audience members. Additionally, more than one hundred evening parties with entertaining shows were held for national members to enjoy...

Citizens in Taipei city had a busy and happy day yesterday (*UDN* [6], 11 Oct. 1968).

Double Tenth Day was in fact scheduled to be even more crowded than the selected excerpt represents: Many events such as races, contests, and exhibitions were not even mentioned. As a censored message in the mainstream newspaper, the detailed description of Double Tenth Day itself contributed to spread the impression of a crowded day as well. Hence, even someone who did not personally attend the commemorative ceremonies held

by the central government in Taipei city was expected to obtain a certain degree of *surrogate-embodied-memory* via this type of report.

Year by year, almost without exception, the central government announced its intention to celebrate Double Tenth Day on an even larger scale (*UDN* [7], 11 Oct. 1957), meaning a bigger government budget, more resources, and more personnel were used for the celebration. All this investment worked to add ceremonial weight to Double Tenth Day (Cressy 2004: 137). In addition to the central-level celebration, these commemorative activities occurred at the local level and overseas as well. Hence, there were miniature public ceremonies, parades, races, contests, and exhibitions held by local governments and overseas (semi-)official organizations despite the miniature ceremonies usually being much simpler due to fewer available resources; in a sense, they provided opportunities to ensure that more people could derive embodied memory by participating in the public organized festivals. Both these miniature ceremonies and reports on them reinforced the memory of a crowded Double Tenth Day.

While it had been celebrated since 1912, Double Tenth Day was officially announced as a national holiday in 1953 (*UDN* [8], 6 Oct. 1953), which meant people could take the day off. With no need to go to work or school, people were further encouraged to either participate in commemorations personally or listen/watch the transmitted ceremonies on the radio channels/TV channels. Whereas in the first decade after the 1949 Retreat, the message and information on the public ceremonies could only be spread via public controlled radio channels, once the TV channels began to broadcast in the 1960s, people gradually began to rely more on the visualized representations. Designed as mouthpieces of the official Chinese nationalism, it is no accident that the three public-owned TV

channels all had their first official broadcasts on Double Tenth Day in different years (1962, 1969, and 1971). Since the three TV channels were all that existed at the time and all three were owned publicly, people had no other option but to become the loyal audience of the commemorations on October 10 (*UDN* [9], 11 Jun. 1965; *Economic Daily News* [1], 11 Oct. 1978). The recorded or live commemorative ceremonies and crowded Double Tenth Day seen on the screen may be remembered as a prosthetic memory by the audience with the assistance of television (Landsberg 2004).

It is not surprising to learn that everything in the public ceremonies on Double Tenth Day was loaded with symbolic meaning. For example, national flags hung not only in the ceremonies and in front of every household but also on the main streets and roads; patriotic songs were broadcast by the media and in the streets; and flowers, fireworks, balloons, slogans, and doves were used to indicate that Double Tenth Day is an unusual day. The core public ceremony (which included the presidential speech) did not begin until 10:10 in the morning, which imbued the whole process with an even more poetic character. The decorations of Double Tenth Day in the public ceremonies were colored with blue, white, and red: These three colors symbolized the KMT government and the noble spirit of national heroes who sacrificed their lives. In addition, the noise that the fireworks made and the assigned patriotic title of each firework pattern suggested this day's significance. In brief, vocabularies of celebration were employed on this day to immerse ordinary people's senses in an ocean of patriotic symbols via aspects of the crowded holiday schedule.²² Carelessly adopting an incorrect vocabulary of celebration –

²² Nonetheless, the vocabularies of celebration imbued with rich symbolic meanings that were used on Double Tenth Day in the mnemonic engineering of the official Chinese nationalism ironically were turned

and thereby identifying with an (incorrect) alternative nationality – on Double Tenth Day might have been blamed and corrected (if not punished):

A school bus which is used to transport preschool kids participated with some special decorations in the parade as well. This bus was equipped with a speaker, a radio, and colorful neon bulbs and festoons, and therefore attracted many people's attention. Nevertheless, when the whole parade was singing songs that go against Chinese communism, it was playing Japanese songs. The crowds felt uncomfortable listening to these Japanese songs, and one person blamed the driver: "Today is Double Tenth Day, why are you playing Japanese music?" The driver reconsidered and exclaimed, "I am so wrong, and I made a terrible mistake!" He soon took out four Japanese albums and tore them into pieces. Though this driver made a mistake, he tried to fix it. His spirit should be admired (*UDN* [10], 12 Oct. 1954).

Intriguingly, yet another rather ironic factor that made Double Tenth Day crowded even after the 1980s was that counter-memories (or, say, alternative nationalisms) wittingly launched protests and riots to oppose the master commemorative narrative of the Chinese nationalism on this day. These challenges are clearly an unintended consequence that the mnemonic engineering of official Chinese nationalism did not anticipate. Whereas the mainstream media usually either marginalized or muted these events before 1987, mnemonic battles between different national identities became more explicit and appeared in the mainstream media in the late 1980s, which also played a role in causing people to remember this day as a crowded day in an ironic way (*UDN* [11], 8 Oct. 1989; *UDN* [12], 10 Oct. 1989; and *UDN* [13], 11 Oct. 1989).

into a hot site where allowed memory organizers of counter-memories could attack the Chinese nationalism. For more discussion, see chapter 5.

Double Tenth Day as a “Memorialized” Day

Second, by intentionally producing and reproducing the memory of Double Tenth Day itself, Double Tenth Day was created as a “memorialized” day. That is, whereas Double Tenth Day is a day to commemorate the birth of the Republic of China era, commemorations on this day are memorialized as well. The memorializing of the memorialization and the multiple layers of collective memory were thus constructed to ingrain the official Chinese nationalism even further. Extra official efforts that guided people to memorialize Double Tenth day *itself* can be seen in the mnemonic engineering of a Chinese nationhood. For instance, more than one theme song for National Celebration Day existed (*UDN* [14], 3 Oct. 1951; *UDN* [15], 17 July 1981); a limited edition National Celebration Day stamp (*UDN* [16], 12 Aug. 1961; *Economic Daily News* [2], 30 Aug. 1971) and wine (*Economic Daily News* [3], 25 Sep. 1975) were produced for collectors annually; “Miss Double Tenth” was elected every year (*UDN* [17], 11 Oct. 1981); and special exhibitions on the “commemorations of Double Tenth Day in history” were held almost every year. Moreover, the whole process of public ceremonies on Double Tenth Day was recorded and edited into official documentaries that contributed to standardizing people’s memory of the commemoration of Double Tenth Day as well as refreshing people’s memory of this memorial day.

The official documentaries of Double Tenth Day played an influential role in memorializing Double Tenth Day *itself*, especially in the early decades after the 1949 Retreat. With no TV channel in Taiwan before 1962 (and even when TV channels started to operate in the 1960s, the diffusion of televisions in Taiwan took time) and public commemorations by the central government held only in Taipei city (people who lived

outside Taipei city usually did not have a chance to “witness” the ceremonies), the documentaries worked as visualizations of the rituals. Whereas the commemorative events held by the central government could not be transmitted through satellite news gathering (SNG) due to the technological limitations at that time, the KMT government worked hard to produce the documentaries of Double Tenth Day ceremonies within days or even hours. Thus, films that recorded the daytime ceremonies and other events were usually played in theaters all over Taiwan in the evening of the same day (*UDN* [18], 9 Oct. 1956). These documentaries were defined as movies (usually entitled “Our National Celebration”) and played in cinemas even after October 10 (*UDN* [19], 05 Oct. 1960). Audiences that watched the documentaries were therefore delay-synchronized to the central commemorations. In the later decades, programs of National Celebration Day activities that depicted the large-scale ceremonies and common people enthusiastically celebrating the day were seen not only on TV channels in Taiwan, but also were spread to other countries (*UDN* [20], 29 Feb. 1964; *UDN* [21], 2 Oct. 1964; *UDN* [22], 13 Oct. 1977). Whether these programs were recorded or broadcast live (when technologies became available), they aimed at standardizing people’s memory of the memorialization of Double Tenth Day.

Taking the documentary on 1959’s Double Tenth Day as an example,²³ the length is twenty six minutes and five seconds and it was produced by the Ministry of National Defense. A voice-over describes every scene with an impassioned tone. The film is composed of six parts. The first part is constituted by the scenery of Taipei streets: Logos such as the “十十” (the official symbol of Double Tenth Day. “十” means “ten” in

²³ <http://catalog.digitalarchives.tw/item/00/3a/16/9a.html> , retrieved March 21, 2013.

Chinese characters, “十十” therefore represents “double-tenth”) were hung outside salient buildings, national flags were seen in front of households and stores, and crowds on the street were included. The second part is a file of the central ceremony at the hall inside the presidential palace: Scenes such as President Chiang reading the National Celebration Proclamation and diplomatic envoys congratulating the president were common. The third part depicts aerial performances of the air force and the gathering of crowds on a bridge to watch. The fourth part records the honor guard from the military and its performance with mock rifles that attracted thousands of people. The fifth part shows the commemorative ceremony at the square in front of the presidential palace: Scenes such as returned overseas Chinese and anti-Chinese-communist heroes giving speeches, President Chiang and the first lady appearing on the balcony and waving to the people, diverse groups participating in the ceremony, and people shouting out their loyalty to the leader during the after-ceremony parade were selected in. The last part of the film includes scenes such as various entertainment events that were scheduled and the landscape of nighttime Taipei city, which was decorated with colorful bulbs. These events indicate that the mnemonic engineering guided people to deem certain events in the commemoration as relevant and worthy of remembering and other events in the commemorations as irrelevant and easily forgotten.

Pictures and materials in the exhibitions on “commemorations of the Double Tenth Day in the history” and the disseminated documentaries all facilitated people’s remembrance of memorialization of Double Tenth Day on an unprecedented scale (Brandt 1994:95-122). After all, due to the power of the cinematic image, films can be used as instruments to “suture” viewers into pasts they have not experienced;

consequently, the viewers may “put on” the resulting prosthetic memories (in this case, the memory of memorialization of Double Tenth Day) and generate empathy and identity (Landsberg 2004; Dayan & Katz 2006 [1992]: 1-9). Intended national members who lived in Taipei city but did not participate and those who lived in other cities and surrounding small islands, those who lived overseas and did not “return” on Double Tenth Day, and those who lived under the PRC government were all given a chance to obtain the memories with the assistance of images.

Also, Double Tenth Day and its celebrations brought with them a wide range of contests designed to encourage people to get involve in “memorializing” the day’s spirit and memorialization. Thus, not only schools but also social fields held competitions related to speeches, writing, drawing, photography, comics, and filmmaking. These competitions required participants to represent the commemorations – instead of merely focusing on the history of Double Tenth Day and its origin – on Double Tenth Day (*UDN* [23], 10 Oct. 1980). Thus, for example, young children were asked to share “how we celebrate Double Tenth Day” in speeches and writing competitions, and professional photographers and even amateurs competed to capture the most touching moments, facial expressions, and splendid fireworks in the commemorations (*UDN* [24], 29 Sep. 1962). Interestingly enough, all these contests and races were newly invented under the mnemonic engineering of official Chinese nationalism, but are still held annually even today.

In sum, layers of the past were piled up in people’s remembrance, and all these repetitions of the memorialization process functioned to reinforce legitimacy and ease power elites’ anxiety. In addition to remembering that Double Tenth Day represents the

birth of a specific era, people were guided to remember ceremonies and activities that were arranged to celebrate the day (or, say, the “hot” history of the commemorations of Double Tenth Day). The memory of Double Tenth Day’s memorialization was stored in multiple sites such as theme songs, kitsch, detailed descriptive reports in newspapers, documentaries, photos, and numerous contests.²⁴ To some extent, sturdy memory of what the commemoration of Double Tenth Day should be was thereby memorized and formed. All the commemorative events were memorized “packagedly” (think about the six main parts in the 1959 documentary), and perfunctorily deleting an event without reasonable explanation may have evoked people’s resentment.²⁵

Double Tenth Day as an “Accepted” Day

Third, by foregrounding “the fact” that not only intended national members but also people of other nations joined the celebration of October 10, Double Tenth Day was brought about as an “accepted” day. The 1949 Retreat resulted in two governments – the KMT and the PRC – simultaneously claiming to be *the* authentic and legitimate regime of a Chinese nation, and demonstrating that its national celebration day is celebrated by national members as well as other nations is a great way to prove the general recognition. Hence, on the one hand, how the intended national members enthusiastically

²⁴ For discussion of the relationship between memory and kitsch, see Sturken 2007: 1-34. Whereas it was the KMT government that initiated making products such as Double Tenth wine, Double Tenth coins, and Double Tenth stamps, private corporations in the later decades of official Chinese nationalism also produced various “kitsch” items to memorialize the day. See, for example, the production of Double Tenth cakes (*Economic Daily News* [4], 09 Oct. 1970; *Economic Daily News* [5], 09 Oct. 1970).

²⁵ In many personal conversations, when I asked “what a Double Tenth Day should be,” no matter the variations in their age, people usually provided me with an almost identical list of events, which mainly included the six parts that the official documentaries covered.

commemorated this day was emphasized to nurture an impression of the popular affirmation of legitimacy. For example, to illustrate that national members who lived on Taiwan island and its surrounding small islands (or, say, people who were directly governed by the KMT government) were keen to observe Double Tenth Day, the number of participants in the public ceremonies held by the central government was announced annually. Not including the surrounding and watching crowds, from the 1950s on, the announced numbers of participants were consistently reported as between two hundred thousand and two hundred and fifty thousand (*UDN* [25], 11 Oct. 1951; *UDN* [26], 11 Oct. 1962; *UDN* [27], 11 Oct. 1974; *UDN* [28], 11 Oct. 1986).

Moreover, messages in the mainstream media also highlighted that numerous commemorative ceremonies were being held by local governments all around Taiwan island and the stories noted that these mini ceremonies were supported by people who did not live in Taipei city (*UDN* [29], 10 Oct. 1958). Furthermore, to reveal that overseas Chinese also wholeheartedly celebrated Double Tenth Day, the number of “returned” overseas Chinese who came “back” to Taiwan to participate in the public ceremonies became crucial information to release each year (*UDN* [30], 10 Oct. 1978); the overseas commemorations that were held by overseas Chinese (though often financially supported by official or semi-official organizations) all over the world were usually reported and described as huge successes (*UDN* [31], 12 Oct. 1978; *UDN* [32], 12 Oct. 1981). For example, a 1955 report said that the overseas commemorations on Double Tenth Day were held and supported in countries such as Korea, Thailand, Spain, Singapore, Burma, Indonesia, and the United States (*UDN* [33], 12 Oct. 1955). Due to the overseas Chinese being scattered all over the world, it is not surprising to see delayed celebrations of

Double Tenth Day due to time differences. As a result, when the mainstream media covered the overseas celebrations, an impression of Double Tenth Day being prolongedly commemorated around the world emerged. These diaspora celebrations of Double Tenth Day were regarded as affirmations of the center (the KMT-led ROC on Taiwan island) just as St. Patrick's Day is for the Irish diaspora.

Intriguingly, how “national members” who lived in mainland China and thus were strictly controlled by the PRC government still tried to express their advocacy of Double Tenth Day celebrations was not forgotten. According to the reports, a considerable amount of the population who lived in mainland China indeed celebrated Double Tenth Day stealthily, and some brave souls could not quench their patriotic emotion and celebrated Double Tenth Day overtly regardless of the possible punishment. The following excerpt serves as an example:

One day before Double Tenth Day, a national flag of the Republic of China was raised in the gate of ZhongHua Book publisher, located at Kowloon Hong Kong – an area controlled by the Chinese communists... The guy who did this... told journalists “We hang the national flag... neither for being famous nor for earning money; the sole reason that motivated us is to go against the tyranny of Chinese communism!” He said that successfully raising the national flag symbolized the good luck of the Chinese nation (*UDN* [34], 11 Oct. 1962).

Double Tenth Day attracted other nations' attention and acknowledgment was emphasized as well. After all, it indicated the diplomatic recognition of the KMT government and its claimed legitimacy of ruling a Chinese nation. Thus, several messages were deemed inevitably significant in the mnemonic engineering of the official Chinese nationalism. First, the central commemoration tabulated the number of representatives and ambassadors who came from other countries to participate year by

year (*UDN* [35], 8 Oct. 1971; *UDN* [36], 8 Oct. 1977; *UDN* [37], 10 Oct. 1983). Second, newspapers published the congratulatory telegrams from other countries, sometimes even the full texts (*UDN* [38], 10 Oct. 1951). Third, the mainstream media thoroughly checked and disclosed the commemorations' coverage by other countries' media – the length of the reports on the commemorative processes, whether other countries published the presidential speeches, into how many languages the official documents were translated and published, whether the official documentaries were played on other countries' channels, and whether the commemorations were broadcast live by other countries' channels (when technologies were available) (*UDN* [39], 7 Oct. 1960; *UDN* [40], 7 Oct. 1961; *UDN* [41], 19 Oct. 1974). Fourth, Double Tenth Day being established as “Free China Day” in New York and Boston in several years was proudly articulated (*Economic Daily News* [6], 9 Oct. 1967; *UDN* [42], 11 Oct. 1971).

Additionally, how the so-called “pseudo” National Celebration Day of the PRC government on October 1st^t was either ignored or merely celebrated “with hypocrisy” was used to contrast Double Tenth Day's broad recognition by the official Chinese nationalism:

Today, people in Hong Kong and Macau had a very lukewarm attitude toward the pseudo National Celebration Day on October 1st. Only a small number of “companies” and “incorporations” that were run by communists were hanging the dirty flags with offensive smells. [The national flag of the PRC, the so-called “Wu-Xing-Qi” (in Chinese, means the flag with five stars on it), intentionally changed its meaning through this report.] Most people did not treat October 1st seriously: In fact, they are busy preparing to commemorate Double Tenth Day. A sharp contrast between the pseudo National Celebration Day of the PRC government [and the authentic National Celebration Day of the ROC government] emerged... (*UDN* [43], 2 Oct. 1974).

Following is an article comparing the two national celebration days that illustrates this aspect even further:

“Understanding people’s commitment to a nation by observing its national celebration” was vividly demonstrated in Hong Kong and Macao...the fake regime should be deeply regretting that their “National Celebration Day” is so close to our Double Tenth Day. The reason that they chose October 1st as their national celebration day was because they would like to appropriate all the mirthful atmosphere. Unfortunately, they have lost people’s support over the past five years. According to the commemorations on these two days in Hong Kong and Macao, we can say that they ignored October 1st and eagerly celebrated October 10...According to people who have lived in Hong Kong for a long time, in this year’s Double Tenth Day, they saw more national flags of the ROC in Hong Kong and Macao than the past forty-three years... (*UDN* [44], 14 Oct. 1954).

In addition, stories such as how the PRC government attempted to disrupt the overseas celebrations (*UDN* [45], 9 Oct. 1951; *UDN* [46], 9 Oct. 1958) and seduce overseas Chinese to recognize October 1st as the authentic national celebration day (*UDN* [47], 1 Oct. 1980) were told. In short, all the mentioned strategies caused people to remember and accept Double Tenth Day.

Double Tenth Day as a “Heroic” Day

Fourth, highlighting the arrival of heroes, Double Tenth Day was generated as a “heroic” day. In addition to the selected national heroes – Chinese ancestors and national heroes who founded the Republic era – who were frequently mentioned in the commemorative narrative, we mainly saw the arrival of three types of heroes for Double Tenth Day. The overseas Chinese who came back to Taiwan for the public ceremonies of Double Tenth Day were treated as the first type of hero: Showing up for this patriotic commemoration indicated that they “righteously” chose our side instead of the “evil”

PRC government on mainland China, thereby making them national heroes. As mentioned, although overseas Chinese is a broad category that included all the “Chinese” people who lived in foreign countries, their return simply demonstrated acknowledgment. With the government providing reimbursement for their airline tickets, hotel fees, and even visits to Taiwan’s famous sights,²⁶ the officially announced number of “returned” international Chinese consistently increased (see Table 2.1). In addition, in years of extraordinary identity risks due to dramatic changes (e.g., the withdrawal from the United Nations in 1971 and the death of Chiang Kai-Shek in 1975), the publicly claimed numbers of returned international Chinese grew extraordinarily high (*UDN* [48], 2 Oct. 1971). More intriguingly, the announced returned number almost never dropped again.

²⁶ However, the amount of governmental reimbursement that a returned overseas Chinese can apply for caused serious debate between the KMT government and representatives of the counter-memories from the 1980s. While Chinese nationalists would have liked to claim that the returned overseas Chinese who came back on Double Tenth Day were motivated by their loyalty and patriotism, advocates of counter-memories contended that overseas Chinese visited Taiwan around Double Tenth Day because they could receive considerable reimbursement. See, for example, *UDN* [52], 4 Oct. 1987; and <http://www.appledaily.com.tw/realtimenews/article/politics/20120926/144327> (retrieved 1/27/2013).

Table 2.1: The Announced Number of “Returned” International Chinese

Year	Returned Number	Year	Returned Number	Year	Returned Number
1949	----	1962	1,021	1975	19,918
1950	----	1963	1,636	1976	More than 12,000
1951	----	1964	2,500	1977	More than 17,000
1952	----	1965	More than 2,000	1978	More than 22,000
1953	300	1966	More than 2,000	1979	More than 20,000
1954	82	1967	2,500	1980	More than 20,000
1955	130	1968	3,100	1981	More than 30,000
1956	1,000	1969	3,200	1982	----
1957	More than 1,000	1970	More than 3,000	1983	----
1958	----	1971	7,980	1984	23,500
1959	More than 1,000	1972	4,500	1985	More than 15,000
1960	1,058	1973	More than 6,000	1986	30,000
1961	1,400	1974	More than 10,000	1987	----

To some extent, the KMT government competed with the PRC government for the patriotism of overseas Chinese after the 1949 Retreat. Though overseas Chinese were also argued to be national members of the Chinese nation, they lived scattered throughout different countries: They were neither “directly” governed by the KMT government (such

as people who lived in Taiwan and its surrounding small islands), nor did they live in mainland China (the claimed motherland) to “enjoy” spatial continuity. Nevertheless, the question is whether the mnemonic engineering of the Chinese nationalism made extra efforts to include overseas Chinese in the nationbuilding project. Among other things, the official slogan, “National Celebration Day is a great opportunity to understand overseas Chinese’s hearts,” implies that the number of “returned” overseas Chinese was a crucial indicator of whether the KMT was still acknowledged as *the* authentic regime of the Chinese nation (*UDN* [49], 11 Oct. 1977). After all, limited by the “temporarily abnormal condition” after 1949, Taiwan island was defined as a “provisional” motherland. In addition to constructing the “returned” overseas Chinese as heroes in Double Tenth Day commemorations, specific “traditions” that strongly targeted overseas Chinese were newly invented. Being appraised as “the mother of revolution” in the master commemorative narrative, Overseas Chinese Day was designated as being observed annually on October 21st in 1953 (*UDN* [50], 21 Oct. 1954). Moreover, from 1978 on, the 10,000 “returned” overseas Chinese who came “home” to celebrate Double Tenth Day and the “glorious” October were showcased in the media (*UDN* [51], 7 Oct. 1978).

The second type of hero was the anti-Chinese-communism hero. In addition to soldiers who fought Chinese communists for the nation (*UDN* [53], 11 Oct. 1958), people who escaped from mainland China were deemed to be national heroes due to their refusal to be ruled by the PRC government. Since 1962, it has almost become a convention that anti-Chinese-communism heroes show up to receive awards and give a speech for the Double Tenth Day commemoration (*UDN* [54], 11 Oct. 1962; *UDN* [55], 01 Oct. 1966). The main goal of having these anti-Chinese-communism heroes at public ceremonies has

been to demonstrate that the rule of Chinese Communists is intolerable (and therefore illegitimate) and that people in mainland China are eager for freedom. However, the appearance of anti-Chinese-communism heroes has been officially manipulated and should be regarded as one part of Chinese nationalists' mnemonic engineering: For instance, even if an anti-Chinese-communism hero arrived in Taiwan months before October 10, people had to wait until the Double Tenth Day ceremony to see his/her "debut" and get more information about him/her (*UDN* [56], 30 Sep. 1981). Furthermore, it was not uncommon for people to see the "on time" arrival of anti-Chinese-communism heroes on the very day of (or days before) Double Tenth Day: According to official announcements, their arrivals served as a surprising and exciting birthday present for the nation (*Economic Daily News* [7], 11 Oct. 1967; *UDN* [57], 08 Oct. 1972; *UDN* [58], 10 Oct. 1975).

The third type of hero is the surrendered alternative nationalist. The prolonged "temporary" circumstance increased the possibility and motivation of promoting alternative nationalism among "national members"; among others, the alternative narrative that Taiwan should be independent from mainland China challenged the official Chinese nationality. Upon giving up their "impure" and "incorrect" national identities, the surrendered Taiwanese nationalists were treated as the third type of hero – if only a quasi-hero (*UDN* [59], 08 Oct. 1974). Just like the official manipulated appearance of anti-Chinese-communism heroes, on Double Tenth Day, the surrendered alternative nationalists were usually encouraged to give "convert testimonies" about their regrets related to identifying with an incorrect nationality. For example, on 1971's Double Tenth Day, several surrendered Taiwanese nationalists were scheduled to talk about their

regrets related to propagandizing an incorrect nationality (*UDN* [60], 10 Oct. 1971).

Despite the timing of their surrender being officially controlled, the Taiwanese nationalists were usually forced to “formally” give up their alternative national identity to save the lives of their family members and significant others (Shu 2002: 47-69). A newspaper article detailed one of the surrendered Taiwanese nationalists’ regret; he said:

We are six overseas Chinese who live in Osaka, Japan. We were seduced by the betrayers and participated in the organization which promoted ideas of Taiwan independence. Recently, we came to understand that President Chiang is a kind leader who loves his people and wisely guides the KMT government. . . . we now have correct and brand new knowledge. . . . the free China is a strong, happy, rich, democratic, and free land. Thus, . . . the past betrayal activities that we engaged in are totally meaningless. We decided to leave the betrayal organization and support the KMT government. More importantly, we came back to our homeland one day before Double Tenth Day, which is the utmost significant day for the nation. . . . (*UDN* [61], 08 Oct. 1974).

In addition to the three types of heroes mentioned above, in the later decades of the official Chinese nationalism, heroes were labeled in an even broader sense and were invited to either be awarded or give speeches at Double Tenth Day public ceremonies. A great example is that a team of doctors who successfully used their skills to separate conjoined twins was invited to present at the Double Tenth Day’s ceremony (*UDN* [62], 20 Sep. 1979). National Celebration Day as a heroic day then turned into a robust tradition. Even after 1987, various people were defined as “the glory of Taiwan” and invited to attend Double Tenth Day ceremonies, including a Taiwanese Major League Baseball pitcher and a vegetable vendor who was selected as one of the Time 100 in the heroes category (as a philanthropist), to name a few.

Double Tenth Day as a “Familial-ized” Day

Fifth, by synchronizing the national celebration and familial celebrations, Double Tenth Day was “familial-ized.” Since 1949, group marriages have been held at different levels of government on every Double Tenth Day (*UDN* [63], 21 Sep. 1951; *UDN* [64], 11 Oct. 1953), and starting from 1976, Double Tenth Day babies (babies born on Double Tenth Day) have been showcased in the media (*UDN* [65], 11 Oct. 1976). Common people were encouraged to either get married or deliver a baby on this day to synchronize the most significant day of the nation with the most crucial two dates in families. This effort of mnemonic synchronization (E. Zerubavel 1997: 97) worked to lead people to remember Double Tenth Day more easily and to make National Celebration Day even more eventful and cheerful by insinuating public doctrines into the field of private experience. Actually, a critical reason for sociotemporally synchronizing national and familial celebrations is to “naturalize” the invented nation-hood and thus better nurture people’s national identification. Nation leaders (or, say, memory organizers) want to lead people to perceive that all proposed national members have “shared” ancestors and thereby are all “sisters” and “brothers” who can be covered by one big family tree (Wailoo et al. 2012; Eviatar 2011: 53-75). Following this logic, the distinction between nation and family is merely a matter of scale, and nation is simply an “extended family.”

The synchronization of national celebration and familial celebration also echoed a well-known Confucian ethic, “Xiushen, Qijia, Zhikuo, and Pingtianxia,” which means that a person who wants to be successful needs to first cultivate his own morals and only after that can he govern his family; then he can move on to consider national issues, and finally he can obtain the ability to manage large-scale topics that go beyond his own

country. The synchronization of national and familial celebrations simultaneously covers people's concerns at two levels. The officially broadcast phrase, "Kuo-ching, Jia-ching" ("Kuo-ching" means national celebration, "Jia-ching" means familial celebration; this phrase indicates celebrating National Celebration Day and familial anniversaries at the same time), was another reflection of the publicly promoted interlocking of the national event and familial events. The fact that political elites and celebrities may hold wedding ceremonies for group marriages and that it is totally free to deliver a Double Tenth Day baby in publicly operated hospitals (*UDN* [66], 8 Oct. 1976; *UDN* [67], 08 Oct. 1985) served as further attractions to people. Hence, it was not surprising that more and more couples registered for official group marriages on National Celebration Day (*UDN* [68], 10 Oct. 1969; *UDN* [69], 10 Oct. 1978; *UDN* [70], 10 Oct. 1985) or that parents-to-be hold a very positive attitude about having their baby on this day; some mothers-to-be even schedule a cesarean section for that day (*UDN* [71], 11 Oct. 1985; *The Liberty Times* [1], 11 Oct. 2011). Synchronizing the national event and familial events has had an accumulative effect as people celebrate their wedding anniversaries and birthdays every year.

Furthermore, in the decades after 1949, it was not uncommon for babies (babies born on Double Tenth Day or any other date) to be named "Kuo-Ching" (which means national celebration) or "Shuang-Shi" (which means double tenth). This further illuminates the interlocking of the public and private fields. When individuals are given names highly loaded with symbolic meaning, every time their name is used, these patriotic names refresh the significance of Double Tenth Day. People's name is yet another site for storing the collective memory of a Chinese nation.

Double Tenth Day as a “Blessed” Day

Sixth, by exaggerating positive things happening on it, Double Tenth Day was invented as a “blessed” day. “Pu Tian Tong Ching” is a term broadly used to describe Double Tenth Day as always a good day so that every sector of the nation joins in the celebration. Although October 10 falls within the typhoon season, according to the news reports, the weather on Double Tenth Day all too often amazingly turns out to be sunny despite the days before Double Tenth Day often being cloudy or rainy. An article entitled “The rain is over and the sky clears up on Double Tenth Day: We are blessed and our nation is blessed” vividly exemplifies the usually dramatic weather change:

...Due to the influence of typhoon Beth and high atmospheric pressure, Taipei city has already had rain for several days. Even until early morning yesterday, it was still drizzling in Taipei. But after 7:00, the rain ended and what we had was a fine day with clear autumn sky and crisp air...The premier Chiang told journalists who covered the national celebration ceremony that it was the participants of the public ceremony who brought the great weather. This indicates that we are blessed and the nation is blessed (*UDN* [72], 11 Oct. 1974).

In numerous years, the claimed sudden weakening of typhoons and therefore the diminishing of their influence on the Double Tenth Day ceremonies can be observed (*UDN* [73], 9 Oct. 1978; *UDN* [74], 10 Oct. 1980). In brief, people were led to remember unmistakably great weather on Double Tenth Day because it was said that even the supernatural forces blessed the nation and joined in the celebration of this glorious day (*UDN* [75], 10 Oct. 1997; *UDN* [76], 03 Oct. 2007). Following this logic, any negative thinking or deviant behavior that occurred on this day was exaggerated as something unbelievable. For instance, committing suicide on National Celebration Day was

ridiculed as “to all people’s surprise” (*UDN* [77], 12 Oct. 1953) since it is such a wonderful day.

Other “signs” were officially highlighted or invented to show common people that Double Tenth Day is a blessed day. First, in traditional Chinese culture, “double tenth” means perfection. The National Celebration Day observed on October (the 10th month) 10th (the 10th day), therefore broadly known as Double Tenth Day, equipped official Chinese nationalists with one more positive symbolic meaning due to conventional admiration of the decimal system in Chinese culture. According to the narration of the official Chinese nationalism, Double Tenth Day also indicates “double perfection,” which is also why the mentioned core public ceremony begins at 10:10.²⁷ Thus, good things are expected to happen on this day. Second, since the official logo of Double Tenth Day is formed by two overlapping crosses (“十十”, and “十” means 10 in Chinese), which is fairly similar to the logo of the Red Cross, it is claimed that the logo of Double Tenth Day symbolizes positive meanings (charity and philanthropy) and thus is blessed even for people from Western societies (*UDN* [78] 10 Oct. 1961). Third, in the days leading up to Double Tenth Day, the state pours money into the stock market to create a bullish market to celebrate the birthday of the nation (*Economic Daily News* [8], 27 Oct. 1985). For ordinary people, “celebrating the bullish market” is another better thing to expect every year.

Actually, even more events during the analyzed decades were foregrounded as indicators to confirm the assertion that Double Tenth Day is a blessed day. For instance, these events included the marriage of a Japanese royal family member on October 10

²⁷ See more discussion of people’s perception of the decimal system in Zerubavel (1977: 868-877).

(*UDN* [79], 13 Oct. 1952), a criminal caught by policemen due to his participation in the public ceremony on Double Tenth Day (*UDN* [80], 28 Dec. 1960), the one-day cease fire – single-sidedly announced by the KMT government – between the KMT government and the PRC government on Double Tenth Day (*UDN* [81], 9 Oct. 1969), the special pardon issued by the president to reduce thousands of prisoners' imprisonment term (*UDN* [82], 9 Oct. 1971), and an additional day off after Double Tenth Day in specific years (*UDN* [83], 8 Oct. 1975). Furthermore, given that several other national holidays occur in October, all of October was declared a “glorious” month for the people, and the mnemonic weight of October was thus constructed as heavier than that of the other months.

Double Tenth Day as a “Pivotal-ized” Day

Finally, by treating it as a momentous fixed central point on the calendar, Double Tenth Day has been “pivotal-ized.” That is, it is constructed as the hinge of a year. Examining the distribution of collected data on Double Tenth Day reveals a temporal pattern. On the one hand, most news reports and articles in October discuss the preparation for Double Tenth Day (before the event) and comment on and record the glory and success of it (after the event). On the other hand, reports in the months before Double Tenth Day usually use Double Tenth Day as a significant date in general and a reference point in particular (E. Zerubavel 1981: 70-100; 138-66). That is, since the 1950s, Double Tenth Day has served as a compass in any given year to initiate a plan, to expect things to be done, and to “anchor” the current status of a project. Among the 365

days in a year, October 10 has become a most salient date and overshadows other dates: It is the pivotal point in a year.

My examination of reports in the months before Double Tenth Day illustrates that there are two different effects caused the pivotal-izing of the day. First, regarding Double Tenth Day as a “pivot” in the year, numerous projects and events were scheduled to be initiated or completed on this day, which made it even more crowded. For example, government institutions announced that a specific road was scheduled to be completed on Double Tenth Day (*UDN* [84], 06 July 1959; *UDN* [85], 08 Sep. 1971), a publicly operated TV channel would broadcast for the first time on Double Tenth Day (*UDN* [86], 24 Sep. 1962), and the first nuclear power plant in Taiwan started to operate on Double Tenth Day (*Economic Daily News* [9], 28 Mar. 1977). Additionally, seen as the “pivot” in a year, Double Tenth Day works to orient people on the sociotemporal map (E. Zerubavel 1997: 100-110). That is, Double Tenth Day has been used as a reference point to check the progress of a project or to give people a sense of whether they have established the right pace. For instance, a project of installing new phone booths was to be finished *no later than* Double Tenth Day (*UDN* [87], 02 Oct. 1960), and a new zoo which was under construction was expected to be completed *before* Double Tenth Day the year after next (*UDN* [88], 13 May 1981).

Whereas it is possible that, more or less, the mnemonic engineering of the Chinese nationalism initially led officials to select Double Tenth Day as a “pivot” on the calendar, in the long run, it became a habit. The use of National Celebration Day as a pivot was therefore not limited to the governmental field. Even in non-governmental circles, October 10 served as an anchor. For instance, private corporations proclaimed that

Taiwan's first personal computer would be marketed on Double Tenth Day (*Economic Daily News* [10], 02 Aug. 1969) and a department store held its grand openings on Double Tenth Day (*Economic Daily News* [11], 9 Oct. 1974). In short, the significance of Double Tenth Day took on another form in common people's lives, which heavily influences people's organization of time.

A Remembered "Sacred" Day

Through the aforementioned seven aspects, Double Tenth Day was (re-)invented as a new tradition for all the proposed national members. All the intended national members were led to remember this day as a sacred National Celebration Day. Most importantly, the encoded sacredness made Double Tenth Day a marked day that possesses a very different quality than "profane" and "unmarked" days in a year (Durkheim 1995 [1912]; Hubert 1999: 50-76; E. Zerubavel 2004:184-95; Brekhus 1998: 34-51; Waugh 1982:299-318). Although the "unmarked" days (i.e., the usual and the default days) always overwhelmingly outnumber the "marked" days (i.e., the special holidays), it is the oscillation between sacred and profane (or, say, marked and unmarked) that creates a specific rhythm that a given mnemonic community collectively hums and leads the members to know what is memorable (E. Zerubavel 1981: 101-37; E. Zerubavel 1985). In the case of official Chinese nationalism, all the commemorative rituals boldly constructed the memorability of Double Tenth Day, and it became an indispensable signifier of the Chinese national history.

Whereas before 1949, Double Tenth Day had surely been observed, the scale and invested resources were far less than after 1949 and some intended national members did not celebrate it. More importantly, the meaning of the National Celebration Day was more or less changed after the 1949 Retreat. Any invention of a national holiday should be seen as a statement. The inventing of Double Tenth Day after the 1949 Retreat increased the mnemonic weight of the “birth” of the Republic era that the KMT government claimed to maintain and thus validated its legitimacy as *the* authentic regime of the Chinese nation. As a result, Double Tenth Day was constructed as an incomparable day on the calendar. The personal participation in public ceremonies and/or the prosthetic memory obtained by watching selected scenes or reading detailed descriptions of commemorations contributed to immerse people’s senses in the symbols of patriotism and the formation of habit memory. Moreover, the inventing of Double Tenth Day indeed was supported by many newly invented traditions in mnemonic engineering. Some invented traditions were left out during or after this period, such as the cleanup day before Double Tenth Day; other traditions are still followed, such as various contests and races to win a National Celebration Day trophy. The commemorative ceremonies, the memorializing of the memorialization, and the invented traditions created embodied and quasi-embodied memory (Connerton 2011: 104-124), and in the long run, they formed a part of the mnemonic sediment of a Chinese nationality that favored the KMT government’s master commemorative narrative.

Chapter 3

Narrating a Shared Past

One of the most remarkable features of human memory is our ability to mentally transform essentially unstructured series of events into seemingly coherent *historical narratives*. We normally view past events as episodes in a story...and it is basically such “stories” that make these events historically meaningful (E. Zerubavel 2003a:13).

How the past is symbolized and how it functions as a mediator of meaning are questions that go to the heart of collective memory, but they have been skirted. (Schwartz 2000: 17).

Narrative, while abstract, is the core of mnemonic engineering. Without exception, mnemonic engineering provides an easy-to-remember narrative format for national stories using various editing techniques and based on a specific mnemonic vision for people to memorize (Mink 1978:129-149). A master commemorative narrative, according to Y. Zerubavel (1995), indicates a narration that provides the overall structure of the shared past. In addition to the master commemorative narrative, there are many subordinate commemorative narratives on individual historical events. In this current study, while supposing that the master commemorative narrative and many subordinate commemorative narratives on specific events are indispensable in any mnemonic engineering, I focus on the master commemorative narrative of official Chinese nationalism without delving into the sub-narratives for stories of specific events. Moreover, the master commemorative narrative indeed defines not only the shared past, but also the shared present and, therefore, the shared future (Halbwachs 1992 [1925]; Y. Zerubavel 1995; Zamponi 2003:43-71). An analysis of my data reveals that the days before Double Tenth Day, October 10, and even the days after it, were considered

opportunities to employ narrations to guide people to remember their nationality. In addition to emphasizing the significant meaning of Double Tenth Day for the Chinese nation, narratives that appeared around this period provided standardized national stories to align and refresh national members' memory.

However, why is narrative significant in terms of inventing a nationality? To evoke intended national members' patriotic emotions, mnemonic engineering needs to tell national stories. Storytelling yields narratives, and events are thereby encoded through story-lization. An inevitable process of "encodation of events" is involved when stories are told to "familiarize the unfamiliar" (White 1985[1978]: 81-100). That is, from a specific mnemonic vision of the storyteller, the essentially unstructured and therefore to some extent chaotic historical happenings are selected, ordered, and structured into meaningful events in stories and narratives. The process of encodation often involves scripting stories. For example, the relationship between events is bridged or unbridged, the importance of events is ranked, and differential meanings are assigned to various events in the stories through encodation. It is narratives that bring meaning – positive, negative, central, marginal, sacred, or profane – to the historical events. For instance, according to Hayden White,

Historical situations are not *inherently tragic*, comic, or romantic...we only think of situations as tragic or comic because these concepts are part of our generally cultural and specifically literary heritage (1985 [1978]: 84).

That is, with the help of familiar cultural and literary heritage, unfamiliar historical situations are transformed into known plots and therefore are easier to remember (Davis

1984:15-24). Telling stories indicates the organizing of events and the harnessing of plot structures and various techniques:

The events are made into a story by the suppression or subordination of certain of them and the highlighting of others, by characterization, motific repetition, variation of tone and point of view, alternative descriptive strategies, and the like – in short, all of the techniques that we would normally expect to find in the emplotment of a novel or a play (White 1985[1978]: 84).

Certain events are marked as historical scenarios, such as beginnings, watersheds, turning points, and endings in narratives; as a result, these specially marked events play the role of “sacred mountains” to link the not-so-marked “profane valleys” of the past (E. Zerubavel 2003a:12-36).²⁸ Moreover, being organized into a narrative indicates that the past is filtered and simplified, depending on the adopted mnemonic vision. National stories usually are easy to tell and retell since “we habitually reduce highly complex event sequences to inevitably simplistic, one-dimensional visions of the past” (E. Zerubavel 2003a:13). In consequence, the nationality that mnemonic engineering is intended to invent is remembered with the familiarized narratives (Lowenthal 1994: 41-57; Duara 1995; Berger 2006).

This chapter focuses on narratives that led people to remember a shared past and reveals the editing techniques behind them.²⁹ While by no means exhaustive, several

²⁸ Compared to “unmarked” historical events that are “selected out” (or, say, forgotten) in the narratives, events that appear in the narratives (and thus memories) are all marked events. Nevertheless, among all the ‘selected in’ events in the narratives, some are specially marked and some are not so emphasized in the stories (Brekhus 1996: 497-520; Brekhus 2003).

²⁹ In the following analysis, certain years’ presidential speeches and other surrounding narratives are cited to support my arguments, but similar elements in many presidential speeches and surrounding narratives can be found from 1949 through 1987. What I cite are simply typical examples. During my analysis period, the length of presidential speeches ranged from 1,500 Chinese characters to more than 6,000 Chinese characters. For the collection of Chiang Kai-shek’s significant speeches and documents (in traditional Chinese), see <http://www.chungcheng.org.tw/thought/class07/index.htm>.

crucial aspects constituting the shared past of a Chinese nation are unraveled: 1911 as the beginning, the eventful Kuomintang (KMT) developmental history, the tight connection between Sun Yat-sen and the KMT government, the bridged uni-linear “5,000-year Chinese History,” and the marginalization and/or collective oblivion of certain events.

1911 as a “Big” Beginning

In the narrative of official Chinese nationalism, the year 1911 was created as a “fat” beginning and was enriched with symbolic meaning.³⁰ On October 10, 1911, the “successful” Wu-Chang uprising evoked a series of social protests and the Xin-Hai Revolution eventually overthrew the “corrupt” Qing dynasty. According to Chinese nationalism, on the one hand, the year 1911 symbolized the death of a long-term absolute monarchy and the disconnection from a long, dark past:

All soldiers and national members! Today is the day to commemorate the establishment of our Republic of China...forty-five years ago, people from all over our nation went against the absolute monarchy of the Qing emperor. The Qing emperor and his minions plunged the people into the depths of sufferings; sold out our ethnicity for their own benefits;³¹ wallowed in luxury and pleasure; ignored the fate of the nation and the welfare of ordinary people. In consequence, this intensified people’s resentment as well as caused the demise of the nation. Thus, our founding father Sun Yat-sen mobilized people all around the world with lofty ideals, led the revolution, pooled the wisdom and efforts of everyone, saved the country, and aimed at its prosperity. Taking more than twenty years and with numerous

³⁰ I borrow Garfinkel’s concept of “a fat moment” (Heritage 2005 [1984]: 108-109) to describe 1911 as “a fat beginning” of the Republic era: It was remembered as a significant year in which many events occurred and brought dramatic transformation to the nation.

³¹ “Ethnicity” is a common term mentioned in the official commemorative narratives (both the surrounding narratives and the presidential speeches), and I believe that it was employed *loosely* to refer to the national members as a whole. That is, on one hand, although there are so many different ethnic groups (such as Han, Man, Meng, Hui, Zang, Miao, and Yao) in mainland China, the variations were downplayed and rarely mentioned in the official narratives of Chinese nationalism (to construct a sense of sameness between proposed national members); on the other hand, since most of the power elites in the official Chinese nationalism had the background of Han ethnicity, the so-called “ethnicity” indeed wittingly or unwittingly prioritized Han ethnicity (which was believed to be the most dominant ethnic group) and the spirit of Han ethnicity.

lives of heroes sacrificed, he eventually overthrew the absolute monarchy of the Qing dynasty...

(Presidential speech in 1956, *UDN*, 10 Oct. 1956)

On the other hand, the year 1911 represented the birth of the Republic era and the arrival of modern China, which embraced scientific thinking, equality, and freedom. In addition, Chinese nationalists even maintained that the establishment of the Republic era served as a desirable model for other Asian countries:

National members! Before the Xin-Hai year [1911], whereas our founding father raised ten revolutions and tasted the bitterness of ten failures, he still held his confidence toward his principles and the values of ethnicity. He guided his believers and followers from all over the nation: They never gave up, even when facing numerous frustrations, and eventually fulfilled their goals. Their achievement not only set a model for other Asia nations as the first revolutionary country that made an effort to search for democracy, but also initiated the independent movements of all the other ethnicities all over Asia. Our founding father, who established the Republic of China, acted both as the pioneer of Asian democratic countries and the symbolic icon of independence and democracy for all the ethnicities in Asia.

(Presidential speech in 1960, *UDN*, 10 Oct. 1960)

The establishment of the Republic of China set the groundwork for the democratic regime in our country and turned a historical new page for the ethnic independence in Asia. It makes our Double Tenth National Celebration radiate brilliant rays in the universe, and is unanimously commemorated by national members.

(Presidential speech in 1976, *Economic Daily News*, 10 Oct. 1976)

Studies have pointed out that “founding moments” (or “beginning”) are compelling candidates to bridge proposed national members to the “shared” past and to bring up a sense of historical continuity (Spillman 2003: 161-192) and, therefore, such moments play a significant role in all national stories. Consider the unique role of 1776 for Americans, 1788 for Australians, 1802 for Cubans (Spillman 1997; E. Zerubavel 2003b),

and World War I for Canadians.³² In short, official Chinese nationalism by no means is an exception in emphasizing the “beginning” of the national story.

It is not surprising to realize that in all presidential speeches during Double Tenth Day ceremonies, the years after 1911 were announced to commence the speech. Double Tenth Day was invented as a day that should be celebrated nationwide as it honors the birth of the Republic of China in 1911. A similar articulation was made in succeeding presidential speeches during Double Tenth Day ceremonies to summarize the significance of this birth date of the nation; for example:

Today is Double Tenth Day and it symbolizes the beginning of our Republic of China. On this very day, we commemorate our founding father [Sun Yat-sen] and national heroes who sacrificed their own lives to overthrow the 3,000-year autocratic monarchy of forty-four years ago. Their efforts established the first democratic nation in Asia that follows the spirit of the “Three Principles of the People.” This is the most honorable history of the Republic of China, and today is the most glorious day for all national members to commemorate.

(Presidential speech in 1955, *UDN*, 10 Oct. 1955)

To stress the importance that 1911 played in the national history, officials coined the term “Xin-Hai spirit” and used it frequently in official speeches and documents.³³ Under the Chinese culture, 1911 is also called the Xin-Hai year – this explains why the successful revolution in 1911 is called the “Xin-Hai” Revolution – and the term “Xin-Hai spirit” was promoted to intentionally encapsulate all the sublime virtues that fostered the establishment of the Republic of China in 1911. Without spending too much time

³² However, nations may handle the “beginning” and “founding moments” differently: Some may go further to provide detailed (and thus thick) narration and stories on them and others may simply employ them as symbols without supporting them with thick narratives.

³³ Sometimes, “Xin-Hai spirit” was used interchangeably with the “Double-Tenth spirit.”

describing the “beginning” of the nation, the term “Xin-Hai spirit” effectively compressed and encompassed numerous symbolic meanings, including the long-term effort to overthrow an “evil regime,” the resolution to seek certain values such as democracy, equality, freedom, and modernity despite the frustrations, and the honorable motivation to strive for a new nation and to turn a new page in history. In the narratives of official Chinese nationalism, calling for the “Xin-Hai spirit” represented the strong nostalgic emotion toward the year 1911 and especially the positive meanings that it symbolized for national members:

Dear elders, brothers, and sisters, we have to rescue our own country, and we have to open up a road by ourselves. No matter how many difficulties we may face in the future, as long as we can hold on to the democracy tightly...fight a pessimistic attitude, exalt the Xin-Hai spirit, the final victory must be ours. I firmly believe that, in the near future, our national flags...can be seen all over the mainland; and the nation of democracy and equality will be put into practice with our endeavor.

(Presidential speech in 1985, *Economic Daily News*, 10 Oct. 1985)

In the past sixty-eight years, the Republic of China has undergone all conceivable hardships: It overcame countless difficulties...defeated numerous enemies...as well as wrote an honorable and striving history with blood, sweat, and tears. During this period, we experienced victories and failures, but with the leadership of founding father and president Chiang, and the earnest and sincere cooperation of all national members...we can eventually overcome every single hurdle and pull through every single crisis...This is the continuance of Xin-Hai power, and this is the enhancement of Double Tenth spirit!

(Presidential speech in 1979, *Economic Daily News*, 10 Oct. 1979)

Moreover, calling for the “Xin-Hai spirit” in Double Tenth Day ceremonies worked to refresh people’s memory of the very beginning of the nation and commemorate all the virtues that were demonstrated in 1911:

The Xin-Hai Revolution which happened on Double Tenth created the Republic of China. This glorious and lustrous day not only shines with extraordinary splendor for the Chinese history, but also gives a new life to the Chinese nation. With his wise foresight, our founding father made a grand wish to save our nation and people. He therefore led revolutions...and finally overthrew the autocratic Qing dynasty to establish the first democratic republic nation in Asia and to open a democratic century for Asians. **Thus, think of the courage of our heroic ancestors. Cast your minds back to the lofty ideal of creating a nation. Every single Chinese person should feel immeasurable honor and greatness for the Xin-Hai spirit!**

(My emphasis, Presidential speech in 1981, *UDN*, 10 Oct. 1981)

The official narrative of Chinese nationalism provided “thick description” of the hard work of Sun Yet-sen, KMT elites, and their followers before the “eventual success” that occurred in 1911.³⁴ While this long-term insurrecting process before the “successful” Wu-Chang uprising was sometimes compressed into a quick depiction as “ten-times-uprising and ten-times-failure” in the narrative,³⁵ to a great extent, it was defined as the “decisive moment” in the nation (Y. Zerubavel 1995:3-12; Spillman 1998:445-77). That is, according to official Chinese nationalism, in establishing the Republic of China, the revolts against the Qing dynasty before the Xin-Hai Revolution were indispensable. Hence, whereas not all of the presidential speeches allowed room to fully address the uprising process before the Xin-Hai Revolution, the following is a typical example of how this period was regarded:

³⁴ Most of the “thick description” on the efforts of going against the “corrupt” Qing dynasty before the establishment of the ROC can be seen in the surrounding narratives, such as the newspaper articles, documentaries, and movies (instead of the presidential speeches due to the limited length).

³⁵ In the official commemorative narratives of Chinese nationalism, ten other uprisings went before the “successful” Wu-Chang uprising, and these failed uprisings were described as setting the firm foundation for the Wu-Chang uprising (and thus the Xin-Hai Revolution) in 1911. These ten uprisings include Yi-Wei Guangzhou uprising in 1895, Huizhou uprising in 1900, Chaozhou Huang-gang uprising in 1907, Qi-nV-Hu uprising in 1907, Feng-Cheng uprising in 1907, Zhen-Nan-Guan uprising in 1907, Qin-Lian-Shang-Si uprising in 1908, He-Kou uprising in 1908, Guangzhou Xin-Jun uprising in 1910, and Huang-Hua-Gang uprising in 1911 (Chou 2009).

The Republic of China was established on this date fifty-three years ago by breaking through the darkness and adversity with continuous efforts! The birth of our nation should honor our founding father, who led the revolutionaries to sacrifice their lives and shed their blood; this should resonate with all national members. They strove toward their goals despite numerous frustrations for sixteen years and experienced ten tragically heroic and painful failures!

(Presidential speech in 1964, *UDN*, 10 Oct. 1964)

The emphasis on the long-term uprising process against the corrupt Qing dynasty led by the founding father before the Xin-Hai Revolution in the official narrative indeed further highlighted the crucial status of the year 1911.³⁶

The “Eventful” and “Hot” KMT History

In the national history, after the “fat” 1911 beginning came the eventful and thus “hot” history of the KMT.³⁷ For example, in the official narrative, we find detailed descriptions and plotted stories about the founding and development of the KMT, the inherited spirit of the Xin-Hain Revolution, various battles in which the KMT participated, and the national heroes (who were almost exclusively political elites in

³⁶ The failed uprising process, as a transforming period, should be seen as a liminal stage in the national history. A liminal stage has the “neither-nor” characteristic (Van Gennep 1960): It was located before the “beginning” of the Republic era; nevertheless, due to its goal to overthrow the Qing dynasty, it was not deemed as belonging to the Qing era.

³⁷ Drawing on Claude Levi-Strauss’s categorization between hot and cold, Schwartz said, “There are ‘hot’ chronologies which are those of periods where in the eyes of the historians numerous events appear as differential elements; others...very little or nothing took place” (Schwartz 1982: 375). Following this logic, I use “hot” history to indicate that many events related to the KMT’s emergence and development were selected in the narratives of official Chinese nationalism. Consequently, the period is remembered as a “hot” and busy period. In contrast, when events that occurred during a certain period were predominantly selected from narratives and national history, it is remembered as a “cold” history and period.

the KMT).³⁸ In the presidential speeches during Double Tenth Day ceremonies, usually a short version of the “hot” history of the KMT was provided to quickly align and refresh the audience’s memory on it. Following is a typical example from 1962:

Today is the 51st National Celebration Day of the Republic of China. Fifty-one years ago, on this very day, our founding father [Sun Yat-sen] organized the Wu-Chang army, fired the first gunshot, and obtained immediate resonance nationwide; everybody wanted to follow his guidance. Within three months, the giant and corrupt Qing autocracy, which had ruled mainland China for 260 years, was overthrown, and the first democratic republic was established! During the past half century, we have been fighting not only for equality among ethnicities, but also for the independence of our nation. We have raised revolutions based on the “Three Principles of the People” to bring freedom to all people. We have experienced Asks for Yuan, Discussion of the Law, the Eastern Expedition, the Northern Expedition, Cleaning Out Communists, Asks for Counter, the Unification, Suppressing Communists, and the eight-year Sino-Japanese War.³⁹ We have never taken success and/or failure into consideration; we continuously fought even when we were defeated. We were not frustrated even in the most difficult circumstances, and we were even stronger after so many battles and wars. In the past fifty-one years, our ethos has remained intact....

(Presidential speech in 1962, *UDN*, 10 Oct. 1962)

Though brief, the remark on the “hot” history of the KMT in the speeches worked to define the ultimate and mention-worthy events after 1911. In addition, it gave the

³⁸ See the presidential speech of 1965 for an extraordinarily detailed description of all these events (*UDN*, 10 Oct. 1965).

³⁹ The “Three Principles of the People” were developed by Sun Yat-sen as part of a philosophy to make China a free, prosperous, and powerful nation. “Asks for Yuan” refers to the KMT efforts to organize and mobilize people to defeat Yuan Shi-Kai (who was a significant officer during the Qing dynasty and was deemed by the KMT to be an obstacle to establishing a free and modern China) in 1913. “Discussion of the Law” refers to the internal contentions that the KMT experienced when some KMT members suggested adopting a Western parliamentary system in 1912. “Eastern Expedition” and “Northern Expedition” refer to the events when the Republic of China government suppressed the forces of warlords who wanted to revive traditional China in both Eastern and Northern China from 1926 to 1928. “Cleaning Out Communists” is a period (from 1927 to 1937) in which the KMT noted the development of the Chinese communists as intolerable and therefore organized people to “clean out” Chinese communists. “Asks for Counter” was an event when the KMT decided to oppress the resistance of several warlords (who were dissatisfied with the way in which Chiang Kai-Shek dealt with Chinese communists) in 1936. “The Unification” was the period when, after the previously mentioned events, the KMT government eventually diminished all of the resisting forces and became the only legitimate ruling power in mainland China in 1928. “Suppressing Communists” indicates the period during which the KMT government wanted to diminish all of the communists in China after 1945. “The eight-year Sino-Japanese War” was the war between China (the Republic of China) and Japan (the Empire of Japan) from 1937 to 1945.

intended national members the impression that all the members of the Republic of China nation had been through a lot together, including a busy period after the “beginning.” As a result, a very distinct “quality” was bestowed upon this time period (Hubert 1999): The decades after 1911 and before the 1949 Retreat were made to stand out as “sacred mountains” in the national history. Whereas there was usually no room for lengthy stories on the hot history of the KMT in the presidential speeches, surrounding narratives adopted ways to include stories in various media. Articles, comments, readers’ letters (sometimes written by political elites of the KMT), visualized documentaries, movies, and exhibitions told stories about rather specific events from the ‘hot’ history of the KMT during the days and even weeks before National Celebration Day to guide people to revisit them.⁴⁰ More importantly, stories on each battle and event unavoidably introduced the names of national heroes who were dedicated to the nation and should be admired. One article entitled “Evocation Song,” which attempted to call back the souls of the heroic dead, concisely revealed that people who sacrificed their lives in events strongly related to the KMT history were designated as national heroes:

Come back, the souls of the dead! Come back, the souls of the national martyrs who overthrew the absolute monarchy of the Qing dynasty, who established the Republic era, and who founded our nation! Come back, the souls of the dead! Come back, the souls of the national martyrs who destroyed the warlords, who accomplished the unification of our nation, and who participated in the Northern Expedition! Come back, the souls of the dead! Come back, the souls of the national martyrs who resisted the Japanese invasion, who protected the continuity of our ethnicity, and who joined the War of Resistance against Japan! Come back, the souls of the dead! Come back, the souls of the national martyrs who went against the tyranny of Chinese communists, who maintained democracy and freedom, and who fought Chinese communists!...Today is the 50th National Celebration Day...recollect the heroes who died for our country. We cannot refrain from crying and calling back the souls of national heroes... (*UDN* [90], 10 Oct. 1961).

⁴⁰ For a typical example, see *UDN* [89], 10 Oct. 1961.

A further reason that a ‘hot’ history of the KMT was included in the official narrative is that the history of a Chinese nation after 1911 was thereby replaced by a history of KMT development (Mackerras 1998; Fenby 2004). In other words, according to the official Chinese nationalism, events that were deemed crucial and noteworthy in the national stories after 1911 were tightly and almost exclusively related to KMT history. For example, through the official narratives, the KMT’s contribution to the nation was foregrounded, the KMT’s existence in the nation was centralized, and the KMT elites were usually memorialized as national heroes. An excerpt from the KMT’s long speech broadcast via radio (and then published in newspapers) on the eve of National Celebration Day acts as a perfect summary of what is mentioned above:

Undoubtedly, if there were no Kuomintang, the establishment and development of the Republic of China would be impossible. **It is not going too far to claim that the forty-year history of the Republic of China is a history of how the KMT struggled, shed blood, and raised revolutions.** The establishment of the Republic of China was the consequence of sixteen years of sacrifice and more than ten KMT failures before the Xin-Hai Revolution. The progress and development of the Republic of China were at the cost of countless KMT party members’ lives... (My emphasis. *UDN* [91], 9 Oct. 1951).

A national story that was inseparable from KMT history was intended to guide national members to remember that the KMT was and is *the* legitimate government of the Chinese nation. While the history of the Chinese nation was plotted and saturated with eventful and busy KMT contributions, other events were selected out from the narrative of official Chinese nationalism and deemed forgettable.

Creating the Continuity with Sun Yat-sen

Among other elements, narratives of official Chinese nationalism especially emphasized the connection between Sun Yat-sen – the “founding father” of the Republic of China – and Chiang Kai-shek and his KMT government. Actually, Sun Yat-sen was presented not only as the founding father but also as an incomparable national hero under official Chinese nationalism. In the master commemorative narrative and all the surrounding narratives, we see positive messages regarding him and detailed stories or even legends to eulogize his early life and revolutionary career. Following is but a representative example:

All our military personnel and national members! Today is the 54th Double Tenth Day, and this year is the 100th year since our founding father Sun Yat-sen's birth!...As we all know, after the mid-19th century, the Asia countries were colonized one after another...but the birth of the founding father symbolized the coming of freedom, rightfulness, and brightness for China and the whole endangered Asia! After the Sino-Japanese War [1894-1895], our founding father established the Revive China Society in Honolulu to engage in the civil revolutionary movement with the ideal of “Three Principles of the People.” Although the mission encountered ten-times-uprising and ten-times-failure during the process, eventually the Xin-Hai Revolution and Wu-Chang uprising established the Republic of China!

(Presidential speech in 1965, *UDN*, 10 Oct. 1965)

Aiming to “bridge” the historical continuity (E. Zerubavel 2003a: 37-54) of the Republic era, in addition to using the “year” of the Republic era continuously without interruption after 1949,⁴¹ official Chinese nationalism made efforts to highlight that Chiang Kai-shek and his KMT government were the “genuine” inheritors of Sun Yat-sen and therefore the

⁴¹ When the Kuomintang retreated to Taiwan in 1949, the “year” of the Republic era was used continuously without any interruption: 1948 was the 37th year of the Republic era, 1949 was the 38th, and 1950 was the 39th. In other words, the continuous time line for chronological dating and the “continuity” of the Republic era was not influenced by the 1949 Retreat. This also implies that the Chinese dynasty succession was not interrupted as a result of the Chinese Civil War.

Republic era (E. Zerubavel 2011: 15-30).⁴² In brief, the symbolic bridge between Sun Yat-sen and Chiang Kai-shek and therefore his KMT government needs to be connected instead of being assumed. For instance, the detailed story maintained that in 1912 it was Sun Yat-sen who decided that the people should observe the establishment of the Republic of China every October 10:

...Tracing back to fifty years ago, our founding father took a position as the provisional president in Nanjing on (solar calendar) January 1, 1912 (which in the lunar calendar was November 11 of the year Xin-Hai) and he thus decided to set up that very day as New Year's Day of the Republic of China. After that, the Republic of China began to follow the solar calendar. At that time, the founding father wanted to decree the date of the Wu-Chang uprising – in the lunar calendar August 19 of the year Xin-Hai – as the National Celebration Day (since it was October 10 in the solar calendar, it was also called Double Tenth Day)...founding father cared much about setting up a National Celebration Day, and it was not until days before the first Double Tenth Day (September 28 in the 1st year of the Republic era) that the government officially announced to the national members...that October 10 (in the solar calendar) is the National Celebration Day (*UDN* [92], 10 Oct. 1961).

Observing National Celebration Day on October 10 therefore was yet more evidence to prove the connection between Sun and the KMT government.

Moreover, the speech that Sun Yat-sen delivered to celebrate the first Double Tenth Day was published from time to time (*UDN* [93], 10 Oct. 1970) and the content of his speeches was quoted in presidential speeches on Double Tenth Day ceremonies to emphasize that it was Sun Yat-sen's guidance in general and his belief in the "Three Principles of the People" in particular that pointed direction for the Chinese nation.

The "fact" that the KMT government followed Sun Yat-sen's "Three Principles of the

⁴² After Chiang Kai-Shek died in 1975, the Kuomintang government was led by his son Chiang Jing-Kuo. Whereas the KMT government once again faced the bridging issue because of the change of national leader, due to the blood tie between these two "Chiangs," it was easier to claim the inheritance and continuity of the Republic era. Nevertheless, we still observe many stories and narrations about Chiang Kai-Shek in the later decades to strengthen the sense of historical continuity to the Republic of China.

People” was addressed repeatedly to demonstrate that Chiang Kai-Shek and his government did inherit the unfulfilled wishes of the “founding father”(E. Zerubavel 2011: 31-52):

Recollect that our founding father aimed at establishing the Republic of China as a nation which follows the ‘Three Principles of the People’...Unfortunately, our founding father died in his middle age and left his ambition unfulfilled. Kai-shek has pursued his steps on the road of revolution and has inherited his doctrine. For more than twenty years in the past, we experienced the Eastern Expedition, Northern Expedition, Cleaning Out Communists, and Asks for Counter; there was not one single day that we forgot our sole mission of accomplishing our founding father’s unfulfilled wish...

(Presidential speech in 1952, *UDN*, 10 Oct. 1952)

We can easily find narratives similar to the following excerpts in official narratives to directly point out that “Chiang Kai-shek inherited Sun Yat-sen’s unfulfilled will” and that both were treated as super heroes of the nation:

Following the will of god and the requests of people, our founding father led the revolution. Sixty-four years ago on this very day, the Wu-Chang uprising evoked resonance from the whole nation, overthrew the autocracy, and established the Republic of China. President Chiang inherited the unfulfilled will of the founding father...he fought the vicious forces with righteousness and defeated violence with benevolence. He [President Chiang] further made the rays of light from our National Celebration to shine on the universe.... [W]hereas President Chiang passed away on April 5th this year...his grand spirit will never stop shining on us, and his resolute will shall never stop guiding us. He set up the goals for us to move forward, pointed out the correct direction for us to head for, constructed an insurmountable bastion for us to rely on, and left a grand nationbuilding blueprint for us to refer to...

(Presidential speech in 1975, *Economic Daily News*, 10 Oct. 1975)

Our founding father mentioned...that a “person who sees revolution as his vocation should overcome difficulties with a pure and sincere spirit. Although we know well that the situation in the future will be even tougher than before, only by maintaining the revolutionary spirit can we firmly set up the basis for the Republic of China.” Our former president Chiang [Kai-shek] also made a similar statement...he said, “We always believe that, regardless of the fast changing of international conditions, the final triumph is ours. This is without doubt due to truth and justice being on our side. More importantly, the ‘Three Principles of the People’ that we follow can conquer anything.” Following these two great leaders’ foresight and inspiration, no matter how many

difficulties are in front of us and how big the changes will be, our revolutionary spirit is unstoppable. We will stride down the road to establish a nation with the 'Three Principles of the People'!

(Presidential speech in 1982, *Economic Daily News*, 10 Oct. 1982)

In addition, anecdotes about the intimate and tight relationship between Sun Yat-sen and Chiang Kai-shek appeared in many speeches and articles. In short, the narratives of official Chinese nationalism led people to remember an “inevitable” continuity between Sun Yat-sen and Chiang Kai-shek (and thus his KMT government.) Due to the invented symbolic inheritance between Sun and Chiang, intended national members were guided to suppose that, on the one hand, people who follow Chiang are people who follow the founding father and, on the other hand, Chiang’s KMT government represented the orthodox heritage.⁴³ More importantly, the “fact” that the Republic of China (ROC) government and its national members represented the orthodox heritage of the “founding father” had to be repeatedly emphasized to refresh people’s memory. Hence, for example, in 1980, to celebrate Double Tenth Day, a special program entitled “Founding Father’s Son and Other Relatives in Taiwan” invited his “blood” son and relatives to share Sun’s private life and their current life in Taiwan (*UDN* [94], 10 Oct. 1980). An implicit message in this special program was that Sun’s blood relatives admitted “us” as the orthodox regime of a Chinese nation.

⁴³ The constructed “inevitable” inherited relationship between Sun and Chiang was called into question by some people. For example, in a documentary, a scholar mentioned that whereas most people “remembered” that Chiang was the assigned “successor” of Sun Yat-sen, the truth is that the “founding father” Sun never had a chance to officially appoint a successor. Moreover, not only was Wang Jing-wei the man whom Sun Yat-sen regarded highly, but also Chiang seized his chance to rise when Wang Jing-wei and Hu Han-ming competed for power. See <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B7QLmbuaVn0> for a more detailed discussion on this issue (retrieved February 2, 2013).

Although mostly appearing in surrounding narratives, the connection between the founding father Sun and Taiwan was “bridged” as well. For instance, whereas Sun Yat-sen died long before the 1949 Retreat, the stories that he indeed had been to Taiwan six times appeared in newspaper reports (*UDN* [95], 13 Nov. 1965). Narratives regarding the relationship between Sun Yat-sen and Taiwan island worked to both “tie up” the past of Taiwan to the history of a Chinese nation and “warm up” the “cold” history of Taiwan island before 1949 (with preferred stories). That is, although most of the events that occurred in Taiwan island before 1949 were selected out of the national history (and there was a “hot” history of the KMT development in mainland China during the same period), Sun Yat-sen’s visits were deemed noteworthy and more or less filled up the “empty” history of Taiwan island before 1949.

Accentuating “The 5,000-Year Chinese History”

“The 5,000-year Chinese History” is one more aspect that the master commemorative narrative of official Chinese nationalism heavily emphasized. Intriguingly, while 1911 was officially invented and foregrounded as the big beginning of national history in the first decade after 1949, it gradually became a small beginning (indicating the start of one more era in Chinese history) in subsequent decades. In other words, whereas in the first decade official narration eagerly highlighted the disconnect between an “advanced” Republic era and the previous “dark” Chinese eras, due to the transformation of international attitudes and the possibility that its legitimacy of governance would be questioned after a prolonged “abnormal” condition, in the 1960s the official Chinese

nationalism began to foreground the “fact” that it was the only inheritor of “The 5,000-year Chinese History.” A modification thus needed to be made in the mnemonic engineering to reflect this change. That is, in the narratives, 1911 turned out to be a “beginning” of another Chinese era instead of a “Beginning” that highlighted the discontinuity between the “modern” Republic era and the previous “traditional” Chinese eras. Hence, although the year 1911 was still a “fat” beginning year for the nation and the following “hot” history of the KMT remained salient in the national history, they were embedded in the succession of Chinese eras. Bridging a symbolic continuity with the ancient past thereby became another priority (Lewis 1975). Official Chinese nationalism then led all national members to remember a knitted uni-linear dynastic succession with the Republic era as the latest dynasty.⁴⁴

“The 5,000-year Chinese History” was accentuated in several different ways in the narrative. First, this history frequently appeared in the narratives as an embedded historical background of the Republic of China. An excerpt from 1963’s presidential speech serves as an example:

Soldiers and citizens: Today is the 52nd Double Tenth Day which commemorates the revolution that led to the founding of our country. The current situation is that all of the world and all human beings face an extraordinary transformation which determines their continuous existence or destruction. Among others, we Chinese confront a turning period which influences whether our 5,000-year history and culture will be honored or humiliated – and, this is also a period that we of the Republic of China can re-build and re-birth a whole new era!

(Presidential speech in 1963, *UDN*, 10 Oct. 1963)

⁴⁴ According to official Chinese nationalism, the dynastic succession of “The 5,000-year Chinese History” is Yellow Emperor, Tang Yu, Xia Dynasty, Shang Dynasty, Zhou Dynasty, Spring and Autumn Period, Warring States Period, Qin Dynasty, Han Dynasty, Three Kingdoms, Wei and Jin Period, Southern and Northern Dynasties, Sui Dynasty, Tang Dynasty, Five Dynasties and Ten Kingdoms, Song Dynasty, Yuan Dynasty, Ming Dynasty, Qing Dynasty, and Republic of China.

Whereas “The 5,000-year Chinese History” was mentioned rather implicitly, such mention gradually led intended national members to take this chronology for granted. Second, it was claimed that, through tracing 5,000 years back, the Yan Emperor and the Yellow Emperor were the two common ancestors of all national members of the Chinese nation. In other words, regardless of huge differences in national members’ appearance, they were all descendants of two identified Chinese ancestors. Thus, all national members were more or less “blood relatives” and (presumably) covered by a gigantic family tree, and the Chinese nation thereby is an extended family.

The projection of a familial image onto a nation works to naturalize its unmistakable invented-ness (E. Zerubavel 2011:53-58; Delaney 1995: 177). “The 5,000-year Chinese History” therefore is something to be symbolically bridged as shared among all national members and thus diluted the heterogeneity among them. Third, in the narrative, “The 5,000-year Chinese History” played the role of providing lessons for the current Chinese people and the KMT government. The “bridged” long history formed a repository in which present actors could find similar events with which to compare their situation and dissimilar occurrences with which to contrast their condition. As a result, historical analogies were commonly derived from past historical experiences in the narratives to echo present circumstances and values. Moreover, “The 5,000-year Chinese History” was argued to be sufficiently long to demonstrate “historical laws” that people can employ to anticipate the inevitable success of “us” and the predetermined devastation of “them”:

The history makes clear to all that tyrannical government is doomed to collapse. The 5,000-year Chinese history declares publicly that no despotic dynasty such as tyrannical emperors Xie, Zhou, Ying, and Qin can avoid being overthrown by the people; and no roving bandit or robber such as Huang Chao and Lee Chuang can escape from being destroyed by the people. At the present time, the bandit Mao Zedong goes against the historical trend and reaches the limits of crimes; he is far worse than Huang Chao and Lee Chung as he kills more people and causes greater damage to the country, and he is far worse than emperors Xie, Zhou, Ying, and Qin as he is more tyrannical and cruelly injures people. Is there any chance that he can escape from the historical law?

(Presidential speech in 1962, *UDN*, 10 Oct. 1962)

Fourth, “The 5,000-year Chinese History” was narrated as a “glorious” shared past that was “longstanding and well established” and, thus, something of which all Chinese people should be proud. Furthermore, this history was delineated as fertile soil that had bred a superior Chinese ethnicity. As a result, in the narrative, all the Chinese people are outstanding people with pedigrees:

The Republic of China was cooperatively established by our founding father, the national martyrs, and all our soldiers and people with their sacrificed lives and shed blood as well as the exalted national virtues and revolutionary righteousness. From that day on, in the past fifty-seven years, our people...have continually used their loyal hearts to swear to fight until dead. This not only indicates that our people all commit to the Chinese nation, but also reveals our confidence with the revolutionary mission. Moreover, it goes further to prove our outstanding culture and longstanding history had nurtured the unbreakable revolutionary spirit and the undefeatable national character for our national members. Consequently, it makes our Republic of China become the pillar of peace and righteousness in the democratic world.

(Presidential speech in 1968, *Economic Daily News*, 10 Oct. 1968)

That said, preserving the honorable “5,000-year Chinese History” from destruction by the Chinese communists and preventing the legitimate inheritance of the glorious “5,000-year” Chinese culture from being stolen by the People’s Republic of China (PRC)

government were turned into “indispensable” responsibilities for the ROC government and its national members:

Today is the 55th Double Tenth Day.... Our prior missions have been saving seven hundred million people’s lives in mainland China and preserving the 5,000-year Chinese history and culture.... The existence of our nation heavily depends on the continuity of our outstanding 5,000-year Chinese culture.... but the “Red Guard” which follows the orders of Mao Zedong intends to destroy the 5,000-year tradition and culture of our nation... We wholeheartedly believe that the longstanding and well-established 5,000-year Chinese history and culture that the Chinese ethnicity possesses can never be destroyed by anyone!

(Presidential speech in 1966, *UDN*, 10 Oct. 1966)

That is, “The 5,000-year Chinese History and Culture,” on the one hand, were treated as precious assets that all national members should preserve. On the other hand, it was said that only “authentic” Chinese people made effort to preserve “The 5,000-year Chinese History and Culture”: People who sought to injure it were classified as “they,” distinctly different from “we.”

A combination of emphasizing the year 1911 and “The 5,000-year Chinese History” (or, say, the Chinese people’s “pedigree”) in the master commemorative narrative is exemplified by the following excerpt:

My dear elders, brothers, and sisters: Double Tenth Day is a grand and glorious day because it created a new life and consolidated new strength for the Chinese ethnicity. It also turned a whole new page in Chinese history. All the descendants of the Yellow Emperor feel excitement for this pleasant day, decide to rejuvenate our nation through dedicated work, swear to carry on the heritage so as to pave the way for future generations, and devote their lives to revive China... the success of the Xin-Hai Revolution seventy-five years ago established the first democratic republic nation in Eastern Asia, changed the status of the Chinese nation in international society, and brought transformations to the international condition.

(Presidential speech in 1986, *UDN*, 10 Oct. 1986)

The year 1911 – while still symbolizing the beginning of the Republic era – was described as a “watershed” that “turn[ed] a new page” in Chinese history as well. That is, as mentioned, the year 1911 was no longer a “Beginning” (instead, it became a “beginning”) and it was embedded in the knitted uni-linear Chinese history. A juxtaposition of the claim of a lengthy “dark” Chinese past before 1911 (or the arrival of the Republic era) and the claim of a long “glorious” Chinese past can be seen in the narrative. More intriguingly, national members remembered both the contradictory elements. That is, national members may assert that the establishment of the Republic of China overthrew the extensive absolute monarchies and ushered in a democratic and modern China (that was superior to the traditional China) as well as that “The 5,000-year Chinese History” was magnificent and is something that all the national members should be proud of simultaneously without considering the possible disaffirmation of these two statements.

Delegitimizing Counter-Narratives

The mnemonic engineering of official Chinese nationalism not only bridged the ROC government and its national members to “The 5,000-year Chinese History,” but also unbridged the PRC government and the Chinese communists from that history. That is, one more aspect that we can see in the narrative of official Chinese nationalism is the unbridging of the PRC government from the Chinese history. In addition to maintaining that the ROC government was the “genuine” inheritor of “The 5,000-year Chinese History,” Chinese nationalism at the same time argued that the PRC government was the “fake”

inheritor of that history. To a great extent, the official narratives of Chinese nationalism bridged the PRC government and Chinese communists to the history of Soviet communism instead. For example, Double Tenth Day presidential speeches and surrounding narratives have presented the PRC government and Chinese communists as attempting to destroy thousands of years of Chinese spirit and tradition so as to connect themselves to the history of Soviet communism:

...the Chinese communists that followed the orders of Mao indeed love their communist motherland: the Soviet Union. Mao Zedong does not love the Republic of China which all our national members tried hard to establish: He loves the history and culture of Soviet communism instead of the glorious history and culture of the Chinese nation. Mao Zedong admires Marxism-Leninism that Soviet communists follow instead of the “Three Principles of the People” that represent the spirit of the Chinese nation.....To put it simply, what Chinese communists do and think is all about making our national members slaves of the Soviet Russian Empire, and ruining the history, culture, language, written materials, ethnic ethos, and institutions of Chinese...

(Presidential speech in 1956, *UDN*, 10 Oct. 1956)

Furthermore, in the master narrative of official Chinese nationalism, the National Celebration Day celebrated by Chinese communists (observed on October 1) was regarded as an unmistakably “fake” celebration that should be bridged to the history of the Soviet Russian Empire. In addition to the many reports and articles focused on people in mainland China who were reluctant to celebrate October 1 (*UDN* [96], 2 Oct. 1974; *UDN* [97], 12 Oct. 1975) and October 1 usually being reported as a rainy day (in contrast to the “always good weather” on Double Tenth Day), official Chinese nationalism claimed that the reason Chinese communists chose October 1 as their national celebration day was to inherit the traditions of the Soviet “October Revolution.” The following report reflects this notion:

When Chinese communists first stole and occupied mainland China, it did three things to prepare itself to completely disconnect from the Chinese revolutionary tradition and past and to claim a whole new beginning of its red dynasty. First, it gave up the official name of Republic of China which was created by the great Xin-Hai Revolution, and named itself “the People’s Republic of China”; second, it cancelled the year of the Republic era and adopted the year of the solar calendar; third, it abolished the national flag of the Republic of China and embraced the national flag with five stars and in red. Instead of following the tradition of Double Tenth Revolution, it chose October 1st as its national celebration day to inherit the Soviet’s “October Revolution” tradition. Moreover, it intentionally set up its national celebration day nine days before our Double Tenth Day to weight down our national celebration and to make people forget October 10. For more than 10 years, areas stolen by the PRC government were never observed on Double Tenth Day; our national members who love our nation could only commemorate them in their hearts (*UDN* [98], 11 Oct. 1961).

The intended national members were guided to remember that the PRC government and Chinese communists not only denied the glorious Chinese past but also wanted to destroy it. A clear-cut contrast to the “genealogical relation” was thereby created in the master narratives (E. Zerubavel 2011:3-13): We (the ROC government and its national members) are the “authentic” heirs of Chinese history and the majority; they (the PRC government and a “few” Chinese communists) are the “fake” heirs of Chinese history and the minority:

The 700 million national members of the Republic of China regard Mao Zedong and Chinese communists as their enemies. The truth is the 700 million people who live on the mainland are not national members of the PRC government...The contest that we see today...indeed is a battle between the majority – our national members – and the minority – a few Chinese communists who follow the lead of Mao....

(Presidential speech in 1967, *UDN*, 10 Oct. 1967)

Unlike the “fake” PRC government, in the narrative of official Chinese nationalism, the KMT government has focused on ways to preserve the Chinese culture and traditions that make its national members the “authentic” Chinese:

In the great undertaking of saving our nation, every single national member is a warrior and a soldier with a brave heart. We are all decent people who work ceaselessly for our ideals: We are proud of our Chinese culture which highlights the spirit of philanthropy, and we are dedicated to inheriting and passing down the great Chinese culture and traditions. We would like to put our political ideal which aims at treating the people as the national foundation into practice through following the traditional Chinese culture and values. We would like to do it with steady efforts and persistent ambitions.

(Presidential speech in 1986, *Economic Daily News*, 10 Oct. 1986)

The ROC government also claimed to emphasize respecting the wisdom of ancient Chinese philosophers, retaining traditional Chinese characteristics, and observing traditional Chinese holidays. In addition, to indicate that the “latest” Chinese era (ROC) was intact even after the 1949 Retreat, the ROC government continually celebrated Double Tenth Day, used the “year” of the Republic era without disruption,⁴⁵ and kept the same national name, national flag, and national anthem. Therefore, the proposed national members of the Chinese nation were led to perceive 1949 as the 38th Republic year and 1950 as the 39th Republic year; moreover, it was just two years ago (2011) when the “authentic” Chinese national members celebrated the 100th Republic year in a grand manner. In addition, since the national flag and anthem were maintained in use, not only were stories regarding “national heroes” patriotically creating the national flag and anthem, and the “noble” meanings behind them, told and retold, but also the national flag was waved and the national anthem was sung on numerous occasions to evoke people’s patriotic emotions.⁴⁶

⁴⁵ A way to prove the continuous use of the year of the Republic era is to examine the stamps issued by the ROC government. According to the years claimed on the issued stamps, it is obvious that the 1949 Retreat didn’t interrupt the continual use of the Republic year (Kloetzel (ed.) 1998: 183-226).

⁴⁶ Intriguingly, the national flag and anthem of *the* Chinese nation were originally designed as the KMT party flag and song. The KMT-led ROC government continuously “transplanted” them (with very limited

According to official Chinese nationalism, since the ROC government was enthusiastically supported and Double Tenth Day was broadly celebrated by its national members (which included mainlanders in retreat in Taiwan, Taiwanese islanders, overseas Chinese, and people who lived on the mainland), the PRC government and Chinese communists could never represent the Chinese nation:

Today, Chinese communists use the fate of the Chinese nation, history, and culture as their stakes... Chinese people who have the ability to know right and wrong and who want to stand up for justice and rightness all feel bitterly about it. Moreover, they all know that “if you love your country, you have to go against communism; only by going against communism can you demonstrate your love for your country”...no matter how Chinese communists pretend and deceive, they can never represent the Chinese nation.

(Presidential speech in 1984, *UDN*, 11 Oct. 1984)

As said, unbridging the PRC government and Chinese communists from the national history is one of the goals in the master narrative of official Chinese nationalism to invent a shared past for its intended national members; hence, when the PRC government wanted to commemorate the Xin-Hai Revolution, to recollect Sun Yat-sen, and to celebrate Double Tenth Day, it ironically caused mnemonic tensions the KMT government had to address. According to the official narrative, the commemoration of the Xin-Hai Revolution, Sun Yat-sen, and Double Tenth Day was merely a “villainous scheme” that the PRC government adopted to seduce “authentic” Chinese heirs to accept that it represents the Chinese nation. Moreover, the “fake” Chinese government was said to want to “appropriate” the Xin-Hai Revolution, Sun Yat-sen, and Double Tenth Day to “mix up” with the “authentic”:

revisions) as the national flag and anthem when the ROC was established to legitimate its own ruling over *the* Chinese nation as well as to guide people to remember that the ROC government was no different than the KMT government.

The reason that Chinese communists want to celebrate Double Tenth is because **they have already realized it is impossible to erase the magnificent tradition of the Xin-Hai Revolution from people's memory**. Since they cannot erase it, they changed their minds and decided to appropriate it. Although they commemorate Double Tenth, they indeed are telling a fake history to the people: They said that the goal of the Xin-Hai Revolution is what they seek; and since the Xin-Hai Revolution was incomplete, it is their mission to accomplish the unfulfilled wishes of national martyrs. They suppose that saying so will lead people to believe that they are *the* heirs who inherited the tradition from the great Xin-Hai Revolution; moreover, they want to make people perceive that the KMT government which in fact created the Republic of China had already abandoned this tradition. They suggest that by doing so they can seduce people who are loyal rememberers of the Xin-Hai Revolution to turn their back on the KMT government and run to support them. Chinese communists seem to play an exaggerated comedy with us...to confuse people...But, there is no need to argue with them, and we can simply dismiss it with a laugh. Our national members are not stupid... (My emphasis. *UDN* [98], 11 Oct. 1961).

...Chinese communists pretend to commemorate the Xin-Hai Revolution, stain the national history, lie to aim at negotiating; the result must be running counter to their desire. That is, our ambition to unite the whole China with "Three Principles of the People" will inevitably destroy the fake sovereign of the Chinese communists, and expedite the 1980s as the decade to recover the mainland China!

(Presidential speech in 1981, *UDN*, 10 Oct. 1981)

The quoted content touches on the issue of the "mnemonic battle" between the ROC government and the PRC government and, more interestingly, the ROC government noted that it is no less furious than real battle. Moreover, it signifies that mnemonic tension not only is a reflection of the present political conflicts, but also can reinforce the contentions between different camps. The mnemonic battle is focused on whether each of these two governments can lead people to remember and/or forget certain historical occurrences and therefore to promote a preferred narrative, memory, and nationality (Corney 2003: 29-35; E. Zerubavel 2003a: 9). It also implicitly reveals an exclusive character of commemoration: Since having the same memory indicates having the same identity, when the PRC government also wanted to recollect the Xin-Hai Revolution and celebrate Double Tenth Day, it created tremendous mnemonic tension toward the ROC government. After all, remembering the same past with a *mnemonic rival* may terribly

blur the *mnemonic boundary*. *Mnemonic boundary work* thus is another ongoing accomplishment of mnemonic engineering.

In brief, in addition to “bridging” itself to “The 5,000-year Chinese History,” the mnemonics “bridged” the PRC government and Chinese communists to the Soviet history – which means “un-bridged” from the Chinese national history. This is another aspect that is frequently seen in the official narrative of Chinese nationalism.

The Remembered Nostalgia

The fat beginning, the eventful KMT history, the inevitable connection between Sun and Chiang (and his KMT government), the accentuated “5,000-year Chinese History,” the bridged historical continuity (of the KMT government), and the narrated historical discontinuity (of the PRC government) all contributed to leading the intended national members of the Chinese nation to remember their shared past. More importantly, the official Chinese nationalism made efforts to spread its narratives to reach not only its assumed national members who might not be able to receive these messages directly but also the international society via numerous avenues.

Mnemonic engineering created nostalgia among national members toward the Chinese nation by invoking a remembered glorious history. Nevertheless, the key components that constituted the “shared past” were subject to a selective mnemonic process (Schwartz 2008: 374-402; Irwin-Zarecka 1994: 115-131; Y. Zerubavel 1994b: 72-100). Collective remembering goes hand in hand with collective forgetting (Gross 2000: 140-152), and historical continuity goes hand in hand with historical discontinuity (E. Zerubavel 2003a:

82-100). For instance, although the Wu-Chang uprising was the oppositional activists' eleventh attempt to overturn the Qing dynasty, rather than choosing the first attempt or any other following attempt, the uprising was selected as *the* key event that launched a whole new era. That is, in the commemorative pattern of official Chinese nationalism, the detailed information of previous failed attempts was deemed rather forgettable. Therefore, unlike the "successful" Wu-Chang uprising, which entailed vivid stories and names of heroes, proposed national members can hardly remember the places and times that previous attempts occurred. Whereas most mnemonic communities find it hard to commemorate their difficult pasts (Polletta 2003: 219), Cuba's Revolution Day perfectly exemplifies that some do have national holidays to commemorate their failures (E. Zerubavel 2003b: 318). Hence, choosing to merely commemorate victories is by no means a neutral decision, and it also illustrates the inevitable selectiveness of collective memories.

Moreover, that Chinese communists also claimed to be the authentic heirs of the spirit of the Xin-Hai Revolution and that Mao Zedong inherited the unfulfilled will of Sun Yat-sen (Mao cited in Zhang & Schwartz 2003: 108) were marginalized and regarded as ridiculous when mentioned:

...Chinese communists recently...ridiculously claimed that "Mao ZeDong led all of our national members to accomplish an ethnic and democratic mission that had never been done in the Xin-Hai Revolution...Sun Yat-sen led the revolution, but he only overthrew the Qing dynasty. Sun just fulfilled half of the revolutionary mission. It was the Chinese communists, led by Mao ZeDong, who completed the unfulfilled revolutionary mission and attained Mr. Sun's goal."...Why do Chinese communists argue so? First, Chinese communists...want to make people consider that Chinese communists are Mr. Sun's heirs...they went further to celebrate Double Tenth to make people wrongly perceive that "we are all family members." Second, they want to lead people to believe that Chinese communists are practitioners of Mr. Sun's ideas. Third, they want to show that they respect Mr. Sun and the revolutions that he led to curry the public's favor ... (UDN [99], 10 Oct. 1961).

To some extent, since both Chiang (Kai-shek) and Mao claimed themselves to be *the* authentic heir of Sun Yat-sen, the competition between them ironically turned into a rivalry between symbolic siblings (E. Zerubavel 2012: 115-131): It made the PRC government's narrative even more intolerable and may have jeopardized official Chinese nationalism's preferred version of collective memory. In addition to marginalizing it most of the time, official Chinese nationalism never forgot to degrade the PRC government's narrative as merely a political strategy to earn public support through winning the mnemonic battle whenever the narrative came up.

Yet another example to demonstrate the selectiveness of official Chinese nationalism is that, in contrast to the “hot” history of the KMT that mostly occurred in mainland China before 1949, events that occurred in Taiwan and overseas during this period were “edited out.” To narrate a simplified national history that was easy to memorize and retell and to avoid messages that may have aroused people's suspicion of the “shared past” and the projected familial image, events such as the repeated colonization by foreign countries and the 228 Incident (a conflict between mainlanders and islanders) in Taiwan, and the distinct circumstances that the so-called overseas Chinese confronted abroad were downplayed, backgrounded, or totally selected out (Chou 2009).⁴⁷ After all, the repeated

⁴⁷ The 228 Incident – also called the 228 Massacre by Taiwanese nationalists – was described by some as an anti-government uprising in Taiwan that happened in 1947 and was violently suppressed by the KMT government.

The 50 years of Japanese rule of Taiwan ended in 1945, and the KMT-led ROC government obtained the ruling power to govern Taiwan. A dispute between a cigarette vendor and an officer from the Office of Monopoly on February 27 triggered the event, and the conflict soon developed into open rebellion that lasted for days. The KMT government began to send the ROC military to put down the uprising on February 28, resulting in the loss of numerous civilian lives. The estimated number of deaths caused by the 228 Incident varies from 10,000 to 30,000 or even more. There is an enormous contrast between how people explain this event. On one hand, Chinese nationalists tend to explain the 228 Incident as merely an accidental occurrence: Not only should the number of deaths not be exaggerated, but also the event itself

colonization of Taiwan by foreign countries may highlight the fact that Taiwan was not a part of the Chinese nation in some historical periods; the 228 Incident may shed light on the internal disagreement between proposed national members and reveal the lack of solidarity; and the circumstances that overseas Chinese faced may also distract the national story to some undesirable directions. Consequently, the “cold” Taiwanese and overseas history facilitated official Chinese nationalism’s preferred mnemonic editing. In brief, to unravel the selectiveness of mnemonic engineering, in addition to investigating the presence, examining the absence is no less important (Irwin-Zarecka 1994: 115-131; Trouillot 1995).

The invented glorious past illustrated in this chapter worked to prepare the intended national members to accept the other two significant components in the master narrative: the shared present and the shared future. After all, collective memory is invented from a specific mnemonic vision to serve present needs. In official Chinese nationalism’s case, the “glorious” past was tarnished by the “shameful” present and thus the cooperation of all the national members was necessary. Following is just a quick “snapshot” of the linkage of these three components in the narrative:

does not deserve too much historical attention. On the other hand, according to the Taiwanese nationalists, this event was a trigger of the accumulated resentment that Taiwanese locals had felt since 1945: The generally perceived corruption of the KMT authorities, the seizure of private property from the locals in the name of land reform, and the ill treatment that islanders experienced all contributed to the displeasure. From Taiwanese nationalists’ viewpoint, not only should the number of deaths in this incident never be underestimated (and it is a “massacre” of innocent civilians), but also this event should be understood as a conflict between mainlander-the-ruling-class and islander-the-ruled-class. Due to the distinct way to interpret this occurrence, the 228 Incident was selected out (and therefore was not entitled as such) in the official Chinese nationalism (from 1949 through 1987), but it was heavily emphasized and thus selected in for the national history of Taiwanese nationalism. See Chang and Chen (2013), Chang et al. (2011), and Lee (2009) for more details on this event.

Today we observe National Celebration Day to commemorate our founding father and the national martyrs who created a glorious history for us. Our utmost responsibility now is to recover mainland China, to save our national members there, and to revive the honorable and grand enterprise that our founding father and national martyrs left to us.

(Presidential speech in 1984, *UDN*, 11 Oct. 1984)

Chapter 4

Controlling the Past, Controlling the Future

Who controls the past...controls the future: who controls the present controls the past. (From *1984*, Orwell 1983[1949]:35)

While many may assume that *mnemonic engineering* can only provide its intended audience with narratives that lead audience members to remember a shared past, an intriguing trait of mnemonic engineering is that it indeed contains narratives that guide people to remember they have a shared present and will have a shared future as well (Mische 2009; Tavory & Eliasoph 2014). The narratives work to (re)define the current circumstances and the corresponding projected future for their audience from a specific mnemonic vision. As we shall see, past, present, and future are highly correlated and inseparable components in mnemonic engineering: The way in which each of them is introduced and thus remembered is usually well “packaged.”

Thus, counter-intuitively, in their daily life, people are led to remember not only their past but also their present and future. For example, although not all people have similar experiences or encounter exactly the same conditions, people in a specific time period may describe their “current” situation in similar terms, such as economic depression, turmoil, democratic, prevalent fast-food culture, or information explosive. However, it is far from a coincidence that contemporary people claim they are experiencing a resembling present. People in fact are influenced by the narratives in mnemonic engineering and thereby are mnemonically aligned to have similar considerations. The “defined present” sometimes is further highlighted by comparison with the constructed

shared past: It is not uncommon for people to delineate their present unanimously as a “repetition” of the past, another unavoidable “stage” of history, or “unprecedented.” Following the same logic, people are also guided to remember their shared future through mnemonic engineering. Hence, although events have not yet occurred, people can talk about their prospects and work toward their goals; in addition, people in a specific group usually have similar anticipations of what will occur in their future. For instance, the distinctive suppositions of history in Western and Eastern societies may serve as crucial mechanisms to project the future: Western societies usually assume a progressive historical trajectory, while Eastern societies all too often suggest a circular historical trajectory. Moreover, it is not uncommon for people to claim that, for example, “despite the current depression, the economy will recover soon”; “if we do not engage in any revolutionary conduct, our company will soon be a sunset industry”; or “an early start on learning may help your children perform better than others in the future.” In short, in the construction of a collective memory, the past is invented in a way to legitimate the present, the present is invented in a way to evoke identification, and the future is created in a way to consolidate cooperation (Koselleck 2004; 9-74; Frye 2012).

In addition to the shared “5,000-year Chinese History,” narratives of official Chinese nationalism also served to lead intended national members to remember that they are experiencing a shared present and therefore should anticipate and work toward a shared future. National commemorations provided great opportunities for defining and/or redefining the national status and national goals, and Double Tenth Day was no exception. Therefore, in Double Tenth Day presidential speeches, the national leaders (who also were the leaders of official Chinese nationalism) not only reiterated the current status –

being forced to stay in Taiwan and another government's claim of legitimacy for the Chinese nation – as “abnormal” and “temporary,” but also expressed a wish to encourage proposed national members' cooperation to recover mainland China in the near future. Several components in the narratives of official Chinese nationalism that guided people to remember their shared present and therefore their shared future will be introduced in the following sections: the year 1949 as a turning point and the 1949 Retreat as a collective trauma, the “abnormal” and “temporary” current circumstances, the sacred mission of recovering the mainland, and the muted and marginalized alternative narratives of the present and future.

The 1949 Retreat as a Turning Point

According to the narrative of official Chinese nationalism, the year the Kuomintang (KMT) government “retreated” to Taiwan and its surrounding small islands, 1949, was a turning point in the national history. After 1949, mainland China was “temporarily” stolen and occupied by the government of the People's Republic of China (PRC), indicating that the entire Chinese nation had entered an abnormal condition: The government of the Republic of China (ROC) had to stay “temporarily” in Taiwan and treat this long-term marginalized place as a bastion (Wang 2007 [1999]). According to the master narratives of official Chinese nationalism, because it brought about a dramatic change in the nation, 1949 created a shared present for national members. The following excerpt provides a typical example:

Today is the 46th National Celebration Day. Forty-six years ago, on this very day, our founding father led the revolution, overthrew the authoritative regime, and established the Republic of China...Unfortunately...the villainous Chinese communists have stolen our mainland for eight years [since 1949]...it caused our nation and our people to confront a great catastrophe...

(Presidential speech in 1957, *UDN*, 10 Oct. 1957)

The whole nation was put into total disorder as the “genuine” regime had to stay outside the central territory and the “fake” regime imposed suffering on the national members. Being remembered as a turning point in national history that resulted in a shared present and, therefore, an envisioned shared future made the role of 1949 as crucial as that of 1911. Hence, it is not surprising to know that presidential speeches and surrounding narratives calculated and reported not only the number of years since the Republic era had been established, but also the number of years since the KMT government had to retreat to Taiwan and seek to recover the mainland:

Soldiers and citizens! Today is the 58th Double Tenth Day of our Republic of China, commemorating the great achievements of revolution that our founding father and many other national heroes made...we all feel enormous honor and excitement...It is also 20 years since Chinese communists led by Mao stole our mainland...we believe that the total failure of the Mao gang will arrive...earlier and faster than we generally expect.

(Presidential speech in 1969, *Economic Daily News*, 10 Oct. 1969)

In contrast to the glorious past in the narratives, the shared present of the Chinese nation, which was greatly affected by the 1949 Retreat, was created as a “shameful” period in the national history:

...our founding father, our national heroes, and the Republic era were all shamed by the rising of Chinese communists and the loss of mainland China...

(Presidential speech in 1956, *UDN*, 10 Oct. 1956)

...today we commemorate National Celebration Day, but we should no longer be satisfied with our honorable past. Because while our past is honorable...we should not wrongly take the glorious past that was created by our ancestors as our generation's glories. People who always commemorate the glories that were left by their ancestors are useless people... (UDN [100], 10 Oct. 1953)

Hence, whereas in the 1980s the narratives of official Chinese nationalism started to redefine the shared present of national members as honorable due to the prolonged “abnormal” conditions, in the early decades after the 1949 Retreat, national members were led to memorize a shameful present that tarnished the glorious past and was in need of correction.⁴⁸

The Chinese communists who follow Mao Zedong have stolen our mainland for 13 years. During these years, they have brought calamity to the country and the people, and they have been cruel and brutal to the people. People not only have become their slaves but also have to struggle not to starve to death in the dark hell. The national culture and familial values are all suffering unprecedented havoc...today, there is only one road in front of you! That is to save yourselves and to save your country by bravely and honorably putting down rebellion and restoring order...

(Presidential speech in 1962, *UDN*, 10 Oct. 1962)

Surrounding narratives also urged intended national members not to forget the “disgraceful” humiliation caused by the 1949 Retreat and to actively take action. In other words, the KMT government explicitly pointed out the 1949 Retreat as an event that should be ingrained in people's memory:

⁴⁸ However, during the later decades of the prolonged “current” circumstance, the “shameful” present status was redefined as also “honorable” due to the KMT-led ROC government establishing Taiwan and its surrounding small islands as the “model” province that all the other provinces in the mainland would like to imitate, according to the official Chinese nationalism's narrative. That is, the definition of the present status evolved over time, and this modification will be discussed later.

...Now that Chinese communists who are guided by Soviet communism are trampling on our mainland, we should feel especially ashamed about it. Hence, on this National Celebration Day, we need to consider how to reflect, how to invigorate, and how to wipe away the humiliation! (*UDN* [101], 10 Oct. 1951)

...everyone in our nation should remember this spot in our history and the humiliation that our country and our people face; there will come the day that we can recover our glory and reinvigorate our homeland. (*UDN* [102], 10 Oct. 1953)

Additionally, the 1949 Retreat was further constructed as a collective trauma that needed to be soothed and “cured” by the cooperation of all national members. That is, in the narratives, the “shameful” present was also invented as a “traumatic” present:

It is impossible for any of us to forget the imprinted trauma [loss of the mainland]...It has been more than 10 years; every area in Asia was permeated and subverted by communists, and today’s Africa and Latin America are also rampant with communism. The loss of mainland China is the beginning of all these tragedies.

(Presidential speech in 1960, *UDN*, 10 Oct. 1960)

Detailed descriptions of how the 1949 Retreat caused harmful consequences – the dislocation of people, the separation of family members, the devastating life conditions, the destruction of Chinese culture and history, to name a few – to the nation and people were provided in numerous narratives to emphasize that it indeed was a “trauma” that heavily “hurt” the nation.⁴⁹ Intriguingly, a certain degree of collective denial and silence regarding the 1949 Retreat can be seen in the narratives of Chinese nationalism, just as with the general manner with which a “trauma” is dealt (E. Zerubavel 2006:1-16). Whereas the narratives emphasize that the 1949 Retreat caused a drastic change to the nation and Chinese history, the reason (“being defeated” by the

⁴⁹ See the presidential speech of 1954 (*UDN*, 10 Oct. 1954) for a typical example.

Chinese communists) that directly brought about the 1949 Retreat was rarely explicitly pointed out in the narratives. Explicitly defining the 1949 Retreat as a “failure” was infrequent (*UDN* [101], 10 Oct. 1951); instead, neutral terms such as “experience” and “lesson” were employed to describe it. Moreover, “the 1949 Retreat” was not a common term used to describe the event in the official narratives, at least in the early decades after 1949. Rather, neutral terms such as “transfer,” “move,” “turn to,” and “withdraw to guard Taiwan” were frequently employed to bypass this very “traumatic” occurrence.

...Although our nation and our people paid unparalleled cost and experienced unprecedented sacrifice, and we contributed enormously to countries in both Asia and Africa, our mainland has been occupied and enslaved by the bandit communists who are controlled by the Soviet communism. However, after our government *withdrew to guard Taiwan*, all the military personnel and ordinary people have been guided to fight aggressively during past 10 years...

(Italics added. Presidential speech in 1960, *UDN*, 10 Oct. 1960)

...Nevertheless, due to Chinese communists and the Mao bandit concealing their malevolence...they took the chance...to mobilize the overall violent protests...it made our government not only have to cope with the internal overthrowing of political conspiracy, but also to be constrained and intervened by the international environment’s over-tolerance...Consequently, all the provinces in mainland China were locked behind the Iron Curtain by Chinese communism!...*That is the reason that our government decided to turn to Taiwan* to redo our national revolutionary enterprise.

(Italics added. Presidential speech in 1965, *UDN*, 10 Oct. 1960)

In addition, little (if any) information regarding how the ROC government and two million mainlanders retreated to Taiwan and its surrounding small islands was provided. To be brief, an ambivalent attitude toward the 1949 Retreat existed in the mnemonic engineering of official Chinese nationalism: As a crucial event that resulted in a “shameful” present, it should be remembered by all national members;

nevertheless, as a critical event that caused the “traumatic” present, it was “semi-muted” in the narratives (Irwin-Zarecka 1994). As a consequence, while people were led to emphasize the hurt that the 1949 Retreat brought with it, under most circumstances, they stayed silent about the ROC government as a defeated regime and were kept in the dark as to details of the 1949 Retreat.

According to Alexander, the invention of a cultural and collective trauma works to evoke people’s sense of belongingness and thereby their taking responsibility for the trauma:

It is by constructing cultural traumas that social groups, national societies, and sometimes even entire civilizations not only cognitively identify the existence and source of human suffering but “take on board” some significant responsibility for it...as they identify the cause of trauma, and thereby assume such moral responsibility, members of collectives define their solitary relationships in ways that, in principle, allow them to share the sufferings of others...trauma is not something naturally existing; it is something constructed by society...Trauma is the result of...acute discomfort entering into the core of the collectivity’s sense of its own identity. Collective actors “decide” to represent social pain as a fundamental threat to their sense of who they are, where they came from, and where they want to go...(2011 [2004]:307-308)

In other words, the built-in traumatic experience may influence people’s identification and direct their projected future. In official Chinese nationalism’s case, the 1949 Retreat was narrated as a collective trauma to not only enhance people’s solidarity toward the Chinese nation led by the KMT-led ROC government, but also to encourage the cooperation of all intended national members to recover the mainland. An envisioned bright future could be achieved through national members’ efforts and their attempts to correct the “shameful” and “traumatic” present caused by the 1949 Retreat. Whereas being defeated in the Chinese Civil War and retreating to Taiwan in 1949 were “direct”

traumatic experiences for only a portion of the intended national members (say, the mainlanders who retreated to Taiwan with the KMT), the mnemonic engineering of official Chinese nationalism had to refresh and standardize this kind of traumatic memory for all national members. As a result, the 1949 Retreat was a remembered trauma generally shared by intended Chinese national members.

The “Abnormal,” “Temporary,” and “Traumatic” Shared Present

Another significant aspect of the narratives is that the “shared” present was defined as “abnormal” and “temporary.” The mnemonic engineering of official Chinese nationalism sought to guide its intended national members to remember that their present is not a “normal” status that the Chinese nation is supposed to have; thus, “undoubtedly” this shared “shameful” and “traumatic” present would soon be broken through. That is, the historical trajectory of the Chinese nation would return to its natural routine in no time (Presidential speech, *UDN*, 10 Oct. 1985). In the narratives, the current circumstances – loss of the mainland, the diaspora of national members, the “authentic” regime having to stay on a marginal island – that Chinese national members were experiencing were merely a “provisional setback” (Presidential speech in 1973, *UDN*, 10 Oct. 1973).

In addition, formal laws and regulations were enacted and implemented to define the era as an abnormal and temporary period. Right after the 1949 Retreat, the KMT announced the imposition of the “Temporary Provisions Effective during the Period of Communist Rebellion,” and under the name of “provisional” national chaos, the KMT went one step further to impose martial law. Martial law legitimated the KMT’s

authoritarian and long-term one-party rule and illegitimated any alternative narrative on nationality. It was not until 1991 that Lee Teng-hui terminated the Temporary Provisions Effective during the Period of Communist Rebellion (Rigger 1999). This indicates that the “provisional period” of communist rebellion had ceased: Escaping from 40 years of a “temporary” and “abnormal” situation, Taiwan stepped into a “normal” situation (Wang 1999:153-188). In short, it is not surprising to see narratives of official Chinese nationalism containing abundant messages pretty close to the following example:

We...all firmly believe the “Three Principles of the People” proposed by our founding father is an eternal wisdom beacon that guides people’s reasoning. We all believe in our outstanding culture and that our traditional spirits can be the base of the Republic of China that will never be shaken or destroyed by evil forces...**thus, no matter how our territory is temporarily segmented and usurped, and how the legal principle and reason is temporarily distorted and overwhelmed**, we know that all the people are still relying on us...

(My emphasis. Presidential speech in 1971, *Economic Daily News*, 10 Oct. 1971)

The “shared” present was expected to be a short period in Chinese history:

...as premier Chiang [Ching-kuo] claimed publicly...the current situation “sufficiently indicates that our recovery bastion is overcoming risks and difficulties even in hard times and we are approaching our great mission to go against communism and recover the mainland. Meanwhile, Chinese communists are walking on a road toward collapse and death step by step.” The history is transforming. **All the signs demonstrate that Chinese communism’s tyranny in governance will disappear soon and this is a short period in Chinese modern history.** The death of their chief Mao Zedong symbolizes the beginning of the end of this short period... (My emphasis. *Economic Daily News* [12], 10 Oct. 1976)

Intriguingly, even in the late 1970s and 1980s – several decades after the 1949 Retreat – the belief that the retreat marked “a short period that the ROC government has to stay in Taiwan” was still maintained and reproduced through narratives:

Although our government left the mainland, our longstanding national culture, the philanthropic Three Principles of the People idea, and the Double Tenth spirit which encourages us to fight even harder when facing failure are still ingrained in the heart of every single national member who is living on the mainland...Therefore, after three decades' brutal suppression by the Chinese communists, now our national members on the mainland...ask to have a life condition just as national members in Taiwan are having...[T]hey gather under the flag of the Three Principles of the People to resist the tyrannical Chinese communism. As a matter of fact, today, our hearts are tightly connected with the hearts of national members who are living on the mainland. In the near future, our hands must be able to tightly hold the hands of national members who are living on the mainland. We will all raise our national flags high and the rays of national rejuvenation will shine far and wide!

(Presidential speech in 1979, *Economic Daily News*, 10 Oct. 1979)

The 70s of the Republic year [the 1980s] play a key role in our nation-establishing process...Therefore, during this critical period, every single action that the Republic of China takes will greatly influence the fate of our nation in the future...Every Chinese person who has the ability to know right and wrong realizes bitterly that "if you love your country, you need to go against the Chinese communists; only if you go against the Chinese communists can you prove your patriotism"...We strongly believe that China's suffering will be over soon...

(Presidential speech in 1984, *UDN*, 10 Oct. 1984)

One element – while mostly observed before the 1970s – that should be deemed a complement to “the shared present as a temporary period” is that narratives in official Chinese nationalism sometimes described the current status of the Chinese nation as in its “third stage of revolutionary mission.” In this sense, the “shameful” and “traumatic” present is just another stage in the national history. The leaders of Chinese communism were analogized to many evil persons in Chinese history (Presidential speech, *UDN*, 10 Oct. 1962) to indicate that they were doomed to fail. Also, since it was seen as an inevitable but passable stage to complete the revolutionary mission of the founding father, it was supposed to be passed through quickly with national members' efforts:

Kai-shek swears that I will follow all the soldiers and all the people, to try my best, to spare no effort in performance of my duty to destroy...Chinese communism led by Mao...to save our national members who are living in the dark hell [mainland], to recover our territory, to honor our Chinese nation, and to accomplish the third stage of the revolutionary mission. Only by doing so can we soothe the souls of our founding father and other national martyrs.

(Presidential speech in 1968, *UDN*, 10 Oct. 1968)

[T]he historical facts have demonstrated that not only are we able to break through any trials, but also we are capable of overcoming any dangers. In the following time period, there will be numerous difficulties and obstacles waiting for us to surmount. We need to be even more earnest and cooperative, and we have to show even more firmness and hard work. National members who live in our country, who live abroad, who live close to our enemies, and who live in the free areas: You all need to contribute to our national establishment and the grand mission of resisting Chinese communism from every corner and every position. Actively, government officials should dedicate themselves to their duties; all national members should contribute their selves and respect the traditional values, to make their self a better person, to follow the regulations, and to practice thrift. Passively, national members should not allow materialism to rotten their hearts, should not allow dispiriting to pollute their life, should not allow lawlessness to disrupt the social order, should not allow waste to hinder economic boost. Today, what we need to remind each other is: ...we should treat our usual life as wartime life.

(Presidential speech in 1977, *UDN*, 10 Oct. 1977)

To further convince its intended national members that the shared “shameful” present can be overcome and corrected, the present was frequently delineated as yet another “decisive moment” in the national history through analogy with the time period before the Xin-Hai Revolution (*UDN* [103], 10 Oct. 1964). The tough conditions for the KMT government after 1949 were analogized to the difficult situation that the oppositional activists faced before the Wu-Chiang uprising and Xin-Hai Revolution (Presidential speech, *UDN*, 10 Oct. 1956; 10 Oct. 1980). The historical analogy between these two time periods also worked to indicate that, just as the time before the Xin-Hai Revolution was a crucial moment to establish the Republic of China and related preparations would lead to a successful outcome, the time period of the KMT government and its national

members was no less crucial to the national history and would definitely yield fruit.

Hence, according to the narratives, just like oppositional activists eventually overthrew the Qing dynasty after 10 failed attempts, the people of the Chinese nation would defeat the Chinese communists despite prolonged fruitless attempts. Excerpts from 1959's and 1980's presidential speeches illustrate this analogy:

Fellow citizens! Today is the 48th Double Tenth Day. We commemorate the difficulties that our founding father and national martyrs faced when they established the Republic of China. We believe that every single citizen of our country takes the responsibility to recover the mainland and rebuild the Republic of China. ...now is just like 48 years ago; everyone holds the triumphant glory in their hands!

(Presidential speech in 1959, *UDN*, 10 Oct. 1959)

Despite the fact that our nation is confronting various challenges and our spirit is continually tested, compared to the tough conditions of the Xin-Hai Revolution, our current condition is no more difficult...[T]hus, we should be assured that we simply need to firmly hold on to our hard work...do not give up easily...we must be able to fulfill President Chiang's will: To revive the Chinese nation, to never let the glory of Double Tenth dim, and to let our national flag wave forever!

(Presidential speech in 1980, *UDN*, 10 Oct. 1980)

In addition to reminding people of their “shared past” and encouraging them to envision a “shared future,” the historical analogy between these two periods in fact reveals one more trait of the “shared” present that the 1949 Retreat caused in the narratives: It was invented as a “liminal period” – just as the time before the Xin-Hai Revolution – in the national history. An examination of the so-called “present” and “today” in the narratives of official Chinese nationalism reveals that the term usually referred to a time right after the 1949 Retreat. That is, to some extent, the progress of Chinese history was “frozen” after the 1949 Retreat in the narratives. Hence, even in the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s, the official narrative could claim that “the KMT government merely has to temporarily stay

in Taiwan” and “recovering the mainland will be achieved very soon.” With this analogy, not only was the time period after the 1949 Retreat defined as another “decisive moment,” but it was also frozen as a “liminal period” because the normal sense of temporality ceased to be effective. As a result, people were led to remember a prolonged “temporary” current status that would eventually end when the mainland was recovered in a postponed “future.”

The “Bright” Shared Future

Based on the shared glorious past and the shared shameful present, the official narratives guided people to envision a *bright* shared future: the reunion with mainland China, saving the miserable national members there, and, more importantly, recreating the history as what it should be.⁵⁰ Thus, Double Tenth Day was observed not only as the most glorious day of the Chinese nation, but also as the day that reminded national members of their obligation to recover the mainland. The “shared bright future” as a national goal was repeatedly mentioned in every speech and numerous surrounding narratives:

In such a jointly pleasant moment, what we need to remember and never forget is our founding father’s reminder to “seek democracy and freedom for China”; what we always keep in mind is the teachings that former President Chiang [Kai-shek] left to us to “fulfill the Three Principles of the People and recover our territory on the mainland.” On our shoulders, we bear the eager expectations to obtain freedom and equality from ten hundred million national members who are living on the mainland. We have to take the sacred responsibility to remake history and to continue the 5,000-year Chinese culture!

(Presidential speech in 1985, *Economic Daily News*, 10 Oct. 1985)

⁵⁰ For more on “sociobiographical memory” (why people have different memories of distinct historical stages), see Bonchek (1994).

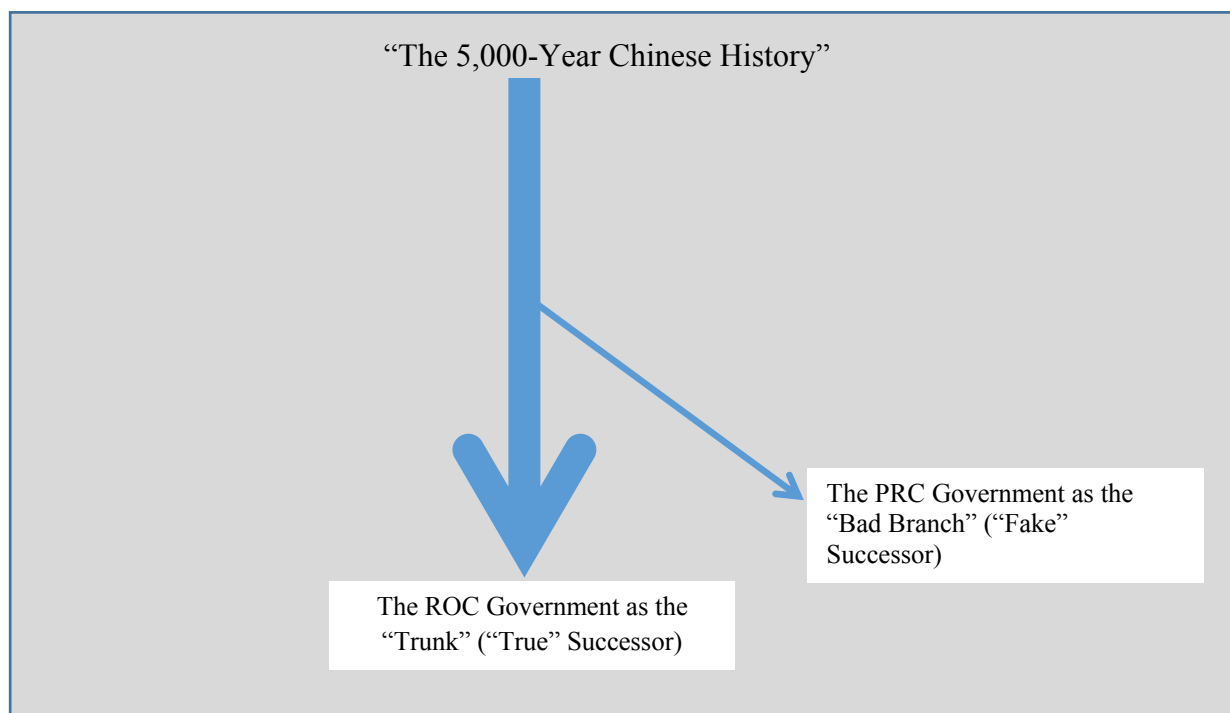
The shared present was defined as a “glitch” in Chinese history in the official narratives: Learning from the long-standing Chinese history, we can be assured that the normal routine of historical law will be resumed shortly. In the narrative, “we” (people who are led by the ROC government) are “authentic” Chinese people and represent the “trunk” of a grandiose Chinese national historical development; in contrast, “they” (people who adhere to the PRC government) are “fake” Chinese people and represent the “bad branch”: More importantly, the bad branch is doomed to be pruned:

Chinese communists’ rebellion brought calamity to our nation. This distorts the direction of historical development and delays our ideal of establishing our nation...nevertheless...the fact is transparent, and it is clear to the whole world that...no matter how the communists harness various strategies to seduce us to join them, they cannot overcome the sharp contrast of advantage and disadvantage between us and them. And, they can never escape from their destiny of failure.

(Presidential speech in 1983, *Economic Daily News*, 10 Oct. 1983)

By sidelining the PRC government through the commemorative narratives, the proposed national members were instilled with a favorable genealogical imagining. Figure 3.1 reveals the genealogical marginalization of the giant PRC government and the resulting synecdoche of the dwarf ROC government (E. Zerubavel 2011: 95-97).

Figure 3.1: Genealogical Marginalization of the PRC Government as a “Bad Branch”



People were led to remember that the diaspora that Chinese national members experienced after 1949, the deep longing for the motherland, and the dislocation of “genuine” Chinese people from their homeland would also end when the “bright” future came. Moreover, in the narratives, the “bright” shared future would “wash away” shared shames and revive national glories (Presidential speech in 1957, *UDN*, 11 Oct. 1957). While the narratives of official Chinese nationalism declared that the argument that “the ROC government and its national members can taste the sweetness of triumph” was supported by robust historical law, the narratives also contained messages that reminded people that the “shared bright future” had to be earned instead of arriving automatically:

Our splendid national foundation and glorious past were tarnished by the evil Chinese communism that is led by Mao. The mainland has been stolen by Chinese communists for eight years...The only way to recover mainland China and save our national members from their ruthless governing is cooperation!

(Presidential speech in 1957, *UDN*, 10 Oct. 1957)

Dearest elders, brothers, and sisters, we are the ones to save our own country, we are the ones to construct our own roads. No matter how many difficulties may be in front of us, we have to stick firmly to democracy...we have to put the Xin-Hai spirit into practice, and the final triumph is awaiting us.

(Presidential speech in 1985, *UDN*, 10 Oct. 1985)

By suggesting that people in mainland China were also national members of the Chinese nation who endured the merciless oppression of the PRC government, other national members (people in Taiwan and overseas) were reminded to prioritize the national mission rather than focusing on their personal enjoyments. Double Tenth Day presidential speeches and surrounding narratives contained vivid stories describing the “miserable” life of people in mainland China, claiming that the only way to save them was to defeat Chinese communism. The following excerpt exemplifies this dimension in the narrative:

On National Celebration Day, the first thing that our people should remember is that, during the past year, our national members in mainland China - including your parents, sons, daughters, brothers, sisters, relatives, and friends - must suffer even more because of the cruel and bloody governing of Chinese communists. This fact brings a deep and indescribable sorrow and sadness to all of us...

(Presidential speech in 1954, *UDN*, 10 Oct. 1954)

Many speeches provided lengthy delineations and stories about the poor policies that the PRC government adopted and how the living conditions of national members in mainland

China had continuously worsened to motivate people to take actions to achieve their memorized shared future. In fact, in many years' presidential speeches, a great portion of the speeches was dedicated to providing details about how people and the Chinese culture suffered and will suffer due to the PRC government's inconsiderate policies. Sometimes, since these "substantial" descriptions and evaluations of occurrences on the mainland occupied a great number of speeches, events that occurred in other parts of the territory (such as Taiwan island) had to be compressed (Presidential speech in 1952, *UDN*, 10 Oct. 1952; Presidential speech in 1965, *UDN*, 10 Oct. 1965).

In addition to stories of how the PRC government attempted to obstruct the fulfillment of the expected future of the Chinese nation, there were also stories about how people fought against the Chinese communists in the narratives of official Chinese nationalism to illustrate that the envisioned bright future was generally shared and the "authentic" regime was enthusiastically supported. The stories guided the intended national members to remember that continuous actions had been taken and are being taken to fulfill the national mission and to approach the shared future:

[W]ho will wrongly regard these people [people who live on the mainland] – who are desperately waiting for the recovery and would echo our attacks from within – as Chinese communism's "militia soldiers" to be used to go against the ROC government's army?...Therefore, for the evil Chinese communists, more than five hundred million people are indeed their enemies...On the contrary, for us, we have more than five hundred million soldiers who are our blood relatives... and would like to fight for freedom! Now the territory stolen by the Chinese communists becomes the source of "explosions" and "upheavals!" Not only does the 11,000-kilometer seashore provide plenty of beachheads for our army to assault, but also the 1,200,000-square kilometer territory turns out to be...a suffering place for the Chinese communists...because people's hatred toward them is just like the volcano lava that can be found everywhere...Quite to the contrary, for us, every inch of the territory is a place for us to strive for the national rejuvenation, and every place is a battlefield for us to fight for freedom! For the Chinese communists, every inch of the stolen territory is their execution ground and their graveyard!

(Presidential speech in 1962, *UDN*, 10 Oct. 1962)

Today, our national members who live on the mainland are engaging in direct and/or indirect actions to explode, to go against, to attack, and to clash with the Chinese communists led by Mao, no matter whether in the peripheral or central areas and regardless of daytime or nighttime. The Mao gang is facing a desperate condition...our shock troops are ceaselessly penetrating crucial areas...the enormous opportunity to rejuvenate our nation is revealed!

(Presidential speech in 1963, *UDN*, 10 Oct. 1963)

As the above excerpt indicates, the narratives emphasized how even people who live on the mainland did not consider their dangerous condition and wanted to stand up and fight for their “genuine” nation. Thus, it was not uncommon for stories of how people on the mainland were strongly committed to the ROC government and resisted the “fake” regime to be reported in newspapers and mentioned in the speeches (*UDN* [104], 27 Sep. 1953; *UDN* [105], 8 Oct. 1955).

Intriguingly, yet another aspect regarding the “shared bright future” in the narrative is that every Double Tenth Day was an opportunity to reset the countdown clock for the nation’s envisioned victory. To put it simply, the basic logic was that the whole nation made better preparations last year than the year before, and this coming year is crucial since we are going to complete our sacred mission in no time. The following excerpt from the 1959 presidential speech exemplifies the repeated appearance of the notion of “rescheduling” in official narratives:

...this year will be the key year that we see the collapse of Chinese communism. That is, this year is *the* year that we will taste the victory of recovering mainland China...during the last year, we have prepared for it...

(Presidential speech in 1959, *UDN*, 10 Oct. 1959)

Due to the prolonged “temporary” current condition, the temporal unit employed to anticipate the recovery was furtively extended from “year” to “decade.” Thus, despite President Chiang announcing the “1st-year-preparation; 2nd-year-counterattack; 3rd-year-wipe-out; and the 5th-year-victory” as a very specific time line for recovering the mainland in a public speech in 1950,⁵¹ when entering the 1970s, the narratives claimed that the 1970s would be *the* key period in which to recover the mainland. In the 1980s, the narratives declared that

....based on the empirical experiences that we derived from past decades, we are more than certain in saying that it is the destiny of the communist institutions to be abandoned in the ashes of history. Everyone who is our national member knows that...the 1980s is the decade to reunify China with the Three Principles of the People.

(Presidential speech in 1982, *Economic Daily News*, 10 Oct. 1982)

That is, the remembered “shared bright future” kept being postponed; nevertheless, it was always claimed to be “closer and closer” to the time for “us” to taste the flavor of victory:

We are here today to celebrate the birthday of our nation. We are here not only to commemorate this glorious day, but also to inform the whole world that **we are getting closer** to our sacred mission: defeating Chinese communism and recovering mainland China!

(My emphasis. Presidential speech in 1983, *UDN*, 10 Oct. 1983)

⁵¹ See <http://www.chungcheng.org.tw/thought/class07/index.htm> for the whole speech (retrieved on December 10, 2013).

Collective Amnesia

To align and to standardize a shared present and a shared future, in addition to narratives that were subject to collective remembrance, there were narratives subject to collective oblivion from the Chinese nationalists' perspective as well. That is, apart from remembering, forgetting also plays a role in collective memory and identification: Forgetting can be good and one of the main goals of mnemonic engineering (Gross 2000: 140-152). Mnemonic engineering always needs to be accomplished by selecting out certain events as well as by downplaying or even muting alternative narratives (Toruillot 1995: 1-30; Ricoeur 2004: 412-452; Connerton 2011:33-50). On the one hand, certain events are selected out from the narrative because they may distract the focus and create "noise" mnemonically; on the other hand, the alternative narratives need to be "dealt with" since they could breed unwanted alternative memories and therefore alternative identifications. The alternative narratives that were edited out of the mnemonic engineering of the official Chinese nationalism were told and disseminated by the ROC government's mnemonic rivals,⁵² mainly the PRC government and the Taiwanese nationalists. Mnemonic rivals compete for the support and loyalty of the intended audience by leading them to remember and/or to forget certain narratives and events from specific mnemonic visions. Whereas all the mnemonic rivals may launch mnemonic

⁵² Although these three mnemonic groups –the Chinese nationalists, the PRC government, and the Taiwanese nationalists–were rivals to one another and each believed its own version of the narrative was *the* valid narrative, some overlap can be observed among them. For instance, while as hostile mnemonic rivals, both the official Chinese nationalism and the PRC government envisioned the reunification of China, and although most of the narratives from the PRC government and Taiwanese nationalism were totally opposite, both led people to remember that people were suffering and suppressed due to the KMT government's rule and both worked to preserve memory of events that were selected out by official Chinese nationalism's narratives (the 228 Incident is a great example). In short, there is an intriguing "triadic group relationship" among these three mnemonic groups, and the triadic group relationship complicates the overall picture (Yeh 2014b). For more discussion on the triadic group relationship among mnemonic groups, see chapter 6.

engineering to define the past, the present, and the future, the degree of their organization and the amount of resources they can mobilize vary: As a result, some may be more capable of marginalizing and muting alternatives than others. In official Chinese nationalism's case, with the aid of formal regulations and mnemonic techniques, the KMT government effectively smothered the alternative narratives (if only in the public field) to make sure its narratives could be received and remembered by intended national members without too much disturbance.

Discussion of the differences between narratives preferred by the ROC government and the alternative commemorative narratives related to the “present” and “future” may deepen our understanding of the selectiveness of mnemonic engineering.⁵³ For example, while the official narratives of official Chinese nationalism degraded the PRC government as a “rebellious force” and defined the Republic era after 1949 as a “temporarily” rebellious period that would be over soon, the alternative narratives from the PRC government suggested that 1949 was the “end” of the Republic era and the PRC was the latest Chinese dynasty; the “fact” that Chiang Kai-Shek and his followers occupied Taiwan simply made Taiwan a “renegade” province of China (*People's Daily News* [hereafter *PDN*] [1], 29 May 1949; *PDN* [2], 1 Oct. 1949). That is, despite the ROC government narrating the Republic era as the “shared present” which was experiencing a short period of disturbance, the PRC government maintained the Republic era as a time period that belonged to the “past” and national history (Wang (ed.) 2010: 399-466; Shao

⁵³ Interestingly, whereas we can find some sporadic appearances – though always mentioned with a negative tone – of alternative definitions of the “past” that the PRC government offered in official Chinese nationalists' narratives, alternative narratives on the present and the future were rarely brought up. That is, alternative narratives for the present and future seemed to be even touchier than those for the past. To get a better sense of the narratives of the PRC government and Taiwanese nationalism regarding these two aspects and the competitive collective memories that they wanted to invent, sources that go beyond the “mainstream” media on Taiwan island need to be consulted.

& Wang 2011: 287-315). Moreover, when the ROC government told stories about how national members who lived on the mainland were suffering, the PRC government said quite the contrary: In the alternative narratives of the PRC government, it was the national members living on Taiwan and its surrounding small islands who were tasting the bitterness of KMT rule (*PDN* [3], 27 Aug. 1954; *PDN* [4], 2 Jun. 1955). In terms of the envisioned future, whereas narratives from both the ROC government and the PRC government projected a reunification between the mainland and Taiwan island, each projected itself as seizing *the* ruling power of the Chinese nation, thus dooming the counterpart to destruction. In other words, when the KMT government led its intended national members to remember that the mainland would be “recovered” and the “Three Principles of the People” would be ideal to guide the road of the nation, the PRC government claimed that the national territories which were occupied by Chiang and his gang would be “emancipated” and the communists would be ideal to direct the national path. Following are excerpts to exemplify the PRC government’s alternative narratives:

...our history had experienced an unprecedented change. Chinese people...overthrew the reactionary KMT regime, which was strongly supported by American imperialism, and the remnants of Chiang Kai-shek’s gang had been defeated completely. The surviving forces of Chiang’s gang can only hide like cowards in Taiwan and its surrounding small islands... Yet, despite the conspiracies between Chiang Kai-shek and American imperialism... nothing can prevent them from the destiny of eventual destruction... The emancipation of Taiwan and the reunification of the whole China are this year’s most significant national missions, which 4.7 hundred million Chinese people determine to fulfill... (*PDN* [5], 28 Feb. 1950)

...We have to overcome the obstacles and consolidate what has already been done in the future... We need to remember, until today, our Taiwan is still controlled by American imperialism and Chiang’s gang... (*PDN* [6], 1 Oct. 1951)

Taiwan is one part of the sacred territory of the People’s Republic of China, and Taiwanese people are the blood brothers of people who live in the motherland. Accomplishing the

reunification of our nation is a sacred responsibility that every national member (including people in Taiwan) should assume... (PDN [7], 10 Dec. 1983)

The contradictions in narratives of Taiwanese nationalism and official Chinese nationalism on the remembered present and the future are no less obvious.⁵⁴ In addition to narrating a mere 400-year chronology as the “shared past” (instead of a “5,000-year” national history) to disconnect Taiwan from Chinese history (Hughes & Stone 1999: 986; Tu 2007) and in spite of the official Chinese nationalism downplaying occurrences in Taiwan that went beyond “Taiwan as a bastion to recover the mainland,”⁵⁵ Taiwanese nationalists generally brought up events that occurred in Taiwan to represent that Taiwan indeed went beyond a bastion (Rigger 1999; Corcuff (ed.) 2002). While mostly transmitted via informal and underground outlets, Taiwanese nationalists suggested that Chiang Kai-shek and his KMT government were nothing but a brutal *foreign* regime and that islanders in Taiwan were experiencing yet another colonization (Gong 1999; Corcuff (ed.) 2002). Negating Taiwan as an indispensable part of China and the recovery of the mainland as the ultimate collective mission, Taiwanese nationalism told stories of the suppression and exploitation that Taiwanese islanders suffered after the 1949 Retreat and maintained that Taiwan was a “nation for itself” (Dittmer 2004; Lynch 2004; Chiu 2007; Stockton 2008; Yeh 2014a). The narratives of Taiwanese nationalism on the experienced

⁵⁴ Nevertheless, from 1949 through 1987, I suggest that most of the time Taiwanese nationalism should be defined as the “secondary mnemonic rival” of official Chinese nationalism. Not only could Taiwanese nationalism be more effectively controlled and muted due to strict surveillance and regulations, but also Taiwanese nationalism itself was rather immature and under development. It was not until the late 1970s and even the 1980s that we saw a more consistent counter-narrative (to Chinese nationalism) from Taiwanese nationalists. See Yeh (2001) for more discussion on the development of Taiwanese nationalism.

⁵⁵ This indeed is reflected in the presidential speeches under official Chinese nationalism, which all too often devoted a great part of the speech to what happened on the mainland without mentioning the substantial occurrences in Taiwan itself, as mentioned earlier.

“present” (as the continuation of repeated colonization) heavily influenced how Taiwan wanted its intended national members to remember the projected future: Rather than reunifying with the mainland, it proposed Taiwan independence and thus the termination of foreign colonization as an alternative (Fell 2012).⁵⁶

With the huge contrasts between the preferred narratives and the alternative narratives demonstrated, it is hardly surprising to know that the mnemonic engineering of official Chinese nationalism would want to “deal” with the alternatives via marginalization, downplaying, scoffing, and, more importantly, leaving them to collective oblivion. Table 4.1 summarizes the master narratives from different mnemonic viewpoints.

Table 4.1 Narratives on Past, Present, and Future from Different Mnemonic Visions

	Official Chinese nationalism	The PRC government	Taiwanese nationalism
Past	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •5,000-year glorious Chinese history 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •A longstanding Chinese history <i>plus</i> bridging itself to Soviet communism history •Republic era as an ended era 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •400-year Taiwanese history (with repeated colonization)
Present	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Shameful and traumatic •The mainland being stolen by the Chinese communists •The need to “temporarily” stay in Taiwan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •The PRC as the latest era •Taiwan, a province of China, appropriated by defeated Chiang gang 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Being colonized by a foreign regime (i.e., the KMT government)
Future	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •The recovery of the mainland and the reunification of China under the ROC government 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •The emancipation of Taiwan •The reunification of China under the PRC government 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Taiwanese independence as an option

⁵⁶ For a thorough comparison of the differences between Chinese nationalism and Taiwanese nationalism, see Stockton (2008) and Yeh (2014a).

The alternative narratives were threats to the ROC government since it wanted to promote its own version of narratives and thus collective memory (Lev-Aladgem 2006: 269-283). Indeed, the alternative narratives on the experienced present and envisioned future were never explicitly mentioned in the Double Tenth Day presidential speeches from 1949 through 1987. Even in the surrounding narratives, the only situations in which alternative narratives regarding the present and future of the nation were brought up by official Chinese nationalism were when they were negated and mocked or when they were announced to be given up by “mnemonic surrenderors.” Moreover, since the alternative narratives were almost completely selected out from the narratives, national members were assumed to be ignorant of these alternatives mnemonically: Remembering too much of these alternative interpretations thereby became an indicator of “mnemonic traitors.”

The Broadly Included National Members

While the last section concerns drawing a mnemonic boundary by classifying the preferred and unwanted narratives and excluding the voices of mnemonic rivals, this section examines the aspect of inventing a sense of “being included” in the narratives and thus in *the* Chinese nation for all the intended national members. The mnemonic engineering must keep aligning and refreshing people’s memory of who is in the “we-group” and therefore who is experiencing the shared present and will greet the shared future with us. In official Chinese nationalism’s case, presidential speeches on Double Tenth Day always addressed all “national members” – mainlanders in retreat, Taiwan

islanders, overseas Chinese, and people in mainland China. The following excerpt from the 1952 presidential speech reveals different categories of national members targeted by mnemonic engineering:

All our national members!

Today is the 41st National Celebration Day of our nation. We celebrate this special day in our bastion – Taiwan province – of defeating Chinese and Soviet communists...we first should consider that *our national members who live on the mainland* are suffering: They live under the terror, killing, starving, and slavery of the Chinese communists. They are not allowed to see our national flag or hear our anthem, and they are expecting us to save them...I also would like to encourage *overseas Chinese*. I can understand your sorrow due to your motherland being stolen by Chinese communists and your family members being killed and imprisoned by Chinese communists. Today you [overseas Chinese] celebrate Double Tenth Day overseas: It is not only the most dignified and splendid of commemorations, but also represents the ethnic morals of our nation. It contributes a great deal to our war on communism. I also would like to urge *our national members who live in free areas* [people who live in Taiwan and its surrounding small islands]: Only because of your cooperation and striving can we establish Taiwan province as our national bastion...

(Italics added. Presidential speech in 1952, *UDN*, 10 Oct. 1952)

It is claimed that, regardless of the realistic tough circumstances, all the national members were spiritually integrated. Furthermore, the intended national members in different categories were always addressed, encouraged, and honored in the speeches:

Honestly speaking, our seven hundred million national members spiritually are an absolute unified entity! Chinese communism is these seven hundred million national members' rival and enemy; and, quite to the contrary, the ROC government is all national members' hope, desire, and the moral source to bring them confidence and determination....Today, even when facing such a turmoil and drastic transformation and confronting such a dangerous and shocking international condition, people who live in the free bastion not only do not doubt our mission but also can strive even further to break through the darkness...Today, the overseas Chinese and students who study abroad generally take actions to resist Chinese communism and to express their patriotism...It reflects the most pure and honorable character of the Chinese nation which would like to be the "propaganda of morality and justice in the world!" Today, people who live on the mainland are not blinded by the over-tolerated attitude toward Chinese communism in international society...they ceaselessly rebel and escape to the free areas. The Mao gang's sudden spurt of activity prior to collapse does not confound them; the cruel knives and guns do not terrify them; the

rivers, mountains, and straits do not separate them [from people who live in the bastion]: These all provide solid evidence to prove that the Chinese nation is unbreakable.

(Presidential speech in 1971, *Economic Daily News*, 10 Oct. 1971)

For a shaky regime like the ROC government, it is important to repeatedly lead intended national members to remember that they are an indispensable part of the nation so as to retain their loyalty. The official narratives made a special effort to address national members who lived on the mainland to emphasize “the fact” that they were still a valuable part of *the* Chinese nation. After all, while they were directly governed by the “fake” PRC government and bombarded by the intensive mnemonic engineering of Chinese communism, “national members who live on the mainland” held the largest proportion of the overall number of national members (if only numerically). Thus, it is hardly surprising to know that the master narratives of official Chinese nationalism foregrounded a primary distinction: That is, most people who were living on the mainland were good and benevolent, and the PRC government and its regime were bad and sinister.

At least in the earlier decades after the 1949 Retreat, in addition to the regular speeches and surrounding narratives that addressed all categories of national members, public notices were written particularly for national members who were living on the mainland. In addition to broadcasting the content nearby the territorial border, fliers printed with the public notices and a portrait of President Chiang, the image of the national flag, pictures of the army, and other supplies were airdropped to the mainland around Double Tenth Day of each year (*UDN* [106] 11 Oct. 1953). Following is an excerpt that exemplifies the content in the public notices:

Dear national members who are living on the mainland:

Today is...our National Celebration Day, the so-called Double Tenth Day. National members who are living in the bastion [Taiwan] and overseas are all excitingly observing this grand holiday...We know that, dear national members on the mainland, you are locked behind the iron curtain of communism...your life is rife with miserable things!... due to the censorship of news and deceptions of Chinese communism, you may not understand the progress that our democratic mother-nation has made. We can tell you that every national member who lives outside the mainland is freely enjoying his/her life...To sum up, in the bastion of Taiwan, we all have a stable, free, and democratic life: It is much better than your life on the mainland...

Undoubtedly, although we are happy here, we feel terribly sorry that Chinese communism has not been destroyed, the mainland has not been recovered, and your suffering has not been ended. All the soldiers and citizens are mobilized and working hard to follow the lead of President Chiang: Our goal is to prepare the strongest power and to recover the mainland...National members! The fateful doom of Chinese communism is coming soon...we will attack them from the outside, and you can attack from within, let us cooperate to destroy communism and revive China. (UDN [107] 10 Oct. 1954)

These notices worked to explicitly show national members on the mainland that they were included in *the* China and that other national members had never forgotten about saving them from the “evil” PRC government. The notices also encouraged national members on the mainland to work toward the sacred national goals: Even national members on the mainland were assigned missions. Additionally, a huge contrast between a successful “authentic” China (the ROC government) and a failed “fake” China (the PRC government) was made in the documents to reflect that “evil can never defeat good.”

Interestingly, the process of airdropping fliers and supplies to the mainland itself became plotted stories that appeared in the newspapers. Details of the process were provided by soldiers who had taken responsibility for it and, without exception, these heroes claimed that they were touched and honored to fulfill such a sacred mission:

The flight crews...carefully examined the relief rice and the fliers with public notices in the cabin; they understood that every single flier, public notice, and even every single grain of rice represented not only the kind feelings toward national members on the mainland from soldiers and citizens who live in the free areas, but also the deeply held concerns about keeping them from the KMT government! ...Ten minutes after nine at night...the pioneering pilot warned “Mainland is just ahead!” All the pilots and crews stared straight ahead...This is the mainland where we grew up! This is the mainland that we eagerly want to recover every night! Suddenly, due to this instinct...everyone had tears in his eyes and everyone was speechless! (*UDN* [108] 11 Oct. 1953)

Overall, these stories – just like many other stories in the narratives of official Chinese nationalism – worked to evoke intended national members’ patriotic feelings toward *the* Chinese nation, as well as their sense of inclusion.

The Invented Organic Whole

The year 1949 as the turning point, the shameful and traumatic current status, the “temporary” stay in Taiwan, the envisioned prompt fulfillment of national goals, the absence of alternative narratives from mnemonic rivals, and the inclusion of various categories of national member are all critical aspects of the narratives of official Chinese nationalism that led people to remember their shared present and shared future. By combining these elements, the main scheme of the mnemonic engineering was completed. The following example shows how these three aspects were packaged in the narratives:

History can project the glory of all the pasts to the present, and the great Xin-Hain Double Tenth already had its position in the annals of our national history. We are now writing a new historical chapter for reunifying the Chinese nation with freedom and democracy, and we will always shed the glorious light of our nation to the future! My dear elders, brothers, and sisters, only through patiently persevering in our efforts can our inevitable success be guaranteed. Let us hold each other's hands, work as one, have optimistic belief, and welcome the final victory. Also, let us shout with glee together: Hooray for the "Three Principles of the People!" Hooray for the Republic of China!

(Italics added. Presidential speech in 1987, *UDN*, 10 Oct. 1987)

In the mnemonic engineering of official Chinese nationalism, the three packaged components – the “shared” past, present, and future – worked to facilitate the building of a “spiritual” community. In Zamponi’s terms, they served to construct an organic whole (2003:66). Although these three main components may not always be exactly aligned, and sometimes may have internal contradictions, they worked to foster an identity of a Chinese nation that resonated with the people.

Nevertheless, national members who could directly receive the messages that official Chinese nationalism wanted to spread was limited because the main ceremonies and commemorations of Double Tenth Day were held in Taiwan and only the mainstream media in Taiwan could be controlled and censored. The ROC government thus harnessed various avenues to reach all its potential national members outside Taiwan. For instance, the air force disseminated brochures and fliers printed with master narratives and radio stations broadcast the official narratives nearby the territorial borders (between the ROC and the PRC regimes) (*UDN* [109] 11 Oct. 1975; *UDN* [110] 11 Oct. 1979). Furthermore, as mentioned, official documentaries of Double Tenth Day celebrations in Taiwan were broadcast in many countries (*UDN* [111] 10 Oct. 1979), the overseas Chinese were encouraged to “go back” to Taiwan and participate in the ceremonies through

reimbursements for their airline tickets, and simplified overseas versions of the commemoration were held or financed by the ROC government. To sum up, although the ROC government had to stay “temporarily” in Taiwan and could directly govern only a small percentage of its national members, the mnemonic engineering of official Chinese nationalism was directed beyond the island to include all national members residing in all locations.

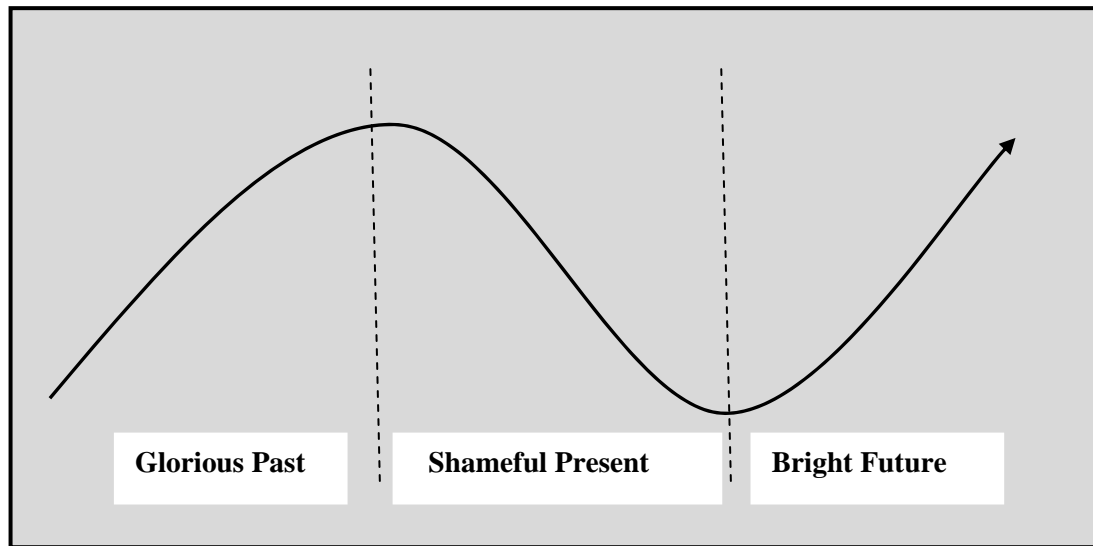
Chapter 5

Idiosyncrasies of Mnemonic Engineering

[C]ommon sense is quite wrong in thinking that the past is fixed, immutable, invariable, as against the ever changing flux of the present. On the contrary, at least within our own consciousness, the past is malleable and flexible, constantly changing as our recollection reinterprets and re-explains what has happened (Berger 1963:55).

The intended national members of the Chinese nation were led to remember a shared past that is longstanding, honorable, and glorious; a shared present that is shameful, traumatic, but merely “temporary”; and an envisioned shared future which will arrive soon to “correct” the “glitch” of historical development in Chinese history. There indeed are two significant turning points in the narration (see Figure 5.1): The first occurred in 1949 and the second (which is expected) will happen when people in Taiwan take back mainland China. Thus, the zigzag narrative that featured both the rise-and-fall and the fall-and-rise trajectories was employed to highlight the dramatic changes in the national history (E. Zerubavel 2003:18-20) and, for the sake of current need, to give the proposed national members an impression that right after the present “fall” is a rising future.

Figure 5.1. The “Zigzag” Emplotment of Collective Memory in Taiwan



More importantly, the invented collective memory of nation-ness has been realigned and refreshed constantly. As a result, regardless of tough situations, such as the Kuomintang (KMT) government occupying only a tiny portion of the entire territory, intended national members having distinct historical experiences, and the prolonged “abnormal” and “temporary” situation, the mnemonic engineering of official Chinese nationalism facilitated the invention of a Chinese nationality through the formation of a kind of synecdoche. That is, according to the official narratives, the KMT government – although staying in Taiwan – represented the Chinese nation. The remembered invented memory built *the* Chinese nation by shaping people’s national identity.

Whereas the KMT government – as an authoritarian regime – did employ coercion as a method to mute alternative nationality suppositions (Rigger 1997; Chen & Zheng 1998; Roy 2003; Wang 2006 [2003]; Rubinstein 2006; Chou 2009), I argue that it was the mnemonic engineering that delayed and even obliterated the challenges from alternative

national imaginings for decades.⁵⁷ More importantly, while the coercive governance of the Chinese nationalists became a salient “weak point” that alternative nationalists wanted to foreground and attack, the mnemonic works of official Chinese nationalism were hard to challenge and eradicate. Nationbuilding can never be accomplished merely with coercive methods because it is impossible to exclusively rely on formal rules, habitual obedience, and coercive threats (and practices) to achieve people’s resonance with their nation. It is through a sociomental and symbolic method that a nationbuilding project can be firmly consolidated and result in people’s perception of their “unmistakable” nationality. Compared to the coercive method, leading people to remember their national identity and thus to stubbornly think of any alternative nationality as “unimaginable” is a “cost-down” strategy since it can insinuate itself into the more peripheral social fields of political arrangements.⁵⁸ In brief, the sociomental, symbolic method is a better way for the dominators to earn their legitimation and authority (Weber 1978:941-55; Berger & Luckmann 1967: 92-128).

In official Chinese nationalism’s case, the messages transmitted through mnemonic engineering indeed were commonly represented – either wholly or partially – in various social sites with symbolic forms. For instance, such messages appeared in popular songs; since people enjoyed singing these songs, they facilitated the spread of the invented collective memory in a rather “soft” and “mundane” way. A very popular song entitled

⁵⁷ After the announcement that the nation was in a “period of mobilization for the suppression of the communist rebellion,” Chinese nationalists adopted coping mechanisms to deal with the stated abnormal national status. For example, martial law was activated and elections were frozen.

⁵⁸ Identity design has “core” and “peripheral” fields (Cerulo 1995): The core fields are where the interventions and influences are most frequent and strongest; the peripheral fields are where the interventions and influences are looser. For example, popular culture usually is a field that is less affected by the political arrangements of the nationbuilding project.

“Descendants of the Dragon,” which was recorded in 1978 and has been beloved for decades, provides an example of how the introduced plotlines of the national history were represented vividly in popular culture. Following are the translated lyrics of the song:

*There is a river in the Far East, and its name is the Yangtze River.
There is a river in the Far East, and its name is the Yellow River.
Although I have never seen the beauty of the Yangtze River, I visit the Yangtze River
several times in my dreams.
Although I have never listened to the sound of the Yellow River, I know its surge through
my dreams.*

*There is a dragon in the Far East, and its name is China.
There is a group of people in the Far East, and they are all descendants of the dragon.
I grew up under the blessing of the dragon, and I grew to be a descendant of the dragon.
Black eyes, black hair, and yellow skin, I am always a descendant of the dragon.*

*On a peaceful night years ago, there was a great transformation.
The sound of guns and cannon broke the peaceful night, and we were surrounded by the
enemy.
After so many years, the war does not cease.
I almost can't remember how many years we've been through this.
Great dragon, please open your eyes, and open your eyes forever.
Great dragon, please open your eyes, and open your eyes forever.*

The first verse describes a nostalgic emotion toward mainland China that the national members of China were generally expected to remember. Hence, even intended national members who had never stepped foot on the mainland (and were not allowed to do so due to the 1949 Retreat) were assumed to dream about it. That is, longing for the motherland was emphasized and remembered, and it indicated that an “indispensable” bonding exists between national members and their motherland. The second verse specifies that the intended national members are all descendants of the dragon (China is generally symbolized as a great dragon); therefore, they have common ancestors and are included in a gigantic family tree. The last verse mentions that a traumatic event occurred; the experienced present is still turbulent, and the wish is for the great spirit of the Chinese

nation to lead the people to a bright future. The three verses in this song cover the main themes of the master narrative in Chinese nationalism in general and the zigzag narrative in particular, either explicitly or implicitly. For example, as a popular song, “Descendants of the Dragon” demonstrates the remembered pride of having a superior pedigree and honorable past, the dramatic and traumatic turning point, the exclusion of occurrences in Taiwan, and the expectation that the great national spirit will provide guidance toward happiness.

In addition to simply looking at nationalism’s state-sponsored nature, a more sophisticated way to explain why the mnemonic engineering of official Chinese nationalism could be so generally observed and broadly disseminated is to further understand its idiosyncrasies. As we shall see, instead of a “one-shot” game, nationbuilding is a “becoming” process and an ongoing accomplishment: Whereas at first glance people may suggest that the mnemonic engineering of official Chinese nationalism was rather static and did not go through many changes during the decades after the 1949 Retreat, a closer examination reveals that it indeed has been through constant changes and contradictory components have been juxtaposed in it. Also, intriguingly, the promoted narratives and thus ingrained collective memory in the earlier stage sometimes might hinder the promotion of adjusted narratives and memory at a later stage due to mnemonic sediments. That is, the success of the mnemonic engineering of official Chinese nationalism may ironically become an obstacle and even result in a crisis in the mnemonic engineering and nationbuilding.

Though not exhaustive, several idiosyncrasies observed in official Chinese nationalism’s mnemonic work are mention-worthy and will be elaborated in the

following sections. While most of these idiosyncrasies are consistent with scholars' observations and some have been mentioned briefly, I believe that a synthetic discussion of them works to advance our understanding of both the specific empirical case and general mnemonic work.

Remembering and Forgetting

Mnemonic work is inherently a dual process that involves both remembering and forgetting (Y. Zerubavel 1995: 214-216). It is like two sides of a coin: When certain events are selected in a national history, other events are omitted and are subject to being forgotten. It is the mnemonic vision of a specific mnemonic community that determines memorability (or lack thereof). The mnemonic engineering of official Chinese nationalism was by no means an exception to this rule. Therefore, to achieve mnemonic alignment, for instance, all events in Taiwan that occurred before 1949 and all events that occurred after 1949 but were not directly related to recovering mainland China were omitted from the master narrative. The repeated colonization of Taiwan (especially the Japanese colonization that ended just four years before 1949), the past of the aborigines and other islanders in Taiwan, the conflict between intended national members in general and people's uprising against the KMT government in particular, the substantial developments of Taiwan itself that went beyond preparation for reunification, the narratives that invented alternative national imaginings, and the changing attitudes toward the cross-strait relationship in international society were mostly omitted from the master narrative and left to be obliterated. Thus, it is difficult to find mention of them in

the presidential speeches and surrounding narratives; even in the rare instances when they were mentioned, the reference was rather vague, degraded, or ridiculed.

Certain occurrences were deemed as unnecessary for inclusion in the official narratives of Chinese nationalism. After all, there is no need to complicate the preferred version of national stories. By extension, to exaggerate the solidarity of the Chinese people, there is no need to bring up events that may show the heterogeneity of national members. For example, on the one hand, although the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) was supported by a great number of Chinese people and therefore defeated the Kuomintang in the civil war in 1949, the intended national members were led to regard the CCP as an evil force and forget that a great number of people supported it. On the other hand, conflicts between various groups of national members (especially mainlanders and islanders) were obliterated.⁵⁹ To prioritize a “5,000-year” Chinese history, the multi-linear historical development in Chinese history was simplified into a uni-linear dynastic succession and what happened in Taiwan before the 1949 Retreat was left unmentioned, as well. If the official narrative wants to insist that Taiwan is merely a place for a short stay to fulfill national goals, it would be unwise to stress that Taiwan itself could be something other than a bastion or that it may not be reunified with the mainland. To be brief, to become members of a specific group and to evoke identification with that group, people have to

⁵⁹ As said, in most of the mainstream newspaper articles, the conflicts and distinctions between different groups of intended national members were selected out (this is a very basic mnemonic technique). However, in some rare cases, we can still “peek” at the collisions between different groups in some surrounding narratives. For instance, in an article entitled “Why still draw a boundary line between each other,” the author told a story that Taiwan islanders and mainlanders may hold different opinions and have various degrees of enthusiasm regarding how to celebrate Double Tenth Day. Nevertheless, she arrived at a positive conclusion: “We are all Chinese people! That’s all! No matter where we are, just remember that we are Chinese!...Considering our current situation, why still draw a boundary line between each other?” (*UDN* [112], 11 June 1967). This excerpt reveals dissonance between intended national members, but most of the time this issue was trivialized by the mnemonic engineering of official Chinese nationalism.

be “rememberers” of certain events as well as “forgetters” of other events (Gross 2000; E. Zerubavel 2003a). Collective amnesia is as important as collective memory.

Continuity and Discontinuity

There is a tight relationship between historical continuity and historical discontinuity in any mnemonic engineering. When attempting to establish historical continuity of a given mnemonic community with a desirable past via various mnemonic techniques, mnemonic engineering simultaneously must construct historical discontinuity from an undesirable past (even though it is through downplaying, ignoring, and forgetting). Mnemonic engineering also must either highlight the historical discontinuity of its mnemonic rivals with its constructed desired past or degrade its mnemonic rivals by bridging them to an undesirable past: Both strategies work to draw a clear mnemonic boundary line between rivals and to claim legitimacy over a mnemonic community.

In official Chinese nationalism’s case, on one hand, the KMT-led Republic of China (ROC) government was connected to the Republic era and “The 5,000-year Chinese History,” which means that at the same time it had to be disconnected from other historical pasts. For example, despite the factual heterogeneous and multi-linear developments of the past, official Chinese nationalism bridged a “5,000-year-Chinese-dynasty-succession” which depicted a homogeneous and uni-linear national past that mainly concerned the Han people. That is, to narrate a neat “Chinese” history, the historical roles of many other ethnic groups and thus their political forces/regimes were selected out and marginalized (Wang 1994; 2006). Moreover, when the master narratives

of the government of the People's Republic of China (PRC) attempted to “debunk” the relationship between the ROC government and America (and its capitalist tradition), official Chinese nationalism chose to downplay, ignore, and negate it as well.

Moreover, to bridge the long-term marginalized Taiwan island to “The 5,000-year Chinese History,” the mnemonic engineering of the official Chinese nationalism also had to un-bridge it from its past of repeated colonization (Andrade 2008). For example, one effort to mute the repeated-colonization past that Taiwan island experienced involved forbidding the use of “Formosa” to refer to Taiwan island (Manthorpe 2008): After all, this term was first used by the Portuguese to describe “the beauty of Taiwan island,” and using this term may remind intended national members of the heterogeneity between them resulting from Taiwan island not always being governed by China and in some periods not being part of the Chinese nation. Following the same logic, after the 1949 Retreat, the Japanese language was strictly prohibited, at least in the public field (Roy 2002).⁶⁰ The “taboos” on the term Formosa and speaking Japanese were strategies to create a sense of discontinuity from the colonialized past.⁶¹

⁶⁰ With millions of Taiwanese islanders who experienced Japanese colonization and were heavily influenced by its efforts in the formation of a Japanese identity (Ching 2001), a total prohibition on speaking in Japanese became an unachievable goal for official Chinese nationalism (at least in the private field). For instance, take my own grandmother, who is in her 80s this year; while she is a Chinese illiterate and cannot talk in Mandarin smoothly, she can still firmly recognize Japanese characters and speak Japanese fluently. Moreover, when I was a young kid (the late 1970s and 1980s), I observed that there were many enthusiastic fans of Japanese Enka (a genre of Japanese music) even if only revealed in the very private field, and many popular songs in Taiwan were in fact Japanese Enka with Chinese lyrics. These examples may demonstrate the mnemonic sediments of Japanese colonization in Taiwan and why the alternative narrative can evoke resonance from a certain percentage of the proposed national members.

⁶¹ Admittedly, the inevitable selections and strategic decisions observed in the mnemonic engineering of official Chinese nationalism turned out to be the jagged edges of alternative narratives and thus memories that both the PRC government and Taiwanese nationalism would like to challenge. That is, bringing up the marginalized and forgotten occurrences sometimes works to shake the legitimacy of the official narrative. A great example can be seen in the recent development of Taiwan movies. Among others things, facing the mnemonic sediments of official Chinese nationalism (and also the returned official Chinese nationalism

On the other hand, the official Chinese nationalism not only emphasized the disconnection of the PRC government from both the Republic era and “The 5,000-year Chinese History,” but also actively bridged the PRC government to the history of communism. For instance, the Cultural Revolution which occurred in the 1970s on the mainland under the PRC government was used as “irrefutable” evidence of Chinese communism’s “discontinuity” from Chinese history. Since founding father Sun Yat-sen, the Xin-Hai Revolution, and Double Tenth Day were all invented as critical national symbols in official Chinese nationalism’s mnemonic engineering, any commemoration of them by the PRC government was seen as “appropriation” aimed at confusing the proposed members of the Chinese nation. The historical discontinuity constructed between the PRC government and the Chinese history was further reinforced by bridging the PRC government to the Soviet communist history to create a sense of historical continuity between them.

Whereas there is no essential and “inevitable” way to tell a national story, the mnemonic vision that memory organizers adopt facilitates their selection of narratives and thereby are promoted the mnemonic engineering. In official Chinese nationalism’s case, bridging historical continuity in fact could not be accomplished without bridging historical discontinuity.

since 2008), director De-Sheng Wei produced movies such as *Cape No. 7* (2008), *Seediq Bale* (2011), and *KANO* (2014) to represent stories that happened and/or were highly related during the Japanese colonization in Taiwan (1895-1945). These movies caused mnemonic tensions in Taiwan due to the long-term constructed historical discontinuity with (or sometimes the collective oblivion of) Japanese colonization under official Chinese nationalism.

Beyond the Political Field

Effective official mnemonic engineering goes beyond a political arrangement and gradually permeates various societal fields. While the official institutionalization of the mnemonic work begins in the “core” fields (such as politics and education), all too often more peripheral fields pick up the messages in the long term and play a role in reproducing them. In the peripheral fields, the mnemonic work usually has a more casual form but with no less significant influence to lead people to collectively remember their invented identification. Hence, although exclusively state-sponsored mnemonic work that focused on inventing a significant Double Tenth Day in the first decades after 1949 was evident, more and more society-sponsored mnemonic work emerged that focused on memorizing National Celebration Day. For instance, as previously mentioned, even private corporations used Double Tenth Day as a reference point on the calendar. When the mnemonic sediments of Double Tenth Day became thicker and thicker (both bodily and socio-mentally) as a result of regular mnemonic refreshment, the day became commercialized by private corporations. Consequently, this society-sponsored mnemonic work also contributed to facilitating common people’s remembrance of Double Tenth Day and their Chinese national identity.

Following this logic, it is not surprising to learn that alternative mnemonic engineering such as popular nationalism usually starts in peripheral societal fields (to the official mnemonic engineering) where the surveillance is less strict and intense. In other words, alternative collective memories first have to find “a little heaven” to let their narratives “sneak in” and mature (Chatterjee 1993; Bhabha 2004; Zinn 2005; Thompson 1966); then, their counter-narratives and invented counter-memories can gradually appear (even

though only sporadically) in the core fields of the official mnemonic engineering (Young 1992:267-96). Therefore, the core and peripheral fields of mnemonic engineering are relative concepts since one mnemonic engineering's core fields can be another mnemonic engineering's peripheral fields. The emergence and development of Taiwanese nationalism serves as an example: It took form as popular nationalism (also a counter-collective memory) in the 1970s and was disseminated mainly in the private sectors to sabotage the official master narratives, and it was not until the 1980s that it was more frequently mentioned in the public sectors.

The Nonmetric Aspect

In all mnemonic work, a nonmetric view of chronology can be investigated, and it reflects a significant logic underneath the social organization of the memory (Sorokin 1943: 184; Levi-Strauss 1966 [1962]: 259). That is, the notion of time period by no means involves only quantity; time periods can also be endowed with distinct qualities (Hubert 1999). E. Zerubavel explained the nonmetric aspect of collective memory as follows:

The social organization of memory involves a particular way of experiencing time that is altogether different from the conventional mathematical manner in which we normally process in our minds. Essentially nonmetric, it basically rests on the perceived qualitative heterogeneity of mathematically identical duration...upon noting the social foundation of such experience of temporality, mathematically equal time intervals are often made socially unequal (2003b: 324).

Hence, not only can two mathematically identical stretches of time be perceived very distinctively in a commemorative sense, a short period can also be remembered as

“eventful” and packed with significant occurrences and a long stretch as “empty” with nothing major happening. With the nonmetric organization of the past, different historical periods are given distinct mnemonic weight in the mnemonic engineering. Moreover, the past is represented in the collective memory as a mixture of both the “sacred peaks” and “profane valleys”: While some past periods/events “stand out” and obtain their sacredness through repeated commemoration on national holidays, other past periods/events are “backdrops” that are defined as forgettable (E. Zerubavel 2003b: 326).

The described nonmetric organization of the past is evident in official Chinese nationalism’s mnemonic engineering. The remembered national stories of *the* Chinese nation actually were formatted topologically, which greatly distorted the “natural” and “raw” historical development from a specific mnemonic vision. For instance, the involved mnemonic editing skills made several years “stand out”; some periods were “crowded” and “hot” and some short periods were treated as crucial moments (while other long periods were ignored). As a result, the nonmetric view of chronology contributed to constructing a unique mnemonic density of the past for the proposed Chinese national members. Moreover, adopting a nonmetric and, therefore, topological approach to narrate the past also established a specific mnemonic tradition for the intended Chinese people. A mnemonic tradition determines not only what people remember but also *how* people remember: This is why people in Taiwan “remember” themselves as “the rootless orchid”⁶² and mainland China, which is ruled by the CCP, as

⁶² In Chinese, the orchid symbolizes purity and respectability. The “rootless orchid” means that while people in Taiwan are “real” and “authentic” descendants of Great China, they had to leave their motherland.

the “bloody Chinese flowering crab apple.”⁶³ The mnemonic tradition behind the periodization also led intended members to assign different social meanings to distinct historical periods. For instance, it is not uncommon for people of *the* China to collectively remember the Tang Dynasty as a bellicose dynasty, the Sung Dynasty as a literary dynasty, and the Qing Dynasty as a corrupt dynasty. Finally, a mnemonic tradition built in intended national members’ collective memory by official Chinese nationalism is an extremely optimistic attitude toward a “bright” future.

The Challenges

Mnemonic engineering always has to confront challenges. Even though the official nationalism, which controls enormous resources, wields power over the legal realm, censors the educational system, plots the master commemorative narratives, arranges the commemorative rituals, and much more, it inevitably faces constant challenges (Scott 1996: 365-93). The official Chinese nationalism had to deal with at least three types of challenges: the counter-memories from mnemonic rivals, the prolonged “temporary” condition, and constraints from the master narrative itself. These three types of challenges – each highly related to the other – more or less created an identity crisis and the need to constantly adjust/modify Chinese nationalism.

As discussed, the PRC government and Taiwanese nationalism were two primary mnemonic rivals that promoted counter-memories that haunted official Chinese nationalism. Different from mnemonic conformists who memorized the plotlines that

⁶³ The shape of mainland China is similar to the leaf of the Chinese flowering crab apple.

official nationalism narrated and, therefore, the invented national identification that comes with them, the people who raised counter-memories can be defined as mnemonic deviants. As said, mnemonic rivals attempted to remember forgotten events that official Chinese nationalism wanted to leave to oblivion, or, in David Gross's words, they became "noncontemporaneities" who held on to the debris (2000). Usually, the counter-memories that mnemonic rivals disseminate result in more and more mnemonic deviants in a mnemonic community. While the existence of counter-memories works to avoid reifying the official promoted collective memory and to bring in various mnemonic visions, in the case of Chinese nationalism, some counter-memories eventually formed challenges to the official nationalism that tried to reach reification through mnemonic engineering.

The boundary between mnemonic rivals can be observed by investigating the oppositions and contradictions in their master commemorative narratives. For example, in the PRC government's narrative, not only had a *new* China been established in 1949 by overthrowing the "corrupt" Republic era, but also a better China can be expected through connections to the [former] Soviet Union's communist history (People's Daily News [hereafter *PDN*] [8], 01 Oct. 1950; *PDN* [9], 02 Oct. 1951). Moreover, according to the PRC government, the defeated Chiang and his followers who escaped to Taiwan and its surrounding small islands indeed represented "evil" capitalism and America (*PDN* [10], 27 Jun. 1965). An excerpt from an article entitled 'To Tell National Members in Taiwan' demonstrates a typical narrative on this issue:

...The eight million people in Taiwan are good sons and daughters of Chinese ethnicity...Chiang Kai-shek and his followers are a gang that betrays the Chinese nation: They escaped to Taiwan and turned Taiwan into their “lair” to betray the nation, Taiwan, and the people in Taiwan. Their aim is to exchange ‘military support’ for ‘economic backup’ from America...Because of this betrayal by Chiang and his gang, America now can totally control the military, politics, and economy: Taiwan has already become America’s military base and colony...(PDN [11], 5 Sep. 1949).

Differing from the ROC government’s neglect of the occurrences in Taiwan before 1949 (actually even many aspects of happenings in Taiwan after 1949), the PRC government delineated a “1,700-year” Taiwan history and, among other things, it commemorated the 228 Incident (which was completely overlooked by the official Chinese nationalism) on an annual basis (PDN [12], 28 Feb. 1951).⁶⁴ For the PRC government, people who lived in Taiwan were national members who suffered due to the cruelty of Chiang and his gang, and the 228 Incident simply became a perfect example to show how citizens with consciousness fought for their freedom and rights but, unfortunately, failed and were suppressed by the KMT. More intriguingly, despite some (unexpected) overlap between the PRC government’s and the Taiwanese nationalists’ narratives, the PRC government led its national members to see Taiwanese nationalism as only the “sidekick” of the KMT government: Following the logic to lump the KMT government with American

⁶⁴ When I submitted a manuscript – a short version of this dissertation’s main theme – to an academic sociological journal, one of the anonymous reviewers gave me an intriguing comment. He/she criticized my manuscript because it “surprisingly did not mention the 228 Incident despite that it was such an important event” and therefore my manuscript was judged as understudied. However, since my manuscript attempts to describe the master commemorative narratives of official Chinese nationalism, it is quite normal to omit the 228 Incident since it had been edited out from the narratives of official Chinese nationalism for decades. Moreover, my manuscript does mention the absence of the 228 Incident in the national story of official Chinese nationalism as an example demonstrating the unavoidable selectiveness of collective memory. This comment reminds me of one thing: Even the top scholars of memory studies cannot believe that such an important occurrence as the 228 Incident can be ignored for decades. Nevertheless, the real world sometimes is far more ridiculous than people can believe. More importantly, the omission and absence of the 228 Incident under official Chinese nationalism demonstrates the invented-ness and fluidity of collective memory.

capitalism, the PRC government suggested that the supposition of Taiwan independence from Taiwanese nationalists indeed was backed up by the KMT and America since one of their goals was to create two Chinas and separate Taiwan from the mainland (*PDN* [13] 16 Mar. 1949). Hence, the PRC government claimed that,

...national members in Taiwan and other surrounding areas...American people entitled you as the small China...in an interview...a representative of America said that...he saw a China of communists, and he went further to argue that this nation exists in reality and he would like to interact with it...Thank god, our nation has eventually been seen by sir America. And, we represent a big China...Americans employed strategies to produce two Chinas...this is something we will not tolerate and we will not allow to be fulfilled...(PDN [14] 26 Oct. 1958).

The mnemonic boundary between official Chinese nationalism and popular Taiwanese nationalism is no less salient. For example, instead of seeing the KMT as the legitimate ruling power of Taiwan and its surrounding small islands, Taiwanese nationalists lumped the KMT government with the camp of foreign forces and treated its rule as yet another colonization that fit neatly into the repeated colonization experiences of Taiwan island's past. In addition, to negating Taiwan island's past as unavoidably and tightly related to the long-term Chinese history, in contrast to the official Chinese nationalism's delineation that intended national members who lived in the "free China" (or, say, not in the mainland) enjoyed democratic and equal treatment, Taiwanese nationalists emphasized the stratification of intended national members under the KMT's governance. Stories of the suppression and exploitation that Taiwan islanders and aborigines experienced were told in the private fields and conflicts between the different groups in Taiwan remained in adherents' memories. Moreover, Taiwanese nationalists criticized the marginalization and even oblivion of occurrences in official Chinese nationalism's

mnemonic engineering because, according to them, these techniques were employed to eliminate the emergence of Taiwanese consciousness and the supposition of an alternative future (other than reunifying with the mainland). Once again, an interesting overlap between the PRC government's and Taiwanese nationalism's narratives can be seen: They both maintained that the Republic era ended in 1949 (Tu 2007; Fell 2012).

As discussed, the mnemonic engineering of official Chinese nationalism employed mnemonic techniques to mute counter-memories. Just as the Popular Memory Group pointed out, it is common for mnemonic engineering to try to make every part of the mnemonic community accept its narratives:

...the various sites and institutions do not act in concert. Making them sing, if not in harmony at least with only minor dissonance, involves hard labor and active intervention (2011 [1998]: 256).

However, what the Popular Memory Group did not mention is that it is difficult (if not impossible) to mute all the opposites even if the extra effort and "minor dissonance" can still grow into counter-memories and narrate their own version of stories. This is the case with official Chinese nationalism. Indeed, as mentioned, a factor that ironically made Double Tenth Day even more "crowded" in people's memory is that counter-memories (or, say, alternative nationalisms) chose to hold protests and riots to oppose the master commemorative narrative of the official Chinese nationalism on this very day (Wachman 1994; Chou 2009). Whereas the mainstream media usually either marginalized or muted these counter-events from 1949 through 1987, the mnemonic battles between different national identities are evident. In short, no mnemonic engineering can totally rule out its opposites: The major confrontations with counter-memories may be halted, but they

cannot be eliminated.⁶⁵ Thus, while on a different scale, the counter-memories always haunt mnemonic engineering.

One more challenge that led people to doubt the master commemorative memory was the prolonged “abnormal” and “temporary” condition in Taiwan, which allowed more room for alternative nationalisms to further negate the master narrative of official Chinese nationalism. That is, with the passing of decades, the unchanged present situation raised suspicions and disappointments about whether it was just a “temporary” and “transforming” stage in Chinese history. More importantly, it made the narrated shared present and the envisioned bright future less convincing and, therefore, challengeable in later decades. Thus, those promoting the counter-memories could seize this opportunity to promote their own versions of narratives. Additionally, the changing attitudes of international society – such as the forced withdrawal from the United Nations and the breaking off of diplomatic relations with numerous countries in the 1970s – indicated that the prolonged “temporary” condition did harm the legitimacy of the ROC government as *the* genuine Chinese regime. Whereas the employed synecdoche might have helped the mnemonic engineering of official Chinese nationalism to do its trick better in earlier decades, with the passage of time, the factual condition that the PRC

⁶⁵ A scene from my childhood that I always remember involves my uncle. One Saturday evening, he rang the doorbell of our house, stealthily handed a seriously creased yellow envelope to my father, and left. It was a very short visit and there was not much conversation between them; my father did not even bother to turn on the porch light. Although I did not pop the question to ask what was inside the envelope, this interaction is deeply engraved in my memory. Many years later, when we had a thorough cleanup of our house, we found that creased yellow envelope in a drawer. I therefore had the chance to learn that a VHS tape was inside. My father told me it was recorded by supporters at a protest of Taiwanese nationalists. In other words, since these events were either selected out from the mainstream media or reported negatively, Taiwanese nationalists and their followers felt it necessary to “hold on” to these occurrences by recording them and “editing in” the important scenes and lectures. Thus, I witnessed one of the ways in which a marginalized and suppressed popular nationalism managed to preserve its “past” and disseminate its voice under a dominant official nationalism. This incident also reveals the selectiveness of collective memory and the multiple facets of historical development.

government governed the mainland and the ROC government ruled only Taiwan island and its surrounding small islands did result in a large segment of international society changing its attitude. Although most of the intended national members of the official Chinese nationalism may not have seriously reconsidered their remembered collective memory and national identification – due to the intense mnemonic engineering to which they were exposed and the exclusion of “inappropriate” messages – and still believed in the KMT government as *the* legitimate regime of the Chinese nation, a part of international society somehow began either to acknowledge two Chinas or, worse (from Chinese nationalists’ viewpoint), acknowledge the PRC government as *the* legitimate regime and establish diplomatic relations with it.⁶⁶ In short, the prolonged “abnormal” and “temporary” condition did shadow the official Chinese nationalism in the later decades (Hsiao 2005), which made the legitimacy of the ROC government become harder to maintain under the little Taiwan (ruled by the ROC government) and big China (governed by the PRC government) circumstance.

Yet another challenge (which is tightly related to the first two) came from official Chinese nationalism’s master commemorative narrative itself. Once disseminated, the previous master commemorative narrative in mnemonic engineering constrained the later narratives and the flexibility and malleability of memory-invention shrank. Since the intended national members had already been guided to remember the plotlines of their national stories, their current condition, and their projected future, even when the counter-memories and prolonged “temporary” condition compromised the validity of

⁶⁶ The mnemonic battle between the PRC government and the ROC government also represented a furious diplomatic battle: Each wanted more diplomatic relations to be established and treated such relations as symbols of its own genuineness (Rigger 2011; Wachman 2007).

official Chinese nationalism, it was difficult to negate the previous master commemorative narrative and replace it with a totally new one. After all, the moment that mnemonic engineering explicitly declines its own master commemorative narrative, it loses many of its mnemonic conformists who leave its narratives – both the original and the reinvented – to be even more un-remember-able. That is, constraints that come with the previous version of the narrative become another form of challenge: Instead of a clear denial, subtle maneuvers are preferred. For instance, degrading the Chinese communists as rebels and treating the PRC government and the era that Chinese communists established as a “bad branch” in Chinese history in its narratives, even when more and more foreign countries wanted to acknowledge two Chinas, the KMT government adopted a “zero tolerance” policy toward such relations. Thus, when a foreign country chose to establish diplomatic relations with the “fake” Chinese regime, the “authentic” ROC government had to break off diplomatic relations with it. Moreover, when the United Nations wanted to include both the PRC government and the ROC government as members, the “authentic” Chinese nation believed that it was humiliated and chose to leave. Also, although facing this prolonged condition, it was difficult (if not impossible) for the official Chinese nationalism to claim that the shared present could be an eternal condition and the envisioned bright future may never come.

To uphold its own internal consistency (even if only ostensibly), mnemonic engineering must try its best to stick to the previous master commemorative narratives: To achieve this goal, sometimes we may investigate “irrational” decisions made, such as the ROC’s exit from the United Nations in 1971. That is, the previous shaped collective memory may become a challenge in the later stage in a single mnemonic engineering.

Ongoing Modifications

In addition to mnemonic techniques such as oblivion, marginalization, and negation of the alternative narratives, mnemonic engineering in fact actively performs ongoing adjustments and modifications to cope with unavoidable challenges and to maintain its legitimacy (Lewis 1975; FitGerald 1980; Schudson 1989). As a form of mnemonic engineering, official Chinese nationalism continued to process adjustments to respond to the mentioned challenges and resulting identity risk. Therefore, although usually giving an impression that it remains unchanged and static, all mnemonic engineering engages in various scales of modification. According to the context in which it is situated, mnemonic engineering “tunes” its discourses and/or practices whenever necessary. Since mnemonic engineering always schedules mnemonic refreshment on a regular basis, it has opportunities to disseminate its adjusted discourses and/or practices.

As for official Chinese nationalism, several discursive adjustments were made that consequently influenced its practices in mnemonic engineering. For example, as mentioned, after being treated as a big beginning in the first few years after 1949, 1911 was transformed into a small beginning in later stages so as to highlight the continuity of a “5,000-year” dynastic succession national history and legitimize the ROC as the latest Chinese dynasty. After all, facing another regime claiming that it had established a new China due to the demise of the corrupt Republic era in 1949 and that the KMT government was merely a defeated force led by Chiang which appropriated Taiwan and transformed it into a renegade province, some emphasis had be put on the KMT

government's "authenticity" as time went by and uncertain feelings increased. Moreover, since the chances of recovering mainland China seemed to diminish with the prolonged "abnormal" condition, official Chinese nationalism had to redefine the current status of *the* Chinese nation. Although the official narration still treated the period as "abnormal" and "temporary," Taiwan gradually came to be described as a "model province" for all other provinces in mainland China to mimic, rather than only as a practical tool and the so-called sacred bastion for recovery. The basic logic behind this was that the "authentic" Chinese government (the KMT) outplayed the "fake" Chinese government (the PRC) in terms of governance with its superior "Three Principles of the People" and democratic values. Thus, the claimed "shameful" present was redefined as an "honorable" present. Appropriate humiliation can motivate intended national members to fix the condition, but too much humiliation may discourage people from believing in the possibility of change. Following are two excerpts from the presidential speeches that exemplify this redefinition:

...Hence, we've followed our ideal "Three Principles of the People" and are dedicated to the construction of our bastion of recovery [Taiwan]. Our ultimate goal is to unite with the mainland with freedom and democracy and to establish a firm base for peace in Asia and the whole wide world. Because of the sincere cooperation and hard work of our national members in different areas, **we have rebuilt Chinese people's confidence and self-esteem, and we have also proved our own value.** We always expect more from ourselves, and we always put all our expectations into practice. We should lead other people to have a correct understanding of the Republic of China...

(Emphasis added. Presidential speech in 1986, *Economic Daily News*, 10 Oct. 1986).

Today...we have reached a consensus among national members that we all want a modern society that not only embraces freedom, democracy, and legal regulation politically, but also cherishes equality and prosperity economically...we deeply believe that the faster the development in our recovery bastion, the worse the PRC government seems to be.

(Presidential speech in 1987, *UDN*, 10 Oct. 1987).

Intriguingly, right after the redefinition of the present status as honorable, the goal to end the “abnormal” current status by defeating the Chinese Communists was also mentioned:

...We have successfully built a peaceful, happy, and prosperous society, and we have transformed from an undeveloped country to a highly developed country: We act as a practical model to other developing countries. We also behave as an anti-Communism bastion...our determination to thoroughly defeat Communism will never change until we win the final victory in this anti-Communism war.

(Presidential speech in 1986, *Economic Daily News*, 10 Oct. 1986).

...Hence, the more effort our military personnel and general people can invest, the more progress can be achieved; as a result, it means the more pressure that we cause to the PRC government’s violent ruling, the more hope we bring to our national members in the mainland. Most importantly, it indicates the earlier we can accomplish our grand enterprise of defeating the Chinese communism and recovering mainland China.

(Presidential speech in 1987, *UDN*, 10 Oct. 1987).

In addition, although events in Taiwan in the early decades after 1949 were mostly selected as “outside” the national story once they were not related to recovery of the mainland, starting in the late 1970s, official Chinese nationalism gradually incorporated more Taiwanese events that occurred after 1949 into its narration because of the prolonged “abnormal” conditions arousing suspicion, the further embeddedness of the ROC government into its directly ruled areas, and the prevalence of alternative national imaginings. For example, in both presidential speeches and surrounding narratives, detailed descriptions appeared of how Taiwan — as a sacred bastion *and* as a province — had been “well” constructed by the ROC government.⁶⁷ In fact, with the redefinition of the current condition and the emphasis on the successful development of the recovery bastion, a sophisticated and implicit modification also occurred: In the late phase of

⁶⁷ For a typical example, see the presidential speech in *UDN* 10 Oct. 1977: A1.

official Chinese nationalism, the reiterated national goal of recovering the mainland transformed into a rather passive national mission instead of an active mission. That is, how the military forces and other societal fields were better prepared to “fight back” against the mainland received less emphasis and the focus was on how the “free China” areas (especially Taiwan) were well developed under the governance of the ROC government and would become great models for other provinces in the mainland when the reunification occurred. Nevertheless, the exact method of how “recovery [of] the mainland” would occur was left ambiguous in the later stages of the official narrative. Some excerpts from presidential speeches and surrounding narratives may facilitate our understanding of this modification:

After thirty years’ cruel suppression by the communists, national members in the mainland now admire the free bastion of Taiwan and request to live as national members in Taiwan. Let’s raise our arms and gather together under the flag of the “Three Principles of the People” to move against the tyranny of communism...

(Presidential speech in 1979, *Economic Daily News*, 10 Oct. 1979).

“Recover the mainland politically” was usually deemed merely a slogan. However, till today, the facts have already proved that right from the very day our former president Chiang [Kai-shek] took his position again in Taiwan [1949], our action to recover the mainland with politics had begun. During the past thirty years, the construction we made regarding the political arena, economic development, the educational system, and the cultural field in our Taiwan bastion all provided great models for mainland China. China must be reunified; by simply following our path to reunify China, Chinese society will take steps toward democracy, freedom, and happiness...(UDN [113], 10 Oct. 1980).

In brief, the focus regarding the collective goal of the whole mnemonic community switched from claiming the mainland should be recovered by actively “fighting back” and “defeating the ‘evil’ Chinese communists” to (rather passively) working on the construction and development of the sacred bastion (UDN [114], 11 Oct. 1987). The

reason that this modification should be considered “sophisticated” and “implicit” is that a certain degree of collective denial of this adjustment can be observed (E. Zerubavel 2006: 33-46). As mentioned earlier, explicitly negating the former narrative in the mnemonic engineering may reduce the validity of the whole project – especially when recovery of the mainland had been such a core argument. Therefore, when the planned method to reach the goal was modified, the modification itself had to be dealt with strategically. Consequently, on the one hand, the change in the master narrative regarding this aspect was rarely brought up explicitly; on the other hand, the former narrative was never completely deleted and was put into the new narrative.

Another adjustment that can be seen in official Chinese nationalism’s narrative is that, whereas in the earlier decades after 1949 Taiwan was exclusively described as a “sacred bastion” in the narratives (more intriguingly, even the term “Taiwan” was mostly left unmentioned), in the final stage of the official Chinese nationalism, Taiwan was sometimes treated as a surrogate motherland for intended national members. Both the prolonged “temporary” current status and the strict prohibition on any kind of interaction across the strait created unquenchable remembered nostalgic feelings toward the motherland (mainland China); thus, Taiwan the bastion sometimes was seen as a “temporary” surrogate motherland in the later stage (*UDN* [115], 11 Oct 1985). Though mostly appearing in the surrounding narratives, this adjustment is still evident:

Premier Yu...said that about thirty thousand overseas Chinese will return to our motherland [here, specifically, Taiwan] from all over the world to participate in the ceremony. This is 10,000 more than last year, and it indicates that the more difficult our nation’s situation is, the more support that overseas Chinese want to give their mother country...Premier Yu also claimed that only the free motherland is overseas Chinese’s “homeland,” and this “home” will always welcome our loyal overseas Chinese to return (*UND* [116], 6 Oct. 1984).

To sum up, despite the apparent immutability of the master narratives in the mnemonic engineering, a closer examination with the emergent approach may easily unveil the ongoing adjustment underneath.⁶⁸ Nevertheless, an intriguing aspect of mnemonic engineering's modification is, as mentioned, that continuous adjustment all too often is performed subtly rather than bluntly. Instead of replacing the previous narrative with a new discourse, piggybacking and superimposition are commonly employed. These newly added elements were skillfully represented in the narrative through ambiguity, coexistence, and/or order changing. Following is an example that reveals how these skills were harnessed in narratives:

Our collective goal at this stage is to put the “Three Principles of the People” into practice, to recover our mainland, and to promote what we have successfully done in the bastion to every corner of our motherland. Our aim is to let every Chinese person share the pleasant life that comes with the “Three Principles of the People” and the values of democracy and freedom. We hope everyone in our nation can regain the spiritual power that comes from Chinese culture. We firmly believe that, once all our national members can understand this collective goal, we can reach consensus, have a firm belief in it, love each other, and cooperate to work on it. Where there is a will, there is a way!

(Presidential speech in 1978, *UDN*, 10 Oct. 1978)

⁶⁸ A documentary produced by a Taiwanese news channel in 2011 (the 100th anniversary of the Republic era) reviewed the commemorations on Double Tenth Day over the past 100 years. It described the commemorations during the 1950s and 1960s as solemn and serious due to the determined resolution of anti-Chinese-communism and commemorations during the 1970s as “swaying in the midst of a raging storm” with the unfriendly international condition and the ambitions to develop Taiwan and recover the mainland. In addition, commemorations during the 1980s were described as “the truly happy National Celebration” since the rapid development of the Taiwanese economy and the further identifying with Taiwan island, and it was claimed that the reunification can be reached by (simply) promoting the Three Principles of the People. This documentary also summarized that, whereas the KMT-led ROC government claimed national status as the “Republic of China retreats to Taiwan” in the early decades after the 1949 Retreat, it subtly redefined the national status as “Republic of China is in Taiwan” in the later decades. This observation indeed echoed the aforementioned modifications in official Chinese nationalism. After 1987, the official narratives (under following waves of nationbuilding) reinterpreted the current condition as the “Republic of China is Taiwan.” See <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dY43DJbJqX4> for more details (retrieved February 10, 2013).

The original collective goal and the adjusted goal were mixed together and coexisted. Usually, as one study points out, common people did not sense a huge transformation in the master narrative and could, therefore, memorize the revised narrative without noticing the contradictions in different compartments of their memory (Y. Zerubavel 1995: 216-221). That is, internal inconsistency in the mnemonic engineering usually is ignored by its audience. Therefore, in official Chinese nationalism's case, instead of completely negating the previous version of narratives, 1911 as a "Beginning" and a "beginning" was juxtaposed in the official narrative, the perception of Taiwan as a sacred bastion and as a model province coexisted, the "shameful" present and the "honorable" present were mixed, the active and passive collective goals were mentioned together, the added Taiwanese elements were superimposed on the strong emphasis on Chinese history, and the mainland and Taiwan were both seen as the motherland.

Mnemonic Sediments

Depending on the effectiveness of the mnemonic engineering, different degrees of mnemonic sediments are formed: The higher the effectiveness, the thicker and sturdier the sediments. Whereas mnemonic sediments are not what mnemonic engineering can wittingly invent, through mnemonic socialization, the master narratives of mnemonic engineering usually transform into something the intended audience is familiar with and even sees as inevitable. Effective mnemonic engineering leads people to remember their past, present, future, and, most importantly, their identification. Consequently, the "essences" of mnemonic engineering become sources for providing people with

ontological security, and people tend to wittingly or unwittingly grasp them. Sometimes, even mnemonic deviants find themselves unexpectedly and habitually reproducing the “essences” of mnemonic engineering that they want to oppose or even forget. In other words, mnemonic sediments are the taken-for-granted memories that are invented through previous mnemonic engineering. The “leftover” essences from previous mnemonic engineering – either from the earlier stage of the same mnemonic engineering or from a different mnemonic engineering – are mnemonic sediments.

When discussing the persistence of the past, Spillman argued that some past events are invented as more functionally and charismatically meaningful, and they therefore turn out to be robust and hence persist in the collective memories (2003: 161-92). These “robust memories” should be regarded as the “essences” and are more likely to settle into mnemonic sediments. Hence, on the one hand, it is not surprising to know that a society has layers of mnemonic sediments that more or less demonstrate the trajectory of its mnemonic engineering. On the other hand, mnemonic sediments cause two types of path-dependency: path-dependency *within* a single mnemonic engineering and path-dependency *between* different mnemonic engineering. That is, whereas we sometimes are amazed by the fluidity and malleability of collective memories, in line with many scholars’ statements, I suggest that collective memories are not totally fluid (Berger & Luckmann 1967: 67-71) or malleable.

Mnemonic sediments *within* a mnemonic engineering refer to early-stage mnemonic work that can enable or, ironically, limit later-stage mnemonic work. Whereas the former is desirable, the latter is an unintended consequence of mnemonic engineering. Being constrained by the mnemonic sediments it creates in the earlier stage implies that (again)

mnemonic engineering is not totally fluid. Briefly, from time to time, mnemonic engineering must deal with its own sediments. It cannot simply throw away what it has narrated and promoted even when continuous adjustment is performed in the later stage and, as said, an explicit negation can only harm the validity of the whole project. The existence of mnemonic sediments explains why contradictions in different compartments of people's collective memory can be investigated. The mnemonic engineering of official Chinese nationalism from 1949 through 1987 formed robust "within" mnemonic sediments. Although the mnemonic sediments of the early stage did not completely predetermine the later stage's narratives and collective memory, to a great extent, it did constrain the possible choices. For instance, the successful ingrained memory of "we are the authentic Chinese, they are the fake Chinese" and "the shameful present will soon be fixed by a bright future" from the early stage could never be directly challenged even when the circumstances of the KMT government changed in the later stage. Moreover, "not to reunify with the mainland" was never an option for official Chinese nationalism. After all, the intended national members derived a sense of ontological security by finding the answer to "who we are" and "what we have to do" through the specific mnemonic vision of official Chinese nationalism; rudely eradicating the previous mnemonic sediments not only would be a clumsy way to execute the modifications, but also would put the whole mnemonic community in jeopardy of collapsing.

As for mnemonic sediments *between* different mnemonic engineerings, since mnemonic rivals strive to lead more people to remember their own stories and narratives, sediments from other mnemonic engineerings without exception create obstacles. Nevertheless, although aimed at promoting a distinct collective memory, when

confronting mnemonic sediments from previous engineering, the “latecomer” mnemonic engineering usually has to strategically employ ways to “smuggle in” its own version of narratives, memories, and thus identification at least in the early stage. Promptly eliminating mnemonic sediments that the intended audience still firmly remembers runs the risk of offending them and losing their trust. The thicker and studier the sediments left by previous engineering, the harder for the latecomer to “brush them away” and the higher the possibility that the mnemonic community built by the previous engineering can revive. In brief, a new mnemonic engineering usually must superimpose its alternative narrative and memory on the previous version to increase the chances of broad acceptance by the intended audience.

The mnemonic engineering of official Chinese nationalism from 1949 through 1987 formed sturdy “between” mnemonic sediments: Whereas the emergence of Taiwanese nationalism provided a narrative that differed from the official national story for common people, Double Tenth Day is still broadly celebrated and was never abolished even after Taiwanese nationalists acquired ruling power in 2000 and sought to promote a distinct national identity. The case of Double Tenth Day indicates that even when the Taiwanese nationalists captured power, they had to tolerate the wrong “beginning” of national history that Double Tenth Day symbolized and continuously use the “year” of the Republic era without interruption. The chronological eras narrated by the official Chinese nationalism were not renounced and most of their symbolic meanings remained intact; more importantly, Taiwanese nationalists did not actively harness the calendrical reform to introduce their own version of commemorative narratives (E. Zerubavel 1981: 70-100). It was a tough (if not impossible) mission for Taiwanese nationalists to “brush away” the

mnemonic sediments of official Chinese nationalism from 1949 through 1987. Robust memories resist change, and once a commemorative pattern is formed, it becomes an obstacle to introduce new patterns (Durkheim 1950 [1895]: 69). How the mnemonic sediments of official Chinese nationalism influenced the following nationbuilding and mnemonic engineering after 1987 will be further explored in chapter 6.

Mnemonic Revolution versus Mnemonic Reform

According to the style that mnemonic engineering manages with sediments from previous engineering, a distinction between *mnemonic revolution* and *mnemonic reform* should be made. A mnemonic revolution means “all-out” mnemonic engineering that tries to erase any previous mnemonic sediment. A mnemonic revolution is usually adopted due to control of more resources and/or an urgent need to disseminate a whole new collective memory and thus identification. Launching a mnemonic revolution means that all the intended audience members are expected to become mnemonic conformists, and there is a zero-tolerance policy toward mnemonic deviants. Hence, it is not uncommon to observe that a mnemonic revolution would eliminate alternative memories and identifications in all social fields. Official Chinese nationalism is a great example of a mnemonic revolution: In its narrative, events that occurred before 1949 in Taiwan were totally and dramatically relegated to oblivion (through both mnemonic and coercive means). This explains why the KMT government did not need to confront the mnemonic sediments of the 50-year Japanese colonization, at least in the early decades after 1949.

Nevertheless, even “all-out” official nationalism allowed room for popular memories (Y. Zerubavel 1995: xviii; Spillman 1997: 35). Taiwanese nationalism emerged as an

alternative collective memory commemorating events on the island of Taiwan both before and after 1949. Taiwanese nationalists claimed that the KMT government should not erase Japanese colonization – as a significant historical event before 1949 (Lamley 2007 [1999]: 201-260) – and other Taiwanese events from the national history. Calling an “all-out” mnemonic revolution immoral, Taiwanese nationalists conducted mnemonic reform instead of a mnemonic revolution when Taiwanese nationalism became the official nationalism from 2000 to 2008. Mnemonic reform is usually adopted due to not controlling many resources, a considerable number of mnemonic conformists of previous mnemonic engineering existing, and believing that a mnemonic revolution is unethical and/or impractical. Unlike a mnemonic revolution, mnemonic reform juxtaposes and/or superimposes its own narrative with other memories and tolerates contradictions that exist in different layers of the mnemonic sediment. For instance, in the mnemonic engineering of official Taiwanese nationalism, the decorations and ceremonies of Double Tenth Day were rife with Taiwanese symbols but the date of National Celebration Day did not change and the content of textbooks was redesigned to cover events that occurred in Taiwan without deleting events that occurred in mainland China. In addition, only a few roads and streets were renamed to include Taiwanese elements. However, this did not alter the fact that the names of most roads and streets in major cities were “duplications” of Chinese provinces under official Chinese nationalism and were intended to make Taiwan island a miniature mainland China (Azaryahu 1996: 311-330). Finally, the official name representing the nation was corrected by Taiwanese nationalists to “Taiwan” in many fields without formally forbidding the use of “Republic of China.” This demonstrates that it is difficult — if not impossible — for an official nationalism

that adopts mnemonic reform to achieve a complete mnemonic alignment among national members. As a result, since numerous mnemonic works from the official Chinese nationalism were maintained under official Taiwanese nationalism, it is not surprising to find that even the nationbuilding from 2000 through 2008 to some extent ironically reproduced the significance of Double Tenth Day (and thus the Chinese nationality).

There is no easy way to judge whether mnemonic revolution or mnemonic reform presents a “better” style of mnemonic engineering. Although a mnemonic revolution seems to eliminate all mnemonic sediments as a guarantee of obtaining the effect of its mnemonic work within a short time, in the long run, all too often it still has to face significant resistance from mnemonic rivals (even only from the peripheral fields) and various challenges due to its own exclusiveness and suppression. In contrast, while mnemonic reform constantly deals with mnemonic sediments and counter-memories, once maneuvering a way to coexist with other versions of commemorative narratives and identifications, its promoted memory and identity can also be deemed rememberable, create mnemonic sediments, and gradually obtain more mnemonic conformists of its own.

In addition, it is wrong to assume that once a style of mnemonic engineering is adopted it has to always remain the same. It is still possible for a single mnemonic engineering to change its style – either from revolution to reform or vice versa – at different stages for reasons such as variations of social context, challenges, and changes of leadership. After all, the classification between mnemonic revolution and mnemonic reform is a theoretical binary. These two styles are indeed situated on a continuum: Although we can categorize a mnemonic engineering as being closer to the “pure” mnemonic revolution end or closer to the “pure” mnemonic reform end, in reality, it is common to see a mixture of the two.

Whereas it is never easy to switch between distinct styles of mnemonic engineering, in official Chinese nationalism's case, at least in the final stage, it had a higher tolerance toward alternative memories and identities and allowed some obliterated occurrences to be recalled.⁶⁹ Even within the camp of Taiwanese nationalism, there were disputes over whether it should become more aggressive – that is, transform from mnemonic reform to mnemonic revolution – once it transformed into an official nationalism (*UDN* [117] 11 Oct 2005; *UDN* [118] 05 Oct. 2007). More intriguingly, after being the popular nationalism for years, when Chinese nationalists grasped power and the Chinese nationalism once again became the official nationalism, mnemonic reform instead of mnemonic revolution was employed: The mnemonic sediments from previous official Taiwanese nationalism were not eradicated in a rush, and compromises in the official narratives that juxtaposed contradictory components can be seen frequently (Yeh 2014a; Yu & Kwan 2008).⁷⁰

Mnemonic Engineering as an Ongoing Accomplishment

Various idiosyncrasies of mnemonic engineering are identified and elaborated in this chapter, and these observations can be applied to mnemonic work in general and official Chinese nationalism in particular. Among other things, a characteristic deserving more attention is that to cope with challenges, mnemonic engineering engaged in ongoing modifications, as the official Chinese nationalism case illustrates. The emergent approach

⁶⁹ Thus, when the first oppositional party — the Democratic Progressive Party, which was composed mainly of Taiwanese nationalists — was established in 1986 “illegally,” it didn’t face formal punishment.

⁷⁰ This relates to the sediments “between” mnemonic engineerings and is discussed in more depth in chapter 6.

thus can better capture the constant adjustments in mnemonic engineering than the non-emergent approach (Yeh 2013; Pickering 2002: 413-437; Pickering 1993: 559-589).

Mnemonic engineering is never a “one-shot” game: There are always new elements to be added to it, old elements to be marginalized and even discarded from it, and combinations of both new and old elements to be strategically invented within it. Hence, what a specific mnemonic engineering was, is, and will be – and thus the collective memory and identification that result from it – needs to be closely examined.

Taking official Chinese nationalism’s mnemonic engineering as an example, the standard to measure “the loyal national member” was not fixed and in fact kept changing in response to ongoing modifications. Thus, intended national members who stubbornly stuck to the previous version of narratives without updating and aligning their remembrance not only were regarded as anachronistic, but also could be accused of being mnemonic deviants of the mnemonic community (or the “authentic” China). For instance, when development of the sacred bastion of Taiwan became the primary collective goal, people who aggressively argued to “fight back” against the mainland with military strength were seen as inappropriate. Nevertheless, according to the analysis, under most circumstances, intended national members seemed to smoothly memorize the updated version of the master commemorative narrative, collective memory, and thus identification without questioning the inconsistencies.

Chapter 6
The Legacies of Chinese Nationalism

[S]uccessive representations of a past do not follow each other willy-nilly merely as one representation after another, but form a dialogue...Remembering, in other words, is like a conversation: neither the speaker nor the analysts can fully understand any particular utterance except by locating it in a chain of utterances (Olick 2005:333).

Mnemonic engineering advances a collective memory and thus identity for its audience. Moreover, remembering is simply a guarantee to “re-member-ing,” that is, to making sure that people’s membership in a specific mnemonic community can be renewed on a regular basis by aligning and refreshing their memory. Despite the fact that people may receive messages from multiple mnemonic engineerings at the same time and that each may carry different or even contradictory narratives, a specific mnemonic engineering’s main goals are not only to increase its own volume and density but also to decrease the volume and density of mnemonic rivals. Although mnemonic engineering is highly loaded with techniques and intentions to invent collective memory and identification, its main purpose is to tell stories so as to define a shared past, present, and future. Thus, instead of a conspiracy plotted by “evil” leaders or rulers, mnemonic engineering is more about making sense of who we are and bringing ontological security to the leaders and members of a mnemonic community. Additionally, although it is rife with rational calculations, we do observe unexpected consequences of mnemonic engineering because it is difficult to fully control and anticipate everything. In official Chinese nationalism’s case, the Kuomintang (KMT) government tried to demonize the People’s Republic of

China (PRC) government by bridging it to Soviet communism;⁷¹ however, the KMT's invented "glorious October," which was celebrated by *the* authentic Chinese people due to several significant national holidays being observed in October, ironically overlapped Russia's admiration of the "Great October." That is, although the mnemonic engineering of official Chinese nationalism intentionally avoided overlapping the PRC government and a mnemonic boundary line between the two served as evidence of their huge differences, mnemonic engineering cannot be completely planned and plotted with rationality alone. Somehow, factors such as emotions, developmental trajectories, habits, and contingencies play a role in it. As a consequence, in reality, any mnemonic engineering is a mixture of rational and irrational factors.

This chapter discusses the "legacy" of official Chinese nationalism, which appeared in the following waves of mnemonic engineering (and thereby nationbuilding) even when the government was promoting a distinct collective memory and national identification.⁷² On one hand, the chapter illustrates the effectiveness of official Chinese nationalism's mnemonic engineering; on the other, it demonstrates how the trajectory of mnemonic

⁷¹ As mentioned, the PRC government also tried to degrade the KMT-led ROC government by bridging it to the American capitalism.

⁷² After 1987, since President Chiang died without officially designating a successor, the KMT entered a period of furious internal conflict. Lee Teng-hui seized this chance and became the president of the ROC from 1988 through 2000. Although representing the KMT, as a Taiwanese nationalist, President Lee (and his government) employed subtle ways to smuggle Taiwanese elements into people's memory and thus to nurture Taiwanese consciousness. Indeed, the prolonged "temporary" stay in Taiwan also caused the modifications in official Chinese nationalism in the 1980s to edit in more Taiwanese elements in its master narratives and thus "polluted" the purity of Chinese nationalism. Hence, from 1988 through 2000, while the government was still KMT-led, we no longer observe pure official Chinese nationalism. Moreover, the Taiwanese nationalists eventually organized their own political party, the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) in 1986; ever since, Taiwanese nationalism has been promoted as a popular nationalism. When Chen Shui-bian – the presidential candidate of the DPP – won the elections in 2000 and 2004, the Taiwanese nationalism became the official nationalism from 2000 through 2008. Nevertheless, having been the popular nationalism from 2000 through 2008, Chinese nationalism "returned" as the official nationalism when Ma Ying-jeou (the presidential candidate of the KMT) captured the presidency in both 2008 and 2012. See Yeh (2014a) for more discussion on different waves of nationbuilding in Taiwan after 1949.

engineering in a specific field (here, nationbuilding) exerts its influence. The legacy of official Chinese nationalism means that its mnemonic sediments (its “essences”) appeared in the following waves of mnemonic engineering. As the quotation at the beginning of this chapter indicates, the fluidity of collective memory (and thus created identification) should not be exaggerated. The invented and remembered memories and identities at an earlier point in time work to facilitate or constrain those appearing at a later point in time. Thus, as mentioned, once a mnemonic reform is adopted (instead of a mnemonic revolution), a path-dependent process can be observed even when contradictory memories and opposite identities are invented.

Mnemonic Boundary Work

What people remember determines their identification. More importantly, any community can be seen as a mnemonic community whose members recall a distinctive shared past, present, and future. Ideally, a fine mnemonic boundary line is drawn between two communities due to people performing their boundary work mnemonically as well. The avoidance of overlap in the collective memories of two distinct communities symbolizes that the communities are each other’s mnemonic rivals (E. Zerubavel 1982:284-289). For example, while the PRC government commemorated the 228 Incident, the Republic of China (ROC) government left this event in oblivion from 1949 through 1987.⁷³ Moreover, although official Chinese nationalism largely selected out the

⁷³ Taiwanese nationalists also had made effort to highlight the significance of the 228 Incident and harshly complained that official Chinese nationalism should not select out this event from the national history. To some extent, the importance of the 228 Incident is also constructed. Just like all the other remarkable social

Japanese colonization in Taiwan from the shared past, the Taiwanese nationalists claimed that it should be remembered.

While a certain degree of overlap is acceptable, too much overlap in the collective memories of two communities may imply that the mnemonic boundary between them is blurred and the distinction between them is diminished or disappearing. As a result, the unique identity of a given mnemonic group would be difficult to manage. Hence, when two mnemonic communities maintain a rivalry relationship, the memory organizers usually find that a blurred mnemonic boundary line damages members' communal commitment and thus they perceive the necessity to maintain their communal identities intact by claiming a monopoly on specific mnemonic symbols. This explains why the ROC government found it intolerable when the PRC government commemorated the Xin-Hai Revolution and admired Sun Yat-sen as a national hero. After all, keeping the boundary line unspoiled may bring a sense of "cleanliness" and "purity," and the opposite may create a feeling of "being polluted" or "contaminated" (Douglas 1996; Nippert-Eng 1996; Yeh 2014b). Nevertheless, in reality – as we will see from the case of official Taiwanese nationalism – due to factors such as rational consideration and habitual taken-for-granted-ness, all too often we see a mixture of contradictory messages from multiple mnemonic engineerings in a specific mnemonic engineering.

Considering the radical performance of Taiwanese nationalists during the 1980s and 1990s, many expected that once they captured ruling power, Double Tenth Day, as the National Celebration Day that symbolized a "wrong" beginning for the nation (from

events, the 228 Incident did not first occur, only later to be written about: It was not experienced by contemporaries, only later to be remembered by them (Corney 2003:36).

Taiwanese nationalists' perspective), would inevitably be canceled. Hence, when Taiwanese nationalism eventually became the official nationalism from 2000 to 2008, the fact that Double Tenth Day remained as the National Celebration Day and the central government still arranged to commemorate it became a conundrum. This is not to say that there were no disputes within the camp of Taiwanese nationalism about to adopt a more "radical" and "thorough" way (such as mnemonic revolution) to instill its own version of memory and identity. Moreover, which date can better represent the Taiwan nation and be assigned as the National Celebration Day was also discussed within the camp of Taiwanese nationalism from time to time during 2000 to 2008 (*UDN* [119], 11 Oct. 2005; *UDN* [120], 11 Oct. 2006). Nevertheless, these disputes and discussions were rarely raised to the official level, and the power elites from Taiwanese nationalism who took office in the central government still celebrate Double Tenth Day annually.

To understand why the mnemonic engineering of official Taiwanese nationalism did not replace Double Tenth Day with another date that may more "correctly" symbolize the beginning of the Taiwan nation, we need to locate official Taiwanese nationalism in "the chain of utterances" (borrowing Olick's concept) of mnemonic engineering in Taiwan to see how its trajectory worked to exert influence.

The Legacies in Official Taiwanese Nationalism

A significant trait of Taiwanese nationalism is that Taiwanese nationalists adopted mnemonic reform instead of mnemonic revolution, even when their account eventually became the official nationalism and they employed plenty of institutional resources to

promote their own version of collective memory and thus national identity. As a result, the effects of path-dependency on the mnemonic engineering were therefore tremendous and we can observe the legacy of the official Chinese nationalism in it. As we shall see, several factors may explain the style adopted in Taiwanese nationalism's mnemonic engineering (Jiang 2001; Corcuff 2002; Dickson & Chao 2002; Lynch 2006; Fell 2012). Most importantly, having criticized Chinese nationalism's mnemonic revolution as "mnemonically unethical" for decades, Taiwanese nationalists adopted mnemonic reform to avoid overlapping with the style of mnemonic engineering under official Chinese nationalism even after they captured ruling power. Moreover, to a certain extent, Taiwanese nationalists habitually inherited narratives and traditions from Chinese nationalism when they captured ruling power in 2000. After being mnemonically socialized to Chinese nationalism for decades, it was hard for Taiwanese nationalists to fully develop their own commemorative narratives because many strongly related events had been selected out and erased from official Chinese nationalism's version of collective memory. Thus, their capacity to remember/narrate an alternative was constrained. A vivid example is that when the "extremists" in the Taiwanese nationalism camp proposed choosing another date as the national day for the Taiwan nation, they either failed to evoke enthusiastic support or were not sufficiently imaginative to think of an appropriate alternative date (*UDN* [121], 9 Oct. 2000; *UDN* [122], 10 Oct. 2000).

In addition, emerging as popular nationalism, Taiwanese nationalism had always experienced competition from alternative nationalisms and thus showed higher tolerance for distinct memories and identities. Yet another factor is that, whereas the candidate (Chen Shui-bian) from the Taiwanese nationalism camp won the presidential elections in

2000 and 2004, both elections were pretty close. This demonstrated that Chinese nationalism retained many mnemonic conformists and Taiwanese nationalists encountered huge obstacles and resistance in selecting out or even negating the master commemorative narratives of Chinese nationalism. The negative attitude that the PRC government held toward Taiwan independence and its determination to reunify also more or less intimidated Taiwanese nationalists (Wachman 2007; Rigger 2011). Finally, the period from 1988 to 1999 set the “tune” for the official Taiwanese nationalism: While the KMT’s Lee Teng-hui was president during this time, he employed resources to promote Taiwanese consciousness.⁷⁴ Nevertheless, under strategic considerations, Lee mainly did this by using rather nuanced methods. For instance, although more narratives on events that occurred on Taiwan island can be observed, the master narratives of official Chinese nationalism were never directly challenged. That is, piggybacking, superimposing, and juxtaposing were frequently used mnemonic techniques. More importantly, mnemonic engineering under Lee’s government did “successfully” lead its audiences to identify themselves as (also) “Taiwanese.”⁷⁵ Taiwanese nationalists’ capture of the presidency in 2000 serves as additional strong evidence of the burgeoning Taiwanese nationalism. Lee even proudly claimed that he had led a “silent revolution” from 1988 to 1999 (Lee 1999; Dickson & Chao 2002; Tsai 2005; Kagan 2007), and thus Taiwanese nationalists did not consider adopting a more radical style of mnemonic engineering in the following period.

⁷⁴ Many doubted how Lee (as a Taiwanese nationalist) could capture the presidency in 1988; in fact, his personal strategies, the fiery clique competition among the KMT elites after 1987, and the geopolitics in East Asia all contributed to it. For more discussion of how Lee Teng-hui became president of the ROC government, see Lin (1999:87-152).

⁷⁵ From 1991 to 2001, the percentage of those who identified themselves as “Taiwanese” ballooned from less than 20% to close to 50% (Chao 2003:289).

In brief, the government under the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) – the long-term oppositional party in Taiwan that promoted Taiwanese nationalism and obtained ruling power from 2000 through 2008 – harnessed ways to “smuggle in” its own version of collective memory and thus national identity instead of explicitly negating the alternative narratives, memories, and identities. As for observing the so-called “National Day,” consistent with its mnemonic engineering in other fields, official Taiwanese nationalism tolerated the alternatives. For example, while events that occurred in Taiwan before and after 1949 were added to the textbooks, they were juxtaposed against the occurrences on the mainland; although a couple of streets were renamed to reflect “localization” and Taiwanese characteristics, this did not change the fact that in big cities, most streets were still named after Chinese provinces to commemorate those provinces and to create the illusion of spatial continuity (Palonen 2008: 219-230).⁷⁶ Instead of canceling Double Tenth Day and replacing it with a date that could better represent “Taiwan as a nation,” official Taiwanese nationalism continued to hold ceremonies and celebrate the “national day” on October 10. More importantly, President Chen’s public

⁷⁶ A “Rectification Campaign” pushed by Taiwanese nationalists and undertaken in 2000 worked to reconfigure spaces by renaming some streets and parks (Lu 2002). Moreover, in 2002, President Chen’s government attempted to replace the terms “China,” “Republic of China,” and “Taipei” with the term “Taiwan” on official documents and in the names of Taiwan-registered organizations, companies, and public enterprises. In 2003, the Foreign Ministry issued a new passport with the word “Taiwan” printed on its cover. The “de-China” movement reached its peak in 2007: The name of the official postal service of Taiwan was changed from the Chunghwa Post Co. to the Taiwan Post Co.; the Chiang Kai-shek memorial hall was renamed as the National Taiwan Democracy Memorial Hall; and the statues of Chiang Kai-shek which were erected on every campus, many parks, and intersections were removed and destroyed. That is, while the Chinese nationalists constructed the KMT leader Chiang Kai-shek as the “savior” of the Chinese people, the Taiwanese nationalists reinvented him as a “ruthless” and “corrupted” authoritarian who killed countless Taiwanese people and appropriated the wealth of the Taiwanese people. Nevertheless, not only did all the mentioned efforts encounter serious opposition from the popular Chinese nationalism, but also these efforts were very limitedly operated, which by no means broadly challenged the robust memory left by official Chinese nationalism. Most importantly, when Chinese nationalists captured ruling power again in 2008, the returned Chinese nationalism soon raised a *New Rectification Campaign* to annihilate the effects of the aforementioned efforts. For reports on these issues, see China Post, “DPP Urges Probe to ‘Uncover Truth’ of 2-28,” China Post 8 Feb. 2007; China Post, “The Name-Change Fever,” China Post, 11 Feb. 2007; Sina News, “President Ma raises a ‘New Rectification Campaign,’” Sina News, 9 June 2008.

speeches on Double Tenth Day rarely (if ever) directly challenged the master commemorative narrative of Chinese nationalism.

Nevertheless, Taiwanese nationalism successfully introduced its messages into both the narratives and the ceremonies on Double Tenth Day. Hence, although commemorative ceremonies were still held, the titles of the main ceremonies were always strongly related to “Taiwan” from 2000 through 2008 (*UDN* [123], 28 Sep. 2000; *UDN* [124], 11 Oct. 2004). While public speeches and speeches on this day did not explicitly confront Chinese nationalism, different languages were spoken: Some parts were completed in Taiwanese and other vernacular languages instead of exclusively in Chinese (*UDN* [125], 10 Oct. 2000). In fact, one invited guest even spoke Japanese when giving her speech during the central government’s main ceremony on Double Tenth Day (*UDN* [126], 11 Oct. 2002).⁷⁷ Although a significant amount of money was still spent on ceremonial decorations, the theme colors were switched from red, blue, and white to green and white; moreover, the theme songs were changed from exclusively Chinese music to songs that represented Taiwan itself (*UDN* [127], 10 Oct. 2000; *UDN* [128], 5 Oct. 2004). In terms of ceremonies and evening parties – where the so-called “patriotic stars” from Chinese nationalists’ viewpoint were seen – more and more invited celebrities and stars were people who represented the “Taiwan spirit,” the diversity of ethnicities in Taiwan, and/or people who were called “Taiwanese heroes” (*UDN* [129], 7

⁷⁷ That is, “Japanese colonization” was no longer a taboo memory under Chen’s government and official Taiwanese nationalism (Ching 2001; Lamley 2007 [1999]). Even more significant, awakening the dormant memory of the shared past (Japanese colonization) may have facilitated official Taiwanese nationalism to invent its own version of collective memory and national identification, leading people to recall the events on Taiwan island before the 1949 Retreat. Also, it reveals that the act of tracing “the chain of utterances” of researchers should not stop at the official Chinese nationalism, but should extend to even the repeated colonization.

Oct. 2005; *UDN* [130], 6 Oct. 2007). With regard to the food at the “national banquet,” which all the invited celebrities and significant guests from foreign countries attended, the Chinese cuisines (mainly cuisines from the mainland) were replaced by famous dishes from various places in Taiwan. Additionally, while some overseas Chinese still participated in the commemorative ceremonies on Double Tenth Day, the numbers were dramatically dropping as a consequence of less effort and fewer resources spent to encourage them to return to the celebration (*UDN* [131], 10 Oct. 2001; *UDN* [132], 27 Sep. 2006). The goal of the changes and adjustments under the DPP government regarding the ceremonial arrangements was to symbolically get more Taiwanese elements and fewer Chinese factors involved in the commemorations. In the long run, since fewer Chinese symbols were employed in the ceremonies, a certain degree of difficulty entered the effort to refresh and align the pure Chinese nationalism. Indeed, enthusiastic Chinese nationalists expressed concern about the gradual exclusion of Chinese symbols on Double Tenth Day.

Furthermore, the mnemonic engineering of Taiwanese nationalism skillfully imported new narratives through presidential speeches and surrounding narratives on Double Tenth Day: Efforts were made to lead people to remember a new (mnemonic) community that differed from what Chinese nationalism guided its audience to memorize. On one hand, to downplay the contradictions between Taiwanese nationalism and Chinese nationalism, not only was “The 400-year Taiwanese History” (the key component in Taiwanese nationalism) skirted in the day’s speeches and narratives, but “The 5,000-year Chinese

History” (the key component in Chinese nationalism) was also side-stepped.⁷⁸ On the other hand, to lead all intended national members – according to Taiwanese nationalism, people living in Taiwan and its surrounding small islands – to remember their Taiwan-ness, new plots appeared in the commemorative narratives of official Taiwanese nationalism. That is, to redraw the mnemonic boundary line for the Taiwan nation, new national stories were needed to lead people to remember their shared past, present, and future despite their huge variation and distinct life experiences. To “weave” mainlanders into the national stories, several events that occurred after the 1949 Retreat that were not directly related to “Taiwan as a sacred bastion” or “reunification with the mainland” were especially highlighted to narrate a shared past. For example, in his speeches, President Chen talked about the unfair treatment that Taiwan had faced in international society and the United Nations, the threats and suppression from the PRC government that Taiwanese people had experienced for decades, the great developments in democracy and their economy that Taiwanese people had accomplished, and the horrendous earthquake on September 21, 1999, which caused damage throughout Taiwan. All these stories helped intended national members remember that they shared something in common and evoked their patriotic emotions toward the nation. In addition, the narratives of official Taiwanese nationalism aimed at leading intended national members to remember that

⁷⁸ To “un-bridge” Taiwan island from “The 5,000-year Chinese History” (and thereby to bridge historical continuity with their own preferred past), Taiwanese nationalists narrated a “400-year” Taiwanese history that represented the “correct” shared past for Taiwan islanders. The national story told by the Taiwanese nationalists by no means is neutral: It is also a social construction and the result of the process of selectiveness. Setting very different story boundaries than the Chinese nationalism, Taiwan nationalism highlights the repeated foreign colonization that Taiwanese islanders had experienced to emphasize the discontinuity between China and Taiwan and the significance of nurturing the self-consciousness of Taiwanese islanders. See Shi 2005[1962] and 1994 for more discussion on the discontinuity between Taiwan and China.

they were experiencing a shared present – among other things, continuous suppression from the PRC government and not being acknowledged as a nation in international society – and thus a shared future – creating a friendly relationship with the PRC government, firmly establishing Taiwan as a nation, and being acknowledged in international society – that everyone should work together to achieve.⁷⁹

However, regardless of new plots and new elements that official Taiwanese nationalism wanted to import into people's memory through Double Tenth Day ceremonies and speeches, the legacy of Chinese nationalism still plays a role in the celebration. This legacy reveals the sturdiness of the sediments of Chinese nationalism as well as the complexity of the relationships among different waves of mnemonic engineering. Hence, we see that traditions invented by Chinese nationalism to foster the general observation of Double Tenth Day by intended national members were still followed and maintained. For example, a grand fireworks show was still held at night on Double Tenth Day,⁸⁰ group marriages were still held by different levels of government on Double Tenth Day (*UDN* [136], 11 Oct. 2000; *UDN* [137], 5 Aug. 2000), expectant mothers were still happy to have their babies born on Double Tenth Day and C-sections were still scheduled to intentionally deliver Double Tenth babies (*UDN* [138], 10 Oct. 2000; *UDN* [139], 18 Dec. 2003; *UDN* [140], 10 Oct. 2004), high-budget evening shows were sponsored by the central government to celebrate the day (*UDN* [141], 5 Oct. 2004;

⁷⁹ See the presidential speech of 2004 (*UDN*, 10 Oct. 2004) for a typical example.

⁸⁰ However, a “minor” adjustment was made by Chen's government: The place to hold the fireworks show was moved to different cities in the middle or south of Taiwan every year after the DPP captured ruling power instead of being held exclusively in Taipei city (*UDN* [133], 10 Oct. 2000; *UDN* [134], 11 Sep. 2002; *UDN* [135], 13 Jun. 2006). This is another example showing that official Taiwanese nationalism wanted to sneak in its own version of collective memory. According to Taiwanese nationalists, solely having the fireworks show in Taipei city had been an unjust decision and moving it to different places in Taiwan reached a balance, especially because more Taiwan islanders live in the middle and south of Taiwan.

UDN [142], 10 Oct. 2006), and all kinds of stores still held their annual sale on Double Tenth Day (*Economic Daily News* [13], 11 Oct. 2005). In addition, while definitely not spread by the DPP government, sporadic reports and articles that tell stories about the origin of Double Tenth Day, the Xin-Hai Revolution, and the first commemoration of Double Tenth Day still exist (*UDN* [143], 22 Oct. 2001; *UDN* [144], 11 Oct. 2003). Certainly, this could be the result of witting efforts from the camp of Chinese nationalism (as a strong popular nationalism from 2000 to 2008) to refresh people's memory under official Taiwanese nationalism, but the point here is that the official Taiwanese nationalism allowed these messages to appear and did not smother them.

Moreover, a mnemonic skill that official Taiwanese nationalism frequently employed in general and on Double Tenth Day commemorations in particular was being ambivalent about certain issues to allow the further work of piggybacking, juxtaposing, and superimposition. Hence, rather than directly negating the narratives of Chinese nationalism to promote its own narratives, memory, and identification, official Taiwanese nationalism built its master narrative on them and imposed something new upon them. For example, in his speeches, after claiming that "Taiwan is the Republic of China, and the Republic of China is Taiwan," President Chen went on to further maintain that Taiwanese people had developed a new Taiwan spirit and established a new Taiwan (Presidential speech of 2001, *UDN*, 11 Oct. 2001; Presidential speech of 2004, *UDN*, 10 Oct. 2004). To deal with the robust mnemonic sediments from previous mnemonic engineering(s) – in this case, for instance, the national name as "Republic of China" – the newly invented national name "Taiwan" had to first be related to "ROC." Instead of discarding "ROC" as the national name, its legitimacy was admitted. Through doing so,

the newly invented national name “Taiwan” could be “carried on the back” of the broadly accepted national name “ROC” and be transported into people’s collective memory more easily. Also, the national names “Taiwan” and “ROC” were placed side by side to give the proposed national members an impression that these two names are close, are both remarkable, and refer to the same entity. More importantly, building on the previous two steps, something new was brought into the picture: The proposed national members were encouraged to pursue a new national spirit and establish a new nation. In the last part, “ROC” was implicitly left as the backdrop, and “Taiwan” explicitly stood out. In brief, the mentioned three strategies – piggybacking, juxtaposing, and superimposition – were all harnessed in this process.

In fact, the mixture of “Taiwan” and “Republic of China” indicates the formation of “a braided memory” (E. Zerubavel 2011:84-86). On one hand, it is a strategy to deal with mnemonic sediments from previous mnemonic engineering; on the other, it ironically illustrates that it became even harder to eradicate the legacy of Chinese nationalism. In addition, the significance of Double Tenth Day – after decades-long mnemonic socialization – could be reproduced in the most surprising places. For example, when the PRC government strategically “forced” Liberia to cut diplomatic relations with Taiwan (here, Taiwanese nationalists’ viewpoint is used), the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Chiang Xu-cheng – who was a radical Taiwanese nationalist – commented that “the PRC government intentionally would like to do it on Double Tenth Day to ‘touch the lintel’ of our nation” (*UDN* [145], 13 Oct. 2003). This comment reveals that people had been guided to remember that Double Tenth Day is the birthday of the nation and always a blessed day. That is, even the most extreme and radical Taiwanese nationalists may “slip”

to show that they still stubbornly remember and even internalize some invented messages from Chinese nationalism's mnemonic engineering regarding the importance of Double Tenth Day (*UDN* [146], 19 Sep. 2006). Moreover, it implies that a mnemonic revolution such as official Chinese nationalism can be so effective and thorough that it is difficult (if not impossible) for even its toughest mnemonic deviants to “screen out” all of its influences.

The legacy of Chinese nationalism appeared in the mnemonic engineering of official Taiwanese nationalism. No matter the reason (witting or unwitting, habitually reproduced or rationally calculated), the commemoration on Double Tenth Day was not canceled even when Taiwanese nationalists captured ruling power. As a result, Taiwanese nationalists more or less joined the camp to reproduce the significance of Double Tenth Day and made Double Tenth Day even further un-cancelable. While official Taiwanese nationalism did superimpose its own version of narratives, memory, and thus identification, its messages usually coexisted with alternative national identities in general and Chinese nationalism in particular. Additionally, as said, the juxtaposing of alternative narratives with mnemonic skills caused the formation of a braided memory that “weaves” distinct memories together.

The Further “Braided” Memory

From 2000 through 2008, Chinese nationalism took form as a strong popular (and oppositional) nationalism. However, official Taiwanese nationalism observing Double Tenth Day as the national day and arranging ceremonies to commemorate it did not

receive positive feedback from enthusiastic Chinese nationalists. On one hand, the Chinese nationalists claimed that the DPP government – while holding ceremonies to commemorate the day – merely “pretended” to observe it (*UDN* [147], 27 Oct. 2000; *UDN* [148], 9 Oct. 2004; *UDN* [149], 10 Oct. 2007). Chinese nationalists provided examples: fewer and fewer national flags seen on the streets and buildings as decoration, some provinces governed by the DPP not holding a flag-raising ceremony on this day, some elites from the DPP not singing the anthem during the central ceremonies, and fewer and fewer foreign guests and overseas Chinese attending the ceremonies; more and more Chinese “symbols” were being eliminated from the ceremonies (*UDN* [150], 11 Oct. 2000; *UDN* [151], 7 Aug. 2004; *UDN* [152], 10 Oct. 2007). That is, according to Chinese nationalists, although Double Tenth Day was not canceled under the DPP government, it was commemorated carelessly. On the other hand, Chinese nationalists denounced Taiwanese nationalists’ gradual appropriation of the sites of memory, which were invented by the Chinese nationalists to instill their version of memory and thus national identity. That is, according to Chinese nationalists, whereas the commemoration of Double Tenth Day was maintained under the DPP government, maintaining it was a strategy to import new narratives and to lead people to remember an alternative nation:

Earlier this morning, Song, Chu-yu — the chairman of the People First Party (PFP) — declared that President Chen in fact commemorates Double Tenth Day insincerely and what he really wants is to destroy the Republic of China. Song explained the reason that PFP decided to hold the National Celebration Flag-Raising Ceremony in Kaohsiung is to protect ROC... There were more than one thousand participants enthusiastically joined the ceremony... Song said, “Under this kind of circumstance, there is no need to lie.” He said it is so obvious that everyone knows that President Chen is not celebrating the National Celebration Day of the ROC. During the past five years, what he has done is to eliminate ROC (*UND* [153], 10 Oct. 2004).

For them, with more and more Chinese symbols being replaced by Taiwanese symbols, the annual observation of Double Tenth Day no longer worked to align and refresh people's memory and identification of a Chinese nation; thus, in the long run, the intended national members may forget their Chinese-ness.

Because of these concerns, ardent rememberers of Chinese nationalism decided that they needed to hold their own ceremonies to commemorate the sacred Double Tenth Day (*UDN* [154], 29 Oct. 2006; *UDN* [155], 9 Oct. 2007). Therefore, not only did they boycott the DPP government's commemorations, they also claimed to be *the* authentic observers of Double Tenth Day and that the DPP government only strategically commemorated Double Tenth Day to import its own messages to dilute people's memory of a Chinese nation. Another mnemonic battle thus commenced. To some extent, holding their own ceremonies to commemorate Double Tenth Day indicated that the ardent rememberers attempted to maintain a fine mnemonic boundary line between Chinese nationalism and Taiwanese nationalism, and they had a lower tolerance for the braided memory. Nevertheless, when the KMT's presidential candidate, Ma Ying-jeou, won the elections in 2008 and 2012, the "returned" official Chinese nationalism did not simply resume as it had been from 1949 through 1987, it inherited narratives and memories from Taiwanese nationalism.

Suggesting that any radical change may evoke people's dissatisfaction due to a certain amount of intended national members remembering both their China-ness and Taiwan-ness simultaneously, in 2008, the returned Chinese nationalism's mnemonic engineering

adopted a gradual reformative style (Stockton 2008; Yu & Kwan 2008).⁸¹ That is, the legacy of Taiwanese nationalism can be observed in the returned Chinese nationalism:

This year's Double Tenth National Celebration will be the first National Celebration Day after the Blue Camp [Chinese Nationalists] regained the ruling power...In the run-down of the central ceremony, the ceremony will be concluded right after the speech given by President Ma; there is no arrangement for President Ma to lead participants to call out the slogan of "Long live Republic of China"...When the Democratic Progressive Party ran the central government, former President Chen did not lead people to call out this slogan, therefore, the preparatory team of National Celebration Ceremony will follow this convention (*UDN* [156], 9 Sep. 2008).

Yesterday was the National Celebration Day of the ROC; there was lacking any of the large-scale celebration activities. There was solely one issue in President Ma's speech: That is, "the Taiwan spirit." He said, "During the past 60 years, the history and culture of ROC and Taiwan have already blended together." President Ma even went further to claim that we need to employ the Taiwan spirit to complete reforms, and our national members should be proud of establishing a Chinese culture which is rife with Taiwan characteristics...However, [I wondered]...why are the virtues "honest, kindhearted, diligent, credible, hard-working, and inclusive" that President Ma mentioned merely limited to "the Taiwan spirit"? Can't they also reflect "the ROC spirit"?...I feel sad for the ROC (*UDN* [157], 11 Oct. 2009)!

As a result, with the contrast in the previous two waves of mnemonic engineering, many key components that the master narrative of a new wave of official nationalism should define and redefine were intentionally left ambiguous. For example, in Double Tenth Day presidential speeches, whether people who live in mainland China should be regarded as national members (as in the definition of Chinese nationalism) or excluded as "outsiders" (as in the definition of Taiwanese nationalism) was left unmentioned (Presidential speech, *UDN*, 11 Oct. 2010). Moreover, whereas "The 5,000-year Chinese History" constituted a part of national history, "The 400-year Taiwan History" was also highlighted (Presidential speech, *UDN*, 11 Oct. 2011). In addition, to give priority to Taiwanese

⁸¹ In 2008, about 70% of respondents identified themselves as "Taiwanese," which reflects that the invention of a Taiwanese nation by official nationalism did have its influence. See Taiwan News, 30 Oct 2008.

consciousness, for instance, in speeches from Ma, national heroes from both the Chinese nationalists' and the Taiwanese nationalists' perspectives were admired (Presidential speech, *UDN*, 11 Oct. 2009). To put it simply, both Sino-centric elements and Taiwan-centric elements were blended in the mnemonic engineering of Ma's government despite contradictions in many dimensions. The effects of the trajectory of mnemonic engineering were cumulative, and the mnemonic engineering under Ma's government indeed even further braided the previous two waves of mnemonic engineering together (Yeh 2014a).

The trajectory of mnemonic engineering in a specific community does matter. Although a clear mnemonic boundary is ideal, in reality, it is not uncommon to see legacy from even the most contradictory mnemonic engineering. On one hand, the mnemonic revolution is rarely adopted because it must mobilize considerable resources to suppress alternatives, so it is usually employed only in urgent circumstances such as a tremendous identity crisis. On the other hand, even when a mnemonic revolution is adopted, counter-memories always emerge or revive as time goes by. To some extent, we can conclude that the "early risers" in the field of mnemonic engineering in a specific community enjoy advantages; in contrast, the "latecomers" confront disadvantages. In official Taiwanese nationalism's case, after having been mnemonically socialized by Chinese nationalism for decades, it was difficult to unanimously align intended national members to the memory of "Taiwan as a nation for itself." Moreover, even among the most ardent rememberers of Taiwanese nationalism, it was difficult to develop a wholesome narrative regarding the shared past, present, and future without being influenced and constrained by Chinese nationalism. In terms of the returned Chinese

nationalism, it had to tolerate the legacy of Taiwanese nationalism and blend it into its own mnemonic engineering. That is, while sometimes we may be surprised by the fluidity of collective memory (e.g., how people who capture power can select out some events and leave them to oblivion), at other times we are stunned by its sturdiness (e.g., how the latecoming mnemonic organizers have to tolerate and cope with the sediments from early risers).

Making Communities More Imaginable

Most communities are imagined communities and, more importantly, collective memories help people to “put on their imaginative hats” and make their communities more imaginable. Mnemonic engineerings, therefore, should be seen as projects that help people know who they are, evoke solidarity among community members, and guide them to apprehend the direction in which to move ahead through the dimension of the projected future. The inherent constructiveness and inevitable selectiveness of collective memory demonstrate that all mnemonic engineerings engage in employing multiple mnemonic techniques to invent a preferred collective memory and thus identification. For instance, despite multi-linear developments of Chinese history, the mnemonic engineering of Chinese nationalism narrated a uni-linear Chinese history for its intended national members to easily commemorate a Chinese nation by selecting out and/or downplaying certain happenings. Moreover, while criticizing Chinese nationalism’s exclusion of certain occurrences in Taiwan before and after 1949, Taiwanese nationalism’s mnemonic engineering narrated a (merely) 400-year Taiwanese history for

its intended national members. That is, mnemonic decapitation (E. Zerubaval 2003a:93-94) as a mnemonic technique was employed to un-bridge the shared past of a Taiwanese nation from the Chinese history.

Even so, it is wrong to assume that the inherent constructiveness and invented-ness create collective memories that are less real, false, or meaningless. Quite to the contrary, common people take their collective memories seriously and even adhere stubbornly to them in their everyday life because collective memories help them locate themselves in the complicated social world. A community without any prevalent collective memory may experience shakiness and even collapse. On one hand, lacking coherent sets of commemorative narratives to memorize creates mnemonic anomie among members; on the other, battles between mnemonic rivals may cause members' disorientation and frequent conflict. In this sense, a community can evoke strong solidarity among its members with proper mnemonic work even in tough circumstances. Hence, a shaky regime with effective mnemonic engineering – such as the ROC government after the 1949 Retreat – can maintain its ruling power for decades because people remember its legitimacy. Moreover, even a suppressed and marginalized group of people – such as Taiwanese nationalists – can have an opportunity to take center stage if they can manage a way to preserve and disseminate their own version of collective memory.

Nevertheless, the unraveled inevitable selectiveness of all mnemonic engineering does remind us that, at least as researchers, we need to avoid reifying any mnemonic vision as providing an inherently superior or truer version of the past (and therefore the present and the future). More importantly, collective memories developed from different mnemonic visions should be respected. Collective memories existing in a community can lead us to

see the unavoidably complex and multiple facets of historical development (E. Zerubavel 2003:109-110). After all, having only one dominant collective memory usually is an indicator of the smothering of diverse voices, memories, and identifications. In this sense, tolerating the existence of distinct memories and identities represents mutual respect, and the emergence of braided memory symbolizes the efforts at bridging and inclusion.

Conclusions

This study claims that nationbuilding involves a process of nation-remembering, and national identification is the result of national members remembering their shared past, present, and future. This dissertation attempts to further develop a theoretical framework to explain the relationship between memory and identity. In terms of people's national identity, mnemonic engineering plays a key role in inventing, maintaining, and reproducing people's patriotic emotions in their everyday life. Mnemonic engineering can be launched by both governments (as the official nationalisms) and popular memory groups (as the popular nationalisms) to nurture people's nationality from specific mnemonic visions. Moreover, far from being a one-shot game, people's national identification must be continuously aligned and refreshed both symbolically and manifestly. Plotted national stories and commemorative rituals are indispensable in the process of nation-remembering. To further illustrate the idiosyncrasies of mnemonic engineering and the social construction of memorability, the empirical case of inventing a Chinese nation is investigated.

This analysis of the observation of Double Tenth Day from 1949 through 1987 indicates that official Chinese nationalism employed various mnemonic techniques and effectively led people to remember the significance of Double Tenth Day and therefore their Chinese identity. Whereas every community should be regarded as a mnemonic group that eagerly wants its members to remember their shared past, present, and future (E. Zerubavel 2003a), the invention of a Chinese identity nevertheless was a unique case of nation-remembering which was conducted extraordinarily intensively, encountered obstacles, but was “successfully” accomplished. On one hand, it was the first time in Chinese history that a government had worked to produce a Chinese nationality that included such a wide range of people as national members. On the other, despite the prolonged “temporary” status that the ROC government held while staying in Taiwan, the existence of the PRC government (which also claimed legitimacy in representing the Chinese nation) and the transformation of the international environment, official Chinese nationalism “successfully” invented a Chinese nationality. Not only did the defeated side in a civil war retain its influence despite the great “rupture,” but also great numbers of its national members have taken their Chinese-ness seriously from 1949 through the present.

The seemingly nation-specific idiosyncrasies of the commemorative patterns observed in official Chinese nationalism indeed illuminate the social logics underneath transnational commemorative patterns. Thus, in all mnemonic engineering we should be able to note the coexisting of remembering and forgetting; the simultaneity of historical continuity and discontinuity; the construction of nation as an extended family; the influences of nation-remembering going beyond the political field; the inevitable confrontations with challenges (while in different forms and with different degrees); the

ongoing modifications and the resulting internal inconsistency and contradictions; the unexpected consequences and path-dependency; and the caused mnemonic sediments (although the thickness may vary). We also apprehend that, to represent the unavoidable selectiveness of collective memories, the best way is to compare them with the alternative memories. Presence and absence are equally significant in mnemonic engineering. Moreover, according to the style of dealing with the sediments from the previous mnemonic engineerings, any mnemonic engineering can be allocated a place on the continuum between mnemonic reform and revolution.

The analysis of the invention of a Chinese nationality also indicates potential topics for future research. For example, this study intentionally focuses on the production of a national identity and does not include the consumption of a national identity. Investigating how official Chinese nationalism was received by ordinary people would enrich our understanding of collective memories. As many scholars have correctly articulated, we should not assume that an official nationalism will naturally resonate with ordinary people; even the most loyal national member may “reformulate” the official doctrine. Thus, unraveling how Taiwanese people “received” official nationalism can illuminate the couplings/de-couplings between public and private fields. Furthermore, this study mainly examines official nationalism in Taiwan from 1949 through 1987 and only briefly addresses the interaction among different types of collective memories and the relationships among different stages of official nationalism. Future work can further delve into issues such as how Taiwanese nationalists dealt with the mnemonic sediment of Chinese nationalism (both when they were the popular nationalism and when they were the official nationalism), how vernacular memories became allies in resisting the

“all-out” mnemonic revolution, how Chinese nationalists employed mnemonic sediment to regain their ruling power in 2008, and how the “returned” Chinese nationalists coped with the mnemonic sediment of Taiwanese nationalism when mnemonic revolution was no longer an option in 2008.

More cases should be investigated so as to define the generalizability of this analysis’s findings. For instance, we need to compare diverse cases – not only cases such as post-colonial, post-war, and post-revolution countries, but also cases of countries not facing dramatic/traumatic changes – to determine the role that mnemonic engineering plays in inventing people’s national identification. Additionally, since the concept of launching mnemonic engineerings to invent people’s identification can certainly be applied to fields beyond nationality, a wide range of cases should be examined to see how mnemonic engineering works in different communities and how people perform their boundary work mnemonically in their daily life. For example, researchers can investigate how religious groups invent collective memory to guide people to remember their beliefs, how corporations harness collective memory to evoke employees’ loyalty, how societies that follow either capitalism or socialism tell stories to “prove” that they are adopting a better economic mode than their counterpart, and how families keep photos, videos, and stories to reproduce family members’ love.

History and memory are the most effective cultural legitimators of individuals’ collectivity (Zamponi 2003:43-71). Mnemonic engineerings are generally employed in all kinds of social communities to solve a legitimacy crisis, to evoke social solidarity (or, say, collective consciousness), and to motivate members’ cooperative actions toward a desirable future. The underpinning social logic of mnemonic engineering is to invent an

auratic shared past and expect its created sacredness to rub on the invented profane “shared” present and future. The sacred-lizing of the “shared” past, present, and future works to produce a common sense that the community is “unmistakably” an organic whole among the proposed communal members. Hence, there is no such a thing as a “true” past that is waiting to be discovered; there are only different mnemonic organizers who adopt distinct mnemonic versions of the narratives to compete in earning more mnemonic conformists to remember their preferred stories.

Whereas the collective memory is mainly invented by memory entrepreneurs and mnemonic agents and all too often it is their preferred version of the past, present, and future that is told and retold, collective memory does provide meaning and ontological security to the people as well as the mnemonic entrepreneurs. Despite the constructiveness and invented-ness of it, collective memory plays a remarkable role in defining who we were, who we are, and who we will be. Thus, it is hardly surprising to know that even the memory entrepreneurs themselves (most are political elites) are dragged deeply into the invented shared past, present, and future and, more importantly, even the memory entrepreneurs sometimes are constrained by the collective memory and cannot use it as they would like. To sum up, there is a tight relationship between memory and identity, but neither can be assumed, and identity-remembering is a sophisticated social process that must be examined.

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