

Identity and War: the Taiwanese National Consciousness Under War Mobilization and *Kominka* Movement - - a study of Chen Wangcheng's & Wu Xinrong's diaries, 1937-1945

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The constructivist approach suggests, regarding identity-related issues, that the national identity is not a fixed and substantial existence. Bhikhu Parekh represents this

approach and regards national identity as ‘a set of tendencies and values that needs to be periodically redefined in the light of historically inherited characteristics, present needs, and future aspirations’. As to the way of ‘redefinition’, Benedict Anderson however suggests that historical narration offers the possibility of reconstructing national consciousness through ‘remembering or forgetting people’s past.’¹ Furthermore, regarding the relationships between warfare and national (or ethnic) groups, G. Simmel argues that conflict is a possible form of sociation, and hostility sharpens group boundaries. Conflict not only accentuates the cohesion of an existing unit, but also mobilizes its members. He further suggests that war requires a ‘centralistic intensification of the group form’, which is best guaranteed by despotism.² Max Weber also drew attention to the major role of political action, such as wars, in the formation of ethnic groups and their imagery.³ Anthony Smith further develops this approach by arguing that war has been a powerful factor in shaping certain crucial aspects of nationhood (or ethnic community). However the influences of war on nationhood (or ethnic community) both direct ones such as mobilization, propaganda, and cohesion, and indirect ones such as centralization, rationalization and colonialism, have been uneven since they have affected some aspects of nationhood (or ethnic community) more than others. For example, how far can war be said necessarily to foster social cohesion of a nationhood depends on the type of war, the incidence of success, and the general climate of ideas⁴

In Taiwan’s case, regarding literature on identity-related issues during wartime, 1937-1945, most scholars focus on examining how the *Kominka* reshapes position of islanders’ identity. Kondo Masami argues that the policies of war-affiliated *Kominka* were to replace Taiwanese cultural and religious identities with Japanese ones, based on emperor-centered ideology, through deconstructing the Taiwanese geographical and blood ties. It however did not achieve an evident success.⁵ This view was challenged by Zhou Wanyao who argues that the young generation of islanders was most influenced by these policies as many of them considered themselves nothing other than Japanese, though Zhou concludes that the *Kominka* was successful more in ‘form’ than ‘substance.’⁶ Instead of assessing the *Kominka* influence on identity positions of the islanders Leo Ching challenges the view that the *Kominka* (1937-1945) was an extension of *Doka*, the policy of assimilation adopted since 1921, on an extended track of colonial policy. The *Doka* was largely articulated as ‘a problem of the colonizer’ since its inner contradiction was manifested by the gap between political discrimination and cultural assimilation.

¹ Bhikhu Parekh, “The Concept of National Identity”, *New Community*, 21 (2), April 1995, p.255. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, 1991, pp. 204-206.

² G. Simmel, *Conflict, and the Web of Group-affiliations*, Free Press of Glencoe, Macmillan, London, 1964, p88.

³ M. Weber, “Ethnic Groups”, in *Economy and Society*, ed. G. Roth and C. Wittich, Bedminster Press, New York, 1968, vol.1, ch5.

⁴ Smith, Anthony D. “War and Ethnicity: the Role of Warfare in the Formation, Self-images and Cohesion of Ethnic Communities”, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*. Vol.4, Number 4, October 1981, p375, pp.390-393.

⁵ Kondo Masami, *Souryokusen to Taiwan – Nihon syokuminchi houkai no kenkyu*, 1996, pp.252-254

⁶ Zhou Wangyao, *The Kominka Movement: Taiwan under Wartime Japan, 1937-1945*, D.Phil dissertation, Yale University, 1991, pp. 226-227.

However the “newness” of *Kominka* lies in its inauguration and internalization of “Japanization” as exclusively ‘problematic of the colonized’, viewed as an incomplete “imperial subject’. Therefore the *Kominka* was a colonial ideology, by concealing the inner contradiction of the *Doka*, radically transformed and defined the manner in which colonial subjectivity and identity were allowed to be articulated and represented. Ching further employs Taiwan’s aborigines as a case study to examine why the aborigines experienced a visible shift after the fiercely anti-Japanese *Musha* Incident in 1930. He argues: the colonial ideology was produced, enacted and reproduced through the fields of symbolism and meaning, in order to maintain legitimacy of colonial rule after the incident. During wartime the aborigines were no longer uncivilized people waiting to be civilized, but were considered imperial subjects assimilated into the Japanese national polity through express of their loyalties to the emperor, even though the shift did not constitute a real and radical transformation.⁷

Following the methodology of a case study, M. Lo employs the story of Taiwan’s doctors, classified as a modern profession, during the *Kominka* era to examine ‘the agency and creativity of ethnic hybrids in their attempts to overcome obstacles in their search for an identity’. Lo argues the physical and cultural differences between Japanese and islanders ‘were actively and to some extent successfully dismissed’, in particular, during the *Kominka* period. The *Kominka* doctors constructed the role of medical modernist as the central theme of their identity narratives without vanishing their ethnicity of being Taiwanese. However subconsciously unhappy regarding the Taiwanese Japanese relationship, the *Kominka* doctors developed a hybrid identity along two dimensions: they located themselves across ethnic boundaries and, furthermore, supplanted the category of ethnicity with that of the profession. These doctors’ embodiment of both Taiwanese and Japanese identities resulted in patterns of identity formation that manifested an imagination of reading modernity as non-ethnic rather than reading Japan as heterogeneous.⁸ Based on an overseas Taiwanese student’s wartime diary written in Japanese in Japan, S Fong argues that identity formation is not necessarily related to a set of immobile values, as Huntington claims. What is more important is the way this formation occurs among intersecting dominant discourses. The student Ye’s case testified to the fact that his wartime identity was multiple, rather than hierarchical, and not fixed: it bent either to Chinese or Japanese values, or to a mixture of both. Ye’s case also showed that the elements connected into part and parcel of an identity depended very much on the dormant discourses, which means nation-states, instead of Huntington’s idea of civilizations, with their ideological apparatuses providing dominant courses, are still the most powerful agent in forming its citizens’ here-and-now identity.⁹

Zhou and Lo are right in arguing that the islanders’ positions of identity, to a certain

⁷ Ching, Leo T. S. *Becoming “Japanese”: Colonial Taiwan and the Politics of Identity Formation*, University of California Press, 2001. pp. 90-91; pp.135-137.

⁸ Lo, M. Ming-cheng, “Between Ethnicity and Modernity: Taiwanese Medical Students and Doctors under Japan’s *Kominka* Campaign, 1937-1945”, *Positions* 10:2, 2002. pp. 291-292, 317-318.

⁹ Fong, Barry Shiaw-chian, “Civilization and Individual Identities: Ye Shengji’s Quest for Colonial Self in Two Cultures.”, *Issues & Studies* 34, no.10 (October 1998), pp. 93, 122-124.

degree, have been reshaped during the *Kominka* period. However warfare itself, such as mobilization and other political actions, rather than the *Kominka*'s cultural and religious policies, appears to play a much more important role in reshaping certain aspects of the islanders' identity. Furthermore the islanders might have responded differently in facing different military rivals in certain war periods, i.e. the Chinese between 1937 and 1941, and the Anglo-American powers between 1941 and 1945, in terms of their positions of identity. Furthermore Fong is right in suggesting that identity is multiple and mobile. However what constituted the islanders' multiple identities and how did shifts among different dimensions of identity occur in changing historical context? What were makers of shift of identity? Is it possible to reconstruct the shift among different dimensions of identity in a wartime context?

I assume that the warfare itself, including war mobilization, etc., as political actions involved by related governments and people, played a major role in reshaping positions of identity among colonized islanders in wartime Taiwan. In this chapter I will examine how the warfare affected two islanders' positions of identity, Chen Wangcheng (1888-1979) and Wu Xinrong (1907-1967), using their diaries as major sources.

The formation of wartime context in the 1930s

In the mid-1930s the island of Taiwan was re-orientated as 'the base for southward advance' due to a significant change in the colonial policy of the Japanese empire, which also included two accompanying policies aiming to turn Taiwanese into an 'imperialized' nation, i.e. the '*Kominka*', and to turn Taiwan into an 'industrialized' island. This change of policy, announced by the Japanese admiral Kobayashi Seizo, who had previously succeeded a civil officer as the governor of Taiwan in September 1936, symbolized the beginning of wartime in Taiwan.¹⁰

The gradual strategic shift of Japanese foreign expansion, from the approach of the Army-first northern advance to that of the Navy-first southern advance throughout 1930s profoundly influenced the colonial policy, economic structure, and social system in Taiwan during the wartime, from (1931) 1937 to 1945. I would like to draw a general picture of how Taiwan was integrated into the war mobilization of the Japanese empire at different periods of wartime, from (1931) 1937 to 1942.

In Japan, the period between the Manchurian Incident of 1931 and the China Incident of 1937 is commonly regarded as a semi-wartime, as evidenced by the increasing control of the army over the government, and by the approximate 20% rise in the military component of the Japanese budget of the period.¹¹ In colonial Taiwan, the colonial authorities implemented a series of policies to pave the way for a future mobilization of the total war, in which the island was designed as 'the base of southward advance'. These policies were, first of all, to gradually put Taiwan's existing major rice-centered economy into a controlled form, through imposing restrictive regulations and introducing

¹⁰ *Taiwan Keizai Nenpou*, 1941, P751

¹¹ Eckert, Carter J., "Total War, Industrialization, and Social Change in Late Colonial Korea", in Duus, Peter, Myers, Ramon H. and Peattie, Mark R. ed., *The Japanese Wartime Empire, 1931-1945*, Princeton University Press, 1996, p.11.

controllable associations, which would economically lead to the decline of relatively autonomous landlord class's influence on local society; second, to reshape the colonial political environment through disuniting the oppositions, suppressing the radicals, and recruiting the cooperators, and through implementing a limited local election that had partly succeeded in roping in the rising native middle-class elite.¹² Both the economic and political reconstructions had significantly reduced the 1920s' tradition of native opposition. Furthermore, as to how the colonial state functioned between 1931 and 1937, colonial Taiwan was governed by a well-organized, Japanese-dominant administrative system, with the authoritarian leadership of the Taiwan governor at the top, and the social control apparatus consisting of strict police network and the *bao-jia* system at the bottom. This institutional design proved to be a highly autonomous, organized and penetrated system for future wartime mobilization in late-1930s.¹³

Between 1937 and 1942, the colonial authorities in the southern-advanced-oriented Taiwan, started two major policies, which included the 'industrialization' and the *Kominka*, to construct/mobilize the island's material and human sources for the ongoing war. Regarding the industrialization aimed at increasing productivity and forming a controlled economy in Taiwan, a state-controlled agricultural economy based on a widely-adopted system of the 'association' was first established through controlling the system of irrigation and the production and trade of rice, thus taking control of lands and the agricultural elite. Furthermore both traditional and new capitalists from Japan, and the semi-state-run companies in Taiwan successfully created military-based industries in Taiwan since the mid-1930s, using existing sugar capitals, absorbing local capitals from the controlled economy, and introducing capitals and new technologies from Japan.¹⁴ These industrial developments (1937-45), forming a dual-structure industry in Taiwan consisting of large military-based companies run by the Japanese, and middle-small-size companies run by the Taiwanese, achieved the greatest material progress in Taiwan history before 1970s and further subjected the colonial society to the control of Japanese technology and capital.¹⁵ The industrialization also significantly reshaped socioeconomic structures and relationship in wartime Taiwan, which also had an impact on reshaping people's ideology and identity. Furthermore the imperial authorities implemented the war-affiliated *Kominka* movement aimed to replace the Taiwanese identity with a Japanese one through encouraging the spread of the Japanese language beginning in 1937, promoting Taiwanese's adoption of the Japanese names and religious beliefs from the late-1930s, and further implementing a recruitment program to enable the Taiwanese

¹² Lin Jiwen, *Riben jutai moqi (1930-1945) zhanzhang dongyuan tixi zhi yanjiu*, Guoli taiwandaxue zhengzhixue yanjiusuo shuoshilunwen, 1991, pp.44-54, pp.55-74.

¹³ Taiwan was therefore regarded as 'a laboratory of controlled economy' in wartime, as some strict policies that were not feasible in Japan were adopted in Taiwan See Kusui Kouzo, , *Senji Taiwan keizailon*, Taipei, 1944, p37.

¹⁴ Lin Jiwen, 1991, pp.112-118

¹⁵ Ho, Samuel P.S., "colonialism and Development", in Myers & Peattie eds. *The Japanese Colonial Empire*, 1984, p368. Kobayashi Hideo, *Taidouakoueikan no keisei to hokai*, 1975, p327. Cumings, Bruce, *Parallax Visions: Making Sense of American-East Asian Relations at the End of the Century*, 1999, pp.77-79.

to serve in the imperial armed forces from 1942.¹⁶

From political shift to identity shift: warfare and islanders' position of identity, 1937-1945

(A) Chen Wangcheng (1888-1979)

Chen Wangcheng (1888-1979), a journalist and a native of Xinzhu, is the first case study examined in this paper. For the following reasons, I regard Chen's diary, which is still unpublished, as a highly private record since Chen recorded many stories that were secret even to his family. In addition, Chen, described as a serious person by his son, had no intention of publishing his diary during his lifetime. Chen kept his diary between 1912 and 1973 amassing up to 44 volumes. He started writing his diary in Japanese in 1912, but changed into classical Chinese around 1916 or 1917, and again into modern Chinese (*baihua*) around 1925. As I have briefly introduced his life in the last chapter, I will not repeat it here.

In this section, my questions are: did the newly-emerged semi-wartime and wartime contexts, from 1933 to 1945, reshape Chen's political stance, after his withdrawal from the 1920s' anti-colonial movements? If so, how far did his shift in political course lead to a shift in his position of identity? What aspect or dimension of his identity was reshaped by the warfare? Why and how did it happen? Is it possible to reconstruct traces of these changes?

a. Between accommodation and confrontation: a tension between political choice and identity position, 1933-1939

A realistic predicament, created by Chen's frustrations in starting business in China in early 1930s, forced him to seriously consider how to seek a long-term career in colonial Taiwan, where the militarist atmosphere was rising.

The first step Chen took to solve his predicament was to join the first-ever local election promoted by the colonial authorities and the bourgeois 'Taiwan Local Self-rule Union' which was partly designed to recruit anti-colonial Taiwanese elite. This political move implied a possibility that Chen's multiple and overlapped identity, with the Taiwanese dimension as a central part, started shifting from the Chinese dimension towards the Japanese dimension. In April 1935, the Japanese colonial authorities announced an amendment to local self-rule in Taiwan, according to which half of the members of city and district councils should be elected by male citizens who were over 25 years old, Japanese nationals, who had resided in the same area for more than 6 months and who were able to pay more than 5 yen in taxes per year, while the other

¹⁶ Chou, Wan-yao, *The Kominka Movement: Taiwan Under Wartime Japan, 1937-1945*, A dissertation presented at Yale University, 1991, pp. 39-41. However Kondo Masami suggests that the implementation of the recruitment program can be better regarded as a part of war mobilization, rather than the *Kominka* campaign.

members should be elected by the government.¹⁷ This announcement immediately created much discussions among Chen's close friends, some of whom were ex-teachers, members of the Xinzhu Youth Society and government-appointed councilors, such as Zhang Jie, Zhang Shigu, and Li Liangbi. However Chen initially did not show much interest in the amendment, since he disagreed with the bourgeois supporters of local-level self-rule. However Liu Wan, a Taiwanese ex-teacher and the then deputy mayor of Xinzhu city government, may have been the key person who convinced Chen of joining in the election. Two months after Chen's return to Taiwan from China, the amendment was announced. Two weeks after the announcement, the Taiwanese Liu Wan, together with a former colleague of Chen's at the *Taiwan Minbao*, first visited Chen at his house where they talked. Ten days after the visit, Chen was warmly invited to Liu's house for a meal and exchanged views of the Taiwan Mass Party and several local figures. Several weeks later, Liu Wan invited Chen to his official residence, where he mentioned many inner news of official circle to him and strongly advised him to join in the local election. This finally led Chen to decide to run for the councilor's election as a candidate.¹⁸ With the support of his friends in Xinzhu, mostly from previous members of the Xinzhu Youth Society and the Taiwan Mass Party, he soon obtained various electioneering sources, and succeeded in winning the election in November 1935 by overwhelming his rivals some 20 candidates in all including 7 Japanese. This might also indicate that the previously anti-colonial political basis led by Chen in the Xinzhu area was, to a certain degree, imperceptibly integrated into as part of the colonial government.

Another Chen's down-to-earth approach taken by Chen to rearrange his career in colonial Taiwan was to organize the Taoyuan-based Datong Company (1935-1940), trading rice and other foodstuffs, which was gradually connected to the emerging controlled economy in mid-1930s designed to support the imperial war mobilization.

However, in the prewar period before July 1937, although Chen was accommodating to the colonial government he sometimes was faced with frustrations since ethnic and political tensions between them never diminished.

The outbreak of Japan's war against China politically created a situation that Chen had to take a side between them in order to survive the war. As a Taiwanese, regarded by the colonial authorities as the same ethnicity as Chinese, Chen acted cautiously when the war broke out. Japan finally went to war with China at Lugouqiao on July 7, 1937. Several days after that, Chen was chatted with his friends outside, which included a Japanese secret agent, but 'nobody dared to mention the current military tension between Japan and China'. Later he returned home and listened to the radio with his family. 'We listened to the official news broadcast downstairs together. Afterwards we moved the radio to my room, trying to listen to the news broadcast from Nanjing, but the reception was not clear.' This record reveals his cautious response that indirectly mirrored the Taiwanese

¹⁷ "Nakagawa soutoku funin no kunji" "chihouseidokaisei ni kansuru Nakagawa soutokunoyokoku" *yochoku reishi yukoku kuntatsu ruisan*, 1941, P613, P696. However, these councilors were only allowed to exercise limited rights such as auditing budget, rather than lawmaking.

¹⁸ *Chen Wangcheng's diary*, April 18, 28; May 11, June 6, 18, 1935

sense of helplessness and embarrassment in the beginning of the Sino-Japan conflict.¹⁹

Chen's cooperative approach towards the colonial authorities was further strengthened in the process of rapidly unfolding war mobilization, which was profoundly reshaping the whole environment in colonial Taiwan. That he continued to cooperate also sharpened an existing, inner contradictories and mobilities among his overlapped Japanese consciousness, Taiwanese and Chinese consciousnesses. At about three months after outbreak of the war, Chen, the popular Taiwanese councilor, was requested by the colonial authorities to support the war against China by giving two public lectures. The first public lecture was delivered at a prefectural meeting attended by the residents in Xinzhu a week after the outbreak of war. One of his Japanese colleagues at the city council had previously negotiated this lecture. Chen initially declined the offer, but finally accepted on the insistence of his colleague. Chen was the only Taiwanese out of eleven lecturers. The others were Japanese including several of his colleagues at city council. In his lecture, Chen stressed the Taiwanese stance entitled 'Our awareness of involvement in the current war situation'. The next day, Chen was highly praised by some of his relatives and friends for his performance.²⁰ However when the war intensified owing to a fierce confrontation between the two sides in Shanghai in October, Chen was requested by the city government to give his second public lecture entitled 'The correct attitude towards the current political situation' at a conference held by an official organization aiming to promote morale for war. Chen was the only Taiwanese out of four lecturers. The others were Japanese, including the mayor of Xinzhu City, the prefectural medical chief and a prefectural councilor. However a couple of his Taiwanese friends voiced their disappointment at his support of the war in his public lecture, and worried that he would be not able to live up to his reputation in Taiwanese society.²¹ The change of his friends' opinion on the second lecture might politically reflected that he was further moving towards a pro-war stance as the war unfolded.

Furthermore Chen, as a councilor, was also involved in other activities related to war mobilization, such as farewell parties for soldiers, donations of money and celebrations of war victory, though he showed his reservation to a certain extent to them. After the outbreak of war in July 1937, the Japanese Army started its first-wave military attacks and expanded quickly from North China to Central China. However, they encountered considerable resistance from Chinese troops in Shanghai. For this reason, on September 13, a total of 1,200 Japanese soldiers and 850 Taiwanese military workers were mobilized to leave for Shanghai to support Japan. Chen described the atmosphere of war mobilization in Taoyuan: 'my fourth brother [a doctor] told me: when he had examined physical conditions of the thirty-nine new recruits last night, he had heard short and quick heartbeats from them on the stethoscope. He then turned his face to look around and found that the recruits were full of anxiety and depressed. Then he wished the war would end as soon as possible'; 'All Taoyuan citizens waved banners to see these soldiers and

¹⁹ *Chen Wangcheng's diary* (July 7, 11, 12, 13, 14, 19, 1937) According to Chen's diary, Japanese secret agents visited regularly Chen since 1928 when he was both a reporter at Taiwan Minbao and a member of Taiwan Mass Party.

²⁰ *Chen Wangcheng's diary* (July 15, 1937); *Xinzhuzhou Shibao*, August 1937, p115.

²¹ *Chen Wangcheng's diary*, October 4, 16, 19, 31, 1937; *Xinzhuzhou Shibao*, November 1937, p54.

military workers off. The city had an atmosphere of war²² In contrast, the atmosphere of celebrating war victories was cheerful. When the Chinese troops in Shanghai were defeated by Japan on October 27, 1937 Chen wrote, ‘ Not only the area of Taoyuan but also the rest of the island were filled with a victorious atmosphere.’ One month later, the Nationalist government was forced to move its capital from Nanjing to Chongqing. Chen responded to the news by writing in an exclamatory tone, ‘ Japanese Army’s front line was approaching Nanjing. Song Ziwen (___) fled from Shanghai to Hong Kong, and on to Manila. This high-level official could only settle in a foreign country when his fatherland was occupied.’ In Taiwan, the news of victory created a sense of arrogance among the Japanese and even among many Taiwanese. This was a new phenomenon of which Chen remained critically aware. ‘The next-door liquor shop was full of bureaucratic airs. The shopkeeper ignored his customers who could not speak Japanese. Shuijing [a Taiwanese] and some other clerks also behaved arrogantly’.²³

Politically, it is reasonable to argue that Chen chose, if passively, to be on the Japanese side after the outbreak of war, but psychologically, he was more an observer than a participant in terms of war involvement. This suggests that a visible tension between his political choice and identity position led consequently to inner contradictories and mobilities among his overlapped Chinese, Taiwanese and Japanese consciousnesses. After the outbreak of war the Japanese secret agents more frequently visited Chen, who had been under close watch since 1928. Still, Chen, under the increasingly upbeat atmosphere of the war in Taiwan, could not help veering a sense of sympathy for people in the mainland who were suffering under the war. Unusually, he transcribed a solemn and stirring poetry, written by Guo-Moruo (___), calling forth Chinese morale against Japanese invasion. Meanwhile a deep sense of loneliness, originating from his inner awareness of independence from the external war atmosphere, emerged now and then in his mind.²⁴ As his diary of 1938 has disappeared, there are not enough sources available to discuss his further responses to the second wave of Japanese military invasion in central and southern China through the year 1938.

In 1939, his decision to withdraw from the councilor’s election of the second term accidentally caused by a fierce oral conflict with his Japanese colleagues at the city council, was probably regarded by the colonial authorities as a step to end his cooperation with them, and might have led to his imprisonment for 300 days in late-December under the pretext of his involvement in an antiwar event. Chen’s diary in 1939 was empty after December 21, because, from then on, he was unexpectedly imprisoned at a police station in Xinzhu for 300 days. According to Chen’s reminiscence in 1966, he was ‘inexplicably’ accused of instigating Xinzhu young people to enlist in an anti-Japan war in Mainland China, and bringing handbills back to Taiwan to spread propaganda for the communists. He denied these accusations against him, and he never knew the true cause of his imprisonment.²⁵

²² Kondo Masami, *Souryokusen to Taiwan - -Nihon syokuminchi houkai no kenkyu* , 1996, P351; *Chen Wangcheng’s diary* ,September 9, 15, 16, 26, 1937

²³ *Chen Wangcheng’s diary*, October 27, 28, 29; November 30, December 14,1937

²⁴ *Chen Wangcheng’s diary*, September 4, December 7, 1937. Chen got the poetry from a popular Japanese magazine titled *Kaizou*(___), which was accessible to readers in Taiwan then.

²⁵ Wang Shiqing ‘An interview of Chen Wangcheng’ pp.92-94

However the true cause of his imprisonment may be known by tracing a series of related events in his diary in early 1939. In February 20, 1939, Chen tactfully questioned the corruption of the administrative section during the wartime. This immediately caused a retort from his Japanese colleague, the businessman Ishii Kazuo. Kanno Hideo, an unfriendly Japanese councilor, then sided with Ishii Kazuo and directly questioned Chen's loyalty to the Japanese empire. This was a serious accusation against Chen in terms of wartime politics. The president of the city council finally settled the argument after Chen loudly denied the accusation. On the following day, an official newspaper published a report on the event, entitled 'Chen's wrong words caused uproar at city council', and voicing an unfavorable opinion of Chen. This unexpected event finally led him to withdraw from an upcoming councilor's reelection in late-November 1939.²⁶ Around then, the situation of international politics was that the European war was approaching, and the Japanese increasingly confronted with the American and the British in diplomatic fields. These finally led to outbreak of the European war in early September, which indicated that the Japanese would be involved in an extensive war in the future. Under this pressing situation, a group of young people in Xinzhu, who were ideologically close to Chen and a couple of whom sometimes exchanged views with Chen at his house, were accused of spreading anti-Japan writings and arrested by the police on 8th September 1939. Three weeks later, a Japanese official visited Chen to confirm his decision to give up the councilor's reelection. Two days after the confirmation, Chen's Datong company in Taoyuan was searched by four secret agents. Chen recorded: '[they] began to ransack our office desks and rooms. I was so embarrassed since my personal letters were checked by them.....Two volumes of my diary, a book entitled "*Entering Russia*" and three postcards were taken.....After that I was very angry and unhappy. I was so shocked about getting into trouble. To me, things were too uncertain to be predicted.'²⁷ During the search, two clerks of his company were also arrested. The cause of the search remained a mystery to Chen. On 21st December he was unexpectedly imprisoned at the police station for 300 days. The Datong company, in the face of rising difficulties caused by a series of stricter measures of rice control enforced by the colonial authorities at that time, lasted only several more months before collapsing.²⁸

One might conclude that the search of Chen's company and his imprisonment revealed that the true intention of the colonial authorities was to warn the Taiwanese not to do anything against Japan, in particular, under the increasing pressure of the European war which was highly connected to Japanese war plan of future stage. Whether or not Chen was really involved in these anti-Japanese activities was of no relevance. However why did Chen, rather than the others, become the object of this? The cause might be: the colonial authorities regarded Chen's withdrawal from the councilor's reelection as a step to end his cooperative approach, which had been working since late-1935 at a time when the previously anti-colonial Chen was roped in local politics through participating in the first councilor's election. Chen, however, was not fully aware of this.

²⁶ *Chen Wangcheng's diary*, February 20, 21, 22, 1939; *Taiwannichinichishinpo*, February 21, 1939

²⁷ *Chen Wangcheng's diary*, September 8, 15, 16, October 4, 5, 10, 1939. These young people were jailed for 3-4 years.

²⁸ *Chen Wangcheng's diary*, November 18, 25, 29; December 7, 1939

In short, Chen's cooperative approach, starting in 1935 and further being strengthened after the outbreak of the Japanese war against China in 1937, came to a stop at the end of 1939, directly caused by political mistrust of the Japanese colonial authorities towards him. However Chen's passive attitude in continuing his cooperative approach, evidenced by his withdrawal of councilor's reelection, might be highly related to inevitable contradictories and consequently mobilities among his overlapped Chinese, Taiwanese and Japanese consciousnesses, created in the process of Japanese war against China.

a. A 'Taiwanese/ Japanese' double identity, 1941-1945

The inner contradictories among Chen's overlapped Chinese, Taiwanese and Japanese consciousnesses, caused by a visible tension between his political choice of being a pro-war and pro-Japan Taiwanese and his identity position, were more or less dissolved as Taiwan, as a part of the Japanese empire, faced new Western military objects, instead of Chinese who is ethnically linked to Taiwanese, during the Pacific War. A sense of cohesion between Taiwanese and Japanese was intensified partly because they shared a common fate, including the experiences of war success and difficulties in cumulative process of warfare.

Chen's mentality experienced a visible shift immediately after the outbreak of the Pacific War. This was caused by a series of initially convincing victories in the Japanese war against the Anglo-American powers, which further led him to an increasing sense of Japanese consciousness. After Chen's imprisonment for 300 days he stayed at home mostly reading and not taking any formal job until the end of the war, during which he was under close watch by Japanese secret agents. He resumed his diary-keeping in early September 1941. The manner that he kept diary was more cautious, and the style of his writing was limper, as compared with before. However he revealed a clearer sense of Japanese consciousness, in response to the ongoing Pacific war. He described the Pearl Harbor Incident on 8th December 1941, 'Our country declared war on Britain and America at 6:00 a.m. In Xinzhu, all radios must be turned on for further news.' On December 9, he added: 'Our Navy destroyed two capital ships, more than ten warships, and more than one hundred military aircraft in the battle. Our side, however, lost only two military aircraft, and no warship was destroyed.' The next day, he wrote, 'In the recent Japan-America conflict, our country achieved remarkable success. ... the American Navy was busy enough with their own affairs, not to mention attacking Japan.'²⁹ In early 1942, Japanese armed forces successfully captured Manila, Singapore and Jakarta. In response, Chen and his Taiwanese friends expressed their optimisms about the further Japanese military expansion in Southeast Asia. In January 1942, after chatting with several Taiwanese young people, Chen concluded: 'Nowadays, the ambitions of the young are in the Southeast Asia. This is clearer than during the period after the Sino-Japanese War in 1937.' 'When we talked about the brightness of our future developments in Southeast Asia, we criticized the wrongdoings of the American and the British.' Moreover when Jakarta was captured by Japan in March, Chen commented: 'The Greater East Asia War might be finished soon. The goal that East Asia should belong to the East

²⁹ *Chen Wangcheng's diary*, December 8, 9, 10, 1941

Asian People will come true before long. What a cheerful project it was!³⁰

These evidences indicate that Chen, as a Taiwanese, also regarded himself as a member of Japanese nation and was proud of his identity. Moreover he was convinced of not only the Japanese strength in Southeast Asia, but also the Japanese war ideology, such as the idea of 'Greater East Asia.' One might argue that these writings could not totally represent his true intention because he was under close watch by secret agents after his imprisonment. However these writings might be more than just products of his cautiousness about surveillance, if he took action. First, in February 1943 Chen proposed to work in institutions of the Japanese-occupied areas of Southeast Asia, when he heard from his friends in Taipei that there were two high-paid vacancies for a department-chief at a newspaper in Thailand and a part-time employee in charge of translation at the 'Greater East-Asia Province', established to govern occupied areas in November 1942. He immediately applied for the posts by sending two copies of his resume and a photograph. The next day, he visited his friends in Taipei to obtain further details, but was told to wait and see. Furthermore, two of his sons, Chen Jixu and Chen Jizhi, joined the Japanese military as military workers in Hainan Island in January 1943, even though Chen did not encourage them to go abroad.³¹ In fact, some of his friends showed their strong interest in working abroad, or worked successfully in these Japanese-occupied areas.³² Moreover he proposed to change his name into a Japanese-styled name called Kikuton Seiichi, though he did not officially register it in the end.³³ For realistic reasons he decided to apply for the recognition of being a 'Japanese-speaking family', regarded as a family of Japanization having certain of privileges in terms of education and food ration, without success.³⁴ These actions might politically suggest that the 55-year-old Chen, a Taiwanese living a depressed life after his imprisonment, was partly convinced of Japanese initial success in the war against the Anglo-American powers and sought to survive the war, through increasingly engaging himself with a Japanese identity. This position of identity, i.e. a 'Taiwanese/Japanese' double identity, might have explained why he commented neutrally on the official announcement regarding conscription of Taiwanese, by citing a friend's words, 'the Taiwanese, from now on, would be fully responsible to all duties of being (Japanese) nationals.'³⁵ His Chinese consciousness, however, became increasingly invisible in the process of unfolding war.

This identity position was virtually maintained throughout the final stage of war, at a time when Taiwan and Japan were increasingly under foreign bombings that indicated the Japanese was losing grounds to the Allies. During this period he continued to live an isolated life focusing on various readings, and only was slightly involved in matters outside, such as sometimes worshipping at a Shinto shrine and joining activities of war mobilization.³⁶ He sincerely mourned the death of a Japanese admiral, Yamamoto

³⁰ *Chen Wangcheng's diary*, January 5, 13, March 8, 10, 1942.

³¹ *Chen Wangcheng's diary*, January 30, 31; February 19, 20, 1943

³² *Chen Wangcheng's diary*, July 7, September 29, December 21-25, 28, 1942

³³ *Chen Wangcheng's diary*, January 2, February 2, 1943; Xinnan xinwenshe, *Taiwan renshi jian* (_____), 1943. pp. 149-150.

³⁴ *Chen Wangcheng's diary*, August 1, November 11, 13, 23, 1943.

³⁵ *Chen Wangcheng's diary*, September 21, 1943

³⁶ May 8, June 8; 1942; August 12, 1943; February 22, 23, 1945

Isoluku, in mid-1942, indicating the Japanese offensive was being restrained by the Allies. However when Italy's Mussolini resigned from office in late-July 1943, a significant sign of the Axis's collapse, he was totally surprised. The war threats caused by the bombings of the Allies was approaching North Taiwan, and at the end of 1943 his daughter and son-in-law were killed, causing him great panic and sadness. The hostility to the Allies caused by intense bombings might have impacted on maintaining his position of a 'Taiwanese/Japanese' double identity. He recorded a bombing event in 1945: 'The enemy warships carrying aircrafts, 450 in total, coordinated with several big aircrafts of Chinese Mainland, coming to attack Taiwan. The damages on our side were not serious.' This evidence indicates that the Taiwanese and Japanese shared the same position in the face of threats of foreign fightback made by the Allies including Chinese. This position of 'Taiwanese/Japanese' double identity might also explain why 'many Taiwanese burst into tears' when they heard the formal announcement of the Japanese surrender to the Allies on August 15 1945 while also reminded themselves of 'keeping cautious and calm' in the face of the Japanese colonial authorities.³⁷

(B) Wu Xingrong (1907-1967)

Wu Xingrong's diary consists of around 33 volumes that cover the period from 1933 to 1967. These writings were published two volumes after a cautious selection in 1981, at a time when freedom of publication was greatly restrained in Taiwan. The rest of his writings have remained unpublished until now. Wu probably started to keep a diary in Japanese in 1922 or in 1923, at a time when he was studying at the Taiwan Commercial School. He continued this writing habit until April 1929 at a time when he was arrested in Japan, with several volumes of his diary taken by the Japanese police, in an anti-leftist crush called the April 16 Incident.³⁸ After that he gave up keeping a diary and transferred his writing energy to literary creation. He however resumed writing in September 1933 when he settled down to operate a clinic for a year in Jiali, in Tainan. He revealed the reason and manner that he resumed keeping diary: 'At the moment I am neither an activist involved in any social moment nor a member of any political society. Therefore the reason that I gave up keeping a diary has disappeared. Diary-keeping is important to us because it is a way to record our daily lives, and to reflect upon our past.'³⁹ Since then he wrote his diary mostly in modern Chinese except during the wartime between 1938.1 and 1945.8, during which he wrote in Japanese. These volumes were usually stored in the drawer at his study room. However they were once hid in the ceiling of his room and once buried in the ground to keep them from being taken by police, when he was in hiding after being accused of involvement in the February 28 Incident in 1947.⁴⁰ After that, he kept diary in a more cautious way and with less enthusiasm. However he

³⁷ Wu Xinrong, *Wu Xinrong's Diary*, January 9, August 15, 18, 1945

³⁸ My guess is that Wu might start keeping diary in Japanese language in 1922 (or 1923) and continued it until 1929, because he mentioned he started to learn basic Chinese when he was studying at the Taiwan Commercial School between 1922 and 1925. He recalled that the first classical Chinese book he read was "The Histories of Three Kingdoms" (____) in 1927.

³⁹ Zhang Liangze, ed., *Wu Xinrong's Diary (Prewar)*, 1981, pp. 1-2

⁴⁰ *Wu Xingrong Huiyilu*, (finished in Chinese in 1952) 1989, p37.

recorded, in June 1949, his dilemma of keeping a diary by saying: ‘ I have been lazy in keeping a diary for a long time. This does have a reason. Since the diary is a record of my whole life, I should not worry about political sensitivity. I do not care if my future career will be affected owing to my writings in the dairy. From now on I will keep diary everyday. At least I will record my here-and-now life.’⁴¹ This revealed his honest attitude towards his diary-keeping habit that had become a daily discipline, shaping his inner, independent self.

Wu Xinrong, 1907-1967, was a medical doctor, a socialist writer and an active politician between the 1930s and the 1940s in colonial Taiwan. He was born in 1907 in coastal Beimen in Tainan, southern Taiwan.

c. Reconstructing traces of Wu’s political shift during wartime, 1937-1945

In this section my questions are: did the warfare reshape the political stance, and even the identity position of left-leaning Taiwanese youth? Is it possible to trace the process of Wu’s political shift in the wartime?

Several months before the outbreak of the Japanese war against China in July 1937, Wu felt something unusual was happening in his surroundings. He first detected an extraordinary boom in rural economy, evidenced by a quick rise of income and patients at his clinic since mid-1936, which, he implied, might had been created by the Japanese buildup of military-related industries in Taiwan. Furthermore he noticed that a series of important events happened in early April 1937, such as the disbandment of the Japanese Imperial Assembly in Japan and the abolishment of a long-existing Chinese printed page of the newspapers in Taiwan, which could indicate that an ‘era of transition’ was coming.⁴² When the war against China broke out on July 7, he recorded the sentence in his diary, ‘ If justice is still alive, human conscience will spread all over the world’, showing his belief in anti-aggression and his compassion for China.⁴³

However as the war unfolded in the following months, Wu was soon involved in a series of war mobilization activities, leading to a mental tension in his mind. He, together with some other medical doctors, was first assigned to take charge of the medical service at a defense unit, and fund-raising for the military in Jiali.⁴⁴ Other tasks he participated in included farewell parties for sending the soldiers off, and parades for celebrating initial victories as the war quickly proceeded into central China. In Beimen area, twenty-six Japanese soldiers and some Taiwanese military workers were mobilized to join the battlefield in Shanghai, as the Japanese Army encountered considerable resistance from Chinese troops. Wu was aware that the ongoing war had become a reality, though he wished the sadness and anxiety caused by it would end soon. It seemed that he showed no special excitement in the parade for celebration after the news of war victory reached Jiali from the battlefield at the end of September 1937.⁴⁵ However he and even his wife were

⁴¹ Wu Xinrong, *Wu Xinrong’s Diary*, June 23, 1949.

⁴² *Wu Xinrong’s Diary*, May 31, July 12, 13, 16, December 31, 1936; February 9, March 31, April 1, 1937.

⁴³ *Wu Xinrong’s Diary*, July 7, 1937

⁴⁴ *Wu Xinrong’s Diary*, August 15, 19, 31; September 1, 2

⁴⁵ *Wu Xinrong’s Diary*, September 9, 12, 21, 27; December 13, 1937

assigned more duties at a couple of units related to war mobilization from then.⁴⁶

Wu's response to his involvements in the war mobilization against China was intricate and manifold. He first realized that the unexpectedly fast development of the war had created a tense environment in Taiwan that he couldn't avoid, though his mental anxiety caused by the war had never been reduced. When he was assigned a couple of new posts for war mobilization in October 1937, he tried to justify himself by recording in his diary: 'This is the current trend that I can not evade,' 'Everyone has his own duty, everyone is following the current trend.'⁴⁷ However participating in the war against China was against his belief of anti-aggression. In order to escape his mental conflict he indulged in daily entertainment and drinking. The increasing mental tension almost led him to the brink of mental collapse at a time when the Nationalist capital Nanjing was losing to the Japanese troops in late-November 1937. Around then he described his life as having 'totally fallen into an immoral world 'created by the current war environment.'⁴⁸

Under this depressed, if unavoidable, environment where the Japanese Army had achieved a series of initial successes in China, Wu gradually found ways to justify his involvement in the war mobilization, and further developed a more realistic approach to it. Wu's new realistic tendency toward the war against China emerged soon after the fall of Nanjing in mid-December 1937. After he returned from a farewell party for Taiwanese military workers on 19th December, about a week after Nanjing's fall, he recorded: 'During this period of historical transition, it is natural that the Taiwanese should also take part in the current war.' He further explained the reason by arguing: 'In Chinese history, China was twice conquered by foreign nations. It was first conquered by the Northern Mongolians, and then by the North-eastern Manchurians. It might be China's destiny to be under invasion by the Eastern Japanese this time.'⁴⁹ This clearly shows that Wu tried to justify the Taiwanese workers' participation in the Japanese war against China through re-interpreting Chinese history and current events in a different way. In so doing, he also indirectly justified his involvement in the war mobilization.

This new tendency of Wu was further strengthened by the second wave of military victory of the Japanese troops in central and southern China through the year 1938, which might have finally lead to his political shift of course in the wartime context. On 1st January 1938, he changed the language used to keep his diary from modern Chinese to Japanese, 5 years after he resumed keeping diary in 1933. He explained that the usage of written and spoken Japanese were 'natural' to him since he had been born in the Japanese period and educated in the Japanese system. It was also 'convenient and necessary' to use Japanese, in particular, in a period when an individual was unable to resist an expanding power created by the Japanese.⁵⁰ This understanding of Japan's strength was previously confirmed by the first wave of Japanese military occupation of the major cities in central China, which had forced the Nationalist government to move into inner China at the end of 1937, and further strengthened by its second wave of occupation of southern China

⁴⁶ *Wu Xinrong's Diary*, October 2, 16, 1937

⁴⁷ *Wu Xinrong's Diary*, October 2, 16, 1937.

⁴⁸ *Wu Xinrong's Diary*, November 12, 23, 24; December 13, 1937.

⁴⁹ *Wu Xinrong's Diary*, December 19, 1937.

⁵⁰ *Wu Xinrong's Diary*, January 4, 19, 1938

and the Wuhan area in October 1938.⁵¹ Under these circumstances, on 2nd October, he first showed his positive intention to take part in the battlefield in Canton as a military doctor because ‘the nation which does not fight is a fallen one’, though he also showed his concern about how to support his family during his absence from home.⁵² In late October 1938, he regarded the actions of the Taiwanese who sent their brothers and sons to the battlefield as justifiable, and drew an analogy between the Japanese conquerers with the Mongolian and Manchurian conquerers who had successfully invaded China before. He expressed his sadness about the uselessness of China’s resistance, which he described as a ‘dead person’, after a further loss of Canton. This indicates a significant shift of attitude to the war against China, from passive to positive, emerged at the end of 1938, even though his mental anxiety did not go away.⁵³

However the substantiation of Wu’s adoption of the new approach first depended on his re-examination of his surroundings, including the current situation and future development of China, Japan and Taiwan; and second depended on his redefinition of self-position and future career arrangement. Regarding China, he indicated the possibilities of a further divided China, as evidenced by several Japanese-supported regimes earlier founded in parts of China. At the end of 1938 he recorded in detail ‘the theory of China’s federation’, which suggested that China should be divided into nine regimes based on their geographical difference. He regarded the theory as radical but plausible. This attitude might have resulted from his newly pessimistic views of China’s current and future prospects, and from his extensive readings of Chinese politics, history and culture.⁵⁴ [Refer to next chapter] In contrast, he increasingly recognized that the Japanese represented a new and strong nation in Asia, and even in the world, though he saw a rising possibility of her confrontation with the western powers. In February 1939 when Hainan Island was taken over by the Japanese, he soon noticed that the island was a geographically important place. The Japanese takeover of the island, he argued, had put the British, the American and the French colonies in danger. This would lead to Japanese confrontation with these western powers if the rising Japanese further intended to control the Pacific Ocean.⁵⁵ When the Japanese formally allied with the Germans and Italians in September 1940, he expressed his agreement on expelling the British and the French from Asia and Africa, and fully understood that the British and Americans would be Japan’s future rivals.⁵⁶

On the basis of his understanding of the broader wartime environment, he first redefined what he thought the Taiwanese stance should be in this context. After Shanghai and Nanking were taken over by the Japanese, he developed a view that the Taiwanese future should be in the Mainland rather than in Taiwan Island, through various exchanges with his Taiwanese friends returning from the Mainland where Taiwanese status was rising.⁵⁷ However this view was based on a recognition that the Taiwanese should be

⁵¹ *Wu Xinrong’s Diary*, October 15, 22, 28, 1938.

⁵² *Wu Xinrong’s Diary*, October 2, 1938

⁵³ *Wu Xinrong’s Diary*, October 19, 22, 28, November 14, 1938

⁵⁴ *Wu Xinrong’s Diary*, March 28, December 2, 1938.

⁵⁵ *Wu Xinrong’s Diary*, February 11, 25, March 24, 1939; February 23, 1940.

⁵⁶ *Wu Xinrong’s Diary*, June 10, October 3, 1940.

⁵⁷ *Wu Xinrong’s Diary*, April 3, 1938; August 3, 1939

viewed as part of the Eastern Asian People rather than Chinese, within an expanding framework of the Japanese empire.⁵⁸ Until the late-1940 he got his younger brother a job working as a translator in the Japanese Army, his father a visit to Nanjing, his cousin work in Beijing, and several close friends worked in different parts of China.⁵⁹

Furthermore he rearranged future careers for himself and his family in a realistic way. First, he decided to join the local election in 1939, which was regarded as an instrument of political control designed to rope in local elite since the mid-1930s. As I mentioned earlier he was indifferent to participating in the first local election in 1935, which he regarded as limited. However, he gradually got involved in local politics in 1936, through expanding his circle of friends mostly young intellectuals, with whom he successfully assisted his political backer, Wang Wuji, who had a close connection with the local authorities, in obtaining membership at the Tainan Prefectural Council. This indirect experience of political participation was further developed into a direct one when he decided to run for membership at the township council of Jiali in July 1939. This decision was made four months after his political backer Wang privately suggested him that he could participate in the township council and financial association representing a new and young influence 'as the colonial authorities of *zhou* and *jun* had shown permissions to him (Wang)'. With the goodwill from the colonial authorities, he also strongly felt 'the necessity of demonstrating his political influence during the wartime'. He, together with three other close allies, finally succeeded in becoming councilors in the election in November 1939.⁶⁰ This election created a twofold impact on him: first, the process of his politicization, from 1935 to 1939, indicated that his involvement in the various activities of war mobilization had gradually turned his position from indifference to active participation in colonial politics, revealing that the Japanese national identity was becoming increasingly relevant and important to him. Furthermore the political picture of Jiali and even the Beimen area was reshaped by the election, since a native political sect consisting of Japanese-educated, middle-class and young Taiwanese elite in the area, centered on Wu and headed by Wang Wuji, was further strengthened in the process of political mobilization and campaign. The aim of the rising political sect, depicted by him, was to reform local political and economic problems through challenging existing local conservatives. Though the colonial authorities were politically friendly to him at that stage, his group sometimes faced frustrations when getting support from local Japanese politicians.⁶¹

On the expanding political basis, he further sought to exercise his influence at state-controlled economic associations, designed to absorb local capitals for war mobilization and industrialization. With support from his political allies in different parts of Tainan county, he first succeeded in extending his influence at an irrigation association, a county-level unit used to control farmlands and local elite through controlling allocation of water. Later in mid-1941, he later became one of the supervisors at Jiali financial

⁵⁸ *Wu Xinrong's Diary*, August 5, 1938; January 1, August 6, 1940.

⁵⁹ *Wu Xinrong's Diary*, August 30, 1940.

⁶⁰ *Wu Xinrong's Diary*, March 17, July 9, November 22, 1939.

⁶¹ *Wu Xinrong's Diary*, January 22, February 28, April 22, November 21, 1940.

associations, whose appointment usually needed official permission.⁶²

Furthermore he decided to send his son to study at a primary school designed only for Japanese students. He tried very hard to exercise his connections with his Japanese friends and finally succeeded in obtaining, for his son, an offer of admission that he described as ‘a ticket of becoming Japanese’.⁶³ There were 11 Taiwanese students allowed to attend this sort of school, which had 167 members in total in 1939.⁶⁴ Furthermore he chose to name his newborn baby ‘Nantu (____)’ or ‘Yaji (____)’, the meaning of which referred to the Japanese wartime ideology, such as ‘Southward advance’ and ‘Eastern Asianism’. With his increasing optimism about imperial future in the Eastern Asian area, the consciousness of being an Eastern Asian was also under formation, which politically led to an anti-western sentiment in his mind as some parts of Asia were still under colonization of the Western powers.⁶⁵ (Refer to next chapter)

However the most significant decision for him was to follow, if reservedly, the policy of *Kominka* (1937–1945), the goal of which was to turn Taiwanese into ‘real Japanese’ through replacing Taiwanese names and religious beliefs with Japanese ones. This move indicated that his shift in political course thus led to a situation that his position of identity gradually tilted towards a Japanese-dimension from a Taiwanese-dimension. In regard to the non-compulsory name-changing policy, Wu experienced a long and elaborate process of decision-making. He did not respond to the policy until March 1940, at a time when the Japanese had control over most of the Mainland. However since his oldest son had just been allowed to enroll at a primary school, which used to be for only Japanese students, he started to consider the idea of name-changing on condition that ‘the Taiwanese have no choice but to take a Japanese name.’ He created a couple of Japanese surnames and names for himself and his family, which still contained purposely the Han cultural meanings from their former ones. He also reached an agreement to the surname-changing issue with some senior members of the Wu lineage at a meeting in Jiali. Though he thought that surname-changing was a dishonorable action of ‘a fallen nation’, he justified himself by arguing that ‘it is also right to put the destiny of the nation on the right course’.⁶⁶ In July 1941, he was appointed as section chief in charge of cultural and medical affairs at the Jiali branch at the *Kouminhoukoukai* (____), which was the major executive body of the *Kominka* movement in the Japanese empire. His attitude was ambivalent to his new post.⁶⁷ This ambivalence might also explain why he had not formally changed his surname in mid-March 1942. The records from his diary show that his family was neither using a Japanese surname nor did they belong to the ‘Japanese-speaking Family’(____) until mid-March 1942, though his two children were surprisingly allowed to study at a Japanese-only primary school. However the pressure to change names remained on his mind. He started using both Chinese and Japanese names in his articles published in the periodical, ‘*Minsu Taiwan*’(____) in 1942. He

⁶² *Wu Xinrong's Diary*, January 20, February 17, 1940; July 12, 1941. Taiwan Jinji yanjiuhui, *Taiwan Jinji congshu* (10), Taipei, 1942. pp. 245-246.

⁶³ *Wu Xinrong's Diary*, July 21, November 10, 1938; April 26, 1939; January 31, March 3, 1940.

⁶⁴ Tainanzhou beimenjunyisuo, *Beimenjungaikuang*, 1939. Pp. 14-15.

⁶⁵ *Wu Xinrong's Diary*, August 5, November 10, December 7, 12, 1938.

⁶⁶ *Wu Xinrong's Diary*, March 15, December 1, 9; 1940; January 20, 29, 1941

⁶⁷ *Wu Xinrong's Diary*, July 3, 1941.

recorded in his diary that he adopted ‘Omichi’ (___) as his first Japanese surname on various grounds including local folk tradition, family history, religious theory and current Japanese political trend.⁶⁸ However as the Pacific War intensified in 1944, he replaced his previous surname ‘Omichi’ with ‘Nobeoga’ (___), a symbolic mixture of Wu surname, Taiwan’s founder Koxingka, and a Japanese place called Okayama (___). According to his diary, the reasons for changing his surname were mainly practical considerations: first of all, he was aware that the 50-year-long Japanese rule in Taiwan was a reality; Second, it was a way to show his willingness to support the empire at the final stage of the Pacific War; third, using a Japanese surname was basically a requirement for those Taiwanese parents who wanted to send their children to a Japanese-only primary school; fourth, he intended to start a new life through changing his surname, in order to forget his misfortunes over the past few years, such as the loss of his first wife in 1942.⁶⁹ However there is no record showing if he had registered his Japanese names at any official institute, though it is clear he was ideologically convinced of the name-changing idea at the final stage.

Furthermore, as a medical doctor trained in a modern way, he responded to the policies of religious Japanization in a broad-minded way. He and the villagers in Jiali warmly welcomed to the first Japanese Shinto shrine, established in Jiali in 1936, with Taiwanese religious rituals. These villagers, however, strongly opposed a new policy, started in 1938, aimed to replace Taiwanese religious beliefs with Japanese ones through drastically reducing the number of Taiwanese temples.⁷⁰ His response to the new policy was multi-leveled: first of all, as a believer of evolutionism, he regarded that these traditional temples containing superstitions were symbols of the ‘old era’, which should be eliminated, while the Japanese Shinto Shrines represented the ‘new era’. However he disagreed with the way that the colonial authorities forced the villagers to follow the policy.⁷¹ Second, he believed that some Buddhist statues and temples, which were valuable in terms of art and local history, should be well preserved. He secretly preserved the oldest Buddhist statue in Jiali, the *baosheng dadi* (___), as he tried to avoid opposition from the villagers and interference from the local Japanese authorities, when the religious reformative policy intensified in 1940.⁷² Furthermore, he regularly worshipped at Shinto Shrines for both private and public reasons. In April 1941 he recorded that he, together with his family, ‘honorably’ worshipped the newly established Kaizan (___) Shinto Shrine, in order to show his ‘sense of national consciousness’. In April 1942, he and his medical colleagues from a unit of war mobilization regularly attended worship at the Beimen Shinto Shrine. He was delighted to attend the worship as he found some tablets of medical deities were placed at the shrine.⁷³ He inclined to view these religious reformative establishments as something ‘new’, and even conducted the wedding ceremony of his second marriage in an official way at the Shinto shrine,

⁶⁸ *Wu Xinrong’s Diary*, March 14, 21; July 8; 1942

⁶⁹ *Wu Xinrong’s Diary*, January 26, March 19, 1944.

⁷⁰ *Wu Xinrong’s Diary*, July 17, 1936; February 14, 1938.

⁷¹ *Wu Xinrong’s Diary*, February 14, 21, 1938; May 4, 1940.

⁷² *Wu Xinrong’s Diary*, August 21, October 9, 1940.

⁷³ *Wu Xinrong’s Diary*, April 28, October 27, 1941; April 28, 1942.

indicating his acceptance of Japanese identity.⁷⁴ This open-minded inclination also can be found in his response to other religious reformative policy, whose aim was to replace Taiwanese family beliefs with Japanese ones, through reorganizing the religious setting of the living room of the Taiwanese family. He was quite willing to follow the policy, as he regarded that ‘it was meaningless to place personal beliefs above the important national career’. Records show that more than 90% of households in one of the villages in Jiali followed the policy.⁷⁵

d. An intensified Japanese-dimensioned identity after outbreak of the Pacific War, 1942 –1945

After the outbreak of the Pacific War in December 1941, regarded as the third wave of the Japanese military expansion, the Japanese dimension of Wu’s national identity was further strengthened as his involvement in the war mobilization and the *Kominka* movement grew even much deeper than before. He described the outbreak of the Pacific War as a ‘nerve-racking’, ‘unprecedented and decisive’ event that had turned the Asian war into a world war. However his shock of war was soon replaced by a positive expectation, when British-colonized Hong Kong was captured by the Japanese three weeks later. He believed that the future downfall of British-colonized Singapore might lead to the emancipation of several independent states including colonized Philippines, Burma, Vietnam and India, which would be the most meaningful event of the Pacific War launched by Japan⁷⁶. His positive thinking towards the anti-West war was further encouraged by the fall of Manila in early January 1942, which he regarded as an event representing ‘the American withdrawal from Asia’. In the upbeat war atmosphere he was promoted to be one of the directors at the only society of medical doctor in Jiali. He also organized a meeting to promote the system of voluntary soldiers among locals in Jiali, at which he gave a public lecture.⁷⁷

Furthermore the fall of Singapore in mid-February 1942 totally convinced him of the Japanese capability to control ‘the sphere of greater Eastern Asia’. When the Japanese troops were entering Singapore, he was aware that ‘the British Empire was toppling’. He described that he ‘experienced spiritually and ideologically great progress’, and regarded that ‘world history has suddenly entered a new era, and the Japanese have entirely dominated East Asia’, when the fall of Singapore was confirmed.⁷⁸ His upbeat mood continued with the news of the fall of Dutch-ruled Jakarta in late-February. As the only representative of Jiali’s residents, he was invited to make a public speech in Japanese at a meeting held to celebrate the war victory. It was attended by around 1000 local cadres from the public sector in Beimen, who he talked to about how to become ‘imperialized

⁷⁴ *Wu Xinrong’s Diary*, October 29, November 8, 1942; June 26, July 25, 1943. On July 16, 1944, he was rewarded a certificate of merit, from the imperial authorities, for his contributions to the *Kominka* Movement.

⁷⁵ *Wu Xinrong’s Diary*, May 29, 1938. Guo Shuitan, ‘_____の_____’, in _____<<_____>>, April 22, 1939.

⁷⁶ *Wu Xinrong’s Diary*, December 8, 26, 1941.

⁷⁷ *Wu Xinrong’s Diary*, February 1, 9, 1942

⁷⁸ February 12, 16, 1942.

civilians' (Koumin, 國) through conducting disciplines.⁷⁹ With his rising status in wartime politics, he formally submitted an application to become a volunteer in the battle, and started to use a Japanese name in articles contributed to a magazine. In the following year he was more frequently invited to make public speeches at various meetings relating to war mobilization.⁸⁰

However when signs that the war progress was being restrained by American fightback, in late-May 1943, his resolution to support the war remained unchanged, indicating that his Japanese-dimension identity appeared to be stronger than before. When he heard the news over the radio that the famous Japanese admiral, Yamamoto Isoroku (山本 五十六), was killed in battle, he was 'extremely shocked and realized the exceptional fierceness and difficulty of the ongoing war'. His shock turned into a strong sense of self-awareness that 'we should fully understand that we are a nation participating in a brutal war', when the imperial Navy encountered another setback in an island (アリュシロン) 10 days later. This sense of self-awareness revealed that the Japanese dimension of his double identity as a 'Taiwanese/Japanese' or a 'Japanese/Taiwanese' intensified in the face of rising war difficulties. This intensification of Japanese identity is clear from his subsequent actions: first, he was put in charge of reading a resolution at a mass meeting entitled 'Beating the American and the British'. He also publicly expressed his willingness to be a medical volunteer in the battlefield and his support of the newly announced conscription act applied to Taiwanese youths at another meeting; second, he had a Japanese-style wedding ceremony for his second marriage at the Beimen Shinto Shrine, and decided to adopt a Japanese surname partly because he realized the 50-year Japanese rule in Taiwan was a reality and intended to show his willingness to support the empire at the final stage of the war.⁸¹

In addition to his Japanese identity, the other source supporting his stance of the depressing final war came from his Taiwanese identity, which represented a sense of belonging and responsibility to defend the island of Taiwan and its people in the face of war crisis. As I mentioned earlier, Wu was involved in the left-leaning activities organized by Taiwanese students in Tokyo between 1928 and 1929, and later participated in a couple of cultural and social societies consisting of young Taiwanese intellectuals of both local and islandwide level, between 1932 and 1937. Most of these societies stopped operating during the wartime, between 1937 and 1941, though these cultural and social connections continued to work in an informal way. However from late-1941, Wu reconnected the circle of writers, and more frequently contributed articles to the Taiwanese-based magazine, 'Taiwan Wenxue', and 'Minsu Taiwan' organized by both well-known Japanese and Taiwanese. 'Taiwan Wenxue' published writings of some well-known Taiwanese, who used to be leftists, and also a couple of Japanese authors. It was also regarded as a magazine aiming to promote Taiwanese spirit. The non-official 'Minsu Taiwan' was a popular magazine among the Taiwanese community, aiming to research and introduce Taiwan's custom and history.⁸² Through writing about Taiwan's local history and associating with Taiwanese writers, Wu developed a more systematic and

⁷⁹ February 27, March 1, 1942

⁸⁰ *Wu Xinrong's Diary*, March 9, 21, May 1, July 7, November 26, December 9, 1942; May 16, 1943.

⁸¹ *Wu Xinrong's Diary*, July 6, July 25, September 23, 25, 1943; March 19, 1944.

⁸² Shi Yulin, *Wu Xinrong Zhuan*, 1999, pp.111-112

deeper understanding of Taiwan's past, which certainly had profound impacts on articulating his Taiwanese identity throughout the wartime, and, in particular, offered a spiritual source of defending the island of Taiwan in the face of war crisis caused by the American fightback.⁸³

However, at the gloomy prospect of war, he became increasingly aware of the elevated Taiwanese status and identity, which indirectly caused a psychological shift in his war participation initiated by a series of frustrations in his political and economic career in December 1944. At the same time, this led to a lessening of his Japanese-dimension identity. Throughout 1944 the Germans were quickly losing grounds to the Allies on the Continent, and both Taiwan and Japan were also under direct threat from American air attacks. In order to recover Japan's dominance of war development, some strict means were adopted by colonial authorities to obtain various sources for war purpose through mobilizing the controlled economy in Taiwan. For this reason Wu was in trouble throughout late-1944 since his father was accused by the economic police of committing an economic crime relating to his family-run fish farm. To sort out the unhappy event, he tried hard to negotiate with the local authorities finally settling the matter through paying a fine amounting to 8000 yen, which was around a quarter of his income in 1944.⁸⁴ Furthermore, aware of the rising Taiwanese status in the war crisis, he became optimistic in becoming president of the medical doctor's society in Beimen. After exercising his connections however he unexpectedly lost to his Japanese rival in the end. He surprisingly described the 'small' event as 'a very humiliating setback' and 'a big warning in my life'. He also 'deeply realized that he should not look for a future in the public sector until the end of the war'. This indicated a psychological shift in his mind that he regarded his future might be better at the postwar period rather than in the current Japanese regime, which reveals that he had predicted a big change in the near future.⁸⁵

The unavoidable failure of the Japanese, evidenced by continuing bombing islandwide and the loss of Manila and Okinawa to the Americans in early 1945, further resulted in some new, entangled psychological inclinations in his mind, which finally led to future shifts in his political course and identity immediately after the Japanese surrender in August. When Manila was taken over by the Americans in February 1945, he expressed deep sadness as the fall of Taiwan seemed to be inevitable. It also reminded him of 'defending the island, a sacred territory, for the descendants'. Under the daily threat of air attacks, he gradually returned to worship local Han Chinese deities, rather than Japanese Shinto, as a sense of helplessness intensified in his mind. This new spiritual inclination indicating his return to the Han identity, however, did not mean that a sense of partition between the Taiwanese and the Japanese was encouraged in his rational thinking, which was evidenced by his actions of stopping the villagers to read handbills, distributed by the American aircrafts in the air, containing war propagandas encouraging Taiwanese hatreds of the Japanese.⁸⁶ Furthermore, the American landing of neighboring Okinawa in late-March, which ended his deep worry that if Taiwan would be next target of landing after the previous loss of another neighboring Manila, nevertheless, suddenly created an

⁸³ June 7, August 10, 31, September 4, 1944

⁸⁴ *Wu Xinrong's Diary*, July 21, 28, 30, November 21, December 8, 25, 1944.

⁸⁵ *Wu Xinrong's Diary*, December 19, 21, 22, 23, 1944

⁸⁶ *Wu Xinrong's Diary*, February 6, 7, 14, 20; April 10, May 15, 1945

increasing sense of isolation in his mind, that further led him to imagine Taiwan as ‘an orphan of the Pacific Ocean’. This sense of orphanage might have led him to read Irish revolutionary history with great enthusiasm and may have led him to conclude that ‘some particularities in the Irish history can also be found in that of Taiwan’, though the military involvement of the Americans and the Russians in Germany throughout April 1945 caught his attention more.⁸⁷ Though the Japanese authorities in Tokyo further tried to maintain Taiwanese and Korean support of the war through passing an important Act to improve their status within the empire, the unavoidable prospect of war failure might have also led him to another inclination toward a re-imagination of Chinese consciousness, since late-May, evidenced by his resumption of reading the Sun Yat-sen’s collections, representing the Nationalist regime’s ideology, that he had previously read at his schooldays in Japan in late-1920s.⁸⁸

These entangled new inclinations, including consciousnesses of the Han, the Taiwanese, the orphan and the Chinese, were abstractly subjected to a larger framework of political identity of Chinese imagined at the turn of regime change, while his Japanese identity was decreasing owing to war failure in 15th August 1945.

(C) Short conclusion

Scholars who research on identity-related issues in wartime Taiwan generally stress the role of *Kominka* campaign in reshaping the islanders’ position of identity and further assess how far the *Kominka* has achieved by examining impacts of its various policies on the islanders. Instead of this approach, I suggest, in this chapter, that the warfare itself played a major role in reshaping the islanders’ identity in wartime Taiwan through examining two islanders’ wartime diaries. Chen Wangcheng’s case shows that his political course was reshaped in the process of unfolding semi-wartime and wartime contexts, from an anti-colonial stance in the 1920s to a practical, if ambivalent, pro-war stance (against China) in late-1930s. The shift in political course, between 1935 and 1939, made possible a shift among different dimensions of his identity, gradually moving from his Chinese-dimension towards his Japanese-dimension, with his Taiwanese-dimension in the central position. However his inner awareness of independence from the external war atmosphere, which originated from both of his Chinese and Taiwanese consciousnesses, and his insensitivity to true intentions of the colonial authorities regarding wartime politics, created a tension between his political choice and identity position, which finally led to his imprisonment for 300 days. However the tension was more or less dissolved as Taiwan, as a part of Japanese empire, faced new and western military rivals, i.e. Anglo-American powers, instead of Chinese ethnically linked to Taiwanese, from the outbreak of Pacific War in 1941. A sense of cohesion between Taiwanese and Japanese, as a national community, was intensified partly because they faced common military rivals from the West, and partly because they shared a common destiny, including experiences of war success and failure, in the accumulative process of warfare. These resulted in his double identity as a ‘Taiwanese/Japanese’ throughout the

⁸⁷ *Wu Xinrong’s Diary*, March 22, 26, 27; April 4, 14-16, 1945

⁸⁸ *Wu Xinrong’s Diary*, March 21, May 29, 30; June 8-17; July 9, 1945

Pacific war.

Wu Xinrong, a generation younger than Chen Wangcheng, experienced a more visible shift in political course, reshaped by the warfare, from an anti-colonial, nationalist and left-leaning stance before 1935 to a pro-Japan and pro-war stance between 1937 and 1945. This political shift, initially emerging at the end of 1938, was highly related to his responses to several waves of war victory of Japanese military offensive against Chinese and Anglo-American powers, which led to his reexaminations and redefinitions of his position and surrounding of different stages. The political shift further led to a reconstruction in his identity position, visibly tilting towards his Japanese-dimension from his Taiwanese-dimension until the end of the war. For the same reasoning the Japanese surrender in August 1945 led him to another shift in political course, from pro-Japan to pro-China, which further resulted in his imagination of Chinese identity in place of his Japanese identity in the initial stage of postwar Taiwan.

The similarities between Chen and Wu, in terms of their war involvements, were that both of them experienced realist shifts in political course, which further led to reconstructions of their identities in wartime context. However Chen's realist approach ended in the midst of wartime, owing to inner ambivalence and outer interruption, while Wu's realism was further strengthened until the end of war. Compared with Chen, Wu's war involvement was more active and more engaged, in particular, between 1941 and 1945, though some uncertainties of mind, separately represented by his mental tension at the outbreak of the war in late 1937 and by his diverse psychological tendencies at the desperate final stage in early 1945, emerged.

Regarding position of identity, both of Chen and Wu experienced an intensification of Japanese identity in wartime, in particular, between 1941 and 1945. However Chen initially embodied a three-dimension identity, since the 1920s, with his Taiwanese dimension in the center. This position was gradually reconstructed in the process of his political shift from 1935 to 1939, with his Japanese identity gradually replacing his Chinese identity, in spite of a temporary stop caused by his imprisonment at the end of 1939. It continued after 1941 and reached a double identity throughout the rest of wartime. By contrast, Wu virtually embodied two-dimension identity, with his Taiwanese identity in the center in the prewar colonial context. However this identity position visibly tilted towards his Japanese-dimension in the process of his political shift throughout wartime. The difference between Chen and Wu, in terms of war involvement and identity position, mainly resulted from their backgrounds of generation and education. Chen (1888-1979) was a generation older than Wu (1907-1967), having more than ten-year study of classical Chinese before his Japanese schoolings in the island, and a long and active anti-colonial experience as a nationalist throughout 1920s Taiwan. However Wu was born in Japanese period receiving only Japanese schooling throughout his study career in Taiwan and in Japan. He was influenced more by the Japanese way and found it more accessible and acceptable to him, though he also had experiences of the anti-colonial and leftist activities for a relatively short period, compared with Chen.

Benedict Anderson is right in arguing that historical narration offers the possibility of reconstructing national consciousness through remembering or forgetting people's past. However, as Bhikhu Parekh suggests, the 'present needs and future aspirations' also enable the reconstruction. The reconstructions of Chen and Wu's identity position visibly resulted from their political shifts mostly caused by their perceptions of war prospect in

current and future stages. Furthermore M. Lo is right in arguing that the *Kominka* doctors developed a hybrid identity. However her view that these doctors located themselves across ethnic boundaries and furthermore supplanted the category of ethnicity with that of the profession might be less convincing. Wu Xinrong's case shows that he, as a medical doctor, also shared some other professions including writer and politician. This multiple role embodied by *Kominka* doctors was not unusual during wartime. As Wu's case suggested, he, as a writer, was able to articulate his Taiwanese identity through researching Taiwan's history and culture during wartime.