

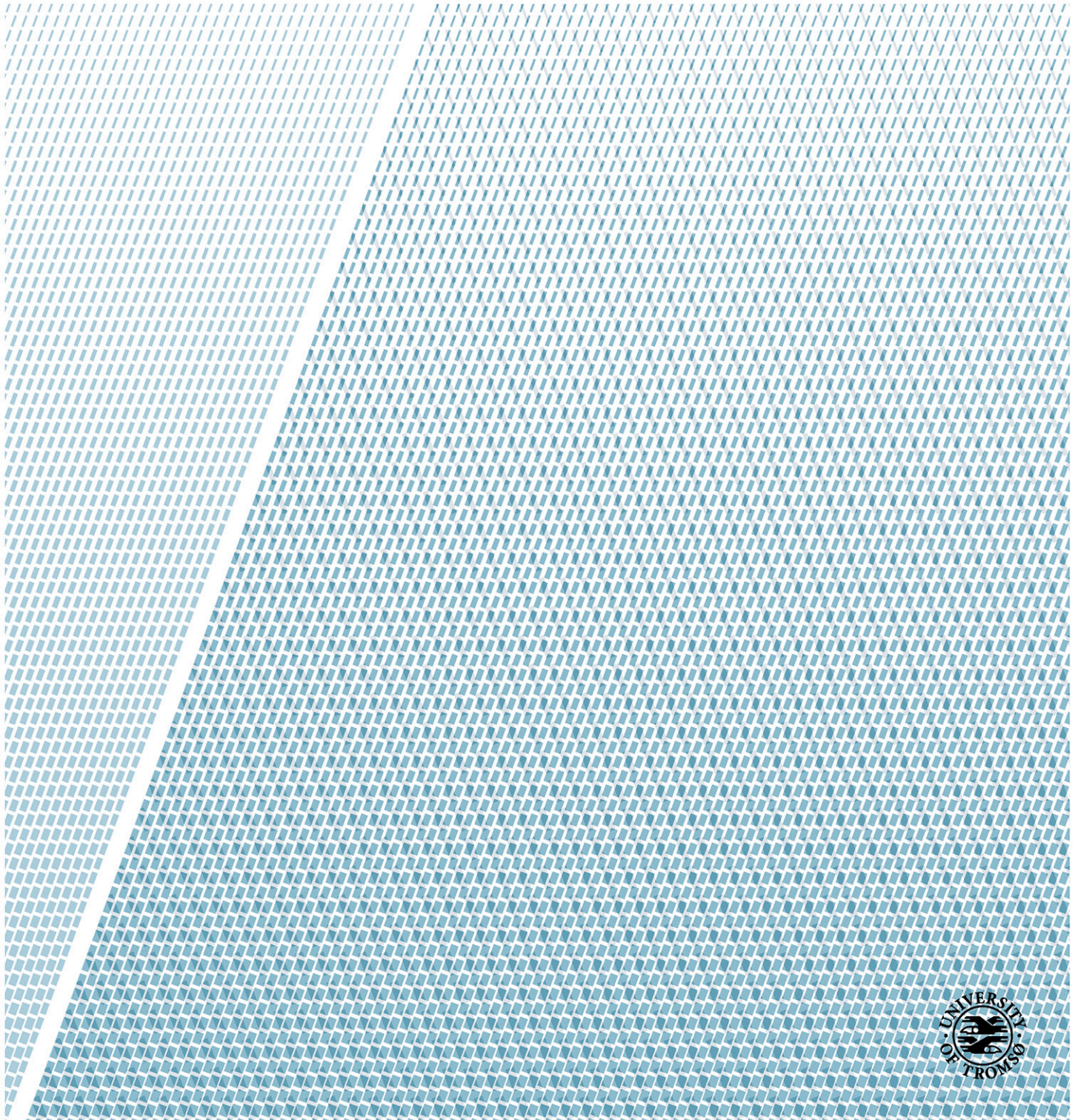
Centre for Peace Studies

Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park

Iconoclasm, Memory and the Importance of Space

—
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ABSTRACT

The Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park is located in rural Taiwan and features over 200 statues of the former authoritarian leader, Chiang Kai-shek (1893-1975). Taiwan had been ruled by Chiang and his son for 38 years of martial law, which ended in 1987. Since then, democracy has developed and the past has been put under scrutiny. Statues of Chiang decorated all official buildings and schools, but once martial law ended, calls for their removal were made. Many of the statues were gathered and displayed in the Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park. The concepts of iconoclasm (the destruction of art), and *lieux de mémoire* (sites of memory) have been applied in the analysis of the park's significance. Through analyzing information plaques in the statue park through a Critical Discourse Analysis, I have examined if the park represents a displacement of Chiang's memory, or if it is a way to keep his memory alive. The finding is that it might represent both, for different parts of the population; to the general public his memory has been laid to rest in the periphery, but for people with a special interest, it allows for vivid memories of Chiang. Additionally, I argue that the physical space of the statue park, as well as the political space it provides, has been important both for sympathizers with Chiang, and the Taiwanese democracy. The statue park represents political plurality, however unpopular Chiang may be in certain parts of society. Moreover, the park is placed in the periphery, and does not force Chiang's memory on those who do not seek it out.

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In memory of Percy Oware (1966-2016).

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1. INTRODUCTION

The bus pulled into the lush, green area of Cihu. Right before the bus came to a halt, we passed a massive sitting Buddha style statue in the color of terra cotta, showing a balding man with a content smile. I exited the bus and walked along the small lake until I reached a gate. The gate was locked with a padlock, but there was no fence connected to the gate so I bypassed the lock and entered the park.

The bronze and granite eyes of former authoritarian leader Chiang Kai-Shek surrounded me from all angles. The statues were narcissistically placed in circles of ten, each statue admiring the other representations of itself. Busts were lining the paths between the circles, ensuring that wherever your eyes veered, every single glance would include the face of Chiang. His cheerful eyes and warm smile were in sharp contrast to the things I had read of this former leader of the authoritarian regime in Taiwan.

Upon this first visit to the Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park, it was drizzling and hazy. The eerie feeling of being surrounded by the past was overwhelming. I felt watched as I walked through the collection of statues in the only statue park in the world dedicated to statues of only one individual, the Generalissimo, the Father of the Nation, Chiang Kai-shek.



Image 1 – Entering the Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park.

1.1 SHORT BACKGROUND

Taiwan is an island off the coast of China with a distinct history and cultural background¹. Taiwan has a long history of being colonized by foreign power. The small island had since the 1500s been inhabited mainly by Austronesian indigenous groups², and a small number of immigrants from the areas closest across the Taiwan Strait. During the 17th century, the Dutch and the Spanish attempted to colonize parts of Taiwan in order to create a trade post in the East China Sea. In 1682 the Qing Dynasty in Mainland China officially annexed Taiwan as part of the Fujian province. However, Taiwan was still left to their own devices in most aspects. When the first Sino-Japanese War ended in 1895, with China defeated, Taiwan was given to Japan as a part of the Treaty of Shimonoseki. The Japanese rule was much more involved than any colonizer had been on Taiwan before, instigating a process of “Japanization” of the people of Taiwan. As a result of Japanese rule, Taiwan became increasingly modernized, in terms of education, infrastructure and health care. On the other hand, Taiwanese people were not allowed to speak their mother tongues and became subjects under the Japanese empire.

In China the period leading up to 1937, when World War II broke out, had been turbulent. A rebellion in 1911 ensured the end of the imperial system and the end of the Qing Dynasty. Following came a time of unrest, of competing leaders and contrasting ideologies. Two groups arose as the largest, namely the Nationalist Party (國民黨, Kuomintang) and the Chinese Communist Party. One of the main military leaders in the Nationalist Party, and who later became leader of the party, was Chiang Kai-Shek. The Nationalists had the support of the United States and many other Western powers, by virtue of being the strongest alternative to communism in China.

In World War II Japan and China fought on opposing sides, and Japan was defeated. Chiang Kai-Shek attended the Cairo Declaration in 1943 as the representative for China along with United States President Franklin D. Roosevelt, and British Prime Minister Winston Churchill. In the Cairo Declaration it was decided that Taiwan would again be returned to China. Civil war broke out in China after 1945 between the Nationalists and the Communists. The Communists had the upper hand, and members of the Nationalist Party steadily moved in great number across the strait, taking over Taiwan. The Taiwanese people had been content

¹ All of the historical background in section 1.1 can be found in Manthorpe (2007)

² Groups of people originating in the islands of the Pacific, unrelated to the Han Chinese from Mainland China.

with the Japanese rule, and the inexperienced Nationalists could not easily fill the shoes of the structured and organized Japanese. Tensions in Taiwan grew and in 1947 a situation in which a woman was selling counterfeit cigarettes escalated into riots in the streets, to which the Nationalist Party responded with a major crackdown. Over 10,000³ Taiwanese were killed in the crackdown, and the crisis inspired the initiation of martial law in Taiwan. The event got the name the 2:28 Incident due to it starting on February 28, and the incident has become a symbol of the repressive government under martial law.

In 1949 the Nationalist Party officially lost the civil war in Mainland China, and retreated to Taiwan in full numbers. Over a million followers made the trip across the strait. Chiang Kai-shek became the first president of the Republic of China on Taiwan, and his son Chiang Ching-kuo followed him as president when Chiang Sr. passed away in 1975. The year before Chiang Jr. passed away, in 1987, martial law was finally lifted in Taiwan. A period of reconciliation on the period of oppression during martial law commenced, and the largest opposition to the Nationalist Party, the Democratic Progressive Party gained support. Prior to 1987, any research on the period of martial law was illegal, so a research boom also took place in the aftermath. In 1996 Taiwan saw its first free presidential election, and a Taiwanese-born Nationalist Party candidate was elected. However, the democratic change had started taking root in Taiwan. Since the end of martial law in 1987, the Chiangs and the Nationalist Party authoritarian rule has been critically engaged with, and put under scrutiny.

Due to this political change, the statues of Chiang Kai-shek that were displayed in all government buildings and schools became anachronistic, and a reminder of an oppressive past to many. There was a call for their removal, and a decision had to be made about what to do with these unwanted statues. This process led to the creation of the Cihu Memorial Statue Park (慈湖雕塑紀念公園) in 1997, which serves as the starting point of this thesis.

³ The exact number is contentious, but between 10,000 and 30,000 is generally accepted as a probable number. For more about these estimates, and about the 2:28 Incident in general, see Lai, Myers and Wei (1991).

1.2 TOPIC DESCRIPTION

The Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park, located in the small municipality of Daxi in Taoyuan County, Taiwan, features over 200 statues of former president of the Republic of China⁴, Chiang Kai-shek. The park is located an hour's car ride from Taipei, but with public transportation the same trip takes two and a half hours. Upon the call for removal of Chiang statues on university campuses across Taiwan, a decision was made by local authorities to collect the statues in a park in the Cihu area in Daxi municipality. Why were the statues collected instead of destroyed, and why were they put on display? These are some of the questions that piqued my interest in the statue park. The Cihu area was not chosen on random, but rather because of Chiang's own affiliation to the place. Before his passing, he took a liking to the area in Daxi, due to its beauty and resemblance to his beloved home province of Zhejiang in Mainland China. The Cihu (benevolent lake) area was formerly known as Bishui Huze, but Chiang changed the name in honor of his mother. Upon his death in 1975, Chiang wanted to be buried temporarily in Cihu, with the hope that the Nationalists would eventually take back Mainland China. Is this place in rural Taiwan, featuring a statue park with over 200 statues of Chiang as well as his burial palace, a place in which Chiang Kai-Shek's memory has been revitalized or where it has come to die? This brings us to my research questions,

1. Does Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park contribute to the continued remembrance of Chiang as a great leader, or is it a way to displace his memory into the periphery?
2. What can the Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park tell us about the important of space in a changed political narrative?

In order to answer these questions I will employ two main concepts. The first concept is *iconoclasm*, meaning the destruction or alteration of artwork. A kind of iconoclasm has taken place with the statues which have been moved to the Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park, and the choice to display instead of destroy is significant for the memory of Chiang Kai-shek. Secondly, the concept of *lieux de mémoire* (sites of memory) is useful in interpreting the symbolic change of how Chiang is remembered in Taiwan. In addition to these two overarching concepts, I also focus on narratives, nostalgia, semiotics, and counter-memory. All of the concepts culminate in the importance of space. My assumption is that the physical

⁴ The Republic of China on Taiwan, and the People's Republic of China on the Mainland should not be confused. Both claim to be the rightful government for the entire area.

space of the statue park is significant on its own, but so is also a political space that allows for a plurality of opinions being visible in society. It allows those who remember Chiang as a positive influence to honor that memory, yet does not impose the memory onto those who do not wish to participate. Chiang Kai-shek has come to symbolize an authoritarian past for many, but there are still many followers of the Nationalist Party who remember Chiang in a positive light. What democracy has done in Taiwan is not only allowing the formerly oppressed Taiwanese to research and recover from the authoritarian past, but it has also left room for the unpopular opinion of supporting Chiang and his family's rule.

The data that has been analyzed in this project was found in the statue park itself, in the form of 30 information plaques which each accompany their own statue and tells the story of its original location. Additionally, tourism information, museum visits and observations have helped inform my research in the form of supplementary sources. A three-week long trip to Taiwan, which allowed for four visits to the Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park, provided me with the background information and collected data I needed to engage with the research questions I attempt to answer. The data collection trip to Taiwan provided me with many opportunities, but it was also limited by time, funding, and the language barrier (see Chapter 2 for more on the method and methodology of the project).

1.3 MOTIVATION

While studying for my bachelor's degree at Pacific Lutheran University in the United States, I majored in Chinese studies. With this newfound interest in the Chinese-speaking world, I was especially fascinated as I learned more about Taiwan and Taiwan's history. In 2012 I was given the opportunity to visit Taiwan to conduct an independent research project on Taiwanese language. Upon visiting Taipei in the summer of 2012, I saw that sites and monuments in the same urban space were dedicated both to Chiang Kai-shek and democracy. The Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Hall, a grand monument built to commemorate the former leader, and the 2:28 Peace Park, dedicated to victims killed during Chiang's rule, are located a mere five-minute walk apart in Taipei. This juxtaposition of narratives and remembrance fascinated me, and from writing a bachelor's thesis about the Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Hall name change (to National Democracy Hall), I continued my interest in Taiwanese history in this project.

1.4 PRIOR RESEARCH

Not much scholarly work has been written about the Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park, neither in English, nor as I have been able to find, in Chinese. Some Taiwan studies scholars, such as Jeremy Taylor and Joseph Allen have mentioned the statue park briefly in their work, but there has not been any work done specifically on the park. Most attention was the park given in Joseph Allen's *Taipei: City of Displacements* from 2012 as a part of his chapter about statues (Allen, 2012, 150-156). Allen interprets the park as a postmodern art installation, which humorously makes light of the former leader. Jeremy Taylor specializes in Chiang Kai-shek and his personality cult, and therefore mentions the statue park in relation to the loyal following Chiang and his family enjoys. In his article about the process of QuJiangHua, or de-Chiangification, Taylor mentions the Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park as a part of the process to remove the image and name of Chiang from public spaces (Taylor, 2010, 193). Despite these two mentions, in scholarship with related topics, there are no works done specifically and solely on the Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park.

A memory boom and research boom followed the end of martial law in Taiwan. Research and information flow had been restricted by the Nationalist Party government during martial law, so much research has since then been done on Taiwan's history, the political situation in Taiwan and the memory of the authoritarian regime since then. Bruce Jacobs published the book titled *Democratizing Taiwan* (Jacobs, 2012), in which he highlights how the democratization process started and progressed, as well as researching *why* Taiwan democratized. Sinologist Mark Matten has written extensively about memory in modern China, and his work includes Taiwan as well. Some of his works also merge the concepts of memory, space and Chiang Kai-shek, such as his book chapter on the Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Hall in Taipei (Matten, 2011). Finnish scholar, Mikael Mattlin has written a monograph, *Politicized Society: The Long Shadow of Taiwan's One-Party Legacy*, which discusses many of the same issues as both Jacobs and Matten touch upon (Mattlin, 2010). I will not attempt a comprehensive list of Sinologists and Taiwan scholars, but Allen, Taylor, Jacobs, Matten and Mattlin represent noteworthy academics who have done research on Taiwan published in English.

Ample research has been done on the iconoclasm of statues, however, mainly in post-Soviet countries and Germany after World War II. Beverly James has written about the visual narrative of the revolution in Hungary in 1956 (James, 2005). The statue park that was

created in Budapest is perhaps the most similar to the Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park in that it features statues of former authoritarian leaders that have been removed from their original locations. It also differs in some significant ways, which will be discussed in the fourth chapter of this thesis. James Young has done research on the visual representation and remembrance of the holocaust in Germany (Young, 1993). What James and Young have in common is the fact that their research deals with representations of history that the new narrative agrees was oppressive, and the monuments and statues are displayed with a clear value judgment attached. This is where the statue park in Taiwan differs from those cases of iconoclasm, and the statue parks found in the aftermath of World War II in Europe and the post-Soviet era.

1.5 RELEVANCE FOR PEACE STUDIES

The field of peace studies is interdisciplinary, and similarly this project relies on political science, history, human geography, and Sinology. It might not be apparent at first glance how a statue park in Taiwan is related to peace or the study of peace and conflict. However, the Cihu Memorial Statue Park represents an attempt to deal with an authoritarian and oppressive past, and researching the park's significance can help us understand an approach to transitioning to democracy. Taiwan has not suffered significant instances of political violence since the end of martial law in 1987, and has successfully adapted a democratic system in which both opposing political parties have been elected and ruled. Due to this relative fast and peaceful transition Taiwan can serve as an inspiration for other nations moving from an authoritarian state into democracy.

1.6 OUTLINE OF THESIS

This chapter has given a short background to Taiwan, an introduction to the topic for the thesis, and discussed what prior research has been done on the topic of the Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park and iconoclasm with statues in general. In addition this first chapter has explained the scope of the project, introduced research questions, and discussed the operationalization of the project. The relevance in peace studies has also been introduced.

Chapter 2 will outline the methodological approach taken in the thesis, as well as some reflections around doing fieldwork and conducting research.

Chapter 3 focuses on contextualizing Chiang Kai-shek and the unique political situation in Taiwan. A personality cult has developed around Chiang Kai-shek, which is a factor that plays into the memory of Chiang today. The concepts of narrative and nostalgia will be introduced, and an initial analysis of the rhetoric in the statue park is presented.

The main analysis and the two main concepts will be elaborated upon in chapters 4 and 5. Each chapter contains background, theory and analytical findings from the data collection. In the Chapter 4 the topic is iconoclasm, which will give a theoretical backdrop through which to look at the statues in Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park. Furthermore, Chapter 4 will discuss whether there is a greater focus on Chiang as a person, or the statues as works of art.

In the Chapter 5, the importance of space will be emphasized through the theoretical concept of memory, and more specifically *lieux de mémoire* (sites of memory). It is in the fifth chapter that second research question on the importance of space, will be discussed most in depth. The greater area of remembering the Chiang family will be examined, and the statue park as a physical memorial, as well as a political space, will be elaborated upon.

To sum up all the findings and arguments made in the three main chapters, Chapter 6 will provide a synthesis of the concepts and findings presented throughout the thesis.

2. METHOD AND REFLECTIONS

“The social world we inhabit is manifestly not insulated from the past, but is very much a ‘hand-me-down’ world, and one which is repeatedly (re-)inherited and passed-on by successive generations”
(Miller, 2003:14)

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The method used in research is always an important factor when a project is being planned and executed, and it can be a motivating, intense, and complicated process. In this chapter I will lay out the data sources and methods used for my master’s thesis project about the Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park in Taiwan, and engage in some reflections around the fieldwork. The method of my project was altered during the course of my fieldwork, and the process through which I arrived at my focus on official rhetoric will be discussed in the first section of this chapter. The main method of analysis of rhetoric is Critical Discourse Analysis. CDA will be used to analyze thirty information plaques located in the statue park. I will also discuss the role of observations and the use of secondary sources in my project, as well as some ethical considerations around the researcher’s role, the concept fieldwork and the process of data collection.

2.2 METHOD AND PROCESS

Qualitative research is the approach most used in the social sciences and humanities, as an alternative to quantitative methods. According to Alan Bryman, qualitative approaches “tend to be concerned with words rather than numbers” (Bryman, 2010, 380). The epistemological foundation of qualitative research is based on interpretation, and its ontology is based in the idea that the world is constructed, and not something given (ibid., 380). The nature of finding and creating knowledge is of importance when conducting and disseminating research. In my project I have chosen to approach the research through the qualitative method of discourse analysis. The reason for choosing a qualitative approach in this project was that the nuanced examination of language could uncover some aspects of the statue park and Chiang Kai-shek’s memory. There is, however, a slight quantitative aspect to my project, as I in some cases refer to a certain number of plaques mentioning a certain kind of information. I made

the decision to examine rhetoric after the process of planning the project and traveling to collect data, at which point I had intended to approach the research in a different way.

The initial plan for my data collection was based on the primary research question of “how is the park used by visitors, and how is the park interpreted?” with the secondary question being “what is the official rhetoric of the park?” Therefore, the initial plan was to conduct semi-structured observations, and more specifically, looking for predetermined occurrences. Cohen et al. write about the approach of *event sampling*, in which certain observable events with a certain significance are chosen ahead of time, and then once in the place of observation, you count the occurrences of these events (Cohen, Manion & Morrison). In addition to these observations I was planning to conduct ten short interviews per visit to the park, and ask visitors why they chose to visit, and to get a sense of who the visitors are. In order to answer the question of official rhetoric, I would collect information pamphlets, read information from tourism agencies, and take pictures of signs in the park. In this research design, the main sources of data would be the semi-structured event sampling, as well as the short interviews.

Upon visiting, it became clear that the focus on *how* the park is used would be difficult to answer, based on the low numbers of visitors as well as the time limitation. Due to the situation in the Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park, I therefore decided to alter the focus of my research. The project focus was adjusted to evolve around the official rhetoric, the reason for creating the park in the first place, and how the memory of Chiang Kai-shek is portrayed in the park. In addressing this new focus, the event sampling and short interviews were no longer a suitable method, but the collection of information pamphlets, reading tourism information and analyzing the rhetoric in the park signage is one of the primary foci, along with the existing literature on Taiwan and observations I made while visiting the statue park.

My data collection in Taiwan took place in August of 2015 for 18 days. I visited the statue park four times in total. The data that serves as the representative for official rhetoric in the park are 30 information plaques situated across the park, each narrating the history of one particular statue. As Miller and Brewer point out, a researcher should “search out the context and understand why the document was created” (Miller & Brewer, 2003, 82). That is the motivation behind the project, namely to understand how Chiang Kai-shek is portrayed in the statue park, as well as why the statues were collected instead of destroyed, and what the significance of this decision is. The information plaques can provide some answers,

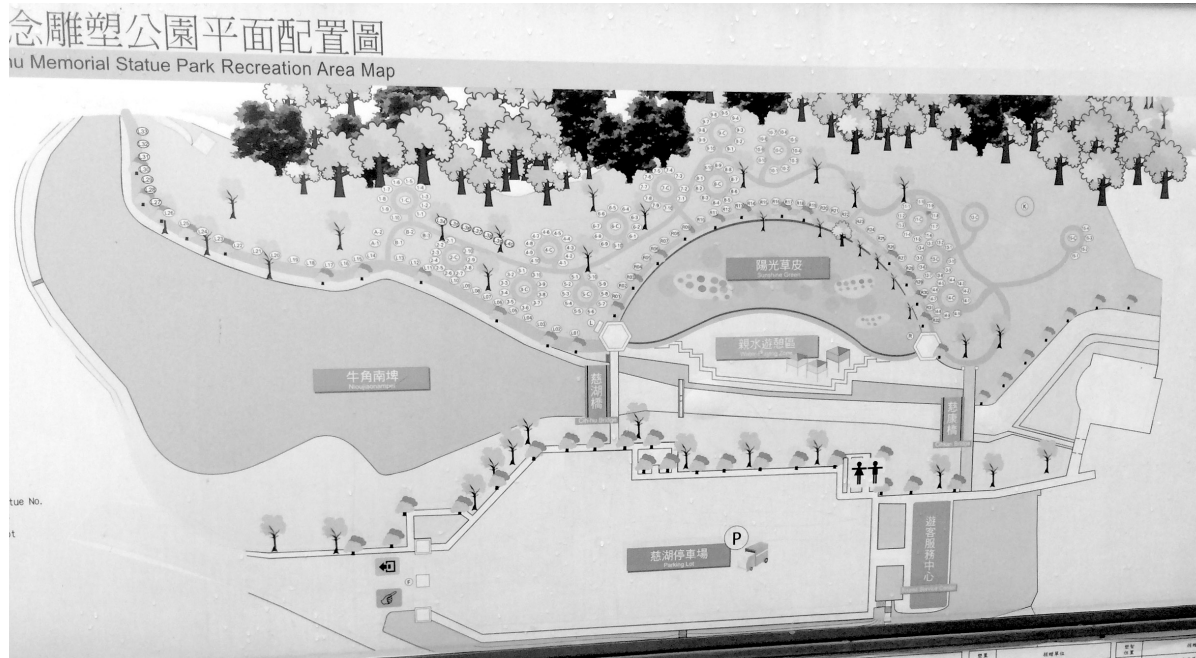


Image 2 – A sign showing the statue park from a bird’s eye view. The statues are located at the top portion of the image.

especially when it comes to the rhetoric of honoring or dishonoring, in addition to alluding to the purpose of displaying the statues. Moreover, I wish to see if there are some certain messages the authors of such rhetoric wanted to get across, which is not always readily available when reading a text unassumingly. Through using critical discourse analysis, the texts on the information plaques will be interpreted in order to find possible answers to my research questions.

Soon after arriving in Taiwan, and after having visited the statue park, I realized that with my initial plan the data I was hoping to collect was not feasible. The statue park had substantially lower numbers of visitors than previously expected, and together with the difficult and time-consuming access to the park, I deemed it more relevant to slightly adjust the main focus of the research. The predictions I had for the research were based on the information at hand before my visit, and the plans were made with the intent to conduct the research to answer my initial questions. However a researcher traveling to collect data needs to be prepared for the possibility of unforeseen events, as was the case in my project, which led to adjusting my focus of the research.

The park is located in the rural area of Cihu, and the statue park is located across a small lake, on the other side of the parking lot (image 2)⁵. This location made it difficult to reach from Taipei, and even its local inaccessibility created a physical boundary. In Image 3 the statue park is marked by a star within a black square in the bottom left corner. Cihu is located

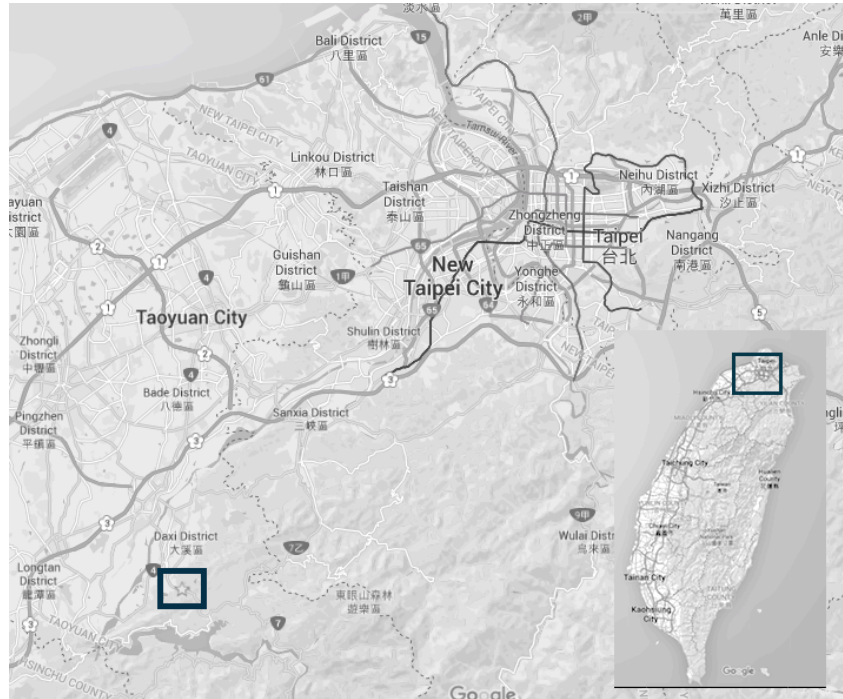


Image 3 – The location of Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park

in the municipality of Daxi, in Taoyuan County. Taipei is located in the top right, and in the bottom right there is a reference of the cutout showing Taiwan as a whole. The park is located far away from the capital of Taipei in a rural area and was therefore not the most common tourism destination for visitors to Taipei. During my visit to Taiwan, I started by visiting two different tourism traveling offices in the hopes of finding an easy way to travel to Cihu. The first tourism office said that “not a lot of people go there,” and the other one gave me a tourism bus map. The travel agents had limited knowledge about how to get to the park, and the park was hard to reach by public transportation, and the trip was time consuming.

2.3 DATA SOURCES

The primary data source that I collected in Taiwan will be analyzed using the method of critical discourse analysis, namely the information plaques in the Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park. These 30 plaques are attached to one statue each, and they tell the story of the statues’ original location and use, as well as donation date; they feature pictures of the specific statue in its original spot as well. There are over 200 statues in the park, but only a selection of thirty-four statues has a plaque attached to them. 34 information plaques are located in the statue park, four of which are attached to statues of Sun Yat-sen, a nationalist hero from

⁵ All photographs in the thesis (excluding image 3) are taken by the author during the time of data collection.

Mainland China. Therefore, only the 30 plaques that describe statues of Chiang Kai-shek will be analyzed in this project. For the purpose of this project the information plaques I have numbered the plaques from 1 to 30 in order to differentiate them from one another. The order in which they are numbered is random.

The information plaques were selected as the basis for the official rhetoric due to these plaques being the only textual information of any length provided in the statue park. There are a number of busts of Chiang in the statue park, each of which has a small plaque stating where the bust was originally placed, but not much else. The information plaques attached to full-size sitting or standing statues contain around 60 to 80 words each, in the English translation. The plaques are written both in English and in Chinese, and the English language texts are the main focus of my rhetorical analysis. In certain instances, for example when mentioning a nickname of Chiang's, I will cross check with the Chinese version for accuracy. However, seeing as the English translation is a product of the park authorities own work, it will be analyzed as official rhetoric.

In addition to the rhetoric I will rely on existing scholarship and research done on Taiwan and the Taiwanese context already. Being able to rely on other people's research and analyses can give both benefits as well as weaknesses (Bryman, 2010, 312-316). The weakness of using other people's material is that it involves a level of trust in that the researcher has conducted their research in a responsible and valid way. Most of the research conducted in social science is hard to prove or disprove by others, as it often relies on interviews or interpretations. There is, however, merit to seeing what has been written, as long as it is read critically. Therefore, in addition to the data on rhetoric in the statue park, the information plaques, it is also important to see if there are other sources that can help support your arguments. In my project I have been able to correspond with the Taoyuan Bureau of Tourism, the institution in charge of the statue park, via e-mail and I conducted unstructured observations while in Taiwan. As mentioned in section 1.4 of the introductory chapter, there has also been written about many aspects of Taiwanese society and memory creation by other scholars. Some of these works serve as supplementary evidence in my project. In order to test a hypothesis, or to argue a likely conclusion, the more sources agreeing with your point, the stronger the argument. Therefore, to create coherence in the research, it is important to also consider the scholarship and journalism (if no academic work is available) that has been done on the area of research at hand. In the case of Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park, not much

academic work has been done, so the sources specifically discussing the park itself are mainly newspaper sources.

As a supplement to the discourse analysis based on the information plaques and secondary literature, some of the observations from the statue park will also be used. These observations range from how many visitors there were in the park to what was available for purchase at the gift shop in the Cultural Park of the Chiangs⁶. During my time in Taiwan I visited other significant locations, such as museums and historic sites while in Taiwan. In addition to the information plaques, there is also a visitor's center on site, which narrated the major events of Chiang Kai-shek's life, as well as his feeling of belonging to the area of Cihu. Chiang's grave is also located in the area, as is the grave of Chiang's successor as president, and son, Chiang Ching-kuo. Accompanying the grave of Chiang Jr. is also a visitor's center narrating his life as president in Taiwan. The Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park is thus placed in a greater area of remembering the Chiang family. Although the statue park is the focus of my research, I also found it important to visit these other related locations, in order to situate the park within the greater context.

2.4 ANALYSIS OF DATA

In order to analyze the data collected in the Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park, I have used the approach of Critical Discourse Analysis. In addition, literature written by other scholars is used to create a historical context, which in some cases can be supplemented with observations I made while in Taiwan.

Discourse analysis is a method used in social research that can provide answers to questions through extrapolating meaning from textual material. In this context the word *discourse* refers to “a group of statements which provide a language for talking about – i.e. a way of representing – a particular kind of knowledge about a topic” (Hall, 1992, 290 cited in Tonkiss, 2012). The group of statements used in this project is the information plaques, which constitute a representation of knowledge about Chiang Kai-shek. Discourse analysis is “grounded in matters of language and signification” and a text can therefore tell us something about the meaning behind its creation (Lee, 2000, 189). Discourse analysis then, is an

⁶ More on the Cultural Park of the Chiangs in chapter 3.

approach in which the researcher analyzes texts and language in order to find how a particular social meaning is produced. One important aspect of discourse analysis could be to show “how ideologies are reproduced through language and texts” (Tonkiss, 2012, 408). What is common in all uses of discourse analysis is the analyzing of language. However, as Alan Bryman points out, there is no single version discourse analysis (Bryman, 2010, 528). There are many ways in which to conduct a discourse analysis, but the approach I have used in my analysis, is Critical Discourse Analysis.

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is one approach within the broader term of discourse analysis. Terry Locke discusses this approach to social research, and points out that the three aspects of CDA are, 1. The text in itself and its language, 2. The ways in which the text fits into the larger social and political context, and 3. How the text operates in the world, including relationship to creator and reader (Locke, 2004, 8-9). In order to create a holistic understanding of a text and its significance, the three components need to be considered. Therefore, with these three aspects in mind I have interpreted a possible meaning of collecting the statues in the Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park and how Chiang Kai-shek’s memory is portrayed in the language of the information plaques. This analysis is based upon the official rhetoric of the park, especially the information plaques. The texts on the information plaques are the objects for analysis in order to interpret the rhetoric, and determine a possible message conveyed about Chiang and his position in the post-authoritarian society.

The approach of critical discourse analysis is based on the aspect of being critical to the texts that the researcher is analyzing. It is up to the researcher to interpret the findings and to disseminate these findings in a valid and reliable way. This strength could also, however, be a weakness in the research process. The qualitative approach of discourse analysis requires the researcher to come to a possible suggestion for an interpretation. All persons, researchers and academics alike, are situated in contexts that help inform their thoughts and opinions. Being aware of this responsibility to remain professional in the research process is elaborated upon further in section 2.5.

Another important aspect of *critical* discourse analysis is that the position and point of view of the researcher is also scrutinized, along with the text produced *about* the discourse. As Alan Bryman points out, the writer of a document must have had an intention and audience in

mind (Bryman, 2010, 551). Through this logic, the information plaques can tell us something about what the creators of the park wanted to communicate to their visitors. Similarly, the researcher writing about these texts is producing another text, which can be interpreted and used by others. Terry Locke emphasizes the importance of a critical engagement, not only with the text one is interpreting, but what researcher brings to the discussion and how that affects the result (Locke, 2004, 8). When analyzing the rhetoric found in the information plaques, the focus will be on connecting certain occurrences in the texts with other, already researched and proven theories and facts. The interplay between textual interpretation and secondary sources is therefore important. As Bryman mentions, social research is messy, in the sense that there are many considerations to take and there are many pitfalls to avoid (Bryman, 2012, 15). One of the reasons for this messiness is that social science relies heavily on the interpretation of the researcher, and the validity cannot always be tried by others. However, this is also the strength of social research. It is supposed to highlight something that is beyond numeric count and quantitative representations.

CDA is an analysis tool that falls within the qualitative methods, and an inductive approach is employed in this project. The methodological approaches of inductive or deductive methods are important when choosing a method for a research project. The deductive method tests a hypothesis or theory through inspecting a specific context or case, while the inductive approach uses something specific, like a case study, in order to create larger theories or more universally applied arguments (Bryman, 2010, 24-25). The two approaches are not mutually exclusive, but there can be an element of induction in deductive method, and the other way around. The two should therefore not be seen as dichotomies, but rather as methods that can interplay (Heit & Rotello, 2010). My project focuses on inducing what the creation of Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park might tell us about the memory of Chiang Kai-shek in Taiwan. Although the inductive aspect is the focal point, I also employ a deductive approach in testing my hypothesis that a democratic transition can be exemplified through the park. It is not in the interest of this master's thesis to attempt universal answers of how Chiang is remembered by all members of Taiwanese society, but rather to offer a possible interpretation of the park, based on the information plaques and existing scholarship.

2.5 CHALLENGES & LIMITATIONS

In addition to altering the focus of the research after arriving in Taiwan, there were also other factors which impacted my data collection process. This section addresses the factors of the role of the researcher (insider/outsider), the concept of fieldwork, language, as well as being situated in a specific time and context.

The positionality of the researcher is important to consider when doing any kind of research. My position when starting to research the Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park came from a background in Chinese studies, and having visited Taiwan for an earlier research project, yet being an outsider to Taiwanese culture and language. Being an outsider to the culture and without the preconceived notions of a Taiwanese, could be a benefit to my data collection and research process. I am researching a politically contentious subject in a society that is polarized politically. Being situated outside of this polarity allowed me to look at the issues without personal attachment to either side. However, for the practical purpose of traveling in rural Taiwan in order to visit the park, the cultural and linguistic knowledge could have been useful. Being situated in the western education system and mindset is an inevitable part of my research process. The knowledge that this position can affect your project, however, can enable you to attempt to negotiate your biases, and not make them prevalent in the research, which is how I have approached my positionality as a Norwegian, studying in English, being in the field of peace studies etc.

The method of a project is in itself a large part of balancing research with ethics, but as researchers we should not forget that nothing takes place in a vacuum. It is easy to try to isolate the focus of study, for the purpose of one's own project, but this is not possible in the understanding of something as a piece of a whole. The Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park is located in a greater area of remembrance, namely in the Chiang's Cultural Area. In the same way that the statue park is located within a greater context, the concepts of research and data collection are situated within the greater field of academia.

Fieldwork is a term often used in data collection, especially when traveling to a place in which the researcher is an outsider in one way or another. In the 1950s cultural anthropology the term was often used when western researchers traveled to non-western areas to research an "other" culture. Herbert Lewis is one academic who acknowledges the critiques of fieldwork being a top-down approach to anthropological studies, but also points out the merit

in such research (Lewis, 1998). Today, the term fieldwork has been adapted into much of social science research. In my project I traveled to a place far away, researching in a culture that is foreign from my own. My considerations when interpreting their symbols might therefore be different from what a Taiwanese native would conclude. This outsider perspective can be a weakness when there is a lack of understanding of the culture and context, but it can also be a benefit as to seeing the situation from a different point of view, less intertwined with the cultural knowledge and background of a Taiwanese.

The language barrier was an aspect that acted as a limitation in my data collection process, and it also impacted my decision to move away from the method of interviewing. My outsider position in doing research in Taiwan was most clearly manifested in my limited Chinese abilities. Although I studied Chinese⁷ for three years when studying for my bachelor's degree, it is not sufficiently useful in this kind of project. The written nature of my data also leaves room for later inspection and interpretation, and can therefore be checked and verified by others and myself. The language barrier became clearer the farther from Taipei I ventured. The capital is highly bilingual between Chinese and English, but the countryside is less so. The statue park was located in a rural area, but through using spoken Chinese I was able to get around the challenge of the traditional characters I could not read.

Finally, it is of importance in any project that entails data collection that the data and its interpretation represents one particular point in time; in my case, the data serves as an indicator of why the park was created and how the rhetoric portrays Chiang Kai-shek. Although information plaques are fairly static, there is also a chance of them being updated, removed or added to. Joseph Allen refers, in his book *Taipei: City of Displacement*, refers to a plaque in the Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park telling the story of an artist who created some of the statues. I did not find this plaque on any of my visits to the park. As Foote and Azaryahu explained, “the meanings of almost all memorial spaces and activities change through time” (Foote & Azaryahu, 2007, 131). I visited the park a total of four times in the span of two and a half weeks, which leaves me with the status quo at that specific time. In my research I will make sure not to draw universal conclusions, but rather to engage with the data I did collect at the given time of my visit. The specific context of post-authoritarianism

⁷ Beijing-based Mandarin Chinese

that Taiwan currently finds itself is unique in the world, but I wanted to see if there were some dynamics that were not readily available without taking a closer look.

Romanization, the writing of Chinese characters in the Roman alphabet, is necessary in a project such as this, especially by virtue of not being within the field of Sinology. The two most commonly used systems of Romanization of Chinese are Wade-Giles and pinyin (pinyin.info). Pinyin is the most commonly used when Romanizing Chinese today, but Wade-Giles has traditionally been more common in Taiwan. The pinyin system is more accurate in recreating the correct sound, and has therefore taken over in Chinese learning worldwide. Authors writing about Chinese persons and concepts in English have to decide which system to follow in their Romanization.

Due to the Wade-Giles readings of Chiang's name and political party has become the most common in literature I have chosen to use the Wade-Giles versions of these names. However, the locations of Cihu and Daxi are romanized in pinyin due to their names not being established as standard in academia. Chiang Kai-shek, 蔣介石, is the Wade-Giles reading of Chiang's Cantonese name. In pinyin, Chiang is known as Jiang Jie-shi. Similarly, Chiang's successor and son, Chiang Ching-kuo, 康經過, (Wade-Giles) is known as Jiang Jing-guo in pinyin. This thesis will employ the most common Romanization of each proper noun.

It is also worth noting that Chinese names are written with the surname first, followed by the given name. Chiang is therefore the family name, and Kai-shek was the given name. President Chiang will therefore be the correct way to address him, not President Kai-shek.

2.6 SUMMARY

Research design and the process of collecting data is an important part of any project. The tumultuous and exciting process of data collection was evident in my project, but through adapting to the unforeseen circumstances of fieldwork I laid the groundwork for as analysis of the Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park. During my data collection trip to Taiwan the main focus, and therefore also the main research method, was altered. The main method employed in my research after the change, is Critical Discourse Analysis, in which a text is interpreted in order to find meaning. There are 30 information plaques in the Cihu Memorial Sculpture

Park, which are used as the main source of text to be analyzed. The role of observation and secondary sources has also been discussed, as important supplements to the rhetoric in the statue park. Through being reflexive and teasing out the possible intended meaning of creating of the park, the method chosen will enable me to answer my research questions. Challenges that I faced included the positionality of the researcher, the concept of fieldwork, the language barrier, and the specific time and context.

3. CHIANG KAI-SHEK AND NOSTALGIA

“Comparing incumbent leaders to the ‘great men’ of history is a practice common to many personality cults”

(Taylor, 2006, 104)

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park, featuring statues of Chiang Kai-shek, is the only statue park in the world dedicated to depicting one individual. Some could think that Chiang was just another president in a line of presidents, but his standing in Taiwanese society has been hotly debated in the past few decades, and views range from hero to dictator. This chapter will discuss the Chiang Kai-shek personality cult, as defined by Taiwan studies scholar Jeremy Taylor. Moreover, the narrative change in Taiwan that took place in 1987 when thirty-eight years of martial law came to an end will be examined to see how Chiang’s memory has been altered or remained the same. Lastly, the rhetoric in the statue park will be given a closer look in order to see how Chiang is portrayed and described. I argue that Chiang is presented, in the statue park, as a character worthy of reverence, and a symbol of the past that evokes nostalgia. The old narrative of the Nationalist Party is evident in the rhetoric, which could tell us more about the memory of Chiang Kai-shek today.

3.2 THE CHIANG KAI-SHEK PERSONALITY CULT

Chiang Kai-shek was born in 1887 in Zhejiang Province in China, and in his youth he decided to pursue a career in the military. In order to achieve this, he trained at an academy in Japan. In Japan Chiang made acquaintances with which he joined an organization, which was later to become the Nationalist Party. The year of 1911 marked the ‘start’ of Chiang’s career, being the same year as the imperial system in China came to an end after a nationwide rebellion. Several groups arose wishing to spearhead the next ruling system. The Nationalist Party was one of these, and Chiang was acknowledged as an excellent military leader within the party. Chiang was made First Commandant at the Whampoa Academy, established to train members of the party to be able to claim China. The Nationalist Party grew, and Chiang

rose in rank as the years passed⁸. The climax of the chaotic period of not having a unified system of governance came with the Second World War, when Japan occupied China. A Civil War between the Nationalists and the Communists followed the Second World War, taking place from 1945 to 1949. Upon the Nationalist Party's defeat, around 1,5 million of Nationalist Party members officially retreated to Taiwan, thinking it would be a temporary withdrawal until they could reclaim China proper (Leitner and Kang, 1999, 219).



Image 4

The Nationalists took control of Taiwan when the Japanese retreated after World War II, and Chiang Kai-shek had been the Nationalist leader in China, and was therefore the natural leader in Taiwan as well. The 2:28 Incident in 1947, as mentioned in the introductory chapter, caused the Nationalist Party to instill martial law. As part of the process to create an authoritarian regime in Taiwan the Nationalist Party portrayed their first president, Chiang Kai-shek as a hero, and as 'father of the nation'

Statues were created, paintings were ordered, and streets renamed in order to honor Chiang. The familiar image of Chiang in his military uniform became widespread across the island (image 4). Taiwan studies scholar, Joseph Allen approximates that there were on average three statues of Chiang per square mile during the time of martial law, and even more in densely populated areas (Allen, 2012, 151).

Jeremy Taylor has dedicated much of his scholarship to Taiwan, and in particular the personality cult of Chiang Kai-shek and his wife Soong Mei-liang. This personality cult has been produced and reproduced to represent Chiang Kai-shek in a favorable and honorable

⁸ For more on the life and career of Chiang Kai-shek, see Fenby (2005)

light. Taylor points out that there was an effort to attribute to Chiang “superhuman power and wisdom” (Taylor, 2006, 97). Other famous leaders have also had their own personality cults, most notably is perhaps Vladimir Lenin and Joseph Stalin in the Soviet Union. Robert Tucker discussed the rise of Stalin’s personality cult, and found that the official aspect of espousing propaganda was important for the production of the cult (Tucker, 1979). The personality cult of Chiang, however, does not have a clear connection to the government. There was no ministry of propaganda, or anything similar, in Taiwan during the time of Nationalist rule. The production of the personality cult was not transparent nor visibly intentional from the side of the government. However, as Taylor points out, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Military Affairs were highly involved in creating the image of Chiang as a great leader (Taylor, 2006, 97-98). The military was central in Chiang’s life, and he was also an advocate for education and, additionally, these were groups that could be easily controlled to follow orders. Although there were many who ‘voluntarily’ celebrated the memory of Chiang, Taylor also suggests a more pragmatic reason than mere reverence, namely the potential to rise in rank. When artists produced statues and paintings of which the regime approved, for example, the result could be more work and better pay (Taylor, 2006, 108). The thirty-eight years of martial law, twenty-six of which led by Chiang Kai-shek, were used efficiently in producing a personality cult that could also be sustained post-mortem.

The life of Chiang Kai-shek, as a person, a military general, and a state leader has been written about and focused upon while he still lived as well as after his death. What made Chiang so interesting internationally before Chiang’s arrival in Taiwan was that his attitudes were quite ‘Western’ compared to other ‘Eastern’ leaders; this was especially in terms of his fight against the Communists in Mainland China, but also in his frequent visits to the United States and his conversion to Christianity (Taylor & Huang, 2012). Chiang, along with his wife Soong Mei-ling, was named Time Magazine’s ‘person(s) of the year’ in 1937, and his picture adorned ten issues of Time Magazine, from 1927 until 1955 (time.com)⁹. The international interest, as well as the regional interest in Chiang Kai-shek shows how the personality cult is something that was produced by many actors, and the cult has yet to die out. A multitude of biographies and books concerning Chiang as a person, leader and military official has been published; these books have been published from Chiang’s time in Mainland China up until present day, in Chinese as well as Japanese and English.

⁹ A list of the times Chiang has featured on the front page is provided in the appendix

The biographies written about Chiang Kai-shek are mainly concerning his life before taking over Taiwan, and many especially focus on the year 1949 in which Chiang “lost China” and retreated to Taiwan (Crozier & Chou, 1976; Taylor, 2011). Jeremy Taylor points out that the time Chiang spent ruling in Mainland China and the time he spent ruling Taiwan is approximately equal (Taylor & Huang, 2012, 115). However, the focus in much of the literature prefers the Mainland China period, perhaps due to it representing a time as ‘underdogs’ in society. In more recent times, Jonathan Fenby published a biography narrating the period from Chiang’s birth until his arrival in Taiwan (Fenby, 2005). This interest in writing books with Chiang as the main theme helped reproduce the personality cult. Another aspect interesting to the Chiang personality cult is his relationships with his wives, as seen in the books *Chiang Kai-shek: An Unauthorized Biography* (Hahn, 1955), and *Chiang Kai-shek’s Secret Past*, the latter of which narrates from the point of view of one of Chiang’s three wives (Chen, Eastman & Chan, 1993). These biographies prove that there is an interest in Chiang Kai-shek as a person, not only in Taiwan, but also in the world in general¹⁰.

Not all works written on Chiang Kai-shek were hagiographic, and a critical approach developed more after the end of martial law in Taiwan. Jeremy Taylor argues that the interest in Chiang was reignited in 2004, when manuscripts of Chiang’s diaries were released by the Chiang family to the Hoover Research Institute at Stanford University (Taylor & Huang, 2012, 109). Both those wanting to prove that Chiang was an honorable military leader, as well as those seeking to prove his dictatorial tendencies have helped create the personality cult. Chiang was, during his time as president in Taiwan, portrayed as a leader ‘removed from historical time’ – emerging instead as a ‘mythical timeless figure’ (Taylor, 2006, 106). This impression of Chiang continued past his death in 1975 as well, and the mystical factor continues as the Chiang family released parts of his diaries, with redactions that are due to be uncovered in 2035 (Taylor & Huang, 2012, 110). Based on the amount of work done on Chiang after his death, it may seem that the fascination with Chiang’s personality and life has not yet subsided. Although Chiang Kai-shek’s place in Taiwanese history has not always been the focus of biographies and books written, the memory of Chiang is still a topic of debate and discussion in Taiwan today.

¹⁰ See also Crozier (1976) and Taylor (2011)

3.3 THE TAIWANESE CONTEXT

The cult of Chiang Kai-shek has become commonplace in the lives of many Taiwanese, and Chiang is not considered a villain in the eyes of everybody in Taiwan. The political situation after martial law in Taiwan was unique – the colonizers, the Nationalist Party, fell from power but remained in the country. As one Taiwanese said, “Wherever there is a change of dynasty, the new rulers have to kill off the old elite to establish their own rule” (Simon, 2003, 128). The removal of the old elite, however, has not taken place in Taiwan after the authoritarian regime ended. The Nationalist Party’s main policy had, since their arrival in Taiwan been to recapture Mainland China. However, this goal was crushed as People’s Republic of China on the mainland became a great military power, and the Republic of China on Taiwan could not compete. The members of the Nationalist Party thus became permanent citizens of Taiwan, and today the Nationalists are supported by almost half of Taiwan’s population; the other half of Taiwan’s population supports their main political opponent, the Democratic Progressive Party¹¹. Mikael Mattlin describes the Taiwanese political system as ‘structurally politicized’, meaning that the threshold for political disagreement and conflict is low (Mattlin, 2010, 2-5). Taiwan has therefore had to negotiate their nationhood with former oppressor and oppressed together. Shelley Rigger attributes the continued success of the Nationalist Party, despite being removed from their absolute position of power, to their ideological flexibility (Rigger, 2010, 44). The Nationalist Party has not remained static, but has adapted to the changes introduced in Taiwanese society. Due to this flexibility, there are still many people in Taiwan today who support the Nationalist Party, and many who remember Chiang Kai-shek as a great man.

The development of democracy is not necessarily given in societies moving from authoritarian rule, but in Taiwan the opposition were vying for democracy even before martial law came to an end. As Bruce Jacobs stated, “Taiwan has been blessed with an opposition which has used non-violent methods and which supports democratization” (Jacobs, 1998, 14). The transition into democracy has therefore been quite swift, and without larger instances of violence. Møller and Skaaning describe *democracy* as a notion with four main features, which are competitive elections, free and fair elections, civil liberties, and the rule of law (Møller and Skaaning, 2013). The deepest level of democracy is the *liberal democracy*, in which all features are present. As discussed by Daffyd Fell, the Taiwanese

¹¹ There are other, smaller parties in Taiwan as well, but the political system can be seen as twofold because of the strong support for the Nationalist Party and the Democratic Progressive Party.

democracy has had its challenges, but he also acknowledges its smooth implementation (Fell, 2010). Although the election system has changed several times in Taiwan, the Taiwanese democracy proved to have competitive elections when the opposition, the Democratic Progressive Party, won the presidential election in 2000 and 2004 (Rigger, 2010, 45-46). The Nationalist Party won the subsequent elections in 2008 and 2012, and the most recent election of 2016 was won by the Democratic Progressive Party.

In Taiwan, Chiang and the Nationalists set up an authoritarian regime, but as biographer Brian Crozier pointed out, he did not lead a *totalitarian* regime (Crozier & Chou, 1976, 378). During the martial law period the Nationalist Party was in control of most aspects in society, and in many instances it was a repressive regime. However, it did not exercise total control of its citizens. Local elections were held, in which representatives could gain some small powers to influence their own society. The potential to influence outside of the Nationalist Party was virtually non-existent during martial law, but this meant that the competition took place *within* the Nationalist Party instead (Rigger, 2010, 44). For many years the approach to politics in Taiwan was ‘if you can’t beat them, join them’ – which can also help explain why there are still many who support the party. The participation in the Nationalist Party was not always purely based on ideology and unyielding support. The small shed of democratic processes taking place in Taiwan after the end of the Nationalist Party’s authoritarian rule could have helped plant the seed that democracy was a desirable form of government.

3.4 A SPLIT NARRATIVE

Narratives can be described as, “discourses with a clear sequential order that connect events in a meaningful way for a definite audience and thus offer insights about the world and/or people’s experiences of it” (Hinchman and Hinchman, 1997, xvi). An individual can have their own narrative, of their own life course, and a society can share a narrative based on shared, collective notions. Jane Elliot identified three main aspects of a narrative, namely that they are chronological, meaningful, and social (Elliot, 2005, 4). In Taiwan, the Nationalist Party controlled the national narrative during the period of martial law. Once the period of democratization started, the narrative started splitting, especially between those who supported the authoritarian leaders of the past, and those who were in the opposition. This project does not attempt to argue for a clear-cut dichotomy of narratives in Taiwan, as there are many who may fall within parts of both or some who adhere to a different narrative.

There are, however, two dominant narratives when it comes to the chronology and meaning of events in Taiwanese history since 1945, and these fall along the lines of the two largest political parties.

In 1987 the era of martial law ended in Taiwan and the process of democratization could ensue. The first democratically elected president, Lee Teng-hui, took office in 1996. Lee had been president since the end of martial law, but the first direct election took place in 1996. With Taiwan's development into democracy, an alternative narrative to seeing Chiang Kai-shek and the Nationalists as heroes emerged in society. The Nationalist Party, led by Chiang Kai-shek and his son, had controlled the narrative for thirty-eight years of martial law, but their grasp on the people slipped as Taiwanese society opened up for new ideas and ideologies. As a clear statement of disapproval for the authoritarian rule of the Nationalist Party, the period of martial law was named *the White Terror* in the aftermath. When the Nationalist regime ended, the Taiwanese people became free to create a political system to their own liking. Many oppressive aspects of the old regime were illegal to research during martial law, so when 1987 came around, there was a *memory boom* in Taiwan, in which all of the events of the past thirty-eight years were researched (Simon, 2003, 112). With research on the 2:28 Incident and scrutiny of the White Terror, the new narrative in Taiwan was partly based on changing Chiang Kai-shek's standing from father of the nation to former dictator.

The major scar on Taiwan's history during the White Terror was the 2:28 Incident. The Nationalist government cracked down on an uprising by the Taiwanese people in Taipei. Tens of thousands were killed by the Nationalist government forces, and martial law ensued (Lai, Myers & Wei, 1991). When martial law finally ended, much research was dedicated to finding out what happened, and who was in charge of the 2:28 Incident. The research conducted found Chiang Kai-shek to be the commanding officer in charge for the crackdown, supposedly ordering to "shoot on the spot with the authority of the law" (Simon, 2003, 117-118). A transitional justice approach was taken to deal with the events of February 28, 1947, and a park was built in the center of Taipei, with a museum in remembrance of the same event (Smith, 2008). In the 2:28 Peace Park there was a monument built to remember the Incident, and in the museum the whole story of the event is told. A list of all the victims is provided, and on a screen the official apology by the first democratically elected president, Lee Teng-hui, to the victims and the victims' families on behalf of the government, is played. February 28 also became a national holiday in 1996 (Smith, 2008, 144). The 2:28 Incident

has been the most contentious event, both in research, commemoration and placing blame in the political landscape of Taiwan. The approach followed by the Nationalist Party after martial law had been to distance themselves from the event, placing the blame on some “bad apples” within their ranks (Smith, 2003, 157). They emphasized that the whole party was not to blame – only a few individuals. Perhaps due to this nuancing of the events, the Nationalists have been able to remain a large player in politics in Taiwan.

In addition to rectifying the events of February 28, 1947, De-Chiangification (去蔣化 quJianghua), a process of removing Chiang from the public sphere started taking place after the end of martial law, especially in Taipei (Taylor, 2010). However, this has not been such a straightforward process as one might think after the purge of an authoritarian regime. Shelley Rigger points out that the Democratic Progressive Party was fractionalized and lacked cohesion, and the process of removing Chiang from public spaces was therefore not as effective as it could have been (Rigger, 2010). The split narrative in Taiwan was the basis for many discussions and debates around whether or not to remove Chiang from the landscape.

Most of the de-Chiangification took place during the time when the first Democratic Progressive Party president held office (2000-2008). One of the main streets in Taipei, formerly known as ‘Long Live Chiang Kai-shek Road’, was renamed to ‘Ketagalan Road’, named after an indigenous group in Taiwan (Taylor, 2010, 187). The street names were especially symbolic due to the fact that the Nationalist Party changed the entire streetscape in Taipei city in the 1940s, to reflect the geography of Mainland China (Leitner & Kang, 1999, 221). In addition to street names, the main airport in Taipei, formerly Chiang Kai-Shek International Airport, was renamed to Taoyuan International Airport, referring instead to the place in which the airport is located. Several such changes were made during the de-Chiangification process, many of which without much controversy.

There were some name changes that caused dispute, however, and one example is the Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Hall. In the center of Taipei there is a large building with a grand garden and a large square attached to it, namely the Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Hall. The hall was built in 1979, to commemorate Chiang after his death a few years prior. During the second term of Chen Shui-bian, the first Democratic Progressive Party president in Taiwan, an attempt to change the name of the memorial hall was made. Some saw the name change as a

logical step in the de-Chiangification process, but the change caused much debate (Chuang, 2007). The new name was National Democracy Hall, and the change officially took place in 2007. The pushback from the Nationalist Party was so strong that the name was changed back to Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Hall only a year after the name change. The name of the memorial hall in Taipei shows that the narrative of Chiang Kai-shek as a dictator is not yet set, and does not represent all of Taiwan. Today, the name of the Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Hall remains, but the square in front of the Hall kept its new name, Liberty Square (Matten, 2012). Close to the Memorial Hall in Taipei is the 228 Peace Park, so the juxtaposition between narratives is apparent in the urban landscape. Leitner and Kang point out that when monuments and buildings, “are inserted into the landscape, history may be said to be mapped onto territory” (Leitner and Kang, 1999, 217). The complex history of Taiwan can therefore be seen in the contradictory memories in the Taiwanese territory.

3.5 NOSTALGIA

The term *nostalgia* comes from the Greek words, *nostos*, which means homecoming, and *algos*, which translates to pain, grief, distress (Online Etymology Dictionary). Put together they denote a painful longing for home. In more recent times, the term *nostalgia* has been used to describe a longing for something that no longer exists. Alison Blunt holds that, “while homesickness refers to a spatial/geographical separation, *nostalgia* more accurately refers to a temporal one” (Blunt, 2003, 720-721). The temporal era that followers of Chiang Kai-shek are nostalgic towards could be assumed to be the period which Chiang ruled Taiwan, and when Chiang was himself alive. *Nostalgia* can be found on all levels in society, from an individual’s *nostalgia* towards their own childhood, to a whole country being nostalgic towards better times in the past. *Nostalgia* on the larger scale often takes place in times of social change, or after historical events have taken place (Legg, 2005, 487). This is visible in Taiwan, where many have developed *nostalgia* towards Chiang Kai-shek after the narrative of the country was split and a process of democratization has been going on.

As mentioned earlier, Chiang’s personality cult attempted to make him into a timeless figure in history. The effect of that image, however, is a kind of *nostalgia* towards the greatness that was Chiang Kai-shek. As Susan Stewart notes, “*nostalgia* is a ‘social disease’ that privileged the past over the present [...]” (cited in Legg, 2005, pp. 488). Through this logic, the past of Chiang’s authoritarian rule seems more desirable than does the democratic present. In the

case of Taiwan, the nostalgia could have served as a response to the social change happening in society after martial law ended. The nostalgia could also be rooted in matters of guilt. Cultural anthropologist Renato Rosaldo uses the term *imperialist nostalgia* to explain a sense of guilt and complicity disguised as nostalgia for the past which the imperialist has itself helped change (Rosaldo, 1989). The nostalgia in the Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park may therefore also represent in some ways a focus on the past that cannot be reached, instead of focusing on the negative aspects of the regime led by Chiang. Chiang in this case, serves as a representative of the former regime, and therefore becomes the object of the nostalgic sentiments.

3.6 THE LATE AND GREAT LEADER

Chiang Kai-shek is a symbolic marker of the Nationalist Party regime that took place from 1945 to 1987. Although the memories of Chiang have, to some extent, been altered in Taiwanese society, his statues are displayed in the Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park. The rhetoric in the information plaques posted around the Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park portrays Chiang Kai-shek with reverence and nostalgia. The wording of the plaques does not follow the new narrative that took over after the period of martial law came to an end, but rather it follows the old narrative of Chiang as a great leader and morally upright man¹². The split narrative in Taiwan is visible in discussions of whether to remove statues of Chiang Kai-shek from their original locations, and the nostalgic narrative favoring Chiang has become the leading one in the Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park. Members of the Democratic Progressive Party, who tend to see Chiang as a dictator, have been at the forefront of collecting and removing statues of Chiang Kai-shek in Taiwan. However, the attempt to remove Chiang from the urban space and into history has created more space for Chiang to be remembered in Taiwan. It was the Democratic Progressive Party who first attempted to make monuments out of sites associated with the Nationalist Party (Taylor, 2009). The Nationalists had not considered this to be necessary, but the Democrats were attempting to leave sites associated with the Nationalist rule to the past.

As Jeremy Taylor has pointed out, the Chiang family has almost emerged as a “royal family” in Taiwan in terms of celebrity status (Taylor, 2006, 349). This image has allowed the

¹² Chiang Kai-shek’s nickname, 中正 (zhongzheng), translates to “upright”. This nickname is almost more commonly seen in Taiwan’s public space than is Chiang Kai-shek (蔣介石)

interest in the Chiang family to stay widespread, in Taiwan and Mainland China, as well as in western countries. One of Chiang Kai-shek's grandchildren was as of 2007 as Nationalist Party legislator, and stated that his grandfather is “and intrinsic part of Taiwan history” (Liao, 2007). The unique context in Taiwan, as discussed in chapter 3, again becomes apparent, as politicians who wish to remove statues of Chiang Kai-shek from the public space have to argue against family members of the former leader. Upon the death of Chiang Kai-shek's wife, Soong Mei-liang, in 2003 at the age of 105 the focus was yet again set on the Chiang family (Taylor, 2006). Taylor has also pointed to the fact that there is a “Chiang Kai-shek industry” in Taiwan, and that the image of Chiang and his fame had led to an interest among the public to *consume* his personality cult (Taylor & Huang, 2012, 113). Creating tourism spots to satisfy this public interest therefore can seem as a solid business plan, which is what the Daxi county government has done, by creating the Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park and the Cultural Park of the Chiangs due to the Chiang family's connection to the area.

As mentioned earlier in the chapter, the process of moving Chiang and the Nationalist memory to the past was most prevalent during the presidency of Chen Shui-bian from the Democratic Progressive Party. President Chen, however, struggled with a corruption scandal involving his close associate, his son and his wife during his last term, 2004-2008 (Rigger, 2010)¹³. In this period the Democratic Progressive Party therefore did not enjoy as high approval rates in society as it had earlier. Chen also leaned towards more extreme and sudden changes in the landscape, which often created dispute and dissent with members of the Nationalist Party. One example of this sudden and unyielding change was the dispute over Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Hall in Taipei, as discussed in section 3.4. Perhaps due to the scandals surrounding Chen, the collection of statues in the Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park were especially contentious due to his controversial attempt to remove Chiang from the landscape. The approach Chen took may have alienated a great deal of voters, and the Nationalist Party members were free to create the Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park on the basis of conserving history and art.

The rhetoric in the statue park makes it seem like the statues were treasured in their original locations, and that sending the statues to Cihu was with a heavy heart. An excerpt from one plaque in the park reads,

¹³ Chen was arrested himself once he had finished his term as president and no longer had juridical immunity

“It [took] much effort to persuade the school authority to agree to donate this beloved statue” (plaque #26).

The wording in this plaque can be interpreted as a nostalgic longing for the status quo at the time when the statue could stay in its own spot. It gives the impression of being removed against the will of those who worked at the high school at which it was placed. Plaque #26 also mentions that the statue was built,

“To instill patriotism into the younger generation during Filial Piety Month”

Filial piety is an important concept in Confucian philosophy, and emphasizes the importance of honoring one’s parents, elders, and ancestors (Hwang, 1999). The mention of Chiang in the context of filial piety could denote that Chiang is the father of the nation, and that he is someone to honor alongside blood relatives and other authoritative figures. This plaque mentions many important buzzwords in remembering Chiang Kai-shek as a revered person in history, such as “patriotism”. Seeing the statue of Chiang therefore asserts that it has the ability to instill a feeling of national belonging and loyalty among the students. Chiang serves as a symbol of the Taiwanese nation, and patriotism can thus be seen as promising allegiance to the nation, as well as honoring its ‘father’, Chiang Kai-shek.

The process of collecting statues of Chiang Kai-shek from schools and public places is an ongoing process even today. In Tainan, Mayor William Lai (Democratic Progressive Party) led a widespread collection of statues from schools within the city. He attributed the removal of the statues to an aspiration to reach political neutrality, not displaying a former Nationalist Party leader, and vehemently defended his decision in the media (Hung & Chen, 2015). Despite this taking place in 2015, there were major protests of the decision by Nationalist Party members. Political disagreements are common in all societies, especially democratic ones, but the wording used in some of the Taiwanese discourse is quite harsh. Mayor Lai was likened to the Islamic State by some Nationalist Party legislators, who compared the removal of Chiang statues to IS’ destruction of ancient artifacts in Syria (Tsai, Hung and Chung, 2015). In addition to the reference to the Islamic State, Democratic Progressive Party members have also been accused by Nationalist Party legislators of starting another Cultural Revolution in Taiwan (Chang, 2006). The feelings stirred by the collections of statues, even

after so many years have passed prove that Chiang Kai-shek was not just another president to the Nationalist Party, and the part of the population that sympathizes with the Nationalist point of view. The two dominant narratives are made visible through this public debate on the statues of Chiang Kai-shek. Moving the statues to the Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park became a compromise that would not destroy the statues, but that would still remove them from their original locations.

Nationalist Party legislators seem to hold on to a nostalgic reverence for Chiang Kai-shek, which creates such heated discussions when people attempt to remove statues. One plaque from the statue park reads,

“As most trainers were transferred from military and police services, they had more emotional connection with this symbolic statue” (plaque #25)

This same notion is found when Nationalist Party legislators argue that the statues should not be removed from their original spots. As Nationalist Party legislator Tseng Yung-chuang said to the BBC on the matter, “like him or not, Chiang is a part of Taiwan’s history” (“Taiwan statue removal fuels spat”, 2007). It is difficult to argue against the fact that Chiang is part of Taiwanese history, but the way in which he is remembered and represented has been discussed at length. A visitor in the Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park, interviewed by Associated Press, states that visitors were interested in honoring Chiang for boosting the economy of Taiwan (“Chiang Kai-shek’s statues to be removed from Taiwanese military bases”, 2006). It is therefore possible to assume that the nostalgia found in the information plaques also mirrors a time in which Taiwan was perceived to be thriving. After the fall of the Soviet Union and the reunion of East and West Germany, a nostalgia also developed towards the former East Germany. Daphne Berdahl writes about an ‘Ostalgie’ (the German words for East and nostalgia put together), in which the social change created a nostalgia for the past (Berdahl, 1999). Similarly, the change in Taiwanese society created nostalgic feelings toward the period of Nationalist rule, which is often symbolized by Chiang Kai-shek.

Associating impressive elements with Chiang Kai-shek as a person supports the feeling of reverence created in the Cihu Memorial Statue Park. Several of the plaques mention the amount of money they spent on acquiring the statue, seemingly in the hopes of impressing

the visitor with the expensive commitment to remembering Chiang. In addition to the money spent on the statues, there is a focus in some statues on the natural forces at play in Taiwan,

“The statue experienced 921 earthquakes and still stands tall” (plaque #6)

The strength of the statue can in this plaque be seen as being transferred to Chiang himself. The statue is made of durable material, and perhaps because it represents a person who can be seen as a pillar in society, the statue could withstand much adversity. The reverence and nostalgia seen in this plaque and others show that the narrative in Taiwan has not fully moved away from seeing Chiang Kai-shek as a national hero.

3.7 SUMMARY

The Chiang Kai-shek personality cult developed from Chiang’s time in Mainland China, when he was a respected military leader supported by western countries for fighting against the communists. When Chiang and many of his Nationalist Party members retreated to Taiwan, martial law ensued and an authoritarian regime was put in place. The national narrative had until that time been controlled by the Nationalist Party, but after the process of democratization started, the narrative of the past split between those who see Chiang as a dictator and those who see him as the father of the nation. The concept of nostalgia has also been discussed, and Chiang appears to be a symbolic representative of the former regime. This chapter has attempted to create a context and backdrop for the memory of Chiang Kai-shek, and his importance in Taiwanese society and history. A preliminary analysis of the rhetoric was provided, displaying Chiang with nostalgia and reverence, but the main analytical points will be presented in the next two chapters, on the themes of iconoclasm and sites of memory.

4. ART AND ICONOCLASM



Image 5 - Two standing statues of Chiang Kai-shek and a sitting statue of Sun Yat-sen

4.1 INTRODUCTION

A decision was made to collect and display the ‘unwanted’ statues of Chiang Kai-Shek, but why? In this chapter I will discuss the theoretical concept of iconoclasm as relating to the statues in Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park. The preservation of these statues as works of art is significant, as is the relocation of the statues to the park; these are the two most important themes in the iconoclastic treatment of Chiang statues in Taiwan, namely the decision to keep the statues and to move them to Cihu to create a park. The statues depict the former president under martial law, Chiang Kai-Shek, and as a look at the rhetoric of the information plaques in the park shows, there is a greater focus on his *person* than there is on the artwork itself. Iconoclasm, in this project, represents *what was done* with the statues, and through a semiotic approach to the rhetoric in the park we can get closer to a possible answer to *why* as well. This chapter starts out with explaining the process of creating the statue park in the Cihu area

and goes on to explain the theoretical concepts of iconoclasm and semiotics. Lastly, some analytical findings, that the focus in the statue park is on Chiang as a person and not on the statues as artwork, will be presented. I argue that although the expressed reason for creating the statue park was the preservation of art, the information plaques in the park lead us to focus more on Chiang Kai-Shek in a positive light than the artistic aspects of the statues.

4.2 CREATION OF THE PARK

The Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park was created when Taiwan was moving from an authoritarian state to a democratic state. It was established in 1997, but the collection and relocation of statues did not start until 2000 (Taylor, 2009). Chiang Kai-Shek became the first president in the Republic of China on Taiwan in 1945 and was the instigator of martial law two years later. Upon Chiang's death in 1975 he was succeeded by his son, Chiang Ching-kuo, as president. As mentioned in chapter 3, the narrative in Taiwan split after martial law ended and democracy took root. As part of the process of creating the narrative that saw Chiang as a dictator, there was a call for the removal of statues of Chiang, which had once decorated all official buildings and schools. Mayor of Daxi, Tzeng Rung-chien, suggested that statues could be collected and displayed in a park in his municipality (Taylor C, 2000). Although Tzeng served as mayor as a member of the Nationalist Party, the same party to which Chiang Kai-Shek belonged, he claimed to wish to salvage the statues due to their artistic value. Joseph Allen calls Daxi, the municipality in which the park is located, a Nationalist "stronghold" due to its historical support for the Nationalist Party. The stronghold was most likely related to the Cihu area, in which the Chiang family enjoyed spending time. The historic significance of Cihu can therefore explain why Tzeng might have a favorable view of Chiang Kai-shek. The expressed reason for creating the park was based on the belief that a statue is a work of art which needs to be respected and preserved, whether it is politically charged or not. However, a symbolic change took place when the statues of Chiang Kai-Shek were removed from their public spots and displayed with one another in the Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park.

The importance of statues, and other physical manifestations, as symbols for a political regime is seen clearly in the post-Soviet period in Eastern European countries, such as Albania, Hungary and present-day Russia. The emotional reactions the public had when gathering to topple a statue of Stalin in Tirana, Albania, shows that it was not merely a

physical object to them (Gamboni, 1997, 63). Physical manifestations of a regime hold much symbolic meaning, both when active as a political tool, but also in the aftermath. In reference to old Hindu monuments in India, Deborah Cherry talks about the *afterlife* of monuments (Cherry). She argues that monuments, and statues specifically, do not stop being important when the political climate changes. There is, however, a likely narrative change at the same time as massive political change, and the significance of monuments of the old regime may change. Dario Gamboni points out that the physical fall of a statue was a powerful symbol of the fall of a regime, and the newfound liberty of a nation (Gamboni, 1997, 62). Although the meaning of the statues in Taiwan was altered, they were not destroyed. When in the process of transition, there are five ways in which to treat monuments from the old regime through iconoclasm, namely to preserve, displace, modify, transform or suppress (Gamboni, 1997, 76). The reason behind choosing to preserve the statues, as well as to display them, has implications for how the past Chiang Kai-Shek represents fits in to the post-authoritarian narrative.

The collection of statues found in the park in Cihu has some similar features to other monuments of former authoritarian leaders, such as Lenin and Stalin in post-Soviet states. As Beverly James pointed out, the decision to gather and display statues in a statue park in Budapest led to an implicit endorsement for political pluralism (James, 2005, 33). In Taiwan we also see that the Nationalist Party sympathizers are many, and for some of those the plurality of remembering Chiang Kai-Shek may be important. Creating a statue park, however, does not only function as a way to *remove* statues from their original location, but it also has a tendency to “produce images in the process of destroying them” (Stubblefield, 2011, 8). What has happened in the Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park is not only removing statues of Chiang Kai-Shek due to public demand, but there have also been an effort to create a different and unique display with these exact statues. Beverly James argues that the destruction and displacement of statues, such as that in Budapest, was more significant than their original meanings (James, 2005, 22). The eerie, and some would argue narcissistic, display of many Chiang Kai-Sheks standing in a circle looking at himself creates a very different experience than seeing a single Chiang in a schoolyard.

What separates the Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park from the statue park in Budapest, however, is the lack of explicit or implicit reference to a narrative change. Dario Gamboni mentions that in post-Soviet states the monuments that were not physically destroyed were displayed in

a way that made clear that their preservation did not equal approval of the old regime (Gamboni, 1997, 74). As in Hungary, the statues could be preserved, but they were displayed in such a way that the condemnation of its ideological origin was apparent. This rhetorical distinction is not made about the Chiang Kai-shek statues in the statue park in Cihu.

Memorials and statues are also highly meaningful in commemorating victims of past atrocities, such as the Holocaust, as well as warning against possible future wrongdoings. Most of the literature, however, is written about monuments and statues in two different categories of discussion. 1. Creating memorials for the purpose of remembering past events with a clear moral undertone, for example in the memorial for the killed Jews of Europe in Berlin (Young, 1993). 2. Redefining remnants of an old regime that are kept intact, yet they are displayed in such a way that the new narrative is clearly explained, and the condemnation is evident, such as the statue park in Budapest (James, 2005). The situation of post-authoritarian Taiwan does not fit either of those categories, and therefore deserves a closer look. In Taiwan, the oppressors and the formerly oppressed are living together in relative peace, under a relatively democratic system, in which both parties have influence. The narrative in Taiwan changed from one single pro-Nationalist narrative, but not to the extreme, where the formerly oppressed are controlling the memories of the past completely. The pendulum is still swinging, and the power dynamics have not yet been set in stone. What then, can a statue park tell us about the remembrance of Chiang Kai-Shek and the Nationalist Party? The concept of iconoclasm is useful in understanding some of the forces at play in the creation of the Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park.

4.3 ICONOCLASM & SEMIOTICS

The concept of iconoclasm originally referred to the physical destruction of religious artifacts and images, but has been transformed to mean to physically or symbolically destroy or alter a work of art (Gamboni, 1997, 18). The original meaning of the word, the physical destruction of art, does not apply to the Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park, but the extended concept as referring to symbolic alteration does. Dario Gamboni discusses the ways in which iconoclasm has taken place in recent history, and the significance of such events, especially in the post-authoritarian context. He points out that after a major narrative change within a society, statues and monuments become popular targets of iconoclasm due to their symbolic nature and accessibility (Gamboni, 1997, 67). People in post-Soviet states often violently and

symbolically destroyed the statues of Soviet leaders like Vladimir Lenin and Joseph Stalin. Gamboni distinguishes between this aforementioned iconoclasm *from below*, in which individuals take it upon themselves to destroy a monument, and iconoclasm *from above* where the government decides how to deal with such monuments (Gamboni, 1997, 23). In Taiwan the iconoclasm was initiated from above while a member of the Nationalist Party was president, and the statues were gathered in a municipality in which a Nationalist Party member was mayor. It is therefore easy to assume that iconoclasm from above is a highly politicized endeavor, which seems to also be the case in Taiwan. The Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park is a result of iconoclasm, but a specific *type* of iconoclasm.

In the definition given by Dario Gamboni, the only requirement needed to call something iconoclasm is an *alteration* of meaning; this broad definition of iconoclasm as a change in context has been discussed more in depth by other scholars, such as Bruno Latour who names it an *iconoclash*. Latour explains iconoclash as the situation in which the alteration of meaning of an object is unclear, and the meaning cannot be determined to be either destructive or constructive (Latour, 2002, 16). When a radical political change has occurred in a country, the physical remnants of the previous regime need to be dealt with, and as already mentioned, a decision whether to preserve, displace, modify, transform or suppress these artifacts has to be made (Gamboni, 1997, 76). In the case of the Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park, the decision was to preserve, yet arguably displace the statues (which will be elaborated upon in chapter 5). In Budapest the statues of the old regime were also gathered in a statue park, but the narrative of the park is quite clear. The statues are presented as a reminder of an oppressive, and morally wrong, past. This can clearly be seen in the ways the statues have been displayed, many of which are tilted, or otherwise not presented in a respectful way (Gamboni, 1997, 60). The iconoclasm in Taiwan was different kind than what took place in Budapest and many other post-Soviet states. The authoritarian regimes were no doubt of a different nature in the two countries, but the public wish to remove the old statues was the same. In Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park, the memory of Chiang Kai-Shek is ambiguous at best, and often leaning more toward honoring, as is discussed in chapters 3 and 5 as well.

The statues of Chiang Kai-Shek appear to many to be anachronistic in nature, yet there exist still a semiotic and mnemonic value in these statues, the latter of which will be elaborated upon in Chapter 5. Semiotics is the study of signs, and as professor in social research Alan

Bryman states, “semiotics is concerned to uncover the processes of meaning production and how signs are designed to have an effect upon actual and prospective consumers of those signs” (Bryman, 2010, 291). Signs, in semiotics, are assumed to hold meaning on the levels of intended message, actual message, as well as the received message. Social scientist Madeline Caviness holds that most cases of iconoclasm involve confusion between the sign, the referent, and the signified (Caviness, 2003, 100). In the case of Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park the sign would be a statue, the referent would be Chiang Kai-Shek, and the signified is the kind of person the statue makes Chiang out to be. The statues, although mostly benevolent in appearance, cannot tell a visitor of the park much about what kind of person Chiang Kai-Shek was. This is where the information plaques posted around the park become significant.

The plaques narrate the stories of different statues, and provide the visitor with context through which to understand Chiang as a person and public figure. To use the metaphorical language of semiotics, the statue is a *message* sent by the municipal government in Daxi, to be interpreted by visitors to the park. In order to make sense of this message, the park authorities have provided 30 information plaques about Chiang, which tell the story of one particular statue each. Through the information given on the plaques, a visitor is more easily able to receive the intended message sent. Through analyzing the rhetorical content of those plaques, we are able to tease out a possible intended message about Chiang Kai-Shek’s memory. Iconoclasm is what happened during the creation of the park, and semiotics is the process through which the possible meaning of the park is found and conveyed. The topics of each chapter in this thesis also follow the logic of semiotics, with this chapter covering the sign (statues), the previous chapter discussing the referent (Chiang Kai-shek), and the next chapter elaborating upon the signified (the memory). The iconoclasm on the statues, the sign, also has an impact on the signified, the way in which we interpret the referent.

Acts of iconoclasm are also closely tied with the creation of memory, or the creation of a narrative. Before 1987 in Taiwan the main narrative was controlled by the Nationalist Party, by virtue of maintaining an authoritarian state and restricting the flow of information. In the years following the end of martial law, the pendulum swung farther and farther away from the Nationalist Party. The symbolic changes in meaning embody such strong emotions and memory-making potential in a politically transitional country, and are therefore highly significant. In Taiwan there was a push to remove the statues of Chiang Kai-Shek from

public places such as schools and town halls, as the increasingly dominant narrative did not find it appropriate any longer. The first push to remove the statues came from Taiwan Normal University, at which students reacted to the anachronistic statue of Chiang Kai-Shek decorating their school buildings (Emerson, 1999). The original meaning of those statues was therefore altered, and the significance of this alteration can be alluded to in the information plaques in the Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park. In understanding the symbolic change that took place in moving the statues in Taiwan through iconoclasm, the statue park can be interpreted both through what took place, but also what *did not* happen. The decision was made to collect the statues instead of destroying them, and this type of iconoclasm influences the memory of Chiang Kai-Shek in present-day Taiwan.

4.4 PERSON OVER ART

The rhetoric found in the information plaques in Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park present Chiang Kai-shek as a beloved and benevolent leader. Arguments to not destroy the statues were based on the intrinsic value of art, whether this artwork was political in nature or not. What becomes evident when reading the 30 information plaques in the statue park is that the focus is on Chiang Kai-shek and his virtuous qualities, not highlighting these works of art. In an art exhibition it is common for some text to accompany the artwork, often stating such information as what inspired the artist, where it was made, at what time the idea manifested, and how the process of creating the artwork was. In the Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park the information plaques accompanying statues state at which place the statue originally was located, what scenery surrounded the statue, and what the statue meant to the local community. In the rhetoric of the signs, it is clear that the symbolic value of the statue, and thereby Chiang Kai-shek, surpasses the value of the statues as works of art.

Each information plaque posted in the statue park tells the story of the adjacent statue. There are 34 such plaques in the park, of which 30 belong to statues of Chiang Kai-shek.

Information plaque #15 reads,

“The statue of Chiang Kai-shek in military uniform was standing beside Eluanbi, and used to be the landmark of south Taiwan that tourists liked to take pictures of. To relieve it of intense broil and severe rainfall, people decided to donate it to [Daxi]. The lighter part of green near Eluanbi shall

be where the statue stood for 20 years” (image 5).

On this particular plaque, the material of which the statue is made is not mentioned, nor is the name of the artist. It narrates, almost nostalgically, how the statue had been popular with tourists and that it had been a part of the landscape for a long time, shows the symbolic importance over the artistic. The reference to “save” the statue from weather conditions is also an argument that has been used in the process of collecting the statues.

During the first non-Nationalist Party presidential period in Taiwan, from 2000 to 2008, the government was accused of removing statues only to appease the president at the time. The Democratic Progressive Party, of which the president was a member, argued that they were removing the statues so as to protect them from erosion (“Taiwan statue removal fuels spat”, 2007). However, the statue park in Cihu is also outside, not protected from wind and rain in any capacity. The reference to protecting the statue from rain and wind seems to imply that the statue was indeed not donated to the statue park due to it being unwanted in its original spot any longer. On the contrary, the statue was so beloved that those who held it in their



Image 6 – One of the information plaques in the statue park

custody sought a safer spot for it. The narrative change of Taiwan transitioning from an authoritarian rule to a democratic state seems almost to be denied in this rhetoric. The kind of preserving iconoclasm that has taken place in the Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park seems to justify the continued presence of Chiang in the public sphere, although arguably somewhat displaced from the capital, as will be discussed in chapter 5.

The political significance of the statues is apparent in the debates about removing statues from the public sphere. Newspapers in Taiwan and internationally have written about many instances in which people have called for the removal of Chiang Kai-shek statues. The political opponent to Chiang's party, the Democratic Progressive Party have stressed the political statement of keeping Chiang statues in place; members of the Nationalist Party, Chiang's own party, have often contributed to the debates stating that the statues represent history, not politics. In 1999 the National Teachers College in Taipei called for the removal of a Chiang statue (Emerson, 1999). In 2006 it was decided to remove statues of Chiang Kai-shek from all military bases in Taiwan (Chang, 2006). The removal of the statues from military bases was an especially contentious event, as Chiang had been a military dignitary and was known by the nickname the Generalissimo. As late as in 2014 a group of high school students from Taipei posted a video on youtube.com requesting the removal of Chiang statues from their campuses (Hsieh and Pan, 2014). In all of these examples politicians have commented on the call to remove statues in newspaper interviews, and the Democratic Progressive Party members are mainly in favor, seeing the statues as anachronisms. The Nationalist Party opposes the collection claiming that removing the statues represents an attempt to alter history. It is therefore easy to think that the Democratic Progressive Party emphasizes the removal of statues from their original locations, while the Nationalist Party emphasizes the protection of the same statues. The debate in the media has not, however, been about the artistic value of the statues. The only times the argument of art has arisen is in the process of collecting the statues instead of destroying them. The collection of statues in Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park seems like an acceptable compromise for both parties, in which the statues are not destroyed, but they do not remain in their original locations either.

Statues of presidents and other political figures are not always considered to be works of art in the same way as a painting or a photograph can be. This is due to the potential that the statues were ordered by the leaders themselves, so the creator could have lacked artistic freedom and the possibility to express his/her true emotions. Gamboni also addresses the

critique of so-called *political artifacts*, which are by many not deemed to be real art, but maintains that art as something free is a Westernized idea (Gamboni, 1997, 89). This notion does not do those artists who actually created the political works of art justice. The artistic expression is still apparent in statues, even in works that are ordered or take place within an authoritarian context. Aesthetic arguments were used to justify the destruction or removal of statues, because they were after all not artwork, only artifacts (Gamboni, 1997, 87). Statues of a political leader were seen as a mere reproduction of their features, and not something significant on its own. Functional use was the focus in this argument, instead of artistic value. There is a political aspect to the creation of such statues as those of Chiang Kai-Shek, but there are many forms of art that have a political message. Ordering a work of art does not necessarily limit the symbolic creativity many artists hold, and the physical craftsmanship should also not be downplayed. It is also a slippery slope to assume that no artists agree with or support authoritarian leaders or states. Hence, statues can indeed be created with the artists own point of view attached to the artwork.

The artists who created statues of Chiang Kai-shek, as well as paintings and other imagery may not have done so for political reasons, but to further develop their careers, a point also mentioned in chapter 3. Jeremy Taylor mentions that Taiwanese historian Zheng Shuiping, has argued that creating statues and paintings of Chiang Kai-shek during the period of martial law was, “not the result of an enforced directive, but rather of competition amongst sculptors and designers who saw such work as a means to improve their own professional standing” (Taylor, 2006, 108). The pragmatic realities of being an artist in an authoritarian state created limitations in how they could work, and what types of artwork they were allowed to create. The artists were also victims of the repressive regime, and should be honored or mentioned for this reason.

Whether or not statues of former authoritarian leaders, which were ordered and paid for by the authoritarian regime, can be considered art is debatable. The impact of the statues, however, is undeniable, especially where there is a collection of over two hundred statues portraying the same individual. The notion that “there are no visual media” (Mitchell, 2005) applies to this context, as it refers to the multi-purpose aspect of media. Here, media is used in its broader sense, referring to films and newspapers, as well as monuments and statues. It is easy to think of a statue as a purely visual object, or medium, but as Mitchell notes there are no purely visual media; all media are negated through existing schemata in society and

prior knowledge (Mitchell, 2005, 260). The important point in Mitchell's article is the fact that cultural expectations and supplementary narratives help a "reader" of a medium understand it in its context. This is where semiotics play a part. The "message" of the statue is transmitted not only by the visual representation, but to *ensure* that the correct message comes across to the reader, written texts help us "read" the statue in a certain way. In the Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park we are invited to see the statues through information plaques that are scattered around the park, explaining the history and background of a particular statue.

The reason given by the mayor of Daxi when creating the Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park was that the statues were works of art. However, when reading the information plaques accompanying some of the statues, the focus is not on the artwork, but rather on its referent, namely Chiang Kai-Shek. The e-mail I received from the Taoyuan Tourism Bureau stated that, "the political environment changed, and part of Chiang Kai-Shek's statues were asked to move out from campus and official office buildings" and they go on to say that because of the historical significance of Cihu to the Chiang family, they urged the institutions getting rid of the statues to send them to Cihu.

Three of the information plaques explicitly mention an accompanying sign to their statue in its original spot, stating "In Remembrance of the Leader" (plaques 7, 13, 34). Three other information plaques feature the same sentiment, but with different wording such as "Reverence for the Leader," and "Savior of the Nation" (plaques 1, 9, 10). Few of these statues mention the statue's technical or artistic information, such as *who* created the statue, of what *material* was the statue made, or *when* it was created. The creator is accredited in less than one third of the statues, and a single statue states the material in which the statue was made (#10). Some plaques mention the posture of the statue, or the clothes Chiang is wearing. This information, however, does not only reflect the artwork, but it is directly related to the man portrayed. The information relating specifically to the statue as a work of art is lacking from the entire collection of information plaques located in the park. However, there is ample reference to Chiang Kai-Shek's leadership and virtuous personality. One could argue that the mere collection and protection of the statues are forms of paying respect to the artists who created them, whoever they may be. It is, however, common for artists to be identified in order to give the proper recognition for their artwork.

Mayor Tzeng, although of the opinion that the statues are works of art, stated in an interview that the creators of Chiang Kai-shek statues had to be careful or they would be “in deep trouble” (Taylor C, 2000). The statues displayed at Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park obviously passed the strict test of Chiang, so this does not appear a convincing reason why accrediting the creators would be inappropriate or risky in any way. Other possible reasons for omitting this information is that the information is missing and unobtainable, or because it is not the focal point of the park. Only 8 of the 30 information plaques give credit to a creator, be it an individual artist or an art studio. Jeremy Taylor points out, “The Taiwan-born sculptor Cai Shun-he was responsible for designing bronze statues of Chiang and Sun that decorated public spaces in the city of Jiayi” (Taylor, 2006, 102). This shows that there are names of artists available, but that might not be mentioned in the statue park, as Cai Shun-he was not. There is, of course, a chance that Cai did not create any of the statues that are displayed in Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park. One statue, with a plaque attached to it, was originally located in Jiayi. No artist is accredited for this statue in the plaque. Whether or not this statue was created by Cai is unknown, but the fact is that few artists are accredited in the park. Important is also that there are artists who have not been given credit for their creation(s), which is not consistent with the ‘art exhibit’ vision of Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park.

The symbolic meaning of the statues in Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park has also been party of the discussion in the media. Mayor Tzeng has also stated that the park will “help promote a fair discussion and evaluation” of Chiang Kai-shek and his leadership (Leavey, 2003). He adds to this sentiment, that the park could also be considered an art exhibition (ibid). Tzeng Rung-chien emphasizes the *artwork* aspect in his promotion of the Cihu statue park, but I argue that the artistic value of the statues is not the main reason for their collection. As former Fulbright scholar in Taiwan, Julia Ross, so eloquently stated, “political persuasion determines how [Chiang Kai-shek’s] legacy translates” (Ross, 2007). Thus, the political bias Tzeng displays, and other Nationalist Party members with him, is apparent in the rhetoric of the information plaques in Cihu. However, due to relying on the argument of artwork, the Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park could be created, and continues to be an important site for remembering Chiang and the Nationalist past for some people.

4.5 SUMMARY

This chapter has discussed the concept of *iconoclasm* in relation to the statues in the Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park in rural Taiwan. Iconoclasm can entail different approaches to dealing with remnants of the past, two of which are to destroy or protect. The statues of Chiang Kai-shek were protected, and I have discussed what this decision could mean for the memory of Chiang as seen through the information plaques in the park. The expressed reason for collecting and protecting the statues was because they were works of art, but the impression left when reading the information plaques is another. The focus in the plaques is Chiang Kai-shek as a person and what his memory means, not on the statues as artwork in an exhibition. The political influence in the statue park has also become apparent, since the Democratic Progressive Party emphasized the collection of the statues, and Chiang's own party, the Nationalist Party, emphasized protection. Looking closer at the sign, the statues, the referent, Chiang Kai-shek, can be interpreted to find the signified, the memory. The rhetoric in the information plaques portrays the referent in a positive light, and the focus is more on the symbolic value of the statues than on the artistic value.

5. SITES OF MEMORY

“History considers the past to be past – something unrelated to the present.

Only memory keeps the past alive”

(Matten, 2012, 3)

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Memory studies make up a broad and disparate field, encompassing disciplines from human geography to sociology. *Lieux de mémoire* is a concept within memory studies which bridges two of the main themes in this thesis, namely memory and space. The concept of memory is a complicated one, with many differing views and approaches, however the full discussion of the epistemological background of the concept will not be addressed here¹⁴.

Firstly, in this chapter, the concept of *lieux de mémoire*, or sites of memory, as a lens through which to understand the Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park, will be discussed. In addition, the concept of *counter-memory* will be examined in the context of the statue park. Secondly, the Cultural Park of the Chiangs and the burial palaces for both Chiang Kai-shek and his son create a context of historical importance for the location of Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park. The placement of the park is important, and the park contributes to a larger area dedicated to the memory of Chiang and his family. Third, the statue park can be said to have been *placed*, as opposed to *displaced*; on the one hand, the park is located in this greater context of remembering the Chiang family; on the other hand, the park is located far off the beaten path and can only be reached by a conscious decision to visit. Fourth, Chiang is portrayed in the park as a positive figure in history, and the information plaques in the park often mention the beauty of the statues' original location, creating a counter-memory. The returning theme in the rhetoric of the information plaques is the many *virtues* that Chiang possesses, be it beauty, admiration or education.

The contrast between the statue park and its greater context, as well as the inclusive political space it represents, will be elaborated upon in this chapter. I argue that the statue park itself therefore appears to embody the importance of *space*, both in terms of physical space for remembrance as well as a political pluralistic space in a democracy. The park allows those

¹⁴ See Erll (2011) for more on the concept of memory

who wish to remember Chiang Kai-shek as a positive contribution to history, yet does not impose this memory on anyone who does not seek it out.

5.2 MEMORY AND LIEUX DE MÉMOIRE

Cultural memory, collective memory or collective remembrance all refer to the common notions of the past that a community or society share, however denote slight differences in focus. Where memory is the outcome, remembrance is the verb that creates this outcome. Memory scholar, Astrid Erll explains the concept of remembrance as “a cognitive process which takes place in individual brains [that] is metaphorically transferred to the level of culture” (Erll and Rigney, 2009, 4). The collective memory was the academic starting point, focusing on the fact that human beings are social in nature, and therefore our cognitive processes are shaped by the social life to which we belong. Collective memory as a concept was coined by Maurice Halbwachs in the 1930s. He argued that in order to remember, we need others (Halbwachs, 1980). Halbwachs talks about imposing and shaping memory consciously, but there are many instances in which memory is shaped unconsciously, and there is memory creation that can be a bit of both. Memory is reinforced by the reconstructions provided by others, so the more people you reach with your reconstruction, the more you can influence the collective memory. Collective memory is often shaped by a narrative, which is implicated by external factors such as politics and power within a society.

Cultural memory is a category under the umbrella of collective memory, which focuses on the expectations and experiences that are shared by a group of people, and the impact that has on memory creation. A concept that can be found within research on cultural memory is *lieux de mémoire*, coined by French scholar Pierre Nora. The translations of *lieux de mémoire* are many, ranging from sites of memory, realms of memory and spaces of memory. Nora’s concept is useful in discussing the juxtaposition between physical space and memory-making potential. Although commonly cited, many studies have been done which have criticized Nora’s work, for example social scientist Stephen Legg (2005). Nora has been accused of being nostalgic, and of romanticizing his view of memory. However, many other scholars have elaborated on the concept of *lieux de mémoire* and added to Nora’s work, making the concept more nuanced. Therefore, the concept of *lieux de mémoire* still has virtue in scholarship.

The importance of space in the context of Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park is related both to the physical space of the park as well as the symbolic space it represents. Similarly, a *lieux de mémoire* can be both physical and symbolic. Pierre Nora identified three types of sites of memory in his work, material, symbolic, and functional (Nora, 1989, 18-19). Material sites are physical commemorative spaces, symbolic are activities and events, and functional spaces are shared codes and concepts (Erll, 2011, 103)¹⁵. The Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park would fall under the category of a material site of memory, but I also argue that it can represent a functional site as well. This argument will be substantiated in section 5.4, about Placement or Displacement. The constructivist approach, meaning the notion that human agency can affect the process of creating memory, that it is not something that is innately given, is the focus in this research. The constructivist aspect is also supported by many scholars, such as Marc Matten who has stated, “it is not sufficient to ask what the memory of the past is, but how it has been constructed” (Matten, 2012, 8). *Lieux de mémoire* can therefore be a place where memory created by people or institutions, situated within a given time and context.

As James Young stated, “both a monument and its significance are constructed in particular times and places, contingent on the political, historical, and aesthetic realities of the moment” (Young, 2008, 361). The realities in Taiwan at the time the statue park was created were very different from the realities of the time when the statues were created. The statues were created before martial law ended in 1987, and during the time in which Taiwan’s political environment was dominated by the Nationalist Party. In the aftermath of martial law, when democracy made its way into Taiwan, these statues were seen as anachronisms, something belonging in the past. Still, a decision was made to collect the statues and display them in the Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park, which created a *new* significance and a new space for the memory of Chiang Kai-shek and the legacy of his rule. In Cihu the statues make up a site of memory, but their significance is not unambiguous or obvious.

Sites of memory are places that hold a memory making potential, but it is still necessary to interpret these ‘messages’ conveyed through the site. Jay Winter discusses the concept of *sites of memory*, specifically as it pertains to the history and memory of World War II. He states,

¹⁵ Erll (2011) refers to the second category as ‘social’, and the third as ‘mental’

“commemoration at sites of memory is an act arising out of a conviction, shared by a broad community, that the moment recalled is both significant and informed by a moral message. Sites of memory materialize that message” (Winter, 2008, 62).

In Taiwan the memory of Chiang Kai-Shek is a contested one, but the fact that his statues were in fact collected and put on display in the Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park has implications for how Chiang is remembered. It could be that the statue park as a *site of memory* is merely a result of nostalgia for the past, but it could also be an attempt to control the memory and image of the late leader and his successors in the Nationalist Party. However, the statue park represents a *space* for nostalgia, as discussed in chapter 3, and allows for those reminiscing to have a place to go. This site of memory, nostalgic or otherwise, is important in the process of analyzing the importance of space in creating the Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park.

5.3 COUNTER-MEMORY

The statue park in Cihu can, in addition to being seen as a site of memory, also represent a *counter-memory* to certain groups in Taiwan. The concept of counter-memory relies on the contested nature of memory, and points to a way of remembering which does not conform to the main narrative in society (Davis & Starn, 1989, 2). The Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park can thus be seen as a site of memory, created in the spirit of counter-memory for those who wish to remember Chiang not as a dictatorial figure, but as a benevolent leader of the nation.

Memory scholar Stephen Legg explains the concept of counter-memory through physical space, stating that, “sites of counter-memory mark times and places in which people have refused to forget. They can rebut the memory schema of a dominant class, caste, race, or nation, providing an alternative form of remembering and identity” (Legg, 2005, 181). In this article, Legg’s research focuses upon post-colonial India and the refusal to forget the struggles attached to being colonized. Counter-memory is often seen as something positive and empowering for people who find themselves in a subaltern position. In Taiwan, the situation is quite unique, because the political climate has changed, one, peacefully, and two, without fully removing the former authoritarian rule or “ideology” from the political landscape. Therefore, the democratic system in Taiwan today is polarized, dominated by the

Nationalist Party and the Democratic Progressive Party, the former authoritarian party and the opposition. In post-Soviet states the former authoritarian system was abolished completely, in South Africa the system of apartheid was universally seen as oppressive and something to leave in the past, and after colonization in India the colonizers physically left the colony when India was liberated. In Taiwan, the authoritarian party did not have any place to “go back to”. When the era of martial law ended, the *colonized* perspective regained momentum, while the *colonizers* were stripped of some of their power. However, the struggle to control the memory of the past is still relevant for both, and part of the Nationalist Party approach was to create a counter-memory in order to combat some of the anti-Nationalist memories of the colonized.

Philosopher and constructivist Siegfried Schmidt points out that, “politics of remembering is intrinsically connected to power” (Schmidt, 2008, 197). The Nationalists used to be fully in power in Taiwan, but now there is a sharing of power between the Nationalists and the Democratic Progressive Party. In addition to power relations being related to memory, the politics of *forgetting* is also connected to power. Although memory-creation in general focuses upon the choice of what to remember and what to forget, counter-memory is especially interested in not allowing certain things to be forgotten. The Nationalist Party in Taiwan refuses to allow the “positive” aspects from the period of martial law to be forgotten¹⁶. Marc Matten explains the process of forgetting as something that is done when a memory is *not desired* or that it is *contradictory* to your view of history (Matten, 2012, 5). A counter-memory attempts to combat this act of forgetting, and focuses upon those to-be forgotten aspects in order to keep them within the public memory.

As Schmidt also points out, the creators of memorial sites “transform their past in a communicative way that serves the purpose of constructing a desirable or at least tolerable self-consciousness” (Schmidt, 2008, 197). The tolerable self-consciousness of Taiwan’s history, for the purpose of Chiang Kai-Shek and his political supporters is one where the authoritarian aspect of Chiang’s life is downplayed. The statue park represents an attempt at highlighting the benign and lovable “great leader.”

¹⁶ I placed *positive* in quotation marks due to it being a notion that does not ring true to all in Taiwan.

Through the lens of lieux de mémoire and counter-memory, we are able to more easily understand the power dynamics and significance of the collection of the statues in Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park. The park is significant as a space to remember Chiang Kai-shek and his family, as well as the park representing a counter-memory to the narrative in which Chiang is seen as a dictator whose picture should not adorn schools and official buildings. The importance of space is therefore twofold, physical as well as symbolic. Physical, in that the park is a physical location people can visit, and symbolic, in that the park represents an inclusive political system, which follows the logic of a liberal democracy.

5.4 THE GREATER AREA OF REMEMBRANCE

The Cihu area is a green area surrounding a lake in Daxi municipality in Taoyuan County. Chiang Kai-shek took a liking to the rural area because it reminded him of his native province in Mainland China, Zhejiang. For this reason he set up a vacation home in Cihu. Upon Chiang's death in 1975 he wished to be buried in Cihu, as a temporary resting place until the Nationalist Party reclaimed Mainland China from the Communists and he could be buried in his hometown. Chiang's goal of reclaiming China, however, proved to be unrealistic, and Cihu has become his de facto permanent grave. His son, Chiang Ching-kuo died in 1988, and a burial palace was built in the Cihu area for him as well. When the Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park was suggested, it was with the knowledge that the Cihu area had a historic importance for the Chiang family. In 2007 the Cihu area was named the Cultural Park of the Chiangs for tourism purposes, in order to show the interconnectedness between the two burials with accompanying museums, the statue park, and the hiking trail in Cihu¹⁷.

The Cihu area has not only been significant after the death of the Chiangs, it was also very important during their time as president of Taiwan. Chiang Kai-shek had a home and a personal military base in Cihu, and the demilitarization of the area in 2007 has led to more openness on how Cihu was used. Cindy Sui with the Taipei Times wrote that Back Cihu (the formerly military part of Cihu), was built to serve as a secret command center "in case of a Chinese Communist invasion" (Sui, 2009). The dream for Chiang Kai-shek and his

¹⁷ The Chinese name is 兩蔣文化園區, literally the two Chiang's cultural site. The English name of the park has been translated as the Cultural Resort of the Chiangs (the Taoyuan Tourism Bureau) and Chiang's Cultural Park (tripadvisor.com) and signs in the park refer to it as the Culture Park of the Chiangs.

generation of Nationalists was to one day reclaim Mainland China, and Cihu was used in the development of such plans.

The area in Back Cihu (后慈湖) was, since the demilitarization, turned into a hiking trail for visitors (Lin, 2008). What is special about this hiking trail is that those who wish to walk it, must apply to the local authorities in advance¹⁸. This is not a common practice elsewhere in Taiwan, and therefore stands out as being slightly mystical, and could perhaps appeal to people's curiosity. My observation when visiting the Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park was that there were not very many visitors, yet there were several large tourism buses in the parking lot. The visitors who come to Cihu most likely make sure to visit the hiking trail, due to the added inconvenience of applying, and leave the statue park as an afterthought if there is excess time. Mainland Chinese tourists have been the largest visitor group to the Cultural Park of the Chiangs (Huang, 2007; Taylor, 2010). One of the reasons for creating the Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park originally, in addition to preserving art, was also to attract these tourists from Mainland China (Taylor, 2009). As Jeremy Taylor points out, the availability of direct travel from Mainland China to Taiwan has increased as the political climate has moved into a more cooperative mode. The reason for this, however, could be the realization that the Nationalist Party has indeed "lost China," and "no longer pose a threat" to the government in Mainland China (Taylor, 2009). The fact that the Back Cihu area was demilitarized could also signify the giving up on the plans that were created by Chiang Kai-shek to reclaim China at this very location.

As previously mentioned, the Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park is located across the pond from the parking lot, reachable by bridges only. However, the Chiang Kai-Shek Burial Palace is located at the far end of the parking lot, and is reached after a ten-minute walk. Upon my visits to the park, there were several large tour buses in the parking lot, yet less than ten visitors in the park upon all of my visits. However, it became clear after visiting the Chiang Kai-Shek Burial Palace that there were several hundreds of visitors in the greater area. Through this observation I was able to situate the statue park not as an entirely separate concept, but rather as intertwined with many other places and factors. The opening up of Back Cihu, with the hiking trail visitors have to apply to visit could have created an incentive

¹⁸ Visitors can apply at <http://backcihu.tycg.gov.tw/Cihu> (only available in Chinese)

to *make sure* you visit Back Cihu, and the statue park being another thing to do if you have time and energy for it after the hike.

The statues of Chiang Kai-Shek in Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park were gathered and placed on display, seemingly in an attempt to keep them from being destroyed. The democratization process after 1987 changed the narrative significantly, toward “villainizing” Chiang. However, the Chiang Kai-Shek *personality cult* as discussed in Chapter 4, shows how the narrative has not yet moved wholly to a view of Chiang as a dictator (Taylor, 2010). Today the park constitutes a *lieu de mémoire*, or site of memory, which links the physical space with the memory capacity it holds (Nora, 1989). The park was named Cihu *Memorial Sculpture Park* by its creators, and it is therefore safe to assume that there has been an attempt to create a memory in which Chiang was not seen as such a bad character in Taiwan’s history. A *space* for Chiang’s memory was created in the statue park, and the information plaques posted in the park convey this memory.

5.5 PLACEMENT OR DISPLACEMENT

The first research question of this project was finding whether the Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park represents a place where Chiang’s memory was displaced into the periphery, or if it was where it came to life. In addition, I wanted to look at the importance of space in the process of memory creation in the statue park. Therefore, the placement, or displacement, of the park also plays an important part. On the one hand, the statue park can be said to have been *placed* in Cihu due to Chiang’s own connection to the area. On the other hand, the park could be said to be *displaced*, due to it being far removed from the hustle and bustle of life in the capital, or even smaller towns or cities. The new narrative has been given the more visible space in the capital of Taipei, where other changes than just the removal of statues have taken place. However, as Francis Chia-hui Lin points out, “by looking at the city of Taipei alone, you are no longer able to frame a context of Taiwan’s post-Martial Law identity construction in space” (Lin, 2014, 56). Thus, the area of Cihu provides an opposing view to that which is visible in Taipei.

As discussed in chapter 3, there is a tug-of-war going on Taiwan in terms of memory creation, between the two largest political parties, Chiang’s old party, the Nationalist Party, and the Democratic Progressive Party. If you look at the Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park from

the point of view of the Nationalist Party, the park is perhaps placed exactly where it should be due to Chiang's connection to Cihu (although they would no doubt like to see his memory more visible in the capital as well). From the point of view of the Democratic Progressive Party, although there has been a strong push to remove Chiang from the public sphere, they accept the existence of the park due to its remote location and historic link to the Chiang family. The statue park could therefore represent both placement *and* displacement, depending on who you ask. The two main narratives in Taiwan do not agree on the position Chiang Kai-shek should play in Taiwanese history, yet the statue park is allowed to exist, and portrays Chiang mostly in positive terms in the rhetoric of the park.

The concept of displacement has been focused upon in Taiwan studies before, especially in the period after 1987. American Taiwan studies scholar, Joseph Allen authored the book, *Taipei: City of Displacements*, and the Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park is mentioned briefly. Allen writes, "the purpose of the park is clearly to commemorate the Chiang legacy," but later comments on the actual effect, "[it] seems somewhat at odds with this intent" (Allen, 2012, 152). He points to the comical and narcissistic effect of hundreds of copies of the same man standing around, admiring himself, as well as the collection diminishing the effect of each individual statue. It is therefore not argued in this project that the *effect* of the statue park on visitors is either positive or negative, but rather to examine how the rhetoric found in the park portrays Chiang. Allen visited the park, and did not especially study the information plaques, and could therefore have concluded that the effect was in fact comical, and not 'properly' honoring Chiang. Someone with a different relationship to the Nationalist Party, and perhaps a different connection to Chiang, could read the plaques in the park and find honor, not comedy. The placement of the park represents a similar notion that the interpretation could depend on the visitor and the visitor's prior knowledge and political affiliation.

The idea that *space* was important came, perhaps, from the Nationalist Party itself. The official retreat to Taiwan in 1949 was very much forced, as it was caused by the Nationalists losing the civil war, and represented a defeat for the party. The old spaces and physical places that were associated with Chiang Kai-shek and Nationalist Party history in China became a distant memory, and could no longer be visited because of the tense cross-strait political situation. Cities in Mainland China, which were in the former stronghold of the Nationalists, such as Nanjing and Chongqing, could no longer be reached and visited by the Nationalists

because of the relationship with the People's Republic of China (Taylor, 2009). The *creation* of spaces that were connected to their own memory was therefore important for the Nationalists to carve out a significant place in Taiwanese history. As mentioned in chapter 3, the Nationalists changed all of the street names in Taipei, as well as renaming buildings and sites formerly associated with the Japanese rule on Taiwan (Leitner & Kang, 1999). The Nationalists also demolished many Japanese buildings and monuments, presumably in an attempt at controlling more of the physical landscape of their new home (Lin, 2014). In the Chinese tradition, sites were only considered worthy of being called cultural heritage if the site was ancient, meaning five thousand years old or older (Taylor, 2005). Therefore, creating the image of being deeply rooted in the cultural heritage, the Nationalists attempted to create spaces appearing to be ancient.

Although the Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park does not represent an ancient heritage site, it can still be seen as an important space in the memory of Chiang Kai-shek. As stated by Foote and Azaryahu, “[remains of the past] are instrumental in rendering the version of history presented at and by the [memorial] site credible” (Foote & Azaryahu, 2007, 128). The only problem in Taiwan is that there are two large groups who disagree on which version of history is preferable, and therefore credible. Perhaps the placement of the Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park, along with the greater area of remembrance for the Chiang family has turned out to be a win-win situation for both narratives in Taiwan. The space in Cihu has allowed those who want to forget, to forget, and those who want to remember, to remember. There need not necessarily exist *one* version of history within a country, and since Taiwan has remained dedicated to democratic values in 1987, it would seem undemocratic to disallow the memory of Chiang Kai-shek to be displayed by those who wish to remember.

5.6 COUNTER-MEMORY IN VIRTUE

The Cultural Park of the Chiangs, and more specifically the Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park, can be seen as an attempt at creating and displaying a counter-memory in which the focus is not what Chiang Kai-shek and his son *did*, but *who they were*. As seen in Chapter 3 about Chiang Kai-shek, the Chiang personality cult was discussed and we saw how he is portrayed with nostalgia and reverence. In Chapter 4, we dove deeper into iconoclasm, and that the focus in the information plaques was on Chiang as a person, not on the artistic value of the statues. Nostalgia, reverence, and being honorable are all *virtues*, which are ascribed to

Chiang Kai-shek by the creators of the park. In this chapter the focus is how Chiang's placement in Cihu is based on beauty, as well as his role as educator and source of inspiration to the people seeing his statues. The area of Cihu is beautiful, and knowing it was chosen by Chiang himself proves that he was someone who appreciated beauty. The importance of space becomes apparent through reading the information plaques, as they describe the former locations of the statues with beauty, as well as educational and benevolent qualities. The Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park is also a space for this counter-memory of Chiang as a benign and beloved leader to live on and thrive.

The Chiangs are portrayed as beneficiaries for education, as caring deeply for the children, and as accelerators of progress in Taiwan. There is a great focus in the museums, and the information plaques in the statue park, on the many virtues connected with Chiang's person. The information plaques in Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park do not always use words describing virtue directly in reference to Chiang, but by painting a picture of the statues placed in very *beautiful* settings before coming to the park, Chiang almost becomes virtuous by proxy. One of the plaques read,

“Surrounded by an octagonal garden full of camellias, 120 meters of height, this statue was a place where trainees would sit, [smell the]¹⁹ flowers, and rest.”

(plaque #3).

The mention of beautiful flowers, the impressive height and how the spot had meaning to the visitors, brings out the virtuous qualities of the statue, and by proxy, its signified. There are many other plaques also detailing the beautiful surroundings of the statue in its original location, which creates a positive association of the statue when reading it. In plaque #28, there is almost admittance to this approach of focusing on the virtues, and it reads, “compared to [Chiang's] images on the wall and in the books, this statue leaves in children's mind a more friendly impression”. Therefore, instead of focus on what Chiang *did*, which the textbooks thoroughly cover, a visit to the Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park will allow you to think of how Chiang was as a person, or how some people wish to remember him.

¹⁹ In original, it states “sit, drink flowers, and rest” – upon crosschecking with the Chinese version, it became clear that what was meant was to “take in” or “enjoy the fragrance” of flowers, not the act of drinking.

Not only are the physical surroundings of the statues described as beautiful and impressive in the information plaques, but the statue in itself is also described as having an effect on those who see it. On one plaque, which was originally placed in a school, the image of Chiang as an inspiration and educator becomes apparent,

“The soothing aura of the statue can ease the impatience and impetuous mood of the teachers and students walking by, which helps their learning” (plaque #24).

This plaque not only boasts the inspirational aspect of merely *seeing* Chiang Kai-shek, but also that his presence in the form of a statue can turn a frown upside down for those who see it. It can be hard to take seriously, when such loaded words as *soothing aura* appear on the



Image 7 – A statue of Chiang with a group of children

information plaque accompanying a statue of a late authoritarian leader. Allen points to the comical effects of the statues, likening the former president’s smile to the Cheshire cat grin (Allen, 2012, pp. 154). The rhetoric of beauty and the narcissistic elements makes the statue park difficult to interpret in one universal way. The intent and the impact of the park do not necessarily coincide, but it is hard to argue that the plaques attempt to create a favorable view of Chiang. Moreover, a different plaque tells the story

of how the statue used to be posted in the center of an atrium garden, but that the statue was moved to the art classroom for students to paint, and so it could “play a role in education” (plaque #23). Due to this change in location it was seen as being able to function better at

conducting its virtues of inspiration and education. As seen in image 7, the depiction of Chiang with children also adds to the image of Chiang as an educator and a positive influence on the children of Taiwan.

The version of history found in the rhetoric of the Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park is in line with the old narrative in Taiwan. The descriptions of Chiang and the statues can be seen as a part of creating a *counter-memory*, due to them being an alternative to the slightly more popular understanding of Chiang as a dictator. Remembering Chiang as a virtuous and benevolent leader goes against the narrative describing him as the merciless dictator who ordered the attacks in the 2:28 Incident. One of the plaques reads,

“In flowering seasons in Baimi Road of a hundred hectometer with azaleas on both sides of it, you can see the pleasant looking, dignified, and outstanding [Chiang Kai-shek] statue in Chinese tunic suit standing in the road”

(plaque #21)

The nostalgia, discussed in chapter 3, as well as associating the former leader with beauty and grace is apparent in this information plaque. This description gives the impression that the mere sight of Chiang Kai-shek on the side of the road could bring some inspiration to its onlookers. The impressive measurement of space the location holds, as well as the beautiful rendition of flowers in season provides an unequivocal positive image of this statue and its referent, Chiang Kai-shek. The signified, the memory of Chiang Kai-Shek as presented in the form of information plaques, is closely tied with virtuous qualities of beauty, inspiration.

5.7 SUMMARY

The importance of space, and how this space is described and displayed in the Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park, has been the focus of this chapter. The theoretical concepts of *lieux de mémoire*, or sites of memory, and *counter-memory* are central to discussing how the statue park represents a space for remembering Chiang Kai-shek; furthermore, I have argued that the park represents an inclusive political space in which the partly unpopular memory of Chiang Kai-shek as an inspirational and benevolent leader is honored. The Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park was not created in a vacuum, but rather in the context of Cihu being a place of significance for the Chiang family and the Nationalist Party since before Chiang Kai-shek's

death. The greater area of remembrance for the Chiang family allows for the interpretation that the statue park was not only displaced from the capital and off the beaten path, but it was placed according to Cihu's significance to Chiang and his family. The statue park also portrays Chiang Kai-shek as a source of inspiration by describing the space at which the statues were originally placed with words and expressions denoting beauty and benevolence. The statue park can, through the reading of the information plaques, be seen as a space for reminiscing on many individual spaces where statues once stood and honored Chiang Kai-shek. The importance of space is apparent in the Nationalist Party's own policies, in the placement of the statue park in Cihu, as well as through a symbolic space of political inclusivity.

6. CONCLUSION

“Reinscribing the past [...] is a highly contentious, hegemonic process that raises questions about who has the authority to do the rewriting and on what grounds”

(James, 2005, 29)

The questions asked in the introductory chapter were regarding whether the Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park represents a place for Chiang Kai-shek’s memory to die or come to life, as well as what the importance of space in a changed political climate is. In order to attempt to find possible answers to these questions I have employed a qualitative approach of critical discourse analysis on rhetoric found in the statue park; additionally I have relied on existing scholarship as well as observations I made while visiting Taiwan. Throughout my thesis I have also used the concepts of iconoclasm and lieux de mémoire, and to a lesser degree narratives, nostalgia, semiotics and counter-memory.

The Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park features statues of Chiang Kai-shek, and through information plaques represents a narrative of the past. Due to the widespread interest in Chiang throughout his time in Mainland China and as president in Taiwan, the personality cult of Chiang Kai-shek has many contributors. The Taiwanese context after the end of martial law in 1987 was unique, due to the former colonizers and the colonized people being present even though the repressive regime of the Nationalist Party ended. The narrative that had previously been controlled by the Nationalists, spearheaded by Chiang Kai-shek while he was alive, was weakened after martial law ended. The narrative in Taiwan became split, and a view of Chiang as a dictator during the period of ‘the White Terror’ gained momentum in society. However, despite the growing criticism of Chiang and the Nationalist Party rule nostalgia towards Chiang Kai-shek could especially be found in the landscape in Taiwan. The rhetoric in the information plaques in Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park describes Chiang as a virtuous man. Chiang seems to be a symbolic representative for the old regime under martial law, and his image therefore needs protection in order not to allow the period before 1987 to be seen as unequivocally negative. The nostalgic sentiments found in the rhetoric of the statue park shows that the narrative in Taiwan is still up for debate. The positive portrayal of Chiang in the statue park rhetoric should not, however, be confused with the intent of the park being purely positive for all. Joseph Allen pointed out the narcissistic and humorous

aspects of the statue park, which represents one interpretation among many (Allen, 2012). Another representation, for someone who has a different relationship to the Nationalist Party or Chiang Kai-shek, could be filled with honor and nostalgia.

The expressed reason why the statue park was created was that the statues were works of art that deserved protection even though they were no longer wanted in their original locations. The iconoclasm that took place in Taiwan in this process was an alteration in the meaning of these statues instead of destroying them. The decision to protect the statues indicates that there was a portion of the population who did not want to see them destroyed, so a middle ground was to remove the statues but display them in the statue park in Cihu. However, contrary to what happened in Budapest after the fall of the Soviet Union, the statues displayed of Chiang Kai-shek were not presented with a clear disapproving rhetoric. The split narrative in Taiwan therefore becomes apparent through the rhetoric that goes against the view of Chiang as a dictator, a view more commonly seen in the capital of Taipei. The argument that the statues were artwork and therefore deserved protection is also negated through the rhetoric in the park; there is little focus on the artistic elements of the statues, such as material and creators. There is, however, a great focus on Chiang Kai-shek as a person. Chiang is described with a tinge of nostalgia, and he is represented in more positive terms than negative.

The memory of Chiang Kai-shek can therefore be seen, not only in the large collection of statues depicting him, but also in the rhetoric of the information plaques in the park. The statue park as a *lieu de mémoire* can be considered twofold, namely in the physical sense of being a space to visit, as well as the symbolic sense of allowing political disagreement. When oppressive regimes come to an end it is common for the pendulum to swing to the other side, so far so that the formerly oppressors become oppressed in the new system. This has not happened in Taiwan, and although the political system is polarized, the Nationalist Party and their main opponent, the Democratic Progressive Party, compete on the same democratic grounds now. The former rule of the Nationalist Party has been put under scrutiny, and Chiang is by many seen as a dictator. The Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park can therefore represent a counter-memory to the new memory in Taiwan. The park is also located in an area that is significant to the memory of Chiang Kai-shek and his family, with gravesites and museums. Due to this placement of the park I have also discussed whether or not the Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park is placed or displaced, and it is likely that the park can represent

both, depending on to whom you speak. The park is placed in terms of being located in the area of remembrance for th Chiangs, and the fact that the Cihu area was significant for them while they lived. However, it can also represent displacement due to the statues being removed from their original locations, and the fact that the statue park is located off the beaten path.



Image 8 – A statue of Chiang Kai-shek seated in military uniform

The Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park is only one small area on a large island, and cannot tell us the whole story about Chiang Kai-shek’s memory or the process of democratization. There are, however, some indications when reading the information plaques and seeing the placement of the park that this statue park represents something bigger than itself. The importance of allowing ‘unpopular’ opinions is essential to a liberal democracy, and this aspect becomes apparent in the Cihu Memorial Sculpture Park. More research can be done on the process of nations developing from authoritarianism to democracy on specifically the political inclusion of the old regime as well, a scope too broad for my project. Perhaps Taiwan has (accidentally) found an ingredient to a more successful transition into democracy. As Beverly James stated, regarding the statue park in Budapest after the Soviet regime ended, “the [statue park] implicitly endorses political pluralism” (James, 2005, 33). Similarly, the statue park in Taiwan might endorse a kind of political pluralism that allows for those who wish to remember to remember, and those who want to forget can forget.

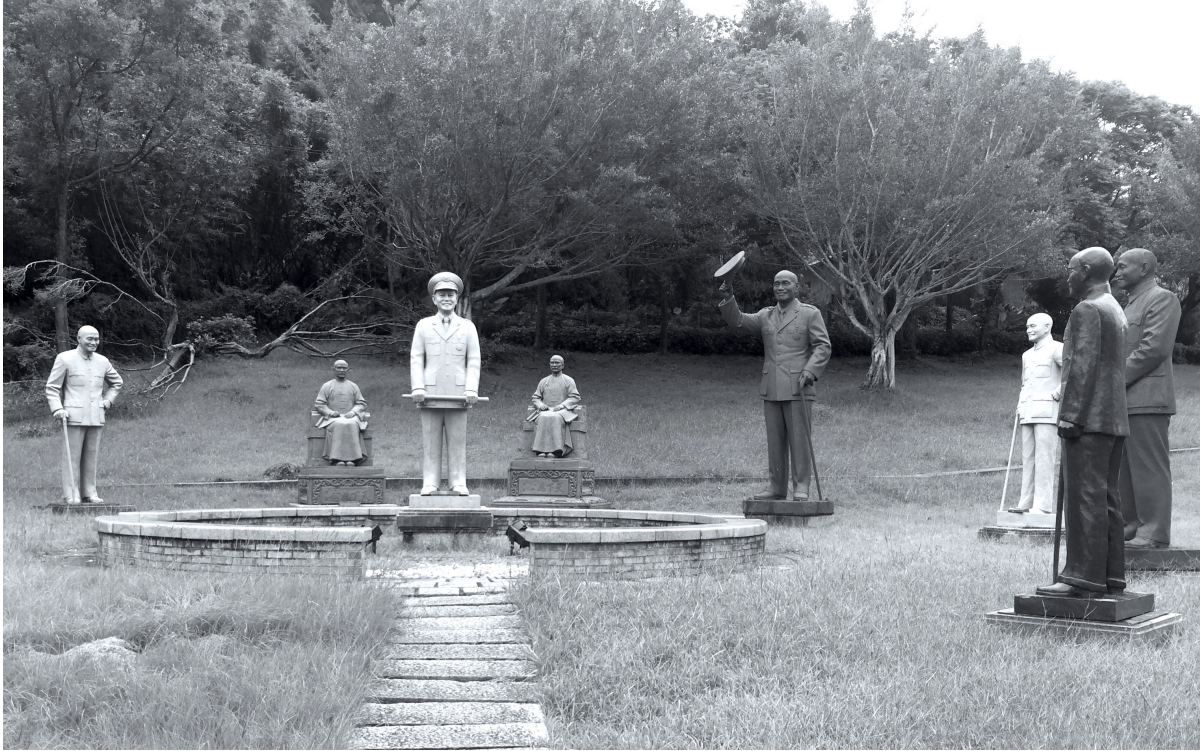


Image 9 – Statues of Chiang Kai-shek surrounding a statue of Chiang Kai-shek

The man saluted himself as the rest of the statues basked in the glory of the past. It did not seem to matter much, what this past actually was, as long as they were allowed to bask. I took one last look back at the park, which in the sunshine seemed a more inviting place than it had in the drizzling rain. The park remembers the Generalissimo, the former dictator, the Father of the Nation, the authoritarian ruler, Chiang Kai-shek.

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APPENDIX

Time Magazine covers featuring Chiang Kai-shek:

4 April 1927

26 October 1931 – with Soong Mei-liang

11 December 1933

24 February 1936 – With Stalin, Hirohito, and Pu Yi

9 November 1936

3 January 1938 – with Soong Mei-liang

1 June 1942

3 September 1945

6 December 1948

18 April 1955