

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **THE REASONS FOR THE FORMATION OF THE TAIGI LITERATURE DEBATES – THE RISING OF THE TAIGI LITERATURE MOVEMENT**

#### **Preface**

In the Japanese colonial period, the Taiwanese vernacular literature, or the Taiwanese language and literature debates, which sought literary language status for Taigi, were the forerunners of the Taigi literature movement. Therefore I start by examining the developments in this era in the first section. I analyze the assertions of members of opposition factions of the debate and the supporting factions for the Taiwanese vernacular literature debates. Advocators like Huang Cheng-Chong, Jhang Wo-Jyun etc, were supporting Chinese colloquial writing. They had strong Chinese affiliations and were influenced by the ‘National language policy’ of the Japanese colonial rulers. They regarded the Taiwanese language as coarse, abnormal and informal low language. Lian Wun-Cing, Huang Shih-Hui etc, were advocators of Taiwanese colloquial writing, who wanted to write popular literature using the Taiwanese language, to promote Taiwanese as a literary language, and enable it to achieve the status of high language.

The second section refers to the dark period of Taigi development in the post-war era. This section is divided to two parts. In the first part, I explore how the KMT regime established the monopolized Mandarin in the post-war era. In the second part, I explore how the KMT regime suppressed native languages through education, mass media and law. The KMT regime totally controlled the power of Taiwan language through implementation of the ‘National language policy’. Mandarin became the

formal high language in the public area by means of political manipulation. All native languages were oppressed and became informal low language.

The third section will describe the development and striving for Taigi writing in the post-war era. I explore early forms of Taigi poems, via the writers of Lin Zong-Yuan, Siangyang and so on, then Taiwanese vernacular literature, Taiwan literature and the Taigi literature.<sup>1</sup> Whether we were referring to Lin Zong-Yuan writing Taigi poems in 1970s or Mandarin writers switched to literature writing in Taigi in 1980s, their ambition was to write beautiful works of literature in their mother tongue. They tried to seek the status of literary language for Taigi, which meant to promote Taigi as a high language and script.

## 2.1 Historical origins in the Japanese colonial period

In the 1920s, a new literature movement brought Chinese colloquial writing to Taiwan in place of classical Han writing. Because the official Chinese language was not a popular language in Taiwan, Chinese colloquial writing was not suitable to ‘the Unification of speech and writing’ in Taiwanese society. Hence there was an appeal to match the spirit of written language with spoken language, which meant using Taiwanese language to write down popular literature.

Therefore debates developed between Chinese colloquial writing and Taiwanese colloquial writing. This thesis does not explore the whole occurrence of debates, only analyzes the assertions of the two factions by their representative advocators.

The advocators of Chinese colloquial writing were Huang Cheng-Cong, Jhang Wo-Jyun and so on. The advocators of Taiwanese colloquial writing were Lian Wun-Cing, Lai He, Huang Shih-Hui, Guo Ciu-Sheng, Jheng Kun-Wu and Cai Pei-Huo and so on. The debates between the faction of Chinese colloquial writing and

the faction of Taiwanese colloquial writing achieved certain compromise afterwards by agreeing to use Taiwanese. Yet the achievement of the debates was too late for the language movement because subsequently the Japanese forbade the publishing of Han literature.

### 2.1.1 The advocators of Chinese colloquial writing

In the Japanese colonial period, the advocators of Chinese colloquial writing were Huang Cheng-Cong, Jhang Wo-Jyun and so on. Huang (1923) had strong Chinese affiliations. He thought Taiwanese people could communicate with Chinese culture through Chinese colloquial writing. Huang opposed Taiwanese native language having its own colloquial writing because he thought the territory was too small. He thought Taiwan was not an independent nation, and thus they had no power to support Taiwanese colloquial writing. Hence, he encouraged Taiwanese to learn Chinese colloquial writing as it would be convenient for them if they had contact with China in their daily lives. Although Taiwan was small, Taiwanese had Chinese spirit. (Cited from Li 1979) In the Japanese colonial period, Taiwanese became a low language by political manipulation. Huang Cheng-Cong had no confidence in the weak Taiwan nation. He thought Taiwan was a small place and that no one would support Taiwanese writing. He thought the best thing to do was to learn only the Chinese colloquial writing of the motherland. He was the representative of the elites who despised their own native language.

Another advocator of Chinese colloquial writing was Jhang Wo-Jyun. He studied in Beijing, China. He favored the reform of Taiwanese local dialect by Chinese colloquial writing. Jhang (1925) stated that there were two key points in the new literature movement. One was the construction of a vernacular literature. The other

was the reform of the Taiwanese language. In his article, he also stated that most Taiwanese native language had no script, because it was a low class and illogical language. Hence Taiwanese native language in his view had no literary value and it must rely on the Chinese national language to reform the Taiwanese local dialect. He wished to unify Taiwanese language under the Chinese language. (Cited from Li 1979)

In my opinion, Jhang Wo-Jyun wanted to use the Chinese vernacular to reform the Taiwanese language. He thought Taiwanese was a kind of low language and script. It appears that he ignored the spirit of colloquial writing in the Unification of speech and writing. Chinese colloquial writing was as difficult as classical Chinese to Taiwanese, because Taiwanese couldn't speak the Chinese official language at that time.

### 2.1.2 The advocators of Taiwanese colloquial writing

The following six advocators of Taiwanese colloquial writing favored Taiwanese vernacular literature becoming a literary language. They wanted Taiwanese vernacular literature to become a national language, and they wanted a popular literature in the Unification of speech and writing. Firstly, I'd like to discuss Lian Wun-Cing. From the following data of Lu (1990) and Lin (1997), I infer that Lian Wun-Cing hoped that Taiwanese language would become a national language and be promoted to be a superior global language. Lian also stressed that the Taiwanese language was the living language of Taiwanese, which should be protected and maintained. Lian Wun-Cing strived to make Taiwan vernacular language a high language and script. Lian (1924) stated, "The quality of a lingual society is to reject the superiority complexes of other national languages on the one hand, and in the meanwhile it

should protect its own national independent spirit and national language. It should improve its national language and surmount other national languages and obtain a superiority complex worldwide.”(Cited from Lu 1999: 50). Lian (1924) proposed, “Language was born from the daily life. It does not fall down from the heaven, or come from foreign countries.” (Cited from Lin 1997: 32) He believed that “In spite of the economic or political situation, Taiwanese need the Taiwanese vernacular language for their social life.”(Cited from Lin 1997: 32)

Next, there was a writer whose name was Lai He. He is also known as ‘the Father of Taiwan literature’. On the basis of Syu (1987), I observe that Lai He favored the Unification of speech and writing through ‘tongue tip and pen tip’. This meant using Taiwanese vernacular language to write Taiwan literature, and creating popular literature, instead of using Chinese vernacular literature. Actually, this was the way Lai He was seeking literary language for Taigi. Lai (1926) put forward the following viewpoint: “1. The purpose of the new movement is an agreement of ‘tongue tip and pen tip. 2. Old literature belongs to the elite and not the ordinary people. New literature belongs to the ordinary people, and this is popular literature.”(Cited from Hu 1989: 77)

The third advocator of Taiwanese colloquial writing was Huang Shih-Hui. Huang (1930) persuaded writers to produce compositions, poems, novels and songs using Taiwanese vernacular language. He hoped that Taiwan literature written in the Taiwanese vernacular language, could be accepted by ordinary people and that Taigi could become a formal language and script. From the data of Lu (1997), I have inferred that Huang expected Taigi to become a high language and script. “According to the article quoted by Liao Han-Chen, the reason why Huang Shih-Hui selected

Taiwanese homeland language as a literary language was that classical Chinese belonged to aristocrats and Chinese colloquial writing also belonged to aristocrats. It didn't communicate with ordinary people who didn't have deep learning". (Lu 1997: 227) On the other hand, from the data from Tan (2001), we can observe that Huang Shih-Hui expected Taiwanese could break away from the domination of Mandarin and Japanese and an independent Taiwanese vernacular language and literature could be established. Huang Shih-Hui thought that politically or ethnically, Taiwanese should separate from China and Japan, and get rid of the control of foreign colonial regimes and establish a suitable independent language and culture. Huang (1931) stated, "Taiwan is a special place. In the relationship of politics, Mandarin cannot dominate Taiwanese. In the ethnic relationship, Japanese national language cannot dominate Taiwanese."(Cited from Tan 2001: 56)

The fourth one was Guo Ciu-Sheng. Guo (1931) agreed with the viewpoint of Huang Shih-Hui. He favored the viewpoint that the Taiwanese language could absorb the etymology of any language. That was, he believed that the aim was to "Create more excellent Taiwanese! Create the useful literature tool for the Taiwanese language." Guo also said, "Even if the etymology is from classical Chinese, Chinese colloquial writing, Japanese or international language, if it can promote Taiwanese, it can be digested by Taiwanese and become an elegant Taiwanese language. The current Taiwanese language could find its etymology from". (Chen 1996:457) From Chen's data, I found that Guo Ciu-Sheng agreed that Taiwanese has absorbed terms from other languages. He wanted to create an excellent Taiwanese language. He wanted to write literature in Taiwanese, and strove to make Taiwanese a literary language and to become a high language.

Finally, I'd like to introduce Jhen Kun-Wu. Jhen Kun-Wu was also an elite who confirmed the existence of a Taiwanese vernacular language and literature. Jhen (1932) mentioned that Chinese colloquial writing was not Taiwanese colloquial writing. For Taiwanese colloquial writing, they tried to write down spoken Taiwanese, which was the popular language used in the daily life in Taiwanese society. Also he thought Taiwanese could not be expressed perfectly by Han characters. Hence, he encouraged the use of Romanized writing for homeland literature creation. (Lu 1999) Jhen also said, "Taiwanese unique vernacular poems and beautiful songs could escape the disdainful vision for a few hundred years. Isn't it the dream of our fellows to enter world literature?" (Lu 1999: 37) From Lu's data, I can infer that Jhen Kun-Wu expected that in the future Taiwanese literature could enter world literature stage and give glory to Taiwan. His expectation was that Taiwanese could become a literary language, which meant it would be a high language.

Apart from these five supporters of Taiwanese colloquial writing movement mentioned above, there was also a special supporter of the Romanization of colloquial writing whose name was Cai Pei-Huo. Cai (1925) favored simple Peh-oe-ji (church Romanization) to teach people new thought, and to cultivate a new culture. He stated that Taiwanese lacked knowledge like famine. If Taiwanese knew Romanization, they would learn knowledge and this would help the education of Taiwanese society. Therefore Taiwanese society would make great progress. (Jhang 2000) In my opinion, Peh-oe-ji was a kind of Taigi script, which was systematized and also accorded with the agreement of written language and spoken language in new literature. In fact, it could be a style of high language and script. Taiwanese society, however, was accustomed to the culture of using Han characters for writing and Peh-oe-ji was only used in the Christian church. It was not popular throughout the whole society, and it

did not become a formal script. Finally, the social movement of Romanization favored by Cai Pei-Huo was suppressed by the Japanese colonial regime and in addition the Taiwan Culture Association didn't support his movement. Thus Peh-oe-ji didn't spread far and wide.

## 2.2 The dark era of post-war Taigi development

In the Japanese colonial period, Taiwanese Han characters were prohibited from use in the process of Japanization movement<sup>2</sup>. Thus the aims of the Taiwanese language and literature movement were frustrated. Taigi was also suppressed by the KMT regime in the post-war era and thus another dark period ensued. Right after WWII, or even to the beginning of KMT occupation, Taiwanese were enthusiastic to learn the 'National language' in their homeland or overseas. (Hsu 1991) The first step of Taiwan occupation for KMT government was promoting 'national language'. Its purpose was to complete the process of Sinization<sup>3</sup> of the control of politics and culture. Moreover, when the KMT government lost its regime in China and evacuated to Taiwan the spread of Chinese culture through the 'National language' movement became more imperative. (Huang 2003a&b) The promotion of the 'National language' movement caused a crisis of the existence of Taigi. As a result, the fate of the Taiwanese native language was to suffer the suppression of the 'National language' policy from the Japanese colonial times to the Chinese KMT era. The first part of this section would explore how the KMT regime established Mandarin as the official language in the authoritarian in the post-war era. The second part will explore how the KMT regime suppressed native languages through education, mass media and so on.

### 2.2.1 Authoritarian establishment of Mandarin

The KMT government implemented the 'National Language Policy' in the



post-war era. Consequently, Mandarin became a formal high language in the public arena due to political manipulation. From the data from Huang (Huang 2003a&b), Hsu (Hsu 1991) and Li (2003a), I have observed that the KMT government intended to implement the ‘National Language Policy’ in Taiwan before their official occupation, which replaced Japanese colonial rule in Taiwan. After the end of WWII in 1944, the KMT government started to occupy Taiwan. It not only organized the ‘Committee of Taiwan Investigation’ in charge of preparatory work, but also opened training classes for administration officers. The National Languages Committee of the Educational Ministry also participated in the preparatory work of the Taiwan Investigation Committee and advised the training class about administration officers. (Huang 2003a) In the outline of the Taiwan Occupation Plan, language was a focal point: for example, the promotion of national language planning and the prohibition of Japanese newspapers and magazines. (Hsu 1991) The implementation of the ‘National Language Policy’ was matched with the performance mission of the ‘Taiwan Province Administration Commanding Officer Office’. The ‘Taiwan Province Administration Commanding Officer Office’ was copied from the Japanese colonial viceroy system, which was different from other provincial systems in China. This organization controlled the power of administration, legislation, judicature, military and so on. (Li 2003a)

On Sep. 2, 1945, Chen Yi, the commanding officer of Taiwan Province Administration Commanding Officer Office took over Taiwan, acquiesced to an interview in the press of *Da Gong Bao* and said, “After arriving on Taiwan, the first thing for me to do is to instruct Taiwanese in Mandarin both spoken and written language for the purpose of understanding the motherland’s culture. It is supposed to be completed in four years.” After arriving on Taiwan, on Feb. 16, 1946, Chen Yi

made a speech on the press of *Taiwan Sin Sheng Bao*, he said, “Promoting national language should be implemented with rigorous measure for efficiency.” (Cited from Hsu 1991:163) At a time when the national language wasn’t promoted by the KMT government in China, Taiwan was forced to implement a ‘National Language Policy’. I stipulated that Chen Yi intended to teach Taiwanese people using the Chinese Mandarin language. Chen Yi tried to get rid of the influence of Japanization by using Mandarin by rigidly promoting and enforcing the ‘National Language Policy’ in Taiwan. From this point of view, we could understand the ambition of Chen Yi to reach the goal of Mandarin popularity in a certain time.

From the KMT policy rules of Chinese culture related to the promotion of national language, we could understand the intentions of the KMT government regarding assimilation. The provision of the fifth article of the *National Language Movement Outline* stated that: “The phonetic alphabet Bopomo should be used to communicate with every ethnic group and to aid the understanding of Chinese culture.” (Cited from Huang 2003a: 329) Huang thought that although the ‘National Language’ movement was about learning the ‘National Language’ it was also a kind of thought education. The intention was for Taiwanese to receive the ideology of the Chinese nation. (Huang 2003a) I doubt that Taiwanese could accept the Chinese culture and thought easily from Japanese cultural influence over fifty years although Taiwanese people in all innocence welcomed the rule of motherland. Unfortunately what the thought education they received from KMT government was the arrogant attitude from the conquering KMT ruler. As a result, the brutal 228 Incident happened in 1947, less than two years after KMT government ruled Taiwan. The KMT government thought the incident was the result of Japanese ‘slavery’, so it carried out its national language policy more rigidly. (Hsu 1991)

The KMT government withdrew its troops from China to Taiwan at the end of 1949. It continued to implement the system set forth by the Commanding Officer Office. At that time, the predominant and executive organization of the 'National Language' movement still belonged to the 'Taiwan Province National Languages Committee' of the Taiwan Provincial government. In order to maintain a legal regime, the KMT government needed to establish monopolized Mandarin, so it used the educational system, mass media and ordinances to control the predominant status of Taiwan languages. On Dec. 10, 1954, the Taiwan Provincial government ordered local administrators of every organization and county and city government to take lessons in the national language for the populace model. On Jan. 18 1959, the Ministry of Education prohibited Taigi explanations in the showing of Mandarin films. All the above ordinances were for national language promotion. (Huang 2003b)

The KMT government didn't slacken the 'National Language Policy' in the schools. Also it oppressed Taiwanese seriously when the Taiwanese arose in protest. The reasons for oppression were stated by the government as being 'harming governmental order' or 'national reunification' and so on. July 10, 1965, Taiwan Province ordered all the schools in every county and city to carry out the request of 'Implementing Project for Promoting National Language'. It stated three points: 1. Because of the revival of dialects, the promotion of the national language was affected so this situation must be rectified. 2. A national language, Mandarin, is necessary, otherwise it would hurt the communication between country fellow and the implementation of government order. 3. If we could not have a national language, it would affect the national reunion. (Huang 1995) According to Huang (1995), I infer that the KMT government constructed the authoritarian Mandarin is for establishing

the value of Chinese society and Chinese culture. This becomes the final target of the KMT government to assimilate Taiwanese languages and to build up the R.O.C. nation.

### 2.2.2 The oppression of native languages

Under the appeal of Chinese nationalism, the KMT government stressed the clearance of all dialects just for Mandarin learning and the value of Chinese culture. From the proceedings of constructing authoritarian Mandarin, we can observe clearly that the purpose of the KMT government was to establish a Chinese society of Mandarin language, the value of Chinese culture and R.O.C. nation. For building up the predominant rule, KMT government dispelled not only Japanese but also Taiwanese native languages. The KMT used the ‘national language’ to replace the status of Japanese for removing Japanese influence in Taiwan society. Further, it wanted to clear up Taiwanese native languages, especially the majority language Taiwanese. Huang (1995: 104-105) said, “The Purpose of The National Language Movement was for dispelling Japanese at the beginning. Hence it was the best way to use the power of Taigi to get rid of Japanese out of Taiwanese society. After removing Japanese, its purpose became to clear up dialects.” (Dialects here mean Taiwanese native languages especially Taigi.) It was true statement at that time between 1950s and 1980s.

As a result, native language became inferior and informal low language in the school and every public area because of oppression and restriction. In the days of martial law, dialects were prohibited in the school. If students spoke dialects, they would be punished by the way of fines or insults. Huang (1995) stated that all Taiwanese native languages were treated as illegal language and were oppressed

because of the promotion of national language policy. There was no mother tongue's class for children in the elementary school. It also forbade children to use their mother tongue in the school. The period of prohibition of the mother tongue was from 1950 to 1987. In all public areas, it stressed Mandarin speaking. The oppression of native languages caused the constriction of the living space of native languages. On October 5, 1976, provincial government ordered all organizations and schools in every county and city, and all representative organizations to use Mandarin. The reason was 'for communicating emotion and for model of populace'. In February 1979, the head of the department of education in Taiwan province ordered all subordinated schools in every county and city to speak Mandarin at meetings. It also requested candidates in election of local or central officers to speak Mandarin. (Huang 1995) Of course, the church was under control too.

Although there were not so many Christians in Taiwan, the KMT government dared not ignore church power. The Romanized bible had been in Taiwan over hundred fifty years. Most of the bibles were written in native language. Its existence was a challenge for the 'National Language' policy of KMT government. As a result, the KMT government couldn't permit it to continue. On October 9, 1957, Taiwan province ordered the government of every county and city to prohibit Romanized bibles because this impeded the promotion of the national language policy. This governmental order also requested missionaries to switch to Mandarin when preaching. On Feb. 15, 1958, the Taiwan province ordered the government of every county and city to eliminate Romanized bibles and use Mandarin bibles within three years. (Huang 1995) In addition, the public arena of electronic mass media was more seriously controlled.

After 1960, television was getting popular. Mandarin via television programs affects every family directly. It hurt the native languages very much. Under the predominance of the 'national language' policy, the KMT government enacted the law of broadcast and television to restrict the broadcasting time of television programs. It caused the minority of Taiwanese native languages and culture to decline sharply. After the first TV station broadcasted in 1962, premiere time was occupied by over 50% of Taigi programs. On December 1, 1972, the Ministry of Education restricted the broadcasting time of dialects and regulated the order 'no more than one hour every day every TV station for Minnanyu programs.' On January 8, 1976, the Administrative Yuan announced 'The Law of Broadcast and Television', which stated that 'Domestic broadcasts should be based on Mandarin, and the use of dialects should be decreased year by year.' (Cited from Ang1995b: 19)

With the rise of democratization in Taiwan in the 1980s, the performance of national language policy was eased off. Hence native languages could survive easily. The authoritarian system which KMT government constructed for half a century in Taiwan couldn't destroy Taiwanese during that time; however, it will take time to change the brain washed ideology. Since democratization in Taiwan society, the language policy has loosened. The 'The Language and Script Law'<sup>4</sup>, which the government tried to enact in 1985 was cancelled because of the resistance of public opinion. On August 20, 1987, the educational office of Taiwan province ordered the cancellation of the penalization of school children for speaking Taigi. On July 14, 1993, the Legislative Yuan crossed off the 20<sup>th</sup> article of 'The Law of Broadcast and Television', which was related to the language restriction of TV stations and broadcasts. (Cited from Huang 1995)

## 2.3 The development and search for a Taigi script in the post-war era

After democratization occurred in Taiwanese society in the 1980s, many social movements developed. In addition, the national language policy was eased off, hence it became easier for native languages to survive. Under these circumstances, Taigi literature became more and more popular. From the concealment of Taigi poems in the 1970s to the development of vernacular literature using Mandarin mixed with Taigi terms or dialogue in the 1980s all led to the increasing development of Taiwan literature in addition to Chinese literature. This was due to literature produced in Taigi script and also some Mandarin writers switched to Taigi literature writing. Finally a Taigi literature movement was formed. In my opinion, the process of Taigi literature movement development in 1980s was different from the Taiwanese vernacular language and literature movement in 1930s, because the latter developed a theoretical framework first, but the former created literature works first and theory later. Taigi poems that appeared in the early period of 1970s could be the best illustration.

### 2.3.1 Early period of Taigi literature: Taigi poem

Lin Zong-Yuan and Siang Yang were two writers of Taigi literature in the early post war period. This was forty years after the Taiwanese homeland movement in the 1930s during the Japanese colonial period. Their writing of Taigi poems was only to express their feelings using their mother tongue, and not for the goal of trying to expand the Taiwanese homeland language and literature movement. The writing motivation of Lin Zong-Yuan was different from that of Lai He and Huang Shih-Hui, who hoped to develop Taiwanese as a literary language. His motivation stemmed from the ideas of poems, rhymes and expression of emotion and trying to attain integrity and smoothness. (Lin 1997) According to the description of the young writer Siangyang, he wrote Taigi poems early in January 1976 in order to memorialize his

sick father. He thought that he would use “the spoken language of his father to explore the life of his father”. (Siangyang 2002: 298) These two writers from different generations were engaged in literary creations using Taigi script during the time of the Mandarin-only policy in the martial law period. Taigi had begun its journey to seek its literary language status in the post war era.

Lin Zong-Yuan started writing Taigi poems in the 1960s'. He joined the *Li Poetry* society in 1964. He received the ‘Wu Jhuo-Liu’ modern poetry prize in 1976, and founded the Taigi magazine *Han-chi poem publication* in 1991. He started to write poems mixed Taigi with Mandarin in the beginning of the 1970s, and continued use Taigi script to write many poems in the mid-1970s. Up to the present he has continued to insist on writing poems in Taigi script. (Siangyang 1993) Lin Zong-Yuan realized the differences among Mandarin, classical Chinese and Taiwanese languages. He intended to utilize them as part of Taigi writing. Therefore he said, “I intend to integrate Mandarin, classical Chinese and spoken Taiwanese. I want to promote, embellish and enrich Taigi.” (Lin 1988: 11-12) He aimed to construct a Taigi literary language through his writing.

Although he had high expectations for Taigi literature, the Taigi script still lacked standardization. Hence in the preface of “Meditation and Introspection (2)” Lin (1988:12) made the following appeal, stating: “We had better establish a brisk Taigi script system in our generation. It is possible to integrate the culture of the mother tongue and create phonetic symbols. Then we can write down our real literature using this writing combined with Han characters and a Romanized script.”<sup>5</sup> (Lin 1988:12)

Actually Lin Zong-Yuan had his opinions about the language choice for Taiwan



literature in the early period. When he joined the *Li Poetry* society, he discussed this issue with another member of the organization named Chen Cian-Wu and said, “Taiwan literature should adopt the Taiwanese script to write it down.” (Lu 1995: 364) Lin Zong-Yuan was asked why he didn’t use Mandarin in his writing when Robert L. Cheng edited his selected works of Taigi poems in 1988. Lin Zong-Yuan retorted, “Taiwanese writers would like to destroy their own language and use Mandarin to create works. How could they have the Taiwanese spirit?” (Cheng 1990b: 214) Lin thought Taiwan literature should be written in Taiwanese language to develop the Taiwanese spirit.<sup>6</sup> I believe that the insistence of Lin Zong-Yuan to use Taigi as a literary language is an attempt to enable Taigi as a high language and script.

Another young writer Siangyang, started to write Taigi poems in January 1976. He wrote an article called “Family tree: Blood kin article” which was labeled a ‘dialect poem’ when published in the magazine *Li*, a poetry publication in April 1976. After this he published other Taigi poems in *Li* and *Taiwan Literature*. He received the ‘Wu Jhuo-Liu’ modern poetry prize in 1978. Siangyang collected his Taigi poetry creations in a book named *Songs of the Land*, and in the end of the book he stated, “There were totally thirty-six poems. Although it was rough, it expressed my love to this land and people, which bore me, reared me and fostered me. It also contained my expectation for this land and people to rebuild their dignity and make long progress.” (Siangyang 1993: 138) Siangyang wrote emotional poems and it became possible to see that Taigi could become a literary language. Siang and Lin’s Taigi poems broke the taboo of the Mandarin-only policy, which affected the subsequent development of Taigi literature.

Although there were few Taigi poems created in the 1970s, the few that were

written moved peoples' hearts. Finally, there was a symposium of Taigi poetry entitled 'Outlook of Taiwan Poetry Literature' held by *Li Poetry* society in 1978. This symposium was the beginning of efforts to enable Taigi to become a literary language in the post-war era. Unfortunately many of the writers still had inferiority complexes because of the Mandarin-only policy. Taigi poems were treated as 'dialect poems', which were not suitable to be put with Mandarin poems. "If a poem written in totally in Taigi script, it would be despised." (Lin 1997: 23) Young writer Siangyang felt himself inferior at that time. He said, "Under the tradition of Mandarin writing in whole literature community, the performance of a few writers in the creation works of dialect poem is futile." (Siangyang 1993: 137) That Siangyang felt useless in Taigi writing reflected the predominance of Mandarin as high script and the dilemma of Taigi literature as a low script.

Actually the colonized country like Haiti in Caribbean Sea had the same situation as Taiwan. The users of low language despised their own language. Valdman (1968) mentioned that Creole was a mixed language of French, which was spoken by 90% of population. It became a clear trend that Creole became a national language. There were some Haitian elites who considered that speaking Creole was a depravity for French as it was an ill-formed and immature language. Thus they denied the status of this language. Some advocated destroying it by teaching French only in school and they promoted a literacy movement in French. (Fishman 1968)

### 2.3.2 Taiwanese vernacular literature

In spite of the exploration of Taigi poetry by Lin Zong-Yuan and Siangyang in the 1970s, there were some writers who tried to use Taigi in Mandarin novels. They added Taigi terms or dialogue when they created Mandarin literature, thus they helped

form a Taiwanese vernacular literature. This type of use had never been appeared in the Taiwanese vernacular language and literature in the Japanese colonial period. The creation of Taiwanese vernacular literature could be traced back to *Taiwan Literature* magazine, founded by Wu Zuo-Liu and *Li Poetry* magazine founded by Lin Heng-Tai and Jhao Tian-Yi in 1964. Many native writers used the spirit of vernacular literature to describe Taiwanese reality, but the literature community didn't pay attention to vernacular literature under the political situation, which was predominated by the Chinese values viewpoint. (Yie 2000) The international status of Taiwan became worse in the 1970s and this influenced the domestic political situation. At this time, the status of vernacular literature was increasing because this kind of literature used a realistic style and reflected the voice of Taiwanese society. Three typical writers of vernacular literature were: Yang Cing-Cu, Wang Tuo and Song Ze-Lai. They invented the novel based on workers, farmers and fishermen. (Lan 1992)

Vernacular literature subsequently became more popular and thus it threatened the mainstream Chinese viewpoint. Finally, it set off debates about vernacular literature in 1977. Mainstream thought considered vernacular literature to be egocentric local literature or separatist literature. They even thought vernacular literature was a kind of 'literature of the working, farming and military classes', which could be used as a weapon of Chinese communist unification. At last, the KMT officials, Wang Sheng, Cu Song-Ciu and so on allowed vernacular literature to develop. Their reasons were given as 'homeland solidarity' and to help 'Chinese literature developments'. (Yie 2000) From then on, Taigi was included as part of Mandarin literature. Some Mandarin writers switched to full Taigi writing afterwards. In my opinion, Taiwanese vernacular literature is only an experimental works for Taigi literature.

After the rise of Taiwanese nationalism, in the 1980s, there were debates in the Taiwanese literature camp about orientation. In the opinion of those writers with Chinese viewpoint value, Taiwan literature was part of Chinese literature. They called literature in Taiwan as 'Chinese literature in Taiwan'. In the opinion of those writers with Taiwanese viewpoint value, Taiwanese literature was independent from Chinese literature. They directly called it 'Taiwan literature' and the name was finally rectified. The delimitation of Taiwan literature by nationalism, however, couldn't be satisfied with the appeal of independence of Taiwan literature. Furthermore, the advocates appealed for an independent literary language for Taiwan literature. They asked for the use of a native language instead of Mandarin in writing Taiwan literature. This was the beginning of the movement to make Taigi into a literary language. Lin (1987) said, "If a writer creates his work only in the mother tongue of other people, he cannot surpass the native speaker's creative works. Then his creation belongs to the colony of literature forever. If we always use Mandarin to create our works, our achievements will be regarded as inferior products. They will become the accessories of Chinese arts. In my opinion, it would be thoughtful to express native arts in the mother tongue." (Cited from Lin1997: 45) I agree with Lin's opinion and thought that only the Taiwanese native language can express the real spirit of Taiwan in the literary works.

### 2.3.3 Exploration of Taigi literature

Taiwanese was treated as a symbol of Taiwan ideology in the 1980s. At that time, many Mandarin works of literature were filled with Taigi vocabulary. Dialogue in these novels was based on Taigi and thus Taigi became a literary language. Some native writers switched from writing in Mandarin to creating literary works in Taigi

language, such as the novelist Song Ze-Lai, and the poets Lin Yang-Min and Huang Jing-Lian and so on.

Song Ze-Lai was a writer of vernacular literature. He published a poetry anthology entitled *Canticle of Formosa* in 1983. The first part of the book entitled “If You Have Taiwan in Your Heart”, was entirely written in Taigi using Han characters. Song (1987) mentioned the importance of the Taigi script and encouraged writing literary works in Taigi in order to carry out the dream of creating a Taigi script. This shows Song Ze-Lai’s ambition to seek literary language status for Taigi. Here we can realize his intention of promoting Taigi as a high language and script. In 1986, Song and some young native writers founded the magazine ‘Taiwan New Culture’. The assertions of Song regarding Taigi script standardization will be introduced in more detail in chapter four.

Another advocator of Taigi literature was Lin Yang-Min. He started to create works using Taigi writing in 1983. He favored the Taigi literature movement. He was also dedicated to the construction of a literary theory of Taigi. He was one of the Taigi writers who had switched from Mandarin writing. Lin was not only dedicated to writing works in Taigi, and theoretical development, but also to promoting the Taigi literature movement. (Lin 2001) In July 1987, he wrote a poem named “Don’t Abandon Taiwan”, published in the *Independent Evening Newspaper*. This poem was used in an elementary school textbook. Lin created some other literary works in Taigi like *Reborn Lily of Taiwanese*, *Rooting Taigi culture*, *Taigi poetry for sixty years*, *Language Culture and National Country*, *Essay on the Taigi Literature Movement*, *Lin Yang-Min Taiwanese Literature Anthology* and so on. The assertions of Lin regarding the Taigi script are described further in chapter three.

There was one more advocator named Huang Jing-Lian. He started to write Taigi poems in 1985. As he previously wrote in Mandarin, we can say that the creation of Taigi literature was his second literary life. Huang (1987) was his representative Taigi poem of his early Taigi period. He learned classical Taigi from 1985 to 1990, which was a period of trial literary creation for him and he subsequently joined the Taigi literature movement in 1990. (Syu 2005)

After martial law was lifted in July 1987, more native Mandarin writers became interested in creating works of Taigi literature, for example, the native Mandarin writer Lin Chen-Mo who switched to creating Taigi poetry in the middle of the 1980s. He said. “After being tolerant for three to four hundred years, Taiwanese have become the host of this land. They don’t feel inferior like cheap sweet potato. Sweet potato already gave out the fragrance.” (Lin 2002: 11) The sweet potato here means Taigi literature. He worked very hard in support of Taigi literary creations at the end of the 1980s. He published his literary creation titled *Taigi Poem Special Album for Lin Chen-Mo in Taiwan Literature* at the beginning of 1990. (Lin 2002) There was another writer A.D.Sakabulajo who went by the pen name of Cheng Hui-Ying. He taught at Asia University in Japan. His Taigi works have included the thesis of *The thinking Foundation of Taiwan Language*, the poetry album *Lonely Eagle* and so on. (Lin 1998a) Another writer was Li Khin-hoan, who was an advocator of the Taiwan nation. He was a poet too and had a PHD degree in linguistics from Hawaii University in the USA. His early poetry creations were published in *Taiwan Literature* Volume 107. (Li 2001)

Apart from domestic writers, there were also some overseas writers like Hu

Min-Siang, Chen Lei etc. They loved their motherland's language, culture and literature and therefore paid close attention to the Taigi literature movement. Hu Min-Siang was a scholar in America and was unable to return to Taiwan because of his inclusion of the 'Black List' (exile order) after a political frame-up. At his earlier period of publication, he used the pen name Syu Shui-Lyu. Syu (1987) explored the deep significance of the Taiwanese Vernacular Language and Literature Movement in the Japanese colonial period. This article enlightened many Taiwanese who didn't know the history of the movement in the Japanese colonial period. In October 1992, he wrote a new poem published in *Hanchi poem publication*. (Hu 1995) Another novelist was Chen Lei who was a Taiwanese doctor living in Canada. He felt that it was confusing for him to write about Taiwanese life, society and history in Mandarin. He said, "As a Taiwanese, good creation works should be written in Taigi as a natural request of literature art." (Hu 1998: 26) In 1986, he started to write a short novel named "The Beautiful Camphor Forest". He also wrote a novel named "The Odd sickness of Li Shih-Tou" between 1989 and 1991. (Hu 1998)

We can see all the above writers switched to the creation of Taigi literature from Mandarin literature camp after the 1980s. Why did they abandon writing in Mandarin that they were familiar with and switched to writing in Taigi, which had an uncertain future? I believe that is because they want to write beautiful works of literature in their mother tongue. Their ambition is to seek literary language status for Taigi. As Lin Yang-Min mentioned above (see ch2.3.2), "If a writer creates his work only with the mother tongue of other people, he cannot surpass native speaker's creation works. Then his creation belongs to the colony of literature forever." The novelist Chen Lei also said, "As a Taiwanese, a good creative work should be written by Taigi as a natural request of literature art." Lin Chen-Mo said, "They didn't feel inferior in their

value like cheap sweet potato anymore. Sweet potato already gave out the fragrance.” He didn’t think that Taigi literature was inferior anymore. He wanted to work in his mother tongue and thus he promoted Taigi literature and sought high language and script status for it.

### Brief summary

The Taigi literature movement became more mature through the enlightened advocacy of Taiwanese colloquial writing in the Japanese colonial period, and through the rise of Taigi poems in the earlier post war era, and also through the devotion of some Mandarin writers. Especially those Mandarin writers joined to the camp of Taigi literature writing and finally formed a powerful trend of Taigi literature movement. Their purpose was to seek literary status of Taigi and obviously this was the effort for becoming a high language and script.

The surge of this literary revolution caused those scholars and writers who were influenced by Mandarin hegemony to protest. Therefore the three phases of the Taigi literature debates occurred between 1987 and 1996. In the first phase, the non-native camp asked the native camp questions about the Taigi literature movement. This was the extent of the debates between Chinese and Taiwanese viewpoints. In the second phase, the native camp asked the Taigi literature camp questions about the language selection for Taiwan literature. In the last phase, the debates also concerned the Chinese and Taiwanese viewpoints, but were also related to the value of Taigi writing.

### Endnotes:

<sup>1</sup>Taiwanese vernacular literature refers to works written in mandarin but with some Taiwanese terms, Taiwan literature uses Mandarin only and Taigi literature is all in



Taiwanese)

<sup>2</sup> The Japanization movement was a kind of movement of being the glorious people of the Japanese Empire.

<sup>3</sup> The Sinization was a kind of movement of being the glorious people of the Republic of China with national language and Chinese culture.

<sup>4</sup> The Ministry of Education established a seven-member group to write the ‘Draft of the Language and Script Law’. The law’s background was based on the following historical developments: The ‘Law of National Language Promotion’, which was enacted in 1972 and the ‘Script Law’, which was enacted in 1984. The Ministry of Education reconvened the National Languages Committee in 1982, and drew up the Law of National Languages Promotion. Finally it combined the ‘Law of National Languages Promotion’ and ‘Script Law’ together, which then became the ‘Language and Script Law’. Resources from: Shih Cheng-Feng, TiuN Hak-khiam edit, “appendix 4: Journal of Human Right of Taiwanese Language”, *Language Policy and Research of Enactment of “Language Equity Law”*, Taipei: Council for Hakka Affairs of Executive Yuan Dec. 2002, p138.

<sup>5</sup> Lin Zong-Yuan also had an article called “Taigi Literature is Taiwan Literature” published in *Hanchi Poem Publication* Vol.2 which mentioned ‘We should face the problems of Taigi script and create our own script. Then Taiwan literature has its dignity and independent life. Our offspring won’t be a generation of a broken mother tongue.’ (Lin 1992: 13)

<sup>6</sup> He accepted an interview with Lin Yang-Min and expressed the following opinion, ‘Spoken language can create literary language. Spoken language is the language of national daily life, which includes the wisdom of ancestor tradition and abundant terms formed by the environment naturally. Therefore, writing with our native language will enable our traditional culture to succeed and give voice to the people

and the special features of our land. It will match the claims of independence. ' (Lin  
1997: 31)