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Authoritarianism in the Living Room: Everyday Disciplines, Senses, and Morality in Taiwan's Military Villages

Elisa TAMBURO

Abstract: With the nationalist government – Kuomintang (KMT) – retreating from mainland China in 1949, some 600,000 military personnel relocated to Taiwan. The military seized former Japanese colonial properties and built its own settlements, establishing temporary military dependents' villages called *juancun* (眷村). When the prospect of counter-attacking the mainland vanished, the KMT had to face the reality of settling permanently in Taiwan. How, then, did the KMT's authoritarian power enter the everyday lives of its own support group? In this article I will focus on the coercive elements of KMT authoritarianism, which permeated these military villages in Taiwan. I will look at the coercive mechanisms through the analytical lens of Foucauldian discipline. I argue that disciplinary techniques such as surveillance, disciplining of the body and the senses, as well as the creation of morality regimes played an important role in the co-optation of village residents into KMT authoritarianism by normalising and naturalising it.

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Authoritarianism in the Living Room

I met Mr. He in the afternoon of a warm September day in the security room of a Taiwan Metro station in Taibei city. Being the son of a mainlander couple who retreated from mainland China to Taiwan in 1949, he can be considered a second-generation mainlander (外省人第二代, *waishengren dierdai*). In 1949 the nationalist government – Kuomintang (KMT, Guomindang, GMD) – retreated to Taiwan, which saw the arrival of two million mainlanders (外省人, *waishengren*) of whom it has been estimated that 600,000 were military personnel. A political crisis ensued, one that saw the KMT occupy Taiwan by force and which also caused a refugee and housing crisis too – with the mainlanders arriving in Taiwan's cities en masse. I asked Mr. He to tell me about his own experience of dwelling in military dependents' villages during KMT authoritarianism. He explained:

> The military village where I lived in Jingmei was under the control of the Ministry of Defence. My father was originally a member of the party (黨員, *dangyuan*), but he sanguinely withdrew from it after a while for reasons that are not completely clear to me. In our village there were military personnel who went missing (失踪, *shizong*), and nobody knew anything about why. These people went to work, finished work, but they never went back to the village. Vanished. Their families were still there and they still received a salary from the head of the family, but we would not know where the person ended up […]. Our village was really small, around 30 households, and yet, about seven military personnel went missing. In such a small village, we saw how many people disappeared! The proportion is very high, you know! (Mr. He 2016)

This article focuses, then, on how authoritarian power permeates the level of people's daily life through everyday practices. It aims first at understanding the ways in which KMT authoritarianism was diffused on a micro level within its own support group – that is, its military personnel – and the people who were expected to remain loyal to the KMT, namely their families. I therefore particularly consider the residents of the so-called military dependents' villages (眷村, *juancun*), settlements created to house military personnel and their families after the retreat of the nationalist government to Taiwan in 1949. How did KMT authoritarianism enter the everyday lives of *juancun* residents?

To shed light on how authoritarianism was operated, legitimised, and sustained, it is necessary to inquire how this power permeated the everyday lives of the people who were meant to secure the island of Taiwan along with the KMT government. How was this loyalty ensured? How did KMT authoritarianism co-opt the military villages in its struggle for legitimisation? I argue that it was *both* mechanisms of coercion and consent that allowed the KMT regime to secure the loyalty of this group.

The academic literature on authoritarianism in Taiwan has focused on the institutional transformation of the KMT party-state (Chu and Lin 2001; Cheng 2006; Wang 2015), or on the victims of well-researched tragic events such as the 2.28 incident or the Kaohsiung (高雄, Gaoxiong) incident (Kerr 1966; Lin 2004; Chen 2008). There has been, however, little research so far on how KMT authoritarianism entered the life of its own most loyal group. This is due to the fact that the people who fled to Taiwan after 1949 – the so-called *waishengren* – are often unquestionably and automatically associated with being the perpetrators of KMT authoritarianism (Yang and Chang 2010). While the existence of such co-optation is not a mystery (Wang 1994; Fell 2005), this view is often taken for granted. It would, however, be a mistake to take this co-optation into Chiang Kai-shek's (蔣介石, Jiang Jieshi) regime to be straightforward, unquestionable, or without resistance.

Instead, we should look into the mechanisms that produced such loyalty. According to Gramsci (1971), hegemony has a dimension of coercion and consent to it. While this co-optation has been investigated solely through the lens of consent, which has been analysed via the concept of "exchange" (交換, *jiaohuan*) (Chang 2015: 95), the dimension of coercion within the KMT support group has been hitherto overlooked. Hence, in this article I ask: How did coercion enter the intimate space of the village and its everyday life? How was villagers' loyalty to the party-state articulated? Which coercive elements were present herein, and how did these become naturalised and normalised?

While welfare measures – such as housing and United States aid (美援, *meiyuan*) – together with the propagandistic ideology of taking back the mainland worked effectively to produce consent among the group of the mainlanders, I argue that it was through coercive mechanisms that dissenting voices were individualised, disciplined, or si-

lenced. Coercion was implemented by subtler techniques of disciplining of the body and the senses on the one hand, and the creation of morality regimes on the other. I conceptualise "discipline" within a Foucauldian framework. Foucault describes discipline as "a 'physics' or an 'anatomy' of power, a technology" (Foucault 1995: 215). In his work, focusing on everyday life is paramount: Foucault wrote that discipline corresponds to

> the penetration of regulation into even the smallest details of everyday life through the mediation of the complete hierarchy that assured the capillary functioning of power. (Foucault 1995: 198)

Focusing specifically on *juancun*, where military personnel and their family lived, further allows me to look at the overlaps between state power and family life – of which the living room is an emblematic representation. The *juancun* living room represents the intimate sphere of family life, but also displays the symbols of the officialdom of the party-state – such as the iconic portrait of Chiang Kai-shek hung on its walls.

Yet, an examination of KMT authoritarianism from the point of view of the same lower-ranking KMT soldiers is relevant for other pressing reasons too. As Wu Nai-teh notes, a true politics of reconciliation in Taiwan is ineffective if it fails to recognise those "fragments of shared history" (Wu 2005: 100) that transcend ethnic division. This line of thought acknowledges that the members of both the so-called groups of the *benshengren* (本省人) – Han and Hakka from mainland China who migrated to Taiwan before 1945 – and the *waishengren* "suffered from the abuses of human rights under authoritarian rule" (Wu 2005: 20). As a matter of fact, mainlanders were also victims of the KMT's pervasive surveillance and repression. This was particularly true in the 1950s, when reform of the KMT and its military forces was fostered by Chiang Kai-shek and Chiang Ching-kuo (蔣經國, Jiang Jingguo) to face the "Communist threat" and the infiltrations of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) into Taiwan (Wu 2005: 90; Feuchtwang 2009, 2011; Shih 2011). According to Wu:

> Of all the victims during the White Terror, Chinese mainlanders constituted around 40 per cent, which was much higher than their proportion of less than 15 per cent in the total population. (Wu 2005: 100)

Through the recollections of former and current *juancun* residents and as well as my own experience of living in a military village for 18 months, in this article I will illustrate the ways in which authoritarian power permeated everyday village life. I conducted extensive ethnographic fieldwork in one of the last-existing *juancun* in Taiwan, Zhongxin xincun (中心新村), located in Beitou, Taibei, before it was relocated to new high-rise buildings in October 2016. I complemented the extensive participant observations, qualitative interviews, and oral history conducted in the village on its relocation with interviews and conversations with inhabitants and former *juancun* dwellers of different generations of formal and informal military settlements scattered across the whole island. Their voices are expression of the unwritten moral rules that bound the *juancun* inhabitants to the state within the familial and neighbourly relationships of the village. Therefore, the focus here is not on an investigation of the structural and hierarchical organisation of military dependents' villages in Taiwan, but rather an analysis of how power permeated and was normalised in their inhabitants' everyday life.

To this end, I will first illustrate the conditions for the emergence of military villages in Taiwan. I will show what kind of threats the military posed to Chiang's government in the 1950s, and the institutional measures that he consequently took to prevent internal uprising. I will also explain why we should not limit conceptualising authoritarianism among the mainlanders group to only consent, but rather see that it is necessary to look at the coercive dimension of authoritarianism through the Foucauldian analytical framework of discipline. It follows empirical material that shows how the institutional measures taken by Chiang Kai-shek translated to different forms of everyday discipline within the military dependents' villages, specifically through surveillance, the disciplining of the body and of the senses, as well as the creation of morality regimes. Finally, in the conclusion I suggest that focusing on the mainlander experience of KMT authoritarianism is helpful in achieving a more nuanced understanding of Taiwan's authoritarianism in its initial stages – which might help contribute to the politics of reconciliation on the island.

Securing the Island

The Retreat of 1949 and the Construction of Military Dependents' Villages

> I don't have any memory of my childhood until the age of five. I remember that when I was five years old, I used to live in a military barrack (軍人的义务房, *junren de yiwufang*). All the inhabitants there and their families (眷属, *juanshu*) were military personnel. There were two rows of military barracks, and each house was divided into two parts. There were about 15 to 20 families living there. Each family divided the space with a curtain hanging from a thread. It was a place for the military. When the [Japanese] army left in 1947, the place was occupied by the mainlanders. It must have been 1952 when I was living in this military village, in Muzha. (Mr. He 2016)

At the age of six, Mr. He moved to the neighbourhood of Jingmei with his parents. His dwelling was an old warehouse (倉庫, *cangku*), which was divided into three minuscule flats shared among three households (Figure 1 below). He describes his experience of dwelling in this former Japanese colonial estate:

> On the one side there was the Wang family, on the other the Du family (Figure 1). We occupied the flat in the middle. Within the flat there was a room with a bed on three levels. We were five brothers and my little sister, who slept in the same bed with my parents. […] The village was located on Beixing Road, behind a road that was called Liujun. The countryside was huge there and there was a big place where we could swim. The village was in the middle. Inside the village there was a well. It was made up of old Japanese buildings, all warehouses that were occupied by the KMT army when the Japanese left Taiwan. (Mr. He 2016)

At first, refugees occupied public places such as squares, schools, and squatted on empty land – as well as residing in civilian houses, too (Yang 2012: 67–71). Between 1945 and 1956, KMT military personnel also occupied the estates left behind by the Japanese after 1945 – mainly military barracks, storehouses, and staples. During this phase of settlement, the Ministry of National Defence (MND) granted married soldiers and married military personnel the permission to build their own houses on empty land that had been seized by the MND (Kuo 2005: 7).

Figure 1. Mr. He's Drawing of *Jingmei* (景美) Military Village

Note: It first illustrates the house where he lived as a child, parted among three families: Wang, He, and Du. Beneath is an illustration of the bunk beds (雙層床, *shuangcengchuang*) within the house. It follows a representation of the river dredge right next to military cargos (陸軍運輸者, *lujun yunshuzhe*) giving on the street, Beixing Road.

Source: © Elisa Tamburo

This first phase of settlement was believed to be temporary. Taking back the mainland (反攻大陸, *fangong dalu*) was the KMT's main objective, and soldiers did not expect that they would settle permanently in Taiwan. This is evident from the fact that in 1952, a marriage ban was imposed on soldiers – who were required to fight back against the Communists and were, for this purpose, forbidden to have a family life in Taiwan. The ban was eventually relaxed at the end of the 1950s, when the MND allowed officers (軍官, *junguan*), technicians (技術士官, *jishu shiguan*), and students who had reached the age of 28 to seek permission for marriage (Li 2015a: 18). Further, the Chiang government's inadequate attention to the housing crisis also indicated

that long-term settlement was not a priority at the time (Li 2015b). According to Lo (2011: 192), soldiers who were not sheltered in *juancun* eventually occupied urban areas in "illegal housing" (違章建築, *weizhang jianzhu*) – which at the time was regarded as a cheap and effective way to solve the housing problem (Lo 2011: 192; Huang 2002). It was only in 1957 that Soong Mei-ling's (宋美齡, Song Mei-ling) Chinese Women's League for Anti-Communism and Resisting Russia (中華婦女反攻抗俄聯合會, *Zhonghua funü fangong kange lian-hehui*) initiated the construction of large-scale military villages by building the first 4,000 state-engineered ones with donations from private enterprises (Lo 2011: 190–191). Only married soldiers could reside in those villages with their families, which corresponded to only one-third of the military personnel in Taiwan (Li 2015a: 19).

The Military Threat

By 1956, military dependents' villages had a precise internal organisa-tion to them. The Women's League was an influential institution in the management of military villages, as its role was not limited to raising funds for their construction. In large-scale ones, the Women's Working Team (婦女工作隊, *funü gongzuodui*) was in charge of main-taining the village's common facilities, managing nurseries and kin-dergartens, organising vocational training for women, and supplying milk; they also elected their own team leader independently (Lo 2011: 195). The team had been first established by the Women's League in *juancun* that had been funded directly by the League, or in large-scale ones. It was directly subordinated to the president of the Women's League, and of equal rank to the local and provincial branches of the League. In 1984 the team was affiliated to the branch of the Women League for Army Corps (軍團婦聯分會, *juntuan fulian fenhui*), and the related *juancun* regulations classified the Women's Working Team as a ring of the *juancun* self-organising association (自治會, *zizhihui*) (Kuo 2005: 46).

The Women's Working Team also established sewing factories and workshops in which employment skills training was provided for women; they could learn about domestic economy and child educa-tion, as well as knitting, tailoring, nursing, driving, and handicraft (Kuo 2005: 46–48). In large-scale villages the League also helped by distributing welfare resources intended for the villages, such as *mei-*

yuan, which was overseen by the MND (Lo 2011: 194). Residents told me that flour, oil, and rice rations were distributed every month in the village through a ration booklet (補給證, *bujizheng*). The portion of the subsidy was determined by the age of the receiver: a small portion (小口, *xiaokou*) was given to children and a larger one (medium, 中口, *zhongkou*, and large, 大口, *dakou*) to adults.

In small-scale villages the distribution of resources was carried out by the *zizhihui*, which was devised for the first time in an article of the military order titled "Nationalist Army's Ways of Settlement in Taiwan" – promulgated by the MND in 1956 (Kuo 2005: 40–41). The *zizhihui* was led by the head of the association (自治會長, *zizhihuizhang*), who in the villages was often simply referred to as "chief of the village" (村長, *cunzhang*) (Lo 2011: 194). The self-organising association had a social but also a political function. On the one hand, it assisted the villagers with the supply of goods, applications for relief resources, and managing the common facilities. On the other, the association mobilised people during local elections by coordinating their votes (Lo 2011: 194) and implemented government decrees at the grassroots level (Kuo 2005: 44). The association was an administrative system controlled by the General Political Department (總政治部, *zong zhengzhibu*) (Lo 2011: 194). According to the regulations provided by the MND, the chief was elected by the village residents. However, Mr. He stated that the process was far from democratic; rather, the chief was appointed in a top-down fashion:

> The chief of the village was not really elected democratically. Democracy did not exist in the village. The chief was appointed from above by the party. Whoever was appointed was accepted as the chief. He was responsible more or less for all the opinions on public affairs and speeches (所有的言論, *suoyou de yanlun*). He was responsible for the governmental policies, and also for the support of KMT candidates during the local elections. He carried on the work of the KMT, the government, and the military (推動國民黨跟政府跟軍隊的事物, *tuidong guomindang gen zhengfu gen jundui de shiwu*). He also was responsible for recruiting new party members (吸收黨員, *xishou dangyuan*). (Mr. He 2016)

Despite not being formally employed and not receiving a salary, the chief disposed of a budget to be used for village necessities – such as the repair of common facilities (Lo 2011: 194). The chief was helped in his duties by committee members (委员, *weiyuan*), who were direct-

ly nominated by him. Because of receiving welfare, the village residents developed a relationship of dependence on the party-state. This has been characterised by Chang (2015: 96), as noted earlier, through the concept of exchange or *jiaohuan*. Welfare and resources were granted in exchange for political devotion (政治忠誠, *zhengzhi zhongcheng*). Similarly, Lo (2011) defined this relationship as a "symbiotic" one – arguing that the high degree of consistency and loyalty demonstrated towards the KMT during its political activities is the most reliable indicator of such a relationship. "Through the Women's League Working Team and the self-governing association, the residents conformed to the interests of the circle of power" (Lo 2011: 195).

As we will see, these welfare measures not only aimed at relieving hardship but also at creating the conditions for legitimising Chiang's government in Taiwan by winning the support of the military and their families and thereby reducing the risks of coup, desertion, and dissent. However, consent is not the only dimension implemented by these institutions. Through the Women's League and the self-organising association, the residents were also subjected to executive orders, propaganda, and party activities – which correspond to the level of coercion. According to Gramsci, exercising hegemony is achieved both by consensual and coercive elements:

> The "normal" exercise of hegemony […] is characterized by the combination of force and consent, which balance each other reciprocally without force predominating excessively over consent. (Gramsci 1971: 80)

Looking at these techniques of coercion through the lens of Foucauldian discipline will help us to understand how mechanisms of such coercion were activated particularly when the hegemony of the KMT encountered dissent. As mentioned above, I argue that the moral spirit of patriotism can be studied as discipline – which resulted from the political and party work of the KMT. But before we turn to examine these forms of discipline in detail, it is necessary to explain why exerting discipline on the KMT military was even necessary.

The systematic construction of large-scale military villages fostered by the Women's League was promoted during the years of important institutional changes occurring, in particular with the reform of the KMT. By moving the nationalist government to Taiwan,

Chiang Kai-shek had to confront multiple internal and external challenges.

Between 1945 and 1950, he concentrated on resolving the rivalry of fellow elites, warlords, and military commanders both on the mainland and in Taiwan (Greitens 2013). During the years of 1950–1955, however, the attention of the KMT turned instead from the threat of nationalist elites to internal military ones – as well as the danger of popular uprising.

On the one hand, the communist forces on the mainland and the risk of their penetration of Taiwan constituted the most significant external threat. Communist spies in particular infiltrated the party and the army leadership (Eastman 1984). On the other, there was a high risk of military coups and desertions. In both cases, in the 1950s, Chiang Kai-shek was not only concerned with a possible uprising within the group of the mainlanders – who seemed more likely to fall prey to communist penetration – but also the breaking out of military coups and revolts within the army (Greitens 2013: 92). Only by the period unfolding between the 1960s to the 1970s did the KMT eventually turn instead against the independent movement among the Taiwanese (Greitens 2013: 126–131). According to the data provided by Greitens:

> One-third of the total victims of state violence during the martial law era appear to have been mainlanders, who made up only 15 per cent of the population. Moreover, in the early years of the KMT rule on Taiwan, mainlanders were more likely to be arrested, and if they were arrested, could expect to receive harsher sentences. (Greitens 2013: 71)

The military threat was also derived from the fact that soldiers, many of whom were young and unmarried, had fought a tiresome war and were now isolated – exiled in Taiwan without any family support (Fan 2011: 44; Yang 2012: 180). Chiang Kai-shek needed human resources to realise his plan of taking back the mainland, and he had to prevent a loss of control over the military – and thus military unrest. Political warfare aimed at a utilitarian maximisation of military forces, whom the KMT needed to discipline and control. In Foucault's words, one could say that

> discipline is the unitary technique by which the body is reduced as a 'political' force at the least cost and maximized as a useful force. (Foucault 1995: 221)

For these reasons, the KMT moved from a state-centred, violent form of authoritarianism between 1945 and 1950 to a less violent but more diffuse form of control and surveillance in the years from 1950 to 1955. The reform of the KMT, which was undertaken from 1950 to 1952, resulted in a revival of its Leninist structure. (Dickson 1993: 56)

First, this meant reinforcing Chiang Kai-shek's leadership over the military and other governmental organs through the reconstitution of the Political Commissar System (政治委員制度, *zhengzhi wei-yuan zhidu*, PCS) in 1950 (Cheng 1990: 24; Eastman 1984: 210). The creation of a PCS within the "party-state regime" (Dickson 1993) – or "quasi Leninism" (Cheng 1990) – allowed the institutional organs of control to also be included in surveillance. This suggests that the target of this control was directed inwardly towards the KMT apparatus itself. It was also in 1950 that Chiang Ching-kuo became the head of the General Political Warfare Department (GPWD) within the armed forces. Chiang Ching-kuo reshuffled military units and removed potential threats among military personnel (Greitens 2013: 108). Not only did the constitution of the PCS avoid competition between similar, rival governmental organs while guaranteeing also their control (Greitens 2013: 107–108), but it additionally reasserted the principle of the "Party leads the military" in the restructuring of the military–party relationship (Cheng 1990: 25).

One of the goals of the PCS was to "ensure the political loyalty of the military, particularly its commanders, to the civilian party" (Cheng 1990: 37). A key function of the PCS was to exercise the so-called political work and party work. "Political work" (政治工作, *zhengzhi gongzuo*) mainly comprised military work, which was conducted by the cadres of the Political Work Department for the official purpose of promoting military effectiveness by "handling human affairs concerning the military" (Cheng 1990: 38).

On the other hand,

> the real political functions that the PCS performs are embodied in party work, in which party control or governmental control over the military was a part. (Cheng 1990: 38)

Discipline

The military plays an important role in Foucault's study of the institutionalisation of discipline. In his work *Discipline and Punish*, the army is –

together with the education system, the medical institute, and the penitentiary – a "site" of disciplinary power (Foucault 1995: 143). From the military barracks to the training camp, the army is the place that makes possible the disciplining of "docile bodies" – which he defines as bodies that "may be subjected, used, transformed and improved" (Foucault 1995: 136). He defines disciplines as

> the methods, which made possible the meticulous control of the operations of the body, which assured the constant subjection of its forces and imposed upon them a relation of docility-utility. (Foucault 1995: 137)

Although Foucault analyses these institutionalised sites of discipline at length, he insists that discipline is not an institution. Foucault further defines discipline as "a type of power, a modality for its exercise, comprising a whole set of instruments, techniques, procedures, levels of application, targets […]" (Foucault 1995: 215). Discipline is also "the effects of power to the most minute and distant elements" (Foucault 1995: 216).

Foucault, however, talks about elements that make discipline possible, principles that operationalise it. First, he talks about distribution in space: "Discipline sometimes requires enclosure" (Foucault 1995: 141). From the military barracks to the factory or the monastic cell, discipline organises an analytical space – according to the principle of partition. "Disciplinary space tends to be divided into as many sections as there are bodies or elements to be distributed" (Foucault 1995: 143). The aim of segmentation is to make bodies localisable. Second, he puts forward the principle of hierarchical observation as a means of correct training. The technique of observation

> makes it possible to see induce effects of power, and which, conversely, the means of coercion make those on whom they are applied clearly visible. (Foucault 1995: 171)

Distribution in space and hierarchical observation are the key principles of Bentham's Panopticon:

> This enclosed, segmented space, observed at every point, in which the individuals are inserted in a fixed place, in which the slightest movements are supervised, in which all the events are recorded, […] in which, the individual is constantly located, examined and distributed among the living beings, the sick and the dead – all this

constitutes a compact model of the disciplinary mechanism. (Foucault 1995: 197)

Yet Foucault clearly sees Bentham's Panopticon as something more than an ideal architectonic form, as a panoptic schema may be used whenever a particular form of behaviour must be imposed:

> But the Panopticon must not be understood as a dream building: it is the diagram of the mechanism of power reduced to its ideal form; its functioning, abstracted from any obstacle, resistance or friction, must be represented as a pure architectural and optical system: it is in fact a figure of political technology that may and must be detached from any specific use. (Foucault 1995: 205)

A third and final dimension of disciplining is the "normalisation of judgement," which I will refer to henceforth as "a morality regime." Foucault explains that a "small penal mechanism" (1995: 177) is crucial for every disciplinary regime. Normalising judgement, like a micro-penalty system – a small-scale court – consists of specific ways of punishing:

> The workshop, the school, the army were subjected to a whole micro-penalty of time (lateness, absences, interruptions of tasks), of activity (inattention, negligence, lack of zeal), of behaviour (impoliteness, disobedience), of speech (idle chatter, insolence), of the body ("incorrect" attitudes, irregular gestures, lack of cleanliness), of sexuality (impurity, indecency). (Foucault 1995: 178)

A more subtle way of disciplining, this morality regime is often an "artificial order" derived from laws, regulations, or a particular programme. As we will see later, a specific moral order was enforced by KMT authoritarianism in the villages where military personnel resided; non-conformity to this order was punishable to various degrees.

Disciplining Bodies, Senses, and Morality

Surveillance

> In the village there were a lot of "deep throats" (深喉嚨, *shenhoulong*), informants (告密子, *gaomizi*). They were voluntary informants (自願的告密子, *ziyuan de gaomizi*), who reported to the authorities in their own interests. Many indeed became informants voluntarily. […] My parents' thought was not really right (思想不

太对, *sixiang butai dui*), but they limited it to avoiding attending the [political] activities; they did their thing, and the others did their own. Perhaps, my parents believed that the KMT did too many extreme things (很過分的事情, *hen guofen de shiqing*); maybe it was the political environment (政治的環境, *zhengzhi de huanjing*). However, in the village they *did not dare* to talk (不敢講, *bugan jiang*) and *even they could not* talk (也不能講, *ye buneng jiang*) *because you did not know who was a spy* (*liaobei*). *Liaobei* is the Taiwanese for spy (間諜, *jiandie*). If there were three people mentioning informants, they would use the Taiwanese term – so that he would not know immediately what they were talking about. (Mr. He 2016)

Establishing networks of informants was not exclusive to *juancun*, but rather they permeated Taiwan's society in a capillary manner beginning in the 1950s. This network of informants finds its origins in the *baojia* system (Japanese: 保甲, *hoko*), the community-based security apparatus that the KMT inherited in 1945 from the Japanese and that was initially discarded by the nationalist government in favour of more coercive institutions that originated on the mainland. The Japanese police system

was a centralized, internally coordinated, inclusive, and socially penetrative internal security apparatus that relied on the *baojia* system of communal responsibility to create strong local networks of monitoring and surveillance. (Greitens 2013: 72).

The Japanese divided Taiwan's neighbourhoods into groups of households (Japanese: *ho*), where each *ho* assisted the police with duties such as monitoring the population's movements. "It was a system of collective responsibility and punishment, of internal social control as well as external self-defence" (Greitens 2013: 78).

An example of such penetration of surveillance is given by Ho's research (2010) on state-owned enterprises during the authoritarian era. For instance, Ho describes the capillary network of informants that permeated the sugar refinery factories during the 1950s and the 1960s. This was constituted by KMT party members, which "silenced rank-and-file workers" (Ho 2010: 563), but even more so by the special agents trained by the Bureau of Investigation who were placed in every plant. According to Ho:

They were responsible for monitoring the day-to-day behaviour of workers. […] To facilitate their broad-ranging tasks of super-

> vision, they built a clandestine network of informants among the workforce. (Ho 2010: 567)

However, unlike these externally imposed control mechanisms, surveillance within the military was internally grown and institutionalised. Despite initially disregarding the *baojia* system, the KMT eventually revived it in 1950 when Chiang Ching-kuo converted the KMT's fragmented policing apparatus into a unified system of monitoring and control (Greitens 2013: 98). With the reform of the KMT, political work was introduced. Party work included organisational work (組織工作, *zuzhi gongzuo*) and the surveillance of troops. *Zuzhi gongzuo* included "the establishment and development of a party structure in the military, recruitment, training, evaluation, and personnel control of the party members" (Cheng 1990: 39). With party work slated, political and bureaucratic surveillance was also institutionalised: "Political surveillance aims at securing military officers' loyalty to the Party and at preventing desertion among the rank and file" (Cheng 1990: 39). It also strived to prevent corruption, poor morale, and inefficiency within the military bureaucracy (Cheng 1990: 39).

Similarly, within the *juancun* the system of surveillance and reporting was internally legitimised and institutionalised through the self-organising association – which was controlled by the General Political Department. Mr. Zhang, who was at the time of my fieldwork a second-generation *waishengren* acting as chief of the village where I lived, told me about his father's personality and duties as a political instructor (指導員, *zhidaoyuan*) and as himself chief of the village carrying out political work:

> My father was a political instructor. Generally, political instructors were all ... because they were responsible for control. It resembles the police within the army, they have to grab the bad elements: it is a bit like a teacher, they have to examine you, instruct you. So, a lot of people within the army disliked these kind of people, but my father would argue with their superiors for the sake of his subordinates, so my father was a very serious person. (Mr. Zhang 2016)

The chief of the village was, in fact, not only responsible for the implementation of the government decrees (Kuo 2005: 44) and political work; he was also required to submit reports to the "relevant authorities" (Kuo 2005: 43).

Every month the president of the *zizhihui* should contact the re-
spective authorities to report the current state of village super-
vision; in case there were incidents affecting security (安全, *an-
quan*), or regulation were broken, he should immediately submit a
report to the relevant authorities or to the local statute or police to
solve it. (Kuo 2005: 43)

Self-Censorship and the Disciplining of the Senses

"You did not know who was a spy" said Mr. He, describing the power
of the panoptic principle. One of the effects of panoptic discipline is
self-censorship. The presence of a vast network of informants affect-
ed disciplinary behaviour. According to Mr. He, the majority of the
informants would report directly to the party office, while the party
would communicate with the Ministry of National Defence – which
would then pass the information on to the Military Intelligence Bur-
eau (軍事情報局, *junshi qingbaoju*). "Not being satisfied with the gov-
ernment and enunciating this dissatisfaction would be sufficient for
you to encounter problems" (Mr. He 2016). Upon receiving tip-offs,
the security officers would then move to catch those individuals: "If
you talked, your voice could reach the ears of the intelligence agency"
(Mr. He 2016). Mr. Wang, a second-generation *waishengren* active in
juancun preservation in southern Taiwan, expressed similar thoughts:

Actually, within the *juancun* there were many people who could not
know the state, could not understand the state, and could not
make allowance for it. These [inhabitants] required people check-
ing on their conversations, or similar institutions. In addition, the
state was also conveniently using "comprehensive lecturing" (整體
訓話, *zhengti xunhua*); that is, when the state had to carry orders in
a *juancun* and guide people it had to do it through a person – that
person was the window of the state. (Mr. Wang 2015)

Once a person was heard, the one who had originally detected the
dissent would report to the relative unit that the individual in ques-
tion thought in a certain way; he would "rat on a colleague," Mr.
Wang commented.

So when we were young there was a saying: "Pay attention,
Communist spies are right next to you" (小心, 匪諜在你身邊, *xiaoxin,
feidie zai nishenbian*). That spy was one of us (Mr. Wang 2015).

As a consequence of this close control, discipline created "ta-
boo" topics that needed to be avoided in the villages.

> There were many things that one could not say. For instance, one could not say that there was not hope to take back the mainland (反攻大陸沒有希望, *fangong dalu meiyou xiwang*). One could not manifest appreciation for the Communist Party (不可以說共產黨有多好, *bu keyi shuo gongchandang you duohao*). One also could not collect the Communist propaganda leaflets that were dropped from the sky by the communists' planes. One could not criticise Chiang Kai-shek (不可以批評蔣介石, *bu keyi piping Jiang Jieshi*). You could not think of getting rid of the KMT (你不可以想我要国民党幹掉, *ni bukeyi xiang wo yao Guomindang gandiao*). (Mr. He 2016)

In the context of military villages' relocation projects, Mr. Wang also told me that this self-disciplining of speech was continuing in the present too. Elderly residents often kept quiet when faced with eviction, as their past education had exhorted them never to speak up. He told me:

> They don't know whom they could talk to about their innermost feelings, because they were military personnel, and how was the military? They proclaimed they had to pledge loyalty to the state. When they [soldiers] became old, they realised that despite having pledged loyalty to the state, they unexpectedly are hurt by the same state and they are distressed, but they cannot talk. The education they received is not the same I received, the education of that time taught that these things cannot be said. (Mr. Wang 2015)

Yet, the disciplining of speech was not the only way to control behaviour. Bodily senses such as seeing and watching were subjected to discipline for instance on Jinmen Island, where soldiers were forbidden to use binoculars to gaze at the mainland. Hearing and listening were also subjected to discipline. The violation of the ban on listening to People's Republic of China radio could, for instance, be easily identified and reported, due to the military villages' thin, badly insulated walls made of bamboo and mud (泥巴, *niba*). My conversations with veterans revealed that smell and taste were the senses that enjoyed more freedom, whereas seeing, hearing, and speaking were disciplined. Soldiers often found consolation from being completely cut off from mainland China only in the dishes of their homeland (家鄉菜, *jiaxiang cai*) – which later became known as *juancun* cuisine, or *juancun cai* (眷村菜).

Here, the *juancun* space plays a peculiar role in disciplining the body and the senses. Village residents would regulate their listening

according to the situation, as they could easily know what was happening next door. Residents were also careful about what was said in their everyday life and family situations, as information spread easily in the villages in the form of gossip – being facilitated by the materiality of the cramped houses built next to each other. This was particularly so in the villages built by the Women's League in the mid-1950s, where the spatial distribution of them was similar to the typical "fish bone" (鱼骨, *yugu*) style of military barracks. For this reason, these villages were also known as "villages in serial" (聯動眷村, *liandong juancun*) (Chang 2015: 46). In the military villages, the power of discipline lay in its fragmentation:

> Power has its principle not so much in a person as in a certain concerted distribution of bodies, surfaces, lights, gazes; in an arrangement whose internal mechanism produce the relation in which individuals are caught up. (Foucault 1995: 202)

Hence, if in the villages "the gaze was everywhere," residents usually exercised discipline "spontaneously and without noise" (Foucault 1995: 206). This "distribution of bodies" facilitated the proliferation of power through the embodiment of a specific moral order, a morality regime.

Morality Regimes

Even though Mr. He regarded his parents as non-conformists, he described them – as with the majority of the mainlanders of the first generation – as "obedient people" (很聽話的人, *hen tinghua de ren*). Similarly, Mr. Wang talks about a "moral frame" (道德框架, *daode kuangjia*) of reference that the military personnel were constantly referring to when choosing silence over speaking up:

> They thought that speaking their mind would violate their moral standards. […] The incapacity of voicing is still mainly an issue of "moral feeling" (道德感, *daodegan*), that is that I am a soldier and I have to proclaim it openly, I have to pledge loyalty to the state. I cannot talk badly about the state, if I do it is like betraying the state. (Mr. Wang 2015)

For Foucault, obedience and morality are facilitated by subtler disciplinary techniques, a morality regime:

> In appearance, the disciplines constitute nothing more than an in-
> fra-law. They seem to extend the general forms defined by law to
> the infinitesimal level of individual lives; or they appear as methods
> of training that enable individuals to become integrated into these
> general demands. (Foucault 1995: 222)

Ms. Liu is a Hakka woman – a Han Chinese group also present in
Taiwan, whose ancestral homes are located in the main Hakka-speak-
ing regions of southern China – and she is originally from Taidong
area. She told me many stories about the "infra-law" and the morality
regimes that discipline produced. She had been married to a *waisheng-
ren* and had in the past lived in several *juancun* (now all demolished).
Ms. Liu then divorced her husband after several years of experiencing
domestic violence, and therefore had, expectedly, distressing memo-
ries of living in a military village.

> When Chiang Kai-shek died, every morning and every evening one
> had to go to a room that had been arranged for the occasion, a
> room that was similar to the "activity centre" (活動中心, *huodong
> zhongxin*). Every village resident had to go there to burn incense (烧
> 香, *shaoxiang*) and worship (拜拜, *baibai*). There were some people
> who argued that Chiang Kai-shek was a Christian, so they ques-
> tioned the necessity of burning incense. They were told that going
> there and performing Christian prayer (禱告, *daogao*) was also ok.
> Then, we all went. At that time the TV was in black and white, be-
> fore eating we had to sing the national anthem following the TV
> and only afterwards could we start eating. The whole *juancun* was
> doing this, not just our household. (Ms. Liu 2016)

The creation of a morality regime in the military villages was the re-
sult of the so-called political work, which included education, hand-
ling of human relations, soldiers' welfare, and political warfare. Edu-
cation essentially meant ideological-political indoctrination. Political
education was conducted through instillation of party ideology and
morality as well as via spiritual and moral mobilisation. This type of
education has also being called "propaganda of integration" (Ellul
1965: 74, cited by Cheng 1990: 40) or "political socialization" (Jones
1985: 114, cited by Cheng 1990: 40). The program of political sociali-
sation envisioned by the political work made *juancun* a patriotic and
moralistic environment through indoctrination, education, and propa-
ganda (Bullard 1997: 70). These activities emphasised the value of

physical labour and making a living, the value of patriotism, loyalty, personal sacrifice, and social service (Bullard 1997: 67).

As political work was part of a broader mission of political warfare – which aimed at the improvement of the effectiveness of the troops – it transcended political socialisation. In particular attention was dedicated to structuring and regulating the military's leisure time, what Bullard calls "morale-enhancing activities" (1997: 69–71). These activities aimed first at ensuring high troop morale within the army; only later did political work focus on the indoctrination of the troops with patriotic messages and the development of "investigative techniques to identify individuals who were not accepting that message" (Bullard 1997: 71) – such as potential dissidents and non-conformists. Finally, attention would be focused on developing techniques of isolating and removing these dissidents (Bullard 1997: 71). Mr. Zhang elaborated on the responsibilities of his father as a political instructor carrying out political work in the village, and the related working unit:

> Ideology, recreation, the scope of political work is huge. Of course there are organisational aspects: ideological, security, keeping secrets and preventing espionage, control, recreational activities. All these aspects are handled by political work. My father worked in the psychiatry department of the hospital. Beyond political work, in the department they also had recreational activities and physical exercise; these activities were all responsibility of the political instructor. (Mr. Zhang 2016)

Morale-enhancing activities found their best expressions in entertainment, which occasionally entered the everyday life of military villages. Film and opera in particular were an integral part of *juancun* life. In the 1950s the Women's League created the "Movie Team" (電影队, *dianyingdui*), whose most important entertainment activity (娛樂活動, *yule huodong*) was the screening of movies (Kuo 2005: 48). It was one of the duties of the Women's League and of the chief of the village to maintain a "happy and peaceful" atmosphere in the *juancun* (Kuo 2005: 42).

Despite these occasional entertainment activities, patriotic morality regimes came on top of the everyday moralising environment – where residents' behaviours and whereabouts were often at the centre of village interests. Ms. Liu described gossip as an insulting, envious, and pointless invention that one experienced as a daily public trial (公審, *gongshen*).

> Let's say that I live in that house, the house of my husband's brothers. I had to wash the blanket every week, however at that time there was no washing machine. At that time, I was pregnant of many months, and washing the blanket by hand was not easy, so I asked a mainlander lady if she could wash it for me. She did, but afterwards she would go around the village saying that I was not washing anything, and that she was doing all the laundry for me, which was not at all true. I suffered so much. If I think about it now, this gossip did not mean anything. […] They also would tell me things about other residents: "Meimei, come here. That lady yesterday came back home with a boyfriend, her husband did not come back home, but she came back with a boyfriend." (Ms. Liu 2016)

Ms. Liu attributed this judgemental environment to the lack of space, friends, money, and distraction. The residents were living very close to each another, and in the village people did not have many friends. As money was scarce, options for entertainment and recreation were limited and there was no way of going out for fun or meeting friends. People did not have an occupation to get distracted by. Mr. He recalled similar memories of the villages where he lived.

> People in the village would judge and reproach (判斷和批評, *panduan he piping*) many things, even the smallest issue. For instance, my mom would go to do the groceries and once she came back someone would reproach her that she spent too much money. But there were also national issues that were motives of reproach: "You can't say this! I really need to tell you, you can't say this!" (你不可以這樣講，我很循地你不可以這樣講, *ni bu keyi zheyang jiang, wo hen xunde ni bu keyi zheyang jiang*). If someone spoke to you in this way, it meant that you were alone with this person and that no one else was there. (Mr. He 2016)

In other instances, the judgement aimed at provoking an action. Mr. He remembered that senior village residents would warmly invite him to go and vote if he had not done so, yet:

> They would ask you, "Did you vote?" They could know if I had told the truth because at that time if you had voted, you also would have received a stamp on your ID card. (Mr. He 2016)

Foucault explains how disciplinary techniques are seen as "the humble, but concrete form of every morality, whereas they are a set of psycho-political techniques" (Foucault 1995: 223). The effectiveness

of morality regimes did not necessarily rely on written rules. The death of Chiang Kai-shek was not only accompanied by incense burning and worshipping, but also by verbal rules of conduct. Ms. Liu told me a story:

> I have a joke about the time when Chiang Kai-shek died. After his death, an unwritten rule was established in the village: every couple was forbidden to have sex for a month starting from the day of Chiang Kai-shek's death. When we heard about this rule we thought it was a joke, but it was not; so we all agreed and said, ok, we will do that. After New Year's, it was May, a baby was born in the village. As soon as people made their calculations, it was clear that the baby had been conceived during the sex-ban period. As a result, people would stare at the mother of the baby, and nobody could talk to her as she violated the rule (打破那個規定, *dapo nage guiding*) and she failed to respect the president (對總統不敬, *dui zongtong bu jing*). (Ms. Liu 2016)

Conclusion

In this article, I have investigated the ways in which KMT authoritarianism permeated the everyday life of the residents of military villages, the *juancun*, in Taiwan. This research angle has allowed me to explore the micro-level mechanisms of coercion that the KMT deployed to remain in power and secure support among its own people. These mechanisms were in effect particularly during the 1950s, when the military threat from China was severe, the hunt for Communist spies reached its peak, and an internal military coup was strongly feared.

I have argued that while welfare measures were effective in creating consent, the KMT's hegemonic power could not have been implemented without coercive mechanisms too – at which I looked through the lens of Foucauldian discipline. Surveillance, the disciplining of the body and the senses, and the creation of morality regimes were all disciplinary mechanisms in action to individualise, silence, or exclude the pathological.

The deployment of informants and the institutionalisation of a reporting system within the villages resulted in self-censorship and the disciplining of the senses. The place of the *juancun* facilitates daily sensory censorship within residents, while morality regimes created unwritten rules that were used as "psycho-political techniques." All

these disciplinary mechanisms were complicit in creating a panoptic environment and co-optation into the KMT regime.

In recent years, military villages have increasingly become the setting of TV dramas, theatre performances, and literary productions, wherein they are depicted as familial, romantic places in which residents dwell harmoniously, youth stories unfold, and the culinary traditions from mainland China are passed on. As Huang (2014: 152) noticed, these productions have turned the tragic experience of war, exile, and political control into a comic, sentimental past. While irony and laughter are powerful weapons to deal with a difficult national past, it is the task of the social sciences to engage with the darker aspects of Taiwan's authoritarian history. In this article I have shed light, then, on how authoritarianism permeated the everyday life of *waishengren* living in military dependents' villages. While their experiences are often unquestionably and solely associated with consent to the upper echelons of KMT authoritarianism, here I have shown the hidden, internally grown mechanisms of power and control that instead governed their everyday life.

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