

## **A Reluctant Ethnic Identity: The Development of Holo Identity in Contemporary Taiwan**

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This paper tries to trace the development of Holo identity in contemporary Taiwan by comparing two waves of disputes over the proper Chinese name for the Taiwanese Holo in 1950s and 1990s respectively. The first debate broke out in 1958 in the literal journal *Taipei Wenwu* (臺北文物) when Taiwanese Holo intellectuals severely dispute over the usages of 福佬, 河洛 and to a less degree, 閩南 among themselves. It occurred in the fever of studying and recording Taiwan's languages, cultures and customs developed before Taiwan was returned to the Chinese rule in 1945. Close examination of the content and the context of the 1958 debate indicate that it was in fact a proxy for a hidden dispute over different views of treating Taiwan's Chinese legacies when the hostility between Taiwanese and the newly arrived mainlander migrants were still quite evident after the first turbulent decade of regime change. This paper argues that a clash of different national imaginations was the real and yet hidden agenda underlying the 1958 debate. The debate ended quite expectedly without any conclusion as different names were still used afterward as a reluctant compromise for unable to use the most preferred terms 台灣話 on the part of the Holo intellectuals. It rose again almost thirty years later under a very different circumstance when a new version of Taiwanese national imagination was formally and openly proposed by a substantial political opposition force after mid-1980s. Ethnic tensions in the early 1990s impelled the 民進黨 (DPP) to propose an alternative ideal pattern of ethnic relations in its nation-building project. Under the protest of other ethnic minorities who accused DPP of allowing Holo Chauvinism to develop among its over-enthusiastic supporters to equate ethnic Holo to national Taiwan in its national imagination, DPP's Holo members initiated the discourse of "Taiwan's four great ethnic groups" in response. The 1994 debate over the proper Chinese name for the Holo ethnic group, which is still unsolved, indicate another dimension of the reluctance for the Holo to accept the self-constraint ethnic identity imposed by others. The nature and the consequence of the reluctant ethnic identity among the Taiwanese Holo was discussed in the preliminary conclusions in this paper.