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**From the Imagination of Cultural Politics of Emotion to
a Community of Sentiment -Take the Example of
Mainland Chinese Students Migrating from Mainland
China to Taiwan to listen to Taiwan Music**

Yingbo Tian

Athens Institute for Education and Research
9 Chalkokondili Street, 10677 Athens, Greece

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Yingbo Tian, PhD Candidate, National Chengchi University, China

**From the Imagination of Cultural Politics of Emotion to
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Appadurai (2009) explored the "work of the imagination" based on media and migration. Around 2000, Mainland Chinese students listened to Taiwan music through broadcast, tapes, TV and so on. They imagine what Taiwan is like through the text, music mv, song lyric, dramas, etc. Mainland China and Taiwan has different politics' imagination, Taiwanese could arrive China at any time, but Mainland Chinese could not go to Taiwan easily. In 2011, Taiwan released the Measures for People from Mainland China to Study in Taiwan at the Post-Secondary Level or Above, Mainland Chinese students could study to Taiwan for a period of time. Sara Ahmed (2004) explored "how emotions work to shape the 'surfaces' of individual and collective bodies". Mainland Chinese students are independent individuals in different areas in China, but when they become Mainland Chinese students in Taiwan who are assembling a migrating student body. Today's global ethnoscape's conflict is the globalization of native sentiment (Appadurai, 2009), Mainland Chinese students recognize Taiwan as a member of our family and a part of China. But when they migrated to Taiwan, they saw a different social picture distinguished from they imagined. I reviewed the current research about Mainland Chinese students, contained on the policy in the study of Mainland Chinese students, e.g. (Wang Qiu-shu, 2010; Hsu Hsiu-li, 2011; Lin Ming-chao, 2017); studies related to learning, e.g. (Su Yi-ching, 2015; Yuan Lin 2018); life adaptation studies, e.g. (Wang Juan, 2014; Zhao Yiming, 2018); political and identity-related studies, e.g. (Zhang Yujia, 2014; Shi Zhiyu, 2022); studies on news media coverage of Mainlanders, e.g. (Yang, Yunqiao, 2013); studies on media use by Mainlanders, e.g. (Huang, Yannan, and Su, Heng, 2019); research on cross-cultural communication and cultural adaptation, e.g. (Hu, Shaojia, 2012). There is one music study on Mainland Chinese students with Taiwan Modern Ballads, in which Ai Ke (2021) conducted feelings between politics of emotions in listening experience. However, there is no study combine Taiwan music with imagination, emotion and sentiment, so this study is an innovation. The research focus on the Mainland Chinese students who move through study opportunities from Mainland China (their provinces limits in Beijing, Shanghai, Jiangsu, Zhejiang, Guangzhou, Shenzhen, Hubei and Liaoning) to Taiwan. I selected 10 Mainland Chinese students who often listen Taiwan music regard music as a media which can communicate, exchange, discuss and share. This study plans to conduct in-depth interviews and Ellingson's (2017) embodied qualitative research. The

project interviews Mainland Chinese students about their musical imaginings about Taiwan in Mainland China and musical practices in Taiwan, and considers the cultural politics of the emotions conveyed by music, as well as reflections on the individual and the Mainland Chinese students as a group. The expected results of this study are Mainland Chinese students combine imagination before coming to Taiwan and music listening practice in Taiwan which help them gain a deeper understanding of Taiwan's society, and to gather together with the emotion conveyed by the mainland student community through music. Mainland Chinese students constituted the "community of sentiment" (Appadurai 1990) through Taiwan music, a group that begins to imagine and feel Mainland China and Taiwan together.

Keywords: *Mainland Chinese students, Taiwan music, imagination, emotion, sentiment*

Introduction

In 2011, Taiwan released the Measures for People from Mainland China to Study in Taiwan at the Post-Secondary Level or Above, Mainland Chinese students could study to Taiwan for a period of time. In the recent period, Taiwan also implemented the "Three Restrictions and Six Prohibitions" policy. "Three Restrictions" refer to restrictions on mainland Chinese students' academic qualifications, the number of mainland Chinese students, and recognition of medical qualifications. "Six Prohibitions" refer to mainland Chinese students not being eligible for scholarships, not affecting the admission opportunities of local students, not being allowed to work in Taiwan, not being able to work after graduation, and not being allowed to take public servant examinations. In 2011, mainland China opened up opportunities for students with household registration in Beijing, Shanghai, Jiangsu, Zhejiang, Fujian, and Guangdong to study in Taiwan. In 2013, Hubei and Liaoning were added, making a total of eight provinces whose students could apply to study in Taiwan. In February 2020, Taiwan announced the temporary suspension of entry for all students due to the Hubei epidemic, while allowing students from other countries to enter early. However, the blockade for mainland Chinese students lasted for six months. In April 2020, the Chinese Ministry of Education suspended mainland Chinese students' enrollment in Taiwan due to the epidemic and cross-strait relations. Except for those already studying at universities and pursuing master's degrees in Taiwan who could continue their studies, mainland Chinese students were no longer allowed to study in Taiwan. As of now, there have been no further changes to the policy regarding mainland Chinese students studying in Taiwan.

The mainland Chinese students I have come into contact with come to Taiwan for various reasons. Besides considering factors such as academic advancement and educational quality, some come based on recommendations from teachers or seniors, while others come because they are drawn to Taiwan's popular culture. Regardless of the reasons for their arrival, many students who have a strong affinity for Taiwanese pop culture find themselves even more

enamored after experiencing it firsthand. Whether it's through TV dramas, movies, literary works, or Taiwan's entertainment stars, pop singers, independent bands, writers, and poets, mainland Chinese students actively engage with various cultural activities in Taiwan alongside their studies. The migration of mainland Chinese students to Taiwan represents a cross-regional movement, and the early dissemination of Taiwanese pop culture to mainland China also reflects cultural exchange. After arriving in Taiwan, mainland Chinese students continue to deepen their understanding of Taiwan through its pop music. What significance does this pop music hold for mainland Chinese students? What do they gain from it? And how does their behavior change after experiencing the intersection of imagined and actual pop music?

Appadurai (2009) explored the "work of the imagination" based on media and migration. Around 2000, Mainland Chinese students listened to Taiwan music through broadcast, tapes, TV and so on. They imagine what Taiwan is like through the text, music mv, song lyric, dramas, etc. Mainland China and Taiwan has different politics' imagination, Taiwanese could arrive China at any time, but Mainland Chinese could not go to Taiwan easily.

Sara Ahmed (2004) explored "how emotions work to shape the 'surfaces' of individual and collective bodies". Mainland Chinese students are independent individuals in different areas in China, but when they become Mainland Chinese students in Taiwan who are assembling a migrating student body. Today's global ethnoscape's conflict is the globalization of native sentiment (Appadurai, 2009), Mainland Chinese students recognize Taiwan as a member of our family and a part of China. But when they migrated to Taiwan, they saw a different social picture distinguished from the one they imagined.

Chinese Mainland Students Studies

Currently, academic research related to mainland Chinese students includes studies on policies, such as Wang Qishu's (2010) research on policies regarding mainland Chinese students coming to Taiwan, Xu Xiuli's (2011) study on the key factors affecting the performance of Taiwan's highly efficient enrollment of mainland Chinese students, and Lin Mingchao's (2017) research on mainland Chinese students' health insurance. Additionally, there are studies on learning-related topics, such as Su Yiqing's (2015) research on the motivations, adaptation, and learning outcomes of mainland Chinese students using Chaoyang University of Technology as a case study, and Yuan Lin's (2018) study on cross-cultural learning experiences of master's students in social work. Furthermore, research on adaptation to life includes Wang Juan'an's (2014) comparative study of the adaptation of Hong Kong, Macau, and mainland Chinese students in Taiwan using the example of National Taiwan University, and Zhao Yiming's (2018) study on the cross-cultural adaptation of mainland Chinese students in Taiwan. There are also studies on politics and identity, such as Zhang Yujia's (2014) research on the institutional framework and national boundaries of mainland Chinese students coming to Taiwan, and Shi Zhiyu's (2022) investigation into the changes in

mainland Chinese students' views on China based on identity theory through interviews with six mainland Chinese students who have been in Taiwan for more than four years, focusing on aspects of assimilation, patriotism, and communication. Additionally, there are studies on mainland Chinese students reported by other news media, such as Yang Yunqiao's (2013) analysis of mainland Chinese students' expression willingness and media usage regarding the sovereignty of the Diaoyu Islands issue using the theory of the spiral of silence. Studies from the perspectives of cross-cultural communication and cultural adaptation often focus on media usage, such as Huang Yanan and Su Heng's (2019) analysis of mainland Chinese students' changes in the use of cross-strait social media in Taiwan from the perspective of cultural communication, and the issues of social context and cultural adaptation of mainland Chinese students in Taiwan. Hu Shaojia's (2012) study investigates a mainland Chinese student's experiences before and after coming to Taiwan, examining their exposure to Taiwanese information, cultural content, and social environment through diaries and interviews, exploring and interpreting the cultural adaptation and identity development of mainland Chinese students from the perspective of cross-cultural communication. Lastly, Ye Naijing's (2018) research explores the information avoidance behavior of mainland Chinese and Taiwanese students in interactive situations from a social perspective (worldview, social norms, social support, etc.), analyzing phenomena such as information avoidance, reasons for information avoidance, factors influencing information avoidance, and outcomes of information avoidance in the interaction context between mainland Chinese and Taiwanese students.

There is one music study on Mainland Chinese students with Taiwan Modern Ballads, in which Ai Ke (2021) conducted feelings between politics of emotions in listening experience. However, there is no study combine Taiwan music with imagination, emotion and sentiment, so this study is an innovation.

Research Methodology and Design

This research project adopts an in-depth interview method and Ellingson's (2017) embodied qualitative research. I interviewed 10 mainland Chinese students in Taiwan who often listen Taiwan music regard music as a media which can communicate, exchange, discuss and share. Talking about their life experiences and scenes related to Taiwanese pop music. Initially, it is expected that one and a half months will be required for actual in-depth interviews about their favorite Taiwanese pop music, including specific singers or bands, as well as any events related to Taiwanese pop music that they have participated in. The interviews will be recorded, and full-text transcripts will be made simultaneously. Subsequently, it is anticipated that another one and a half months will be needed to comprehensively organize all the data and write up the text.

Mainland Chinese students have become an indispensable part of the community in Taiwan. Through the lens of popular music, the author aims to explore the life of mainland Chinese students in Taiwan. Against the backdrop of

the times, this research will document the cross-strait communication and development of Taiwanese pop music, as well as mainland Chinese students' everyday musical practices and personal life experiences in Taiwan.

Before coming to Taiwan, mainland Chinese students imagine what Taiwan is like through Taiwanese pop music or TV dramas

In 2011, the opening of Taiwan to mainland Chinese students and individual tourism to Taiwan, known as the "Personal Tour Plan" in mainland China, was initially introduced in June 2011 as a new form of tourism to Taiwan after group tours. Initially, only Beijing, Shanghai, and Xiamen were allowed, but by 2015, the number of cities allowed increased to 47. Therefore, before the opening of tourism and students from the mainland coming to study, mainlanders without direct family ties to Taiwan were unable to visit Taiwan. Mainland students imagine what Taiwan is like through Taiwanese pop music, song lyrics, music videos, TV dramas, and the appearances of celebrities.

Almost at that time, there were a lot of Taiwanese TV dramas, especially those by Qiong Yao. Qiong Yao's Taiwanese TV dramas were very numerous (Interviewee A).

Because our understanding of Taiwan was actually very limited, basically through idol dramas and then pop music, at that time, we used these methods to understand. Maybe he has some exaggerated impressions of idol dramas, like talking about wealthy young ladies from prestigious families, and then you'd see things like luxury cars and mansions, including their MVs and pop music. Their popular music at that time should have been relatively leading in Asia, during my childhood. So, I would feel like they should be more prosperous than mainland China to some extent.(Interviewee E)

The Popularity of Taiwanese Pop Music in Mainland China in 2000

The post-90s mainland Chinese students I interviewed were exposed to various popular music during their primary, middle, and high school years in mainland China, around the year 2000. They listened to early Taiwanese pop artists such as SHE, Jay Chou, Mayday, Jolin Tsai, and others. This period coincided with the peak of Taiwanese pop music's popularity. Since that time, mainland Chinese students have been exposed to Taiwanese pop music, learning about Taiwan and Taiwanese people through different Taiwanese pop music artists or bands. They experienced the lyrics and melodies of pop music and saw images of Taiwan in music videos. These early sounds, lyrics, and images left mainland Chinese students with beautiful expectations and fantasies about Taiwan. During their youth, singing songs together with friends or lovers, buying tapes, CDs, or merchandise of Taiwanese music stars, copying lyrics, and various other behaviors formed memories of that special period.

At that time, apart from Jay Chou, there was nothing else, nothing else that was on the same level as him. It seemed like mainland China didn't have any very famous pop music stars at that time, so we actually listened to Jay Chou a lot (Interviewee B).

During primary school, I really liked listening to Taiwanese pop music, as it was quite popular at the time, and also because of Taiwanese idol dramas, I would listen to some OSTs (Interviewee E).

After high school, influenced by classmates, I consciously started listening to Mayday.

I had a wish to attend a Mayday concert with someone I liked.

In the second year of high school, I went on a study trip to Taiwan organized by the school for a week at Kaohsiung High School.

I bought Mayday merchandise, feeling closer to them.

I like Mayday, I like Taiwan (Interviewee D).

Many people ask me why I like Jay Chou. At that time, I had a lyric book, and many classmates came to borrow it. Singing together with everyone was truly wonderful. And many songs are associated with different friends. For example, the first song I learned to sing, "Clear Sky," was taught to me by a good friend in my first year of junior high. She sang it to me all the time. For example, a friend and I passionately sang "Silence" and its lyrics, expressing "loving yet leaving." And of course, there were many love songs that reflected our youthful emotions at the time. As I grew up, I wasn't as enthusiastic about music as I was during my school days, but when it comes to Jay Chou and his songs, I still feel like they represent my youth. Interviewee G)

Music as a Medium

During elementary, middle, and high school in mainland China, most schools prohibited bringing mobile phones to school. Consequently, music became a means of communication in many scenarios. Mainland Chinese students shared experiences such as morning radio calisthenics music and the relaxed and enjoyable time during lunch break when popular music was played on the radio station. In high school, there was also a half-hour period after Wednesday lunch for appreciating and studying music. Most students used this time to teach each other popular songs:

Back then, the songs played on the radio could be requested. Students would write short stories about themselves or their friends/lovers and pair them with a favorite song, creating a sense of sending blessings to the entire school. I remember once requesting a song by Pan Weibo, and it made me secretly happy!

During study periods, mainland Chinese students would discuss their favorite pop music with classmates in addition to their heavy workload. They would secretly lend each other portable music players or listen to music at home. Bringing purchased tapes or CDs or lyric books to school to discuss lyrics with

friends, or some would buy a beautiful notebook specifically for copying down lyrics. These behaviors made music a means of communication. It was during a time when other electronic media couldn't be used, and the internet environment wasn't as developed, providing an excellent environment for the dissemination of music, which is sound.

During that time, TVs or computers at school were only allowed to be used with the teacher's permission or during special times. We couldn't bring mobile phones, and even if we did, there weren't as many videos to watch as there are now. Listening to music and reading novels were already considered great privileges for students!

I was a huge fan of Mayday during high school. After every evening self-study session, I would listen to some songs to encourage myself. On the day of the college entrance examination, Mayday's songs were played, and I felt even more encouraged to do well on the exam! And I did perform really well! It was very inspiring!(Interviewee G)

Reunion with Music for Mainland Chinese Students in Taiwan

Although most interviewees had already begun to love Taiwanese pop music during their early school years, coming to Taiwan further stimulated their interest in attending pop music events. However, one mainland Chinese student interviewee shared that during their early school years, they mainly listened to mainland Chinese singers. But after coming to Taiwan, they felt a connection with Taiwan's local culture, which increased their interest in Taiwanese pop musicians and various Taiwanese music genres, leading to a greater love for Taiwanese pop music.

There is an image of Taiwanese artists, such as being highly cultured and humble. The first concert the interviewee attended in Taiwan was Liu Ruoying's at the Taipei Arena. Later, they became a big fan of Pan Weibo. They had seen his performances in Taipei, which felt more intimate than seeing him on the internet. There was a love for both music and people.(Interviewee H)

Some mainland Chinese students also felt that Taiwan is an atmospheric place. Although they had only heard a lot of Taiwanese pop music before and hadn't liked it very much, after coming to Taipei, they wanted to visit iconic music venues like Witch House and attend concerts of Mayday or Sodagreen. Also, mainland Chinese students studying at National Chengchi University learned that Wu Qingfeng's "Little Love Song" was written on the campus, which added another layer of love for the school, seniors, and music.

It seems that I like Wu Qingfeng more after coming to National Chengchi University. Although Sodagreen's "Little Love Song" was familiar to everyone and everyone could sing it, there was a special feeling walking around the campus. These traces of the path in the environment, being so close, and creating such great works, made me feel proud! Last year, I was lucky enough to attend Sodagreen's free concert for fans. Their songs were amazing and so pleasant to listen to. The atmosphere at the concert was great too! And Qingfeng's talk was really

interesting and funny. My friends from mainland China said he's not as open there! (Interviewee G)

Through pop music and musicians to gain a deeper understanding of Taiwan

Many interviewees share that through listening to songs and participating in music activities, they use music to gain a deeper understanding of Taiwanese culture. Sometimes, musicians themselves have certain charismatic qualities that allow mainland students to experience the friendliness and warmth of Taiwanese musicians.

Attending Xu Jiaying's concert, experiencing a different level of dedication and emotion compared to other singers, because Xu Jiaying would come to the back rows to sing closer to the audience, showing the artist's aura, attitude, and invisible gratitude and thankfulness towards life. Growing up in a good cultural environment in Taipei, she delicately observes people's feelings, emotionally cares about this aspect, and is moved by the healing power of music. (Interviewee H)

During Mayday's concert in Kaohsiung, there was a talk session, and Masa brought out Kaohsiung's salted crispy chicken while speaking. Later, hearing from friends about a recommended salted crispy chicken restaurant in Fengshan, Kaohsiung, they decided to visit for the double reasons of recommendation and love for Taiwanese cuisine, and unexpectedly found it to be the best salted crispy chicken they had ever tasted in Taiwan. (Interviewee F)

Jolin Tsai's song "Rose Boy" is one of the most beloved songs voted by the audience at the Kaohsiung Pop Music Center. This caring song resonates with many. Even girls who have encountered setbacks feel inspired when they listen, as there's a lyric that says, "The most beautiful bloom is the counterattack." (Interviewee G)

The cultural politics of emotion of Mainland Chinese students: Both sides of the strait are one family

Early mainland students who came to study at National Chengchi University in Taiwan have all heard about exchange students specifically taking courses at the College of Communication to learn from Wu Qingfeng, because besides being a member of the College of Liberal Arts, he also majored in advertising. There are also fans of other pop musicians among mainland students who attend concerts in Taiwan, such as those of Mayday's New Year's Eve concerts, attending every session or selecting several to attend, and scrambling for tickets for Wu Qingfeng's music festivals, concerts, or live house gigs.

Being able to attend a Mayday concert in person is truly a blessing! Expressing some inner feelings through singing, feeling very happy and meaningful to spend the New Year's Eve with them! (Interviewee G)

There are even fans of Jay Chou among mainland students who couldn't wait for his concert. They would rush to the venue upon seeing social media posts about Jay Chou playing basketball at NTNU. They would also go to his trendy

clothing store to buy clothes and to his favorite bubble tea shop to buy bubble tea, and so on. They would also visit the filming locations of his music videos or movies, such as the one shot at Tamkang High School in Tamsui for "Secret", and take a day trip to Tamsui on holidays, focusing on capturing the classic scenes from "Secret" and combining movie scenes with real-life scenes.

I think listening to Jay Chou's Chinese-style music, and continuing to listen after coming to Taiwan, I have always believed that we are one family! There is no distance! Music knows no boundaries, and there is no distance between us!

From the Imagination of Cultural Politics of Emotion to a Community of Sentiment

Interviewees share that through their studies and life in Taiwan, they have made many Taiwanese friends through music interactions. Some have met fellow fans of certain singers at concerts or small live houses, while others have connected through specific music communities online. Additionally, mainland students often share their musical experiences openly on social media, leading to proactive interactions with others who share similar interests. During these interactions, people discuss music both online and offline, regardless of backgrounds or geographical boundaries, avoiding political topics and focusing solely on music-related stories. These interactions have extended to forming close friendships, where individuals share aspects of their lives and express a desire to visit mainland China through exchanges with mainland students.

One Taiwanese interviewee mentioned, "Originally, my family didn't understand much about mainland China, but after getting to know you as friends, we found that you are really nice people, which has changed our traditional impression of mainlanders. We also really want to visit mainland China."

Through music, I have really gotten to know many Taiwanese people who have great musical tastes and also enjoy rock bands from our mainland. Discussing music with them has enriched my knowledge about Taiwanese bands that I didn't know much about before. (Interviewee G)

Conclusion

In the past, during the youthful years, listening to various kinds of music, singing, and sharing songs about friendship, growth, dreams, and love were all related to youth and popular music's self-perception. Liking a singer, liking a band, liking many Taiwanese pop musicians, and pop music. The time spent listening to these pop musicians, buying tapes, CDs, and sharing with different friends, behind these actions, is also a kind of emotion towards Taiwanese pop music and musicians.

During those years when they couldn't come to the Treasure Island of Taiwan, imagining what Taiwan across the strait looked like through Taiwanese pop music. Is it the freshness of idol dramas? Is it the encouragement in the lyrics?

Is it the literary style of some music MVs? The deep emotions toward Taiwan make mainland students yearn to come to the other side of mainland China.

After coming to Taiwan, they see the real appearance of Taiwan. Maybe it's not as prosperous but rather old-fashioned, but after understanding it, they know it's also part of the overall humanized planning and design. Being able to have many opportunities to contact music, giving birth to many different musicians, hearing many different rich music. Going to various pop music venues to listen to songs, visiting the favorite shops of pop musicians, or following things they like (such as interviewees sharing that they would go to Jay Chou's favorite milk tea shop Machi Machi), further understanding Taiwan through Taiwanese musicians.

In the process of interacting with Taiwanese people through music, they feel the sincerity, friendliness, and enthusiasm of Taiwanese people. Everyone openly shares stories about music and what music they like, and there is no distance between them. The practice of listening to music together reflects the practice of being close to each other across the strait. Many Taiwanese people who communicate with mainland students further understand the mainland through them and want to visit the mainland in the future. There are also Taiwanese friends who originally liked mainland music, who, like mainland students, imagine what the mainland looks like through mainland music, and have curiosity and goodwill towards the mainland. In the world of music, the imagination and emotional cultural politics before mainland students came to Taiwan have formed a *community of sentiment* with Taiwanese friends through music. China mainland and Taiwan are the *community of sentiment*.

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