The Local Dimension of Identity Construction in a Web-Based Political Organization

Presented at the
German Institute for Japanese Studies, Tokyo

By Peichi Chung (鍾珮琦)
National Chiao Tung University (國立交通大學), Taiwan
Presentation Structure

- Intro on internet/ICT penetration in Taiwan
- Taiwan’s politics
- Media Context
- Case Study: Taiwan Independence Party
- Significance
1. Internet Penetration up to 2003
Household Connection to Internet

- Households without Internet connection: 47%
- Households with Internet connection: 53%
IT Penetration in Domestic Scale (2002)

- 53% households connected to the internet
- 72% households having computers
- 58% households subscribed to broadband
IT Penetration in Global Scale

Taiwan 2002
- Regular Internet Users: 8.7 m (39% penetration)
- Broadband Subscribers: 2.7 m (9.4% density)
- Mobile Phone Subscribers: 25 m (112% density)
- Mobile Internet Subscribers: 1.7 m

Japan
- Broadband Penetration: 12.6 m (6.1%)

- Among 178 economies
  - 9th in the world
  - 3rd in Asia
- Sweden
- Denmark
- Iceland
- Korea
- Norway
- Netherlands
- Hong Kong
- Finland
- Taiwan
- Canada
Broadband Penetration Worldwide (ITU 2003)
Mobile Phone User Density (ITU 2003)

- Taiwan (106%)
- Luxembourg (101%)
- Israel (95%)
- Hong Kong (92.98%)
- Italy (92.65%)
- Iceland (90%)
- Sweden (88%)
- Czech Republic (84.88%)
- Finland (84.5%)
- UK (84.49%)
ICT Development

- Internet’s readiness and advancement in both domestic and global scale

- Internet’s potential to reach more than 50% of total population in Taiwan (emerging media)
2. Taiwan’s Politics

- 1895-1945 Japanese empire
- 1945 - Chinese KMT (國民黨)
- 3 ethnic origins:
  - Chinese (14%)
  - Taiwanese (85%)
  - Aborgines (1%)
- Ethnic conflict in the 228 Incident in 1947
Japanese Troops in Taiwan
Taiwanese Students Welcoming Chinese Arrival
Taipei Riot in 1947
Ethnic Conflict
Taiwanese Nationalism vs Chinese Nationalism

Taiwanese
- Anti the Kuomintan (國民黨)
- Pro Independence
- Taiwan vs China
- Lower Social Status
- Nostalgia of Japanese Occupation

Chinese
- Anti Communism (People’s Republic of China)
- Pro Unification
- One China Policy
- Higher Social Status
- Anti Japanese Empire
3. Media Context:

Mainstream Media (1949-1987):
The Silence of Taiwanese Voice
- Radio
- Television
- Film
- Newspaper

Alternative Medium (1987-present):
The Emergence of Taiwanese Voice
- Cable
- The Internet
Radio

Ownership of more than 70% controlled by KMT and military

Use of government propaganda:
- Broadcasting Corporation of China
- Anti-communist broadcast
- Domestic and overseas Broadcast
Television

- All state-owned up to 1987
- ‘Elite’ management: no Taiwanese
- Strict censorship promoting national policy
  - 1972: Teaching Chinese language (70%); 2 Taiwanese songs per day
  - The disappearance of Taiwanese language after 70s
1 Central Motion Picture Corporation

1949: Temporary Provisions Effective During the Period of Communist Rebellion (No Japanese Movies)

Forbidding: the damage of President Chiang, the praise of PRC, the criticism of the U.S. – Taiwan relation
Newspaper

2 major newspapers (80% market):
- China Times (中國時報)
- United Daily News (聯合報)
- Owned by Chinese

Publication law enforcing suspension of violated newspapers
Cable

- Post 1987 (martial law deregulation)
- Backyard satellite dish to wired cable
  - Illegal reception of HBO, NHK, CNN…
- 1990s: Opposition voice through Democracy Television Station
The Internet

- Bulletin Board System in TANET
  - Only Uncensored Political Discussion Sites in the Media

- World Wide Web Popularity in 1996
  - Use of Web Broadcast by Political Parties
4. Case Study:

**Taiwan Independence Party**

- Supports independence
- Established by radical fundamentalists in 1996
- The most Taiwan-centered voice on the internet
- Lack of presence in mainstream media
TAIP Web Site
13 subsections:
- Most updated news releases
- Affiliate offices in Taiwan
- Party program and structure
- Party’s guiding principles
- Party manifesto
- Party newsletters
- …
- Friends from Japan
- Recent meeting updates
The TAIP Web Site

As a broadcast center to:

- Participate in the making of media rhetoric inside Taiwan
- Present Self-image for public understanding
- Mediate communication to web site visitors
Media Presence

- Chinese archive page since 1999
台灣島上建立台灣國的時機將到:

“建國黨堅持台灣要獨立建國，且認為現在是最重要的時刻，正如小林善紀在台灣論所說的，台灣正處於建國神話之時刻，而就在此建國因際會之際，金美齡女士勇敢的站出來出任國王沒有穿衣的真話，這位素有台灣才女之稱的勇敢台灣人，是非清楚，將台灣運動奉為職志，是台灣建國之母。

外來者不認同台灣，其大中國的思想將台灣視為邊陲，好不容易換了一個主張本土化的新政府，但實際上並非本土化，反而成為台灣的本土政黨掩護了中國思想，這種只想要拿到政權，獲取利益，而不教育獨立的政黨，終究會失敗。”
Self Manifestation

- Introduction on Taiwan
  - Island characteristics – an independent perspective
- Party propaganda
  - Party’s most current development
  - Affiliate offices
  - Constitution after independence
- Party’s newsletter and publication
  - Preaching the importance of independence (critique on other parties)
  - Teaching Taiwanese written language
As a matter of fact, who causes the *ethnic problems* in Taiwan? This is a good question to ask those of you who never want to settle in Taiwan. It is also a good issue to challenge those of you – old and young “taros” – who always think of yourselves as *strangers* in Taiwan. It is out of question that the Chiang Kai-Shek family caused unbearable damage to Taiwan. There is no need for us to wait for historian to reach this conclusion. Everything is already proved (TAIP web site, 2001)
It wasn’t until the 26th of June in 1997 that I began to change…This was my first day to attend street activity. It was also my first time to leave home without my daughter…But today I wanted to be myself…The fireworks program brought everyone to a heightened state…The brightness of the sky seemed to tell the world that Taiwan wants independence. It was telling that Taiwan wants to be herself…The people here were those with flesh and blood, and people who had the real love and hate. What about me? I lived with innocence for my first thirty years. What have I done for Taiwan? I wish I were able to defend this beautiful island, my country, my home – Taiwan (TAIP web site, 2001).
Communication for public coalition

- Talk with the chairman
- Letters from Japanese friends
- Public forum
- Call for coalition
Reaction to political situation on the street
The Republic of Taiwan Passport Movement
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2003.3.21</td>
<td>非洲のか グレッド・ウェン様</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003.3.21</td>
<td>台湾は中国の一部ではない。それでも…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003.3.21</td>
<td>台湾は中国の一部ではない。</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003.3.21</td>
<td>国家の再生</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003.3.25</td>
<td>海洋権益を目指せる部が強い中国人民解放軍海軍</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003.3.25</td>
<td>日本にとっての最大の敵は</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003.3.25</td>
<td>日本と台湾</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003.3.25</td>
<td>中国、アメリカの方が危険では？</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003.3.25</td>
<td>中国軍</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003.3.25</td>
<td>虎ノ牙</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003.3.25</td>
<td>シナ国体化</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003.3.25</td>
<td>同盟とは…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003.3.25</td>
<td>新中国、台湾民国！</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003.3.25</td>
<td>新疆</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003.3.25</td>
<td>実にところを</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003.3.25</td>
<td>再「二独立」イコール「統一」ではない</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003.3.25</td>
<td>日台比の軸、今が好機？</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003.3.25</td>
<td>中国、台湾海軍の現状</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003.3.25</td>
<td>彼らの本音は</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003.3.25</td>
<td>新聞より</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003.3.25</td>
<td>「再独立」イコール「統一」ではない</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
日本の未来

パブリック・デッキが勝負された挙げ句の好況は解散。長い平成不況と、一部の経済
攻撃で経済力の急速に終焉。パブリック・デッキの発生と拡大は20年代半ばの日本経済
のプラス成長が大きに変わっています。そこで日本の経済力が高週期に変わりました。

もし日本の立場のない国際情勢において、アメリカのために
景気過熱・異常変動状態で経済成長が維持つつですか、パブリックを拡大し続けました。

日本の経済はどこにどうたらか、急速に高まる真剣な問題に、いわゆるドル240円時代の半ば
に米国債を再転換して大量に寄付したナバリモン経済を支えました。自分を犠牲にしてでも資本主義の中核を預かるアメリカを守ろうとしたのです。その政策に行ざるえようアメリカの形態のために、国民経済が緊急に回復しています。

何故なら、米国の所有権の国際的価値にあたるアメリカ中国に一方的に有利で、日本はその通路をつけて戦後に投資の生産物を厚生される一方のようです。その点で日本の経済・財政も大切ですが、文化・文明としての「日本の復興」が最も重要ではないでしょうか。

私の考えは、日本社会がアメリカニズムと左右両国にこれ以上優遇され、資源を被せられ、壊されたことはあるです。今の日本のエンターテイメント文化は戦後までの遺産として高品質のものです。経済的なインフレ、ただアメリカのものや経済主義のものだとした日本製として存在する意味があります。国際的な傾向に、文化を取り戻し、高めることと、政治的・経済的な事実独立の達成しようという上は同じとの面白いであるように思えます。自分達自身で価値と人生の意味を追求し、進化、全成長の収束に成り下がることです。

無制限に中国の価値を上げたい、新を追求する人が多いのは、日本の悲劇です。現代日本は、中国の歴史を改ざんの手をきれて国民の間で害し、文化を傷つける、違いと無理に成り下がることがある。そこで、人たちはこの国をさらなる歴史をしなければなりません。
“These letters are all from unknown friends in Japan. Some sent them by mails and some used the Internet to email us. Readers from People’s Republic of China tended to hack our web site. They many times changed images on our pages with x-rated pictures. But friends from Japan were really supportive. There was one letter that told us how Taiwan is a friend of Japan. The person who wrote the letter said that Taiwan is the guardian gate to Japan’s ocean business. Taiwan is the most friendly neighboring country. Taiwan is also a place where many old Japanese spirits and traditions get to be preserved. His letter touched me deeply...” (December 2, 2003).
5. Significance

- The get-away of negative report
- Marginal voice presented
- New global and local relation
- A strong “national” discourse
Reaffirmation of Self-Identity

Taiwanese in mainstream media
- Second class citizen
- Folk (Yam)
- Low taste
- One of Chinese ethnicities (漢人)
- Japanese colonized (皇民化)

Taiwanese in TAIP web site:
- Taiwanese with subjective identity
- Self
- Struggling social agent
- Not Chinese
- With Japanese heritage
- Real Taiwanese
Conclusion

- Participation in local politics
- Equal competition
- Small scale cohesive cyber community
- Site for cultural resistance and identity struggle