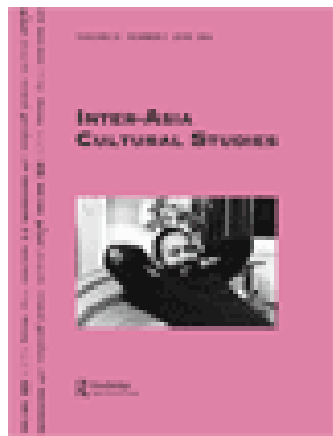


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Building a new society on the base of locality: transformation of social forces in Taiwan during the 1990s

CHEN Jui-hua[†]

ABSTRACT *The aim of this article is to explain the transformation of social forces in Taiwan during the 1990s, as well as the “ideals of society” embedded in Community Construction that aims to reconstruct the local community. Based upon the analysis of discourses of movement agents, I differentiate four ideal-types of “good society” configured in the Community Construction. First, by the ideal-type of “indigenous (bentu) society,” people hope to reconstruct local history and local culture. Secondly, by “civilized society,” people want to build a society in which its residents live in solidarity and civility. Thirdly, by “civil society” people emphasize the importance of grassroots democracy and the subject position based on locality in order to respond to forces of the state and the market. Lastly, by “civic society” people aims to construct communities encompassing different geographical ranges, in which people from different backgrounds can live together and integrate into a civic nation. Among these ideal-types, “civic society” is the articulating link between “indigenous society” and “civil society,” while locality has become the fundamental element in defining “culture” and “community” in Taiwan. As a result, the cultural resistance based on locality has transformed into the cultural governance focusing on locality.*

KEYWORDS: community construction, localization, social forces, civil society, civic society

1. Introduction

Localization (*difanghua*) has usually been considered as a pairing movement to globalization. During the 1990s in Taiwan, the Community Construction (*shequ yingzao*) movement incarnated the momentum created by localization. Indigenization (*bentuhua*) and democratization have been two major dimensions adapted by researchers to analyze its social implications. But how do these two dimensions coexist and interconnect? What is Community Construction's effect as a whole on the transformation in 1990s' Taiwan?

Localization as social actions based on locality (*difang*)¹ is not a new phenomenon, as it emerged in Taiwan during the 1990s when globalization became a focus of academic debate. Local movements have emerged in different times in different countries in accordance with the latter's historical development and position in the world-system. Each of the movements took place at different speeds and in different forms, in accordance with the particular historical context of the nation in question. For example, in France, the regionalist movement resurged in the 1960s; in Japan, the hometown development movement (*machizukuri*) emerged towards the end of 1960s and thrived during the 1970s. These movements have continued since then;² in South Korea, the government launched the New Community Movement (*Saemaul Undong*) in the 1970s, which was aimed at reforming rural villages and urban districts. These actions do not have the same characteristics—some of them are

[†]Note on spelling: including the author's name, all the Asian names in the text are presented in the Asian order: last name first.

social movements and others are governmental policies—but “locality” has been the field upon which various practices have been launched.

The aim of the Community Construction in Taiwan was not only to reconstruct local community in certain districts or villages, but also to reconstruct the whole society, as well as to redefine “Taiwan” as a nation. However, no movement is born in a vacant space of history. Community Construction itself was the fruit of previous historical process.

Around 1987, the year Taiwan’s martial law was lifted, social movements thrived across the island. To explain such a development, researchers proposed the concept of “social forces” (Hsiao 1989).

After 1992 in Taiwan, the quantity and the scale of social movements in the urban street were much weaker than before. On the other hand, towards the end of the 1980s, social actions aiming to enhance local culture emerged sporadically in certain townships, while in the 1990s, groups or associations devoted to investigating local histories and promoting local cultures popped up almost everywhere across the island. Concomitantly, in urban areas, people launched collective actions to protect the environment of their own neighborhoods. Some researchers considered these actions as “community movement” and saw them as a sign of the emergence of the “civil society.”

Various autonomous people’s actions based on locality, such as the above mentioned ones, facilitated the transformation of governmental policy. The Council of Cultural Affairs³ became the locomotive for the policy transformation and proposed to use Community Construction as a cultural policy to respond to waves of local movements. This policy integrated gradually with different social actions aiming for social reform, and transformed itself into a serial of actions operating in the field of the “local,” in which social movements and public policies interconnected. In this transformation, local community became not only one important arena for these actions for social reform to take place, but also a platform on which many social forces interconnected. As a result, Community Construction’s influences were not only limited to the urban areas or to a certain social category, but encompassing many places and social classes. It became a widespread and deeply influential community movement.

Many researchers have tried to define the social implications of Community Construction. These definitions can be summarized into two major points: (1) Community Construction is considered as the action to establish a “civil society,” it thus embodies the idea of democratization (Lii 2007a, 2007b; Yang 2007); (2) Community Construction is interpreted as one of the efforts to establish a new national identity based on Taiwan, it thus also represents the idea of indigenization (Huang 1995; Lu 2002). Each of the two points illustrates a certain dimension of the movement. However, the questions I would like to ask are: how do they coexist and interconnect? What is Community Construction’s effect as a whole on the transformation of the social forces in Taiwan during the 1990s?

Protest actions, which were extremely active in the late 1980s, were in a state of stagnation and decline in the early 1990s. Concurrently, actions focusing on the reconstruction of locality became a prosperous type of movement in Taiwan. Many studies have recognized the temporal sequence of these actions, but they have hardly analyzed the relation between transformations that happened in these two periods of time.⁴ Were the, respectively, rise and fall of these two kinds of social actions during the 1990s just a coexistence of two parallel phenomena, or was there an intrinsic linkage between them?

The aim of this article is to analyze the localization of social forces behind various social actions and movements in Taiwan during the 1990s as well as the “ideals of society” embedded in actions aiming to reconstruct the local community. In the following sections, I will first re-examine two major arguments about the transformation of social forces in Taiwan during the 1990s, and propose the idea of the “localization of social forces” as an alternative explanation. Secondly, I will analyze such localization by presenting the rationale

through which agents of social actions explain why they have decided to return to the local in the beginning of 1990s. Thirdly, I will differentiate four “ideals of society” embedded in these actions with locality as the focus of their concerns: the indigenous society, the civilized society, the civil society, and the civic society. Furthermore, I will argue that “civic society” is the link connecting the two major arguments of the social implication of Community Construction. Finally in conclusion, the implications of the localization of social forces will be discussed.

2. Emergence and transformation of social forces in Taiwan

During the 1980s, many collective social actions were launched to combat pollution in Taiwan. Around 1987, the year martial law was lifted, social movements thrived with full force. According to Hsiao Hsin-huang (1989, 32, 56), the eruption of social movements during this period was due to the liberation of “social forces” from the domination of “political forces” and “economic forces.” This liberation was the result of the transformation of social structure as well as social consciousness. With these transformations, social forces began to address distortions caused by political and economic forces, demanding social change. In other words, social forces are the collective manifestation of people’s power, with the thriving of social movements as its most striking display.⁵

However, social movements in the form of protests and demonstrations weakened in the early 1990s—many of them encountered the problem of weak mobilization. Some researchers tried to explain the causes of such decline of social movements.⁶ A decade later, instead of focusing on the “decline,” researchers started to view it as a transformation, and asked: if social forces didn’t vanish but have been transformed, how did this happen?

Ho Ming-sho offered an interpretation with the idea of “regularization” (*zhiduhua*):

Environmental movements did not vanish in the stage of democratization [...]. However, such movements in the form of protest did not cause as much tension as they did in the preceding decade, neither. With protests treated in milder ways and official channels to deal with the issues available, large-scale mass protests decreased gradually. We call such a development the regularization of social movements, since they have been successfully incorporated into the democratic daily life and became a solid sector of the civil society. (Ho 2000, 159)⁷

Three years later, Lii Ding-tzan and Lin Wen-yuan (2003) proposed the theory of “organizationalization” (*zuzhihua*)⁸ of social movements to explain such a transformation in environmental movements, suggesting the application of new organizational techniques allowed environmental movements to transform from violent confrontations to professional lobbying. The violent confrontations were thus moderated and under control. From this perspective, the transformation of social forces was interpreted in two concurrent trends: organizationalization in form and domestication in spirit.

Regularization and the application of organizational technique illustrate, respectively, certain aspects of the transformation of social forces in Taiwan after the 1990s.⁹ What I want to carry on asking here is not whether the two explications of social force transformation are “correct,” but what aspects of those transformations can the explications help us to understand.

First, in order to facilitate our comprehension of the validity of the two explications, we can differentiate between two types of social movement study: *organizational conditions analysis* and *historical transformations analysis*.¹⁰ The former focuses on the conditions and the strategies for social movements to mobilize people and sustain themselves, while the latter concerns primarily the significance of the emergence of new social movements and tends to explain their characters by situating them in the transformation of the society. The former analyzes political opportunities, organizational techniques and cultural framings,

while the latter explores the historical context, social implications and cultural characteristics of certain social movements.

In fact, the distinction between these two types of studies mentioned above is valid only in the sense of ideal type. The studies on social systems also explore the historical context in which the movement appears; those who study historical transformation cannot ignore the systemic elements in the social movement. Nevertheless, what needs to be clarified here is how these different perspectives influenced the orientation of the studies.

Although Ho (2000) analyses social movements in their historical context, he focuses on the aspect of the “social system” while the historical significance of social movements is neglected, even abandoned.¹¹ Lii and Lin paid more attention to the social implication of the transformation of social forces, but while they did situate social movements in their historical context, they did not analyze the historical context itself. In other words, they have demonstrated such transformation in terms of the techniques being applied rather than historical implications. As a result, Lii, Lin and Ho’s analyses share two characteristics. First, analyses based on regularization and organizationalization explained the *technical transformation*, not the *historical transformation* of social movements. What can be analyzed by these explanations is the general orientation of modern society development. That is, according to these analyses, as long as social movements continue to develop, the rationale of organizationalization will come into play; as long as political conditions allow, the process of regularization will occur. However, what analyses based on regularization and organizationalization can tackle is not the formation of social movements emerging from new conditions created by new historical development, but the results that individual social movements in modern nation-states are supposed to produce. If we want to explain the transformation of social forces behind these social movements, we need to pay more attention to where the new social movements emerge, and how different social movements thrive and/or weaken respectively.

Secondly, analyses based on theories of regularization and organizationalization tend to lead researchers to adopt a movement-centered perspective rather than an actor-centered one. That is, when actors of one movement turn to engage in another movement, they stop being a qualified object of study for researchers, for the former are no longer “relevant” to the movement per se. However, for the actors, physical confrontations and protests, as well as involving in legislative lobbying are all parts of social movements, as are protecting the environment and human rights, and involvement with other cultural and educational issues—all these are fields of participation chosen by actors to take actions through the process of problem defining and meaning seeking. The vicissitudes that social movements have gone through are also the result of actors’ “investment transition” among different fields of participation. By analyzing the transformation of a certain movement, we can understand its rise and fall, as well as the transformation in terms of organizational techniques of social forces. Whereas, to explore the historical transformation of social forces, we need to move our focus from “social movement” to “social action.”

To analyze the historical transformation of social forces in Taiwan during the 1990s, I propose moving beyond analyses based on the perspective of regularization and organizational techniques. The perspective proposed by this article instead is “localization.”

3. Localization of social forces

The localization of social forces is manifested firstly in the phenomenon that social movement activists began to shift the sites of struggle from the streets in urban districts to local areas. In these processes, the meaning of their local endeavor is connected to the progress of national society. In the following, I will take the environmental movement, political reformation

movement and the indigenous movement as examples to illustrate how social movements were localized in the early 1990s.

3.1. From the environment to the homeland

Guanyin Township had been an important rice production area in Taoyuan County, Taiwan. However, since the early 1980s, it has suffered from repeated environmental pollution and destruction. In a statement entitled “The Genesis of the *Kuanyin Cultural Work Position* (KCWP),” activists explained why they decided to start this local social movement group:

Cadmium pollution, *Itai-itai* disease,¹² anti-6th Naphtha Cracking Plant, anti-Dupont , followed by illegal collecting of sand and stone that are replaced by garbage and discarded materials, plus the dumping of discarded soil produced by the construction of Taipei’s rapid transportation, all these have destroyed the littoral area in Guanyin. In a very short period of time, Guanyin has become notorious nationwide. As a poor village without beautiful scenery, fancy resorts, architectural heritage or economic potential, Guanyin has been known to people outside only because of its pollutions and protests.

[...]

On May 4th, 1993, witnessing the destruction of their homeland, several young men couldn’t stand it anymore, and established the group *Kuanyin Cultural Work Position*. A journal was published and cultural activities were organized. They had hoped to draw people’s attention and invite discussion, to change people’s minds, to reform Guanyin ...

But things didn’t change as they had hoped. In fact, Guanyin is the epitome of Taiwan. The disasters it suffers are not at all “the necessary cost to pursue prosperity,” but an inevitable atrocious result caused by years of “detaching oneself from the ethical lessons the land has been teaching us.” Such developments have simply proved that we are a group of naive idealists. Regardless, we will continue to fight, no holding back. Because

...

Guanyin is our homeland!¹³

In an article entitled “The Cultural Origins of Social Forces,” Lii Ding-tzan and Lin Wen-yuan (2000) considered the transformation of people’s consciousness as an important factor in the formation of social forces. They proposed three stages to depict this transformation, using “body” as the symbol: body that suffers, body that is the victim, and body that cannot be violated. From the stage of body that suffers to the stage of body that is the victim, the public opinion composed of experts’ discourses and media reports played a key role in facilitating the emergence of people’s consciousness as individuals that have rights. Then, from the stage of body that is the victim to the stage of body that cannot be violated, the public opinion also played an important role. However, what was most influential in this process was not the rational or scientific analysis, but people’s profound reflection on their relationship with the land and environment. Through various texts written with literary, aesthetic, and ethical concerns, the environment or “the land” came to be considered as something “alive,” with its own feelings as well as flesh and blood.

Environmental pollution affects not only the individual, but also the geographical space in which individual’s lives take place. An environmental movement taking place in the local space can also be seen as a local movement. But a social movement taking place in the local space is not necessarily the one with locality as its object. Lii and Lin (2000) argued that the key factor in the formation of social forces is the increase of people’s awareness of their rights due to their own experience of suffering. If that’s the case, the question would be: in the transformation of modes of action from protests in the local space to the movement of local

community reconstruction, what are the transformations in terms of people's awareness? Analyzing the third stage in forming the awareness of environmental rights, Lii and Lin (2000, 198) argued that "when the environment becomes the *mother* with flesh and blood, or the *land* that feeds us, it gradually embodies a sacred and inviolable meaning." Here we find an analogy between the individual and the land, and the most important element for such a sacred meaning to come into being shifts from the individual body that suffers to the land that suffers. As illustrated in *Kuanyin Cultural Work Position's* statement, we can say that when the environment becomes a "homeland" people can relate to, the environmental movement would no longer be simply a momentary protest, but can be transformed into a long-term movement to reconstruct the local community. The solidarity between people and the land is the key for the environmental protection movement to transform into a local community reconstruction movement. Such solidarity is achieved through the mediation of the idea of "homeland." With this idea in mind, a social actor is not only an individual who becomes aware of his own rights, but also a member of the community that is devoted to the land on which everyday life takes place. When the main concern shifts from protecting individual rights to ensuring the sustainable existence of the local community, an individual begins to extend her/his awareness of time from the here and now to the past and the future, and the community begins to produce its memory and its vision as well.

3.2. *Associating locality with culture and people*

When the environment became the "homeland," an important effect was in place: the issue of culture became part of the movement agenda. Let us return to the case of KCWP. Faced with environmental problems taking place in the local space, they raised this question: "Why don't people in Guanyin cherish their own land?" and provided their diagnosis from a cultural perspective: "Being ignorant about one's homeland and poorly informed about what's happening in local community are the causes of such indifference!" They then proposed the solution: "To make things right, we have to engage ourselves in the long-term endeavor to influence people and transform culture through sharing information and organizing activities."¹⁴ In these accounts, problems of culture were defined as the origin of the environmental problem; spreading information and knowledge about one's homeland was regarded as the fundamental solution to the land's sufferance.

In addition to the environmental problem, "culture" was also regarded as an appropriate aspect through which the democratic practice can be improved. Su Wen-kuei, one of the founders of the *Hobei Cultural and Historical Society* in 1990, explained the motive behind establishing a local cultural organization:

Up till the 1990s, by involving in electoral campaigns, we found that many problems were not political but cultural. With 300 or 500 NT Dollars you can buy up a vote; the significance of such practice goes beyond political—it told us something has changed significantly in term of people's culture. Faced with this situation, we felt the urge to do some cultural work. (Su 1997, 277)

For these activists, the best way to influence people is to go back to where they live.¹⁵ Locality, as the arena for where people's lives take place, becomes the crucial site to reform the society. The progress of local culture is considered synonymous with the elevation of people's cultural quality. Therefore, as one member of the *Po-A-Ka Cultural Work Position* puts it, "The era when politics took the lead has gone. The new social movement should be carried out locally to take root in the soil, to really influence people and transform the society of Taiwan in a profound way" (Ho 2000, 145).

Ethnic movements also witnessed a shift toward localization. The aboriginal movement, which emerged in 1983, and the Hakka movement, born in 1988, switched their action from protests in urban streets to endeavors in the local space. Ethnic movement activists considered the revitalization of culture as the key to reviving and sustaining the ethnic groups. The reason for returning to the locality was to reconnect the dispersed people/culture with the land they came from. In doing so, the activists attempted to return to the urban streets with a more solid-based mass support when necessary. Taiban Sasala, one of the founders of *Green Mountain* (*Gao Shan Qing*), the journal which inaugurated the aboriginal movement, returned to his homeland to publish *Aboriginal Journal* (*Yuan Bao*) and proposed the slogan of "Battle in Homeland" (*yuanxiang zhanduo*) and "Tribalism" (*buluo zhuyi*). In an article entitled "Return to the Place of Departure" (*huidao chufa de difang*), he urged

From the stand point of common people, we want to ask: apart from "Protest, protest, and more protest!" where else do elites of the aboriginal movement intend to take us, the thirty thousand aborigines, to?

[...]

Since the launch of *Green Mountain*, the aboriginal movement has always lacked a clear orientation. It didn't keep up with the pulse of its time, thus degraded itself to play a clown's role. The movement has neither resonated with the common people nor formed a connection with the homeland where it is from, and has become marginalized and subordinate in Taiwan's democratic movement. [...] Therefore, we urge our people to abandon the past mode of struggle in urban streets and return to our homeland; to carry out an aboriginal movement that put the tribe as the center in its resistance, the homeland as the point of departure in its struggle, and put into practice the idea *Green Mountain* proposed eight years ago—"Returning to the tribe."

Only by returning to the tribe, by returning to the sides of old men and children, by returning to the place of our origin, by devoting to our ancestors' land, can we truly enrich the meaning of aboriginal movement, take it to another level, and move beyond "the calling in the wild." (Taiban [1992] 2004, 3-5):

Taiban Sasala transformed metaphors of "city versus tribal land" and "civilized versus savage." "The Wild" does not exist in the tribal land but in the city. The tribe is the fertile land where culture can grow on it. On the contrary, the city is the wild one that drained the aboriginal culture. An aboriginal movement rooted in the city loses the nourishment of its motherland and lacks the solidarity in its people, and thus can merely be "the calling in the wild."

All the social movements discussed above articulate the locality with culture and people to configure the image of an ideal society. They took the locality as the field of their struggles, the culture as their approaches, and the people as their targets. In different areas, by different participants and on different issues, locality was chosen as the important site for various movements to operate on. Many of the social movement activists returned to their locality to continue their projects of social reform, and the "localization of social forces" thus came into being.¹⁶

The major dynamic of "the localization of social forces" originated from this: many social movement activists learnt the limitation of actions in the form of protest, and turned to define the locality as the base from which to reform the society. The principal spirit of the localization of social forces is to associate the movement agenda with the locality and to bring the movement closer to the lives of common people in order to implant progressive ideas in daily lives. It reflects the shift of the movement perspective from prioritizing political movements to making cultural movements the necessity.

4. Ideals of society in the actions focusing on locality

The reason why “local community reconstruction” as an agenda has attracted activists with various backgrounds is that, while operating on the arena of “locality,” such an agenda can accommodate various aspects and layers of issues through which activists can construct their own ideals of society. These ideals serve as the framework for meaning production and direction setting for activists to take actions. Local community reconstruction is hence endowed with various implications. However, the local society is not only a target for the activists to project their own social ideals, but also a site in which different social ideals interact. Through interactions between activists and their ideals for the society, social forces continue to transform. In this section, through the analysis of discourses delivered by activists, I differentiate their ideas of a “good society” into four ideal-types: indigenous society, civilized society, civil society and civic society.¹⁷

As ideal-types, these ideas for society defined below do not correspond fully with any activist as actor in the social world, since each actor is usually multi-motivated. It is the implications embodied in these ideals that I would like to analyze so as to realize different aspects of the phenomena-complex of the Community Construction, as one of the manifestations of local community reconstruction, as well as the dynamics that reorient the social forces in Taiwan during the 1990s.

4.1. *Indigenous society*

Once a cultural problem is connected with local issues, the locality becomes in turn a basis on which the implication of culture is defined, and the border of community is drawn. When connections between the culture and the locality are established, the locality becomes a criterion to evaluate the culture. Those related to “our place” are regarded as “local” (*zai di*), those related to places other than ours are regarded as “external” (*wai di*); all that have been engendered by our place is considered as “indigenous” (*bentu*), all that have been transplanted from places other than ours are seen as “foreign” (*wailai*). In the struggle against the authoritarian KMT regime, there had been close bonds between social movements and political opposition movements. As the result of such bonds, languages used in the two kinds of movements were mutually infiltrating. Under the influence of political language, the distinction between indigenous and foreign was interpreted as the confrontation between good and evil. “Foreign” was not seen as evil in itself, but the oppression “foreign people” forced upon “indigenous people” was often regarded as the origin of evil. Such attribution can be found in a speech delivered by Pan Chung-cheng, one of the founders of *Kuanyin Cultural Work Position*:

My personal interpretation of the [distorted] cultural phenomena in Guanyin and across Taiwan is that they are the result of the absence of an ethical aspect in people’s relation with the land. In other words, for a long time, Taiwan has been “under the domination of a political authority coming from outside. [...] Such authority does not base its ruling on the interests of local people, but the interests of the country it considers as its motherland. [...] Indeed as one of such authorities, the nationalist party (KMT) used to take Taiwan only as a springboard for it to go back to mainland China, and all they cared about was the latter’s interests. As a result, what the elementary school students here had been studying was not about the land they live, but about the “motherland” of the authority. [...] How is it possible for the kids to care about what happens to this land when they grow up, if they had learnt nothing about it? (Pan 1997, 183–184)

For Pan Chung-cheng, the problem of the “place” called Guanyin is the epitome of the problem as a whole in Taiwan. The decline of local culture is attributed to the harmful influences of the foreign authority; the cultural oppression exerted by the state and the resulting

cultural alienation are key factors that allowed capital forces to pillage and destruct the environment. The primordial task for solving these problems lies in the reconstruction of people's understanding of the "indigenous." Rediscovering the locality therefore is not only a rediscovery of places in which we live, but also a rediscovery of the motherland—Taiwan.

4.2. *Civilized society*

In the 1980s, besides activists who have been involved in social movements before, many intellectuals who didn't have such experience also decided to engage in the reconstruction of local culture by establishing a "cultural-historical studio" or "cultural-educational association/foundation" in their homelands. They usually started their actions by investigating local history or organizing cultural-artistic activities, and were often motivated by a simple thought: "I live in this place, so I hope it could be better."¹⁸ In contrast, activists who have been involved in social movements before usually built a link between their local endeavors and the whole of society's progress. They believed they could improve Taiwanese society as a whole with cultural works they involved in their homelands. Two images of an ideal society were thus depicted: the one attempting to recover the solidarity and courtesy of the local society, and the one endeavoring to improve people's culture and the quality of life. The first image is based on a prototype of "traditional civilized society," while the latter is on "modern civilized society." While the former leads to the rediscovery of cultural legacy of the locality, the latter set about introducing artistic performances from outside as the path to becoming "civilized."

We can see the exemplification of the traditional civilized society ideal-type in the following statement made by one of the initiators of Dah-Buh Flower-Drum Cultural Association, a Community Construction organization formed in 1995: "Back to the origin, we initiate these activities to gain strength from our tradition," to take "people" as our point of departure, while valuing inter-person relations that warm our hearts. At the same time, we take villagers' identity formation into consideration, and endeavor to conform to their needs and lifestyle (CAC 1997, 6).

On the other hand, there is the following founding statement made by Hsinkang Foundation of Culture and Education, one of the oldest Community Construction organizations, the example of the modern civilized society ideal-type: "Promoting cultural and educational activities, ameliorating social ethos, enriching people's spiritual life, and improving the quality of life" (Liao 1995, 201). In the early stage since its formation in 1987, this foundation has introduced artistic performances of high quality each month from outside, aiming to change villagers who had indulged in gambling (Liao 1995, 65–66).

Such division between traditional civilized society and modern civilized society, however, is only established to illustrate the initial motivation of the actors in these movements. In practice, when these organizations continue to pursue the amelioration of the local, their works would transcend the division between tradition and modernity—whether such transformation occurred due to self-reflection or to learning from counterparts in other communities. As a result, after operating for a while, the Hsinkang Foundation of Culture and Education began to work on local culture as well, including the formation of a folk customs "Infernal Generals Troupe" (*bajiajiang*) study group, revitalizing of the traditional music association, investigating local culture and local history, and so on.

4.3. *Civil society*

Several collective actions were launched in local communities in Taipei city during the 1990s. Some were protests to protect the local environment, some were public-space reforms through more direct involvement with the residents, and others were communal activities

to build the solidarity of residents. We can see in these urban community movements the will to form an autonomous subject position in order to regain power over people's own living space. In many of these cases, we found no direct link between them and the social movements launched earlier. However, the awareness of autonomy we found in these community actions hinted at the emergence of a civil society capable of resisting vicious developmentalist forces from the state and the market.

Such a perspective is illustrated in the analysis by Huang Li-ling (1995, 27), ex-general secretary of OURs (Organization of Urban Re-s):

The searching for autonomy in communities has emerged in the early 1990s. Actions such as local memory writing or local history inventing, were attempts made to confront the prevailing "de-historicalization" and "de-communalization" of Taiwanese society in the past as well as the authoritarian regime. They are also actions for reconstructing the value of space from the user's perspective in order to rewrite "the value of space as commodity for exchange" defined by the capital, and the "economic-centered" orientation adopted by the state in urban development. Meanwhile, the process of community mobilization in these actions manifested the rationalizing process of the grass-root democracy; its aim is to establish the identity of modern civil society.

In this way, the local community is regarded as part of an autonomous civil society, which is expected to resist the domination of the capitalist market and the state.¹⁹ In this perspective, civil society is not a part of the state, but its opponent.

4.4. *Civic society*

The localization of social forces has broadened the spectrum of social movements and redirected the latter from issue-oriented protests and institutional reform to culture reformation and locality reconstruction. The appeal of cultural indigenization (*bentuhua*) found its ground and triggered waves of action in the 1990s. In response, the KMT government launched a new policy, Integrated Community Construction (*shequ zongti yingzao*), attempting to integrate the energies of local cultural movements into governmental policy. As a result, through the interaction between these movements and the policy, the complex phenomena of Community Construction (*shequ yingzao*) have been formed, in which social forces have been further localized and retransformed into "communalization." The social engineering of community construction based on "locality" has made a great step forward.

In an article entitled "The Community and the Reconstruction of the Nation," Chen Chi-nan, who has been regarded as the general engineer of Integrated Community Construction policy, explained his ideas and ideals:

The formation of "community" is based on the establishment of the awareness among residents of a commonly shared body of community. Without such awareness, a community cannot be formed. If a local community (*shequ*) cannot operate as a commonly shared one (*gongtongti*), then the structure of the whole nation and society is also a scattered and disintegrated one. Not only is local autonomy impossible, neither is democracy realizable. I have called repeatedly for establishing civic consciousness among our people, because without which, we can never develop a modern state regime based on the social contract, while being caught in a traditional concept of state based on culture. Nonetheless, the cultivation of civic consciousness has to be launched from the level of local communities, because if we cannot establish people's civic consciousness as members of a community on the local level, how can we establish such consciousness as members of a modern state on the national level? (Chen Chi-nan 1994)

In Chen's rationale above, the foundation of democracy lies more in the local community consisting of residents (as citizens to be cultivated) than the universalized citizens as

individuals. Such a rationale does not imply removing the intermediation between the state and the citizens, but calls for establishing the mediating community between them, on various geographical levels, since only through the “local community” can citizens be cultivated, and only when the commonly shared communities are formed locally can the community of citizens be established on the national level. As a result, the local community, the national community and the civic society merge into a three-in-one complex. The local community is regarded as the base of the nation and the society, while the civic society becomes the sign of a civic nation.²⁰

4.5. *Intrinsic rationale of imaginaries about the good society*

In the above-mentioned four social imaginaries constructed on the basis of locality, the “indigenous society” hopes to reconstruct local history and local culture; the “civilized society” attempts to elevate people’s cultural level and to improve the quality of life; the “civil society” emphasizes the importance of grassroots democracy and local subjectivity in order to respond to developmentalist forces from the state and the market; and the “civic society” aims to construct communities encompassing various geographical space in which people from different backgrounds can live together as a community and eventually form a civic nation. If the imaginary of the “indigenous society” responds to the distinction between “native” and “foreign,” the “civilized society” to the contrast between “civilized” and “savage,” and the “civil society” to the oppositional relation between the society, the market and (or) the state, then the “civic society” proposes a diagram of integrations encompassing multiple scales of geographical spaces in different administrative hierarchies that articulates the individual (as resident-citizen), the local communities and the nation.

As a framework of reference for various local actions mentioned above, Community Construction not only allowed different ideals of society to coexist, but also facilitated the interactions among them. Since the ideal of the traditional civilized society tends to include re-establishing “what has been good” in the local society into its practices, it is easy to connect with the ideal of indigenous society. On the other hand, since the ideal of modern civilized society implies enhancing the existing cultural practices by introducing new ones, it could be reoriented relatively easily toward the ideals of civil society. However, there existed a gap between the ideal of indigenous society and the ideal of civil society, while it was the civic society that connected the two ideals by articulating the local with the national, the homeland with the democracy. Through the channeling of the Integrated Community Construction policy, another transformation took place in social forces in Taiwan: the trend of localization was reoriented to the one of communalization. Ideals of indigenous society, civilized society and civil society were articulated to facilitate the construction of the civic society.

If reconstructing the relationship between people and the land is the shared axis of concern in localization and communalization, the difference between them lies in the shift of the focus from the “culture” to the “community.” In the stage of localization, the importance of reconstructing local history and local culture was highlighted, while in the stage of communalization, the necessity of establishing the community consciousness was emphasized. The boundary of “community” extends along the geographical space, that is, when the community corresponds to the space of the entire nation, “residents” becomes “citizens,” “community consciousness” shifts into “civic ethics,” and then the “local community” is turned into “civic society.” As a result, the sphere of civic society and the territory of the state overlap. Through a geographical-territorial approach, local community is regarded as the base of civic society and the civic society has already become synonymous with the “civic nation.”

Nevertheless, although the ideal of civic society had been highlighted as the prominent focus, civil society and civic society represent different visions of society that correspond to

different contexts respectively. In contrast to the ideal of the “civil society” emphasizing the empowerment of local society to acquire autonomy in relation to the state and the market, “civic society” emphasizes the resident’s participation in public affairs to form a shared local community. The diagram depicted by the ideal of civil society is concerned with the division of different sections in society, while that of civic society is concerned more with integration within the society and of the society. However, the “civil society” is not what caused the “civic society.” While the latter is not the result of the former, they are two perspectives to define social relations.

5. Conclusion

The localization of social forces took place in Taiwan at the beginning of the 1990s, and resulted in the ensuing phenomena-complex of Community Construction, which reoriented social forces from localization to “communalization.” From localization to communalization, the reconstruction of the relationship between people and land has been the shared axis of concern. Nevertheless, while the former emphasized the reconstruction of local culture, the latter focused on the establishment of community consciousness. In the stage of local community movements, the reconstruction of local culture was regarded as a way to reform society. In contrast, in the stage of Community Construction, the focus shifted to the community, in which local identity and national identity were linked.

By reviewing the historical process of the transformation in social forces, we can say that the local cultural movement in Taiwan in the early 1990s was a “new social movement” generated in the social context of that time. Since the mid-1990s, however, channeled by public policies, such movements have been transformed to that of “Community Construction”, which articulates the social movement and the public policy. The characteristics of social movements were thus diluted in local actions. As a result, the confrontational relation between the state and the local society were transformed into the one of cooperation. The local community movement that confronted the nation-state and the capitalist forces has been transformed into the strategy of governance co-constructed by the government and society, in order to redefine the identity of community at different scales (local and national) and to respond to the challenges of globalization.

The locality became the fundamental element for defining “culture” and “community.” The cultural resistance based on the locality was transformed into the cultural governance focusing on locality. This is the trajectory of the transformation of social forces in Taiwan during the 1990s. It is also the essential implication of the “rediscovery of the locality.”

However, Taiwan has entered into another historical process since 2000. As mentioned earlier, the “civic society” proposes a diagram of integration in multiple geographical spaces in different ranges, which articulates the individual as resident-citizen. Nevertheless, “resident” and “citizen” do not imply the same political status. There are migrants living in Taiwan without citizenship, and immigrants whose customs are not taken into consideration by local society, or are even respected by the latter. During the 1990s, the issue of migrant-worker was not taken up in the Community Construction, nor did we see find the issue of spouses from other countries being considered, except for a few rare cases. The reconstruction of cultural identity in Taiwan during the 1990s was undertaken mainly as the challenge to official discourse on national identity back then by proposing ethnic identity and local identity as the alternatives. In the process of reconstructing community consciousness, the discourse of multiculturalism was adopted as a major resource to deconstruct official national discourses. The focus of the argument was prioritizing native and indigenous cultures over the external official dominant culture. Nowadays, native and indigenous cultures have acquired legitimacy in Taiwan and have even become the source of a dominant ideology. When the native becomes the master of the country and people from “outside” are no

longer the oppressor but are usually the ones being oppressed, then such social changes demand a broader multiculturalism, in which Taiwan's concerns extend from the recovery of indigenous culture and local community to the respect for external cultures. Migration is the stage before settlement. Only when we are able to look at things from "the other's" perspective, can it be possible for "the other" to become "us," and form a community based on locality together.

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Notes

1. In this article, the term "locality" means a place or an area, in which people live as a local community.
2. About the hometown development movement in Japan, see Nishimura (1997).
3. The Council of Cultural Affairs became the Ministry of Culture in 2012.
4. Ho Ming-sho (2000) discussed the localization of environmental movements in Chapter 7 of his dissertation. Yang Hung-renn (2004) proposed in the introduction and the conclusion of his dissertation the continuity between Community Construction and social movements from the perspective of the deepening of democratization.
5. On the relationships between social movements and the political transformation in Taiwan during the 1980s, see Chang (1989), Wang (1989), and Wu (1990).
6. See for example, Wang (1991) and Chao (1994, 193–194).
7. All the cited Chinese texts are translated into English by me.
8. The term "organizationalization" is created by me as the English translation for *zuzhihua*, which designates the trend of applying organizational techniques to social movements. It does not mean "organizationalism," however, because establishing a formal organization did not become the prioritized mode of action for activists of these movements.
9. Besides these two explications, Ku (2003) proposed the idea of "institutionalization" (*jigouhua*) as another explication of the transformation of social movements. By discussing the transformation from "social movement's organization" to "non-profit organization," Ku tried to associate two fields of study. Yet the focus of his writing was on the formation of the "third section" as well as the signification of "civil society."
10. This differentiation is inspired by Alain Touraine (1984), and the concept "historical transformation analysis" is borrowed from him.
11. In Chapter 7 of Ho Ming-sho's (2000) dissertation, the section depicting the regularization of social movements was entitled: "the localization of environmental movements." However, in his book published in 2006 on the same movements, the chapter (Chapter 5) analyzing the regularization of the movements was still there, but there was no longer any discussion on "localization." The case of anti-dam movement in Meenung, which was used to illustrate the "localization" in the dissertation, is re-named in the book to treat the issue of "autonomy and dependence of environmental movements" (Chapter 7). Such an act of re-naming and re-writing illustrates that the author has decided not to treat the already tackled question about the historical implication of the movement, but to concentrate on the study of general conditions about the social movement.
12. *Itai-itai* disease is a disease caused by cadmium (Cd) pollution.
13. "The Establishment of KCWP" by KCWP. <http://www.kucw.org.tw/el.htm>, accessed September 28, 2000. Although this website no longer exists, the same idea can be found in similar statements in that period of time. See, for example, Pan (1997).
14. "The Establishment of KCWP" by KCWP. <http://www.kucw.org.tw/el.htm>, accessed September 28, 2000.
15. In comparison, the labor movement emphasizes the importance of entering where people work.
16. As one of the reviewers pointed out, it may be too totalizing to identify the similarity in movements that are so different from each other, since indigenous people's movements have a fundamentally different relationship with the nation state, compared with other social movements. I agree that indigenous people's movements have their own origins, conditions and ways of representation. However, the process of capitalist

development has swept across Taiwan and influenced various sectors in different timelines and ways. Such process brought about a common effect: younger generations were driven from villages to cities. One of the results was the later trend for various social movements, including the aboriginal one, to call for the return to one's homeland. On the other hand, such a trend in common does not mean these movements have encountered social conflicts of the same nature, but implies that they have faced the same historical conjuncture in which and to which people's actions take place.

17. My discussion about the ideals of society has been inspired by Lii Ding-tzan and Wu Jieh-min (2008). Lii and Wu differentiated the development of the concept of "civil society" in post-war Taiwan into five stages: (1)1965–1978: Modern society or Civilized society; (2)1978–1986: Pluralist society; (3)1986–1990: Civil Society I—*minjian shehui*; (4)1990–2000: Civil Society II—*shimin shehui*; (5) after 2000: Civil Society III—*gongmin shehui*. However, the ideals of the "good society" analyzed in this article are not different stages in the development of a certain idea or concept, but different dimensions of the ideal about society. Although there exists generally a sequential relationship between these different ideals, it is due to the time sequence of historical events rather than the evolutionary stage between the concepts.
18. See the case of *Er-jie*, in Chen Jui-hua (1996, 101–103).
19. Similar analysis could be found in Hsia (1999, 7–8).
20. It seems paradoxical to position democracy as something the state fosters in people, and not as something coming directly from the people. However, democracy must be practiced and be learned. Without democratic practices on the local level, it is impossible to have democratic practices on the national level. In this perspective, the local community is not perceived as a social entity consisting of "people" sitting on the opposite side of the state apparatus, but as the base of a democratic nation.

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Special terms

Aboriginal Journal 原報	jigouhua 機構化
Battle in Homeland 原鄉戰鬥	Meenung 美濃
bentu 本土	Po-A-Ka Cultural Work Position 樸仔腳文化工作陣
bentuhua 本土化	shequ yingzao 社區營造
Dah-Buh Flower-Drum Cultural Association 大廂花鼓文化促進會	shequ zongti yingzao 社區總體營造
difanghua 地方化	Tribalism 部落主義
gongtongti 共同體	wai di 外地
Green Mountain 高山青	wailai 外來
Hobei Cultural and Historical Society 滬尾文史工作室	zai di 在地
Hsinkang Foundation of Culture and Education 新港文教基金會	zhiduhua 制度化
	zuzhuhua 組織化

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