

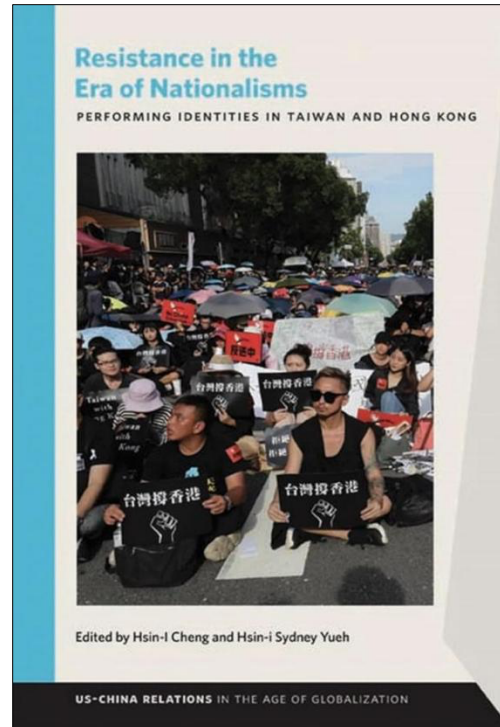
Hsin-I Cheng and Hsin-i Sydney Yueh (Eds.), **Resistance in the Era of Nationalisms: Performing Identities in Taiwan and Hong Kong**, Ann Arbor: Michigan State University Press, 2023, 258 pp., \$44.95 (paperback).

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In the social sciences, nationalism has become a recurring research topic, with many scholars dedicated to elucidating the complex social practices and mechanisms revolving around nationalism. A wealth of research is uncovering the rise of great powers such as China and Russia and the process of their nationalist movements, but there remains limited research on the influence of their power on neighboring regions. In this respect, Hsin-I Cheng and Hsin-i Sydney Yueh's new edited volume, **Resistance in the Era of Nationalisms: Performing Identities in Taiwan and Hong Kong**, appears to be a valuable contribution. This publication attempts to reveal the global strategies adopted by people in Taiwan and Hong Kong in resisting the overwhelming influence of Mainland China, while also demonstrating that their ambivalent attitudes toward nationalism originated from Mainland China. How people in Taiwan and Hong Kong shape their local self-identities and tell their own stories is the focus of this work. The contributors in this book believe that these resistance performances and practices stem from local experiences and are influenced by the logics of globalization and geopolitics. Those who want to gain a detailed understanding of the formation process of self-identity among people in Taiwan and Hong Kong will consider this publication an invigorating exposition.

The book consists of two parts. The first, from chapter 1 to chapter 4, mainly discusses the resistance in Taiwan, while the second, from chapter 5 to chapter 8, focuses on the resistance in Hong Kong. Following a well-presented introduction, chapter 1 delves into the analysis of 10 of Tsai Ing-wen's public speeches in Taiwan. The chapter argues that through discursive strategies such as flexible endurance, reserved invitation, and sustainable survivability through diverse relationality, Tsai's remarks have portrayed a Taiwanese-style nationalism characterized by inclusiveness, flexibility, and resilience. Transcending the collective nationalistic imagination depicted by Benedict Anderson (2016), this chapter argues that the self-identity of people in Taiwan is based on their values, shared history, and pursuit of goals.

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Chapter 2 aims to go beyond the traditional framework of critique and conspiracy to offer an interpretation of the reparative functions of COVID memes created by people in Taiwan in the digital era. Internet memes should be understood as an emerging social form that creates a sense of belonging and resilience based on the intersection of biopolitics and geopolitics, and they also represent a postcolonial nationalism that originated in that region. In this chapter, the author constructs a new epistemology about memes that contends that memes do not carry a single description or explanation of a given event but mutate in continuous circulation to forge new cognition.

Chapter 3 begins with a review of the literature related to global fact-checking movements and then shifts its focus to disinformation and misinformation issues in Taiwan. Subsequently, in-depth interviews with eight professionals from fact-checking organizations in Taiwan such as MyGoPen, Cofacts, and TFC are presented to provide insight into the organizations' operations and concerns. The three organizations adopt a variety of fact-checking methods to build an information security network with the common goal of providing a clear and independent judgment to the people in Taiwan. These fact-checking efforts have proven to be valuable as an important means for the people in Taiwan to resist the intrusion of disinformation and misinformation from the international community. They are also of great significance in safeguarding the carefully cultivated local self-identity among people in that region.

Chapter 4 deals with two vernacular terms in search of a new Taiwanese identity. One is *hari*, meaning Japan-mania, and the other is *tienzhong*, meaning kissing Mainland China. These two resistant terms are active in Taiwan's online anime, comic, and gaming (ACG) discourse and community, reflecting the ambivalence of the Taiwanese people about their choice of pro-Japan or pro-Mainland China ideologies that is deeply affected by the conflicts in Sino-U.S. relations. The author's key argument is that although *hari* and *tienzhong* are in an antagonistic relationship, they will work together to shape the political identity of people in Taiwan. By highlighting the ambivalence of the Taiwanese people about whether they are pro-Mainland China or pro-Japan, chapter 4 gives readers a clear understanding of the gradual, resistant, and autonomous process in which Taiwanese identity originated and developed.

The second part of the book, chapters 5–8, focuses on the resistance in Hong Kong. Drawing on a case study of Hong Kong's anti-Extradition Law Amendment Bill (ELAB) movement, chapter 5 discusses how the people of Hong Kong view, experience, and imagine their political time in the interaction between people, environment, and technology. For instance, *laam caau*, as a phrase devised by activists in the anti-ELAB movement, signifies mutual destruction. It is endowed with a new will to power, implying both disaster and hope. Although this phrase promotes rapid action through social media, most actions become disorganized and leaderless and end in failure, which means that the political time created by this phrase is too short to sustain a political movement. However, based on the urgency brought by *laam caau*, the evolving characteristics of social mobilization, especially temporality, should be noted by scholars.

Chapter 6 focuses on the Umbrella and Hard Hat Movements to showcase Hong Kong people's use of public transportation as a creative way to resist mainlandization. With the help of Jean Paul Ricœur's (1990) strategy for appropriating historicity, the author identifies three transformative narratives of each movement. For the Umbrella Movement, the narratives are an allegory of history, a monument of living death, and dreams of democracy. In contrast, the Hard Hat Movement's narratives fuel

recolonization, an illusion of death, and facing a nondemocratic nightmare. The citizens of Hong Kong have demonstrated aesthetics and creativity in resisting mainlandization, but while forging a new Hong Kong identity, they have also triggered many negative outcomes including xenophobia, racism, and nativism, which are irrational acts of resistance against Mainland China.

Based on the analysis of Hong Kong's extradition bill protests, chapter 7 tends to argue that glocal consumer identities should be regarded as the basis of resistance to mainlandization. Through the case study of McDonald's and Starbucks, the author believes that glocal consumer individuality is rooted in Hong Kong identity. Affordable McDonald's restaurants play an important role in the protests, serving as halftime spots for activists where they can charge their phones, eat, or take a nap. Starbucks, which is more expensive than McDonald's, has become the target of activists who want to force the United States to take notice of the unrest in Hong Kong and intervene by destroying the American brand. All these signs indicate that Hong Kong's local identity is market-oriented. Turning consumption into activism will not solve the contradictions emerging from the protests but amplify the weakness of the protests and ultimately lead to their failure.

Chapter 8 conducts a discourse analysis of media coverage of the leadership of Carrie Lam, the former chief executive of Hong Kong. Carrie Lam experienced some turbulent events, such as the Hong Kong protests from 2019 to 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic, and the Sino-U.S. trade war. The chapter explores the nationalist leadership styles that Carrie Lam deployed in dealing with these crises and how the media portrayed her. By analyzing Lam's discourse, this chapter attempts to discuss the dynamic relationship between Hong Kong's identity and political ideology. The research findings of this chapter indicate that Lam's leadership style is highly linked to the central government of China, and the media portrays the legitimacy of her leadership as patriotism. Lam's leadership needs to be strengthened in terms of reinforcing solidarity between the Hong Kong government and its citizens. The aim of this chapter is not to criticize Lam's administration but to understand Hong Kong's unique identity and political tension from assorted contextual perspectives.

Chapter 9 is an epilogue that presents a dialogue with Audrey Tang, Taiwan's first director of digital development. The conversation centers around the democratic culture of transparency, dealing with misinformation and the interaction of technology and identity in Taiwan. The chapter provides insights into how technology can drive Taiwan toward a democratic and inclusive future, especially focusing on explaining how communication technology plays a significant role in resisting misinformation and disinformation intrusion.

This book provides in-depth discussions on the formation of the self-identities of people in Taiwan and Hong Kong, combined with geopolitics, and thus, it can be regarded as a successful work. However, the studies included in this book are mostly qualitative investigations, and it is evident that the subjective judgments of contributors play a role in exploring the self-identities of people in Taiwan and Hong Kong. It may be beneficial to incorporate some quantitative research to further support the findings. Overall, we think this is a strong publication and recommend it to a wide range of readers.

References

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