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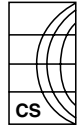
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Abstract

This article examines the contested transformation of parenting discourses in postwar Taiwan as a case of global sociology. The author argues that such transformative change embodies Taiwan's compressed condition of modernity, entangled with a variety of global forces and transnational connections. This article looks at two critical periods of discursive transformation, including a top-down project marked by US aid and the family planning programme during the 1950s and 1960s, and a bottom-up campaign activated by transnational elites to advocate schooling reform and parental education in the post-Martial Law period. The author raises the concept 'glocal entanglement' to describe the cultural and institutional entanglements between societies under asymmetrical power relations, and emphasizes that parents across class divides had differential access to globalization and uneven relations with the modernity projects.

Keywords

Compressed modernity, globalization, global sociology, glocalization, parenthood

The fertility rate in Taiwan has dropped to one of the lowest in the world. However, an organized family planning programme sponsored by the US, which urged fertile couples to reduce the number of children for quality childcare, took place only half a century ago.

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Raising their ever precious and vulnerable children, Taiwanese parents nowadays are constantly advised by expert opinions, often translated from the West, to attend to children's needs and emotions. Accordingly, the public discourses on parenting and childhood have dramatically transformed in postwar Taiwan. How did such transformations happen? What do these social processes demonstrate about the interaction between the global and the local in the constitution of modernity in Taiwan?

I argue that the contested transformation of parenting discourses embodies Taiwan's compressed condition of modernity, entangled with a variety of global forces and transnational connections. I look at two critical periods in particular: 1951–1970 (US aid and family planning) and 1987–2000 (schooling reform and parental education). My lines of enquiry pursue an approach of global sociology in contrast with three common explanations about the transformation of parenting discourses. First, the thesis of modernization views cultural transformation as a result of the global trends of economic and social development. Second, the analysis of historical sociology sees cultural transformation as an endogenous process and thus overlooks the scales of the global and transnational. Finally, the explanation of cultural diffusion or colonization reduces the global into an exogenous variable without exploring the process of glocalization or the uneven access to global modernity within a society.

Global sociology of parenting discourses

This section discusses three possible explanations for the transformation of parenting discourses or childrearing repertoires, and I argue that each represents a distinct type of 'global-blind' analysis. The first explains cultural transformation as a result of economic and social development. It carries an undertone of *modernization*, prescribing that different societies, sooner or later, will follow a similar path of development. The global trends of industrialization, urbanization and fertility decline, along with the differentiation between work and home, give rise to the modernist notions of childhood and parenthood, such as the construct of the 'playing-child' (Wyness, 2006) and the deepening bonds between parents and children.

The Eurocentric thesis of modernization has been widely criticized for treating the experience of Western development as a universal model and overlooking power inequality and cultural particularities around the globe. To echo the agenda of global sociology to provincialize the constitution of analytical categories in social science (Bhambra, 2010), I contest that Western literature tends to discuss parenthood and childhood on the grounds of the 'bourgeois nuclear family', which is actually a class-specific, culture-bound, historical construct. The differentiation between the public and private spheres should not be assumed to be a universal trend, but rather takes place in historically and culturally specific forms. For instance, in Taiwan, the extended family still plays a major role in the arrangement of childcare, and the spheres of reproduction and childcare have been penetrated by state policies and nationalist ideologies.

The second explanation provides more nuanced analyses about the cultural construction of childhood rooted in historical particularities. Viviana Zelizer (1985), in her now classic book *Pricing the Priceless Child*, traced the emergence of 'the modern child' in the US during the period from the late 1800s to the 1930s: children became

'economically useless' but 'emotionally priceless'. She pinpoints the cultural process of 'sacralizing' childhood that had redefined the social value of children in multiple institutional spheres.

Despite its brilliance, this book assumes the nation-state as a given unit of analysis and sees cultural transformation as an *endogenous process*. The pitfall of 'methodological nationalism' (Wimmer and Schiller, 2002) obstructs the development of 'global imagination' to see how 'societies are constituted by relations of exchange and are marked by a significant degree of interpenetration' (Magubane, 2005: 105). For instance, Zelizer (1985: 26) mentions similar cultural transformations in Europe, but she simply sees them as parallel cases, without exploring interconnections and exchanges across the plural forms of Western modernities. In addition, the inflow of immigrant families was an unmistakable factor shaping the changing notion of childhood in the US.¹ Unfortunately, the book fails to look at relevant cultural encounters and conflicts as a process of 'internal globalization' (Fass, 2003: 967).

The third explanation highlights the global impact upon the transformation of parenting discourses. A power-neutral version sees the global convergence of parenthood as a result of *cultural diffusion*, i.e. the worldwide circulation of expert-based scientific knowledge concerning children's development and early education (Hoffman and Zhao, 2008). Another more critical perspective views the diffusion of Western childhood ideologies as 'colonizing kidworld' (Kincheloe, 2002); global capitalism has created a 'homogenized global children's culture' through the media and cultural products like McDonald's, Disney and Sesame Street (Buckingham, 2007). Both versions, nevertheless, run the risk of reducing the global into an *exogenous variable* while overlooking the interaction between the global and the local, a dynamic process called 'hybridization' or 'glocalization' by scholars (Robertson, 1995).²

Instead, I utilize the concepts of 'compressed modernity' and 'glocal entanglement' to submit an alternative explanation. East Asian countries have been labelled representative cases for 'compressed modernity', which, according to Chang Kyung-Sup (2010: 446), describes 'a civilizational condition in which economic, political, social and/or cultural changes occur in an extremely condensed manner in respect to both time and space' and in which diverse components of multiple civilizations coexist, influence and change each other.³

Taiwan's postwar development is characterized by rapid industrialization under the leadership of the Kuomintang (KMT) regime as an authoritarian developmental state, followed by dramatic political democratization that took place after the termination of Martial Law in 1987. The island has been exposed to multiple hegemonic politico-economic orders and cultural-ideological influences, including Chinese and Confucius traditions, Japanese colonialization (1895–1945) and the geopolitical power of the United States (see Huang et al., 2010).

Compressed modernity is not a self-contained evolutionary process but a dynamic condition that involves historical and contemporary entanglements between Western and non-Western societies in colonial and postcolonial contexts. Rather than simply recognizing the plural paths and hybrid outcomes of modernization, Shalini Randeria (2002) coined the term 'entangled modernities' to describe the interaction and interdependence between the different roads to modernity. She urges us to break down the West/non-West dichotomy by

adopting ‘a relational perspective which foregrounds processes of interaction and intermix in the entangled histories of uneven modernities’ (2002: 287). Along this line, I raise the concept ‘glocal entanglement’ to describe the global–local entanglements that take place at two levels: first, a variety of cultural and institutional entanglements occur between societies with intersecting histories and often under asymmetrical relations of power, and second, the local society as an uneven entity receives, engages and negotiates with these entanglements in a dynamic and disparate manner.

Scholars usually analyze alternative or compressed modernity at the level of nation-state, thus overlooking how different groups of people *within* a society understand and experience modernity in various ways (Randeria, 2002). Societal members not only have uneven relations with a multiplicity of modernity projects, but also have differential access and exposure to a variety of transnational interconnections and cosmopolitan engagements. Doreen Massey (1994) has raised the term ‘power geometry of globalization’ to describe people’s differential access to and control over time–space compression. The formation of compressed modernity, as an uneven experience and a complex process of glocal entanglement, often reproduces and reinforces social inequalities *within* the society.

I explore the following questions to investigate the contested formation of parenting discourses as a politics of knowledge production: Who were the major actors involved in the production of parenting discourses and childhood ideologies? What kinds of discursive strategies did they employ to negotiate the meanings of modernity and its others (‘non-modern’ or ‘anti-modern’)? How did global intervention intersect with the local politics of symbolic struggle? How did these processes demonstrate the dynamic constitution of compressed modernity and the uneven access to glocal entanglements?

Research methods

This article is part of a larger project that explores how globalization influences the experiences of parenting across class divides in Taiwan. The data collection for this article is mainly based on archival research and content analysis of newspapers and magazines. My research team looked into two well-circulated magazines, *Harvest* (1951–present) and *Taiwanese Women* (1946–2001).⁴ I selected these two magazines because they represented public discourses appealing to Taiwanese readers of distinct social backgrounds. *Harvest* started under the support of the US News Agency with the aim of ‘serving farmers and improving their income and family life’, while *Taiwanese Women* appealed to educated, urban women and promoted the women’s movement. We collected the magazine issues published during the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s relevant to the first period of our investigation. We read all the magazine articles related to the topics of parenting and childhood and coded them by categories that inductively developed following the broad principle of grounded theory.

For contemporary discourses on parenthood, we coded 13 issues of a very popular parenting magazine, *Education, Parenting and Family Lifestyle* (EPFL in the following), which started in August 2008 and has attracted a substantial number of subscribers.⁵ Its readership reveals a distinct class profile: 95% of its readers have an education of college or above and 41% identify themselves as the upper-middle class. The majority are

married parents (93%), especially mothers (85% are female readers), with only one or two children (83%).⁶ Although the *EPFL* readers are predominantly highly educated, middle-class parents, the cultural ideas it espouses have nevertheless become dominant ideologies that impact less privileged parents regardless of their capacity to follow the norms (Hays, 1996). We should be careful not to use these popular advice texts as evidence for what parents believe or do in their everyday childrearing practices, but they do reflect certain widely recognized cultural ideas of normative parenting (Rutherford, 2011).

We also looked into two leading newspapers, *China Times* (1950–present) and *United Daily News* (1951–present) for public discourses about parenthood and for historical documentation about activities related to parental education and schooling reform. We collected all the family editions of *China Times*, which started from 1987 and lasted until 1999. And we used keywords to search the electronic database of *United Daily News*, which covered news and opinions published from 1951 to 2012. The titles and contents in all magazine and newspaper articles were originally in Chinese and have been translated by me when quoted. I also triangulated the sources of data by collecting relevant government documents, official statistics and academic articles.

The changing repertoires of parenthood and childhood

This section offers a brief chronology of how the cultural repertoires of parenting and childhood have transformed in postwar Taiwan. I focus on two major changes most relevant to the purpose of this article. First, the status of children changed from labouring bodies for military nationalism to healthy bodies under fertility control. Second, the role of parents transformed from the enforcer of child discipline to the recipient of parental education.

Nationalist propaganda permeated the public discourses in the 1950s, after the KMT regime lost the civil war to the Chinese communists and took over Taiwan. According to the Confucius tradition of filial piety, parents have responsibility and vested interest in cultivating children, whose achievements will maximize parents' payoff at old ages. However, in the era of military nationalism, children's filial duty to parents could not surpass their loyalty to the nation. A female writer described 'a mother's true love' as 'allowing my son to have sacrifice for the nation as his goal'.⁷ Children were positioned as future national warriors in service of Chiang Kai-Shek's mission to 'recover the fallen Mainland'.⁸ Parents were encouraged to reproduce more offspring and children should be 'directed to serious, disciplinary real life'⁹ and '[trained] for obedience and proper life habits'.¹⁰ The magazine also published pictures of child labourers, such as those shining shoes and riding a rickshaw, as good role models.¹¹

Children became the target of public health governance during the period of US aid (1951–1965). The 1960s was called a 'decade of family planning' (Kuo, 1998), when Taiwan's government, with US support, engaged in an organized campaign of population control (more details later). The infant mortality rate (under one year of age) was as high as 44.7 in 1952 and 35 in 1960 per 1000 live births.¹² In the eyes of international and local public health experts, the underlying causes were not only poor sanitary conditions and widespread contagious diseases, but also oversized families and careless parents

with harmful childrearing styles. *Harvest* published many articles that advocated scientific knowledge about children's health and nutrition, and countering superstitious ideas. Several articles introduced ideas about proper childcare in regard to children's sanitary conditions, sleeping habits, health protection and household security; tips and knowledge were offered about the purchase of children's toys, books, shoes, clothes and food.

Corporal punishment from parents used to be a legitimate means of child discipline in Taiwan. The public discourses in the early postwar era questioned the adequacy of corporal punishment at home; the concern was nevertheless about its *effectiveness*: rods would harm children's dignity and distance them from parents without producing the intended effect of proper discipline. The relevant discourses after the mid-1970s shifted the focus from parental discipline to children's rights, protected by national laws and international treaties. Physical punishment is no longer attached to 'strict parents' but associated with 'lazy parents' who are not willing to learn new methods of childrearing (He, 1976).

By the end of the 1980s, the term 'parental education' widely appeared in Taiwan's media. Parents became the recipient of new knowledge and ideas that were deemed necessary for raising a modern child in a rapidly changing society. The paradigm of permissive parenting, which has dominated the style of childrearing in the US since the 1930s, offered an alternative cultural model. The public discourses in the 1990s and afterwards started advocating new ideals of the parent-child relationship characterized by the rhetoric of cooperation, equality and trust instead of authority, obedience and discipline. Maintaining such a parent-child relationship requires intensified parenting labour, mentally and physically. Among the 13 issues of *EPFL*, we found intensive usage of certain keywords such as 'understanding your child' (21 times) and 'keep your child company' (20 times). Parents' physical company and emotional attendance, centring on the child's needs and desires, are considered a critical means to the child's cognitive and emotional development.

How did such transformation in the dominant repertoire of parenthood and childhood take place within such a short period of time? The thesis of modernization would see it as a universal path of economic development and demographic change. Indeed, the vibrant export trades since the 1960s built an 'economic miracle', turning an island of poverty into a tiger of prosperity.¹³ The improvement of household income and savings allowed parents to invest more in children's education and the material conditions of family life. And the reduction of birth and mortality rates further augmented the emotional value of children.

However, fertility decline in Taiwan was not simply a natural result of industrialization or an endogenous process of social change. It was rather the consequence of global political and cultural interventions. Around the mid-1950s, American demographers who followed the new orthodoxy of 'neo-Malthusianism' saw rapid population growth in non-industrial societies as a serious social problem and dictated that offering contraceptives to peasant couples could lower fertility and facilitate industrialization. Unlike the dominant paradigm of 'transition theory' in the 1940s, which viewed industrialization as a necessary prerequisite for demographic change based on the Western experience, the new orthodoxy viewed fertility decline as a *cause* effecting social change (Hodgson, 1988).

This demographic perspective became a development strategy adopted by US policy-makers to exert widespread impacts on the global South during the Cold War. Taiwan was one of the US aid recipients that adopted a comprehensive programme of family planning. The total fertility rate (per woman) dropped from 5.6 in 1960 to 4 in 1970 and 2.5 in 1980. For the entire period between 1961 and 1984, 65% of the fertility decline was due to declining marital fertility, largely as a result of using contraception (Chang et al., 1987). In short, fertility decline in Taiwan was a product of social engineering under global influence.

As I have argued earlier, global effects must be examined as a dynamic interaction between the global and the local. Only by looking into power divides and fractions *within* the Taiwanese society can we understand the creative negotiation and selective appropriation of multifarious cultural elements in the constitution of compressed modernity in Taiwan. The following two sections examine how global–local entanglements operated through different social actors and mechanisms in the transformation of parenting discourses during two critical historical periods.

US aid and family planning (1951–1970)

Taiwan (ROC) received US assistance totalling US\$1.5 billion during 1951–1965. The aid covered a wide range of instruments and policies under the command of the Sino-American Joint Commission on Rural Reconstruction (JCRR). Although US aid officially ended in 1965, various forms of financial assistance from the US state agencies and private foundations continued to have a powerful impact on the population and development policies in Taiwan. The most influential programme was family planning or population control, which was activated as early as 1954. The first official five-year plan was put in action during 1964–1969. The goal of reducing the population growth rate from 3% to 2% was successfully met in 1972. Taiwan was praised as a model of success for the implementation of an organized family planning programme and even a ‘demographic laboratory’ (Chow, 1970) for ‘an experiment in social change’ (Freedman and Takeshita, 1969).

US economic aid to Taiwan carried a clear geopolitical agenda: social stability and economic development in Taiwan would secure its status of ‘free China’ as well as American interests in the Cold War. Policymakers and demographers also highlighted the urgency of population control in Asia for its political implications: the problem of overpopulation would become a hazard not only in Asia but in the whole world, because the consequence of stagnant development was thought to be a breeding ground for communism (Hodgson, 1988).

The promotion of family planning in Taiwan initially encountered political resistance, first of all, because of the tension between reproducing for military labour power and population control. Approving the Malthusian diagnosis of overpopulation would imply that the KMT rule was only valid within the territory of Taiwan and that the political claim to recovery of Mainland China was futile (Tsai, 2007). The advocates of birth control could be easily labelled as ‘communist sympathizers’.¹⁴ Second, the US promotion of family planning attracted the criticism that ‘Americans [were] meddling in the reproduction of Chinese people’ (Chen et al., 2003: 19). Dr Sun Yat-Sen, the founder of

the republic, had believed that China would be taken over by Western powers due to the former's lagging population growth.

The initial campaign was therefore kept low profile. JCRR helped established a private organization (Family Planning Association) in 1954 to avoid stirring up resistance. They also tactfully masked the goal of population control under the terms 'housewife sanitary education' and 'pre-pregnancy health program'. Step-by-step, JCRR managed to establish the legitimacy of population control policy based on institutional and cultural connections with the US.

In 1952, with assistance from the Rockefeller Foundation, JCRR invited George W Barclay of Princeton University to set up a population research team and published *A Report on Taiwan's Population* in 1954. LP Chow, a Taiwanese demographer and a leader in the family planning programme, recalled the significance of this study (Lu et al., 2007: 9):

If we hired a Chinese to do the survey, it would not have seemed so objective. Dr. Barclay was a foreigner and a demographer from a globally famous university ... his objective analysis would not carry any political implication. That was science.

The institutional links with US academia and bureaucracy were further consolidated. In 1961, the Taiwan Population Studies Center was established within the Provincial Health Department, with support from the Population Studies Center of the University of Michigan and the Population Council of New York. The birth control advocates successfully tamed the conservative voices regarding their suspicion about colonial penetration by showcasing the modernist narrative of universal science in the foreground.

Harvest magazine exemplified the cultural connection with the US and the relative autonomy of US-sponsored programmes from the KMT rule. Robert Sheeks, then director of the US Information Service (USIS) in Taiwan, raised the suggestion of publishing a magazine to circulate news and knowledge among the rural populace and won support from the US Council. In 1951, JCRR and USIS founded *Harvest* Publishing Company and printed the first issue. USIS insisted that *Harvest* be published as a bilingual magazine (one page in Chinese and one page in Japanese) in order to reach Taiwanese farmers who were more able to read Japanese than Chinese.¹⁵ This was an exception to the KMT rule that no books or newspapers could be published in Japanese after 1946 as a measure of decolonization (Wang, 2011).

The cultural campaign of birth control promoted the social imaginary of the 'modern family' as the nuclear household with a limited number of children and an ample amount of parental love. *Harvest* was flooded with articles about the misfortune of the big family, with titles like 'Raise good kids, not many kids', 'A big family is not a good fortune' and 'Too many children, too much pain'. Parents were urged to offer quality care and improved education for children, a condition prescribed as being only affordable with two or three children.

A KMT government staff member complained that JCRR had become an 'extragovernmental body' that imposed external pressure with the bargaining chip of US aid (Tsai, 2007: 94). The international pressure became imminent when the United States Agency in early 1963 announced its decision to terminate aid to Taiwan within a few years. In

1963, Chiang Kai-Shek acknowledged for the first time that Taiwan's population growth rate was high. A remarkable shift in public opinion in favour of population control became evident around this time (Liu, 2001).

Taiwan was coerced to accommodate some policies or programmes that served the US economic, political or ideological interest during the period of US aid (Wen, 1990). One example was Taiwan's promotion of the new intra-uterine contraceptive device (IUD), the Lippes Loop. The health workers advocated Loops as the primary method of birth control, in an attempt to meet the target of inserting 600,000 Loops within five years (Kuo, 1998).¹⁶ This policy bias was largely due to the large supply of free Loops by the Population Council of New York. American experts promoted the IUD in the early 1960s because this contraceptive, controlled not by users but by clinicians, was considered ideal for mass application in developing countries (Huang, 2012).

However, I am not implying that the US was launching a meticulous plan of cultural imperialism in Taiwan. In fact, JCRR operated as a bilateral agency whose commissioners included three Chinese appointed by the ROC president and two Americans appointed by the US government. The US financial support for *Harvest* magazine was phased out in three years (1954). Moreover, the US agents in Taiwan were from various public and private institutions whose ideas and interests did not always stand in alliance. The political and cultural influence of US aid was rather mediated by the KMT political elites, who had their own political agenda and cultural mission.

First, the KMT regime relied on US aid to establish political legitimacy vis-a-vis Communist China, a goal that coincided with US geopolitical interests. The KMT ruling legitimacy was grounded not only on economic and social stability but also on moral and cultural hegemony. The US support confirmed Taiwan's status as the only 'free and democratic China'. Even the private sphere of family life became a site for achieving Western modernity and democracy. In 1953, under the suggestion of US experts, the first Department of Home Economics was established within National Normal University to promote the scientific management of domesticity. In 1959, Taiwan Provincial government started the first annual election of a 'model happy family'. The celebration of family value in Taiwan carried deep political implications while Chinese Communism was experimenting with the revolution of defamilization. In the same year, the chair of the Department of Home Economics at National Normal University made a speech in the annual conference of home economics education sponsored by US aid (An, 2010: 60–61):

Chinese Communism is using violence to build the system of the People's Commune in violation of human nature and dignity. Taiwan is the only free China. ... To build happy families in Taiwan is a crucial weapon to combat the Communist. ... Therefore, Taiwan's home economics education has very crucial and timely significance.

Second, the KMT political elites who were involved in JCRR or family planning were already familiar with American culture and Western ideology prior to their participation in these programmes. Chiang Monlin, the director of JCRR from 1948 to 1964, received his PhD in Education from Columbia University in 1917 under the supervision of John Dewey. In an article published in 1951, Chiang described the duty of JCRR as 'applying

Western democratic thoughts to China' (Chiang, 1990: 34). The interviews of JCRR officers were conducted in English and most of the recruits received graduate degrees from the US (Huang, 1991: 48). In fact, the US assistance also provided fellowships to produce an increasing number of US-trained Taiwanese elites.¹⁷ These political elites served as 'agents of modernity' (Lo, 2002) by appropriating and domesticating American cultural schemas and repertoire in Taiwan. On the one hand, they embraced the universal narratives of science and development and saw modernization as a necessary path to the liberation of peasants who were trapped in a backward lifestyle. On the other hand, they enjoyed a certain degree of organizational autonomy from the conservative ring of the KMT regime, and carefully manoeuvred the shield of American power while avoiding being criticized for being agents of Western imperialism.

The modernity project of birth control, along with the intervention of US aid, reached the Taiwanese society in an uneven manner across class and geographic divides. Demographers have reported that the birth rate in rural areas was reduced more significantly than that in urban areas during the five-year plan (1964–1969).¹⁸ This discrepancy was partly due to the growth of the younger population in urban areas, as a result of industrialization and rural-to-urban migration. The other factor is that the family planning programme had purposively targeted rural women and the lower-educated, especially in the promotion of Loops.¹⁹ Chiu She-Rong, then president of National Taiwan University Hospital, also commented on this matter (Kuo, 1998: 77):

People with lower education, mostly trapped in poverty, see reproduction as something natural and give birth to a dozen without thinking, and they also suffer from poor sanitary conditions and want to have more children as an insurance.

As mentioned earlier, birth control and quality childcare were two issues strongly related in the campaign of family planning. Although most rural parents might not have been able to read brochures or *Harvest* magazine, health workers and village nurses were employed to make home visits. They also organized small group meetings to teach personal hygiene and household sanitation, and to advocate birth control and good parenting (Chen et al., 2003). The Bureau of Health specified in the work plan for health workers that more than half of home visits must be done in remote areas (Kuo, 1998: 78).

By contrast, educated people in urban areas had more access to information and thus more capacity to contest the external imposition of selective methods of birth control. In 1966, a columnist received a letter from a reader who was obviously part of the highly educated strata. He questioned why Taiwan's birth control campaign had prioritized the insertion of Loops instead of introducing a variety of methods for women to choose. Someone who attended an overseas conference told him that the participants from other countries were shocked at the prevalent acceptance of Loops in Taiwan. He also asked a Taiwanese doctor about the potential side effects of Loops, and the doctor answered: 'who knows ... but, what else can we do? We need U.S. assistance' (Lady Weiwei, 1966). Educated women were more likely to try new methods of contraception; however, they were also more likely to give them up once the methods caused any discomfort or uncertainty. This explained why many of them preferred condoms or oral contraceptives to IUDs (Kuo, 1998: 77).

Schooling reform and parental education (1987–2000)

Unlike the last project of modernity that was carried out by political elites in a top-down manner, the second project of modernity was bottom-up in nature and mediated by transnational cultural elites in the growing civil society. Non-governmental organizations dedicated to schooling reform and parental education mushroomed after the termination of Martial Law in 1987. With the newly granted freedom of assembly and association, NGOs and parents' organizations have functioned as principal venues for the introduction of novel cultural ideas about parenthood and childrearing. The most forceful organization was the Humanistic Education Foundation (HEF in the following), which started as an association in 1987 and turned into a foundation in 1989.

The thriving civil activism successfully pushed the state to enact an official campaign of education reforms starting in 1994. Absorbing many reformist ideas, the campaign aimed to alleviate academic pressure upon children and to promote a liberal, humanistic and pluralistic education. Concrete measures included the deregulation of textbooks and the prohibition of corporal punishment at schools. Higher education has been expanded to relieve competition, and college admissions no longer centre on standardized exams but involve multiple venues including application based on individual merits. The rights of parents have also broadened: they are legally entitled to participation in school committees and activities; they have also gained some liberty in choosing schools for their children and have a choice to educate children at home.

How did HEF and its partner organizations achieve the seeming success in such a condensed manner? What kinds of glocal entanglements and discursive strategies did they employ to establish the legitimacy of education reform and to build alliances with particular groups of parents? How did they project the social imagery of modernity and act upon it to urge the necessity of reform? What was the drawback or unintended consequence of education reform guided by the umbrella term of modernity?

The global connections of the education reform were not institutional ties but cultural flows and personal networks across borders. HEF advocates were mostly college professors with PhD training in the US or other cultural elites with substantial overseas experiences. The government committee established in 1994 was chaired by Nobel Laureate (Chemistry) Yuan-Tseh Lee, who returned to Taiwan after working in US academia for 30 years. These cultural elites, upon their return from the West, took on the role as 'agents of modernity'. The US in particular has been the most important destination for Taiwanese elites to pursue postgraduate studies. The numbers of Taiwanese overseas students in the US hit a record high in the early 1990s.²⁰

HEF reformers successfully promoted the idea of 'humanist education' as a pedagogy that better protected children's creative minds and emotional health. Not surprisingly, they faced the strongest resistance from school teachers and administrators. HEF protested against the mainstream curriculum and school culture by portraying them as backward or even 'anti-modern' Chinese traditions. In particular, they called for the abolition of corporal punishment, which was described as 'a myth of traditional Chinese education' (Chen, 1988); it was necessary to 'modernize the respect for teachers' and abolish the 'feudalistic' custom according to which students must pay obedience to teachers' authority.²¹

The reformers also advocated ‘modern education’ in alliance with the vibrant political movement against the KMT’s authoritarian rule. The discourses of democratization and deregulation – to protect individual liberty from state control and patriotic nationalism – became an essential undertone in the post-Martial Law era. This historical backdrop partly explained HEF’s preference for a more laissez-faire, permissive style of childrearing. The belief in democratization also shaped their inclination to rely on the market as a means to achieve humanistic education (Ho and Hindley, 2011).

Despite their strong adherence to the binary discursive frame of ‘tradition vs modernity’, education reformers carefully avoided the association with the parallel dichotomy of ‘Chinese vs Western’. They were inclined to highlight humanistic education as a *universal value* rather than a foreign model. This rhetorical strategy was similar to that of the KMT elites, who validated the legitimacy of family planning against the criticism of ‘colonial intervention’ by claiming the universal status of modernity and science. The difference was that HEF advocates further emphasized the importance of ‘localizing’ ideas and using personal stories and concrete examples suited to local contexts instead of translating and copying thoughts from overseas (Shih, 1994).

HEF reformers employed the discursive strategies of universalization and localization to guard themselves from two relevant lines of criticism: first, mainstream educators attacked transnational elites for their sheltered status and class privilege. Second, reformers’ ideas were criticized for simply transplanting Western culture and losing touch with the local contexts. HEF established Forest Elementary School in 1990 under the influence of the British model of Summerhill School.²² This very first alternative school in Taiwan attracted progressive parents who could afford the high fees, but it was initially outlawed by the Ministry of Education for its violation of education laws and zoning/building regulations. The then chief of the Bureau of Education in Taipei City criticized the school for being ‘too romantic and laissez-faire’ (Hu, 1989). A school teacher, in a newspaper opinion, analogized HEF advocates as ‘Plato in college classrooms’ who established ‘an aristocratic school in the forest far away from the secular world’ (Lin, 1993).

Facing hostile reactions from mainstream educators, HEF reformers saw parents as their important allies who could transform and supervise education through school participation. In 1988, HEF started a column titled ‘Family and School’ in *United Daily News* to advocate how to ‘normalize education with the forces of family’. HEF started parental education by offering seminars for selected groups: parents who were involved in parent–teacher committees at school and college students who worked as home tutors (Hu, 1989). In particular, HEF made alliances with parents whose children were disadvantaged or maltreated in the existing educational system, such as children who suffered from corporal punishment by teachers and those who were streamed into ‘bad classes’ after receiving lower grades.

The narrative of global modernity vs Chinese tradition was also applied to the reform of parent–children relations. The principal of Forest School, in a school–parent meeting, urged attending parents to transform themselves into ‘modern parents’: ‘to become happy new parents, you must get rid of the Chinese tradition that fails to validate a person positively’ (Tsau, 1997). HEF published a parenting guidebook called *Handbook of Love*, urging parents to use love and inspiration, instead of rods and threats, at home.

In the 1990s, a negative image of ‘modern children’ surfaced in the media: these children –the only one or two in a dual-income family – were depicted as ‘inconsiderate, irresponsible, prone to lying and talking back to parents’ (Wang, 1991). These reports lamented the situation that ‘the umbilical cord of parent–child communication has been cut’ because ‘working parents are unable to delve into children’s inner world and simply satisfy them with material things or do everything for them. This is why today’s children have become hedonistic freeloaders with a lack of work ethics’ (Shui, 1991). In other words, these ‘modern children’ were portrayed as being vulnerable to materialism and consumerism as an unfortunate consequence of modernization.

In response to the growing risk emerging from the condition of compressed modernity, HEF further expanded parental education and turned its criticism to ‘irresponsible’ or ‘incapable’ parents falling at the polar ends of the class spectrum. Elite parents were criticized for overprotecting children with material wealth or over-pressuring children to be competitive. Working-class parents with limited time to accompany children were blamed for their failure to catch up with modernity and acquire new parenting skills. To resolve these problems, HEF offered expanded parenting education, including evening courses and workshops in less urban areas, to instruct parents on how to become ‘modern parents’ who ‘learn to attend to children’s needs’ and ‘express love’ (Tseng, 1996). Someone even proposed the idea in an HEF meeting to institutionalize parental education so that couples would be required to get a certificate in parental education before registering for marriage (Yang, 1995).

Humanist reformers’ promotion of deregulation has nevertheless led to an unintended consequence of embracing neoliberalism while marginalizing the issues of distributive justice (Ho and Hindley, 2011). For instance, in the critical march that mobilized as many as 100,000 participants on 10 April 1994, demands relating to redistribution and social equality were listed under the heading ‘Educational Modernization’. In the end, the state only incorporated the humanists’ agendas as long as they did not challenge the status quo. Parents who benefit the most from the deregulation of education are those who can afford to send their children to private alternative schools, followed by higher education overseas.

Similar to the previous modernity project, schooling reform and parental education had an uneven impact on Taiwanese parents across the class divide, albeit in a reverse way. Middle-class parents I interviewed tend to use a narrative of rupture to describe intergenerational differences regarding the style of childrearing, and highlight their agency in initiating the changes. Many parents cited books, magazines and web articles that have shaped their ideas of good parenting. These books were often translated from English or authored by Taiwanese who resided overseas for a period of time. Some parents also mentioned their previous stay in the West for study or work as an eye-opening experience. They aspire to the Western paradigm of permissive parenting not only as a rupture with tradition but also as an indicator of cosmopolitanism, to distinguish themselves from lower-class people with limited global exposure.

By contrast, working-class parents have been marginalized or excluded in the social pursuit of modern parenthood. Although these parents have limited exposure to global culture or overseas networks, they nevertheless face similar institutional pressure since the reforms in college admission and school curriculum have absorbed the new cultural

repertoire as the template of education. The expansion of parents' rights and participation in school activities only empowers selective groups of parents, especially the middle-class family with a full-time homemaker. The enlarged expectation from schools and teachers upon parents to get involved in children's learning becomes rather a burden for less-educated parents and reinforces the social blame upon them as 'unsuitable', 'un-modern' parents.

Conclusion

The contested transformation of parenting discourses in postwar Taiwan demonstrates the country's compressed condition of modernity and global–local entanglements. This case shows that cultural globalization is neither a universal process of modernization nor a linear impact of cultural colonization. It operates on concrete historical paths in which various social actors appropriate and utilize global resources, which enable as well as subjugate them, to engage in localized symbolic struggles. The global and the local are intertwined through multiple forms of institutional and cultural entanglements, including organizational ties *from above* such as the family planning programme, and transnational links *from below* through the movements of people, goods and information. Two projects of modernity were discussed in this article. The first project (1951–1970) was marked by US economic assistance and a cultural campaign mediated by KMT political elites. The second project was characterized by the activism of transnational cultural elites in the thriving civil society with increasing global cultural exposure.

The concept of 'glocal entanglement' also highlights the fact that the local society receives, engages and negotiates with global effects in a dynamic and uneven manner. During the US aid period, lower-educated, rural parents were the target of family planning and parental education, while higher-educated, urban parents had more capacity to contest the US imposition of birth control. During the post-Martial Law period, middle-class parents were more able to appropriate transnational connections and global cultural resources to activate institutional reforms or exercise individual rights, while working-class parents were marginalized or excluded in the social pursuit of global modernity.

The above analysis reveals the importance of provincializing the Western experience of modernization and refraining from essentializing or homogenizing non-Western cultures and societies. To do so, we must historicize the formation of cultural repertoires and the politics of knowledge production, and look into the dynamic processes of interconnection, interaction and intermixing under the rubric of globalization. We need to incorporate a global or transnational analytical framework that goes beyond methodological nationalism or the West/non-Western dichotomy by investigating entangled histories across societies and uneven modernities within a society.

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Notes

1. Instances in the book include the supply of immigrant children as labour power (p. 63) and social concerns about the 'defective' economic views of children by immigrant parents (p. 71).
2. Some studies have noted the glocalization of popular children's culture: for instance, Sesame Street in Israel incorporated material about Israeli and Palestinian children, and the US distributors of Pokémon edited out material that was seen to be too culturally strange or specific (Buckingham, 2007).
3. Western modernity is not a homogeneous or endogenous condition, either. Chang (2010) characterizes Western countries as 'lower-order compressed modernity' in contrast to higher-order compressed modernity in East Asia.
4. The bi-weekly *Harvest* magazine was given for free during the first year and printed as many as 160,000 copies. It became subscription-based after July 1952 and the average print run was about 40,000 copies (Wang, 2011). *Taiwanese Women*, published by Taiwan Provincial Women's Association, was freely distributed to libraries, schools and organizational members. Members were mostly elite local women; 40% of them had college degrees (Wu, 2008).
5. When we conducted coding in 2010, only 13 issues of EPFL had been published.
6. EPFL website, www.cw.com.tw/saleskit/image/2012parenting-mediakit.pdf (accessed 5 October 2012).
7. A great mother of the air force, 1952.
8. Taiwan Restoration Day, 1951.
9. Scouts of China, 1952.
10. Children's obedience problem, 1952.
11. Working children, 1952.
12. Bureau of Health of Republic of China, www.doh.gov.tw/CHT2006/DisplayStatisticFile.aspx?d=64473 (accessed 9 October 2012).
13. The gross domestic product (GDP) rose rapidly from NT\$1630 in 1951 and NT\$5977 in 1961 to NT\$15730 in 1970 and NT\$85851 in 1980. ROC. Statistics Website, ebas1.ebas.gov.tw (accessed 9 October 2012).
14. JCRR published a brochure called *Happy Families* to advocate population control and planned on circulating as many as 1 million copies. The circulation was forced to terminate because the brochure was accused of being a 'communist plot to weaken the military power' (Chen et al., 2003: 15).
15. By the end of Japanese rule, mandatory primary education was widely attended (71% in 1944) (Hsu, 1993: 109), but the Chinese illiteracy rate (among people aged six and above) in 1952 was only 42% (Long, 1968: 7).
16. It was estimated that about 47% of the 2.75 million married women who entered the age range of 20–44 during the period 1964–1976 had at least one Loop insertion (Sun, 1978: 14).
17. For instance, quite a few leading figures in the family planning campaign received fellowships to study at the University of Michigan or Johns Hopkins University in the 1960s; both institutions were strongly involved in Taiwan's population control (Lu et al., 2007).
18. By the end of the five-year plan, the median reduction rate was highest in remote mountain areas (5.3%) and coastal areas (4.8%), while the reduction rates in urban areas (1.8%) and semi-urban areas (2.8%) were significantly lower (Li, 1973: Table 5).
19. The proportion of Loop acceptors with primary or less education was well above 85% before 1971 and 79% in 1975. By the end of 1975, the rates of first Loop insertion among married women aged 20–44 was 38.5% for cities, 59% for townships and 58% for counties (Sun, 1978: 17).

20. Ministry of Education, Republic of China, www.edu.tw/pages/detail.aspx?Node=2204&Page=18230&Index=2&WID=409cab38-69fe-4a61-ad3a-5d32a88deb5d (accessed 6 April 2013).
21. Teachers and students direct new modes of education, 1988.
22. AS Neill's book, *Summerhill: A Radical Approach to Education*, was translated into Chinese and first published in 1965. It became influential only after it was reprinted in 1984 and widely sold in the late 1980s. http://tysharon.blogspot.tw/2013/04/blog-post_6825.html (accessed 1st February 2014).

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Résumé

Cet article examine la transformation contestée des discours sur l'éducation des enfants dans le Taïwan de l'après-guerre en tant que cas de sociologie globale. Mon argument est qu'un tel changement transformateur concrétise l'état de modernité restreinte du Taïwan, enchevêtré dans un éventail de forces globales et de connexions transnationales. Cet article étudie deux périodes critiques de transformation discursive, d'une part un projet de conception descendante bénéficiant d'une aide des États-Unis et le programme de planification familiale durant les années 1950 et 1960, et d'autre part une campagne de conception ascendante activée par des membres de l'élite transnationale partisans d'une réforme de la scolarité et d'une éducation parentale dans l'ère postérieure à la loi martiale. Je propose le concept d'« enchevêtrement globalocal » pour décrire les intrications culturelles et institutionnelles entre des sociétés dans lesquelles les relations de pouvoir sont asymétriques. Je souligne en outre le fait qu'au travers des classes sociales, les parents ont un accès différentiel à la globalisation et des relations inégales avec les projets de modernité.

Mots-clés

Globalisation, globallocalisation, modernité restreinte, parentalite, sociologie globale

Resumen

Este trabajo investiga la transformación contradictoria de los discursos parentales en la Taiwán de post-guerra como un caso de la sociología global. Sostengo que dicho cambio transformador encarna lo comprimido de la modernidad de Taiwán, enredado con una variedad de fuerzas globales y conexiones transnacionales. Este trabajo analiza dos períodos críticos de la transformación del discurso, incluyendo un proyecto verticalista marcado por la ayuda de los Estados Unidos y el programa de planificación familiar durante los años 50 y 60, y una campaña desde abajo hacia arriba activada por las elites transnacionales abogando por la reforma educativa y la educación parental en el período posterior a la ley Marcial. Levanto el concepto de 'enredo glocal' para describir los enredos culturales e institucionales entre las sociedades bajo relaciones asimétricas de poder, y hago hincapié en que los padres a través de las divisiones de clase tenían acceso diferencial a la globalización y a las relaciones desiguales con los proyectos de la modernidad.

Palabras clave

Globalización, glocalización, modernidad comprimida, paternidad, sociología global