

The Relationship between Mobility and Identity

_Take Taiwanese Privilege Labor in Dongguan as an Example

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Abstract:

This is an article about the relationship between mobility and identity. By focusing on a group of privilege labor from Taiwan in Dongguan, Mainland China, who are the middle-level managers in Taiwanese-invested enterprise, this paper try to explain how mobility impact self-identity of this group of mobile people in a global world. The conclusion is living a mobile life between two places, Dongguan and Taiwan, neither helps them reinforce a self-identity to local culture in Dongguan nor a self-identity to be a Taiwanese, but gives them a more clear recognition about status they stand in a global stage. I argue that this is a consequence of a deeper progress of globalization for both China and Taiwan, which is related to political, economic and social elements that have effects on the contribution of people's global identity.

Keywords: mobility, identity, privilege labor, Taigan, globalization

Who is Taigan?

The people I'm discussing in this paper are a group of skilled migrants from Taiwan who have been worked in Mainland China for almost 30 years. It was about 1980s when the Taiwan-funded enterprise emerged in Mainland China, following by a group of Taiwanese managers coming with the companies. They're the middle-level manager in Taiwanese-invested enterprise. They call themselves "Taigan", meaning the leader in their department. In this name, the second word "Gan" is short for "Ganbu" (cadre) in Chinese. And this usage comes from a Japanese custom, who usually use cadre refers to managers in company. They didn't call themselves Taigan in Taiwan companies until they settle down companies in mainland China. The name Taigan at first is a natural given name for Taiwanese workers who want to go to factories in Mainland China. That's to say, anyone who want to go to factories in Mainland China would become managers in Taiwanese-invested enterprise in China. This group of people is leaders in the main department in their company. Some scholars call Taigan a group of highly skilled migrants (Deng Jianbang, 2006). However, there are some Taigan who do not have the high skills were invited by the Taiwan-funded enterprise in Mainland China, only because they are Taiwanese.

Since the 1960s, Taiwan has become one of the Four Little Dragons in Asia and was famous for its manufacturing factories all over the world. However, as they carry out an export oriented strategy and the economic goes well, trade surplus continues to extend. The New Taiwan Currency hence got a problem of appreciation. This directly leads to a higher salary and cost of production in manufacturing factories. Every manufacturing company living in this global economy time is searching for cheaper labor forces with a global perspective. Most of them set factories in every possible place in the world that have enough cheap labor, but keep research and development center in one place, usually in their own country. It is well known around the world that Taiwan

has competitive manufacturing industries. Most of the companies in Taiwan work for larger companies on an OEM basis. However, Taiwan is the real “world factory” to a great degree, it doesn’t have a big power with rich labor resources. Taiwan companies are also in the process of searching places that have cheaper and larger labor forces. For them, this task is tough but necessary.

China has been taken a policy of “open the door” since 1980s. This policy does have significant meaning both for itself and the market world. Some scholars believe this is a symbol of success to the world market. One of the most important policies in “open the door” is to bring the foreign capital in. For Taiwan companies, this is an huge opportunity. As I mentioned before, they are searching for cheap labors, while now China is providing rich cheap labors along with the process of labor transformation from rural places to urban. Taiwan companies were considered to move their manufacturing factories to Mainland China because of a simple consideration on “cost-benefit”, meaning their cost of production would significantly decrease. China has a positive policy to bring in foreign capital, while for political reasons the Taiwan government has taken a relatively negative attitude to let their aboriginal companies to settle down factories in Mainland China. Both the politicians and the scholars in Taiwan are worried about if a highly economic dependence on Mainland China would lead to a political or cultural identity change for Taishang or Taigan, and then have impacts on political things in Taiwan.

Taigan is also a group of mobile people between Mainland China and Taiwan. They own the preferential investment policies, including tax, land policies provided from the central government of Mainland China. They usually have a good relationship with central and local government, and they can directly connect with the governors who are in high-rise when they have something to express or make some change. In general, they have economic capital and social capital to make them become a group of privilege people in their migrant locations. They worked in Mainland China for most of the time and back home four times averagely one year. The motivations of why they choose a mobile life are complex. On one side, there is no doubt the attraction of a higher salary is one of the most important motivations. Salary for Taigan in Mainland China factories is more than twice compared with the same occupation in Taiwan companies. Rules for Taigan in the company are very tolerant. They could have a four-time-one-year holiday and they have enough time back to Taiwan. Some of them choose to travel. Most of their travel partners are their families. Taigan who came to factories in Mainland China can gain not only material benefits, but also a higher social status because of the natural-given name “Taigan”. For those who are not that much excellent in parent companies in Taiwan and have little opportunity to promote to management, they just need to move to another place so that they can get both social status and money. On the other side, bosses in Taiwan parent companies would give their staff some forces so that the staffs have to accept a mobile life in case of being fired. Some interviewee told me that it is not their self willing at first, but the boss’s order to let them work away from home. However, a high salary and enough holidays are both attractive conditions for them to leave for home. They will have the attitude that if it is easy to earn money in Taiwan, no one would leave far away from home, but at the same time, they have the ambition to take a chance outside. Sometimes they feel excited about going to other places. There is no clear-cut separation between choice and constraint, between forced and voluntary mobility (Salazar and Smart, 2012). As in the process of globalization and

the enlargement of the world capitalist market, the uncertain things are getting much more than before, so relationships between different subjects are becoming complex.

Theories and Approaches

Four main streams of researches on Taigan people have been taken.

First, a group of scholars focused on adaptation of the mobile Taiwanese in Mainland China. For example, Song Ziya talked about relationship between working and degree of satisfaction of marriage of the Taiwanese. She held the opinion that the families have to make some change to adapt the new life style when the husband has to move from home to their working places (Song Ziya, 2000). Similar researches have done by Li-Ling Sha, who concern about the changes on Taigan family, the family relationship, and the adaptation way of family members. (Li-Ling Sha, 2006). Doctoral student Chen Yijie from Fudan University carried the research on the residential patterns and determinants of Taiwanese migrants in Shanghai. The results from this study show that the patterns of Taiwanese family residence affecting their social adaptation, social inclusion, social identity and residential plan (Chen Yijie, 2012).

Second, scholars who have a feminist perspective find that most of the papers concerning about Taigan people are from a perspective of Taiwanese men, but not Taiwanese women, neither Taiwanese women in factories nor Taiwanese wives for their Taigan husband. Paper from Hsin-Chieh Lin from Tamkang University explores the transition of the role of female spouse into being a pseudo-single-parent family or a pseudo- single statement and its influence of a separated family for male spouse working in China while female spouse choosing to stay in Taiwan. The conclusion of her paper is that it is not living together that can determine maintaining intimacy in marriage, but the intensity and the interflow of the affections in between (Hsin-Chieh Lin, 2008).

Third, identity of Taigan is a core concern topic for Taiwanese scholars. Jiang Yiqing do research on the group attachment of Taiwanese and Mainland people, wondering if person to person contact could help change group identity and eliminate stereotypes among different ethnic groups (Jiang Yiqing, 2008). He finds that people can blend in a community or change their way of looking people or local culture hard if they would not open their heart to know something, or spend time with local people. By contrast, one who has the willing to accept the local culture could have a better and easier adaptation way when they face a new circumstance and these people can develop a kind of sympathy to local people and local culture (Jiang Yiqing, 2008). GengShu focus on the changes of political identity on Taiwanese people after they began living a mobile life between their home and Mainland China. He did his research in Shanghai and finds that Taiwanese has a trend to weaken the identity of “being a Taiwanese” (GengShu, 2006). Scholars keep focusing on the identity of “being a Chinese” or “being a Taiwanese” about the Taigan people and even their children. However, they didn’t notice the cultural boundary that exists between two groups of Taigan and local people due to a larger global effect like capitalism and the special policy China has given to Taiwan that may affect their identity.

Fourth, till now a lot of scholars treat Taigan and Taishang (Taiwan businessman) as the same group, for their similarities in ethnicity, working sites, and so on. Seldom of them notice the inequality between these two groups. In fact, differences between Taigan and Taishang are obvious to some degree. Taiwan scholar Deng Jianbang noticed this type of differences. He finds that relationship between managers and general manager in Taiwan companies is employee and

employer. That's to say, these two people are in two classes. And Deng holds the opinion that the coming out about the differences between Taishang and Taigan is a result of the uncertainty of the working life or the daily life. Deng also said that the differences between these two group of people didn't existed in the early years in 1980s when Taiwan companies first located in Mainland China, and he described the relationship between Taigan and Taishang as family members. (Deng Jianbang, 2006)

Scholars from other disciplines also pay attention to this group of people. Scholars from business administration have had a serious of publications on the adaptation way and managing way of Taigan, and continue doing researches on the relevant topic. And main purpose of these researches is to find better management mode in cross-border business, so they seldom concern about Taigan people from the prospective of themselves like the anthropologists do.

I define people in my paper as privilege labor. Privilege labor means that labors have rights in their working places and are cared about by government, company or any other institutions that have power. Privilege labor is different from migrant worker who move from developing places to developed places, for the former one have a special "up bottom" adaptation way to local culture, which can have great impacts on their self-identity. They don't need to fight for rights like reasonable working time, good salaries and security as the migrant workers do. And they either need not to fight for a nationality. This is on one hand because of the favorable policies that Chinese government giving to Taiwan-founded enterprise, and on the other hand because of a needy opportunity for China to lay the foundation in global market. In my opinion, there is a big similarity between Taigan and managers of transnational corporation. They are sent by their parent company to countries where they have business and become another kind of new group to the local place, although many of them do not need to gain a nationality of their settlement place. These migrants are emerging with the process of economic globalization. Although Taigan is protected by policies in China, however, they are suffering a pressure coming from the global market and have to bear burden like economic crisis or any uncertain elements factors from the capitalism market. As China has been involved into the global market more deeply, the policies that they give Taiwan-funded companies become less favorable at the same time. And in this process, not only the Taiwan people who stay in Mainland China, but also China itself are searching for a proper position in the world system.

It is not a fresh topic on talking about the relationship between mobility and identity. Giddens think identities are understood to be fluid, while Bauman claims that individuals find themselves with no stable position to aim for in the process of identity construction. Some other scholars who agree with Giddens and Bauman hold ideas as identity is dynamic (Rutherford 1990), positional (Gupta and Ferguson 1997), hybrid (Bhabha 1994; Ang in Zournazi 1998). I agree with their opinion that maintaining a stable identity becomes harder at the background of globalization, especially for those who are living a mobile life. However, the meaning of mobility is different in different society, different historic stage to different people or people from different classes. Someone who have a mobile life doesn't mean they have a body experience about moving if they have special adaptation strategies that could exclude them from the local culture so that they don't have the necessities to localize. That's to say, even the mobile people have living experiences in two places, the process of mobility could not arise their feelings up about the living places. The

process of mobility which is impacted by global economic forces impels them to think of the position or station of themselves. This article takes a research about a group of privilege labors in Mainland China and tries to find that what and how these people's identity is changed in a deeper process of globalization. For Taigan people, it is not important to be a Chinese or Taiwanese, but is important to them that if they have good skills to create value for their companies and a great ability to cope with uncertainty.

Introduction on Field Spot and Methodology

I choose Dongguan, Guangdong as my field spot. Dongguan city locates in Guangdong Province, in south China, which is near Guangzhou, the "Shenghui" (provincial capital) of Guangdong Province. Dongguan is very famous for its manufactory industry. It was one of the so called "Four Little Dragons of Guangdong's Economy" in 1980s, meaning a place which has a high speed of economic development. Most of the pull force of the development of Dongguan economy is coming from the contribution of private enterprises. Dongguan is also a place that attracts investors who come from a lot of districts to provide foreign investment. In Dongguan, there are about 6,000 Taiwan-funded enterprises and there are about 25,000 Taiwanese people nowadays. Dongguan governs 28 towns and four "streets" (central urban area). Most of the factories are in towns. Taiwanese people are mainly living in Houjie Town, Humen Town, Changping Town, Tangxia Town and Shijie Town. There are also a few Taigan coming from Guangzhou and Shenzhen. Most of the interviewee of this paper are from Dongguan. However, as their job is not stable, and some of them may have been moved in two or three main cities near Dongguan after changing their jobs, so totally my interviewee is coming from Dongguan, Shenzhen and Guangzhou, which are three main developed city in Guangdong Province, and also three main cities in Pearl River Delta. And the Pearl River Delta is the first places to carry out the policy of "opening the door" after 1978.

Dongguan is the earliest settled areas place for Taiwanese in Mainland China. As some Taiwanese told me, the reason why they choose Dongguan as their first settlement place is Dongguan has a similar culture with Taiwan to some degree. Well maybe the policy and an open concept of culture that Dongguan holds is also a big attraction for Taiwan-funded enterprise.

Methodology of this paper is literature retrieval, fieldwork and deep interview. I do bibliographic retrieval in Google Scholar, and the key words I choose are "privilege labor", "highly skilled labor", "Taiwanese people, highly skilled labor", "mobility, identity", "anthropology, mobility, identity", "globalization, mobility, identity". Till now, I have done deep interview with 31 Taigan people. It is not very easy to find strange Taigan people and successfully ask them to accept my interview. For three of my senior schoolfellows are Taigan, and I have been got a lot help from them. Most of the interviewees are introduced by them. And I also take the research method of "snowing balls". I have visited some district where there gathers a large number of Taigan, like Houjie Town and Changping Town in Dongguan. I got some basic knowledge from books and internet. I have also tried to get information from local Dongguan people, however, they didn't know much about Taigan, even if the taxi driver doesn't know the way of Taiwan Businessmen's Dongguan School. My cousin is living in Guancheng District in Dongguan city, and I can live with his families when doing my fieldwork. His apartment is about 16 minutes away from the Taiwan Businessmen's Dongguan School, while as the taxi driver didn't know the way to that

school, he has been driving about half an hour. When I told him that I want to go to this school, he felt puzzled about that location and told me he just heard about this school but had never taken anyone to this school before. He used a GPS to find the way, but he finally took a long time and chose a too bad way that we had to go through a village to get to the location. When I left that school, the teacher called a driver who is the private driver for their school to send me home. When I asked local people, for example, my sister-in-law, who has been living in Dongguan for almost ten years about the Taigan, she knew little about that. And when I asked the taxi driver about which district has got some Taiwanese, their answers were not very clear. And the teachers in Taiwan Businessmen's Dongguan School also provided me some interviewees. I would show great thanks to all of them, my families, my supervisor, my cousin and his families, the school teachers and all of my interviewees.

Expanded Factory Community

The Taiwanese businessmen usually set their factories in Mainland China and keep the research and development center in Taiwan. For Taigan people, factory is their core activities area, and is just like their home. When they first set down in Dongguan, they had their special buses sending by factories wait for them at the airport and then picked them up to their factory directly. They needn't to find the way to the factory by themselves when they first arrived in this city.

The living place for Taigan in Dongguan is rented by company. Most of the Taiwan-funded enterprises in Dongguan is the enterprises which need land in low price and plenty of labors, so the factories would be built in the countryside of Dongguan. Factories will help them to rent apartment together. One of my interviewee Mrs. Zhou said she and her workmate, who also is a Taigan live in one apartment and many of the buildings in this community have been rented by her company to provide to Taigan people of her company. Two of them take one apartment usually. Each apartment holds about 80 square meters. Location of the apartment is not determined by the distance between factories and the living places usually. However, a comfortable circumstance for living is necessarily considered. That's to say, the company consider little about the cost when they have to pay money for its staffs. Even the living place is a little far away but not very far away from the factories, there are also special buses for Taigan to be transported from the living place to working place at certain time.

For most of the Taiwanese people in Dongguan, they keep their habit to use the fanti-zi(traditional Chinese character, which is opposite to simplified Chinese character that the Mainland China is using). The brand name of Taiwan-funded factories, and restaurants or any other things that are owned by Taiwanese people all use the traditional Chinese character. This is a kind of symbol that could reflect their identity. They do not follow the habit that using the simplified Chinese as Mainland Chinese do. It is easy to find the real Taiwanese food in Dongguan. A very famous street where is full of Taiwanese people in Dongguan is Houjie. Someone has described Houjie as "Little Taipei". My main field spot in Houjie is a little restaurant managed by Taiwanese, in which it sells real Taiwanese food.

Entertainment in Weekends

Some of the reports described Taigan as the “flying guy”, which is quite fit to the living style of Taigan people. They spend most of their time working in Mainland China and have home leave. Home leave varies from rules of companies. Usually, the longest home leave is not more than ten days, and the shortest home leave is not less than seven days. Taigan have full domination of these holidays. Most of them will go back to their home in Taiwan so as to have a short reunion with their families who haven’t moved to Mainland China together with their husband. Taigan who do not return to Taiwan will organize some conventions, such as Lei Cha (mashed tea), travelling or do something interesting alone. Lei Cha is a traditional recreational activity for Taiwan people, in which several people get together to make tea and then drink the tea they made. An interviewee told me that Lei Cha activity is a good way to release pressure. Mrs. Liu is another Taigan who is a woman, and she has not got married yet. However, keeping single does not impact the passion she needs to face the life. She loves travel and spends most of her home leave travelling around the world. She told me that till now she had arrived most of the places in China, and has been to Europe twice, to Southeast Asia once. It is one of the important reasons for her to choose a mobile life between Taiwan and Mainland China that she would get more holidays, which means she would have much more time to command all by herself.

During the weekends, Taiwanese women usually like to do some shopping in the city with their roommates or Taiwanese partners of their company. They seldom invite the un-Taiwanese people to join them. As many of their factories are in the countryside of Dongguan, there are feeder buses for them to send them to the city centre in the morning and pick them up back to their living place. Usually, these buses would stay in one place that Taigan have prescribed, so Taigan should discuss the location place in the city and make compromise many times. Of course Taigan can go into the city on one’s own way, the transportation cost should be paid by oneself. As an interviewee told me that most of the time, they would make compromise, for they really have no idea on where to go or where is the best place to shopping, and hanging out together has got more interesting to some degree. For men, they like to go to the bar or do business conventions in weekends. And all the rent buses cost is paid by company if they go to one place together. If they want to go to the bar at night and do not want to go back on time, they have to use the city bus or call a taxi, and the transportation cost should be paid by them.

Family, Marriage and Children

About the family life of the Taigan in Dongguan, three main categories of their family type could be recognized. The first type is “two-site” family, meaning the husbands are working in Mainland China while the wives are in Taiwan home. The second type is “migration family”, meaning the whole families are living in Mainland China as for work reasons. And the third type is single. However, number of the marriage between Taiwanese and Mainlanders is not much. It only existed in the early state that Taigan came to Mainland China. When the men Taigan is single, he is very easy to married with his women assistant or other women from mainland China who are introduced to him. This type of marriage is a typical marriage mode between the rich Taiwanese and the poor mainland women. As one interviewee told me, in this type of marriage, if a man takes a woman as his wife, he could control all her families, which means the whole family belong to the wife should obey the husband’s words. This kind of marriage reflects an unequal relationship between women and men, and which is basically determined by the economic status. Emotional

communication is not that much in this type of marriage. There are indeed phenomena like a woman Taigan marrying to a man mainlander, and in their marriage life, most of the time the man mainlander have his words in family. For example, Mrs. Cai is a woman Taigan who has got married with a man mainlander who comes from Taiwan for almost twenty years. She told me that before they got married, she followed her husband to go back to his hometown in a little village in Xian, and it was at that time she has been known about the meaning of poor. So the economic situation of her husband's hometown is terrible. However, she still decided to marry him and she believed that "who I wanted to married is that person, but not his hometown". They have got married for almost twenty years and have had two daughters. As for work reason, Mrs. Cai stays in Dongguan and her husband and their two daughters are staying in Xian. Sometimes Cai thought the education way about her husband taking to their daughter is really tough, as he would not buy another bike for his daughters if they lost, so the daughters should carry on the bike to the fourth floor where their apartment was. For these things, Cai would complain about, but seldom prevent. When I asked why she didn't prevent the action of her husband, she just said "I listened to him". However, "obeying" in her family is not a result of negotiation between two cultures, but they both obey the traditional custom which is called male chauvinism in traditional China society.

The Association of Taiwan Investment Enterprises on the Mainland (ATTEM) is an official organization for Taiwan Businessmen. The Association of Taiwan Investment Enterprises on the Mainland (ATTEM) is an official organization for Taiwan Businessmen. This association organizes regular meetings to get together Taigan people in each city. Once a time, when I asked one of my interviewee why she has been keeping single but not got married, she told me that actually she couldn't find a proper person to marry because the range of her relationship is too small. Another interviewee complained about the ATTEM that most of the meetings they organized are used to announce official information, but not for people each other to improve their relationship. So in general, the social network of them is limited in a small range but not expand to a large one. Taiwanese from the same factory are the main relationships that each Taigan people have.

The family members usually do some activities, such as traveling, having tea party, and various games. Usually they do activities themselves and seldom organize the public activities that invite un-Taiwanese people to do such recreational activities.

Parents send their child to Taiwan Businessmen's Dongguan School. This school was founded in 2000. And the recruitment of student scope covers the whole Pearl River Delta region, which includes several main cities like Guangzhou, Dongguan, Shenzhen, Zhongshan, and Huizhou. 70% of the school children are the children for Taigan's and 20% of the children are children for Taiwan businessmen's. There are also a few Hongkong businessmen's children studying here. This Taiwan Businessmen's Dongguan School is a boarding school. Students will have their whole weekday, from Monday to Friday, in the school and also the school will provide school bus to send them home at every Friday afternoon and pick up back to school at every Monday morning. This school covers an area of two thousand square meters. It was in in Zhongtang town in Dongguan city. Only the children who have Taiwanese nationality could be admitted into this school. Teachers, teaching programme and textbooks are all imported from Taiwan in this school. The teachers always told me that "there is no difference in living here or in the countryside of Taiwan." Then, if they got ill, they would fly back to Taiwan to see their doctor but seldom go to the hospital at the local place. Not only the school, but also the companies do provide good

conditions for their transport both sides. As a result, they had little contact with the hospital system of Mainland China. The original money on building this school is donated by local government of ZhongTang Town. The project of building a Taiwanese School has also been negotiated with the central government of China. The purpose of donating to build a school special for Taiwanese children is to attract capital and develop economy for ZhongTang Town. For the Taiwanese businessmen, they want to have this school because a more convenient management mode could be built and Taigan labor would not worry about how to balance the education problem of their children and the little time that they have to get along with their children. Parents needn't to find a proper school for their children in Mainland China, and for the parents, nothing has changed.

“Lugan” and “Taigan”: A Relationship of Competition?

The name “Taigan” was a natural-given name in the 1980s, which means it is not an identification that should be fight for. Anyone who wanted to work in factories in Mainland China would be given this name. “Taigan” is a group of labor that has privilege because of the needy of their Taiwan-funded companies when they first settle down in the developing Mainland China. The companies need labor who are familiar with the management mode of Taiwan Companies. Even though some labors are not that much proficient in managing, they would be accepted and put into the management layer for their Taiwan identity and a little knowing about the management culture of Taiwan Companies. From the perspective of managers in Mainland China, the life style of Taigan is perfectly comfortable and free. However, this was a scene that only existed in the first twenty years since Taiwan-funded companies came to Mainland China.

As there is a high-speed development bringing out in Mainland China, a group of skilled labors and proficient managers has been growing up. And as more and more Taiwan companies choose to settle their manufacturing factories in Mainland China, there are some of them choose to use mainlanders as their managers in their companies in Mainland China. After XXX, Taiwan society is facing a high unemployment, so there also comes out a group of young Taiwanese who want to work in Mainland China where there has big job market and demands. However, it is not easy for them to become regular staff if they go into the Taiwan-funded enterprises in Mainland China. They have to fight for to be Taigan, meaning the managers, but not to be given a natural identification of Taigan. An interviewee told me that each young Taiwanese should go through a process of fierce competition, in which elder Taigan would organize a serious training and examine. Only if you pass all the training and examine, you would be accepted by the company as Taigan. There are also mainlanders who pass the examination or from job-hopping and become a Taigan in the companies, and they are really a challenge for both the young Taiwanese who want to work in Taiwan-funded enterprises and the elder Taigan. An elder Taigan told me that he would fly to Suzhou to participate an oral English practicing class to practice oral English in case his English level would be not as good as before, for he has not used English for a little long time. Elder Taigan is continuing improving their skills.

After the economic crisis in 2008, many of the Taiwan-funded enterprises who rely deeply on the export trade has closed down. Another reality they have to face is a higher land price and salaries for labors in Mainland China. And as the economic development of mainland China itself becomes faster, which has been called the “miracle” especially after 2008, the taking care of Taiwan-funded enterprises has been weakened. One Taiwan businessman told me that in the 1980s

and 1990s, the local governors really gave them enthusiastic support for their work in Mainland China. He showed me an example that the phone of the governors could be connected anytime you want them, because they governors had the rule of “opening your phone for Taiwanese businessmen 24 hours”, which gave them much more convenient when comparing efficiency in governors of other countries like Vietnam, Thailand in Southeast Asia where there also has some Taiwan-funded enterprises to set up. After 2008, when the export-oriented economy has been shocked, the government has taken some policies on economic transformation, based on this, the government encourages Taiwan-funded companies transform economic pattern from export orientation to domestic sale. There has been some of the Taiwan-funded companies choose to change the marketing mode to expand the market in mainland China, however, a big competition for Taiwan-funded companies has occurred with this process. As the number of manufacturing companies in Mainland China is increasing and they has occupied most of the market in domestic China, it is not very easy for the Taiwan-funded companies to find a way and take a place in market in domestic China. And some of the factories would choose to move their factories to lower price places in inland areas in Mainland China, or move to other developing countries in Southeast Asia or Africa where there has low land price and low salaries for labors. And in this process of movement, Taigan people are training to have a kind of knowledge on how to adjust a strange circumstance quickly. Even in mainland China, as for the uncertain affections of economy, they have to face a situation of moving, facing the risks on closing down of factories and changing job from one factory in one place to another factory to another place. They are definitely facing a more competition from the global market and are bearing more pressure from developed countries who give them orders, for if they want to have a big deal of order, they need to guarantee the quality of their production, and if they want to give promise to their product and gain profit from the OME industries, they have to do everything possible to search for lower places and lower salaries that can save cost. There is no doubt that they have to connect with the local government and contact the local culture as they move and settle down in a place, however, the pressure they have is from a much more big global market. As on interviewee told me, when they hire employees nowadays, they will firstly considerate the person’s individual skill, and secondly considerate if he or she is a Taiwanese, which is opposite from the past that they will first considerate the identification of the person he or she holds and secondly considerate the person’s individual skill. For the Taiwanese staff, they have to face the competition from a global scope, but not Taiwanese or mainlanders.

Conclusion

In the 1980s, it is the political policy from the government that encourages Taiwanese to set up companies in Mainland China. Taiwanese people use the social capital, policy support that provided by central government of Mainland China and good relations with central government built by some entrepreneurs, to “copy” their living community as their Taiwan home successfully in Dongguan. Their construction of the community in Dongguan is successful because the existing way of their copied living community is not obvious in Dongguan, which means there Taiwanese community is hiding in this city. It seems that these people have been integrated in this city, however, their contact with the local people and local culture is rare.

This article finds that the mobile people have a fluid identity in process of globalization. However, this kind of people has not reinforced an identity of “being a Chinese” or “being a Taiwanese”, they have developed a clear recognition of their status in global market, which can affect their identity deeply. I argue that it is not the migrants’ willing, but the structural factors which have formed due to complex historical, political, and economic dynamics in their 30 years of mobile life keep them away from the local culture and it is the pressure from the economic connections in a huge market changed their identity. It is the consequence of the structural factors that I called “the social adaptation way from top to bottom”. Actually, their living way in Dongguan were perfectly defined in this process, and there are no necessities to make changes most of the time. We may see there is little chance for the Taiwanese people to experience local culture or communicate with local people, because they have use their economic capital and social capital to build an umbrella for them to protect them, or in other words, to exclude themselves from their living circumstance. On one hand, their identity seems stable and fixed in some aspects, and on the other hand, their identity changed a lot as the changes of their social status.

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