

## Taiwan must resume localization

Written by Lee Min-yung 李敏勇

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The period from former president Lee Teng-hui's (李登輝) administration from 1988 to 2000 through former president Chen Shui-bian's (陳水扁) two terms from 2000 to 2008 and President Ma Ying-jeou's (馬英九) rule since 2008 has reflected political development in the post-president Chiang Ching-kuo (蔣經國) era: The shaky path toward development amid the struggle between Taiwanese localization and Chinese colonialism.

Lee attempted to transform the Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT) into a Taiwanese nationalist party and make the Republic of China (ROC) more Taiwan-centered. In 1999, he proposed the special state-to-state dictum to define relations between Taiwan and China, and this should have been an opportunity for the Chinese colonialist KMT government to get a new lease on life in Taiwan.

However, the stubborn KMT was unable to clearly see the historical trend and made every effort to expel Lee from the party. Since Taiwanese politicians inside the KMT mostly bend with the wind, they were unable to consolidate Lee's line.

During Chen's time in office, Taiwanese outside the KMT tried to make the ROC Taiwan-centered using the force of the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), reiterating that there is "one country on each side" of the Taiwan Strait.

Unfortunately, Taiwanese had been brainwashed for years by the Sinicization ideology that had taken root at every level throughout society. Since the DPP did not hold a legislative majority most of that time, it was blocked repeatedly, while it was unable to convince Taiwanese living abroad to support localization.

Despite Chen's accomplishments, he was attacked from every direction and failed to consolidate localized rule and was seriously humiliated and tormented after stepping down in 2008.

Ma has been eager to draw a line between his own and Lee and Chen's 20-year rule by reversing their road toward reconstruction and reform. He has resumed the attitude of the two Chiangs, secretly promoting the colonial nature of the KMT by joining hands with the Chinese

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Communist Party to control Taiwan.

He is incompetent and extremely evil, and merely shouts slogans about economic development. He hides corruption behind an anti-corruption image, while collusion between government and industry becomes worse and worse, clearly exposing the chaos and failure as the KMT's collapse became apparent in the nine-in-one local elections in November last year.

The 28-year period from Lee through Chen to Ma — assuming Ma can finish his term — should have been long enough for a country to turn its misfortune into fortune and rise from ruins. The rule of the two Chiangs in Taiwan overlapped with the Martial Law era. If democratization and localization are to be realized in the post-Chiang era, a shared national entity will be formed, and the formation of such a shared community would be a significant historic development.

Unfortunately, some Taiwanese and many Chinese exiles who have not abandoned their Greater China colonialist attitude and refuse to truly identify themselves with Taiwan are not allowing this glorious historic change to take place.

Meanwhile, China is using its newfound economic prosperity and capitalist logic to lure Taiwanese, who attach great importance to the economy.

This is a critical challenge to Taiwan. Without the progressive cultural vision of localization, Taiwan will not be able to follow the road to freedom through to its end.

*Lee Min-yung is a poet.*

Translated by Eddy Chang

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