

# **Capturing the Image of Justice between Generations: A Preliminary Report on Four Confrontational Situations in Environmental Dispute**

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This paper is the third in a series of three articles dealing with environmental rights and justice between generations, the first being an article on the idea of justice between generations, and the second on the anti-nuclear power movement in Taiwan in the 1980s. It aims at capturing the image of justice between generations as glimpsed from four confrontational situations in environmental dispute in Taiwan in the past two decades and further more endeavouring to account for it. They are the construction of the #4 nuclear power plant in Gong-liao, northern Taiwan, the disposal of low intensity nuclear wastes in Lan-yu, the Anti-Dupont movement in Lukang in the mid-eighties, and the protest against the development of Bin-nan Industrial Zone in the south of Taiwan.

To the extent this paper is primarily based on the materials gathered from a series of meetings using the focus group method, it is useful to describe how was the research conducted. The coordinators of this research project, Professor Chang Mau-kuei and this writer, were fortunate to have the support of an exceptionally outstanding team of assistants. Briefly, before the meetings took place, the

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research assistants would make an effort to gather relevant information and review the literature regarding the issues to be discussed as well as the backgrounds of the persons invited to the meetings so that an in-depth dialogue would be possible.

Altogether seven meetings were held: the controversy over the #4 nuclear power plant, the nuclear waste disposal at Lan-yu and the Bin-nan Industrial Zone each took up two sessions. The first meeting was held in January 1997, and the last in May 1997. The verbatim records of the meetings were published in January 1998.

**Key words:** Environmental Dispute, Confrontational Situations, Justice between Generations, Image of Justice between Generations, Protest Movement.

## I. Introduction

This paper is the third in a series of three articles dealing with environmental rights and justice between generations, the first being an article on the idea of justice between generations (Mab Huang, 1997), and the second on the anti-nuclear power movement in Taiwan in the 1980s (Mab Huang, 1999). It aims at capturing the image of justice between generations as glimpsed from four confrontational situations in environmental dispute in Taiwan in the past two decades and further more endeavouring to account for it. They are the construction of the #4 nuclear power plant in Gong-liao, northern Taiwan, the disposal of low intensity nuclear wastes in Lan-yu, the Anti-Dupont movement in Lukang in the mid-eighties, and the protest against the development of Bin-nan Industrial Zone in the south of Taiwan.<sup>1</sup>

Plainly, they are different situations, yet they all pose the problem of justice between generations. The struggle to oppose the construction of the #4 nuclear power plant is closely related to protecting the environment for the future generations. So is the disposal of nuclear wastes in Lan-yu; moreover, it has a bearing on the preservation of the cultural heritage of the indigenous peoples living there. The fight against Dupont's plan to build a factory in Lukang provoked a sustained reaction in favor of preserving a historical town with a distinctive and closely-knitted way of life. As for the movement to oppose the development by two giant corporations of an industrial zone in southern Taiwan, it is by far the most complicated situation of the four, involving governmental power, corporation money and to an extent, violence on the parts of the antagonists. However, it would seem that the problem of justice between generations is embedded in all the four situations. But was it clearly recognized as such by the elites and the people in the

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1. For the verbatim records of meetings on these four confrontational situations, see Proceedings of Conferences on Justice between Generations and Environmental Issues, January 1998. Hereafter referred to as Proceedings.

communities? How did they articulate their ideas? And how did this awareness of the rights of the future generations impact the actions taken?

To the extent this paper is primarily based on the materials gathered from a series of meetings using the focus group method, it is useful to describe how was the research conducted.<sup>2</sup> The focus group method, roughly speaking, is a kind of group interview. It differs from interview-in-depth in that the focus group approach provides the researcher serving as the moderator with ample opportunity to observe the interactions between the members of the group. It is especially effective if the research project were primarily concerned with the attitude on and cognition of specific issues of the group, such as this research project. Of course, the group situation could have blocked the expression of intimate thought of the members or it could lead to the domination by a powerful opinion leader. Thus the role of the moderator is crucial to the success of the meetings. He must be skillful in directing the discussion, stimulating the members to tell their experiences and reflections in their own words.<sup>3</sup>

The coordinators of this research project, Professor Chang Mau-kuei and this writer, were fortunate to have the support of an exceptionally outstanding team of assistants. Briefly, before the meetings took place, the research assistants would make an effort to gather relevant information and review the literature regarding the issues to be discussed as well as the backgrounds of the persons invited to the meetings so that an in-depth dialogue would be possible. Suggestions were prepared for the convener, (either Professor Chang or this writer) on how to begin the session so as to create a favorable atmosphere for the discussion. Participants were carefully chosen, the criterion being their role in the disputes and their contribution to the discussion. As it turns out, most of them are government officials, industry and business leaders, community leaders,

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2. For a detailed description of the conduct of research of this project, see Proceedings, pp. 1-15.

3. For a brief discussion of the focus group method, consult Hu Yu-hui, ed. *Qualitative Research: Theory, Method and Case Studies from Feminist Research in Taiwan*, Taipei, 1996.

scientists and intellectuals. A few young men, difficult to classify in terms of their role in the society until they took part in the confrontations, contributed to the liveliness of the conversation in the meetings.

Altogether seven meetings were held; the controversy over the #4 nuclear power plant, the nuclear waste disposal at Lan-yu and the Bin-nan Industrial Zone each took up two sessions. The first meeting was held in January 1997, and the last in May 1997. The verbatim records were published in January 1998.

## **II. The Concept of Justice between Generations**

The problem of justice between generations is new and intractable. It was not until the early 1970s that scholars in the Western nations began to think seriously about it. The reason is not difficult to ascertain. It was only in the late 1960s that the optimistic assessment by governments and the academic communities of the future state of mankind began to perceptibly change. Population explosion, food shortage in the third world and the exhaustion of many natural resources all portended a grim future. Against this background, the problem of justice between generations must be faced. In making decisions, for examples, concerning environmental matters or social welfare policy, does the present generation have any obligations in protecting the interests of the future generations? Or to put it differently, do the future generations have any claim to rights, either in sharing the use of natural resources, or in opportunity? As soon as the question is posed, it becomes immediately clear that a definition, not to speak of a solution, is far from being easy.

What is a generation? How are generations to be distinguished from age groups? And if the future generations do enjoy rights to which the present generation assumes corresponding obligations, who are they?

In a pioneering article, Professor Peter Laslett and James Fishkin agree on a definition that deserves to be quoted at length.

The definition of justice over time that we favor goes as follows: It consists in an obligation

on all present persons to conduct themselves in recognition of the rights of all future persons, regardless of geographical location and temporal position. No generation is at liberty to ransack the environment, or to overload the earth with more people than can be supported, or even, though this is more debatable, to act in such a way as to ensure that the human race will disappear. This duty goes beyond beneficence, the idea that it would be better to act in this way and magnanimous to our successors. Rather, we are required so to conduct ourselves because of the rights of future persons (Peter Laslett and James Fishkin, 1992: 14-15).

From this tentative definition, Professor Laslett proceeds to propose his famous metaphor of processional justice. To quote:

When walking in a procession, an irregular moving assembly such as Saint Patrick's Day Parade in New York City, rather than a military formation in defined rank, we can interact with those walking in our immediate vicinity. We can have no knowledge of how long the procession is in temporal terms, that is, how long it would take for the whole to pass a particular point, but we can be confident that it is not of infinite length. We are conscious that our predecessors, those ahead of us in the procession, have acted in ways that control us to some degree, because we are liable to be slowed down or halted by a motion communicated along the line from them. But we are well aware that we can have no such impact on our predecessors. If we decelerate or stop, either of our own accord or because our predecessors make it unavoidable, then there will be a similar impact on our successors, those who will come after us, but they can have no such impact on us (Peter Laslett and James Fishkin, 1992: 11-12).

Neither their definition nor the metaphorical model, ingenious as it is, could be expected to settle the debate. Many years later, for example, Professor Derek Parfit argued forcefully for some variant of utilitarianism, but could not be completely satisfied himself.<sup>4</sup> He was, in his own words, still in the quest for a perfect theory. To quote:

As I argued we need a new theory about beneficence. This must solve the Non-Identity Problem, avoid the Repugnant and Absurd Conclusions, and solve the Mere Addition Paradox. I failed to find a theory that can meet these four requirements. Though I failed

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4. See Derek Parfit, *Reasons and Persons*, Oxford University Press, 1984. Also consult Chun-hong Chen, "Reflection on the Puzzle of Justice between Generations: The Paradox of the Non-Identity Problem," in *Soochow Political Science Journal*, Vol.7, March 1997.

to find such a theory, I believe that, if they tried, other could succeed.<sup>5</sup>

As for the other troublesome problem in the concept of justice between generations, the philosophers and economists tended to take opposite positions regarding social discount rate (Hsueh Li-min, 1997). Many philosophers, of course not all, are against the concept of social discount rate, while the economists as a group are quite comfortable with the idea and find it very useful indeed.

### **III. Four Confrontational Situations in Environmental Dispute.**

Fortunately it is not necessary to settle all the difficult problems concerning the concept of justice between generations before an effort could be made to capture a glimpse of it in the environmental disputes in Taiwan. As indicated earlier, four confrontational situations have been selected. All together, seven conferences were held, from January to May of 1997. In all the meetings, the method used is that of focus group approach, with Professor Chang Mau-kuei and this writer serving as moderators. There were two meetings on the building of the #4 nuclear power plant; the first being held in Kin-shan, Taipei County on January 18, and the second in Taipei City on February 27. In the first meeting two representatives of the Taiwan Power Company, four local community leaders who were opposed to the construction of the plant, and two professors took part. One of the two professors, Dr. Shi Hsin-min of the National Taiwan University, had played a most influential role in the organization and operation of the Taiwan Environmental Protection Union, which had spearheaded the anti-nuclear movement in Taiwan. The second meeting was designed to ascertain the attitude and positions on economic development and environmental protection of the representatives of industry and business community.

Similarly, the problem of disposal of the nuclear waste materials in Lan-yu was

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5. Derek Parfit, above, p.443. Also consult Chun-hong Chen, "Reflection on the Puzzle of Justice between Generations: The Paradox of the Non-Identity Problem."

taken up in two meetings. The first took place in Lan-yu on March 12, with twelve community leaders present. It is worthy of note that the village leaders chose to speak in their own language. Although interpretation was required, it did not detract from their eloquence when they dwelt on the plight of their people. The second was a meeting held at the Academia Sinica in Taipei on March 15. Government officials, representatives from the Taiwan Power Company, scholars and scientists committed to diverse positions as well as a well-known Lan-yu writer were present. It was a wide-ranging exchange of views, and the problem of justice between generations were brought up and discussed.

The fifth meeting was devoted to a discussion of the anti-Dupont movement in the mid 1980s, especially its origins and the mobilization process against the company and the government. It was held on April 12 in Soochow University, Taipei. Seven former movement leaders and participants were invited to tell their experience and what they thought some ten years after the events. It turned out that a substantial portion of the time was taken up by reminiscences. The sixth and seventh meetings were used to tackle the controversy concerning the development of the Bin-nan Industrial Zone in the south of Taiwan. The sixth was held in Tainan City in the morning on May 3, with eight persons participating, including six leaders in the opposition camp and two professors sympathetic to their cause. One of the leaders was a member of the Legislative Yuan. In the afternoon of the same day, the representatives of the two powerful corporations were out in force, with the president of the steel mill corporation and the deputy president of the chemical corporation each leading a fairly large entourage, including scientists and experts.

During the six-month period in which the meetings were held, the research team faced a few crises; they also enjoyed a few light moments. For example, it was the intention to hold a meeting on the construction of the #4 nuclear power plant, inviting all interested parties, i.e., the opposition leaders, the representatives of the Taiwan Power Company, leaders from the industry and commerce, as well as scholars and experts. Yet the National Association of Industrialists declined to participate, giving the reason that



the agenda was far too sensitive. As a result, a separate meeting was arranged at their headquarters in Taipei, as indicated above. Moreover, in the meeting in Kin-shan on January 18, Professor Shi Hsin-min was late, apparently delayed by traffic. The opposition leaders from the community were clearly agitated, saying that without the presence of Professor Shi, they would withdraw from the meeting. Again, the idea of convening a meeting in Lan-yu, with all interested parties coming together, was soon abandoned. The Taiwan Power Company was reluctant to meet in Lan-yu, thinking that they might be met with demonstrations by local people there. At about that time, the controversy concerning shipping nuclear wastes from Lan-yu to North Korea was raging. A delegation of South Korean environmental protection organizations arrived in Taipei to present their case against the government and the Taiwan Power Company, making the latter nervous about the proposed meeting. Consequently, the decision was reached that the research team would first visit Lan-yu and interviewed the village leaders and other local elites before holding a meeting with representatives from the government and the Taiwan Power Company. Similarly, given the accusations by the community groups against the two big corporations for instigating violence, and vice versa, concerning the development of the Bin-nan Industrial Zone, two separate meetings were plainly the better part of prudence.

#### **IV. The Attitudes of Governmental Officials, Entrepreneurs, Scientists and Experts and Opposition Activists toward Justice between Generations.**

In pursuing the image of justice between generations embedded in the four environmental disputes, it is difficult not to fall into the trap of stereotyping the participants. It is indeed easy to describe them in stark contrast: the government officials, the entrepreneur class and the scientists and experts in the pay of the rich and powerful support rapid economic development, without much concern for the future generations, while the people in the communities affected by the decisions and the university

professors and scientists fought selflessly and courageously for the right to a clean environment and the well-being of the future generations. To a certain degree, this stereotype thinking contains a kernel of truth. However, the realities are much more complex. The nuances and gradations of the attitudes and ideological positions of the participants are what make this study interesting. And in some cases, what is being publicly stated could very well be assumed to be different from privately held positions.

That for more than three decades the government has been committed to rapid economic development to the neglect of the environment is beyond doubt. The business community was given support and incentives while the educational system emphasized training in science and technology. As a result, Taiwan was fast becoming an industrialized society with an entrepreneur class and a large well-educated technological elite. The cultivation of humanities and arts was neglected. Labor movement was suppressed, and the environment was severely degraded. The mind-set that heavy industry was the key index of power and prestige still remains influential.

For example, speaking of the need for steel production, the President of Yieh Loong Enterprise Co. Ltd, the owner of the steel mill in planning stage in Bin-nan Industrial Zone, insisted that Taiwan must have a manufacturing industry as its economic base, and that the most ideal choice is steel. He cited Germany of Bismarck and Great Britain in the 19th Century, and the United States and Japan in post World War II era to make his points. Moreover, steel industry, given the new technology, is no longer a dirty industry in any sense of the word. Only when the society is prosperous could the future generations live a healthy and happy life (Proceedings, 1998: 177-78, 181).

This sentiment was effectively echoed by the Vice President of Tuntex Petrochemicals Inc, the other powerful corporation in Bin-nan Industrial Zone. For him, it was the petrochemical industry that was the foundation of power and competitive capability. Computer technology and service industry could not be relied on to turn the trick, but petrochemicals will ensure Taiwan a place in the international society and take the island state into the 21th Century (Proceedings, 1998: 182-183).

In a different setting, i.e., the meeting to discuss the pros and cons of the construction of the #4 nuclear power plant, a representative of the Taiwan Power Company, as expected, stressed the need for electricity for economic development and for a higher standard of living. To achieve this goal, a energy policy based on diversified sources is optimal, including the use of nuclear energy (Proceedings, 1998: 2-3, 7). Moreover, the reliance on the nuclear power was far from being excessive. As the Taiwan Power Company estimated it, nuclear power only accounted for 21.9% in 1997 of all energy produced, and 18.4% in 2006. If the #4 nuclear power plant were not built, it will account only for 12%. Compared with 35% in Korea in the year 2000, and 25% in Japan in 2010 (Proceedings, 1998: 7), it is plainly acceptable.

Simultaneously, the nuclear technology has improved much, the representative from the Taiwan Power Company insisted. The risk should not be exaggerated. Accidents like Chernobyl simply could not have happened. As to the future generations, he argued from economic prosperity, saying that it would be difficult to face the future generations if after college graduation, our children could not find jobs in Taiwan and have to be satisfied with the position of servants or waiters in restaurants abroad (Proceedings, 1998: 11).

In the meeting with representatives of the Chinese National Federation of Industries and the General Chamber of Commerce of the Republic of China at their headquarters in Taipei, the Secretary-General of the Chinese National Federation of Industries and the Deputy Secretary-General of the Chamber of Commerce were prepared to concede that most industrialists and business men supported the government in building the #4 power plant, albeit in a low-key fashion. Safety was obviously important; yet economic development could not be neglected either. However, they were not incompatible; they were supplementary (Proceedings, 1998: 41, 43-44). Moreover, the Federation could not do much about the attitude of its members concerning environmental protection; yet it could only persuade. Industries would move out of Taiwan if they judged that the

investment environment was deteriorating. Perhaps it is immoral for Taiwanese entrepreneurs to export polluting industries to South-east Asia or to Africa; it appears to be an unavoidable part of development process. This kind of injustice had been done to Taiwan not that long ago (Proceedings, 1998: 49-50).

In the meeting on the disposal of nuclear waste materials held in Taipei, a high-ranking government official referred to the interest of the future generations. Nevertheless, he chose to dwell on a fund set up for taking care of the long-term problems of restoring to their former state the nuclear power plants as well as the storage facilities. By 1997, this fund has accumulated more than 70 billion Taiwan dollars (Proceedings, 1998: 113).

From the brief discussion above, it is clear that the representatives of industry and commerce, the Taiwan Power Company and government officials rarely referred to the well-being of the future generations. In the few occasions when they did, they tended to take a hard-lined position in that they made subordinate the interests of the future generations to that of economic development.

What to expect from the scientists and experts? Would they be more sensitive to the need for environmental protection and the interests of the future generations? Would they be speaking in gradations and nuances?

The group of scientists and experts who came to the meeting with the powerful corporation managers concerning the development of Bin-nan Industrial Zone were hardly more accommodating to the environmental needs. One of them was highly critical of the consciousness of environmental crisis propagated by the environmental movement, saying that many of their ideas and opinions were outdated and did not have a scientific basis. She complained about the many unreasonable requests the corporations have to meet in the process of doing the environmental impact review. For her, social stability came fast, and that it could only be achieved by having a heavy industrial base (Proceedings, 1998: 204-205).

The scientists and experts who took part in the meetings on the construction of the

#4 nuclear power plant and the disposal of nuclear wastes manifested a wider range of attitudes and ideological commitment, with quite a few making a gallant effort to be objective and neutral. For example, Professor Tsai Chun-hong, a well-known nuclear scientist who headed up a graduate program in a university, began by arguing that it was not a question of whether nuclear energy were needed, but how much and when. He opted for a balanced and diversified energy strategy, including the use of nuclear, oil, gas and coal. He conceded that at the present time and in the near future, he could not say that nuclear energy was perfectly safe; yet the risk was fairly low indeed (Proceedings, 1998: 5-7). As for the interests of the future generations, he emphasized the half-cycle of the life of nuclear waste materials, making it a more soluble problem compared to that of some chemical materials. Anyhow, mankind in the past two to three hundred years has almost used up all the oil and coal, and new energy sources are needed. By developing nuclear energy, the depletion of oil and coal could be delayed. Yet it is only a matter of buying time. Perhaps our children would be able to find new energy sources. Better still that we should work on new energy sources. We should act responsibly (Proceedings, 1998: 17-18).

This apparently neutral and sophisticated analysis and proposed solutions were challenged by scientists opposing nuclear energy. Speaking on their behalf, Professor Shi Hsin-min asserted that he and many people in the anti-nuclear movement were not against electricity; they were against nuclear power. This is so primarily because nuclear power is not safe, and accident-prone. Three-Mile Island and Chernobyl must be taken seriously. Moreover, nuclear waste materials posed serious problems, affecting not only the present generations, but future generations as well. Professor Shi concluded by urging alternative energy sources, certain in his conviction that Taiwan could not afford nuclear power, and that shipping nuclear wastes for disposal abroad would face insurmountable resistance (Proceedings, 1998: 3-4).

In response to Professor Shi's position, Professor Tsai argued forcefully that from

his studies, Three-Mile Island is possible, but not Chernobyl. The heart of the matter is how to face risks. If we refuse to take any risks, and would not allow the future generations to take any risks, they would definitely perish. They simply can not survive. We should teach future generations how to face risks, and we must have confidence in the future generations that they are capable in facing risks (Proceedings, 1998: 34).

In the meeting in Lan-yu to discuss the disposal of nuclear waste materials, Professor Lee, another nuclear scientist, emphasized the need for a comprehensive plan in tackling the problem of justice between generations. For him, the government must do the planning, including who can make what decisions affecting what groups of people. Obviously the crucial part of the planning was how to estimate the carrying capacity of the earth, both in terms of its physical capacity, and in taking into account the impact of environmental decisions on society and culture as well. For the disposal of nuclear wastes in Lan-yu, the concerns of the indigenous people must be heeded. And the process of decision-making, in contrast to that before the disintegration of the authoritarian government, must be open and fair. Otherwise, their legitimacy would be in doubt (Proceedings, 1998: 89-90).

The statement by Professor Lee above apparently triggered off a many-side debate on the danger of nuclear wastes and what constitutes justice. Professor Chi, a student of culture and ethnicity, was critical of the government decision to use Lan-yu for storing nuclear wastes, arguing that we must take a more long-lasting concept of justice, if not an absolute concept. Otherwise, every decision by the government could be justified by the specific circumstances under which it was reached. If this were so, the German Nazi movement would have been justified, and the Nuremberg trials were not legitimate. For him, an environmental ethic must encompass democratic participation. The people in the local community affected by a government decision must have the right to participate in making the decision (Proceedings, 1998: 93-95).

Professor Chi's reference to the Nuremberg trials was highly provocative. Professor

Liu, a nuclear engineer-turned law and management professor felt that to dwell on the problem of justice between generations is to exaggerate the degree of control over social development that man enjoys. As he saw it, man is dictated by economic motivations in what he does. Comparing the storage of nuclear wastes in Lan-yu to Nazi persecution of the Jews was farfetched. After all, the Taiwan Power Company was not engaged in genocide. It was only executing government policy. The principle of comparative advantage should be useful. If it were more advantageous, that is, less risk, less opposition, to ship the nuclear wastes abroad, then do it (Proceedings, 1998: 96-97).

At this point, he was severely and emotionally challenged by Professor Yang, another nuclear scientist who had been active in the anti-nuclear movement. It turned out that both of them had worked at the Nuclear Research Institute without running into each other. In the heat of debate, they each claimed to know more than the other about nuclear science, going so far as to refer to the number of papers they had published and appealing to the high-ranking government official present who had also worked at that Institute as a judge. The high-ranking government official tactfully declined (Proceedings, 1998: 95-98). As to who could speak for the future generations, Professor Yang was direct in his answer: the knowledgeable, wise and just persons of the present generation. And they should be guided in their decisions by the ideas of sustainable development, by taking into account the consequences of their actions, the carrying and recoverable capability of the environment (Proceedings, 1998: 112-113).

Compared to the emotionally charged exchange between the two scientists indicated above, the brief discussion of the potentiality of technology, including the use of gene engineering, by a scientist at the Headquarters of the National Federation of Industries would seem to be the ultimate of coolness and detachment. Briefly, he tended to think that the government in making decision must be practical; it cannot, like the philosophers or university professors, think of themselves as the embodiment of justice. He suggested that genetic engineering had reached a mature stage, although only few

would have endorsed cloning of the human species. Yet, who could tell what potentiality of science and technology? Perhaps, twenty to thirty years from now, if the environment deteriorated further, science and technology could save mankind by enhancing our adapting capacity. It could be that at some point, the future generations would only need only half the oxygen we need to survive (Proceedings, 1998: 39-40).

The people in the communities affected by the decisions of government and/or the corporations, it seems safe to assume, would be resolutely opposed to economic development and for environmental protection and for future generations. Yet it is definitely not so simple and straightforward. The diversity in attitudes and positions was truly astonishing. Take the Anti-Dupont Movement for example. It was the first mobilization effort against a powerful multinational corporation and for that matter, against the government, which supported it. Before that, no thing of that kind was thinkable. Its success could not but give an impetus to the opposition movement rising at that time. Yet there was scant mention of the future generations in the reminiscences of the participants in the meeting convened on April 12, 1997 on the campus of Soochow University.

According to this recount, it all started when Mr. Lee, now the head of the Lukang township, came upon an item of news on the United Daily that Dupont would be building a factory in Lukang. As Mr. Lee was campaigning for a seat in the County legislature, he quickly decided that it would be an effective campaign issue (Proceedings, 1998: 119). But how ?

Mr. Lee and his supporters hardly had any experience in mobilizing the people. Nor did the police have experience in controlling them. Slowly they began with petitions and demonstrations in Lukang and then in Taipei in front of the Presidential Palace. And the campaign slogan escalated from that of "I Love Lukang; Say No to Du-pont," to that of "I Love Taiwan; Say No to Du-pont." (Proceedings, 1998: 123, 133) During this process, the press and intellectuals from other cities, and high school students in Lukang, began to



play a part. In the words of an intellectual who had hitchhiked to Lukang to take part in the activities, what prompted them to go was a sense that the time had come to challenge an authoritarian government. They aimed at some kind of social movement. The concern for environment protection need not be that important. They learned as much as they could. What was disadvantageous to Du-pont they propagated without hesitation; what favored the corporation they duly suppressed. That Du-pont was an American corporation served them just fine. For the government had been most submissive to the United States for far too long. Their ideology, in a rough sense, was a kind of simple anti- capitalism (Proceedings, 1998: 125-126).

Apparently quite a few participants in the meeting shared this sentiment. A man who had played a very important role in Lukang and has now turned his interest to mobilizing the fishermen in southern Taiwan agreed. For him, the anti-Dupont Movement was a challenge to the authoritarian government, not merely an environmental issue. Yet he insisted that the Left in the new social movement in Taiwan had not achieved much and could not have much of a future. The future belonged to those who combined genuine community interests with social movement, who used the productive relationship in mobilization the people (Proceedings, 1998: 121, 131).

Similarly, another active participant in the anti-Dupont Movement referred to it as communitarianism, a kind of community effort to preserve its cultural heritage. In his recollection, the struggle was successful because Lukang was a better-preserved community than many others in that its cultural traditions were kept intact. A sense of pride and the economic deprivations suffered by the fisher men combined to make the situation explosive. And in pioneering the new social movement, its impact on Taiwan far exceeded the change that it has brought about in Lukang (Proceedings, 1998: 123, 147).

No doubt then that in Lukang politics and culture had played a very important role in triggering the anti-Dupont Movement, so much so environmental concerns were sidelined. Yet the situation in Lukang was not unique in the early years of the new social

movement. In the struggle against the construction of #4 nuclear power plant in Gong-liao in Northern Taiwan, political motivations seem to have been very much on the minds of the intellectual and professional elites who had linked up with the community in opposing the Taiwan Power Company and the government. Professor Shi Hsin-min admitted to that much (Proceedings, 1998: 20; Mab Huang, 1999). This, of course, does not deny that the anti-nuclear movement was concerned with the environmental dangers of nuclear power: nor that the people in the community were not genuinely worried about the well-being of the future generations. In the words of Mr. Chao, a local leader in Gong-liao, the anti-nuclear movement in Taiwan was a movement of political consciousness raising, a kind of political awakening. The Taiwan Power Company should not be allowed to impose its decisions on the community. If the local people were to make their own choice, they would opt for developing tourism, and thus preserving the environment for the future generations. And the right way of settling the dispute was through plebiscite, which is, in his opinion, a reasonable democratic process of making decisions (Proceedings, 1998: 9-10).

Mr. Chao's statement were given support by his colleagues present at the meeting. They emphasized that they were not opposed to more electricity, but against nuclear power because it is not safe. Without exception, they spoke vehemently about the high-handedness and deception they had suffered in dealing with the Taiwan Power Company. There was a clear sense that if things were left along, if the nuclear power plant were not built, the future generations could take care of themselves (Proceedings, 1998: 12, 14, 15).

The concern for cultural heritage, which had contributed to a sense of solidarity in Lukang was predominant in the conversations of the village elders and church leaders of Lan-yu. As the elder of Leng-tao Village put it, whether the storage facilities for nuclear waste materials were removed from Lan-yu was a matter of life and death for their community. It would determine to a large degree if their cultural heritage and way of life

could be preserved. He cited decline in agricultural production, and prevalence of all kinds of rare diseases, including retardation and psychosis. This unfortunate situation, he suggested, was related to the storage facilities (Proceedings, 1998: 54-55). In the words of another village leader, the storage facilities and their radioactive materials have brought about many diseases, including stillbirths and sterility on the part of young women, and thus can be compared to genocide (Proceedings, 1998: 65). Or as a clergyman put it, it was a policy of racial discrimination. His people, innocent and uncalculating, were sacrificed for no good reasons at all. The hurt was not only physical and environmental, but psychical as well. The youth of Lan-yu was deeply wounded, and it would take years, if not decades to heal this wound. Looking forward to the future, merely removing the storage facilities is not enough to turn the situation around. To give the people in Lan-yu a chance of living a life of dignity, the educational system must be revamped. Han chauvinism must be abandoned (Proceedings, 1998: 66-68).

From this idea of radical change, it is only a short step to political autonomy. The government must declare Lan-yu an autonomous region as well as protect its traditional culture from encroachment by the Han people (Proceedings, 1998: 72-73).

Another young man from Lan-yu, a well-known writer and deep-sea diver who had lived in Taiwan for long years before resettling again in his native place, declared himself and his colleagues environmental nationalists, not anti-nuclear activists. For him, his generation was burdened with a historical mission to preserve the land their ancestors had left to their care (Proceedings, 1998: 87). It was not fair for the first world to dump its waste materials in the third world countries. Thus, the government must face up the duty to provide a suitable environment for the future generations in Lan-yu (Proceedings, 1998: 111-112). As to the question of who are our children? He took it to mean that they are either Han or Lan-yu or mixed blood persons. He found the question very interesting if somewhat puzzling (Proceedings, 1998: 110-111). Although this indigenous writer/diver did not appreciate that it was referring to the non-identity problem, he was the only

participant in all the seven meetings who endeavors to wrestle with it.

By far most violent confrontations between different groups of people in the community investigated in this report took place in conjunction with the development of the Bin-nan Industrial Zone. The mutual distrust and hostility was palpable. For many of the community leaders, economic development was the only hope for the future. They simply could not understand why any one would be opposed to the two corporations. As one of them put it, “We simply can’t wait for development. The opposition is motivated merely by politics.” (Proceedings, 1998: 184) Another expressed his gratitude to the two corporations (Proceedings, 1998: 184); while still another thought the development projects the best opportunity for his community to break from poverty and stagnation (Proceedings, 1998: 185). Without exception, they derided the government for giving in to the environmental organizations. Only a weak government could have delayed building more reservoirs to meet the need for water of the steel mill and the chemical factory. Only a weak government could care about a few birds [referring to the black-faced spoonbill] (Proceedings, 1998: 187). They insisted that they have the support of the people with them. They counted some twenty opposition organizations on paper, yet they insisted that hardly more than thirty people were really active. If plebiscite on the development of the industrial zone were held, they estimated that 80% of the people would back them (Proceedings, 1998: 183). As for violence, they blamed primarily Mr. Su Feng-chi, the Democratic Progressive Party member of Legislative Yuan and Professor Huang Min-chin of National Chen-kung University in Tainan: the former for his political ambition and the latter as an outside agitator (Proceedings, 1998: 192, 193, 194).

Against this uniformly hard lined position in support of economic development, the community groups opposing them were comparatively loose. One group was for preserving the wetlands, another for protecting the seacoast, still another for developing a national park. Their interests could be contradictory. For example, the development of a national park catering to tourism need not be helpful to the fishermen. In the words of

their spoke man, what would the fishermen be doing for a living? Moreover, a national part needs big capital, which only outside financial corporations could muster, and local people could not hope to derive any benefit from such a venture (Proceedings, 1998: 157-158). Nevertheless, they were all united in opposing the development plans proposed by the two powerful corporations and the government for supporting them.

For many of these organizations, the western sea coast of Taiwan had been over-developed; the area designated as the Bin-nan Industrial Zone was the only place that had not been polluted. It must be preserved for the future generations (Proceedings, 1998: 150, 155). They condemned the two corporations for being greedy and arrogant, and the government for being accommodating to the entrepreneur class and linked up with gangsters.

They simply refused to believe that economic development would produce jobs for the people in the community, or hospital beds, or new universities. If many people supported the development scheme as the corporations had claimed, it was because they had been coerced or bribed. The government, the big corporations and the gangsters were closely intertwined. In the words of an old fisherman, Taiwan is a society without justice (Proceedings, 1998: 165).

## **V. Conclusions**

From the brief description above of the conversations and interactions in the meetings, what can be deduced as to the articulation and impact on action of the concept of justice between generations? To begin with, it can be said that there is only a glimpse of the image of justice between generations; it is not clearly drawn. In some meetings, the concept was talked about more than in others; yet it was hardly explored in great depth. Moreover, the idea of justice between generations, when it was brought up, was never quite separated from politics, economics and/or culture. It was never treated in its own right. In the 1980s, both in the struggle against Dupont and against the construction of the

#4 nuclear plant, political motivations seem to have been the driving force. And in fighting against the development of Bin-nan Industrial Zone, economic and class interest was as important as concerns for the environment and the well being of the future generations.

Perhaps it is rightly so. After all, the concept of justice between generations is a new and difficult idea and was not introduced by the intellectuals into Taiwan until the environmental protection movement in the 1980s. It can hardly be expected that the government officials and the elites and people in the community would be familiar with it. It goes without saying that for many government officials, managers, scientists and experts, the idea of justice between generations is highly mischievous, if not outright dangerous; it must be combated for the good of the community. What is more intriguing, nevertheless, is the division of the scientists themselves, taking opposite positions on nuclear power, environmental protection as well as economic development. This is not surprising. Scientists in many other countries confronting similar situation did not act differently. It was left to the community leaders in Lan-yu and the old fisherman in the south of Taiwan to dwell on the idea of justice between generations movingly.

As for the impact of the idea of justice between generations on actions taken, it is obvious that few were solely motivated by it. Most of the committed were urged to actions by a mixture of motivations, political, economical or cultural. The young man who had hitchhiked to Lukang to take part in the actions against Du-pont was more concerned with anti-capitalism than with future generations; of course, in a broad sense, it could be argued that the two are related. Similarly, the indigenous writer/diver referred to himself as environmental nationalist, i.e., a kind of aboriginal nationalism against the Han people in power in Taiwan. And Professor Shi, probably the most well known leader in the controversy over the construction of the #4 nuclear power plant, was equally concerned with ending the authoritarian rule of the Nationalist Party. The undisputed fact, it would seem, is that Taiwan was going through a very rapid change, both in terms of

politics as well as economic, social and cultural, and many urgent problems need be tackled. The concept of justice between generations by itself simply could not be the driving force for political and social transformation at that time. It could only play a collateral role.

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# 捕捉世代正義的影像： 有關四個環保抗爭處境的初步報告

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這一篇文章試探從八〇年代四項有關環保議題的衝突中去尋找、探討世代正義的影像。這四項衝突事件是，鹿港抗拒杜邦設廠、貢寮反對核四建廠、蘭嶼存放核廢料的抗爭，以及在南台灣建立濱南工業區的計劃所引起的爭議。

就研究方法來說，這一個研究計劃採取的是「焦點團體法」。我們一共舉辦了七次的座談，邀請有關單位及人士參加，試圖從他們的對談以及互動來了解他們對世代正義的看法。這個研究計劃開始於一九九七年一月，費時五個月，在五個月間完成，七次座談的紀錄在一九九八年一月編印成冊。

關鍵字：環保議題、抗爭、世代正義、世代正義的影像、反對運動

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東吳政治學報/2003/第十六期/頁 1-25