

Social Protests and Political Democratization in Taiwan

Yun-han CHU*

Abstract

This article explores the interaction between the recent outburst of social protests and the process of political democratization in Taiwan, a process which has been pushed forward by the political opposition as well as ushered in by the ruling elite. In a long-term perspective, the recent upsurge of contentious collective actions in Taiwan should be viewed as the political consequences of the island's rapid industrialization in the last three decades. Also, structurally speaking, the existing micro-socio-economic settings are conducive to collective actions at community-level. In particular, recent collective actions benefited from the existing organizational endowment of the long-standing hierarchy and lineage networks in Taiwan's local communities. In temporary analysis, however, it is shown that perceived erosion of the willingness of the state elite to use coercive forces against political dissenting groups as well as ordinary citizens in open defiance of public authority constitutes the more immediate cause of the upsurge of social protest. Social protests, in turn,

*Yun-han Chu, Associate Professor of Department of Political Science, National Taiwan University.

widen the cracks of existing authoritarian orders, create potential resources for the opposition to exploit, and hasten the process of political liberalization.

For a long time, Taiwan has been known among students of comparative politics for its economic dynamism and political stasis. But since the early 1980, the political landscape on the island has changed so rapidly that, to many outside observers, it has changed almost beyond recognition. One of the most salient aspects of political changes taking place in the last few years has been the sudden upsurge of organized contentious collective actions, in the forms of citizen petitions, demonstrations, wildcat strikes, civic disobedience, and riots, of which frequencies have risen to an astonishing level-- almost two reported incidences a day in year 1987^①.

Only a few years ago, incidences of organized protest which pressed demands to the authority had been few and far between. In the past, few segments within Taiwanese civil society escaped the immediate control of the authoritarian regime. But in recent years, one witnessed an explosion of autonomous social mobilization throughout the society. In its most ostensible form, it manifested itself in the outburst of reported incidences

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①See Appendix for the data sources used.

of social protest^②. The number of reported incidences of social protest has increased from a total of 143 in 1983, the year our data series begins, to 676 in 1987 (see Table I). Contentious collective actions as a means of pressing collective demands on the authority or other social and economic establishments have proliferated into all kinds of issue areas and spreaded all over the island within a very short time span. Most notably, four major types of social protest emerged in recent years-- political, environmental, economic and labor^③(see Table II). Except for political protest which were typically organized by the political opposition, most of other types of social protests were initiated by ordinary citizens making claim over issues concerning their livelihood.

This article explores the interplay between the assertion of autonomous social forces in the form of social protests and the process of political democratization, a process which has been pushed forward by

②In this research, I define an incidence of social protest as an occasion on which a number of people gather in a publicly accessible place and make claims which are directed toward public authority or any party believed to bear on the interests of the participants. This broad definition would include all kinds of contentious collective actions from citizen petition, demonstration, civil disobedience, strike, to riot. We think this rather broad definition of social protest is justified considering the island's highly restrictive political atmosphere during the past four decades. Before July 1st of 1987, the day the martial law statute was formally lifted, any public gathering without the government's approval in advance is prohibitive under the martial law.

③For analytical purpose we classify events of social protest by nature of the issue. Environmental protests refer to events precipitated by pollution or the perceived possibility of pollution. Political protests refer to contentious collective actions precipitated by the dissatisfaction with certain features of the existing political structure, institutions and power configuration or with certain concrete officials measures believed to be the consequences of these features. Any protests involving disputes over wages, working conditions and labor practice regulations belong to the category of labor dispute. Economic protest is more like a residual category for any social protests that are caused by disputes over the distribution of economic resources other than labor and environmental protests.

Table I

Reported Frequencies of Social Protest Incidence in Taiwan
1983-1987

Year	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	Sum
Frequencies	143	183	243	271	676	1516
Growth Rate	--	28.0%	32.8%	11.5%	149.4%	

Source: (please see Appendix)

Table II

Reported Frequencies of Social Protest Incidence in Taiwan By Types of Issue,
1983-1987

Issues	Year	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	Sum	Col. Percent
Political								
frequencies		5	4	20	35	106	170	11.2%
growth rate		--	-20.0%	400.0%	75.0%	202.9%		
Environmental								
frequencies		43	61	34	78	167	383	25.3%
growth rate		--	41.9%	-44.3%	129.4%	114.1%		
Economic								
frequencies		57	72	89	101	257	576	38.0%
growth rate		--	26.3%	23.6%	13.5%	154.5%		
Labor								
frequencies		20	37	85	38	63	243	16.0%
growth rate		--	85.0%	129.7%	-55.3%	65.8%		
Others								
frequencies		18	9	15	19	83	144	9.5%
growth rate		--	-50.0%	66.7%	26.7%	336.8%		

Source:(please see Appendix)

the political opposition as well as ushered in by the ruling elite^④. We examine the impact of political democratization on the recent upsurge of contentious collective actions and evaluate the implications of this development for the political transition process. I will proceed this in four steps. In the first section, I will describe the overall political setting in which social protests emerged. In particular, I will give an account for the process and sequence of the recent political opening in Taiwan. Secondly, in light of some recent literature on social mobilization in general and social mobilization during the political transition from authoritarianism in particular, I will address both the structural and conjunctural causes of the recent outburst of social protest in Taiwan. In section three, I will present some empirical evidences to substantiate the arguments I put forth for explaining the recent surge of social protest. In the concluding section, I will touch upon the political consequences of the diffusion of contentious collective actions.

I. The Political Setting of the Explosion of Social Protest in Taiwan

In comparative perspective, the Kuomintang (KMT) one-party rule in Taiwan is distinctive among third world authoritarian systems in two important aspects: First, the KMT regime on Taiwan is one of the few entrenched authoritarianism that has effectively combined political stability with successful economic development in the post-war era. The KMT regime has enjoyed an undisrupted rule for almost four decades in a context of a dynamic industrialization and social transformation. Secondly, in contemporary era, few authoritarian regimes in the developing

^④I share the view of Share and Mainwaring (1986) that democracy implies the possibility of an alternation in power. In this sense, a transition to democracy involves more than a liberalization of an authoritarian regime. Democratization refers to the establishment of institutional arrangements-- free competitive elections, universal adult suffrage, freedom of speech, of press, and of political association-- that make possible such an alternation. Transitions to democracy involve both what O'Donnell and Schmitter (1986) call "democratization" and "liberalization".

countries can do without some form of democratic facade (Epstein, 1984). But for almost three decades since its initial consolidation on Taiwan, the KMT regime is one of the few that relied very little on democratic legitimacy for its rule.

The KMT regime in Taiwan entered the 1970s with a proven formula for maintaining the entrenched political dominance of the Mainlander elite at the national level and for controlling a limited popular electoral process implemented at local level. Formally, the KMT state maintained a complicated five-branch (*Yuan*) national government, with a functioning legislature claiming to represent all the provinces of China with its life-term members elected in 1948 on the Mainland. It also intentionally retained a cumbersome four-tier administrative system designed for the whole China, starting with the national then down to provincial, county/city, and town/borough level. Limited home rule was implemented since 1950. The natives were allowed to elect their representatives up to the provincial level and executive officials up to the county/city level.

But under the surface, the KMT maintained a stable political order through an elaborate ideology akin to socialism, a cohesive and highly penetrating party apparatus organized along Leninist democratic centralist lines, and a powerful, pervasive but less visible security apparatus reinforced by martial law. The official ideology, Sun Yat-sen's eclectic "Three Principles of the People" -- nationalism, democracy and people's livelihood -- advocated the commensurability of the interests of the capitalist class and working class, the need for regulating private capital and the advancement of state capital. Through its exclusive control over the socialization agents, the schools and mass media, the Mainlander elite constructed an ideologically indoctrinated popular coalition where all members of society believed the KMT state embodies the interest of all classes and they had a stake in preserving the political status quo (Gold, 1986)

The party apparatus consisted of cross-cutting functional units organized along both regional and corporatist (sectorial) lines. At the grass-root level, the KMT utilized the existing social structure to establish

complex local political machine built on patron-client networks within the party structure throughout the island. Within each administrative district below the provincial level, the KMT nurtured and kept at least two competing local factions striving for electoral offices and other public offices in many quasi-state organizations such as Farmer Associations, Fisherman Associations and Irrigation Associations and various Produce Cooperatives, and more importantly, for a share of region-based economic rents in the nontradeable goods sector to be distributed by the party-directed local spoil system (Winckler 1981). Above the local level, the KMT controlled and demobilized all modern social sectors through preemptive incorporation of business and professional associations, labor unions, state employees, journalists, the intellectual, students and other targeted groups. Few autonomous social forces escapes the immediate control of authoritarian order. The party apparatus filled up all the political space in the society and the party membership reached almost 15% of the entire adult population. Also the KMT captured the rents created by natural monopoly and governmental procurement at the national level and used them to cushion the economic security of their loyalist Mainlander followers. Finally, wherever indoctrination or cooptation failed, the security apparatus picked up. Under the rule of martial law, the security authority was prepared to suppress even a hint of political stirring. For almost three decades of its rule, the KMT faced a very unorganized and weak political opposition consisted primarily of defiant local factions which has had no national political aims and posed little threat to the KMT's dominant position. Thus for an extended period of time, the ruling elite saw no pressing need for even a limited electoral opening at the national level.

Initially, electoral system was installed by the emigrant regime at the local level for coopting native elite and for incorporating existing local patron-client networks into an superimposed party apparatus. A series of development, however, has gradually transformed both the nature and significance of the electoral process.

First, as it evolved, election has become the major institution to assimilate emerging economic and social forces into the political system.

Facing recurring electoral challenges, the party-sanctioned local factional networks are more adaptive than the formal party apparatus to socio-economic changes. When traditional clientelist networks can no longer deliver votes as effectively as it previously did, faction-centered or candidate-centered clientelism was expanded to incorporate more secondary associations and regional business concerns especially in the rapidly urbanized areas. Also more and more new contenders were drawn into the electoral process vying for political access and economic privilege, since electoral success could be readily translated into instant social prestige and handsome economic gain. With an ever expanding economy, both the cost and stake of election became ever greater for the established factions. Thus, as more social resources were mobilized into the electoral process, elections became more institutionalized. Elections became the institution in which local political elite found their self-identity and upon which the entire local power structure rested. Increasingly, the national ruling elite found out not only that they could not do without elections, but they had to deal with the rising pressure from both within and without the party for electoral opening at higher level.

Another unavoidable political consequence of rapid socio-economic changes is the rise of a new breed of political opposition in the elections. With rapid urbanization, diffusion of education, and a general rise in material well-being, the opposition who dared to initiate ostensible challenge to the legitimacy of KMT regime have found more and more ready ears among an increasingly articulate, self-assuring, and economically secured electorate. This development culminated in the local election of 1977, in which a loosely coordinated opposition group, bearing the label of *Tang-wai*, literally outside the (KMT) party, has made considerable gains in contesting local and provincial electoral offices. Since 1977, more and more activists dared to test the permissible limits of public defiance of political taboos. The opposition have turned campaign process into an effective medium of "resocialization" for fostering the growth in popular demand for democratic legitimacy. On the other hand, it became increasingly costly for the ruling elite to use repressive measures against popularly elected opposition leaders. To do this, the

KMT regime had to pay a considerable price at the cost of its own legitimacy as the ruling elite soon found out in the aftermath of the Formosa incidence, in which a number of prominent dissident leaders were prosecuted and jailed for treason. The incidence also precipitated great political strain on the political system. After a temporary disarray, members of *Tang-wai* soon regroup themselves and regained their electoral momentum. Built on increased electoral backing, the opposition became even bolder in their political demands.

Drastic changes in the external environment also compelled the ruling elite to become more responsive to the rising popular demand for political opening. During the 1970s, a series of diplomatic setbacks, the loss of U. N. seat to PRC and derecognition by major allies, have severely undermined KMT's claim to be the sole legitimate government of whole China. A series of peace overture initiated by the Communist China in the late 1970s and the emerging detente atmosphere in the Taiwan Strait also began to melt down the "besieged mentality" among the public. Thus the KMT elite felt the need to turn inward and to rely more on the legitimating function of electoral institutions. Thus, limited electoral opening of national representative bodies were first instituted in 1972 and expanded in 1980. But the overall institutional arrangements retained the necessary design to ensure that the opposition that emerge in the election and the competition it brought about would be in no way posing real challenge to the regime.

The limited opening of national representative bodies for electoral contest provided a ferment ground for the formation of an island-wide coalition among independent candidates with national political aims. Also increased electoral support has emboldened the opposition to break the legal limitations on their organizational growth. Since 1979, the opposition have moved cautiously toward forming a quasi-party despite the stern warning from the government of its resolve to enforce the legal ban. After a temporary setback in the aftermath of Formosa incidence, the opposition was regrouped and united under various forms of quasi-party organization (Lee, 1987). Also begining in 1984, the *Tang-wai* has gradually stepped up their push for democratic changes in ways never

before tolerated. They organized mass rally, staged street demonstrations and engaged other kinds of confrontational strategies to undermine the political support for the KMT regime on all three fronts: at the level of political community, political regime and policy performance (Easton, 1975). They confronted with the regime on the sensitive issues of constitutional reform, Taiwanese identity and self-determination. Facing the opposition's intensified challenge, the KMT regime evidently has lost its resolve to use repressive measures against the opposition especially during the last two year of Chiang Ching-Kuo's tenure (1985–1986). Thus, the opposition has effectively expanded the public spaces the ruling elite decided to tolerate at the beginning of the transition. On the eve of the 1986 election, a formal party, the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), was declared in defiance of the legal ban (Hu and Chu, 1989).

In retrospect, the limited political opening which was started in the early 1980s clearly has had its multiple effect on loosening the regime's authoritarian grip on the society. It ignited a broadly-based popular demand for political decompression and started a reciprocal cycle between political liberalization and democratization in the early 1980s. Suddenly, the KMT regime found itself reigning over a resurrecting civil society expressing itself in the mushrooming of autonomous social groups breaking out of the out-dated corporatist straight-jack and in the upsurge of social protests and all kinds of contentious collective actions. In the following section, I will examine the impact of political democratization on social movements in the light of some recent literature on social mobilization in general and social mobilization during the political transition from authoritarianism in particular.

II. Some Theoretical Considerations

As we explore into the interplay between the recent democratic opening and the upsurge of social protest, two kinds of question are particular relevant: "How-question" and "Why-question". The domains of these two questions, and therefore the kinds of answer, are different. "How-questions" are concerned with the domain of possible, whereas

"Why-questions" are concerned with the domain of actual (Garfinkel, 1981: 21-48). The former is dealt with in terms of structural analysis which tries to answer "How is A possible?". Structural analysis uncovers "tendencies" for structures to be actualized in certain ways but not directly accounts for the production of particular events (Sayer, 1984: 216-7). The latter is dealt with in terms of causal analysis which tries to answer "Why did A happen rather than B?", and thus takes as unproblematic the possibility that those events *can* happen in the first place.

In searching for answers in these two explanatory domains, two theoretical perspectives are particularly relevant in the analysis of the structural and conjunctual causes for the explosion of social protest in Taiwan: Charles Tilly's comprehensive analytical framework for social mobilization and contentious collective action (e.g., Tilly, 1975; Tilly, 1978) and recent literature on transition from authoritarianism (e.g., O'Donnell and Schmitter, 1986; Malloy and Seligson, 1987).

The conclusion that Tilly has drawn from his analysis of how collective action in Europe evolved under the influence of long-term structural transformation brought about by industrialization can be summarized in the following: Rapid urbanization and industrialization did exert stress on existing social fabrics and stimulate social conflict over the long run, but the changes labeled modernization had no uniform effects on the level, form, or timing of major bursts of contentious collective actions. Instead, shifts in the struggle for political power explains the timing and intensity of contentious collective actions better than hypotheses based on social breakdown or economic hardship. Major bursts of violent social protest usually accompanies a large-scale realignments of the political system. Finally, the main determinants of a group's mobilization and possible forms of collective actions are its organization and the current opportunities and threats confronting its interest, in particular the possibility of its subjection to the repression of the state. In sum, Tilly's mobilization model direct our attention not just to the long-term disrupting effect of industrialization, but more to the larger political process and the microscopic social settings of protestors.

The emphasis on state power and political process is also brought up by O'Donnell and Schmitter in their recent analysis of the democratic opening in Latin America and Southern Europe. They contend that the opening of an authoritarian rule usually produce a sharp and rapid increase in general politicization and popular activation. This explosion has to be set against the background of the success of most authoritarian regimes in depoliticizing as well as atomizing their respective societies. Once the government signals that it is permitting contestation on issues previously declared off limits and lowering its willingness to use coercive forces, these regimes quickly discover that the so-called peace and consensus were, at best, "part of an imposed armistice" (O'Donnell and Schmitter, 1986: 40). This limited concession was usually forced upon the ruling elite by the effective mobilization and confrontational political strategies of the political opposition. Other groups from a rather different segment of the society also take rapid advantage of political liberalization. Once most social actors have learned that they can engage in collective actions at lower cost to themselves and their followers, an enormous backlog of grievance, anger and conflict long repressed or ignored by the authoritarian rule was unleashed and resulted in an explosion of grass-root organizations and contentious collective actions.

Against these theoretical backdrops, we can consider the social and political sources of the recent burst of social protest on the island in two domains. In the domain of structural analysis, the recent upsurge of contentious collective actions in Taiwan should be understood as a result of a number of structural factors--the social conflict and social mobilization brought about by island's rapid industrialization in the last three decades, the structural characteristics of the authoritarian state itself, and the facilitating effect of the existing social fabric at the communal level.

In Taiwan, as in many other developing societies, industrialization and urbanization as a long-term force stimulated social conflicts. New form of production relation generated structural situation of potential conflicts between modern economic actors, in particular between the capitalist and the workers. Also popular grievance held by the victim of many forms of negative externality of production and consumption

accumulated rapidly in the process of growth-first industrialization. This is further aggravated by increased social density of exchange, interaction, communication and interdependence in a highly compact ecological environment^⑤. General rise in education level also increased the level of awareness among the masses of the complex causal mechanism which bears one's own interest on the interest of other contenders. All of the aforementioned conflict-prone changes have taken their roots in the Taiwan's rapid industrialization.

Next, some inherent features of the state structure are also possible structural sources of the outbreak of popular discontent. One of the weakness of the one-party authoritarian rule is the underorganization of secondary associations, most of which are not functional under KMT's strict control. Thus, paucity of functional intermediaries to translate popular discontent into effective policy responses has been an enduring feature as well as weakness of the political system. With the arrival of an articulate and partially mobilized civil society, the ruling elite is constrained by lack of an effective organizational instrument to assimilate these emerging social forces into the institutionalized political process. In many cases, the existing local factions can hardly make up the void. Next, the organizational characteristics of the state apparatus also constrain the capacity of the state to respond effectively and in a timely fashion to emerging popular demands and thus prevent the backlog of popular discontent from accumulating. A cumbersome multi-layer state administrative apparatus which the KMT elite insisted on tends to reduce the state's capability in grasping the acuteness and urgency of the popular discontent at the grass-root level. At the same time, overcentralization of power and resources at the national level leads to severe undercapacity of local governmental agencies. As the society becomes more industrialized and urbanized, increasingly it shows signs that the state apparatus as a whole just can't keep up with the magnitude and complexity of social problems at hand in terms of institutional design, personnel competence,

^⑤Taiwan, the Republic of China, is one of the most densely populated countries in the world.

and disposition. Furthermore, the proliferation of local rent-seeking factions in local politics has skewed the quality of public policies intimately affecting the livelihood of common people. Local authority becomes highly susceptible to particularistic demand which usually involves extra-legal or illegal economic privileges. This eroded the popular faith in the impartiality of public authority. These structural tendencies for contentious collective actions, however, have seldom been actualized in the past under a highly restrictive political environment.

Effective collective actions always require organizations. So we also need to identify certain features of the micro socio-economic settings in Taiwan society that are conducive to the organization of collective actions at the local level. We found out that most small-scale collective actions, which were typical in the early phase of the recent upsurge, benefited from the existing organizational endowment commonly found at the communal level in both rural and urban areas. Specifically, the long-standing hierarchy and social networks in local community, in the forms of lineage ties, brotherhood gangs, workshop circle and local factions, are crucial. These existing organizational endowment minimizes the free-rider problem in organizing effective collective actions and provides the instant leadership. For all the reported incidences during the 1983-1987 period, in at least 45% of them we found that the participants of social protest shared lineage, communal, religious or factional ties (Chu, forthcoming).

While it is part of a complete explanation of actual events, structural explanation has its limits. It explicates the *possibilistic* relationship between structural factors on the one hand and explosion of social protest on the other. However, it can hardly explain the timing and intensity of social protest. Most of these conditions that are conducive to the outbreak of contentious collective actions have already existed long before the actualization of a large amount of social protest in the 1980s. What's missing in the complete explanation is the more immediate antecedent of the upsurge of social protest. In the domain of historical analysis, the timing and intensity of the recent burst of social protests, I argue, can be better explained by the perceived erosion by the social actors of the

willingness of the state elite to use coercive forces against open defiance of public authority. Specifically, the agitation of *Tang-wai* spearheaded the whole process as it continued testing the will and resolve of the state elite and the limits of its toleration. Moreover, with the political opposition in the forefront of challenging the authoritarian order, other social actors might perceive the strategic opening for exerting their claim as the government needs to concentrate its coercive resources on meeting the more ostensible treat to its authority.

III. Statistical Evidences for the Contagious Effect of Political Protest on Other Types of Social Protest

In a crude way, we can recast our arguments about the direct impact of political protest on other types of social protest precipitated by environmental, economic and labor issue in terms of the vector autoregression (VAR) framework (Sims, 1980; Freeman, 1983). We can construct a four-variable VAR model as follows

$$\begin{pmatrix} \text{Political}_t \\ \text{Environment}_t \\ \text{Economic}_t \\ \text{Labor}_t \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} A_{11}(B) & A_{12}(B) & A_{13}(B) & A_{14}(B) \\ A_{21}(B) & A_{22}(B) & A_{23}(B) & A_{24}(B) \\ A_{31}(B) & A_{32}(B) & A_{33}(B) & A_{34}(B) \\ A_{41}(B) & A_{42}(B) & A_{43}(B) & A_{44}(B) \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} \text{Political}_{t-1} \\ \text{Environment}_{t-1} \\ \text{Economic}_{t-1} \\ \text{Labor}_{t-1} \end{pmatrix} + \begin{pmatrix} e_{1t} \\ e_{2t} \\ e_{3t} \\ e_{4t} \end{pmatrix}$$

Note: A_{ii} is a vector of coefficient parameters where

$$A_{ii}(B) = A_{ii1} + A_{ii2}B + A_{ii3}B^2 + \dots$$

B is the backward shift operator

e_{it} is the residual white noise series

One of the functions of the VAR system is to assess the causal interdependence, in the sense of Granger causality^⑥, among the

⑥ A variable X is said to Granger cause another variable Y , if Y can be better predicted for the past of X and Y together than the past of Y alone, other relevant information

variables. Our arguments about the relation between political protest and other types of social protest revolves around all four equations in the system. The first equation assesses the impact of the past history of environmental, economic and labor protests and of political protest itself on the current level of political protest. We can verify if changes in the reported frequencies of environmental protest, economic protest and labor protest do have an lagged impact on the ebb and flow of political protests, by assessing the joint statistical significance of A_{12} , A_{13} and A_{14} respectively. F tests or specially constructed likelihood ratio tests can be used for this purpose (Freeman and Williams, 1986: 44–45). Similarly, the joint statistical significance of A_{21} , A_{31} and A_{41} can be used to assess the causal dependence of environmental protest, economic protest and labor protest on the past history of political protest. The discussion can be extended to other A_{ii} in the matrix of VAR coefficients in a straight forward fashion.

Based on our characterization of the interplay between political liberalization and social protests in Taiwan, we expect that the F statistic for A_{21} , A_{31} and A_{41} are significant and all statistically significant regression coefficient estimates in vector A_{21} , A_{31} and A_{41} carry positive signs, or substantively, the faster the rise in the level of political protest the more frequent the social protests centered around environmental, economic, and labor issues. This also means that political protest is causally prior to other types of social protest. In addition, we expect that F statistic for A_{12} , A_{13} , and A_{10} will be insignificant. This means I expect that the overall impact of past history of other types of social protest on the current level of political protest should be negligible. In other words, political protests tend to precipitate more other types of social protest at later time but not vice versa. We do not hold any prediction for A_{23} , A_{24} and A_{34} or A_{32} , A_{42} and A_{43} , or causal interdependence among environmental, economic and labor protests. Finally, since we have no prior knowledge about what lag structure best characterize the relation, we will have to determine the appropriate lag length empirically.

being used in the prediction (Pierce and Haugh, 1976). A thorough review of the concept and its application in political analysis can be found in Freeman (1983).

We fit this four-factor VAR model to our monthly time series data for the period from January, 1982 to December, 1987^⑦. All series were checked for stationarity as required by the VAR model. First differenced values of each series, instead of original scores, were used in the estimation. Since the same right hand side variables appear in all four equations, ordinary least square method is used to fit the model^⑧. Preliminary investigation reveals that two lags of each variable should be included in the model^⑨. The results of our Granger causality assessment is summarized in Table III.

According to F statistic, among the four monthly indices of different types of social protest, the past changes in the reported frequency of political protest help predict the current level of environmental protest, economic protest and political protest itself. The significance level of the F statistic for A_{41} is close to .05^⑩, which suggests that the level of political

⑦We aggregate our event based time series into monthly time series, because incidence of social protest are discrete, rare events and thus might be best analyzed as Poisson outcomes.

⑧A check of the Q statistic of the four residual series verified that they are all serially uncorrelated. The correlation matrix of the residuals, however, does indicate that the three economic series are weakly correlated. This should not be of any concern. As long as the same right hand side variables appear in all four equations, GLS reduces to OLS. OLS estimator is still unbiased and consistent regardless the possibility of contemporaneously correlated disturbances (Johnston, 1984: 338).

⑨Models with different lag length-- two, three, and four-- have been investigated. The selection of lag length of two is based on the likelihood ratio statistics, following the method introduced by Litterman (1984). The likelihood ratio statistic, chi-square, has the values of 11.36 with 16 degree of freedom ($p=.79$) for the test of two versus three lags; for the test of three versus four lags it has the values of 24.06 with 16 degree of freedom ($p=.09$), and the test of two versus four lags it has the values of 34.13 with 32 degree of freedom ($p=.35$). The likelihood ratio statistic was corrected by the number of variables in each unrestricted equation as suggested by Sims (1980: 17).

⑩The probability level is .059 precisely.

Table III
Assessment of Causal Independence Between Different Typs of Social Protest:
Monthly Time Series, January 1982 to December 1987
Vector Autoregression Version of the Direct Granger Method

Current Level of:	Past History of:					
	Protest for Political Issue	Protest for Environment Issue	Protest for Economic Issue	Protest for Labor Issue		
	R ²	F _{2,45}	F _{2,45}	F _{2,45}	F _{2,45}	Q ₂₁ (P)
Political Protest	.69	35.34**	.43	1.63	.05	22.0 (.40)
Environmental Protest	.43	6.71**	6.82**	2.59	2.41	16.9 (.71)
Economic Protest	.38	4.94**	.55	3.89*	.31	14.1 (.86)
Labor Protest	.41	3.01	.67	.37	11.02**	19.3 (.56)

Legend: *P<.05
**P<.01

protest also has some lagged impact on the level of labor protest. Only that the overall effect is on the border line of being statistically significant ①. The two lagged regression coefficient estimates in vector A₂₁ both carry positive signs. The same applies to A₃₁. The F statistic for coefficient estimates in vectors A₂₂, A₃₃, and A₄₄ are all significant. This means, the current level of environmental, economic and labor

①There are a number of possible reasons for why labor protest is least affected by the level of political protest. First, the level of labor protest, in contrast to other types of social protest, is more likely to be affected by some short-term ups and downs in the economy. Secondly, in the time series of reported frequencies of labor protest, there is a strong seasonal component: Most labor protests took place around the Chinese New Year, the time when the issue of year-end bonus strains the labor-employees relationship; Finally, as we mentioned earlier, is strained by dispute over; the state is more repressive toward the labor protests.

protest respectively are influenced by its own past history. On the other hand, the F statistics for A_{12} , A_{13} , and A_{14} are all insignificant. This suggests that as long as its own past history being taken into account, neither the immediate history of environmental protest, nor economic protest, nor labor protest helps predict reported frequencies of political protest. Overall, our VAR analysis provide strong statistical evidence to support our argument that a rise in the reported frequencies of political protest tends to bring about higher level of other types of social protest, but not vice versa.

Lastly, the detected nonstationarity in each of the four time series begets substantive explanations. Nonstationarity can be understood as the result of certain endogenous dynamics within each type of social protest. These endogenous dynamics might involve the spillover effect of some established grass-root organizations which continue to agitate other like-minded people with its existing mobilization resources. Also, through diffusion or other mechanism, the positive responses or concession that the protesting groups usually got from the authority simply invite more similar collective actions or more contentious form of social protest.

IV. By Way of Conclusion

Our data clearly suggests that the recent bursts of social protest were encouraged by the intensified confrontation staged by the political opposition against the KMT regime. This answers only a part of the larger question. The political consequences of the burst of social protest is also of interest here. We can evaluate its political consequence along two lines of analysis. First, it can be convincingly argued that the outburst of social protest widens the cracks of existing authoritarian orders, creates potential resources for the political opposition to exploit, and thus tends to hasten the process of political liberalization. Direct evidences for this line of analysis are not difficult to come by. Evidently the KMT regime was compelled to respond to these developments in recent years with a accelerated "Taiwanization" within the party's power structure and a general political decompression culminating in the lifting of the Martial

Law and other long-time political bans around the end of 1986.

But on the other hand, we might also ponder whether the recent upsurge really weakened the authoritarian order and if the state power has been substantially pushed back. Is the strong state in retreat or just in a process of repositioning itself? The responsive and adaptive strategies of the state elite in other areas seem to suggest that the incumbent elite is trying to protect the authoritarian core from the popular control while liberalizing and democratizing the system at the margins. To this end, it has reorganized state administrative apparatus and revitalizing the existing corporatist structure. New state agencies, eg., Labor, Social Welfare and Environmental Protection, are being created to take over the emerging issues and coopt new social groups. Also the ruling party has indicated its intention of retaining the Temporary Articles^⑫ which protects the apex of state power structure, the presidency, from direct popular accountability. Thus it is still too early to give a definite answer at this point. We have to wait out the transition process to run its full course.

Lastly, we might wonder if democratization in Taiwan will ameliorate social protest? It depends on the development of political parties and the kind of interest intermediation and representative institutions in the making. Alfred Stepan reminds us that a critical question for the democratization is how the gap between the new movements based in the civil arena and the organized opposition in political arena can be bridged (Stepan, 1988). There are no sure signs that the gap will be bridged in Taiwan.

^⑫The Articles, having been in effective since 1948, supercede the Constitution.

Appendix: A Note on Methods and Sources

The data set used in this paper was constructed by a research team led by professor Ya-li Lu. The data set is essentially a collection of archival event-based time series data covering the period from the beginning of 1982 to the end of 1987. The data is constructed from a content analysis of newspaper reportings about events of social protests in Taiwan. In recording these events, our research assistants searched through all editions, including national edition and all local editions specially edited for various regions of the island, of China Times, one of the two leading newspapers with a circulation over 1 million, to locate news stories about events of contentious gathering under the guidance of a standard definition of social protests. Then we registered relevant information about that event, such as places, duration, issues, participants, targets, and so on, on an uniform coding sheet by following a series of concrete rules of codification. The basic unit of the data set is a record of a dated event described by its qualitative and quantitative characteristics. At next level, a series of events which involve the same group of participants and the same issue constitutes a social movement. Thus the characteristics of a movement is constructed, by rules of aggregation or composition, from the characteristics of its constitutive events.

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社會抗議運動與政治民主化

朱雲漢

摘要

本文試圖從社會與政治結構的轉變中尋找出有利於集體性抗爭行動形成的因素，來為台灣地區近年來迅速湧現的民衆「自力救濟」事件提出合理的解釋。本文的主要論點為：導致社會抗議事件急速湧現的中長期因素是相當多元的，包括快速的工業化及都市化，地方公權力的積弱，以及利益中介組織的功能不彰等；但是在短期因素主要是因為政治反對運動對於威權體制的衝撞所導致的威權控制之鬆動。本文運用時間序列分析中向量自迴歸（VAR）統計模型，檢驗四種類型的羣衆抗議事件的因果先後關係，結果顯示在民國七十二年到七十六年所發生的一千五百餘次事件中，由反對派人士所主導的政治性抗議事件對生計性及環保性的事件，有顯著的先行引導作用。