〈特集論文〉

Uneasy Alliance:
State Feminism and the Conservative Government in Taiwan

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State feminism usually begins to develop or has rapid development under the rule of leftist or progressive governments. Like many other countries, Taiwan's state feminism is a product of the progressive, or at least relatively progressive government.

After the Democratic Progressive Party captured power in 2000, many feminists were brought into the government mainly as commissioners of various government commissions and they actively promoted the agenda of gender equality. In 2008, however, the conservative Nationalist Party returned to power and the challenges to state feminism immediately emerged. Some of the newly appointed civic commissioners to the cabinet or ministry-level gender commissions had little background in or knowledge of the feminist movement. This creates a challenge to the commission-driven gender policy machineries in Taiwan.

By examining the reconfiguration of the gender policy machineries and the interactions between the feminist movement and the conservative government, I argue that, under the conservative government, the alliance between the government and feminists, though not completely broken, has become much weakened.

Key words: state feminism, conservative government, gender mainstreaming, women's movement

Ⅰ．State Feminism and Conservative Government

In January 2014, the Ministry of Education in Taiwan announced the list of newly appointed members of the Commission on Gender Equality Education. The announcement immediately angered the feminist movement because two of the members had been involved in the campaigns against legalizing same sex marriages in prior months. The Commission on Gender Equality Education has been a main engine in promoting gender equality since its establishment in 1997. Though among the newly appointed commissioners there were also seasoned feminist activists, the appointment of the two controversial commissioners signaled that, under the conservative government, the alliance between the state and feminist movement, known as state feminism, had become really fragile or nearly broken.

State feminism has attracted the attention of feminist scholars since the 1980s when it emerged in many countries. Mazur and McBride (2007) delineated the development of the term in three stages. At first it was a loose term to describe a range of state activities related to gender and women's issues. Later, influenced by the United Nations' agenda of women's decades and gender mainstreaming, the term was associated with women's policy agencies. The third stage illustrated intellectual endeavors by gender and women's studies scholars and they gave the term an operationalized concept—state feminism is about the interactions between women's policy agencies and feminist movements.

The impact of state feminism has been documented into two kinds: (1) policy and legal success in some policy realms, and (2) de-mobilization and de-radicalization of the feminist movement. It has been shown that state feminism was successful in issues that have long been on the feminist movement agenda. Major policy changes or enactment of laws regarding abortion, prostitution, and equal representation of men and women are usually achieved under state feminism. For policy issues that are not generally recognized as gender and women-related, however, state feminism had clear limitations (Haussman and Sauer, 2007: 5)[1]. State feminism is also criticized for de-mobilizing and de-radicalizing the feminist. Once engaged in the bureaucratic routines of state functions, portions of movement resources were directed to deal with the usually tedious bureaucratic requirement and less to advocate on gender equality (Haussman and Sauer, 2007: 5).

While the strength and limitations of state feminism were shared in many countries' experience, the literatures also tend to suggest that state feminism enjoys more success under progressive governments than conservative governments. Except for Bashevkin (1998, 1996, 1994), few studies focused specifically on the relation between conservative governments and feminist movements. Bashevkin's studies (1994) showed that under conservative governments, women's interests could vary with different opportunity structures, and they were not always disadvantaged. However, Bashevkin (1996) also showed that even if the feminist movement could still make advancement under conservative government, their common ground with the conservative government was much narrower. What happened to state feminism under conservative government if it began under the progressive government in a newly democratizing country? Could state feminism survive the government change or did it disappear when the conservative party returned to power? On the other hand, under what circumstances would the conservative government be willing to continue what was achieved during the rule of the progressive government? This paper aims to explore these questions by looking at the experience of Taiwan, a young Asian democracy that has experienced state feminism under both progressive and conservative governments since 2000.

Taiwan experienced decades of authoritarian rule before democratization began in 1987. The democratic forces eventually captured power in 2000, and feminists were brought into the government to take advantage of the opportunity to make and implement women-friendly policies. In 2008, however, the conservative Nationalist Party (Kuomintang, KMT) returned to power, and the challenges to state feminism began. Based on data collected through documents, field research, and personal involvement and observation of Taiwan's feminist movement, I will show in this paper that the alli-

ance between government agency and the feminist movement was weakened but survived after the conservative party returned to power. While state feminism withstood the attacks from the conservative social forces, a significant crack did emerge after the Ministry of Education appointed members of conservative social organizations to be the commissioners of gender equality education. The paper concludes by arguing that, however uneasy the alliance between the state and feminist activists, the alliance is still important for the development of gender equality.

Ⅱ．State Feminism under the Progressive Government[2]

The creation of women's policy agencies or gender policy machineries, in many countries, was treated as the starting point of state feminism. In the 1970s, women's movements in the western democracies regarded the state as patriarchal and unfriendly, so feminist activists usually worked outside of the state. At that time movement actors focused on advocating gender equality in societies (Banaszak, Beckwith and Rucht 2003: 30). In the 1980s, the movement strategies began to shift and activists not only wanted to engage the state more but also had more international mobilization (Rai 2003: 20; Meyer and Prügl 1999). Many countries created women's policy agencies in response to the women's movement's demands and the directives of international organizations such as the United Nations.

Being excluded from the United Nations, Taiwan was not engaged in the UN agenda of gender equality until the early 2000s. The establishment of women's policy machinery in Taiwan had more to do with the development of the domestic feminist movement than with the advancement of the UN agenda. The first women's policy machinery was established in the capital city Taipei in 1995, after the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) won the mayor election and established the Taipei City Commission on the Promotion of Women's Rights (CPWR). This gender commission consisted of bureaucratic members and civic members. Bureaucratic members were heads of some of the departments of the city government. Civic members were representatives of women's organizations or gender scholars. The chairperson of the gender commission was the mayor himself. Besides the CPWR, the Commission on Gender Equality Education and Commission on Women's Health were also established under the Department of Education and Department of Health in the Taipei City government, following similar compositions of the gender commission and headed respectively by the heads of each department.

Though the Taipei City government under the DPP began to work with feminist activists through these various commissions, women's policy machinery at the national level did not emerge until 1997 after a tragedy. The DDP's director of the Department of Women's Affairs was killed at the end of 1996. The killing was believed to be a random crime at night and not politically motivated.[3] However, women's organizations protested against the state's inability to create a safe environment and demanded the national government, still under the rule of the conservative KMT, to be more responsive toward women's needs. The national government eventually established similar commissions like the ones in the Taipei City government. The cabinet CPWR was established and the Commission on Gen-

der Equality Education was also established under the Ministry of Education. The cabinet CPWR met three times a year, and at first the commission was chaired by the Minister of the Interior, at that time a female, and later the chairperson was replaced by the Vice Premier. Though civic commissioners would advise the government on various women's policies, gender mainstreaming was not a part of the policy vocabularies yet. Though the commission did publish works related to gender equality, its impact on government policies was not obvious under the KMT government.

In 2000, the Democratic Progressive Party won the Presidential Election and the alliance between the government and feminist movement began to emerge and influence national policies. After the DPP came to power, many feminist activists were appointed as the cabinet gender commissioners, and their involvement in the policy process led to institutional transformations and implementation of gender mainstreaming. Before these feminist activists became gender commissioners, the commission held meetings three times a year and the policy suggestions made in those meetings were not necessarily adopted or followed by line ministries. Among these commissioners, some were also seasoned feminist activists. However, at that time the major function of the commission was consultative, and there was no established mechanism to follow up on the suggestions made by the commissioners.

When the DPP was first in power, the term of the KMT appointed gender commissioners had not yet expired. Some feminist activists that were close to the DPP government made two demands. First, that the commission should be expanded so more feminist activists could be commissioners. Second, that the Premier, not Deputy Premier, should be the chairperson of the commission. The government accepted both. When more feminist activists were appointed as cabinet gender commissioners (commissioners for the cabinet CPWR), the feminist movement network was brought into the government. These feminists did not regard themselves as mere policy consultants; they thought of themselves as partners with the government in making gender policies. The cabinet gender commission was then divided into five different sections with focuses on women's safety, health, employment and welfare, education and culture, and international participation. Besides the regular commission meetings held once every four months, civic commissioners now had section meetings on those five major policy realms and special meetings on specific policies. In other words, civic commissioners of the cabinet gender commission not only met the Premier and other ministers once every four months, they were constantly holding meetings with various ministers or senior bureaucrats to discuss all kinds of policies.[4]

Around 2002 and 2003, gender mainstreaming as a movement agenda was finally incorporated by the cabinet gender commission and the alliance between the government and feminist movement was further intensified because now the civic commissioners helped to review line ministries' gender mainstreaming plans. Though many civic commissioners held full-time jobs in addition to the commission works, they were actively involved and very dedicated because of their activist background and mentality. The gender commission model was expanded into local governments in almost every city and county after 2002, and by 2008, before the conservative party returned to power, a commission-like working team was also established in every ministry.[5] The expansion of the gender commis-

sion was a significant change, because it created even more institutional space that feminist activists and gender scholars could take advantage of. In order to assure the connection between the ministry-level working teams and the cabinet gender commission, members of the cabinet gender commission passed a resolution and demanded that all the ministry-level working teams should have at least one member of the cabinet gender commission on their teams. Such institutional design made Taiwan's gender policy machinery a commission-driven one since by 2008 there were gender commissions in every ministry and in almost every local government.

Along with the development of commission governance, under the progressive government, there were also enactments of important gender laws. The Gender Equality Employment Law and the Gender Equity Education Law were passed respectively in 2002 and 2004. The Gender Equality Employment Law had been on the feminist movement's agenda for more than a decade and was finally passed by the parliament in 2002. The Gender Equity Education Law, on the other hand, was a significant success of the alliance between the government and the feminist movement.[6] Civic members of the Commission on Gender Equality Education in the Ministry of Education began to draft the law in 2001 and when the bill was submitted to the parliament in 2004, activists and bureaucrats were on the same side to lobby for the law. The law stipulated that a gender-friendly environment was essential for students' rights to education, so it required every school, from elementary schools to colleges and universities, to establish a Committee on Gender Equality to promote gender equality education and prevent sexual assault and harassment on campuses. The law also clearly demanded teachers and administrators to respect students' sexual orientations. In the ensuing years the law opened the door for gay and lesbian organizations to go into many schools to educate students on gay and lesbian rights.

In addition to the legal success, the alliance between the government and feminist movement also helped to increase women's political participation. Due to the early adoption and later reforms of gender quotas, Taiwan already enjoyed one of the highest levels of female representation in elected offices in Asia. The current percentage of female representatives in parliament is 33.6 percent, much higher than Japan's 9.5 percent and South Korea's 15.7 percent. In 2004, the cabinet gender commission demanded that a 30 percent gender neutral quota be applied to every cabinet- and ministry-level government commission, not just gender commissions. This would allow each sex to occupy at least 30 percent of the seats in a commission. The demand became one of the resolutions of the cabinet gender commission in 2005.[7] By the end of 2007, among the 500-plus government commissions that were supposed to comply with the resolution, more than 90 percent of them did.[8]

Despite the success through commission governance, there were also obvious limitations. The best example of the limitations was the cabinet gender commission's inability to prevent the government from including a waiting period in the draft of the Reproduction and Health Bill. Around the mid-2000s, the Department of Health wanted to replace the outdated Eugenics and Health Law, enacted in 1984, with a new Reproduction and Health Law. The religious organizations and feminist organizations fought against each other through the drafts of the bill regarding women's reproductive freedom. The religious organizations demanded the government to implement a waiting period of seven

days for any woman who wanted to have an abortion and the feminist organizations wanted none of that.[9] Eventually in the bill submitted by the cabinet to the parliament in 2006, the waiting period was reduced to three days and several cabinet gender commissioners resigned to protest.[10] Unable to win the battle within the cabinet, feminist activists turned to the parliament to block the bill. Because of the controversy about the waiting period, parliamentary members were reluctant to deliberate on the bill and it has yet to be placed on the legislative agenda.

Generally speaking, state feminism in Taiwan had its share of success and limitations under the progressive government between 2000 and 2008. One thing indisputable, however, is that the alliance between the government and feminist movement was unprecedented. Before the feminist movement had a chance to reflect on its gains and losses under the progressive government, the conservative party returned to power and the new challenges began.

Ⅲ. The Weakened Alliance under the Conservative Government

In 2008, the conservative party KMT returned to power in Taiwan. The government did not completely exclude feminist activists from the cabinet gender commission, but among the newly appointed cabinet gender commissioners were people who did not have much feminist background or who were members of conservative women's organizations. The alliance between the government and the feminist movement, at first however, was only weakened, not broken.

Because the term of the cabinet gender commissioners was not synchronized with the election cycle, when the conservative government returned to power in 2008, the Premier could assemble the new cabinet but he could not re-appoint the civic gender commissioners until their term expired, which was one year away. In other words, institutionally, the Premier and his cabinet had to work with the feminist activists left in the cabinet from the previous government. In 2009, when it was time to appoint new cabinet gender commissioners, the government excluded those close to the opposition party but not all of the progressive feminist activists. There were notable changes of course. For example, the National Women's League of the Republic of China known for its close relation with the conservative party, now had its deputy secretary appointed as a civic member of the cabinet gender commission. The Awakening Foundation, a feminist organization known for its long-term advocacy on gender equality policies and laws, no longer had its president appointed as a cabinet gender commissioner, breaking a long-term tradition since the birth of the gender commission. There were also civic organization members or scholars who became commissioners but had no particular background in women's affairs. The government, however, kept some of the commissioners who worked with the progressive government before and that was enough to maintain a weak alliance with the feminist movement. Table 1 shows the composition of the cabinet gender commissioners since the conservative government returned. As shown in the table, between 2007 and 2009, when the conservative government had to work with the civic commissioners left from the previous progressive government, the number of commissioners that had connections to the feminist movement or opposition

party was relatively high. After 2009, that number went down but remained stable throughout the rule of the conservative government.

The conservative government's willingness to work with some of the feminist activists in the cabinet gender commission was partially related to the fact that Taiwan's gender policy machinery did not have a full-time bureaucratic unit until 2012. Before all the government gender commissions emerged from the mid-1990s, bureaucratic units such as the Departments of Women's Affairs in the national or local governments treated women's affairs mainly as an issue of welfare delivery, not an issue of gender equality. The situation changed when the various gender commissions were established but the government's commitment to promote gender equality still fell short of establishing a high-level bureaucratic unit to be in charge of planning and making gender policies. Starting from 2003, the feminist movement demanded the government to establish a high-level bureaucratic unit for women's policies. Within the feminist movement, there were vehement debates about the proper institutional design. Some argued for a new ministry, like the Korean Ministry of Gender Equality. The advantage of this ministry-model was transparency and an independent budget. Others argued for a bureaucratic unit within the cabinet. The advantage of this department-in-cabinet-model was its bureaucratic power over line ministries. The debate lasted for a few years. Eventually in 2009 the government decided to adopt the department-in-cabinet model and that decision also allowed preservation of the cabinet gender commission. According to the new design, the cabinet gender commission would be renamed as the Gender Equality Committee (GEC) of the Executive Yuan and remained as the decision-making body for women's and gender equality policies. The newly created Department of Gender Equality functioned as the secretariat to execute policies and decisions made by the GEC.

The government's decision to opt for the bureaucratic model instead of the ministerial model was related to its intention to down-size the government, since the bureaucratic model would only have created a bureaucratic unit within the cabinet and the unit would not have an independent budget. However, the government's decision also had an institutional impact that kept partisan politics distant from the gender policy machinery. Unlike the position of a minister, the head of the Department of Gender Equality within the cabinet would not be a political appointee. Instead, that position needed to be filled by a civil servant. The head of the Department of Gender Equality therefore was basically a senior civil servant executing policies approved by the cabinet Gender Equality Committee, which in turn consisted of civic members that might or might not be politically close to the ruling party.

Such institutional design could also partially explain why some feminist activists were appointed as civic members of the cabinet gender commission. Though the commissioners were appointed by the Premier, it was the civil servants that prepared the list of potential commissioners for the Premier to select. Thus, as long as the activists were willing to work with bureaucrats in promoting gender equality, they had a chance to get invited back to serve in the commission, even if they, as individual voters, might not be supporters of the conservative party.

The irony was that if the conservative government really cared about gender policies and had its own gender-related agenda, then the department-in-cabinet model could be as political as the ministe-

rial model, because, after all, the Premier himself was both the chairperson of the Gender Equality Committee and the boss for the head of the Department of Gender Equality. He held the power to appoint the committee members as well as the head of the department. However, if the Premier did want to politicize the gender policy machinery, then he needed to first make sure that the head of the Department of Gender Equality, supposedly a senior civil servant, was a good executioner of his gender-related political agenda. And then he needed to make sure that he appointed the right kind of Gender Equality Committee members that would not oppose his agenda during the committee meetings. All these works probably meant he had to pay more attention to gender policies then he was willing to. And this has been why the department-in-cabinet model seemed to have been less affected by partisan politics.

Another institutional reason that the alliance between the government and feminist movement somehow remained was because of the gender equality working teams in the line ministries. When all the ministries, under the demand of the cabinet gender commission, had to establish a gender equality working team that included civic members, the ministries needed to find scholars or activists that had gender knowledge and understood the work of the ministries. When there were all these positions to fill, it was no surprise that at least some feminist activists would be invited to be the civic members of the gender equality working teams at the ministry level. In other words, the weak alliance between the conservative government and the feminist movement was not exactly a result of the intent of the government, but a result of institutional demand.

Between 2008 and 2012, under the conservative government, because of the feminist activists in the cabinet gender commissions and in the line ministries' working teams, there were still advancements made by the feminist movement. Besides the creation of the Department of Gender Equality within the cabinet, the government passed the Enforcement Act of CEDAW and a new Gender Equality Policy Framework in 2011. Both had many feminist activists involved. Though Taiwan is not a UN member, the Taiwanese parliament ratified the CEDAW in 2007 and the government, with the help of feminist activists, prepared the first national report in 2009. Unable to send delegates to the UN for the report to be reviewed, the Taiwanese government invited some CEDAW committee members to Taiwan to help review the national report and the NGO's shadow reports. However, up until 2009, there was no consistent enforcement of the convention and no systematic review of laws and regulations to see if any of them violated CEDAW. Under the demand of the feminist movement and with the support of the cabinet gender commission, the government submitted the bill of the Enforcement Act of CEDAW to the parliament and got it passed. The Gender Equality Policy Framework was initiated by civic members of the cabinet gender commission in view of the fact that the old framework, written and passed in 2005 under the progressive government, needed to be updated. The commission invited other gender scholars to participate in drafting the framework, and, before the framework was formally approved by the cabinet, it was presented to all ministries and to women's organizations, conservative or progressive, in every city and county. The Framework was a comprehensive document and served as a "to do list" for the newly created Department of Gender Equali-

ty.

When the Department of Gender Equality was finally established in the cabinet in 2012, the major tasks taken up by the department were three pillars: promoting gender mainstreaming, enforcing CEDAW, and implementing the Gender Equality Policy Framework. All three tasks began under the rule of the progressive government, and all three tasks had feminist activists involved and working with the state, regardless of whether the government was progressive or conservative. The policy continuity was there, but the alliance between the government and the feminist movement was different. Under the progressive government, when a large number of activists were appointed as commissioners, the feminist movement network was brought into the government. Under the conservative government, however, some of the feminist activists stayed on as commissioners, but the feminist movement network was no longer in the government. The difference was mainly about the communications and interactions among civic commissioners before they attended the commission or working team meetings. Under the progressive government, such kinds of communication usually allowed the activists to have more strategic thinking in their interactions with the bureaucrats. For example, they would try to solve their differences beforehand and avoid raising different opinions when facing bureaucrats, so the bureaucrats could not use differences of opinion among civic commissioners as an excuse for not taking actions. This "united front" was easier to form among the commissioners under the progressive government since most of them shared feminist values. However, under the conservative government, such a united front became harder to form because the composition of the commissioners changed. When pre-meeting communications did not exist or became rare, the agenda that could be pushed by the civic gender commissioners was affected. Though there was no significant regression of state feminism before 2013, the pace of the progression was slowed down. One example of the slowdown was gay and lesbian rights. In the Gender Equality Policy Framework, after rounds of discussions, the government still refused to make a clear commitment to enact the Civil Union Law or to legalize same sex marriages. The wording in the section regarding same sex marriages turned out to be very vague, stating only that the government would make efforts to create social understanding and consensus on this issue. The issue of same sex marriages, however, became the focal point of the gender equality struggles in 2013.

Ⅳ. State Feminism Challenged

In 2012, the conservative party KMT won re-election again in Taiwan, and, not long after that, the already weakened alliance between the state and feminist activists was challenged by the conservative social forces which rallied against gender equality education and same sex marriages.

The conservative forces' challenge against gender equality education first emerged in the spring of 2011, and the target was gay and lesbian education. After the Gender Equity Education Act was passed in 2004, the Commission on Gender Equality Education in the Ministry of Education soon decided to emphasize three tasks in schools: relationship education, sexual education, and gay and lesbi-

an education. A new curriculum guideline for grade 1 to 9 was scheduled to be in effect in August 2011,[11] and the Commission on Gender Equality Education had made sure that gay and lesbian education would be included as part of the gender equality education in the guideline. The commission also invited scholars to write a teachers' resource manual in which there were candid discussions on human sexuality, including homosexuality and transgender identities.

In the spring of 2011, a petition initiated by the Taiwan True Love Alliance, connected to Christian churches, demanded the Ministry of Education to stop teaching students about gays and lesbians and called for the suspension of the new curriculum guideline. The petition misunderstood the teachers' resource manual as a new textbook for elementary and junior high school students and questioned the appropriateness of the content. Though feminist as well as gay and lesbian organizations countered with news conferences and releases to clarify the misunderstanding and defended the teachers' resource manual, the True Love Alliance successfully lobbied the parliament to stop the Ministry of Education from implementing the new curriculum guideline. The parliament also demanded the Ministry of Education to hold public hearings on this issue. Feminist and gay and lesbian organizations by then had also formed the Friendly Taiwan Alliance. In the following months, the two alliances fought against each other in all of the public hearings held by the Ministry of Education. Meanwhile the civic commissioners of the Commission on Gender Equality Education were working hard within the ministry to fight for including gay and lesbian education in the curriculum guideline. Eventually in the spring of 2012 the Ministry of Education presented a report to the parliament and the curriculum guideline remained intact. The only revision made was on a competence indicator for junior high school students. In the original guideline, one of the students' competence indicators would encourage students to understand their own sexual orientations, and that indicator was changed to teach students to respect other people's sexual orientations. The change, therefore, was not a compromise on the curriculum guideline, only a compromise on the competence indicators for students. The curriculum guideline that included gay and lesbian education withstood the attack from the True Love Alliance partially, if not mainly, because of the work of the Commission on Gender Equality Education.[12]

Though gender equality education did not experience huge setbacks under the attack from the True Love Alliance, the conservative forces' attempts to re-orient the direction of gender equality education continued and their mobilization for opposing same sex marriages exerted enough pressure for the conservative government to eventually compromise the integrity of the Commission on Gender Equality Education. Since the mid-1980s, there had been sporadic efforts in Taiwan to demand the legalizing of same sex marriages. The momentum picked up in 2009, when the Taiwan Alliance to Promote Civil Partnership Rights (TAPCPR) was established. The alliance aimed at revising the Civil Law to recognize civil partnership and legalizing same sex marriages. In October 2013, the TAPCPR announced that, with the help of a female DPP parliamentary member, the organization was ready to submit the bill they had drafted. The announcement immediately led to the formation of the Alliance for Protecting Families which opposed same sex marriages. The TAPCPR's bill consisted of three

parts: recognizing civil partnership, legalizing same sex marriages, and allowing "multi-member families" — a family form that could be but not necessarily is polyamorous. The DPP politician only submitted the part on same sex marriages to the parliament for deliberation, but the Alliance for Protecting Families focused their attacks on the part of "multi-member families." The same sex marriage bill quickly passed the first reading in the parliament, and the Alliance for Protecting Families, along with other non-religious conservative forces, mobilized a huge rally to prevent the bill from entering the second reading. Between October and December 2013, the fight between the pro and con camps of same sex marriages was very much like the replay of the fight over the curriculum guideline a year and half before. The only difference was that the fight was even more vehement and had many more people involved. Surveys conducted a year before showed that more than 50% of Taiwanese support same sex marriage, and younger generations overwhelmingly so. Therefore, besides the rallies each held on the streets, social media were also battlegrounds.

The conservative forces' mobilization successfully blocked the bill from entering the second reading of the parliament after the Alliance for Protecting Families lobbied and exerted pressure on both the KMT and the DPP parliamentary members. It turned out the party whips of both parties had sided with the Alliance for Protecting Families and the only parliamentary members that continued their support for same sex marriages were a few female DPP politicians.[13] In early 2014, accompanied by the KMT parliamentary members, the Alliance for Protecting Families met with the Premier and demanded that the Commission on Gender Equality Education should be "diversified" to include representatives from religious organizations and parental organizations, both close to the conservative camp. Soon after, the Ministry of Education announced the list of commissioners for the 2014–2016 Commission on Gender Equality. Though there were credible activists and scholars on the list, the appointment of people who had openly opposed same sex marriages shocked and angered feminist and gay rights organizations. Despite protests from these organizations, the Ministry of Education continued to cite "respecting diversity" as a reason for such appointments. Though there has been no obvious regression of the work of the Commission on Gender Equality Education yet, preliminary evidence shows that the function of the commission has been affected by the two members close to the Alliance for Protecting Families.[14]

Ⅴ．Uneasy Alliance

Between 2008 and 2014, state feminism has survived under Taiwan's conservative government. The government continued the work initiated during the rule of the progressive government by creating the Department of Gender Equality within the cabinet, releasing a new policy framework for gender equality, and enacting a law to enforce the CEDAW. The gender commissions in the cabinet or line ministries also demonstrated their strength when their agendas were attacked by the conservative forces. However, state feminism under the conservative government also showed significant cracks in one of the most important gender commissions—the Commission on Gender Equality Edu-

cation. It remains to be seen, however, whether there will be other cracks in the future and whether the cracks will eventually break the alliance between feminist activists and the state.

Taiwanese feminists began to engage the state in an active way from the mid-1990s and the engagement was never easy. In many ways, it was a mutual learning experience — feminists learned the workings of the state and the state learned about feminist values. The engagement undoubtedly brought challenges to the feminist movement. Besides the usual issues raised in the literatures of state feminism such as dual constituencies, re-direction of movement resources to accommodate the bureaucratic process of the state, or de-radicalization of the movement, the development of state feminism also made it more challenging for the feminist movement to connect with the youth. Engaging the state requires knowledge of the state, and that knowledge could be tedious, boring, and sometimes even difficult for young people to get a hold of because usually it is about understanding how the bureaucratic process works.[15]

The continuity of state feminism was also a double-edged sword. On the one hand, it showed that state feminism in Taiwan was not affected very much by partisan politics because it allowed the feminist movement to keep its influence in the policy making process to some extent. On the other hand, however, it also meant that the feminist movement's agenda was not able to drive any political party's major agenda. This was particularly clear on the issue of same sex marriages. When both the KMT and DDP were under pressure from the lobby of the conservative forces, neither party showed the commitment to legalize same sex marriages.

Generally speaking, Taiwan's experience has shown that state feminism under the conservative government might slow down the pace of gender equality development, but it has not reversed the course of actions taken under the progressive government — at least not yet. This means that once feminist activists find a way to engage the state, as long as they keep engaging, the state would become more gender friendly. The alliance might be uneasy between the feminists and the state, especially under the conservative government, but it is important and even necessary for the development of gender equality.

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Table 1. Cabinet CPWR Member Composition

Term Year	Total # of the Cabinet CPWR Members	# of Civic Members	# of Members who have movement or progressive party connections
2007-2009	30	17	12
2009-2011	31	18	8
2011-2013	31	18	6
2013-2015	35	18	7

Source: Compiled by the author with data from the Department of Gender Equality of Executive Yuan, Republic of China

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1　The studies that Haussman and Sauer (2007) mentioned include Stetson (2001), Outshoorn (2004), and Lovenduski et al. (2005).

2　I am sure there will be disagreement from scholars or social activists in Taiwan when I use the term “progressive government” to describe the government under President Chen Shui-Bian of the Democratic Progressive Party. However, since progressiveness can be a relative concept in terms of the political spectrum, I stick to that term in this paper for

analytical purposes.

3　The case was not solved and the killer is still at large.

4　The bureaucrats, of course, did not like these changes and had their share of doubts and reservations on gender mainstreaming. See Peng (2008).

5　For a description of this process, see Huang (2008).

6　For a comparison of the state-society relation of the enactment process of the Domestic Violence Prevention Act, enacted under the conservative government in 1998, and that of these two gender laws, see Yang (2006).

7　See the 22nd Meeting Minutes for the Executive Yuan Commission on the Promotion of Women's Rights: http://www.gec.ey.gov.tw/Upload/RelFile/1508/719858/2dd73a76-5610-4485-81ba-ef68f0f1a68.pdf
Executive Yuan is the name for Taiwan's cabinet.

8　This percentage is calculated from the meeting documents for the 27th Meeting of the Executive Yuan Commission on the Promotion of Women's Rights. The meeting documents were data and documents prepared by bureaucrats for the commission's meetings. Unlike the meeting minutes, these documents have not been released online.

9　Technically speaking, Taiwanese women had reproductive freedom in the old Eugenics Law because one of the conditions under which legal abortion was allowed was very vaguely worded.

10　I was among those who resigned.

11　In Taiwan, all the textbooks used by the schools, from elementary to high schools, have to follow the curriculum guideline designed by the Ministry of Education.

12　Unable to change the curriculum guideline, the True Love Alliance came up with a new tactic. In 2013, the alliance changed its name to Taiwan Gender Education Development Association. The name, in both Chinese and English, was extremely close to the Taiwan Gender Equality Education Association, an organization established 10 years earlier and well known for its efforts in advocating for gender equality education. Once the True Love Alliance changed its name, the organization began to advocate a conservative version of gender education of which one of the main ideas was that gays and lesbians were corrigible.

13　Though the bill on legalizing same sex marriage got blocked, Taiwan was still regarded as the beacon for gay and lesbian rights in Asia (Jacobs 2014).

14　I was told that civic commissioners spent a lot of time fighting and arguing within the commission mainly because there is always difference of opinions between the two conservative members and the rest of the commission.

15　For example, it takes some experience for civic commissioners to understand how to push the right button when they demand bureaucrats to take actions. Bureaucrats usually would not take initiatives to accomplish the tasks that civic commissioners demand unless the tasks are specifically assigned to them. To make sure the tasks are correctly assigned, civic commissioners need to have some knowledge about the functions of different units within the cabinet or the ministry.