

AcE-Bs 2012 Bangkok  
ASEAN Conference on Environment-Behaviour Studies,  
Bangkok, Thailand, 16-18 July 2012

# The Choice of Hui-Lan in Taiwan: Building an Expressway to Return Home or Preserving the Ecology for Generations to Come?

Po-Chun Huang and Shenglin Elijah Chang\*

*Graduate Institute of Building and Planning, National Taiwan University, Taipei, Taiwan ROC*

---

## Abstract

This paper explores the dynamic relationships between landscape identities and economic developments. Hui-Lan is a remote county in Taiwan. Since 1990, locals and environmental groups have been battling over the proposed Su-Hua Expressway connecting Hui-Lan and other cities. Through qualitative methods, we examine how locals perceive the potential ecological and cultural impacts of the expressway's construction and we analyze Bali's community-based ecotourism as an example for Hui-Lan's own economic development. In order to reduce traffic congestion and avoid construction of the Expressway, we conclude that the people of Hui-Lan should consider the small-scale eco-tourism model as an option in future economic development.

© 2012 Published by Elsevier Ltd. Selection and peer-review under responsibility of the Centre for Environment-Behaviour Studies (cE-Bs), Faculty of Architecture, Planning & Surveying, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Malaysia  
Open access under [CC BY-NC-ND license](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/).

*Keywords:* Infrastructure investment; environmental conservation; environmental valuation; eco-tourism; Bali tourist development

---

## 1. Departure: “No Way. We Want Free!”

“No Way. We Want Free!” In Spring 2007, a group of young Hualien students, named “Lovers of Hualien,” organized a nation-wide petition to prevent the on-going Su-Hua Expressway proposal from

---

\* Corresponding author. Tel.: +886-2-3366-5984; fax: +886-2-3366-5984.  
E-mail address: [shenglinchang@gmail.com](mailto:shenglinchang@gmail.com).

passing the environmental impact assessment review (EIA). This so-called Lovers of Hualien group consisted of young Hualien students who had moved to Taipei or other cities to seek higher education. Most of them had relocated to large cities, including metropolitan Taipei. They were all locals who needed to return to their Hualien homes for important holidays, such as Chinese Lunar New Year in February, the spring Tomb Sweeping Festival in April, and the Mid-Autumn or Moon Festival. As a result of their common need, it was among these student groups that battles over constructing the Su-Hua Expressway officially began.

The argument was not about a road for young people to return home on, per se. Developers, investors, and politicians, both domestic and international, were all waiting for the results of the EIA. In May of 2008, when the expressway proposal re-entered the EIA's committees, two groups from Hualien confronted each other outside the Environment Protection Agency Office in Taipei. As the "Lovers of Hualien" student group chanted "No Way. We Want Free" in defiance to the proposal, another group of four hundred local Hui-Lan people had taken a six-hour-long bus trip from Hualien to Taipei with Mr. Huang, the Chairperson of the Hualien County Council. These local Hualien residents argued that they have been waiting for a safe way to return home for decades, and that the government had never responded to their urgent call. They were begging the EIA committee to pass the proposal in order to allow the ground breaking of the expressway project to commence.

## **2. Prepared for traveling through the Su-Hua Expressway Corridor**

The construction of the Su-Hua Expressway, like the center of a whirlpool, has been spinning and unfolding at least three theoretical wings of scholarly discourse. First, from the economic perspective, scholars (i.e., Gramlich 1994, Holtz-Eakin 1994, Dalenberg and Partridge 1997) have challenged the old belief that government investment in transportation infrastructure can stimulate local economic development. More particular, Chandra and Thompson (2000) argue that non-metropolitan interstate highway spending in the United States has had different impacts across industries in various locations. While the manufacture, retail and service sector earnings grow in the counties the highway directly passes through, similar sectors located in adjacent counties experience the loss and decrease in their economic performance. As a result, the non-metropolitan or rural states, as a whole, eventually do not gain extra economic benefits from the billion dollar governmental investments. The empirical evidences from Chandra, Thompson and others advise the Hualien locals that the economic improvements might not perform as well as they had hoped for in the post-Su-Hua expressway era.

Secondly, from the cultural landscape perspective, the battles of with-or-without Su-Hua expressway unfolds the formation of the politics of urban and rural identity that Raymond Williams (1973) first recognized in his influential book, *The Country and the City*. Decades ago, Williams observed the county-city disconnections and argued the phenomenon embodied the industrialized way of life that the capitalist society pursued. Remote viewpoints from rural communities and dismissing the essential value of agricultural culture dominate the mainstream value that Creed and Ching (1997) criticize in their work, "Recognizing Rusticity." In the case of Su-Hua expressway battle, we also notice the identity battle between rural Hualien and urbanized Hualien among the Hualien born people. Furthermore, the identity transformation of Hualien echoes the Balinese identity 'Bali erect' (ajeg Bali) that Picard (2003) studied and argued.

Finally, from a community-based tourism development perspective, the Su-Hua expressway construction symbolizes the debate between the eco-tourism alternatives and mass tourism development (Weaver 1991, Hughes 1995, Brown 2002, Byczek 2011, and Eshliki and Kaboudi 2011). Lately, scholars and researchers in developing countries point out that mass tourism not only decreases the quality of life for local communities, but also destroys cultural and ecological characteristics of certain

متن کامل مقاله

دریافت فوری ←

**ISI**Articles

مرجع مقالات تخصصی ایران

- ✓ امکان دانلود نسخه تمام متن مقالات انگلیسی
- ✓ امکان دانلود نسخه ترجمه شده مقالات
- ✓ پذیرش سفارش ترجمه تخصصی
- ✓ امکان جستجو در آرشیو جامعی از صدها موضوع و هزاران مقاله
- ✓ امکان دانلود رایگان ۲ صفحه اول هر مقاله
- ✓ امکان پرداخت اینترنتی با کلیه کارت های عضو شتاب
- ✓ دانلود فوری مقاله پس از پرداخت آنلاین
- ✓ پشتیبانی کامل خرید با بهره مندی از سیستم هوشمند رهگیری سفارشات