

Exchange student report

Loïs Gauthier

First of all, I want to thank everyone who accepted me to spend this year in the National University of Tainan : the office of Research and Development, the department of Public Administration and Management etc... This year was an important moment in my life and I express my gratitude to anyone who could make this possible. In fact, this year allowed me to open myself to another culture and tradition. Taiwan is a very special country in the world with its own history and should be recognize to its fair value. I am glad to could appreciate its environment for some months. Chatting with Taiwanese, I have discovered a strong identity in opposition with mainland China. Taiwanese people are proud of their history, of their background and especially their colonization. I discover a way of life really peaceful whereas I couldn't don't find in France. Taiwanese people are respectful from other, and they enjoy every moment of their life. The most important is that the weather is really agreeable. The life in Taiwan was really enjoyable, and I give my respect to everyone who contributes to this year.

Concerning NUTN, I discover a different way of teaching applying to a professionalization of students whereas French Universities are more focus on research skills. NUTN gave me tools to understand the Taiwanese society and the political management. In class, students are closer to their teacher and discuss with them anytime they want, which makes a good atmosphere of study. I was surprise to be invited for a dinner by my department. I think, it is really important for the cohesion of the group. I spend a very good time to learn with my classmates. Furthermore, besides my poor level in Chinese, teachers were every time helpful and comprehensible of my situation. They, often, help me to have good score even though I did not understand everything. I always try my best to learn Chinese, and speak in their mother tong to my classmates even if it was difficult to communicate sometimes. They were very friendly with me and asked me every time whether I need help or not. Some classmates, even, invite me to their house to introduce me with their culture and tradition. I

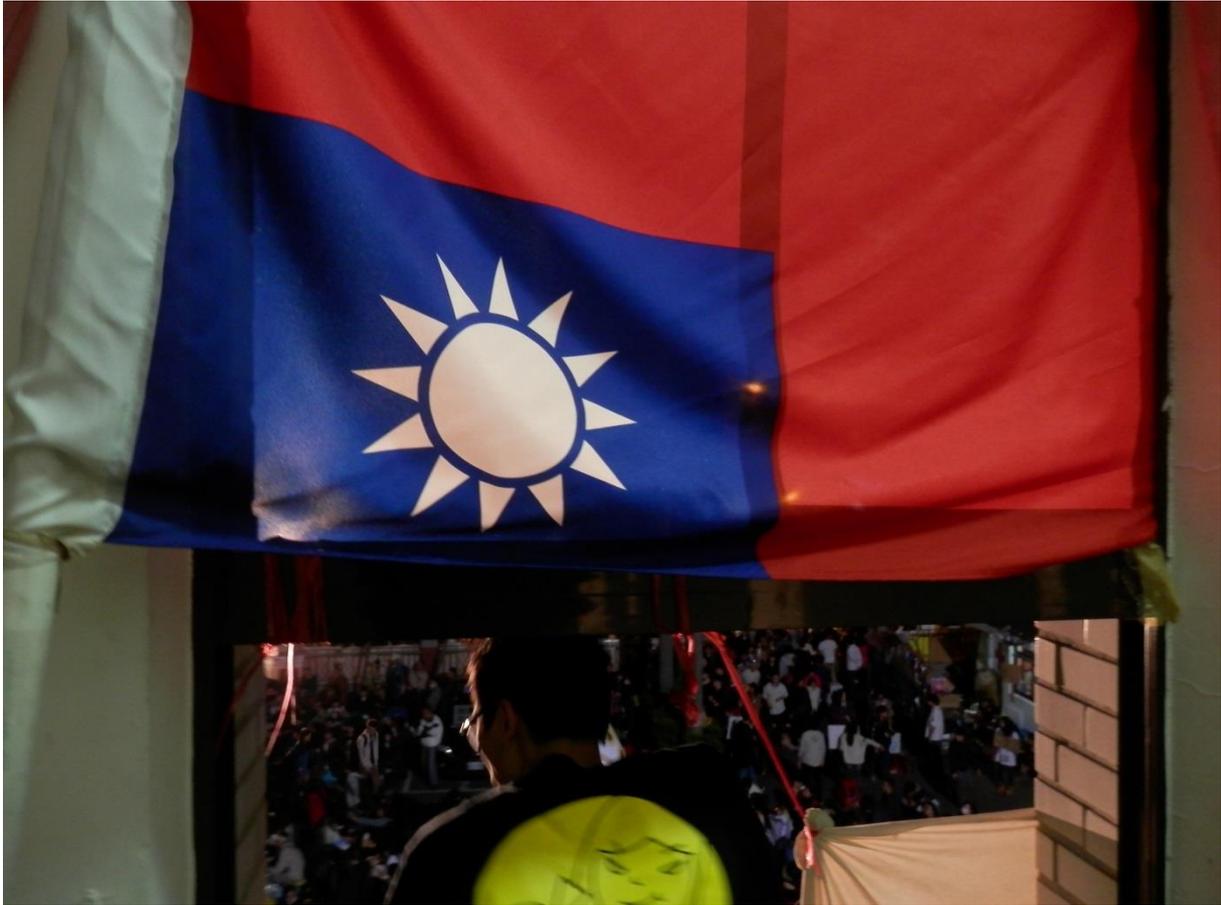
enjoyed this moment of discussion and sharing way of thinking. I had one year to enjoy Taiwan and I think I did what I could. The first priority was to learn Chinese, after one year I guess I can communicate and have conversation. It is really useful. The first semester was really interesting, because I lived in the dorm of NUTN. There were one student from Shanghai, an other one from Hong Kong and three from Taiwan. They were all very friendly and it was interesting to share culture. We spend a good time together and every one share with me a lot, even if the room was small. When I had problems for admissions, they often help me. I hope I could see them again. I met also a lot of foreigner from Russia, Mongolia, Indonesia, Malaysia and Guatemala. It was good to get away from my roots and find other languages, stories... Everyone had a story to tell, and I enjoyed listening why they were here and the philosophy of life. Before coming to Taiwan, I didn't know that I was going to meet so much people, especially from these countries. It opens my eyes on the reality of the world. Moreover, before coming to Taiwan, I didn't know all the specificity of the Taiwanese culture, and history. Travelling around Taiwan was really enjoyable. I went with my friends to each place of Taiwan (Taichung, Taitung, Kenting, Penghu, Green Island, Yilan...). Travelling around Taiwan was, also, a good way to be familiarized with the Taiwanese culture. It was a way to improve my Chinese speaking but also to meet people from different part of the Island, and the aboriginals. I liked islands most, like Green Island, Penghu and Xiao Liuqiu. I felt a wind of freedom there where the life is relaxing and people extremely friendly.

I enjoyed the environment and the atmosphere of the study in NUTN. The campus site was pleasurable, the park, the stadium etc... After a long day of class, it was pleasant to walk surrounding by Taiwanese people who often asked me where I'm from. Taiwanese people were always asking me questions whether I enjoy Taiwan, about the weather... It's always pleasant that people take care of you. Even if sometimes I wanted to be invisible, people take care of me. I was surrounding by pleasant and adorable people. It makes me happy, and let open myself to other. However, I liked Tainan so far. This city has soul that other city doesn't have, probably because of its history. I liked walking around on the street, between the little shop and little streets where I discover the daily life of Tainanese inhabitant. I appreciated to eat at the night market where the smell of the food was everywhere. I wanted to test everything. Actually, I probably eat everything possible. Now, I understand why Tainan meal is so famous. It is one of the best attractions of the city. I enjoyed a lot this city and I hope I could come back one day.



In response to what NUTN offer to me, I taught French for free to some students (almost 10) who wanted. It was really important for me to also give something to Taiwanese students. I was really happy that they were interested to French culture and language, so it was with great interest that I taught them French. Moreover, most of them improved a lot. I was glad to be part of this success. I hope they could go to France one day, and I wish I could introduce them my culture. It was important for me because as an exchange student I must give something back. The exchange of culture was something I wanted to do.

Then, I also implied myself to the Taiwanese's struggle against the Fare Trade Agreement on March. I went to Taipei to understand what the current situation was. I discussed with lots of student who were engaged to demonstrations. I didn't expect that they were so implied in the movement. I wrote articles for French newspaper to relate the situation, it was part of my duty to show to French the important contestation in Taiwan. I did my duty of French ambassador in Taiwan. Through this movement, it shows to the world the importance of Taiwanese independence, that I totally agree. I discover an important political implication of the young generation. My major was administration management, so it was important for me to know and understand the current political situation in Taiwan.



I also wrote article for urban magazines in France to show the authenticity of Tainan.

I understand the importance for Taiwanese people to be recognized as a country on the International stage. I think by improving this kind of study mobility, foreigners can spread the Taiwanese identity and culture. Furthermore, I understood the relation and the opposition between DPP and KMT which was really important on the daily-life. I think Taiwan is on the good way to find its own identity and own country.

Thank you for everything.

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