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This paper examines contemporary developments among Taiwan's indigenous Austronesian peoples. We have reviewed major policy changes mainly since the 1980s and their impacts on later developments – both the positive improvements in general well-being and the persistence of ingrained problems among them. Major findings indicate two growing trends among Taiwanese Austronesians. One is the rise of interest in their cultures and efforts to preserve and restore selected indigenous customs and practices. The other trend is a continuous outflow of the indigenes from traditional tribal communities to urban centers for better employment, education, or health care. Their increasing urbanization also contributes to more inter-ethnic marriages and the loss of indigenous languages and practices. The case of Taiwanese Austronesians illustrates the impacts historical and politico-economic processes are having on indigenous peoples.

Keywords: Austronesian; Taiwan; social policy; cultural heritage; development

Research goals and methods

A succinct overview of the contemporary policy change and its impact on Taiwanese indigenous peoples is not readily available, although myriads of research topics on them have been conducted since the post-war era (circa post-1945). The first major study with this goal was coordinated by anthropologist Li Yih-yuan in 1983. Based on firsthand collected data, Li published a major treatise on contemporary Taiwanese indigenous peoples entitled *Research and Assessment of Hill Aboriginal Administration Policies* (in Chinese).[1] This book identifies major problems Taiwanese indigenes faced and the possibilities of alleviating them through administrative means. A quarter of a century had passed since this landmark research was published, another follow-up comprehensive research was coordinated by anthropologist Huang Shu-min, the first author of this article, to have a broad-based assessment of the current conditions in indigenous communities. An edited volume *Government Policy and Social Development among Taiwanese Indigenous Peoples* (in Chinese) was published in 2010, and its findings pointed to various major changes from Li's research.[2] In line with these two comprehensive studies, this article aims at overviewing the social changes Taiwanese indigenous peoples have experienced over the long history and highlights the current challenges facing them. The questions that help organize our review are the following: What major policy changes have been implemented by the government to improve the lives of the indigenes? To what extent have the general well-being of the indigenous peoples changed over the past

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decades? Have the grassroots movements launched by indigenous elites since the late 1980s and early 1990s produced tangible results and narrowed the gaps between their communities and mainstream society? What features still hindered the improvement of their general well-being?

Most of the data presented in this article is based on Huang's 2010 edited volume that engaged 14 researchers and employed a multitude of research methods: archival research, census data, fieldwork in indigenous communities, in-depth interviews with officials in charge of indigenous affairs, focus group discussions with experts and ordinary villagers on pressing indigenous issues, and survey questionnaires. In the last case, standardized questionnaires were developed to elicit quantitative data that would supplement general impressions gained through qualitatively obtained data. Following a rigid stratified sampling procedure by using the official household registration, the research team covered all 14 officially registered indigenous groups nationwide at that time with 2057 valid samples: 1178 from traditional indigenous communities and 879 from metropolitan areas. In addition, some updated data in this article was collected in another survey conducted by the current authors that targeted ethnic Paiwan migrants in metropolitan Taipei, Taichung, and Kaohsiung through snowball sampling method. This survey was carried out with 209 valid samples in 2014: 76 originally from indigenous Mudan Township and 133 from other indigenous townships.[3] The current article highlights the major findings of these studies.

Profiles of Taiwanese Austronesians

Linguistically, Taiwanese indigenous peoples belong to the Austronesian language family, in close association with the Malayo-Polynesian and Oceanic languages that cover major islands in the Pacific and Indian Oceans. One school of thought, championed by Australian archaeologist Peter Bellwood, argues that Taiwan must be the original home of all Austronesian peoples due to the extremely high diversity of the indigenous languages on the island.[4] To differentiate Taiwanese indigenous peoples from the majority Han people, we use terms such as Taiwanese Austronesians, indigenous Austronesians, Taiwanese indigenous peoples, or simply indigenes interchangeable in this article.

Historical context

Historically, despite its close proximity to Chinese empires in the mainland, Taiwan and its indigenous peoples made little impression on China's imperial historiography. It was not until the early seventeenth century, during European colonial expansion in Southeast Asia, that the Dutch and the Spaniards began to explore the island's southern and northern ends, respectively, and established tiny fortified trading posts and harbors to guard their commercial interests. Rivalry between the Europeans lasted for two decades and quickly ended when the Dutch successfully drove out the Spaniards from northern Taiwan. Chinese sovereignty was extended to Taiwan in the mid-seventeenth century during the dynastic change when defeated Ming loyalists, under the leadership of Koxinga, drove out the Dutch and established Chinese settler communities on the island. Even though the European colonial occupation of Taiwan had been short – a mere 50 years – it was the first encounter Taiwanese indigenes had with Christianity.

The Ming loyalists in Taiwan eventually succumbed to the consolidating Qing dynasty (circa 1644–1911), which had established formal sovereignty on the island by the late seventeenth century. For the next two centuries, this newly acquired territory attracted

hordes of immigrants from China's overcrowded Southeast Coast, mostly from Fujian and Guangdong provinces where land-hungry farmers had been spilling out across greater Southeast Asia in search of arable land.

Early Chinese records produced by travelers and government officials in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries depicted Taiwanese Austronesians as primitive and fearsome: practicing slash-and-burn agriculture (growing chiefly millet and hill rice as staples) with simple farm implements, hunting the widely abundant deer for their skins and meat, and raiding and killing each other and outsiders for their heads as war trophies. With a low level of technological sophistication and lacking written languages, the indigenes were considered 'barbaric and loathsome'; they were to be converted to the mainstream Han Chinese way of life if possible. The ensuing encounters between Han settlers and the indigenous peoples had not been pleasant. Armed with more advanced weaponry and organizational capabilities, the Han Chinese settlers either subjugated the indigenes and turned them into dependent servants or tenants, or forced them to retreat farther into high mountains unsuitable for agricultural use – at least from the Han Chinese point of view.

Imperial China's policy toward Taiwanese indigenous peoples, like its treatment of other ethnic groups in the borderlands of the mainland, was an ambivalent one: a mixture of biases colored by a belief in Sino-centric cultural superiority on the one hand, and benevolent paternalism on the other. Whenever an ethnic minority was assimilated into the Sinicized moral world that was characterized by supposedly superior Confucianism, they were treated as genuine court subjects and protected by law. Thus, the degree to which indigenes complied with Sinicization became a key benchmark to demarcate the various ethnic minorities. There were the 'Cooked Barbarians' (*shu fan*, the so-called assimilated barbarians) who had taken on some of the basic features of Han Chineseness, such as Han languages, costumes, sedentary agriculture, proper mannerism and social decorum, and so on. From the Qing court's point of view, the Cooked Barbarians could be further cultivated through education, so they would eventually be 'civilized' and could enjoy the benefits of Chinese civilization.[5] The 'Plains Indigenes' in Taiwan, a term used prior to 1994 for a conglomerate of more than 10 ethnic groups who lived at lower elevations throughout the island and who had long experience of Han culture, belonged to this category.

The term 'Cooked Barbarians' was long considered derogatory in Taiwanese history and had been shunned for its implication of barbarian ancestry. The denial of 'barbarian ancestry', however, changed in the late twentieth century when indigenous social movements awoke long-dormant ethnic pride and aspiration.[6] One particular group, the Kavalan in Eastern Taiwan, for instance, reclaimed its non-Han ancestry and was recognized by the government in 2002 as the eleventh indigenous group in Taiwan. Other Plains Indigenous groups that have organized to reclaim their Austronesian ancestry and gain official recognition, however, have been stonewalled in recent years by the Council of Indigenous Peoples, due to the complexities of sorting out ethnicity and the politics involved.

Taiwan's 'Raw Barbarians' (*sheng fan*, the so-called nonassimilated barbarians) were subjects of pacification from the imperial Qing court's point of view. Since they were 'uncivilized', they had to be fenced off so they would not encroach upon citizens of the Celestial Empire on the frontier. When Raw Barbarians attacked early Han Chinese settlers, the Qing government had to respond in kind, sending in troops or constables to arrest the culprits and defend the territory. The Qing court's policy toward the Raw Barbarians, however, was more paternalistic than strictly punitive. Administrators at

various levels of local government in Taiwan knew too well that Han immigrants were not always victims in those conflicts: they could easily outwit the less sophisticated indigenous peoples and used various forms of chicanery to steal their land. To prevent such encounters and their subsequent conflicts and bloodshed, the Qing court ordered to erect earthen walls called 'bull's backs', to separate the Han settlers and the Raw Barbarians from the late seventeenth century to the late nineteenth century. The dual purpose of the bull's backs was to prevent the indigenes from attacking the settlers, and also to prevent the settlers from entering the tribal territories. But due to the continuously increasing population pressure along Taiwan's western coastal plains, those earthen walls were continuously being pushed back toward the high mountains. This went on up to the tenure of the last Qing governor of Taiwan, Liu Ming-chuan, who launched ambitious modernization plans in 1885 to promote cash crop production such as tea- and camphor-planting in the hills. During the second half of the nineteenth century Christian missions, chiefly English and Canadian Presbyterian also began to take an interest in Taiwan and established churches and hospitals on the island. Their initial targets were the local Han Chinese, but their efforts later expanded to the indigenous areas. In addition to introducing Christian gospels and modern medicine to the indigenes, the missionaries also used a Romanization system to translate the Bible into Austronesian languages, thus creating a vehicle to record those languages. The establishment of the Tainan Theological College and Seminary in 1876 was a major development since the Seminary would train a large number of indigenous pastors who contributed to their communities' subsequent development.

The modernization projects introduced by Taiwan's Governor Liu Ming-chuan were quickly terminated once the Qing court ceded Taiwan to Japan in 1895, the year China was defeated in the first Sino-Japanese War. The Japanese colonial government launched another bigger wave of modernization in Taiwan. In terms of ethnic affairs, the Japanese colonial government generally followed the imperial Qing policy by dividing the indigenous populations into two broad categories of the Raw and the Cooked Barbarians, minus the Confucian concerns of a universalistic humanity. In addition, the Japanese colonial administration brought modern science and an explicit scientific racism to this newly conquered land. Among the first wave of the Japanese occupation army that landed in Taiwan in 1895 were also linguists and anthropologists who began to explore the island's indigenous populations. Based on those 'scientific' explorations, the Raw Barbarians among Taiwan's indigenes were first identified and classified as belonging to seven or nine different ethnic groups. In addition to this nomenclature change, the colonial government also conducted surveys of the Central Mountain Range (henceforth CMR) that runs the length of the island from north to south. Once the cartography of the CMR was determined, the colonial government declared that all unoccupied forestland belonged to the government, and the indigenes were to be confined to their current residential territories.

To placate and pacify the seemingly unruly Raw Barbarians, the Japanese colonial administration adopted several measures. The lowland indigenes were taught to grow paddy rice to replace their slash-and-burn agriculture. Those living in the high mountains with limited outside contacts were forced to resettle to lower elevations. Between 1903 and 1941, an estimate 7318 families with 43,112 people, or about half of the entire indigenous population, were forcibly relocated to new settlements below 1500 meters above sea level.[7] To ensure the success of this policy, the colonial government also constructed police stations in the hills to monitor indigenous tribal communities. Once the indigenes were registered by the police, they were not allowed to move freely as they

had been before when practicing slash-and-burn agriculture. Firearms used for hunting were registered or confiscated to prevent possible revolts. These heavy-handed approaches inevitably raised resentment among those ruled.

The Wushe Incident is regarded as one of the most dramatic examples of indigenous revolt against Japanese rule in the CMR regions. On 27 October 1930, some 300 warriors from six Seediq tribal communities, under the leadership of Mona Rudao, attacked the Wushe police station, post office, and school, and killed 134 Japanese, including women and children. To suppress this astonishing rebellion, the colonial government immediately amassed troops numbering 1194 soldiers and 1306 police to attack Seediq tribal communities. In addition, the colonial government also enlisted the assistance of neighboring Truku tribal men who harbored historical animosity toward the Seediq. When the Seediq warriors offered stiff resistance, the colonial government even sent in aircraft to drop bombs carrying vesicant gas. Ultimately modern weaponry won the day, and, with 364 Seediq people killed and 225 committing suicide, the rebellion was over one month later.

With the end of Japanese colonial rule in 1945, at the end of World War II, the heavy-handed policies imposed by the Japanese colonial government on Taiwanese indigenous moderated somewhat by the new government. Instead of calling them Raw and Cooked Barbarians, the incoming Chinese Nationalist government that took over Taiwan from Japan abolished the category of 'barbarian' and registered the indigenes as ordinary citizens. The Raw Barbarians, following the manner of the Qing court's paternalistic tradition, were divided into two categories: the Mountain Compatriots of the Hills (*shandi shanbao*) and the Mountain Compatriots of the Lowlands (*pingdi shanbao*). We will now use Hill Compatriots and Lowland Compatriots to differentiate these two categories. The Lowland Compatriots were concentrated in relatively isolated east coast areas, and the Hill Compatriots resided in the mountainous areas of Central Mountain Range. As compatriots, both categories were recognized as citizens of Republic of China (in Taiwan) with full legal rights and obligations. Furthermore, to alleviate their generally poor living conditions, the Nationalist government established various policies that gave the indigenes preferential treatment, such as awarding bonus points to those who took high school college entrance exams and reserving quotas for them in tuition-free teachers' normal schools or nursing schools. Preferential treatment for Taiwanese indigenes was also seen in the number of their elected representatives at the national, provincial, and local levels. Despite all these, the classificatory terms for indigenes remained derogatory and 'fictive'. For instance, the term 'Mountain Compatriots of the Lowlands' is clearly an oxymoron. We will address the name changes in the next section.

While the Lowland Compatriots often lived in mixed communities with Han people and had become increasingly indistinguishable from their neighbors, the Hill Compatriots in CMR reservations, until 1987 – the year when Martial Law was lifted in Taiwan – remained sometimes off limits to ordinary Han people. Nonindigenes who wanted to enter the hill reservations had to apply for permission from local police, so did Han anthropologists who studied on indigenous cultures. This policy has limited the interaction between the Hill Compatriots and the mainstream Han society. This restriction, like the bull's back of the Qing dynasty, served two purposes. The first was to prevent illegal or clandestine activities in the hills. The second was to prevent the encroachment of the Han people who often tricked the indigenes into selling their land. Since the lifting of the Martial Law in 1987, restricted access to the hill regions has been relaxed and entry applications to the former hill reservations have become more or less *pro-forma*. However, the government still closely monitors indigenous land transactions to prevent

land seizures by Han people and to prevent environmental deterioration from over-development of Taiwan's mountainous areas.

Contemporary distribution

In 1983, as stated in Li's research, the indigenous population was barely over 310,000, or about 1.7% of Taiwan's entire population of 18,790,538, according to the household registration records of the Ministry of Interior. With a rate of indigenous population growth that is slightly higher than Taiwanese society as a whole, the number of indigenous people increased to 408,030, or about 1.8% of the island-wide population (22,276,672) in 2000, and 504,531, or about 2.2% of the island's total (23,119,772) in 2009. The steady increase of the indigenous population since the early 1980s, however, was not solely the result of natural growth. In the early 1990s, grassroots indigenous movements began to attract general public interest, and later the government changed its policy and granted indigenes and persons of mixed blood the freedom to decide their own ethnic affiliations and to change their registration at the Household Registration Office. That is, they can choose to follow either their father's or mother's ethnic identity.

Among the 14 officially recognized indigenous groups in 2010, the largest was the Amis, who mainly resided in the eastern coastal lowlands; Amis people numbered 185,000, or about 38.5% of all Taiwanese indigenes. They were followed by the Paiwan of southern Taiwan, with 89,000 people or 18.5%. In northern Taiwan, the Atayal group had 81,000 people or 16.7% of the total. The fourth largest group was the Bunun, who occupied the center of the CMR; this group's population of 52,000 was about 10.5% of the total. The remaining 10 groups were generally small in size: Truku, 26,100 (5.4%); Puyuma, 12,000 (2.5%); Rukai, 12,000 (2.5%); Tsou, 6800 (1.4%); Seediq, 6800 (1.4%); Saisiyat, 6000 (1.2%); Tao (also known as Yami), 3800 (0.8%); Kavalan, 1230 (0.3%); Thao, 698 (0.15%); Sakizaya, 478 (0.1%).

As the indigenous population grew over the past three decades, another trendy phenomenon has also fundamentally changed the indigenous society: their dramatic geographic movement from traditional tribal communities to metropolitan areas where they can find better education and nonagricultural work. According to Taiwan's official household registration records, in 1983, only about 6% of all indigenes lived outside of their traditional tribal communities and moved to urban areas; but by 2009, the proportion of city-dwelling indigenes had shot up to 39%. If we include short-term sojourners and youths who attend school in urban areas but retain their household registration in their tribal hometowns, the actual number of indigenes now living in Taiwan's cities could be close to half of the entire population. The biggest out-migration has been seen among the Lowland Compatriots from the eastern Hualien–Taitung Corridor.

When examining where out-migrating indigenes mainly headed for, we found that their general mobility followed fixed patterns (see Figure 1). The green shade in Figure 1 marks the traditional indigenous territories and the blue dots indicate clusters of indigenous settlements, with each dot representing 10 people. The green shade includes the Central Mountain Range and the eastern coastal areas. The heavy concentrations of indigenous populations are along Hualien–Taitung Corridor and Northern and Southern parts of CMR. Outside the green area, three regions are marked by a concentration of blue dots – from north to south, the Taipei–Taoyuan Metropolitan Area, the Taichung Metropolitan Area, and the Kaohsiung Metropolitan Area. These three metropolises are Taiwan's major industrial hubs where most of the labor-intensive industries and city facilities are located. It is in these industrial and urban zones that many newly migrating
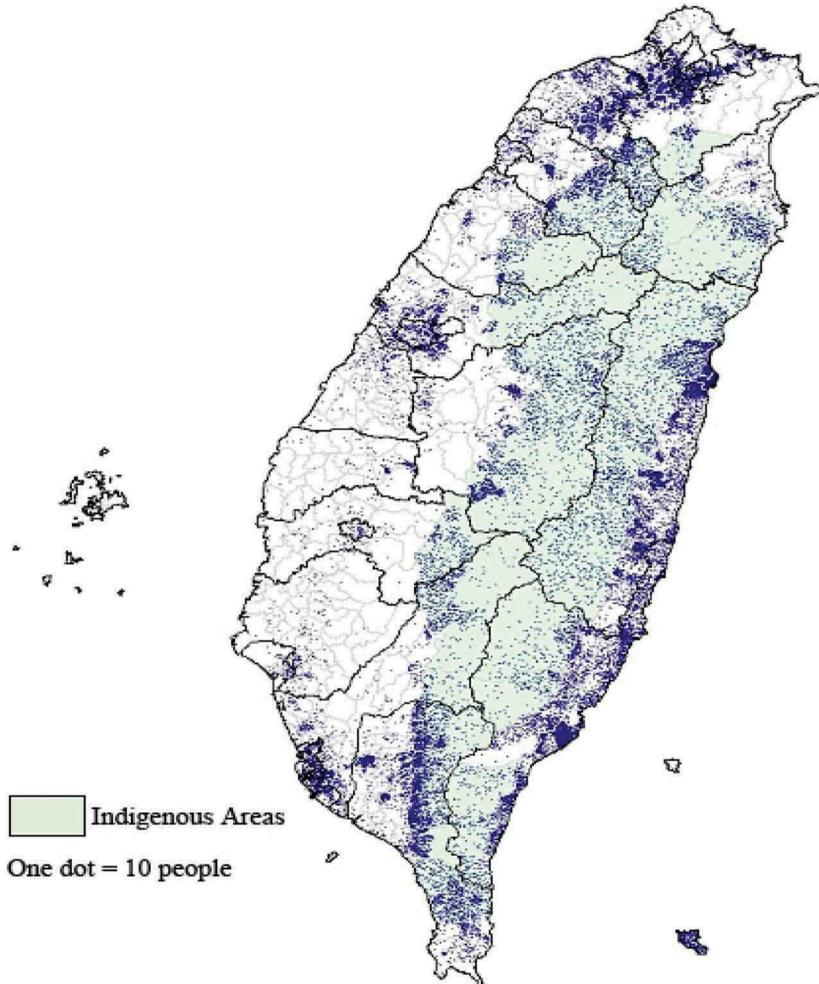
Figure 1.   Distribution of Taiwanese indigenes.[8]

indigenes find semi-skilled work in assembly line production, construction, truck driving, and other service jobs.

Major policy changes

Have these rural-to-urban movements improved the general well-being of the indigenes or alleviated the structural problems they encounter as a collective marginal group in Taiwanese society? How has the migration contributed to their relationship with and conceptualization of indigenous cultures and ethnic identity? To answer these questions, we must first review the major policy changes that resulted from democratization and grassroots social movements in Taiwan over recent decades.

In the late 1980s, several indigenous college students began to question and challenge the social conditions faced by Taiwanese indigenous peoples; those included: general poverty in the indigenous tribal communities, social stigma associated with ethnic

identity, deprivation of the right to carry out traditional practices (especially hunting and logging) in Nationalized Forests, and the gradual disappearance of indigenous languages and cultures. The appeals of these leading elites struck a chord with the Taiwanese society that was experiencing unprecedented economic growth and democratization and was ready to debate over social justice and ethnic equality. To some extent indigenous protests might have also stirred hidden guilty feelings among Taiwan's Han elites who had selectively ignored or forgotten the cruelties and injustices their forbears had inflicted on the indigenes over the past four centuries. In addition, Taiwan was in the process of undertaking a broader indigenization movement as part of reconstructing its self-identity vis-à-vis China. As a consequence, the indigenous movements gained wide sympathy and support in Taiwan in the early 1990s.

The first concrete result of this social movement was the Name Rectification enacted in 1994, with a constitutional amendment that abolished derogatory terms such as barbarians, hill tribes, Mountain Compatriots, and so on. Instead, the English term 'indigene' or 'aborigine' was translated into Chinese and used to represent all Taiwanese indigenes. Along with the name rectification effort, a 1995 Presidential decree allowed indigenes to change their personal names from the adopted Han Chinese names logged in the official Household Registration back to indigenous names – still in Chinese characters and optionally with Romanization. In 1996 the Council of Indigenous Affairs, a ministry-level office in charge of all matters related to Taiwanese Indigenes, was established under the Executive Yuan.

It is worth mentioning that, in the early 1990s when China was threatening to wage war to Taiwan because of the increasing pro-independent movement on the island, indigenous elites began to call themselves 'Taiwanese Austronesians' for two purposes: one was the symbolic attempt to go beyond the political conflicts between the Han people in Taiwan and China; the other was to connect themselves with global indigenous peoples, first in the Austronesian regions, and hence to redefine their indigeneity and positionality in Taiwanese society. The publication of the *Austronesian News*, an indigenous newspaper in 1995 can be seen as a product in the social milieu.

The policy progress of the 1990s became complicated later on as democratization and ethnic differentiation continuously deepened in Taiwan and created friction among various ethnic groups. In 2000, Taiwan experienced its first political power transition when the pro-independent Democratic Progressive Party (henceforth DPP) defeated the long-ruling Nationalist Party in the presidential election. To garner favor among the Taiwanese indigenes, the DPP government accelerated efforts to propose political autonomy for the indigenous groups. In 2002 the Council of Indigenous Affairs was renamed the Council of Indigenous Peoples to underscore its goal of self-determination among Taiwanese indigenes. A year before the name change, in 2001, the College of Indigenous Studies was established at National Dong Hwa University in Hualien as presumably a training institution for future indigenous officials.

In the early 2000s, several other measures were enacted by the government to prepare the Taiwanese Austronesians for future political autonomy, though not outright independence. The first push was to recognize 'Indigenous Traditional Land Rights' in 2002. Indigenous tribal communities were encouraged to reconstruct their erstwhile migration routes and former settlements through the collection of oral histories, as the basis for reclaiming their traditional territories. Scholarly communities, including the Geography Department of National Taiwan University, were commissioned by the Council of Indigenous Peoples, through the collaboration with local indigenes, to use Geographic Information System (GIS) to reconstruct traditional indigenous territories. However, since

the premodern indigenes practiced slash-and-burn agriculture, which entailed constant movement and relocation in search of new land, overlapping claims by various indigenous ethnic groups and tribal communities in the CMR soon emerged. Seeing potential conflicts in the pursuit of such claims, the land right reconstruction project was quietly ended.

Another landmark development was the establishment of the Taiwan Indigenous Television in 2004. This government-sponsored station was to enhance the ethnic identity of the indigenes as a whole, yet it also unravels the internal differences among the indigenes. Due to the diversity of Austronesian languages (i.e., linguists have identified at least 24 mutually unintelligible languages among the indigenes), which languages to use in broadcasts became a contentious issue, especially among the four largest groups – the Amis, Paiwan, Atayal, and Bunun.

In 2005 the Council of Indigenous Peoples proposed 'The Basic Laws of Indigenous Peoples', which clearly spelled out the ultimate goal of establishing parallel 'nationhood' institutions in legislation, judiciary, education, and so on among indigenous communities. The Basic Laws were approved by the Legislative Yuan in 2007 and have become part of Taiwan's legal system.

All these policy changes have had a direct influence on the indigenous peoples as regards their self-esteem, aspirations, and relationship with the mainstream society. Public recognition of the Taiwanese Austronesians as a special category of citizens has allowed them to bargain with the Taiwan national government for ethnic privileges. Sometimes the privileges may be positive to the general well-being of the indigenes, while other times they may be detrimental to the social relationships among the indigenes. For instance, in 2004, the Truku people of the Seediq branch, formerly considered part of the Atayal group, demanded recognition as a newly independent ethnic group in exchange for the votes of its members in the upcoming presidential election. The DPP government rushed through the legislation to formally establish the Truku as the twelfth ethnic group in Taiwan. This enraged the Seediq branch, which considered itself on a higher ladder than the Truku among the so-called Pan-Atayal collective and as such should have received such ethnic recognition before the Truku. This conflict further rekindled historical animosity between the two groups, embedded in the Wushe Incident in 1930. To pacify the Seediq people, in early 2008, the DDP government recognized them as the fourteenth indigenous ethnic group in Taiwan.

Major findings: continuity and change among Taiwanese indigenous peoples

With their newly gained acceptance and respect, Taiwanese indigenes have fastened up their movement *en masse* to urban centers since the late 1980s in search of opportunities such as gainful employment, better education, better health care, and change in lifestyle. Their tangible progress in education and income can be seen in Table 1. In Table 1, only 40.27% of indigenous high school graduates entered colleges in 2001, but that increased to 68.3% in 2006, an almost 30% growth. The significance of such increase is twofold

Table 1.   Comparison of college entrance among high school graduates.[9]

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Indigenous	40.27	59.57	67.11	57.88	60	68.3
Nationwide	61.36	65.63	62.33	76.49	74.16	83.37
Difference	−21.09	−6.06	+4.78	−18.61	−14.16	−15.07

Table 2. Changing income gap per household per annum.[10]

	Indigenous	Nationwide	Difference	Ind./nation
1985	NT$209,440	NT$320,495	NT$111,055	65.3
2006	NT$463,980	NT$1,064,153	NT$600,173	43.6
% increase per year	5.78	11.04		

when compared with the national average. Indigenes appeared to have improved in school education significantly from 2001 to 2003: they not only narrowed the gap in higher education with mainstream society, they also once outperformed the latter by approximately 5%. This achievement, however, rapidly eroded over the next 3 years when indigenous college entrance rates lagged behind, and the gap nearly returned to previous levels.

Similarly, in terms of increase in average annual household income, we find comparable fluctuations. Table 2 shows that the average household income for the indigenes was NT$209,440 (about US$6981, based on a US$1 to NT$30 exchange rate) in 1985, and it grew robustly to NT$463,980 (US$15,466) in 2006, more than doubling in 21 years. Superficially, the indigenes have made significant progress between 1985 and 2006 when their average annual household income increased by 5.78% per year. The real problem is, during this same period the national average increased even faster, by 11.04% per annum: while in 1985 the income gap between an indigenous household and the national average was a mere NT$111,055 (US$3702), by 2006 it had increased to NT$600,173 (US$20,006).

Nowhere is the stagnation in general well-being more clearly seen than in the life expectancy of Taiwanese indigenes. Presumably due to the lack of adequate health care in hill communities, the prevalence of chronic diseases (e.g., liver diseases), and accidental death, Taiwanese indigenous life expectancy has remained below the national average, as the following statistics show.

Table 3 clearly shows that from 1971 to 2009, both Taiwanese males and females experienced longer life spans, with increases of 8.5 years for males and 10 years for females. Both the indigenous males and females also experienced increases in their life expectancy (6.6 years for males and 10.3 for females). Despite such improvements, it is alarming to notice the increasing gap between indigenous and nonindigenous males, from 8.5 years in 1971–1973 to 10.4 years in 2001–2009.

In brief, Tables 1–3 indicate an important point: while Taiwanese indigenes have made incremental progress in several aspects of their lives in recent decades, mainstream society

Table 3. Comparison of life expectancy between indigenous males and females with Taiwanese society.[11]

	Ind. males	National	Difference	Ind. females	National	Difference
1971–1973*	57.9	66.4	8.5	63.1	71.1	8.0
1984–1986*	58.0	70.1	12.1	68.2	74.6	6.4
1992–1994*	58.1	71.6	13.5	69.3	77.0	7.7
1998–2000*	59.2	72.7	13.5	70.0	78.4	8.4
2001–2009**	64.5	74.9	10.4	73.4	81.1	7.7

Note: *See Wen et al. (2004); **see Department of Statistics (2011).

Table 4. Comparison of workers' monthly income distributions among rural indigenes, urban indigenes, and the national average, 2007.[12]

	NT$10,000 –20,000	NT$20,000 –40,000	NT$40,000 –60,000	NT$60,000 –80,000	Above NT$80,000	Total
Rural Indigenes	47.6%	38.5%	10.9%	2.3%	0.7%	100%
Urban Indigenes	22.5%	52.5%	19.5%	4.4%	1.1%	100%
National Average	23.3%	46.4%	18.0%	5.4%	6.9%	100%

has moved even faster. As a consequence, the general well-being gap between indigenes and the majority remains huge, and in some areas it is expanding.

Another emerging trend among Taiwanese indigenes is the striking bifurcation between those who moved to cities (urban indigenes henceforth) and those who remained in their rural tribal communities (rural indigenes henceforth). Since indigenous tribal communities typically occupy relatively marginal regions with limited arable land, opportunities for employment that provides a stable income are limited. With increasingly younger and better-educated indigenes moving from their tribal communities to metropolitan areas, significant gaps in income and other social indicators between the urban and rural indigenes are emerging. When we disaggregated the cumulative data by separating them according to their place of residence, this divergence begins to show. In Table 4, the gap in monthly income between indigenes and the national average is obvious. But the average monthly income of urban indigenes is much closer to the national average than their rural fellows.

Rural indigenes are concentrated in the lower income brackets of NT$10,000 to 40,000 (totaling 86.1%), with only 13.9% at the above-NT$40,000 levels. In contrast, urban indigenes have a lower ratio in the below-NT$40,000 (75%, or 11.1% below the rural indigenes, but 5.3% higher than the national average of 69.7%), and a higher (above NT$40,000) income level (25%) than their rural fellows, approaching the national average of 30.3%.

Differences in income based on residential regions may also have health-related implications. Public health officials and researchers have long noticed particular mortality patterns when comparing the indigenes in various residential areas and national average. It appears that among the indigenes who migrated to cities or lowland areas, owing perhaps to easier access to medical facilities or changing lifestyles, they show a mortality pattern that is closer to the national average than their hill fellows. Table 5 compares the seven major causes of death among the indigenes.

Table 5. Comparison of major causes of death among indigenous peoples based on residence and the national average, 1999 (number of deaths per 100,000).[13]

	Hill indigenes	Lowland indigenes	Urban indigenes	National average
Accidents	184.0	137.3	93.6	58.9
Malignant tumors	173.4	123.1	141.6	135.3
Liver diseases	143.8	67.4	65.8	23.5
Stroke	120.7	77.4	87.0	57.4
Heart diseases	90.5	78.9	93.7	51.3
Diabetes	56.8	39.7	32.1	41.0
Tuberculosis	53.7	30.5	13.7	6.9

Table 5 points to three issues on which we can further elaborate. First, indigenous health as a whole, as can be seen from six of the seven major death causes, appear to have improved along with the mobility pattern from the hill to lowland, and have further ameliorated in urban environments. The only exception is the category of malignant tumors, a health problem increasing rapidly along with Taiwan's urbanization and industrialization over the decades, where there is no significant difference among all categories of people, indigenous or nonindigenous, rural or urban. The second issue that deserves our attention is the exceedingly high ratios of deaths caused by accidents and liver disease among the hill indigenes. Both causes are likely symptomatic of high alcohol consumption, which has become epidemic in many marginal indigenous communities. In premodern times, alcohol was chiefly made from millet, in limited supply, and was used mainly for ceremonial occasions, such as wedding, funerals, harvests, and so on. The availability of commercially produced wine with a seemingly unlimited supply has completely changed alcohol consumption patterns in hill communities. The most glaring example is indigenous Tao people in outlying Orchid Island southeast to Taiwan. Wine making did not exist in Tao society until the 1970s when wine was sold to the island through the government's monopoly channels. With their increased involvement in the cash-based economy, many Taiwanese indigenes have fallen into alcoholism at an alarming rate in recent decades. The third issue is the persistence of tuberculosis, which should have been brought under control with the improved public health regimens of recent decades. We suggest that as rural indigenes maintain some aspects of traditional lifestyle, they seem to remain vulnerable to tuberculosis

In average, urban indigenes have earned higher incomes, received a better education, and enjoyed longer life than their rural fellows. Assimilation into mainstream society through migration also affects how indigenes perceive themselves in terms of place, work, and inter-ethnic marriage. The results of our 2007 survey on these issues are quite revealing. Table 6 shows that among the 2057 samples, 1809 respondents answered the question as to whether they are willing to work with Han people. While 83.02% of the sampled rural indigenes responded positively, more than 94% of the sampled urban indigenes gave positive answers. Similarly, when asked if they are willing to have Han people as neighbors, only 76.06% of the sampled rural indigenes answered positively, while 94.43% of the sampled urban indigenes responded positively. Moreover, the question 'Have conflicts between indigenes and the Han been very serious in recent years?' seemed to draw generally negative responses from both categories of respondents.

The 2007 survey also asked about attitudes toward inter-ethnic marriages. Among the 2050 respondents who answered this question, we find bifurcation between urban indigenes and their rural fellows as Table 7 shows. When we add the 'strongly opposed' with 'mildly opposed' into a single category, and the 'mildly supported' with 'strongly

Table 6. Changing indigenous perceptions toward Han people based on residence, 2007.[14]

	Total	Rural indigenes	%	Urban indigenes	%
Total samples	2057	1178	57.27	879	42.73
Willing to work with Han people	1809	978	83.02	830	94.43
Willing to have Han neighbors	1726	896	76.06	830	94.43
Conflicts between indigenous and Han serious?	105	46	3.90	41	4.66

Table 7.   Comparison of attitudes toward marrying Han people.[15]

	Strong opposed	Mild opposed	Mild support	Strong support	Total
Urban ind.	45 (4.51%)	155 (15.55%)	625 (62.69%)	172 (17.25%)	997 (100%)
Rural ind.	117 (11.11%)	311 (29.53%)	563 (53.47%)	62 (5.89%)	1053 (100%)
Total	162 (7.90%)	466 (22.73%)	1188 (57.95%)	234 (11.42%)	2050 (100%)

supported' another single category, the divergence emerges sharply: among the rural indigenes, up to 40.64% of the respondents expressed disapproval of marrying Han people, more than twice that of urban indigenes' 20.06%. The opposite is consistent with the above regarding support for cross-ethnic marriages: 79.94% of the responding urban indigenes supported such unions, while the response of rural indigenes indicated a much lower rate of 59.36%, a one-fifth difference. There may be various explanations for the difference. One of them could just be a reflection of unavailability. For urban indigenes, the opportunities to find suitable indigenous marital partners are likely limited or they have more opportunities to encounter potential Han spouses.

All in all, developments among the Taiwanese indigenous peoples over the past decades have several salient features probably not much different from ethnic minority groups in other parts of the world.[16] Two major parallels should be noted. First, although indigenous peoples have made incremental improvements in major socioeconomic indicators, such as higher incomes, better education, and improved general well-being, they nevertheless have suffered much from relative deprivation when compared with mainstream society, whose pace of change and improvement has been even faster. The expanding chasm between the two often inflicts negative psychological blows upon the indigenes; especially those who stay behind in traditional communities have been consistently denied the benefits of socioeconomic development. Under these circumstances, alcohol has often become the readily available escape for the relatively deprived, and the epidemic of rural alcoholism becomes an expectable development.

The second feature is the bifurcation or internal stratification of the indigenous society. About half of the indigenes have moved out of their traditional communities and their migration have, in general, changed their perceptions of themselves and the larger society. As ordinary individuals or households in Taiwan's metropolitan areas, urban indigenes and their children will have fewer opportunities to practice their traditional languages, customs, and social gatherings. In other words, they are becoming more similar to Han people, at least superficially, in lifestyle and aspirations than to their rural fellows. This ostensibly voluntary and unconscious assimilation process may weaken their distinct ethnic heritage as many aspects of their unique culture gradually fade away, to be replaced by those of mainstream Han people or globalizing trends.

The ongoing out-migration and the disintegration of traditional culture, especially among the young people, have alarmed many middle-age and senior elites in rural communities, and they have begun to launch various projects to regain their cultural heritage and ethnic pride. Many individuals and organizations primarily associated with Presbyterian churches in hill communities made the initial efforts to preserve or revive traditional indigenous culture. For instance, Pastor Pai Kwang-Sheng, a Bunun indigene who graduated from Tainan Theological College and Seminary, returned to serve his home village in Yanping Township of Taitung County in 1984. In addition to regular Sunday services, in 1992 he established a kindergarten for preschool children – the first known educational facility with explicit goals of teaching children their traditional Bunun

language and cultural knowledge. Seeing the success of the kindergarten, Pastor Pai began to build a resort-like facility modeled after a traditional Bunun village on the 10 hectares of land he inherited from his father. In 1995 the Bunun Leisure Farm, intended to serve tourists who wished to experience indigenous life, was renamed Bunun Cultural and Educational Foundation. It soon began to receive donations from various individuals and charity organizations. Today, this resort attracts steady streams of visitors who may spend from a few hours to a few days there, tasting traditional Bunun cuisine, sampling Bunun culture, learning Bunun craftsmanship, watching Bunun youth perform traditional songs and dances, and, before departure, purchasing Bunun souvenirs from the gift shops. In addition to Pastor Pai and his wife, this operation has regularly employed about 90 full-time and 40 part-time workers – a significant contribution to the village economy.

A similar endeavor was developed by the Smangus community of the Atayal group in northern Taiwan. Smangus is a small village of about 28 households with some 150 individuals. Situated 1500 meters above sea level, it is one of the highest elevation indigenous communities in Taiwan, with only limited transportation accessibility. Smangus used to be called 'the Dark Tribe' because it lacked electricity. It was not until 1979 that it finally gained access to the electric power supply. In 1991 Smangus youth reported the finding of huge primary forest with giant 1000-year-old trees. The discovery immediately suggested the potential for eco-tourism and employment opportunities. In order to prevent destructive competition among them and to prevent Han people from seizing this commercial opportunity, Smangus villagers quietly began a long consultation process to find the best solution for themselves. It was through the efforts of a village elder, Presbyterian Pastor Icyeh, who invoked the Atayal tradition of *Tnunan* (joint ownership) and persuaded all villagers to pool their land and resources together to form a corporation, called the Association for the Development of Atayal Smangus na Kalan in 2001. Modeling itself after Kibbutz in Israel, the Smangus organization follows a shared system of work and profit. All villagers take part in work in the village restaurant and boarding facilities. Smangus young people also receive training to become tour guides or cultural instructors for visitors. The triple purposes of village cohesion, cultural preservation, and youth employment have accomplished in this endeavor.

Sometimes, unexpected natural disasters have turned into opportunities for cultural revival during the reconstruction or rehabilitation. For instance, on 8 August 2009, Typhoon Morakot struck many hill communities in southern and southeastern Taiwan dumping over 3000 mm of rainfall and creating tremendous damage to lives and properties. In response to this calamity, Presbyterian Pastor Dai Ming-xiong called a pan-indigenous meeting in Taimali, Taitung, on 16 August. This meeting marked the initial formation of what would become the Cultural and Educational Foundation for Indigenous Tribal Reconstructions. Participants in the meeting began to deliberate not only on short-term post-disaster reconstruction; they also discuss long-term cultural preservation and revival. Pastor Dai set out two long-term goals. The first one was to recover traditional wisdom of the indigenes. The second was to reestablish the traditional ways of living that are considered more compatible with the natural environment. Besides channeling external resources to disaster zones for community reconstruction, this foundation also launched two projects in early 2010 as part of its long-term cultural revival plan. The first project, called 'Millet Farm Restoration Project', contracts with indigenous farmers to begin growing millet again. Since millet played a central role in traditional indigenous life – many indigenous festivals were associated with different stages of its cultivation, as well as the production of indigenous cuisine and wine – the restoration of millet farming carries important symbolic meanings. Furthermore, cultivating traditional crops signals a

change from the mainstream society's market-oriented, chemical-dependent agriculture. Over 40 hectares of farmland in Taitung joined the plan to grow millet in 2010.

The second project, called 'Taitung Association of Creative Down Wood Culture Enterprise', has requested the government's permission to use post-typhoon down wood – damaged tree pieces claimed by the government since most of them drifted here from CMR's nationalized forests – to produce indigenous art works. The foundation plans to establish a protocol for collecting the down wood; the dual purpose of the project is to preserve indigenous arts by training new generations of artists and to provide modest incomes for participating indigenes.

In brief, culture revival efforts initiated sporadically in rural tribal communities have signaled indigenous people's reaction to the loss of their tradition and culture following the rapid urbanization throughout Taiwan. This sometimes also inspired urban indigenes to create cultural projects or gatherings in the cities. For instance, many urban indigenes launched festivals in cities because they could not return to their hometowns for these traditional events. Or they offer classes about indigenous culture or making indigenous handcrafts in community colleges in the city. Although sporadic, these developments lend hopes, or at least comfort, to urban indigenes who are seeking for cultural belonging.

Conclusion: dilemmas of indigenous development

Taiwanese indigenes have gone through a rapid and dramatic transformation since the early 1980s. Some of its most salient features include a growing proportion in Taiwan's demography, an incremental improvement in income and education (but still lagging behind mainstream society), a massive outflow of indigenes from traditional communities to urban areas, and a regained ethnic pride that enables them to confront discrimination and injustice emanating from mainstream society. As a collective, they have assumed a new type of self-identity that puts them on a par with other citizens in Taiwan in commonplace social interactions.

This seemingly favorable condition, however, is overshadowed by the emergence of the dual social chasms we described above. The widening gap between indigenous society and mainstream society continues to grow. So narrowing the ethnic divide remains an ever-challenging task. The other chasm is the internal stratification of indigenes – almost an even split – between urban and rural indigenes. It seems most of the tangible gains and improvements were achieved in relation to migration to cities. Experiences and skills acquired in cities have led to the stratification of Taiwanese indigenous society, which in turn seems to be related to the willingness of the skilled migrants into mainstream society. But urban indigenes may also help financially their families staying in their rural hometowns. According to our 2014 survey of Paiwan migrants in urban areas, for instance, 102 out of 209 respondents stated they would send money back to their tribal hometowns, with mostly a few thousands NT dollars. Urban indigenes may also try to sustain some of their cultural practices and engage in regular gatherings with their township fellows through churchgoings or tribal associations in the city. But the macro urban environment is far from ideal as regards passing their cultural heritage onto the next generations. So their new level of social acceptance in the mainstream society comes at a price: their children may be at risk of losing their native tongue or traditional customs. If the trend toward urban migration and cultural assimilation continues without systematic counter-measurements in the city, the unique Austronesian cultures of Taiwanese indigenes may face big challenges to be a salient part of the island's rich ethnic mosaic in the next generations.

Taiwanese indigenes in their traditional communities, especially those who hold little social and financial capitals, face a different type of social challenge. With limited employment opportunities, inadequate quality educational facilities and health care, the rural communities are constrained for social advancement and career development. With this destitution and marginalization, alcoholism, domestic violence, accidental death, suicide, and liver diseases are prevalent in many tribal communities. Still, while the general conditions in indigenous tribes may be below expectations, people there have remained a critical source of cultural revival and the destination of nostalgia of urban indigenes. Our 2014 survey shows that, although most respondents were satisfied with their incomes in the city, the majority (64.6%) of them still expected to return to their original rural tribal communities in the future and only 10.52% of them clearly stated that they would not return. Although urbanization and out-migration continuously characterize the future of Taiwanese indigenes, the less-than-idyllic rural tribal environment remains their ideal destination for the transmission of Austronesian languages, ritual ceremonies, indigenous ecological knowledge, craftsmanship, moral tenets, and family heirlooms from one generation to the next. It is also in the rural tribal communities that we find new aspirations and strategies to achieve cultural preservation and revival and regain ethnic pride.

Hence regarding the perennial question among indigenous groups and concerned scholars 'What is the ideal development trajectory for Taiwanese indigenes?' the indigenous elites have proposed prospects that can be summarized into two ideal-typical paths: 'autonomous conservation' and 'participatory elevation'. The first option, autonomous conservation, implies the graduate disassociation between indigenous peoples and mainstream society – physically, geographically, culturally, and politically – through the establishment of autonomous groups with quasi-national institutions, such as educational, judiciary, legislative, and representative bodies. The benefits of having parallel institutions are multiple. For instance, it would ensure that unique indigenous languages or cultures will be fully protected by officially sanctioned legislation and education. In addition, this approach will grant indigenes an autonomous administrative apparatus by which to promote their own interests. That is, they may be able to make better bargains with mainstream society through state-to-state negotiations.

Even though this approach is attractive to many indigenous elites, it does present practical difficulties that render it almost unlikely to realize. For instance, the increase of officially recognized indigenous groups from 9 in 1999 to 16 in 2014 clearly indicates that ethnic identification or classification is often a political expediency initiated by elites rather than a widely accepted concept among ordinary people. Another problem of the autonomous conservation approach comes from the tension between a pan-indigenous identity versus individual or parochial identities. How can this problem be mitigated for the sake of forming autonomy? How many different education systems based on different languages should be prepared for the various groups? The number of Taiwanese Austronesian languages, according to linguists, has been wavering between 24 and 40. A third problem entailed by autonomous conservation is how to handle different indigenous communities living side-by-side in the same area? Or how to position the approximately half of the indigenous population who live and work in Taiwan's urban areas? Should they be given the right to choose citizenship? With the limited resources and employment opportunities in the rural tribal communities, how these new autonomous entities survive is the primary challenge the advocates of autonomy must face.

The proposed alternative ideal-typical approach to autonomous conservation is participatory elevation. This approach starts with the assumption that Taiwanese indigenous

peoples make up a minority group whose legally protected citizen rights and benefits have long been ignored by mainstream society. Like any other marginalized minority group elsewhere in the world, Taiwanese indigenes must take and have taken an active initiative in changing the status quo. Through public awareness campaigns and legislative motions, indigenous elites have been demanding the establishment or expansion of various types of affirmative action programs. These programs are initiated to protect and advance their interests as ethnic minorities in areas such as education, employment, health care, and old-age support. To counter the potential problem of losing indigenous culture and language, Taiwan's education system could be made multicultural and include topics about Austronesian languages, art, and history in the teaching curricula. Similarly, certain indigenous cultural symbols, such as the geometric snake motif in wood carving among Paiwan and Rukai peoples in southern Taiwan or the harvest festivals among the Puyuma and Amis peoples in eastern Taiwan, all can be promoted to represent a part of national culture. Through participatory elevation, Taiwanese indigenes may make themselves into active citizens, although a small population, within and representing the multicultural state of Taiwan.

This approach has appealed to many Taiwanese indigenes, but there are also implicit difficulties in the near future. For instance, some indigenous groups such as the Sakizaya (population 478 in 2013), the Thao (698), and the Kavalan (1226) are very small. Through sheer attrition, these small groups may lose their languages within the foreseeable future if without special preservation efforts. The same problem also confronts urban indigenes because there are limited opportunities for culturally embedded interaction and communications in their native languages with their ethnic fellows. Although the Council of Indigenous Peoples has implemented the Mother-Tongue Education in public primary schools, such language instruction at school is often a kind of tokenism without real effect. The second difficulty with participatory elevation is that continuous recourse to preferential treatment or affirmative action to promote the interests of the indigenes may not be sustainable. Modern citizenship is based on equal rights and social justice. To remedy historical injustice such as the discrimination upon ethnic minorities, mainstream society may adopt short-term measures to correct the status quo, but often with an expected timetable. Few preferential treatments are permanent or formally institutionalized, lest they violate the basic principle of social justice and equality. Where to draw the fine line between assisting the historically deprived minority and infringing upon the rights of other citizens is a question that few politicians or elites care or dare to confront.

According to our 2007 and 2014 surveys, the grassroots indigenous opinions expressed more concerns about how to improve their lives financially than expecting major political reform. This response reminds us of the reality: the primary pursuit of the indigenes is to improve their quality of life as most Taiwanese people do, and some elites' pressing expectation of regaining past ethnic pride and future social prestige through political restructuring may differ from that of their ordinary fellows and mainstream society. We are thus backed to square one: there is no smooth and painless development trajectory for Taiwanese indigenous peoples. The bottom-line question that we face here is more fundamental and philosophical than political: there is simply no minority policy or indigenous policy that can be regarded as good or without controversies. The existence of any minority or indigenous policy in a society means that there are structural stratifications, based on particularism, among different categories of people living together. Such divisions inevitably entail prejudices, stereotypes, stigmatization, and discrimination – at both individual and group levels. How to eliminate these social problems is a haunting challenge that neither ancient sages nor

contemporary spiritual leaders have been able to accomplish. Without a clear and easy road to a prosperous development, Taiwanese indigenous peoples can only keep trying to make their way into the future. Still, Taiwan mainstream society is responsible for keeping the opportunities open for the marginal groups and for social debates about justice and equality.

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