Indigenous Rights Movements, Land Conflicts, and Cultural Politics in Taiwan: A Case Study of Li-Shan.

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INDIGENOUS RIGHTS MOVEMENTS, LAND CONFLICTS, 
AND CULTURAL POLITICS IN TAIWAN --- 
A CASE STUDY OF LI-SHAN

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the 
Louisiana State University and 
Agricultural and Mechanical College 
in partial fulfillment of the 
requirements for the degree of 
Doctor of Philosophy 

in

The Department of Geography and Anthropology

by

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December 1998
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ABSTRACT

Land rights claims remain the major focus of world indigenous movements. Lands relate to the formation of indigenous identity, religious practices, and the material base for indigenous cultural survival. From a spatial/geographical perspective, this dissertation explores the influences of Taiwan's state policies on indigenous peoples, their cultures, identities, and human-land relationship. The Li-Shan area, in central Taiwan, is the focus of the research due to the fact that the most severe land disputes are in this area, as well as longest history of economic interactions among indigenous peoples, the dominant Han people, and the State, in the postwar Taiwan.

The rise of indigenous movements in the mid-1980s in Taiwan indicated that the indigenous peoples remain the victims of colonialism. Appreciating this fact, the movements made demands against the State in struggling for “ethnic space.” Although the movements drew significant concessions from the State, the majority Han people systematically fought back with appeals which deny the existence of any indigenous peoples in current Taiwan and requested the abolishment of Aboriginal Reservation Lands.

Political economy, new cultural geography, and post-colonial theories provide the major theoretical framework for this study. The perpetual uneven ethnic power relationships between the dominant Han people and the dominated indigenous peoples are examined from the critical perspective of political economy. The new cultural geography offers the theoretical backgrounds for discussing cultural and identity politics, and multiculturalism. Post-colonial theories are especially helpful in
explaining the social construction of a new indigenous/Taiwanese culture through the
combination of the colonizing and the colonized cultures, as well as in deconstructing
mainstream social values, and in illustrating the geography of resistance.

Finally, I wish to summarize the impacts of indigenous movements on three
aspects of mainstream culture. First, indigenous movements shatter the mainstream
definition of social justice and question the superficial multiculturalism. Second, the
indigenous claim of “natural sovereignty” challenges the ideological myth enshrined
by modern nation-states. Third, indigenous ecological wisdom injects a new and
different ethic between society and nature. The formation of respect of the indigenous
“situated” knowledge through an appropriate application in eco-tourism will uphold
the improvement of ethnic relations.
CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

Taiwan's indigenous peoples have only recently been re-discovered from long-lost historical collective memories concealed by successive colonial regimes since their first contacts with Han Chinese in the sixteenth century. Although the collective histories of the Han majority in Taiwan have been gradually recovered from the forty years long martial law implemented by the Kuomintang (KMT), Taiwan’s indigenous peoples continue to struggle both with respect to their land claims and also their cultural revitalization.

Around the world, land rights claims are essential to indigenous peoples and all other issues seem inevitably tied to land conflicts. The transnational connections are now the important characteristics of the world’s many indigenous movements in terms of producing mutual support in indigenous struggles against both physical violence and cultural hegemony, mostly from modern nation-states. Their collective memories of colonial sufferings brought about by foreign domination in contemporary world politics provide solid base for the formation of various pan-indigenous identities in many locations and countries.

1.1 Indigenous Peoples in Taiwan

As many other indigenous peoples around the world, Taiwan’s indigenous peoples suffer from hegemonic state policies, socially, politically, and culturally. Mandatory education imposed by the State is conducted in an alien language. Standardized textbooks and curricula systematically discriminate against indigenous cultures and customs (Chen Hsin-yi 1993). The current national official language policy restricts the transfer of indigenous oral histories from the elders to the youths.
Ancestral lands were either taken by eminent domain in the name of national security or economic development, or alternately fell into the hands of Han farmers and business groups. The introduction of capitalism into areas where tribes now live destroyed the traditional subsistence economies as well as social and political structures (Huang Ying-kuei 1981). Authority over tribes no longer comes from inherited/hereditary chieftains, but rather from taking hold of positions in public office. Traditional ways of hunting and gathering are prohibited by the national park system, which epitomizes the colonial controls over indigenous territories. The development of ethno-tourism as a designated showcase of the State's cultural policy has become powerful forces that shape and direct the allocation of resources for a modern indigenous cultural "renaissance." Although land rights claims and land-related issues are the focuses of this research, a thorough examination of all the related social, cultural, and political dimensions of aboriginal problems are essential to build a more meaningful understanding of indigenous peoples, and their way of life, thinking, concerns, and values.

Many foreign regimes have established control over Taiwan in the past four hundred years (Table 1.1). The rugged terrain and high-rising mountains in central Taiwan blocked west to east expansions and deterred the territorial growth of the early regimes into the mountainous areas and along the eastern coast. Prior to the establishment of prototypes of any state apparatus, of course, indigenous peoples have lived in Taiwan for thousand of years. The subsequent relationships of the indigenous peoples with other "foreign" groups have never been equal since these very early times. Many archaeological sites discovered in the past few decades clearly
demonstrate that humans, most likely the ancestors of current indigenous peoples in Taiwan, have peopled this island since at least 4000 years ago (Liu Yi-chang 1994; for a more complete list, see web site:

Table 1.1 The “Foreign” Regimes in Taiwan and Their Control Areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rulers</th>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Control Areas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dutch</td>
<td>1624-61</td>
<td>southern Taiwan only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Chengs</td>
<td>1661-83</td>
<td>southern Taiwan, control points in mid- and northern Taiwan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Koxinga)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ching Dynasty</td>
<td>1683-1895</td>
<td>almost all western plain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>1895-1945</td>
<td>western plain and most of eastern Taiwan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KMT</td>
<td>1945-</td>
<td>the whole island</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Shepherd 1993; Chuang Ya-chung 1993.

Early Han settlers referred to indigenous peoples living in the plains areas (i.e. the plains aborigines Pin Pu Tzu or Pin Pu Fan), who had frequent interactions with the agriculturally more advanced Han people, as “cooked fan.” Those aborigines living in the broad Central Mountain Ridges, with little interactions with Han people, were, in contrast, called “raw fan.” The term “fan” is an expression of Han-centrism, which literally means “savage people” and is often used to allude to different peoples surrounding the China proper other than ethnic Han. It was these terms of “cooked” and “raw” that allowed Han settlers to measure the various degrees of Sinicization (i.e. assimilated by Chinese culture) of aborigines in Taiwan. They are, ultimately, another expression of Han people’s sino-centrism.

During the two hundred years’ span of the Ching Dynasty’s rule (1683-1895), no academic or systematic classifications of aborigines were ever conducted. Japan undertook extensive ethnological and resource surveys immediately following their control of Taiwan (Chen Chao-ju 1992). The mountain aborigines were divided into
either eight or nine or ten groups by Japanese anthropologists, according to different criteria (Pan Ying 1995). The ten groups from this classification are Atayal, Thao, Bunun, Tsou, Saisiat, Rukai, Amis, Dawu (formerly known as Yami in Lan-Yu island), Puyuma, and Paiwan. The Sinicization of the Pin Pu Tzu aborigines in the plains areas was already considerably complete and thus it became difficult to distinguish group differences even during Japanese colonial rule. However, the academic classifications of indigenous peoples, as Wu Mi-cha (1996) argued, were derived from certain assumptions and presumed criteria, and were often subject to opposition from the peoples in question (Figure 1.1).

The recent resurgence of Pin Pu Tzu identities, which are associated with the rise of Taiwan’s indigenous movements, is merely a by-product of the gradually popular idea that Taiwan “should be” a multi-ethnic nation-state. This Pin Pu Tzu identity does not constitute a separate national identity within Taiwanese nationalism. Rather, it is only part of phenomena pertaining to Taiwan’s resurgent nativistic identities, which were only allowed to emerge after the lifting of the martial law in 1987. The impacts of Pin Pu Tzu identity on Taiwan’s society is far less significant, in terms of political and cultural influences, than the construction of a pan-indigenous identity, which is one of the main topics in this research (see Chapter 5). The studies on the early histories of reclamation and frontier development in Taiwan often neglect even the Pin Pu Tzu peoples, who had much more frequent social and economic interactions with Han settlers than the mountain aborigines. Rather, most histories focus overwhelmingly on the intensive communal strife among Han sub-ethnic groups in the nineteenth century and generalize indistinguishably about the
Figure 1.1 The Distribution of Indigenous Peoples in Taiwan
Source: GIO 1997:21
seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (Shepherd 1993:3), without carefully considering the different degrees of aboriginal Sinicization over time and space.

When the Chinese Nationalist party, the KMT, took control of Taiwan in 1945, the traces of Pin Pu Tzu were barely found in the island, and the mountain aborigines had just begun their “modernization” process due to Japanese controversial colonial development. The KMT’s “mountain policies” promoted Han-centrist assimilation policies and a stigmatized ethnic identity which aborigines faced (Hsieh Shih-chung 1987a) was institutionalized through the mass media, standardized textbooks, and government-controlled cultural industries, such as films, literature, and tourism. The implementation of prolonged martial law effectively silenced not only indigenous peoples, but also the majority of native Han Taiwanese. The rise of indigenous movements in Taiwan in the mid-1980s, then, presented tremendous challenges to various mainstream ideas and conceptions, such as the homogenizing tendency of nation-state ideology, discrimination against “the other” peoples, the superficial institutional arrangements of multiculturalism, and human-land relationships. These issues will be examined in this study.

I use indigenous peoples and aborigines interchangeably in this dissertation. In many literatures (such as Shepherd 1993; Wilmer 1993), the term “aborigines” is no longer confined to native people in Australia. I use the term “people” in a way similar to the word “nation.” In order to respect their internal differences, the plural form of people, peoples, is used when the whole indigenous population is mentioned. However, the term “people” implies a more or less political neutrality, while the term “nation” hints that a group of people has a stronger will to seek a special status, not
necessarily an independent statehood, within nation-states. The best example to illustrate the meaning of “nation” from the perspective of indigenous peoples is the term “First Nations” used widely among indigenous groups in Canada.

“Ethnic group” is used in referring to a group of people within a nation-state seeking a “sub-national” identity. There are at least four “ethnic groups” in current Taiwan by popular definition: Holo (73%), Hakka (12%), mainlander (13%), and aborigine (2%) (Wachman 1994:17; also estimated by the author). The first three categories are all sub-Han ethnic groups. In fact, the classifications of people were a political taboo during the martial law era, when identities other than “Chinese” were viewed as threats to national security. In this dissertation, for demonstration of the successive immigrating waves in the history of Taiwan, the term “native Taiwanese” includes only Holo and Hakka groups, in contrast to the late-coming mainlanders, who mostly came to Taiwan in 1949. Ironically, the smallest group, the aborigines, was not included in my category of native Taiwanese. However, this just reflects the political reality in contemporary Taiwan.

I often refer to indigenous peoples as ethnic groups despite the fact that the development of indigenous ethno-nationalism is theoretically and practically unfeasible in current Taiwan. However, the use of “ethnic groups” does not imply that the author denies or neglects the “potential” and willingness of Taiwan’s indigenous peoples to become “nations” in the future.

The KMT regime officially divided Taiwan’s indigenous peoples into two groups: aborigines registering in mountains and aborigines registering in plains. They are called mountain aborigines and plains aborigines respectively for short by the
KMT. However, these terms should not be confused with their early usage during the Ching Dynasty. The early Han colonists called all the Pin Pu Tzu peoples (the “cooked” fan) as “plains aborigines” who were assimilated into the Han people and virtually disappeared before the KMT came to Taiwan, and all the “raw” fans living in the mountain areas as “mountain aborigines.” In the KMT era, Pin Pu Tzu are essentially indistinguishable, while the remaining indigenous peoples in the mountains have often been forced to migrate to the cities for better economic opportunities. Therefore, the KMT’s two categories of mountain and plains aborigines are in fact, the same peoples of the so-called “raw” fans in previous regimes.

1.2 Colonialism and Politics of Identity

Taiwan’s current social, cultural, and political situations have been significantly shaped by, and re-constructed through its colonial histories and their legacies. Japanese colonial rule from 1895 to 1945 was succeeded by, arguably, another colonial regime, the KMT. Taiwan and mainland China were “united” under the KMT control from 1945 to 1949 as parts of Republic of China (ROC). After losing the civil war to the Chinese Communist Party in 1949, the KMT fled to Taiwan with nearly two million military personnel and refugees, who are known as “mainlanders” later. Taiwan did not benefit from the “independence wave” after World War II, when many Third World countries obtained statehood following their political de-colonization. The international Cold War structure enabled the ROC government in Taiwan, which claimed that its territory includes mainland China and Mongolia, to be considered as the sole legitimate government of China until 1971, when the KMT-led ROC
government's seat in the United Nations was displaced by the People's Republic of China.

The "imagined China" (i.e. the Republic of China) constructed by the KMT in postwar Taiwan served as an important basis of legitimacy for its ironfisted military rule. The political structures of the ROC were "transplanted" almost completely to the island to maintain the ROC's Chinese orthodoxy. An imagined China was built upon Taiwan from the naming of the streets, the four-layer government structure in a small island, and through the destruction and recreation of people's historical collective memories and landscapes.

Japanese colonialism in Taiwan was based not only on economic exploitation, but also on cultural assimilation. The economic dimension of colonialism is a much-explored topic in theories of political economy, such as Dependency Theory, World Systems Theory, and the early stage of Internal Colonialism. Nevertheless, the cultural impacts of colonialism take a much longer time to be thoroughly explored and theorized. The rise of post-colonial literatures reflects the critical reflections on the political, social, and cultural impacts of colonialism. The influence of colonialism on the formation of identities is as significant on the colonized as on the colonizing people.

It is generally accepted, especially from left-wing theorists, pro-Taiwan independence scholars, that in many aspects, the early KMT's military rule in Taiwan was akin to colonial rule (Chen Fan-ming 1996:128-41). The right wing pro-independence scholars tend to describe the Chinese KMT simply as an "alien" regime
which neglecting Taiwan’s colonial experience (Huang Chao-tang 1994; and most articles in Shih Cheng-fong ed. 1994).

Both Japanese colonialism and Chinese nationalism had forced many of Taiwan’s intellectuals into a self-exiled status. As described by Chen Fang-ming (1996:119), this “only way out” for the intellectuals include two “geographical” types: internal exile and external exile. The former refers to the intellectuals who remain at home, and at the same time, refuse to recognize the legitimacy of the political establishment imposed by the ruling class/colonizers on the society where they reside. The cultural and value system associated with the rulers fails to obtain identification from the internal-exiled intellectuals. External exile refers to the elites who are either expatriated by the ruling power, or choose to leave their homeland for an alternative form of resistance. Internal exile is a form of spiritual exile, while external exile is both spiritual and physical. For Taiwanese intellectuals, internal exile was the major form of resistance during the Japanese colonial rule, and external exile developed during the KMT’s martial law era (Chen Fang-ming 1996:120).

Despite KMT’s construction of the Chinese Nation identity in Taiwan, a nativistic identity movement surged in the late 1970s and early 1980s, when economic success provided a sound material base, and international pressures offered spiritual support for a political democratic movement. Traditional theories of nationalism might emphasize/imply the “mutually exclusive” characteristic of two hostile nationalisms (see Blaut 1987). However, the post-colonial literatures recognize that the formation of identity as a much more complicated process (see Zhang Jingyuan 1995). Two hostile nationalisms are often “mutually constructed” concurrently. In Taiwan’s case,
the development of nativistic identity cannot be separated from both the superimposed Chinese nationalism, and the previous experience of "Japanization" (see Chen Fang-ming 1996). From the indigenous perspective, the formations of a pan-indigenous identity and indigenous movements are also inseparable from and inspired by aborigines' interactions with Han people, as well as the collective sufferings of their tribes and people which resulted from the State's hegemonic policies.

The emergence of Taiwan's pan-indigenous identity is associated with democratization and the recent breaking of political taboos, particularly the homogenous and one-dimensional identity. Hsieh Shih-chung (1987b) also points out that the increasing tolerance of social movements by the ruling KMT was a major factor to explain the eruption of Taiwan's indigenous movements in the mid-1980s. Indigenous movements offer the pan-indigenous identity as the third possible identity, other than Chinese and Taiwanese identities. This relatively "new" identity poses challenges to the current two major national identities, to the national territorial planning for the accommodation of indigenous autonomous zones, and to decision-making regarding choices for political alliance among major political parties (see Chapter 7). However, the actual strength of these challenges will depend on the political clout generated from the indigenous movements.

1.3 Land Rights Issues and Environmental Problems

The protection of land rights is the basis of all indigenous movements and claims today (Wilmer 1993:183). For indigenous peoples, land relates to culture, society, religion, dignity, food production, hunting, and the formation of identity. The land rights issues involve not only virtually all aspects of indigenous lives, but also the
basic characteristic of nation-states that claim to have "sovereignty" over a certain territory. Indigenous peoples claim that they are not merely native to their countries, but they are also the first people and are still there, and so have rights of prior occupancy to their lands (Maybury-Lewis 1997:7). It was the conquerors' "frontier colonialism" which often drove the "first peoples" into marginal lands and underprivileged status.

The first and most important organization in Taiwan's indigenous movements, the Alliance of Taiwan Aborigines (ATA), was founded in December 1984. The ATA was also the first pan-ethnic organization which systematically developed an indigenous movement (Hsieh Shih-chung 1986). Before the establishment of the ATA, an ethnic social movement organization had never systematically evolved due to its highly political sensitivity. Land rights have always been one of the central concerns of the ATA (see Chapters 5 & 6), and the "Return Our Lands" movements, initiated by the ATA, were by far the most successful ethnic mobilization among Taiwan's indigenous movements.

The KMT inherited the Japanese Aboriginal Reservation Land system, which conferred a certain amount of lands from national forest land to each indigenous household. Despite the official claims that Aboriginal Reservation Land aimed to preserve indigenous peoples' subsistence economy and improve their living conditions, the Reservation Land System exposed indigenous peoples to a constant police surveillance and limited their traditional hunting-and-gathering grounds. On the one hand, ironically, the invading Japanese and Chinese conferred lands and resources, in the name of the countries, to the island's original masters, the indigenous
peoples. On the other hand, the reservation lands, however limited or “unfair,” do provide the final refuges for aborigines in facing both Han cultural hegemony and the exploitation of a capitalist mode of production. Radical indigenous activists argue that indigenous peoples have “natural sovereignty” (see Chapter 6), i.e. prior occupancy over the island. Therefore, the “Return Our Lands” movements should be a negotiation between two “nations,” between indigenous peoples and invaders, and between colonizers and the colonized peoples (Interview G). For indigenous organizations, to be simply considered as “pressure groups” within a liberal-democratic society, will conceal the fact that indigenous peoples do not recognize the legitimacy of the invading regime and its social and political institutional arrangements.

Land disputes often relate directly to environmental and resource management. Indigenous people’s close relations to nature and their ecological wisdom have been widely recognized. It is this changing politics of nature that provides us a critical reflection on the relationship between society and nature. In Taiwan, indigenous peoples’ involvement in resource management, environmental protection, and local community activism has apparent geographical variations. The variations reflect the different degrees of aboriginal communal consciousness and organizational strength at the grassroots level. In a case in southern Taiwan, under the banner of “tribalism,” aboriginal local knowledge, together with the cooperation from some academics, have created a new perspective in empowering indigenous communities in their struggles against deteriorating wildlife resources, illegal deforestation, and the rampant
development of tourism without attention to environmental and cultural implications (Chapters 6 and 7).

1.4 Case Study: Land Conflicts in the Li-Shan Area

Li-Shan, with an average altitude of around two thousand meters above sea level, is the earliest and most important location for the production of temperate-zone agricultural products in Taiwan. The opening of the Central Cross Island Highway in 1960 permitted the introduction of commercial fruit and vegetable production suitable for cultivation in high-cold mountainous areas extending into the Li-Shan areas. In 1957 and 1963 respectively, the government set up two public-sponsored farms to relocate retired servicemen and to “develop” mountain resources (Lin Fang-chi 1984:55-59). The indigenous people in the Li-Shan area, the Atayal people, learned the agricultural skills necessary to grow vegetables and fruits from the veterans in the public farms, and gradually converted aboriginal reservation land into orchards and farmlands to take advantage of this new economic opportunity.

Han people in the plains areas were also lured by the potential profits which could be made producing temperate-zone crops in the high mountains. Armed with more abundant capital and advanced technology, Han farmers came to Li-Shan and purchased or leased lands from indigenous people. From a historical perspective, the arrival of Han settlers in the mountains seems a continuation of their unfinished “reclamation” process. What is different from their ancestors centuries ago is that the object of the current Han “adventure” is the “internal frontier.”

Originally, the legal land titles of the reservation lands did not belong to individual aborigines, but to the state. Despite the fact that a certain amount of land
was allocated to each indigenous household, aborigines were simply the nominal title holders. Only indigenous peoples are allowed to lease lands from government and to cultivate land within the reserves. The high profits from growing fruits, especially apples and pears, soon attracted Han people. On the one hand, it is clear that Han farmers “illegally” lease or purchase reservation lands from aborigines. Inter-ethnic land disputes increase as all the land transactions are conducted “under the counter.” On the other hand, the developmental state apparatus systematically relaxes the limits of laws related to the uses of reservation lands and so has opened a loophole for the operation of capital from the plains areas. All the actions, including the relaxation of land use laws, are justified in the name of economic development (see Chapter 4). As essential land surveys in the disputed areas are long overdue, the KMT government’s reservation land policy has drawn severe criticism from both Han and indigenous peoples with interests in the region.

This extensive, essentially unlimited slopeland cultivation has dramatically shortened the life expectancy of one of the major dams in Taiwan, the Te-Chi reservoir on the Da-Chia River, downstream from Li-Shan. The amount of siltation from natural landslides has been accelerated by human interventions. The huge amounts of fertilizers, herbicides, and pesticides applied to fruits and vegetables are washed into the downstream reservoir, resulting in eutrophication and deteriorated water quality. The safety and capacity of the reservoir are the major concerns of the government. Soil erosion and its potential threat to lives and properties reveal an even more urgent issue for local farmers and residents. Policies that were encouraged by the state intent on developing and exploiting mountain resources are now issues of public
condemnation. Environmentalists demand a comprehensive reflection on the current “development first” policy and also a restoration of forests in the mountains, particularly after a series of typhoons caused catastrophes which resulted in a large number of casualties in recent years. Thus, land disputes in Li-Shan are not only correlated with ethnic relationships, but also involved locally-specific environmental problems.

As I write this dissertation, Han people still cannot legally own the titles of reservation lands, and cannot run for the position of the “head” of the mountain hsian (a sub-county administrative unit), where most indigenous peoples live and, where virtually all the aboriginal reservation lands are located (Figure 1.2). Although in many mountain hsians, the number of Han residents has exceeded aborigines, the official position of chief for the thirty mountain hsians are all reserved for indigenous peoples.

A group of Han people living in mountain hsians in Nantou County founded an organization to promote Han people’s rights in 1993. However, the most influential Han people’s organization, the Plains People’s Rights Association (PPRA), was established in Hoping Hsian, where Li-Shan village is located. The PPRA was formed as a politically opposing group to counteract the Alliance of Taiwan Aborigines (ATA). The PPRA aims to legitimize Han people’s “ownership” of reservation lands and to promote the candidacy of Han people for hsian chiefs. While the ATA’s “Return Our Lands” movements demands that the State to confer more lands to aborigines and will work to prevent the losses of reservation lands to Han capitalists, the PPRA, in contrast, demands the deregulation of all reservation lands (PPRA
14. Santime 15. Wutai
16. Machia 17. Taiwu
18. Lai-i 19. Chunjih

Figure 1.2 The Thirty Mountain Hsian in Taiwan
That is, the PPRA wishes that laws be changed so that all lands are subject to the mechanism of the free market.

The PPRA also accuses that the indigenous activists do not identify themselves with the "Chinese Nation" and insists that, in fact, there are no indigenous people in Taiwan at the present time (PPRA 1997b). With plentiful capital for lobbying and well-established political and business connections, the PPRA had become an organization with considerable political clouts within a few years.

The rise of the PPRA represents a counterattack of sorts by conservative forces by some elements in mainstream society against the indigenous movements. Nevertheless, it is more complex than to simply dichotomize the ATA and PPRA as a progressive indigenous group versus conservative Han people (see Chapter 6). It is the locally specific historical and geographical contexts that constitute and shape this particular political environment. The application of some so-called "grand theory" has a certain strength in explaining the formation of the overall picture, such as uneven ethnic power relations, the political economy of the East Asian newly industrializing countries, and indigenous sufferings from colonialism. However, a more delicate exploration of local history, economy, and politics must rely on more sophisticated field work. It is this personal involvement with the people and causes imbedded in this research that bring up the question of the representation of "the others" (Chapter 2).

The land disputes in the Li-Shan area in Taiwan is singled out as my case study, with other land related issues of identity, cultural representation, and environment that constitute the three major issues in my dissertation. My central concerns are the impacts of Aboriginal Reservation Land system on the indigenous society, and the
influences of the indigenous movement, which to a large degree is a response to the reservation land policy, on the entire Taiwan’s mainstream society. The reason for me to choose Li-Shan as my study area is because it is the earliest locations to introduce commercial agricultural activities into the high-cold mountain area. Li-Shan also presents the most intensive land conflicts between indigenous and Han people. The research will investigate the extensive impacts of reservation land system on the indigenous societies: What is the historical and political context under which the policy was formed? What does this policy mean to Taiwan’s aborigines, especially on their identity formation, cultural and landscape representation, as well as on the “modern” concerns on environmental problems? Under what circumstances and through what media does the current ethnic relationships in Taiwan are constructed? How do indigenous people’s calls for a “national” status challenge the mainstream ideology of modern nation-states? In terms of the identity issue, what is the relationship between the indigenous movement and the mainstream socio-political movements, especially the Taiwan independence movement? What can we learn from the severe environmental degradation in Li-Shan, and from indigenous “situated” ecological wisdom?

In this dissertation, Chapter 2 will present a review of literature. I give a brief outline on the histories of indigenous peoples prior to the arrival of the KMT regime in Chapter 3. The focuses are on the pre-modern Ching Dynasty, and the first modern regime, the Japanese era of colonial rule. The KMT’s “mountain policies” are introduced in Chapter 4, including the evolution of laws which most directly effect the Aboriginal Reservation Land. The greater picture for both the current conditions of
indigenous peoples in Taiwan and on the physical characteristics of the reservation lands are also provided in Chapter 4. Chapter 5 examines (and deconstructs) KMT-promoted dominant ideology and its impacts on Taiwan’s identity politics, including both Han and indigenous peoples. The wax and wane of Taiwan’s indigenous movements are also incorporated in this chapter. Chapter 6 focuses on both the land conflicts and the emergence of the PPRA in the Li-Shan areas. As one of the major factors that has brought Li-Shan to the national spotlight, the environmental problems resulting from extensive cultivation on steep slopes are also examined critically in Chapter 6. I review the impacts of indigenous movements on three dimensions in Chapter 7: the cultural hegemony and the fundamental assumptions of interest-group pluralism, the relations between indigenous ethno-nationalism and native Taiwanese nationalism, and the establishment of new human-land relationships. Finally, Chapter 8 provides a summation of issues in which I will give my own conclusions and point out possible further research topics and ways to improve the understanding of other cultures.
CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW: PREVIOUS RESEARCH AND APPROPRIATE THEORIES

In this chapter, different interpretations on the causes and effects of the current conditions facing indigenous people throughout the world will be presented. Some consider indigenous populations as the not-yet-“de-colonized” people in the world political arena due to situations which are best called “internal colonialism.” Different kinds and intensities of colonialism prevail and are practiced in different places and I shall make a more general review of these conditions later. The appropriateness of applying postcolonial theories under the contexts of both indigenous peoples and East Asian societies has also raised concerns for some local scholars (Liao Bing-hui 1995).

Indigenous movements also give rise to critical reflections on the ideology of national sovereignty around the globe. In spite of the rise of various trans-national indigenous groups, the political clout of indigenous peoples is still vulnerable to State violence, resource developers, and cultural hegemony. Fourth World theory is still under construction and has not yet exercised significant impacts on international politics.

To conduct fieldwork under “other” social and cultural contexts raises the ultimate question of representation: Is the researcher capable of legitimately speaking for his/her objects being studied? On the other hand, how can we, as academic researchers, minimize the existing uneven power relations embedded within the interactions between the researchers and the research objects, who in this case are politically and culturally underprivileged groups? What social and political stances, do we, the researchers choose to stand? As we might know, the researcher’s location on
the ideological spectrum not only reflects in his/her theoretical frameworks, but also the “academic” interpretation of “field data.”

Some works on indigenous peoples in Taiwan will be reviewed in areas related to my concerns: reservation land, cultural and identity politics, ethnic relations, and environmental ethics. It is worth noting that the majority of documents on indigenous peoples in Taiwan prior to the rise of indigenous movements in the mid-1980s were produced mostly by anthropologists, which provided a “thin description” of indigenous customs and traditions. Less attention was paid to political, economic, and social conflicts (Huang Ying-kuei 1983).

2.1 Colonialism in Various Forms

The burgeoning focus on colonial studies has recently led to more extensive re-examinations of colonial impacts on various dimensions than classical Marxism. Corbridge (1993) identifies four key points or activities of colonial rule:

First, ‘colonialism established territories and territorial boundaries where [sometimes] none had existed before’... Second, colonialism established within each territory a political order and the administrative hierarchy to run it. The ultimate basis of this political order was, invariably, force... Third, colonialism brought with it a series of ties which bound a colony into the wider networks of trade and production which defined the colonial world-economy... Finally, colonialism brought with it a culture of rule bound up with the imposition of an alien language (Corbridge 1993:176).

Internal colonialism separates space within a nation-state into two familiar units: the core and the periphery. Uneven spatial “modernization” processes create a relatively advanced core with superordinate group, while also resulting in a less advanced periphery with subordinate group (Lee Tsu-min 1991:56). There are crystallized separations based on the unequal allocation of social resources between...
these two groups. High prestige roles are reserved for members of superordinate group, while less privileged roles are inevitably left to the dominated group (Hsieh Shih-chung 1994a). Some high prestige spots do go to members of the subordinate group in a symbolic action to reinforce the legitimacy of the hierarchical system (Hsieh Shih-chung 1994a) and the associated cultural/ethnic division of labor. This social stratification system contributes to the formation of distinctive ethnic identities within these two groups.

Spatially, the core is characterized by a diversified industrial structure whereas industrialization in the periphery, if it takes place, is highly specialized and usually complementary to the core economy. Therefore, the peripheral economy is most vulnerable to price fluctuations in the world market (Hechter 1975:9-10).

Modernization theory and economic determinism seem to be the underlying presumptions of internal colonialism, given its emphasis on economic perspectives and industrialization, and its ignorance of colonial cultural and psychological imprints. However, in its later application, the idea of internal colonialism has been employed to explain other factors, such as cultural differences and social status (NPQ 1989; Walis YuGan 1994a).

The uneven spatial development of the core and the periphery in internal colonialism is often associated with the spatial distribution of ethnic groups. The ethnic groups in peripheral areas suffer economic exploitation and political marginalization, while the dominant groups in core areas enjoy greater prosperity and privileges. Ethnic inequality develops along both class and spatial lines (Lee Tsu-min
1991:57). Thus, internal colonialism successfully integrates both ethnic groups and class issues within a geographical dimension.

In the 1990s, postcolonialism receives simultaneously the insights and controversies both political and cultural which emerged from the postmodern polemic of the 1980s. However, the term “postcolonialism” suggests a misleading concept in that it implies that postcolonialism only deals with a society whose colonial period has been terminated. Postcolonialism not only deals with the current various forms of colonialism (political, cultural, and economic), but also analyzes the colonial impacts on contemporary societies, including effects on both the colonized and colonizers. In fact, the influences of centuries-old colonial expansions are so profound that even political de-colonization has only been partially achieved. Thus, “postcolonial” refers to only the termination of “formal,” “political” colonial rules in many Third World countries. In brief, as an intellectual project rather than a chronological moment, postcolonialism shifts the wisdom and loads of critical culture studies to the relationship between the colonizers, the colonized, and the colonies (Duara 1997).

Although the opponents of postcolonialism heavily criticize it as nothing more than the product of intellectuals from the Third World in search of academic posts in the West, there are insights from postcolonial ideas that are espoused and applied by many Third World intellectuals. In a sense, postcolonialism inherits the celebration of differences from postmodernism and provides a sharp analysis on the politics of cultural representation derived from cultural studies. But it takes a step further to disclose the mutual construction of self-identity between the colonizers and the colonized. Identities in the “mother countries” are as much constituted by the
colonizers’ experience in the colonies as the identities of the colonized by the foreign hegemony. While the Orient’s self-imaginations – geographical, cultural and social – and identity are powerfully shaped by the Western construction of “Orientalism” (Said 1979), the Western self-identity and its imagination of both self and others are also inextricably influenced by this very Orientalism.

It is important to identify the social, historical, and geographical backgrounds behind the seemingly “popularity” of postcolonialism in the 1990s. Its popularity, ironically, is partially the result of colonialism that leads to global migrations in an effort to settle “frontiers” and civilize “savages.” Because of past colonial relations, many intellectuals from the colonized world come to their colonial “mother countries” for further studies. Many of the important scholars in postcolonialism, such as Said, Bhabha, and Spivak, possess this Third World background (Liao Bing-hui 1995; Zhang Jingyuan 1995). The characteristics of postcolonial studies, which rise in Western academic contexts and are, then, colored with some “foreign” attributes, makes the direct application on East Asian societies problematic (Liao Bing-hui 1995). Liao argues that discussions about postmodernism or postcolonialism in Taiwan has, in fact, the appearance of neocolonialism in promoting or embracing the newest Western theories (Liao Bing-hui 1995). It is this time and space that challenges scholars, with different training backgrounds (studying in North America, Europe or Japan) and different “locations” (ages, social status) to develop their own views on local political, social, and cultural issues within the framework of multi-national economic and academic institutes (Liao Bing-hui 1995).
Colonialism left different imprints and operated in different “intensities” across different space and time. Japanese colonialism left behind different cultural impacts, created different sentiments towards ethnic identities, and drew different evaluations in Taiwan and Korea. “If there is indeed no singular time and space of colonialism/postcolonialism... it is also impossible to speak of a singular colonial discourse” (Willems-Braun 1997). There can be no global theory of colonial culture and discourse, only “localized theories and historically specific accounts that provide insight into varied articulations of colonialist and countercolonial representations and practices” (Willems-Braun 1997).

It is also important to point out that neither internal colonialism, nor postcolonialism and neo-colonialism is aimed directly at interpretations of the relationship between indigenous people and their opposite, the settlers which came later. Internal colonialism, in particular, in its most significant analysis by Hechter, addresses the uneven economic power and modernizing process between England and its Celtic fringe. Nevertheless, this is as much a limitation as it is a point of departure to introduce new dimensions and case studies into these theories by putting them into “alien” societal contexts. A more comprehensive research on aborigines will involve virtually all aspects of societies in the modern nation-states and in all tangent disciplines. The development of indigenous movements in Taiwan also introduces new perspectives in re-examining some policies that used to be viewed as beneficial to the aborigines, whose oppressions were brought to light only recently. For example, universal mandatory, but Han-centrist, education and textbooks are criticized as educational colonialism (Interview C). The inappropriate social welfare system that

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helps to trap the aborigines into the social construction of poverty (Chen Hsin-yi 1993) which has also been referred to as welfare colonialism by indigenous activists is also a case in point (Interview C).

2.2 Indigenous Peoples and World Politics

To limit the concerns related to indigenous peoples within a nation-state context so as to ignore international dimensions and their impacts on world colonial history will mislead our reflections to a narrowly isolated path. Before examining the roles of indigenous peoples in world politics, it seems inevitable that a definition must be given to the central term, “indigenous peoples.” To provide a universal definition for any term is never easy work, especially when the term itself involves diversified peoples in different corners of the world suffering various cultural, political, economic and social oppressions imposed by different conquerors. I have no intention of attempting a universal definition to this term. However, it is essential to distinguish several aspects that differentiate indigenous peoples from other groups, such as minorities.

Indigenous populations are not necessarily minorities in a nation-state. In certain Latin American countries, such as Guatemala and Bolivia, indigenous people are in fact the largest ethnic group (Wilmer 1993:217). Although the conditions facing indigenous peoples and minorities are sometimes similar: oppression, low social status, poverty, degradation of ethnic cultures, and discrimination, there are exceptions in the case of minorities if we define minorities exclusively and mistakenly only on “head counts.” Minorities can be the ruling class who establish authoritarian regimes and hold the majorities from contesting politically powerful posts, such as the country
of South Africa during the apartheid era. According to Daes (1996), “a group must not only lack political power, but lack the numerical strength ever to gain power through democratic means, before it qualifies as a “minority.” An oppressive group that constitutes a numerical minority of the national population would, accordingly, not qualify automatically as a “minority” (Daes 1996). Minorities can also be economically successful, such as Chinese in Malaysia and Indonesia. Under this condition, whether they can be qualified as minorities is open to different ideology with different presumptions.

But there are at least two concepts that have never been associated with the conditions of minority that serve to distinguish indigenous peoples from minorities: priority in time and attachment to a particular territory (Daes 1996). Indigenous peoples are widely regarded as maintaining a special relation with their “ancestral territories.” They inhabit some particular land since time immemorial, long before any modern political regime was established. However, “peoples from other parts of the world overcame them, and by conquest, settlement or other means, reduced them to a non-dominant or colonial situation” (U.N. Working Definition, see Wilmer 1993:216). From the above discussion, we can add a third aspect to indigenous peoples: they are the peoples who have not yet experienced de-colonization, and so, by definition, do not benefit from independent statehood.

In 1970, the United Nations Commission on Human Rights Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities called for a study on indigenous peoples. In 1981, the Commission on Human Rights created the Working Group on Indigenous Populations and since then a yearly meeting has been held to
develop a drafted declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples. The U.N. announced 1993 as the “International Year for the World’s Indigenous Peoples.” In 1995, a draft of the “Universal Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples” was submitted to the Commission on Human Rights (TIVB 1994). The year of 1995 also marked the start of the International Decade of the World’s Indigenous Peoples (Mercer 1997). In this decade, significant progress is anticipated to be made on the official U.N. document of the Declaration.

The “Convention no. 107 Concerning the Protection and Integration of Indigenous and Other Tribal and Semi-Tribal Populations in Independent Countries” ratified by International Labor Organization (ILO) in 1957 was another influential international document pertaining to the rights of indigenous peoples. Its comprehensive coverage on various aspects, including respect for aboriginal land rights, protection for job opportunities, improvement of social security and health care, equal access to language and education, and enhancement of economic and social conditions, however, was flawed by its basic assumptions of assimilation and integration. Therefore, indigenous peoples’ autonomy for culture and social institutions was ignored. In 1989, a revised version of the ILO Convention no. 107, known as Convention no. 169 “Concerning Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries,” was adopted by the general conference in response to aborigines’ request for a higher degree of autonomy on culture, natural resources, and self-identity (Wilmer 1993: 179-80).

The International Work Group on Indigenous Affairs (IWGIA) was founded in Copenhagen in 1968 by a group of scholars. Such academics have played significant
roles in recent developments, such as the Survival International (SI) found in 1969 in Britain, and Cultural Survival (CS) in 1976 in Massachusetts. IWGIA and CS reach its audience mainly by publications, reports, and related activities. Representatives from these two groups regularly attend the U.N. Working Group’s meetings. IWGIA recently turned its attention to indigenous human rights and assisted delegations from different countries to go to the U.N. meetings (Wilmer 1993: 141; TIVB 1994).

In 1975, George Manuel, joining indigenous leaders from Australia, New Zealand, and Scandinavia, founded the World Council of Indigenous Peoples (WCIP). WCIP, advocating human rights and cultural rights, self-determination in the direction of development, indigenous ownership of natural resources and lands, and education in nativistic languages, represents another significant achievement of international indigenous movement (Hong Chun-hu 1992: 68).

All around the world there are far too many examples of human rights abuse against indigenous peoples, who are often seen as standing in the way of economic development, and who are paying the price for opposing the destruction of their traditional cultures, way of life, and local environments (Mercer 1997). Indigenous movements around the world must contend with various forces and trends, such as multinational corporations, inappropriate policies and violence from the States in which they reside, cultural hegemony, the invasion of the capitalist mode of production, and the deterioration of the environments that are crucial for their survival. Despite the fact that some significant progress on indigenous rights has been made in Australia, New Zealand, the U.S., and Canada (see Mercer 1997; Salee 1995), indigenous peoples are still vulnerable to all the forces mentioned above.
Another international ethnic political movement initiated by indigenous peoples is the Fourth World movement. The proposal and usage of the term, Fourth World, indicates the strong appeals of indigenous peoples to distinguish themselves from the First, Second, and the Third Worlds (Hsieh Shih-chung 1990). The term “Fourth World” also possesses a symbolic function to raise the international status of indigenous peoples, one of the most underrepresented groups in international politics, to a hoped-for equality with other international political entities that constitute all other “worlds.” Although the “Fourth World movement” is still an ongoing process on its theoretical construction, it has almost become an exclusive term for the worldwide indigenous population, and has attracted some attention within the academic community (Hsieh Shih-chung 1990).

2.3 Field Work in “Other” Cultures: the Issue of Representation

For geographers' and anthropologists' fieldwork, or other social scientists as well, the description of the “real” world and the issue of representation has been a major issue in the past decade. In the work following his Orientalism in 1978, Said pointed out that representation of other cultures, societies, histories, as well as the relationship between power and knowledge constitute his central concerns (Said 1986).

Duncan and Ley (1993) have pointed out four major types of representation theories. The first two modes are roughly based on the same “mimetic” theory of representation, which believe that researchers should exert themselves to reflect and describe the external world as authentically as possible. First, there was a period where “descriptive” fieldwork based on the observation of “trained” professionals dominated
the methodology of fieldwork. This continued until the 1950s. The second form of mimesis is based on positivist science. The major difference of these two modes is that the former whose central concerns are description and classification (or pattern), values the concrete and emphasized particularity. On the other hand, the latter is more concerned with abstraction and generalization, and strives to construct spatial theories through a set of presumptions and reductions (Duncan and Ley 1993). One of the well-known examples of spatial theories developed by geographers is Central Place Theory.

Postmodernism represents the third type and was a radical departure from mimetic representations. Its "destroying forces" come from two strategic displacements. The first is to remove the "privilege sites from which representations emanate, notably Western, male intellectuals" (Duncan and Ley 1993:7). Second, postmodernism interrogates and distrusts the totalizing ambition of meta-narratives known as Enlightenment projects. It is the second strategy that shifts the representational control from Western male academics to the "polyphony of voices" of multiple sites and decentralizes a single authority.

The hermeneutic method is the fourth mode of representation identified by Duncan and Ley. It recognizes the author's position in an interpretative text where interpretation is a "dialogue" between the researchers and their data – which are collected for representing other places and other people (Duncan and Ley 1993:3). A neutral, value-free observer (which never existed) is displaced by an intellectual who is embedded deeply in his/her intellectual and institutional context and whose interpretation of external world is subsequently influenced by his/her social and political positions. The hermeneutic way of research in a broad sense can
accommodate a number of theoretical positions in geography and I will adopt this mode of representation in this interpretation of my own fieldwork in Li-Shan.

Geographers may borrow from anthropologists, particularly ethnographers, for their critical reflection on cross-cultural fieldwork. The new cultural geography, in fact, borrowed heavily from works of cultural/social anthropologists, especially Clifford Geertz's differentiation between “thin” and “thick” description. Thin description emphasizes human behavior in the sense of physical motions; in contrast, thick description reveals its significance in the social and cultural context. Ethnography, and by the same token, cross-cultural fieldwork in geography, “is a matter of interpreting the meaning of behavior with reference to the cultural context within which it is 'produced, perceived, and interpreted’” (Jacobson 1991:4).

Despite all the new developments in the field of cultural geography, the “traditional” concerns of cultural geographers, dated back to Carl Sauer, such as cultural diversity, distributions, and diffusions, have been by and large maintained (Mathewson 1996). Nevertheless, with the new development in theories and methodologies, geographers are equipped with new weapons to examine the same themes with different perspectives and interpretations (Gregory 1989).

Unbalanced power relations are seemingly inevitably embedded in the relationship between the researchers and the subject of the research. The researchers seize the power of controlling and interpreting the data or information collected from the fields. These data function as “raw materials” that can be utilized. The rewards of using/consuming these data almost exclusively flow towards the researchers; rarely do they benefit the research objects (Bostock n.d.). Moreover, the usage of research
information is often channeled towards the re-confirmation of these uneven power relations, or the institutionalization of these relations (Bostock n.d.).

I made two field trips to Taiwan from April 1997 to August 1997, and from November 1997 to February 1998. During my field work in Li-Shan, I resided at the Li-Shan Presbyterian Church, with the family of one of my most important informants, Minister YuRaw PaSang. I went to their orchard and church, visited church members and other local indigenous activists, as well as engaged in local election campaigns. The head of Hoping Hsian is the Minister's brother-in-law and thus I was able to obtain specific data and took a closer look at the local election. Because I cannot speak any indigenous language, the most used language between my informants and me is the Mandarin. In addition to field work in Li-Shan, I also interviewed several indigenous activists and academics in Taipei and Pingtung, as well as participated in one conference, one public hearing and some reading group meetings on the aborigine-related issues. Of course, I also developed some connections with the core members of the Plains People's Rights Association (PPRA) and Alliance of Taiwan's Aborigines (ATA).

2.4 The Politics of Indigenous Peoples in Taiwan: Land, Culture, Identity, and Environment

Hong Chun-hu's study (1992) on Taiwan's aboriginal reservation lands was the first dissertation devoted exclusively to this topic. As a conservative, pro-ruling party scholar, he fail to critically examine the KMT's mountain policies and ignored, almost completely, the meaning of land to aboriginal cultures and social structures. This pro-establishment study, in my view, only contributed to the re-enforcement of current ethnic power relations, and made no attempts to change this power structure. Other
studies on the reservation lands, such as Lin Fang-chi (1984) and Chang Fen-chien (1962), gave insufficient considerations to social, political, and cultural dimensions. It is not until the rise of the indigenous movement that the studies on the impacts of both the capitalist mode of production and modern technology upon indigenous societies appear (Yang Kuo-chu 1996). Sociologists also studied the process of ethnic mobilization associated with two indigenous “Return Our Lands” movements in the late 1980s (Lee Tsu-min 1991). Chen Hsin-yi (1993) explores the social construction of indigenous peoples’ poverty in Taiwan’s society. The economic dependence of aborigines upon the State is not an internalized characteristic of aborigines, but rather a result of the State’s minority policies (Chen Tzung-han 1994:9). Geographers’ research on reservation lands tends to focus on land use patterns and their changes over time to reflect the economic re-structuring in the mountain areas (Chen Hsien-ming 1984 & 1986; Chang Chang-yi 1989 & 1992). However, few recognize that aboriginal land rights movements are, in fact, struggles against the State or business interests over space – the maintenance of ethnic space, and the rights to interpret and utilize this space.

Most ethnic studies in Taiwan focus on the relationship between native Taiwanese and the mainlanders (such as papers in Chang Mao-kuei et al 1993 and Shih Cheng-fong ed. 1994). Hsieh Shih-chung’s series studies (1987a, 1987b, 1992, 1994b, 1994c, and 1994d) on ethnic relationships between Han and indigenous peoples laid the foundation for further exploration into this relatively new dimension of ethnic studies. His pioneer study on the “stigmatized identity” among indigenous peoples was among the first researches on the social construction of identity politics.
Hsieh (1987b and 1994a &d) also introduced Western theories applied to local case studies, such as internal colonialism, theories of ethno-tourism, and the American Indian Movement, into the field of Taiwan’s indigenous studies. He argued that the ethno-tourism and the social “re-discovery” of Taiwan’s indigenous culture were the results of the state policies. Huang Ying-kuei (1981) opened a new broad field on economic transformation and its impacts upon indigenous societies, particularly the commercialization of agricultural products. Chen Tzung-han (1994) provides a very comprehensive and critical analysis on the post-war KMT policies towards aborigines.

There are also works that are heavily supportive of KMT policies, and filled with an uncritical acceptance of the KMT’s political propaganda, including the work done by the indigenous peoples (Kao Te-yi 1984; Chen Jui-yun 1990). This kind of “academic” works only serves to legitimatize unequal ethnic power relationships and re-enforce the already rigid nation-state ideology, which accelerating the assimilation trend imposed upon the minorities by the hegemonic state policies.

Aborigines’ call for self-autonomy in Taiwan’s mountain areas and efforts directed at the formation of a pan-indigenous identity stimulate more delicate discussion and critical reflection on the existing nationalism discourses. Western theories of nationalism cannot be applied uncritically to different social and cultural backgrounds. Anderson’s “Imagined Community” (1991) is often interpreted as emphasizing the importance of “print capitalism” and its widely diffusion in a country where the “imagined” political unit is built. In Taiwan, I will argue, it is this “imagined geography” that is essential to legitimatize ruling power. Chao Kang (1996) borrowed heavily from Hobsbawn, Greenfield, Habermas, and Geertz to construct a
radical theory of a democratic nation. He claimed that various forms of nationalism, given primordial nationalism that stresses blood relationships, liberal nationalism, or reactionary nationalism (what he called hyper-ethnonationalism, or “voodoo” nationalism), are the crisis of modernity, rather than the hope of human beings (Chao Kang 1996). Nationalism, with its xenophobia and “organic” connections with modern nation-states, is too often associated with wars and genocide. In this regard, both Chao Kang (1996) and Hsieh Shih-chung (1990) coincidentally argue that the pursuit of independent statehood is not the ultimate truth in the process of human history.

Political economy approaches to environmental problems often associate with development issues and the empowerment of underprivileged people (see Blaikie 1985; Peet and Watts 1996). Indigenous peoples’ close connection to the mother earth is the result of their cultures and economic modes of production, rather than simply a romantic imagination. Therefore, the “return” of rights to natural resource management to indigenous peoples means not only the utilization of indigenous wisdom about local environment, but also requires a full respect and support for each indigenous cultural renaissance. The recent combination of academic, “scientific” knowledge with the aboriginal, local, and grassroots knowledge in managing mountain and forest resources in southern Taiwan, seems to provide a promising future for local aborigines, and the restoration of their cultures, and ethnic pride (Chang Chin-ju 1997).

Tien Ke (1994) argues that Chinese scholars studying Taiwan’s aborigines reflect a similar propensity to the pro-KMT scholars in Taiwan: they both are blinded by rigid nationalist ideology and, moreover, some of the researches seem simply to
serve for the purpose of state policies. According to Tien, the errors that Chinese scholars make about Taiwan’s indigenous peoples include an ignorance of plains aborigines, the homogenization of indigenous peoples, and the imagined “single origin” theory which advocates that Taiwan’s aborigines were in fact, originated from South China (so they are also “Chinese” in origin!) (Tien Ke 1994).

The indigenous peoples themselves are now also speaking up after a long silence during the martial law era. Indigenous scholars, activists, artists, and novelists, such as Sun Da-chuan, TaiBong SaSaLe, and Walis YuGan, provide an “insiders’ view” for students of indigenous studies. However, Sun Da-chuan (1995b) cautions readers with two critical reviews. First, the common feature of these indigenous elites is that they all master the mainstream communication tool, the Chinese language and are able to manipulate the writing codes. This skill allows the more-educated indigenous elites to, at least partially, replace the elders in tribes as the source of authority. Nevertheless, these young indigenous elites are deeply Sinicized and many of them were absent from childhood memory of their tribes (Interview E). Second, in the process of constructing a pan-indigenous identity or “tribalism” (see Sections 6.3 and 7.3), any essential fundamentalism of indigenous ego- or tribal-centrism, which promotes superiority or excludes other ethnic groups’ perspectives on indigenous affairs on the basis of their being “inauthentic,” should be avoided.

Few studies in the Li-Shan area have considered the complex relationships among current land use patterns, the history of the local political economy, aboriginal culture and land rights claims, and the dominant developmental ideology. To blame local indigenous and Han fruit or vegetable growers without critically reflecting on the
appropriateness and "legitimacy" of reservoir construction, and State-led development policies, only reveals how deeply the developmental ideology and cultural bias has penetrated into Taiwan's civil consciousness.

In brief, political economy, new cultural geography, and post-colonial theories provide the major theoretical framework and methodology for this study. The perpetual uneven ethnic power relationships in Taiwan are examined from the critical perspective of political economy. Environmental degradations are also investigated with the theory generated from both political economy and cultural ecology, the political ecological analysis. The new cultural geography offers the theoretical backgrounds for discussing cultural and identity politics, cultural and landscape representation (especially in ethno-tourism), as well as multiculturalism. Post-colonial theories are especially helpful in explaining the social construction of a new indigenous/Taiwanese culture through the combination of the colonizing and the colonized cultures, as well as in deconstructing mainstream social values, and in illustrating the geography of resistance. The collection and analysis of "field data," and even the theories that are chosen by a particular researcher are not only limited by also inevitably influenced by his/her training backgrounds and ideological stances. Messages of "subjectivity" are not what a hermeneutic research tries to convey. Rather, I will argue, a clear stance on the study topic will clarify the researcher's social responsibility towards the objects being studied and influenced by the research project, as well as clarify the blindspots and limitations embedded in every research.
CHAPTER 3. SOCIAL AND POLITICAL FORCES INFLUENCING
THE HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF INDIGENOUS
PEOPLES IN TAIWAN

The writing of histories is also a writing of politics. Histories are never simply repetitions or description of realities. Rather, histories always involve the politics of representation and reflect contemporary power relationships. The interpretation and writing of histories are contested “fields” for those with different agenda and ideologies.

The “official” history of Taiwan traces the course of Chinese “common ancestors” back approximately five thousand years ago. The mythical figure of Huang Di (the Yellow Emperor) is said to be the common ancestor of all Chinese. Peripheral Taiwan, from Chinese point of view, is hardly a stage of historical events. Moreover, due to the highly oppressive socio-political controls and the ideological indoctrination superimposed by the KMT regime, the idea of a common ancestor, Huang Di, became a symbol of subordination of certain ethnic or national identities in Taiwan. Although both the ROC and PRC claim that Taiwan is an “integral and inseparable” territory of China, Taiwan was not officially incorporated into the Chinese Empire until as late as 1683 during the Ching Dynasty and has never been ruled by the PRC.

The early Taiwanese national discourse, however, was also Han ethno-centric, which blinds the capability of viewing history with the co-presence of the indigenous peoples. Therefore, Taiwan’s history was often referred as a “four hundred years’ history” (Su Bing. 1986). Only until the mid-1980s when the indigenous movement righteously challenged both Taiwanese and Chinese Han chauvinism, did the historical writings alter their routine assumptions of Sino-centrism.

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The new historical writing on Taiwan’s histories includes not only the Chinese cultural and lineal backgrounds, but also includes the colonial Japanese culture, American global pop culture, and the Austronesian culture of the indigenous peoples. The new imagined geographical location of Taiwan is no longer in the peripheral area of the culturally “greater China,” but in a new location where various cultures and political powers meet, contest, and co-exist. Taiwan, as the arguable original place of the Austronesian peoples (Bellwood 1991), is capable of looking not only westwards to its old connection with China, but also southwards and eastwards to the histories of Austronesian migration.

The insertion or “discovery” of indigenous histories regarding the writing of Taiwan’s histories is itself an ontological breakthrough. Critical reflections on both colonial representations and cultural politics of the indigenous peoples will provide an epistemological re-examination on traditional historical writings and must challenge the old, “orthodox” interpretation.

3.1 The Policies towards Taiwan’s Aborigines under the Dutch, during the Koxinga Era, and the Pre-Modern Ching Empire

The Dutch East India Company was awarded a monopoly of Dutch trade in the East in 1602 (Shepherd 1993:47). In an effort to break up Portuguese and Spanish monopolies of the China trade, and given the Company’s already strong trading presence in Southeast Asia, the Dutch managed to occupy southern Taiwan in 1624 (Shepherd 1993:47-48; Chuang Ya-chung 1993). Of course, the main objective of the Dutch East India Company was to conduct profitable trade in its colonies. Deerskins hunted by the aborigines were exported to Japan while other deer products such as the antlers and hooves went to China (Shepherd 1993:62; Lin Tao-sheng 1995). The
Dutch drew “foreign” guest workers from nearby southeastern China to Taiwan’s then indigenous society and thereby completely changed Taiwan’s social structures forever (Wu Mi-cha 1996). The Dutch also used aborigines to subjugate several Han people’s rebellions (Lin Tao-sheng 1995) in an effort to “pacify” the “raw fan.”

The subjects of Dutch colonial rule were mainly indigenous peoples in the plains areas in the southern portions of the island. The Dutch colonialism, as any other colonial rules, was more than merely economic exploitation and political domination. Western colonialism and its associates, such as geographical expeditions, journals, missionaries, and technologies, involve the politics of representation and the displacements of indigenous cultures and value systems (Chuang Ya-chung 1993). The regional surveys conducted by the colonizers signaled both the incorporation of Taiwan into the Dutch mercantile trade network, and the new epoch of cultural reconstruction undertaken mainly by Dutch Christian missionaries (Chuang Ya-chung 1993).

The construction of the colonial “otherness” is the prerequisite to justify the righteousness of religious conversion. The “mission” to convert Formosa natives to Christianity, to some extent, on the prevalent idea of the times that the native religions and customs were inferior, immoral, and uncivilized from the perspective of Western Christians (Chuang Ya-chung 1993). Therefore, the process of conversion always involved the displacement and interruption of indigenous cultures and the alienation of aborigines from their traditional spatial concepts. Both romanization of, and the translation of the Bible into, the indigenous languages produced controversial consequences. The introduction of a writing system into the indigenous societies by
the Dutch missionaries represented both empowerment and at the same time, accelerating dissolution of indigenous customs and resistance against the colonizers. The influence of the romanized Bible was so profound that it was still in use even when Taiwan was under the rule of both the Koxinga (Cheng Cheng-kung) and subsequently the Ching Dynasty (Lin Tao-sheng 1995).

Koxinga's fleets landed in southern Taiwan, defeated the weak coastal defenses of the Dutch, and quickly seized control over southern Taiwan. As a loyalist family of the Ming Dynasty, the Chengs vowed to expel the Manchus from China proper and reestablish the Ming Dynasty and its royal family. Taiwan was Chengs' solid base for re-taking the mainland. (Ironically, history seemed to repeat itself about two and half centuries later when the KMT promised its followers that it would return to mainland to overturn the "tyranny of Communism.") However, Koxinga and his successors controlled Taiwan for only 22 years, from 1661 to 1683.

Because of the military purposes of the Koxinga, the people of Taiwan, mostly peasants, were treated as a reserve army, and the land of Taiwan was reclaimed extensively for the production of food to feed the large standing military that Koxinga was developing. During the Cheng's reign, most of the southwestern plains areas in Taiwan had been reclaimed by the Han immigrants (Lin Tao-sheng 1996). The Chengs' eagerness to build up military strength resulted both in unprecedented efforts to reclaim arable lands within the aboriginal territories, but also harsh policies towards the indigenous peoples in the plains areas (Lin Tao-sheng 1996).

Even though under the Chengs' aggressive cultivation policies, the middle and northern Taiwan saw only limited Han reclamation and the lands remained mostly
held by the plains aborigines, the *Pin Pu Tzu*. At this time then, the majority of the indigenous peoples still possessed their social and political organizations, and maintained their own cultural autonomy in interpretations of the outside world (Hsia Chun-hsiang 1992:74). However, the Han people, with more advanced land management skills and more effective agricultural production systems gradually instituted an efficient state apparatus for further development of this “frontier” island.

The Ching Dynasty ruled Taiwan from 1683 to 1895. The first documented effort to erect stone-marked boundaries to delimit “fan territory,” which literally means savage’s lands, from the Han-colonized land occurred in 1722. This miniature “Great Wall” was the earliest prototype of the recognition of aboriginal reservation lands. The line of demarcation was subsequently shifted and re-constructed to become an island-wide set of boundary trenches which changed from time to time according to the dynasty’s changing pro-colonization or protectionist policy toward indigenous lands. In the early Ching period, only men were allowed to come to Taiwan for reclamation, while their family members had to stay in the mainland. The overall goal of the Ching policy was to prevent Taiwan from becoming an overseas rebel base. It was believed by many Ching officials that the government’s interest was best served by preserving the livelihood of indigenous peoples, both mountains and plains aborigines, including their access to lands (Shepherd 1993:3). Han immigrants and their reclamation activities were held to lands within the official boundary.

It was important to be “economical” in terms of the overseas frontier management for a land-based empire. Clarifying land titles and preventing title disputes were activities which were necessary to reduce control costs. One efficient
way devised by the Ching administration to strike a balance between the control costs and the extraction of local revenues was to enlist young mail plains aborigine in pacification campaigns against rebellious Han immigrants and other plains or mountain aborigines (Shepherd 1993:3). Therefore, the Ching's frontier policy was the product of careful consideration weighing factors including the frontier's strategic importance, control costs, and potential revenues (Shepherd 1993:3-5). The balance between control costs and revenues generated by taxes on agricultural lands decided whether the State backed the land claims of plains aborigines, or at other times permitted the Han people's expansion of reclamation into the "fan territory" (Shepherd 1993:5).

During the reign of the Yung-Cheng emperor (1723-35), who was renowned for his aggression in expanding frontiers and his eagerness to increase revenues for the military, a pro-colonization policy was adopted to enable Han settlers to rent deer fields from plains aborigines (Shepherd 1993:17). To respect the aboriginal prior claims, Han people's reclamation corporates (the farmers' organizations) had to pay "large-rents" before reclaiming tribal lands. From 1738 to 1766, extensive land surveys were ordered to scrutinize land contracts between Han and plains aborigines for official inspections (Shepherd 1993:18-19). The frequency of surveys reflected the fast changing boundaries of "fan territory" due to the Han encroachment. In 1788, the Ching government came to realize that the protection of plains aborigines land rights was no longer feasible and formally legalized land transactions between Han migrants and plains aborigines. While reclamation activities pushed toward the ancestral lands
of mountain aborigines, plains aborigines were Sinicized and eventually assimilated into the Han agrarian society.

The history of the Han people’s reclamation in Taiwan can be described as the gradual encroachments upon the indigenous ancestral lands. The Ching government’s policies were forced to frequent changes over certain period of time to reflect the social reality that aborigines, plains and mountains alike, were losing lands to the Han immigrants. In 1724, Han settlers were first allowed to lease lands within the *fan* territories from plains aborigines. Then, in 1788, the Ching government acceded to the demands of Han people and allowed them to officially purchase lands from plains aborigines. Finally, in 1875, even the lands within the traditional territories of the mountain aborigines were open to Han settlers (Huang Fu-san 1981). It is obvious that Han people used more than legal measures to obtain arable lands within *fan* territory and forced the government incapable at the time of putting down revolts, to legalize the land transactions.

A complicated land tenure system evolved in conjunction with ethnic interactions between indigenous and Han peoples. This system arose from locally specific socio-political relations in the frontier colonization. In order to conform to the official order that ruled against illegally acquiring aboriginal lands, many Han farmers acknowledged that tribal lords owned the titles to their lands. These Han settlers also agreed to pay annual rents to the aboriginal landlords, as well as investing capital and labor to improve the productivity (Chen Chiu-kun 1994; see also Figure 3.1). Some Han peasants asked the land titleholders to permit their cultivation in perpetuity so long as the required rents were appropriately paid. Thus, the Han peasants were able to
gain the privilege of using their improved lands independent of tribal authority (Chen Chiu-kun 1994).

The second type of land tenure system involves even more parties, usually more than one ethnic group, into the land in question (see Figure 3.2). The three-layered relationship in which the original tenant cultivator became a usufruct right holder. The usufruct right holder paid primary rent to the landlord (either the titleholder or aboriginal landlord) from the rental crops collected from the subtenant, the actual cultivator (Chen Chiu-kun 1994). In this three-layer system, the ownership of a plot of land was separated into title (or subsoil, large-rent) right that owned mostly by tribal authority, and cultivation (or topsoil, small-rent) right that mostly own by Han settlers (Shepherd 1993:8; Chen Chiu-kun 1994). By paying “large-rent” to the tribal landlords, Han settlers were able to “legally” reclaim the lands within the fan territories.

The “headhunting” mountain aborigines and their territorial claims continued to be the counterforce to Han-sponsored reclamations. Efforts made to conquer and pacify
the "raw" aborigines extended throughout the Ching and continued even during the Japanese occupation. This land tenure system was partially modified and finally abandoned by the Japanese colonial government. The large-rent system was abolished in 1904 within the surveyed territories. The abolition of the large-rent system reduced the condition of split ownership and simplified the majority of arable land areas into "one lord to a field" and therefore, raised the efficiency of the statecraft of the Japanese empire in controlling land resources (Lin Chia-ling 1996:45-47). The tribal authority in collecting large-rent had been gradually in decline from the late Ching period. However, the abolishment of the large-rent system by the Japanese government accelerated the process of deterioration of tribal economic sources, and inevitably elevated the pressures upon minorities and politically underprivileged groups to assimilate into the mainstream (Lin Chia-ling 1996:46).

![Figure 3.2. One Plot, Two or More Owners Pattern](source: Chen Chiu-kun 1994.)
3.2 Indigenous Peoples of Taiwan under Japanese Control

The Japanese Empire was the first political entity with the characteristics of the prototype of the modern nation-state to rule Taiwan. Various modern surveys, including land, ethnology, and natural resources, were undertaken extensively and aggressively by the Japanese regime to better manipulated export potential during colonial rule. During the period from 1910 to 1914, the Japanese conducted a “Forests and Wild Fields Survey” with the goal of confiscating lands without official patents and ownership certificates. From 1915 to 1925, the plan of “Survey of Official Forests and Wild Fields” was implemented and aimed at the clarification between state-owed forest lands, including fan territory, and those lands that were subject to later development. Even as late as 1925, not all the territory of mountain aborigines was surveyed completely by modern methods (Chen Tzung-han 1994:34; Lin Chia-ling 1996:57-60). These ambitious “forests and wilderness” surveys arguably laid the foundation for the future exploitation of Taiwan as a colony and promoted the process of capitalization of state controlled fan territory.

The earliest Japanese survey demarcated around 450,000 hectares as the “lands for the fan peoples.” These lands were discrete and disseminated from the locations of tribes (Chang Fen-chien 1962; Interview A). Successive surveys on mountains, forests, and fan territory classified land uses into three categories according to the different degrees of potential for future development. One category of land, accounting for around 240,000–250,000 hectares, was reserved for the use of aborigines (Lin Chia-ling 1996:61; Chang Fen-chien 1962). The powerful modern state apparatus thus shrunk the areas allocated for aborigines by about 200,000
hectares. The fact revealed that the Japanese Empire, with the assistance of advanced technology and an effective bureaucratic system, had a more thorough control and understanding of both the peoples and the land of Taiwan than any previous regime. The reserved lands, based on the previous “lands for the fan peoples,” were in discrete units and were mostly scattered around, or emanated from, the location where aboriginal tribes were still living. A limitation to indigenous hunting grounds and slash-and-burn fields was disguised through the creation of aboriginal reservations, which, in fact, circumscribed aborigines, and their way of life within a space designated by the colonial state.

A series of coercive collective movements directed at the indigenous tribes was imposed throughout the whole period of Japanese colonization. At its outset, the policy of collective movement was a tentative experimental method in “managing” mountain aborigines by local governments. It later became a formal policy of the Japanese empire. The purpose of collective movements was at first, for the convenience of exploiting natural resources, most notably, hardwood logs and camphor, within mountainous fan territories. It also served as an instrument for the ensuing authoritarian control over aborigines and lowered the costs of management of fan peoples by moving aboriginal tribes to more accessible sites. The new sites were often located within the jurisdiction of regularly administrated areas to reduce the area of fan territory. This encirclement assuredly placed the aborigines under a much greater degree of police surveillance. By disconnecting people from their homeland, the assimilation and acculturation of uncivilized fan would be accelerated, and thus
prevented the indigenous peoples, who often took the advantage of local rugged
topography, from revolting against the Japanese Empire (Hwu Sheau-Shya 1996:28).

Taiwan, as a colony of Japan, was driven into the Second World War. Taiwan
provided not only natural resources for colonial exploitation, but also its people were
coerced to serve the war machine of the Japanese Empire. Throughout world history,
governments have conscripted minority groups in multi-ethnic states for military
service. Peled (1994) has categorized three types of ethnic conscription: by force, by
ideology, and by contract. In responses to such drafts, he argues that there are three
reasons which caused ethnic youths to be enlisted: fear, ideological conviction, and the
expectation of future civic benefits. Colonial mother countries differ from each other
in terms of the power of the colonial regimes vis-a-vis ethnic minorities, so that the
priorities of methods to enlist their minority groups and the reasons for ethnic
minorities to be conscripted by the colonial regimes might vary. The Japanese way of
conscription, to a large extent, was the combination of force and ideology, with more
emphasis on the promotion of ideological conviction. For any place, this was, perhaps,
the most thorough control of minority groups. With the ideological loyalty to the
Japanese Emperor, the possibility of domestic insurrections against Japan was
reduced.

An ethnic division of labor was emerged under the supervision of the Japanese
imperial war machine. On the one hand, Japanese-introduced the agricultural
technology in conjunction with the labor force of the Han youths generated massive
food exports to Japan. On the other hand, the hunting skills and great endurance,
which characterized the tribal societies (in perhaps a somehow stereotypical way), of
the indigenous youths were transformed into the skills of war (Chen Tzung-han 1994:35).

The Japanese also conducted comprehensive ethnological, flora, and fauna surveys in the mountain areas. Japanese anthropologists' classification of Taiwan's (mountain) indigenous peoples into either nine or ten distinctive groups has had profound influence even long after the end of World War II (Chen Chao-ru 1992).

The consequence of Japanese colonialism is a controversial and ideology-driven topic. Progressive academics condemn colonial impacts on the formation of a confused identity, resource exploitation, political oppression, and cultural distortion. While at the same time, ironically, these scholars were later proud of the cultural "hybridity" (see Chapter 7) that distinguishes Taiwanese culture from others. Advocates of Taiwan independence tend to positively credit the Japanese "achievements" in modernizing Taiwan and efficient law enforcement. Those who believe in unification with China denounce the Japanese because of either Chinese nationalism or the hatred which developed during war. The different collective war memories experienced by different ethnic groups helped breed later ethnic tensions in Taiwan. In this way, the current ethnic tensions in Taiwan are, in part, a legacy of Japanese colonial rule.

For a brief review of the relationships among indigenous peoples, alien regimes, and Han settlers, then, some generalizations can be drawn from the above discussion. The Dutch desired mostly economic profit, coupled with some limited efforts to convert nearby aborigines to Christianity. The overall relations between indigenous
peoples in Taiwan and the Dutch were benign, if in some specific cases also oppressive (Hsia Chun-hsiang 1992:112-113).

The Ming loyalist Koxinga and his successors brought the first large-scale Han immigrants to Taiwan. Because of Koxinga’s purpose of re-taking the mainland from the Manchus, he undertook the military buildup by aggressively acquiring lands from aborigines to promote higher food production to feed his large military force. The relations with indigenous peoples were, therefore, in tension (Hsia Chun-hsiang 1992:112-113).

In the early Ching period, only (single) men were allowed to come to Taiwan. The intermarriages between Han men and indigenous women became common and were also helpful for friendly ethnic interactions (Hsia Chun-hsiang 1992:112-113). As more and more Han settlers came to Taiwan and the demands on lands escalated, ethnic tensions gradually built up.

Japanese colonialism and its natural resource extraction policy generated very tense relations with the indigenous peoples, particularly those lived in the mountain areas. A relatively stable condition was finally reached in the mountains only after series of pacifying policies, oppressive measures, and the introduction of rice-growing agriculture into these areas, which resulted in improvements in material life. Of course, ideological indoctrination was also carried out by the authoritarian colonial government as it was throughout the Empire (Hsia Chun-hsiang 1992:112-113). Nevertheless, the era of Japanese colonial rule, in fact, still enjoys a highly positive position in the thoughts of many indigenous elders (Sun Da-chuan 1991:20).
CHAPTER 4. MOUNTAIN POLICY AND RESERVATION LAND POLICY UNDER THE KMT

This chapter will illustrate the current social and economic circumstances facing Taiwan’s aborigines after nearly 100 years colonial rule by both the Japanese and the KMT, and then, follow by detailed and critical reviews on the evolution of reservation land-related provisions and laws. The last section of this chapter is devoted to the land conflicts in Taiwan’s mountain hsians (the sub-county administrative units).

It is interesting that the KMT continued the Japanese indigenous policies, despite its denouncement of the Japanese colonial rule in Taiwan. Whether the KMT's rule of Taiwan is also a form of colonial rule is subject to debate (see the debate articles in Chung Wei Literature Monthly during 1995). However, a simplified dichotomy of either pro-Taiwan independence or pro-unification with China is useful to distinguish two ideologies towards both the evaluation of the Japanese colonial rule, and the nature of the KMT regime. Still, we must recognize that there is a wide political spectrum reflected in different strategies and opinions about these issues. The locations of the arguments on the spectrum are decided not only by independence/unification positions, but also by left or right ideological stances in the political arena. The overall popular perspective is that advocates of Taiwan’s independence tend to value the Japanese colonial rule for its achievement of modernizing Taiwan, and in turn tend to consider the KMT’s takeover Taiwan simply as the actions of yet another colonial regime.

In contrast, those who are pro-unification, including the KMT itself, are inclined to discount Japanese development efforts and to emphasize the exploitative side of colonial rule, while at the same time playing down the KMT’s “alien” characteristics.
vis-a-vis the native Taiwanese. Despite all those stances, the recognition that the indigenous people have been under some form of colonial regime, while under the KMT or the Japanese, constitutes one of the few agreements reached by the debates in various issues of the Chung Wei Literature Monthly during 1995 and on other occasions (Chao Kang 1993; Walis YuGan 1994a).

Recently, the full complexity of the colonial experience has received more attention, mostly from post-colonial scholars. Colonial rule involves the colonizers' manifest superiority toward the colonized, and the promotion of labels of modernization versus primitiveness (Wilmer 1993:60). All regimes that have established control over Taiwan have considered the mountainous area to be a special administration district. The relationship between the indigenous people and the successive alien rulers was dependent on the capacity for governmental control in the mountainous area.

The reservation land policy has been one of the most profound mountain policies that influence indigenous peoples' livelihoods while re-defining indigenous peoples' conceptions of both land and spatial organization.

Similar to the treatment of many other aborigines around the world, the indigenous peoples of Taiwan were thought to be unable to cope with the dramatic social changes induced from the “outside.” This belief led to the creation of both, what Kariya’s (1993) calls, “paternalistic administrative structures,” under both Japanese and KMT rule, and the reservation land system.
4.1 The Current Situation Facing the Indigenous Peoples in Taiwan

The current conditions facing indigenous peoples in Taiwan cannot be understood without looking at both the broader historical and political contexts of Taiwan over the past few centuries, as well as considering world colonial history which subordinated indigenous peoples in many different places to marginalized positions. This marginalizing process of Taiwan’s indigenes is summarized by Hsieh Shih-chung (1986) according to a set of different eras of alien domination in Table 4.1. I briefly discussed the eras of the Ching dynasty and a detailed description of the policies carried out by the Japanese empires toward the indigenous Taiwanese in Chapter 3. This section will focus on the KMT’s policies on Taiwan’s indigenes.

Table 4.1 provides not only the numerous alien dominations, but also summarizes the changing power relations among different social/ethnic groups. The Ching and those regimes (the Dutch, Spanish, and that of the Ming loyalist Koxinga) that preceded it had only loose controls over raw fan, the aborigines living in the mountains, and thus had only limited access to mountain territories and resources. With the assistance of modern technology and the introduction of more intensive bureaucratic control, both the Japanese colonial rulers and the KMT strengthened their authority and policy influences to an unprecedented extent while subjugating virtually all the indigenous territories under the surveillance of the state apparatus. By the late Japanese era, the indigenous peoples in Taiwan had completely lost their status as “masters” of this island, and total domination of these people and their lands by external groups had become firmly rooted.

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Table 4.1 The Process of Marginalization of Indigenous Peoples in Taiwan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positions of Aborigines</th>
<th>Eras</th>
<th>Alien Powers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Only master</td>
<td>ca. 1620 B.C.</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One of masters</td>
<td>1624~1661</td>
<td>Holland &amp; Spain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Half master</td>
<td>1661~1875</td>
<td>Koxinga &amp; Ching Empire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being masters in Fewer areas</td>
<td>1875~1930</td>
<td>Ching Empire &amp; Japan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Losing position of master completely</td>
<td>1930 ~ up-to-date</td>
<td>Japan &amp; KMT (China)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Hsieh Shih-chung (1994) later defines the term “master” as

[the group identifies itself positively, and that its sociocultural institutions are still effective. It does not refer to relationships between the majority and minority groups in the sense of population. ... although objectively the Han Chinese had already become the superior group [in 1875], some aboriginal groups, having almost no contacts with the outerworld, still interpreted the whole in their own terms. Their ethnic position was not different from the time when alien powers had not yet arrived. They were still masters, so to speak.]

The “master’s” status refers not merely to effective control over certain territory, but also to social and cultural viability. I will discuss the changing social status of Taiwan’s indigenous peoples and their social and cultural revitalization movement in Chapter 5.

4.1.1 Economic Conditions in the Mountain Areas of Taiwan

The KMT’s early “protection policy” toward the mountain compatriots was in fact aimed at accelerating the modernization process affecting the indigenous cultures, with the purpose of controlling resources and preempting resistance from mountain area residents (Chen Hsin-yi 1993:10). Poverty is quite prevalent among the indigenous population (Table 4.2), but it is unfair to say that living conditions in the mountain areas have not improved given the remarkable economic growth during the past five decades or so. However, the average income of an indigenous person is

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slightly greater than sixty percent of the average income level of a Taiwan Province resident. This estimate excludes Taipei and Kaohsiung, the island's two largest cities. If these two cities are included to estimate, the average income per capita in Taiwan as a whole, the percentage is even less, dropping to 36.95% and 37.60% for aborigines in the mountain area in 1978 and 1985 respectively (RDEC 1991:64). A simple quantitative comparison of the differences in wage levels or the uneven distribution of wealth, or even a qualitative approach on the "relativity of exploitation" and other social psychological indicators will not satisfactorily demonstrate the social mechanisms that produce poverty. Poverty, is constructed by the socio-economic relationship that cannot be reduced to the economic dimension alone.

Table 4.2 The Income Comparison Between Indigenous and Average Family in Taiwan Province in 1985 and 1991

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Average Income in Taiwan Province</th>
<th>Average Farmer's Income in Taiwan Province</th>
<th>Average Indigene's Income</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>74626</td>
<td>54558</td>
<td>48644</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>155731</td>
<td>116636</td>
<td>96608</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Average Income of Indigenes in Mountains

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Average Income of Indigene in Mountains</th>
<th>Average Income of Indigene in Plains</th>
<th>Average Income of Indigene in Cities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>42989</td>
<td>45012</td>
<td>50311</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>92117</td>
<td>96524</td>
<td>112586</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


*Not include Taipei and Kaohsiung Cities

The island's economic transformation is conspicuously reflected in the changing income components. Taiwan has undergone a thorough and rapid industrialization in the past fifty years. Over time, industrial production substituted for agricultural products as the major source of income for people in Taiwan. Considering the spatial distribution of wealth, a parallel example of core and periphery relations originating...
from Dependency Theory can be drawn between plains and mountain economies, and indeed even on a larger scale, between First World countries and Taiwan as a whole (Koo 1987). Along this path toward modernization, peripheral areas have limited autonomy in the direction and pace of their development. Within the framework of Dependency Theory, the indigenous mountain economy situated so clearly in the periphery of a peripheral capitalist country has but little control over the core-initiated modernizing /industrializing process.

Two major economic trends can be identified in indigenous societies. Table 4.3 shows the first trend of economic transformation in a rapidly capitalizing mountainous area. Within a six-year period, wage income accounted for an increasing proportion in the income component structure. In turn, the proportion of incomes generated by agricultural activities steadily declined in all three categories of indigenous population. The portion of income remitted by family members working outside the area provides a broad possibility of interpretation. The family members working outside could mean either wage laborers or seasonal agricultural workers. Whatever the interpretation, it reveals that income from working outside was a significant source of revenue, at least to the plains aborigines.

The long declining trend of the contribution of agricultural income to total income is illustrated in Table 4.4. Before capitalism was introduced into mountain subsistence economy, the indigenous living relied exclusively on agriculture-related activities, such as the production of subsistence crops and hunting. During the process of the capitalist development in Taiwan, the original subsistence economy collapsed as the agricultural income decreased in significance. This overall tendency, however,
fails to reflect the minor, local differences resulting from different spatial locations and specific environmental conditions. Agricultural income in Li-Shan, for example, since the mid-1960s, has always accounted for a significant portion of family incomes when temperate-zone fruits and vegetables displaced original slash-and-burn agriculture.

Table 4.3 Income Components of the Indigenous Peoples

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Wage Income</th>
<th>Agriculture Income</th>
<th>Family Member Working Outside</th>
<th>Other Sources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aborigines in Mountain</td>
<td>56.52</td>
<td>68.96</td>
<td>21.63</td>
<td>15.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aborigines in Plains</td>
<td>61.17</td>
<td>74.38</td>
<td>11.57</td>
<td>8.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aborigines in Cities</td>
<td>92.17</td>
<td>90.59</td>
<td>1.81</td>
<td>1.10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table 4.4 Percentage of Agricultural Income as Total Income for Indigenes in Taiwan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non-agriculture</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>19.43</td>
<td>26.47</td>
<td>40.61</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>78.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>80.57</td>
<td>73.53</td>
<td>59.39</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>21.63</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


* Indigenous Peoples in Mountain # Indigenous Peoples in Plains

The second characteristic of the economic transformation of mountain areas in Taiwan is the commercialization of agricultural activities. Capitalist agriculture is claiming a growing proportion of the production resources, including land, labor and
capital, for both indigenous peoples and Han people. The other transformations associated with commercialized agriculture have been gradually perceptible, including the commercialization of agricultural land and changing attitudes toward land, the increasingly importance of the cash economy and the demands for cash, the alteration of employment pattern, changing land use patterns, rising land values, and dramatic changes to the land tenure system. These changes will be discussed in the last section of this chapter (Huang Ying-kuei 1981; Hsia Chun-hsiang 1992: 92-3).

For more comprehensive studies of poverty among the indigenous peoples, several factors need to be taken into account: the land and property rights under the KMT regime, the roles played by capital and labor in the local market economy, and education and power relations under Han cultural hegemony (Chen Hsin-yi 1993:i). On this small crowded island, land ownership and the wealth resulting from land speculation, rather than the actual wage incomes, accounts for Taiwan’s enlarging gap between the haves and the have-nots. The labor market has highly selective controls over worker characteristics such as ethnicity, race, gender, and age. Changes in the education level alone have limited capability to change this labor market. In short, the same level of education does not guarantee the same job opportunity for different racial/ ethnic groups. Therefore, education can only be one of the predictors of income levels. Taiwan’s reputation as one of the few developing countries with a very evenly distributed incomes has faded away since the various waves of land and real estate speculations beginning in the mid-1980s have increased the “resource gap” between rich and poor.
Within the indigenous population, educational levels are, in a very general sense, related to wage levels and the degree of socialization into the mainstream social values. Table 4.5 indicates the differences of education levels between the aborigines and the Taiwan population as a whole. The percentage of indigenous peoples receiving at least a senior high school education is significantly lower than for the average person living in Taiwan. The differences in educational attainment between the indigenous peoples of the plains, cities and mountains, are minor, although the indigenes dwelling in plains seem to receive less education than the other two groups. Table 4.6 shows that the gap between the average population and the aborigines in the mountains for attending higher education has increased over the past few decades. Despite government subsidies, extra scholarships, and selectively lowering the threshold for college/university entrance, policies aimed at elevating education levels for the indigenous population have failed to achieve the hoped-for results.

The study of poverty also demonstrates imbalances in the knowledge/power relationship between the dominating and the dominated groups. Traditional conservative approaches, on the one hand, emphasize the direct association of "capability" with "race" and "gender" (Chen Hsin-yi 1993: 22). The poverty often associated with minority ethnic groups is attributed to the distinctive "nature" of these groups, such as laziness, lack of "work ethics," alcoholism, and dullness (Lee Yi-yun 1992). The lack of control over the pace of social change, maladjustment to changes, and stereotyped images imposed by the dominating group and media, however, are interpreted as the cultural characteristics of the minorities. These interpretations resemble moral criticisms and reveal the underlying character of Han chauvinism in
Table 4.5 The Differences of Educational Levels between Indigenous and Total Population Aged Six and Above  
unit: percentage %

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total Taiwan Population</th>
<th>Total Indigenes</th>
<th>Indigenes Registered in Mountain</th>
<th>Indigenes Registered in Plains</th>
<th>Indigenes Registered in Cities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>College/University</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>2.34</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>1.98</td>
<td>3.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior High School</td>
<td>22.5</td>
<td>14.30</td>
<td>14.23</td>
<td>13.96</td>
<td>15.44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table 4.6 The Differences of Educational Levels between Mountain Indigenes and Taiwan Average

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Senior High School</td>
<td>5.29%</td>
<td>8.74%</td>
<td>9.71%</td>
<td>14.51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College/ University</td>
<td>2.05%</td>
<td>4.26%</td>
<td>5.64%</td>
<td>8.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Taiwan's case (Chen Hsin-yi 1993:25). On the other hand, the more liberal perspective stresses that "capability" is varied with learning opportunities. Education is thought to be the way to nurture "cultural capital" for vocational requirement. In this regard, education has only an instrumental purpose as exclusively for the purpose of future economic benefits. Ethnic/racial differences are absent from, or neutralized, in both approaches. Ethnic cultural backgrounds rarely draw attentions in evaluating the performance of minority students in Taiwan's standardized educational system, where cultural differences are completely ignored.

4.1.2 Mountain Policy

Like the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development in Canada, Taiwan's mountain policy and its agency is a "total," "comprehensive" structure in the sense that it controls virtually every aspect of life for the peoples under its charge (Kariya 1993). However, the purpose and evolution of the KMT's mountain policy must be understood within Taiwan's historical and geographical context. Taiwan was restored to Chinese control in 1945 but one result of the Potsdam Agreement which served as the "blueprint" for a new postwar world order among the Allies (Pannell and Ma 1980:264). The international Cold War structure, centered around two superpowers, enabled the KMT to justify its claim as the legitimate government of the whole of China until 1971 when Taiwan was expelled from the United Nations. This forced the power base of the KMT's legitimacy to shift from claiming to be the sole legitimate Chinese government to, most vividly, promoting economic development in Taiwan (Amsden 1985).
Geographically, two-thirds of Taiwan is composed of rugged, steep mountains in the central and eastern parts. Mountains are now home to the majority of the remaining indigenous peoples whose different cultures and languages are still distinctive today. Taiwan’s location in the east flank of the Eurasian landmass made it party to the containment policy promoted by the West, especially the U.S. The historical conjunction also gave Taiwan a special place to receive and interact with three major cultures – Japanese, Chinese, and American. All three have their respective positions in Taiwan in the postwar era.

Administratively, the thirty mountain hsians – sub-county units - were all established by 1946. The “Mountain Development Association in Taiwan” was founded in 1948 by the ruling regime to co-opt indigenous intellectuals and the elite for stabilizing the mountain administrative system and to strengthen the KMT’s control over the indigenous societies (Chen Tzung-han 1994:116). Civil and military controls were further consolidated by the enactment of several executive orders validated by martial law which was in effect from 1949 to 1987. These orders were aimed at isolating mountain society from the plains society, and at limiting the accessibility of the mountain areas and their residents to Han people.

The alternative educational system employed in the mountain area was incorporated into regular administration and became one part of the standardized policy of the Department of Education, of the Taiwan Provincial Government in 1949. The adopted national language, Mandarin, was made mandatory in schools and, in turn, once popular Japanese was prohibited. The purpose of this language policy, as outlined in the act, was to “promote the concept about our country and elevate national
consciousness” (Chen Hsin-yi 1993:7). Textbooks were standardized in 1958 when all indigenous children had the same curricula as Han pupils. Even the indigenous peoples’ names were changed into the names of Han people, and indigenous peoples were even compelled to adopt the Chinese way of naming, i.e. the use of first names and family names, which was completely strange to the aborigines. This forced adoption of Chinese names only ended in 1993 when the new law allowed the aborigines to restore their traditional names.

It is obvious that the goals of the national education system and its associated preconditions were to pave the way for “plainization” and to justify the assimilation policy. Moreover, even in the late 1980s, some texts in the standardized books contained apparent discrimination against the aborigines and implicitly promoted the idea of the superiority of the Han people. Indigenous peoples were depicted as headhunting, backward, people whereas the Han were portrayed as civilized. It is under this kind of social construction that indigenous peoples suffer what Hsieh Shih-chung calls the “stigmatized identity (1986). His definition of ethnic stigma is as follows:

“An ethnic group, especially a minority, has a real, fictive, or imaged “feature” which not only makes people who contact with this group keep them at arm’s length, but is disgusting by the group itself. ... In addition, this “feature” also always had intimate relations with poverty, dependence, rejection, and forever inferiority. In the expressed attitude or behavior, members of this group may self-defend themselves a lot, because of the uncertainty or insecurity. Furthermore, “cringe” and “making a deceptive show of power”, or “strong self-slight” and “exaggerated self-esteem” usually interlock to appear in their social lives.”

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In the Taiwan Provincial Government’s outline on the governance of the mountain area, the mountain administrative system should be in a transitional status to prepare for the future incorporation into the regular administration. Three major “movements” were promoted in the mountain hsians in 1951 — agricultural cultivation, reforestation, and the “correction” of living style of the mountain people. Six programs were carried out simultaneously, including the forced adoption of the national language, improving and correcting clothes, diet, housing, daily life, and customs. The influence of the state policy penetrated thoroughly into the indigenous private domain and everyday life for the first time. In 1973, the new act for improving the standard of living for the mountain people echoed similar themes which stressed economic development and the necessity to foster “progress” in the mountain regions for the purpose of modernization. Changes to cultural and religious practices, through the disguise of economic improvement, had profound impacts on indigenous society and ethnic identity. In 1953, a Taiwan Provincial Government’s program specified “plainization” as the ultimate goal of the mountain administration (Chen Tzung-han 1994:53). As I will discuss later, “plainization” in fact means modernization (in its narrow sense) and eventual assimilation.

As a signatory of, and influenced by, the “Convention Concerning the Protection and Integration of Indigenous and Other tribal and Semi-Tribal Populations in Independent Countries” approved by the International Labor Organization, the KMT enacted the new mountain policy in 1963. Integration replaced “plainization” as the ultimate goal of the new policy (Chih Man-ling 1991:33). Under the prerequisite of military security, and in coordination with the “progress of mountain societies,” the
development of tourism, and the requirement of exploiting mountain resources, the new policy allowed the relaxation on earlier laws which previously maintained the isolation of mountain areas. This revision signaled the first policy transformation from protection to a development orientation. In 1966, a revised provision concerning all aboriginal reservation lands opened the door of the mountain areas to the capital and markets of the plains society. The KMT's Central Standing Committee also passed a resolution in the same year aimed to assist aborigines to develop the economy as the major goal of the KMT's mountain policy (Chen Hsin-yi 1993:7).

Extensive construction of an improved transportation network in mountain areas followed the opening of the Central Cross Island Highway in 1960. This primary network was completed in 1968. This network system permits accessibility by road for each of the thirty mountain hsians' governments. The presence of a highway system in peripheral areas is always a double-edged sword to the people it is supposed to serve. One the one hand, it connects different economic systems and subordinates the subsistence economy to the imperatives of modern industrializing economy. Thus, the standard of living is significantly improved. On the other hand, the dominant cultural and value systems are superimposed to the peripheral area through the better "connections." Highways also served as the path for the outflows of indigenous youths and labor forces to the job market in the core area.

The first governmental effort to preserve traditional mountain culture was not promulgated until 1976 (Chen Tzung-han 1994:127). As the prototype of the KMT's cultural policy towards minority groups, the contents of the policy, such as the training of traditional songs and dance for tourist consumption, "museumized" aboriginal
cultures for display, reveal implicitly the Han chauvinist domination. The “top-down” paternalistic institution decides what is suitable for aboriginal cultural revitalization and what should be subsidized for the purpose of tourism development. The state intervention often becomes the origin of stereotypes about the indigenous groups. Thus, the displayed cultural activities, such as the yearly harvest ceremony, or folk dances and music, guided by state’s policy and ideology are manifestations of the uneven knowledge/power relations between the dominating and the dominated, or between the commercialized cultural industry and the culture it aimed to preserve.

The largest public project pertaining to Taiwan’s indigenous culture, the Aboriginal Cultural Park in Pingtung, was open in 1987 under the protest of several indigenous groups. This theme park signaled, perhaps, the biggest and latest attempt to interpret and reproduce the “official edition” of Taiwan’s indigenous culture by paternalistic government agencies. The rise of the indigenous movement in the mid-1980s has effectively challenged the authority and the monopolistic interpretations of indigenous cultural meaning by official agencies.

The indigenous peoples’ movements and other “nativistic” movements in Taiwan, as the opposition to the Sinicization process imposed by the early KMT policy, have gained positive responses from some reform-minded politicians. In an oral instruction given to the Taiwan Provincial Government in 1992, Taiwan’s President was quoted as saying:

“We should not deal with aboriginal education, living, employment and other affairs as we deal with general affairs. In short, aboriginal affairs should be taken care of with special attention. Our attention to them should be clearly demonstrated through our administration in order to make them actually enjoy our care for them” (AAB, unknown year).
Two issues stand out in the remarks above. First, the highest level of administration seems to abandon the early recognition that the mountain policy was only to serve for a "transitional period" and in time would be replaced by "regular" administrative measures. A policy orientation that is more sensitive to cultural differences was adopted as the result of the "nativistic trend" which emerged around the time when martial law was lifted in 1987 (see Chapter 5). A strong request from the civil society to pay more attention to the nativistic culture, language, history and geography has gained substantial political support and forced the ruling KMT elite to respond to the demand. Geographically, the State confirms the politics of difference in the ethnic space in the mountainous area. Policies sensitive to culture and geography have displaced demands of homogenous solidarity of the previous military regime which characterized the old KMT before the eruption of democratic movements in the mid-1980s.

Second, the paternalistic character in the KMT administration remains clearly prevalent. Indigenous peoples are peoples who required being "taken care of" and from this perspective they are not even to be significant participants in their own affairs. Paternalism, in addition to its dominant power over the minorities, implies a potential integration of value systems. The norms of mainstream culture displace indigenous cultures and social principles as the "standard" system. The loss of cultural subjectivity to the Han value system constrains the capability of the original internal mechanism in indigenous societies to respond to outside stimuli (Hsia Chun-hsiang 1992: 106-111). Facing the "attacks" rather than "interactions" from outside, the tribal culture and people are a "dying," "sunset" nation. To the indigenous nations, culture
and history at their outset are not simply academic issues, but are critical for the struggle for cultural and national continuance (Sun Da-chuan 1991:128).

4.1.3 Cultural Representation: Indigenous Peoples in Tourism

The representation of indigenous cultures in Taiwan has been under the one-party control for more than four decades. Stereotypes have been constructed and maintained through standardized textbooks, mass media controlled by the State, and pop culture such as movies, magazines, novels and commercials. In many cases, indigenous peoples and cultures are presented as objects for tourist consumption. The wholehearted support of the “ethnic tourism” by the local government (for example, the Hualien County) and promotion by the mass media has justified the marketing of cultural exoticism (Mellinger 1994; van den Berghe and Keyes 1984).

During Taiwan’s martial law era, political dictatorship led to a monolithic, silent society wherein the homogeneity of the population was stressed for the sake of “national security” (Hsieh Shih-chung 1994c: note 3). Diversity in any aspect was considered as a threat to national solidarity. Therefore, information on racial/ethnic diversity was virtually absent from the educational system. Ethnic and racial characteristics were repressed from discussion and display. The insensibility toward different “others” has led to the distortion of the social and cultural representations of these minority groups in Taiwan. Tourism serves as one of the most obvious fields for the study of the representation of the “indigenous others.”

MacCannell (1989) suggests that tourists as the new leisure class look for an “authentic” experience of different lives. However, the development of tourism, itself a phenomenon of modernity, has generated a “staged authenticity” for the
consumption of tourists. Tourism needs to take place in particular space and for a period of time. Seeking a diversion from routine life, tourism often occurs in places where other people live. Ethnic tourism, which often involves minority groups, is the case in point.

The most significant ethnic tourism in Taiwan takes place in around ten theme parks, mostly very small and located in eastern Taiwan, which display indigenous culture (Hsieh Shih-chung 1994b: 68). The largest among them, the publicly-owned Aboriginal Cultural Park in Pingtung is organized around the “real” life of the pre-modern indigenous peoples in this tourist space. Unlike other parks which almost exclusively highlight folkdance and music of the local aborigines, this theme park also features ancient housing and information on the spatial allocation of families and tribes. Presumably, this park restores or preserves some aspects of indigenous lives and heritages. However, similar to Laxson’s study of Native Americans (1991), the questionnaire survey and observation of tourists’ behaviors conducted by Hsieh Shih-chung (1994b) concluded that the perceptions of indigenous culture reveal more about tourists’ own cultural stereotypes than the information that they are supposedly to learn from their visit. Laxson even rejects the idea that traveling can encourage cultural understanding and suggests that brief touring encounters can only reinforce ethno-centrism and convince tourists of the correctness of their own worldviews (1991).

“Commoditization” is another concern about the development of ethnic tourism. Local customs, rituals, festival, and ethnic arts are produced and performed for the tourists’ consumption and thus undermined and changed the meanings of cultural
products and human relations in local communities (Greenwood 1977). Moreover, capitalists can commercialize local cultures without the consent of the participants, while the capital/labor relations allow the local people to be exploited. At the same time, ethnic artifacts are increasing “staged” so as to look “authentic.” The force of capital thus creates an “illusion” of indigenous cultural revitalization. Hsieh Shih-chung (1994b: 124-25) has made similar observation for Hualien county located in the eastern side of Taiwan:

Most aboriginal performers concentrate in a few commercial institutes owned by the Han entrepreneurs to perform set dances and songs, which are defined by those enterprises as mountain culture. ... One dance instructor... said that young ladies as well as kids do not have national (ethnic) consciousness and the mountain culture is relegated to a money-making instrument.

“Lacking passion toward culture” does not happen to the dancers and performers alone. Other staff members and even the audience display a similar jaded attitude in the commercial performing institutes. For the staff, their jobs are viewed only as profit-making activities. For the audience, the performance is just another kind of entertainment. Few will make connections between the dance and music, and the indigenous culture from which it sprung. Together, the staff, the performers, and the tourists have forged the existence of a cultural formalism for commercial aims (Hsieh Shih-chung 1994b: 124-25).

Even though the purpose of the cultural formalism is profit, it is still a process of cultural display which dynamically defines ethnic identity through the limited interactions of the indigenous performers and, the mostly, Han audience. The audience, in this case, does not necessarily seek authentic experience. Rather, a disruption from regular life may well be their goal so that they can return to “real life”
with happiness and health, as they believe to be a main function of tourism. Cultural connections are thus difficult to form, not to mention any effort to induce the desire for an “authentic experience” which is described by MacCannell (1973) as the modern embodiment of religious pilgrim. MacCannell’s concept of “authenticity” remains problematic both in the tourists’ attitudes and in how to “define” such an experience.

Cohen (1988) argues that authenticity cannot be a “objective” quality “out there” waiting to be discovered. Instead, authenticity is a “socially constructed concept and its social (as against philosophical) connotation is, therefore, not given, but ‘negotiable’” (original emphasis). Any viable culture must be dynamic and itself a changing process. Culture in this regard, cannot be only as the pre-modern life prior to the penetration of modernization, as sought by the early nostalgic ethnographers (Cohen 1988). Culture in its dynamic process of development might “absorb and digest” new elements for its own reproduction. “Fake” culture can one day become authentic as regarded by both the “experts” and the people themselves.

Greenwood’s concerns about the commoditization (1977) of local cultures also need a more delicate analysis. Intrinsic meaning and significance of cultural products or religious rituals may be lost in the process of this commoditization. Cultural brokers and tourist entrepreneurs from outside may exploit local peoples. However, viewed from a different angle, new cultural meanings are emerging from the cultural representing process. Religious rituals for the internal public can be transformed to an expression of self-identity to the external public. The yearly harvest ceremony held by the urban Amis people in Taiwan may lose some traditional meanings compared to the one held originally by the tribe, but the urban form of ceremony functions as the
display of Amis identity and ethnic consciousness as it exist for better or worse at the present time (Chen Tzung-han 1994:145).

The development of tourism in indigenous societies has other implications. First, it leads to the creation of a certain number of low-paid, low-skilled service jobs in indigenous communities. The number of job created varies geographically. Those jobs, with a finite number, preserve certain labor forces from leaving the tribes. The second side effect, however, is to increase the dependency on cash and the wider market economy for aborigines. Third, the increasing state intervention in ethnic tourism inevitably leads to questions on the contradictory and complex role that a state can play (Wood 1984). In the politics of representations, one needs to recognize the linkages between tourism discourse and the power of the State to uncover both the practices and ideologies that structure touristic relations and the representation of the minorities, and whose interests the touristic industry serve (compared to Mellinger 1994: 776). The resulting changes in power relations are the fourth major influence of tourism. It is demonstrated most vividly in the naming of places. As the "only masters" before the arrival of the Han people, the aborigines once had the sole power to name the landscapes within their ethnic space. Those names are often related to tribal myths and ancestral stories. The influx of tourists has altered the indigenous naming of the landscapes into the "Sinicized" names to accommodate the cultural background of the Han tourists at the expense of local history and geography (Hsia Chu-joie and Chen Chi-wu 1988).

For the indigenous peoples living in these areas, tourism can be destructive in some cases, but empowering in others. The consequences obviously influence the
whole social and political structures of a region, as well as the historical and
geographical contexts of the local community. That is, the social and cultural impacts
of tourism should be submitted to a detailed empirical examination, if possible within
an emic, processual, and comparative framework (Cohen 1988). A geographically
sensitive study is necessary to distinguish the conditions under which cultural
meanings are preserved and newly emerged, from those under which meanings and
societies are destroyed and alienated. The goal of this kind of study is, as pointed out
by Mellinger, to

condemn and disrupt the imperialist structures and colonialist
fantasies that constitute much of tourism culture, and to take up a
discourse of possibility that provides for the empowerment of
misrepresented groups and the transformation of tourist

A living indigenous people’s culture has ties to the land, not performance stages
or museums. Land rights, therefore, have been repeatedly singled out by worldwide
indigenous leaders as the most important issue (Wilmer 1993:131). Despite various
definitions about “indigenous peoples,” the close cultural affinity with a particular
area of land or territory is always central to the concept of this term (see Kingsbury
1995; Gray 1995). In next section, I will turn my attention to the official government
provisions relevant to the indigenous lands in Taiwan. These documents are important
in that they reflect both attitudes and efforts by the national government to come to
“grip” with these issues.

4.2 The Evolution of the “Provision”

“The Management Provision of Mountain Reservation Land in Counties of
Taiwan” was originally promulgated as administrative decree of the provincial
name of this Provision was later modified to the “Provision of Development and
Management of Mountain People’s Reservation Land” (the “Provision,” hereafter). In
1995, the term “mountain people” was replaced by the term “indigenous people” in
the Constitution and was henceforth changed in all laws and administrative decrees
generated in response to the calls and pressures from the indigenous movements.
Despite the fact that this is the only “Provision” pertaining to the indigenous
reservation land, its legal status is still as an administrative decree rather than a formal
law or act approved by the legislature. As such the importance of the decree in courts
of law remains insufficient compared to the formal laws. This creates problems in
dealing with the subsequent land disputes between the Han and indigenous peoples as
will be discussed later.

In power/knowledge relations, naming is one of the most direct ways of
expressing domination and authority. The evolution of these names and indeed the
naming processes of this single Provision reflects the changing social and political
context, and the changing of policy trends as they may effect indigenous people and
the land tenure system. Two alterations constitute the major theme in the subsequent
name changing process of the “Provision” in question. First, a mere management-
oriented Provision was substituted by one which included both “development and
management” in 1990 which seemed to exemplified the ideological changes in some
government agencies. Hsiao Hsin-huang (1983) illustrated that at the provincial level,
protection was the preferred direction. On the contrary, the central government
promoted a development-oriented agenda and the modification of the terminology
reflects these contrasting goals. Nevertheless, the struggles and competitions between different state apparatus leading to different policy orientations did not necessarily involve re-evaluations about the preferred condition of either development or protection for aborigines as a goal of these minority policies. Rather, the development and cultivation of marginal slopeland demanded by rapidly expanding capitalist development in Taiwan’s “economic miracle” were at stake (Chen Tzung-han 1994: 9-10). The modification of the Provision towards a more capital-friendly direction demonstrates that continual economic development remains still at the top priority of the government policy.

Second, the name-changing process from “Mountain Reservation,” to “Mountain People’s Reservation,” and to the latest “Indigenous People’s Reservation” in 1995, not only recognizes ontologically the other “persons” in mountains, but finally confers upon them the name they have long sought. This “name-correcting” movement has been one of the three major goals of Taiwan’s indigenous movements since the mid-1980s. The other two goals are the establishment of clear land rights and clarifications about autonomous rights (YiChiang BaLuer 1995). Mountains are no longer simply physical landscapes and meaningless space. Instead, mountains are the living place for “other” peoples, an “ethnic space” for indigenous peoples.

Protection was the major characteristic of the early edition of the Provision which proclaimed its goals as to “stabilized people’s livelihood in the mountains” and to “develop the mountain economy” in 1948. The goals were changed into “safeguarding land used by people in the mountains, to promote reasonable use of mountain reservation land, to stabilize people’s living in mountains, and to develop
the mountain economy” in the 1966 version. This was modified again to “safeguard mountain people’s livelihood, and implement mountain people’s administration” in 1990 (Hong Chun-hu 1992:44). Seeking economic development and a more effective, “soft” surveillance (compared to the Japanese policing system) seem to be the two major intents throughout the era as a whole. Despite its significant impacts on the indigenous livelihood, this Provision remained an administrative decree of provincial government until 1990 when it became an executive order of the central government. However, it was still an administrative decree, not a law.

In his dissertation, Hong Chun-hu (1992:198-257) made an extensive effort to collect and organize all official documents to record the detailed process of revising the Provision from 1980-1989. However, as a conservative pro-KMT scholar, he did not offer critical reviews and evaluations on the Provision itself. Though some contextual information on the entire matter was offered at the very beginning of his volume, such as the rise of civil society after lifting of the martial law in 1987, and the establishment of opposition parties, critical comments are basically absent from his work. To evaluate the process of policy formation, one cannot abstract the Provision from these concrete sociopolitical contexts or pay attention exclusively to just the governmental documents.

During the fifty years of Japanese control, despite the fact that they were conscripted by the colonizers to fight all over Southeastern Asia, the aborigines were basically protected and isolated from the plains Han society. The KMT inherited the Japanese policy of reservations that separated indigenous peoples of the mountains from the Han people of the plains, both demographically and administratively. A
developmental perspective was, however, added with the inception of the KMT’s mountain policy. The goals of the mountain policies embodied by phrases such as “transitional status” and “regulated capitalist development” characterize the KMT’s economic, social, and political policies toward the mountain area (Hsiao Hsin-huang 1983). The reservation policy, then, served as both a buffer between a more “advanced” capitalist mode of production in the plains and the premodern economy in the mountains, and also as a political instrument for social control and surveillance.

“Plainization of mountainous area,” as outlined in a provincial government’s project in 1953 (Outline of Promoting Administrative Development in the Mountains), was the ultimate goal of the KMT’s mountain policy. From the KMT’s perspective, the term “plainization” not only means changing the economic system, but also re-shaping the political organizations, social norms, and cultural values. In a word, it reflects the KMT desires to promote modernization and assimilation. The profound influence of Taiwan’s “plainization” policy can still be seen even after more than three decades of implementation of the mountain administration. The “plainization of mountain economy” was suggested by a provincial official in charge of reservation land as the long-term goal of the mountain policy (see Chang Chen-che 1988). This proposal reveals not only the oversimplified separation of economy from other social factors, but also clearly indicates a developmental ideology, and a critical lack of perception toward the current political, social, and cultural crises facing these indigenous peoples.

The establishment of aboriginal reservation lands, as the most decisive policy in the government’s efforts to effect the transition of indigenous society, has altered traditional concepts of land based upon a spiritual, religious, and kinship-oriented
interpretation, to the establishment of law-binding private property and personal space, which was seen as a necessary for the State-defined development.

In the 1966 revision of the Provision, capitalism was officially introduced into the mountains following the opening of Central Cross Island Highway in 1960, by permitting "legal" public or private companies to rent and use reservation land. This opened the area to a variety of new problems and new agents of change. The revision is commonly considered to be the result of the concession of government policy to the pressure of imperative economic development (Lin Fang-chi 1984:92; Lee Tsu-min 1991:32). Economic development served as the most important legitimate foundation for the KMT's rule over Taiwan in the face of the international crisis (Amsden 1985).

After the Cross Island Highway was opened, the changing concept of land ownership and control became more apparent. Capital and technology from "plains-based" investors were able to permeate into the mountain subsistence economy and fundamentally altered not only the mode of production, but also traditional social values. To take advantage of the higher altitude and the lower temperatures in Li-Shan, plains-based Han people invested significant capital to make Li-Shan a rare region for growing temperate-zone crops in tropical/subtropical Taiwan. As a consequence, extensive areas of steep slopelands were turned into fruit orchards and vegetable fields. Agricultural activities on these slopelands, legally or illegally, brought huge profits to both Han and aboriginal cultivators and at the same time accelerated the ensuing environmental degradation. The intensive land use in ecologically sensitive areas causes national concerns on the slopelands conservation (Chang Chang-yi 1981&1992).
Despite the Provision's efforts to prohibit the sale of reservation land to Han people, the very significant number of land transactions between aborigines and Han investors is an "open secret" among the people of the mountain hsian. From 1958 to 1968, an islandwide land ownership and land use survey in the reservations was conducted to clarify the cadastral records and the utilization of natural resources. Other, less comprehensive, cadastral surveys were computed in the Li-Shan area in 1958, 1966, 1970, 1974, 1976, and 1985, as land conflicts in the region continued to be among the most severe in the island (PPRA 1997a: 183-84). The Provision limits land ownership in the reservation land to only those aborigines who have continuously used or tilled a plot of land for ten years. This criterion was officially revised to five years of tenure in 1990 because of many complaints. Land titles otherwise remain with the State, in which case, aborigines possess only usufruct rights, tilling or topsoil rights. After the revision of 1966, Han people could lease land from the aborigines who still own the usufruct rights to any given parcel. Under no conditions can land title or usufruct rights be transferred to any non-indigenes. Although land transactions are illegal and so theoretically impossible (since the State is the legal owner) in the reservation area, complete land sales including the title and the usufruct right passing from the aborigines to Han people are prevalent in several mountain hsians. Potential land conflicts were hence embedded in this particular geographical and historical context since the implementation of the Provision as the land tenure policy. Although the Provision was the major government document which addressed these issues, its lack of both strict enforcement and of a broad picture of the minority policy brings about the current complex problems of the land disputes.

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Some individual aborigines, who benefited from their early investment in high-value-added cash crops, were among the first group to realize that land could in fact, be the target of investment. To take advantage of being aborigines, they started to purchase plots from other indigenous people who needed urgent cash (Yang Kuo-chu 1996). A small new “land aristocracy” class emerged among indigenous groups from what was originally a much more egalitarian tribal societies. The gap between rich and poor indigenous people enlarged as one of the most conspicuous consequences of capitalist development and land speculation. Plains-based Han people, with ample capital, advanced technology, and superior management skills, entered the mountainous area mostly after 1966 when the revised Provision allowed this to occur.

4.3 Land Conflicts in Mountain Hsian

Again, the revision of the “Provision of Development and Management of Mountain People’s Reservation Land” in 1966 opened the legal door for the first time for public and private enterprises and individuals to invest in reservation land. However, it would be misleading and naive to assume that land conflicts in the reservation land emerged only after the revision in 1966. Structurally, it is the “profit-seeking” nature of the capital from plains investors and the developmental ideology supported by the KMT which enabled the relaxation of usufruct rights in the reservation land, and the more intensive use of these resources.

Fifty years earlier, the Japanese were also active in the region. With the goal of exploiting camphor resources in Taiwan’s foothills and for other types of logging, the Japanese tried to incorporate the indigenous peoples into the imperial production system. At the same time, the Japanese brought Han people into the mountainous areas.
as labor for resource exploitation. During the "power vacuum" when the Japanese were forced to leave Taiwan, but before the KMT had totally gained control of Taiwan, the Han people who either resided in, or had recently penetrated into, the indigenous territory had started some commercial activities. These Han residents of mountain areas clearly functioned as cultural brokers before any provision about the indigenous peoples was enacted (Hsia Chun-hsiang 1991:100). Some long term Han residents of these areas will argue accordingly that they are also "indigenous" since they have lived in the mountains since before the KMT took control over Taiwan. These Han people argue that this long term occupation justified their claims to land titles within the reservation areas.

Historically, then, land conflicts are not a new event in the mountain area. With the increasingly flow of Han migrants from southeast China since the seventeenth century to Taiwan, and considering the space and resources of Taiwan remained constant, lands, especially arable lands became a precious resource to both indigenous peoples and the Han immigrants. Thus, in the history of Taiwan, land conflicts have developed culturally along the ethnic/racial cleavage and geographically, in the marginal areas of the island. The following section will focus on the land conflicts which occurred after the KMT established its control over Taiwan, particularly after capitalism intruded into the mountain subsistence economy.

4.3.1 The Physical Characteristics of the Reservation Land

Uneven distribution in both the thirty mountain hsians and in some plains hsians in Taiwan's eastern coastal plains is the first spatial feature of the aboriginal reservation lands. They are spatially discrete and mostly located along both sides of
upper-middle streams, and often contiguous to national forest lands (Chang Hui-tuan et al. 1996:212; AAB 1996; see Figure 4.1 for distribution). The second spatial feature of the reservation lands is that they are found, with few exceptions, in slopelands across the island. Table 4.7 shows the distribution of the reservation lands in terms of altitude. Most of the reserves are under the altitude of 1,000 meters and in accordance with traditional tribal locations. The reservation lands located in altitudes higher than two thousand meters account only for a small proportion of the entire reserves. The lands above twenty-five hundred meters have limited economic benefits given their slopes, their extreme climate conditions and the poor thin soils. Because of topographical limitations, coupled with the traditional indigenous conception of lands where vague boundaries among individuals' lands were common social practices for many tribes, some of the reservation lands did not have clear demarcations in early days. (In fact, as I will argue in Chapter 7 that the precise boundaries of private lands and, by the same token, the territories of national states, are possible only after the modern development of "geography," i.e. the inventions of sophisticated instruments to determine the boundaries.)

The total area of the reservation lands has changed on a yearly basis, especially in recent years, as a result of efforts by the indigenous movements and the plains peoples' rights movements. Both will be discussed in the later chapters. In most cases, new reservation lands are added to the old ones but these "new" lands are overwhelmingly located in marginal areas.

The laws and relevant government agencies, including the departments of Environmental Protection, Agriculture and Forestry, and Civil Affairs in Taiwan.
Figure 4.1 The Distribution of the Aboriginal Reservation Land in Taiwan
Source: AAB 1996: 41
Provincial Government, classify the aboriginal reservation lands into three basic categories of agricultural, pastoral, and forestry lands, according to the physical characteristics and topography. The slope gradient, or the steepness of the slope, is the single most important factor in deciding the legal allocation of land. Other criteria include the depth of soil, the degree of soil erosion, and the characteristics of the parent rock materials (Chang Chang-yi 1992). My fieldwork and interviews suggest, however, that many of the attributes are, in fact, arbitrary and inconsistent, and reflect subjective measures conducted in a careless way by government officials in the early days. Years later, the precedents established by these first surveys remain in place regardless of veracity.

Table 4.7 The Distribution of Aboriginal Reservation Land in Altitudes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Altitude (meter)</th>
<th>Area (hectare)</th>
<th>Percent (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>~200</td>
<td>28519.3723</td>
<td>11.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200~400</td>
<td>25929.0912</td>
<td>10.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>400~600</td>
<td>50610.7651</td>
<td>20.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>600~900</td>
<td>56836.1132</td>
<td>23.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>900~1200</td>
<td>35230.4935</td>
<td>10.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1200~1600</td>
<td>18920.1754</td>
<td>7.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1600~2000</td>
<td>27586.8364</td>
<td>11.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000~3000</td>
<td>219.7182</td>
<td>0.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3000+</td>
<td>878.8727</td>
<td>0.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>244731.4380</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


According to the intensity of land use patterns, agricultural lands can be used for forestry and animal husbandry as well as crop production, and the pastoral lands are also compatible for forestry use. Nevertheless, the forestry land, given steep slopes, can not accommodate any other land use, such as the growing of cash crops (agricultural use), or the raising of animals (pastoral use). "Illegal" land uses, as referring to the agricultural or pastoral uses of forestry lands, or the agricultural use of
pastoral lands, are termed “exceed the limited use” (chao-hsien-lee-yung) in official documents.

Table 4.8 provides the areas and percentages of the land use categories in the reservation land. The universal standards set in the “Statute of the Use and Conservation of Slopelands” proscribes that any land with its slope over twenty-eight degrees has to be categorized as “forestry only” land, regardless of soil and vegetation conditions (Chang Chang-yi 1992). Since the pastoral lands account for but a small proportion of the reservation land, most illegal land use occurs in the forestry lands that are used, despite the regulation, for the cultivation of crops.

Table 4.8 Classification of Aboriginal Reservation Land in Taiwan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types</th>
<th>Agricultural Land</th>
<th>Forest Land</th>
<th>Animal Husbandry</th>
<th>Others</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Area</td>
<td>57759.590</td>
<td>173368.65</td>
<td>1905.920</td>
<td>11697.278</td>
<td>244731.438</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>23.60</td>
<td>70.84</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Aboriginal Administration Bureau (AAB), Taiwan Provincial Government. 1996

4.3.2 The Current Conditions in Mountain Hsians

The early edition of the “Provision of Development and Management of Mountain People’s Reservation Land” indicates that reserved slopelands were designated for the indigenous peoples exclusively so that only indigenous people could lease lands from the State and later obtain clear and free land titles. The situation only changed after the revision in 1966 which permitted private or public enterprises to invest in reservation lands and thus introduced more intensive economic activities such as lumbering, mining, and quarrying into these reserves. While the KMT’s policy vacillated between “protection” and “development” of the mountain area, capitalism and the Han people did not waste their time following the “letter of
the law” and began quickly to develop the mountain areas in their own way with little regulation.

The Provision, from one perspective, seems to be a causal factor in the origin of land conflicts in the mountain hsian. On the one hand, only aborigines can legally own the land title in the reserves. Han people can only lease lands from the aborigines who either own the lands, or have usufruct rights over the lots in question. On the other hand, under-the-counter land transactions have been pervasive between Han investors and the indigenous peoples who often needed immediate sources of cash. Officially all of these “mutual agreements” where land is at stake are unlawful according to the strict limits of the Provision. In such cases, the hsian government is supposed to “confiscate” any land which “exceeds the limited use” (illegal use), restore original forestry, and terminate the legal lease of the land parcel in question. The problem seems to lie either in the ineffective governmental implementation of the Provision, or possibly even with imperfections of the Provision itself.

Table 4.9 shows the official statistical results of the most current land uses survey for the reservation lands in 1996. The areas used by aborigines account for sixty percent of the total reservation lands. Natural forestlands, that is lands without any human interventions or activities, occupies slightly more than thirty one percent of the total. Within the lands used by the aborigines, 53,955.9472 hectares, or about forty percent out of the total of 148,872 hectares are devoted to reforestation by indigenous peoples over the period from 1976 to 1992, in a different source of data (Aboriginal Affairs Bureau, AAB 1992:57). The data itself in Table 4.9 does not specify what institutes are present in the reservation areas. In alternate sources, lands used by the
government and taken by eminent domain also constitute a significant proportion of
the “lost” reservation land. For example, the Yu-Shan National Park alone has taken
around fifteen hundred hectares of reservation land (Lee Tsu-min 1991:33).

Table 4.9 Land use Classifications in Reservation Lands in Taiwan, 1996

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Use</th>
<th>Used by Aborigines</th>
<th>Natural Forest Lands</th>
<th>Institute &amp; School</th>
<th>Used by Hans</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Area</td>
<td>148872</td>
<td>76672.3541</td>
<td>10168</td>
<td>9019.0839</td>
<td>244731.438</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>60.83</td>
<td>31.33</td>
<td>4.15</td>
<td>3.68</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Aboriginal Administration Bureau (AAB), Taiwan Provincial Government. 1996

The reservation lands used by Han people have become the most direct source of
ethnic/racial land conflicts since the mid-1960s. Herein lies the crux of the matter.
Official documents record less than four percent of the reservation lands as being used
by Han people (Table 4.9). Although the situations vary from place to place, it is
widely believed that the actual proportion of land used by Han investors or residents is
much higher, given the fact that many transactions are simply kept from official
inspections. Taichung and Nantou Counties are often singled out as the two most
significant cases for Han people using the reservation lands (see PPRA 1997a; Lee

The area of the reservation lands, some argue, is in fact diminishing even under
the KMT’s control. Lands are not only lost to aggressive Han capitalists, but also to
the state apparatus, including the Taiwan Provincial Government, as well as to
counties, hsians, state-owned enterprises (TaiPower Company, Taiwan Sugar
Company, which is the largest land owner among public institutes), national parks,
experimental forestlands for public universities, veteran farms, and also to the
Table 4.10 gives a detailed insight into the current circumstances of the indigenous peoples' use of the reservation lands. The indigenous peoples are at best, the nominal owners of the reservation lands. Only about thirty percent of the reservation lands are actually assigned to indigenous ownership. In order to acquire ownership of reservation land, the aborigines have to first register the transaction with the local government and then prove their claim to uninterrupted use over the lot in question for five or ten years, depending on the time of their registrations of the lands. The ten years' requirement was revised to five years in the "Statute of the Use and Conservation of Slopelands" in 1986, which is the source of the Provision (Lin Chialing 1996:103). The new Provision, however, was not enacted by the Executive Yuan until 1990. Also 1990 marked the first time that the status of the Provision was elevated from an administrative decree of the Taiwan Provincial Government, to one of the central government. Despite the revision, the percentage of land officially assigned the status of indigenous ownership is much lower than the original expectation. The problem lies, perhaps, either in the lack of access to government information, or that the concept of registering land for exclusive use remains foreign to the aborigines. It is no wonder that some elder indigenous peoples have great difficulties navigating the complex legal process and failed to obtain the official ownership for many years (Interview C).

The titles of those lands, which have been set up for either usufruct or tilling rights, can be transferred from the State to individual aborigines provided they have continuously been used for five years or for five years into the future. Therefore, by the year 2000, about ninety percent (29.67+40.48+23.06 in Table 4.10) of the lands...
currently used by the aborigines should be under the title to indigenous peoples.

Compared to the current, low ownership rate, if ninety percent of the land could be under indigenous ownership (of the total 148,872 hectares lands), this would reflect great progress.

Table 4.10 Various Rights Acquired by Aborigines in Reservation Land Out of A Total of 148,872 Hectares in 1994

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current Condition</th>
<th>Land Title Acquired</th>
<th>Setting Up Usufruct Right</th>
<th>Setting Up Tilling Right</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Area (hectare)</td>
<td>44171</td>
<td>60257</td>
<td>34330</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>29.67</td>
<td>40.48</td>
<td>23.06</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current Condition</th>
<th>Use for Free</th>
<th>Renting Right for Business</th>
<th>Non-Registered for Use or Rent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Area (hectare)</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>779</td>
<td>9264</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.52</td>
<td>6.22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


While land rights constitute a matter of paramount importance to indigenous peoples in Taiwan, the issue has not gotten much attention in the mainstream press. The land rights issue only drew public attention in the late 1980s when indigenous groups held two marches in the name of the "Return Our Lands Movement." This movement is by far the most successful indigenous movement in terms of the number of the people mobilized to participate in the demonstrations. Each of the two marches drew around two thousand indigenous peoples from different tribes across Taiwan. Given that the total indigenous population is estimated to be around thirty-three thousand, about one out of every one hundred sixty six participated in the two demonstrations (Lee Tsu-min 1991:1). This successful mobilization not only reflected the acuteness of the land loss in the mountain hsians, but also drew significant attention to many related issues. The marches seem to have gotten the attention of the authorities as well. From 1991 to 1995, mainly in response to the demands and
pressures of the “Return Our Lands Movement,” the Taiwan Provincial Government added a total of 17178.2993 hectares to the original reservation lands (AAB 1996:9-11, calculated by author).

According to the Aboriginal Administration Bureau (AAB 1996:13-15) of the provincial government, the additional reservation lands come mainly from public forestry lands. However, the task did not go smoothly and fell behind the original schedule. Some new sanctioned reservation lands are contiguous to Han people’s lands and the boundaries are in disputes. Other new reserves contain lands used by non-aborigines. These lands have to be excluded from the category of reservation lands (AAB 1996:15) as a compromise to reality. In fact, the government’s concession to the reality that many Han people illegally use reservation lands, and that many more have “exceed the limited use” problem, is the force behind every revision of the Provision.

In a proclaimed democratic society, the rights of both minority groups and indigenous peoples are inevitably appropriated and incorporated by various political forces. For the ruling elite, the formal care for the minorities functions to consolidate the legitimacy of its ruling. For the opposition party, the minorities/aborigines and their problems serve as a subject which can be co-opted by opposition forces and as such serve as sources of political gain.

In April 1995, the Executive Yuan held a conference on national territorial planning, partly in response to the indigenous and environmental groups’ calls for a comprehensive planning for future development and resource allocation. The “Planning and Management of Aboriginal Reservation Lands” was among eight topics
being discussed in the conference. The Democratic Progressive Party, the biggest opposition party in Taiwan, together with several relevant indigenous groups such as the Aboriginal Division of the Taiwan Presbyterian Church and the Alliance of Taiwan Aborigines, cosponsored the first aboriginal land conference in May 1995, before the opening of the official planning conference. Delegates from the aboriginal communities, scholars, and government officials attended the DPP’s conference (The First Land Conference for Indigenous Peoples in Taiwan, 1995).

Still, most of the reservation lands currently under indigenous control are located on marginal slopelands with only limited economic potentials. Land conflicts between the indigenous peoples and the Han people occur in specific locations where economic prospects, either in agriculture or tourism, are notable. As indicated in Table 4.11, Taichung and Nantou are the two counties with the highest percentage of Han people’s use of the reservation lands. Considering both legal and illegal uses, Han people use up to 31% of total reservation lands in Taichung and 11% in Nantou, while the national average is around 4.6%. However, these figures are all from official documents. The actual area of the reservation lands used by Han people can be even greater than the data suggest. The only mountain hsian in Taichung County is Hoping Hsian, where I conducted my field research. The area of the reservation lands in Taichung County is second to the last. However, the total area used by Han people in Taichung County is only second to the Nantou County.

In Table 4.9 and 4.11, the total reservation area used by Han people has a difference of nearly two thousand hectares (9019.0839 in 1996 vs. 10970.8755 in 1994). It is highly unlikely that within a two-year period, the area used by people of
Table 4.11 The Use of Aboriginal Reservation Land by Han Peoples in Taiwan in 1994  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Total Area of Reservation Lands (1)</th>
<th>Legally Used Area (2)</th>
<th>Illegally Used Area (3)</th>
<th>(2) + (3)</th>
<th>% of Land Used by the Han</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Taipei</td>
<td>2095.2629</td>
<td>6.1440</td>
<td>3.0147</td>
<td>9.15</td>
<td>0.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ilan</td>
<td>14802.6190</td>
<td>264.4209</td>
<td>171.1513</td>
<td>435.5000</td>
<td>2.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taoyuan</td>
<td>11675.0704</td>
<td>291.5938</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>291.5938</td>
<td>2.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hsinchu</td>
<td>18960.8590</td>
<td>16.1845</td>
<td>0.3620</td>
<td>16.5465</td>
<td>0.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miaoli</td>
<td>8002.3467</td>
<td>565.3392</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>565.3392</td>
<td>7.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taichung</td>
<td>6303.6456</td>
<td>1524.9831</td>
<td>428.7464</td>
<td>1953.7295</td>
<td>30.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nantou</td>
<td>30372.1831</td>
<td>1976.9857</td>
<td>1373.1090</td>
<td>3350.0947</td>
<td>11.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chiayi</td>
<td>6992.9969</td>
<td>71.8802</td>
<td>41.0123</td>
<td>112.8925</td>
<td>1.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kaohsiung</td>
<td>12709.5304</td>
<td>189.4520</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>189.4520</td>
<td>1.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pingtung</td>
<td>63925.5842</td>
<td>938.1873</td>
<td>647.8807</td>
<td>1586.0680</td>
<td>2.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taitung</td>
<td>39413.4697</td>
<td>1436.8282</td>
<td>283.2927</td>
<td>1720.1209</td>
<td>4.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hualien</td>
<td>24141.3139</td>
<td>415.3622</td>
<td>324.9453</td>
<td>740.3075</td>
<td>3.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>239395.2629</td>
<td>7697.3611</td>
<td>3273.5144</td>
<td>10970.8755</td>
<td>4.58</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Han extraction has dropped nearly eighteen percent from the official figure calculated in 1994. A possible interpretation is that the situation is so blurred and/or that illegal land transactions are so pervasive that each subsequent survey obtains tremendously different results. Some aborigines and local officials may well be inclined to conceal the real amount of land being co-opted to avoid ensuing punishments. This situation reveals the “dynamic” dimension in the reservation lands: not only has the area of the reservation lands in question changed in the past few years, but also the real areas of different land use patterns have fluctuated. The local contexts, social, political, historical, and geographical are the key to deciphering this complex, long-standing problem.

Socially, the mountain *hsians* have been the mixed space represented by both aboriginal and Han cultures since the late Japanese period beginning in the 1930s. This “hybridity” makes the mountain *hsians* a special place for the majority Han people. Politically, only aborigines are eligible candidates for the official political position of “chief” of the mountain *hsians*. Han people, even though they outnumber the aborigines in several mountain *hsians*, cannot be elected as the chief of the *hsian*. Historically, the educational system in Taiwan emphasized a homogenous civic public which was intended to transcend all differences in peoples. Only recently has the educational system started to acknowledge cultural differences in Taiwan. This reluctance among Taiwan’s people and the educational bureaucratic system has done a great harm especially to the minorities and their cultures. In this historical context, being “different” in practical terms means exclusion and discrimination. Geographically, the economically and politically peripheral locations enable the
disputes in the mountain hsians to exacerbate to a significant degree before the issue
drew any national attention. The relatively sparse populated marginal areas of the
mountain hsians also permit abundant space for development of tourism and high-altitude agriculture. Land conflicts, therefore, often occur in which viable tourism or
high value-added agricultural products are at stake.

Complaints from Han people living in mountain hsians are centered around two
land-related issues: the rights to the continuous use of, and rights to the ownership of,
the reservation lands. Han people possess only lease rights in reservation areas. Since
the government does not acknowledge the land transactions between Han and
indigenous peoples, one parcel of land can thus be sold or leased several times which
often results in civil disputes involving more than two parties. Some Han people allege
that aborigines try to deny those transactions conducted between their parental
generation and Han people and now want the land back ignoring earlier contracts.
Often, new Han investors who were previously unfamiliar with the Provision and its
related clauses, “bought” lands from indigenous landlords and then found that, de jure,
they did not own the land they have already bought and paid for (PPRA 1997a:48).
Certainly most indigenous peoples do not intend to be fraudulent as the Han people
alleged, but similar civil disputes inevitably do damages to the already bleak ethnic
relations and go far in reinforcing existing racial stereotypes in the mountain hsians.

On the other side of the story, aborigines’ complain about the “cunning” and
“relentless” plain-based capitalists, who buy large areas of the reservation lands by
any means available for the purpose of land speculation or other exploitation. Such
stories are prevalent in my field research and in the reports from the First Land
Conference for Indigenous Peoples in Taiwan (DPP 1995). The socially structured
disadvantages in aborigines' economic status, which I discussed earlier in this chapter,
often propels indigenous peoples into land sales, even though they know the
transactions are unlawful.

As a consequence of economic hardship, many indigenous peoples are forced
into the black market to sell their lands, sometimes at an unfair price, because they
need cash. According to the sixteenth clause of the Provision, those aborigines who
transfer their usufruct or tilling rights to non-aborigines should be denied their
previous rights over the lands and their reservation lands should be confiscated by the
local government.

YuGan NaFu (1995) lists several possible reasons to interpret the causes of the
illegal land transactions in the mountain hsians. Indigenous peoples tend to sell their
lands to Han people under the following conditions. First, in locations where the
reservation lands have clear potential value for the tourism industry, the aborigines are
lured by monetary benefit. In other cases, the lands have no potential for tourism but
may have a high economic value (usually in agriculture), however, the aborigines have
no capital to effectively manage them because of no feasible financial assistance from
the government or the local Farmers’ Association. Land sales can also occur in places
where the lands have neither tourism nor agricultural values, but the aborigines have
no motivation to work on the lands because they simply cannot rely on their efforts to
raise their families. Second, the lack of effective implementation of the indigenous
land policy by the government results in a prevalence of illegal transactions. The
inefficiency of enacting land policy in the mountain hsians is arguably due to the lack
of professionalism within the bureaucracy of the local *hsians*. Third, the low status of the “Provision of Development and Management of Mountain People’s Reservation Land” as an administrative decree constrains its capability for effective criminal charges against illegal uses. Fourth, the numerous “satellite” laws, which refer to any law related to the Provision and the use and development of slopelands, reduce the motivations for crop production. Fifth, by cheating and other fraudulent means, and capitalizing on the unfamiliarity of laws by aborigines, plains people can purchase lands. Sixth, for large-scale resource exploitation, vested interest groups in the mountain *hsians*, including politicians, merchants, and some civil servants, have used their privilege to collaborate with big business groups to purchase lands collectively from the aborigines who are ignorant of these future plans for development which would raise the value of their lands in the very immediate future (see DPP 1995).

Based on my own intensive research, I am inclined to agree with the overall observations made above. The lack of direct proof in the last but definitely not the least important aspect of the problem, that is, the implicit connections between the Han people that demand the deregulation of reservation lands and one business conglomerate renown for land speculation, need further exploration and research. However, my field research suggests that these allegation are often true and I shall discuss the relationship between some active Han capitalists in the mountain *hsians* and the big business groups in Chapter 6.

In summary, as the “foreign regimes” increase their control of indigenous peoples over a span of 400 years, the social and economic conditions facing aborigines are generally deteriorated. In both incomes and education levels, the gap between
aborigines and Han people is enlarged increasingly. In most cases, the aborigines are stereotyped and their images are distorted in the consuming process of the development of ethno-tourism. The goals of KMT’s mountain policy, thus, can be described as assimilation and modernization.

The establishment of reservation land system generated profound influences on indigenous perspectives towards lands, spatial organizations, and social behaviors. However, the changes of related provisions, i.e. the Provision, were unable to prevent the loss of the reservation lands to Han people. Moreover, the revisions of the Provision reflect the State’s increasing concessions to the demands of capital and the interests of business groups. Following their deprivation of interpreting rights towards their own histories and cultures, the indigenous peoples in Taiwan also lose their lands to the majority Han people rapidly.
CHAPTER 5. CULTURAL POLITICS AND IDENTITY
POLITICS UNDER THE KMT

Chapter 5 reviews the social constructing process of the KMT’s Chinese orthodox ideology in Taiwan, and the resulting ethnic tensions among Han people’s sub-ethnic groups, as well as between Han and indigenous peoples. The development of the indigenous movement in Taiwan and its impacts on the new cultural and identity politics are also critically reviewed.

Taiwan’s transformation from the stringent order of a military regime predicated upon authoritarianism to a relatively democratic and pluralistic society is an impressive success given the remarkably limited violence involved in the transition (Wachman 1994:xii).

There are numerous debates about the “nature” of the KMT’s rule in Taiwan: whether the KMT should be considered to be a “foreign colonial” regime, or just an authoritarian regime with the same culture and national identity as its Taiwanese “compatriots” (Chen Chao-ying 1995a &b; Chen Fang-ming 1995; Liao Chao-yang 1995; Su Bing 1986, Chap 8). Even the presence of this debate remarks on the new political era in Taiwan at the present time. The underlying force differentiating these varied views on the KMT’s rule is reflected in different stances on unification with, or independence from, China and the possible political paths facing Taiwan in the near future. This unification/independence conflict was socially and politically constructed as the single most fundamental force, through a set of conflicts over the past few decades, and as such determines virtually every aspect of Taiwan’s society and future. This state-centered nationalist argument, the Chinese nationalism versus Taiwanese...
nationalism, inherits the blind spots of nation-state ideology, and fails to acknowledge cultural and identity differences.

In Taiwan, ethnic tensions developed over time as the mainlanders monopolized both the political and economic arenas since the arrival of the KMT in 1945. In an early rough vision of Taiwanese nationalism, “exclusion” of the “Chinese” mainlanders from privileged positions was the main appeal to the majority Holo population. As a pluralistic system gradually emerged and replaced the original monotonous value system imposed by the authoritarian regime, nationalist discourse blossomed and exhibited more sophisticated considerations on issues related to the meaning of nations, ethnicity, and culture. Discourse of Taiwanese nationalism is no longer merely confined to the old bisection of Taiwanese vs. Chinese, but also now includes the domain of cultural and political construction of identities. Indigenous movements and their claims for nationhood exert significant influences on the construction of Taiwan’s new identity. However, indigenous voices were not heard in these greater debates prior to the epiphany of the indigenous movement in the mid-1980s. In the early formation of Taiwanese nationalism, a dichotomy of Taiwanese (pen-sheng-ren) vs. mainlanders (wai-sheng-ren) dominated the entire discourse. Any appreciation of the distinctive characteristics of Taiwan’s indigenous people was totally absent from the discourse construction in the two major national identities.

Cultural politics concerns the representation of “otherness” by a dominant group as a way of control and as a formulation of stereotypes of all other groups. Representation in this sense is a manifestation of power relationships among different social groups, in the same way that race, gender, or class is represented. Identity seems
to be one of the underlying causes, if not the decisive one, of contemporary cultural politics. Different identities induce struggles for access to resources and the right of representing the others. These rights function as reflections of knowledge/power relations exemplified in naming, classifying, and defining systems in terms of a modern, pluralistic society's views towards minority groups.

Regarding the formation of national/ethnic identities, which are the central concerns of this chapter, two opposite perspectives arose from earlier theory: primordialism and instrumentalism (Smith 1991: 23-25). Primordialism, or essentialism, stresses the "natural," "essential," "animal instinctual" causes of national/ethnic identities, nationalism, and patriotism, and therefore the separation of self and otherness (Ardrey 1966, cited in Jordan et al 1994:139). A common "belief" in common ancestry, then, is insufficient for the formation of ethnic/national identity. Blood relations, the continuity of lineage, and other biological connections (that is, the same "race" from the point of view of physical anthropology) must also be emphasized among the members of primordial ethnic groups (Chao Kang 1996).

This perspective came under severe attack by many more contemporary theories of national/ethnic identity (such as Chao Kang 1996; Anderson 1991; Hobsbawm 1990; Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983). However, the primordial perspective still remains prevalent with the claims and rhetoric of what Chao Kang (1996) called ethno-nationalism. Ethno-nationalism is often associated with the building of the nation-state and often needs an idealized person as the symbol of collective worship in the process of consolidating and directing political power to the state apparatus rather than distributing power among people. In this regard, a primordial interpretation of
national/ethnic identity is better described as political propaganda rather than the result of thorough research. Nevertheless, the pervasiveness of this primordial national/ethnic formation precisely mirrors the conspiratorial knowledge/power relations between the State and the academics. This national/ethnic discourse is constructed around some biologically-derived conception of “who does not belong to us,” rather than some politically-based conception of “who is one of us.” On the other hand, the construction of national/ethnic identities is also considered instrumental as an intentional manipulation of domestic opinion against “foreign” invasion or for political gains. Here, “instrumental” is not necessarily used in a derogatory fashion, rather, I use the term to stress its “artificial” nature. Therefore, language, religion, customs, collective historical memories, and citizenship are among the most important aspects of culture which are used to construct identities. However, the demarcation between these two categories of primordialism and instrumentalism can easily blur. For example, language is often associated with blood relations; and religion with collective memories.

The constructed nature of national/ethnic identities suggests the possibility of shifting boundaries and to some degree, the malleability of cultural identities, and of national/ethnic membership, just as the subjective significance of the different cultural attributes mentioned above waxes and wanes (Smith 1991:23-24). Smith (1991:25) also suggests that:

Any realistic account of ethnic identity and ethno-genesis must, therefore, eschew the polar extremes of the primordialist-instrumentalist debate and its concerns with, on the one hand, fixity of cultural patterns in nature and, on the other, ‘strategic’ manipulability of ethnic sentiments and continuous cultural malleability. Instead, we need to reconstitute the notion of
collective cultural identity itself in historical, subjective and symbolic terms.

Three layers of identities appear in my above discussion: national, ethnic, and cultural. Because of the richness of the various meanings for these terms, a consensus on universally acceptable definitions is difficult to achieve. For very general, but by no means comprehensive distinctions among these levels, a national identity tends to lead to a request for independent statehood, while an ethnic identity places less emphasis on political demands and more on a cultural dimension. However, it is not unusual to see the term used interchangeably (Chang Mao-kuei 1993, quoted in Chao Kang 1996). The geographical scale of cultural identity can be international, national, or sub-national. Cultural identity constitutes an important part of a sense of community, and yet remains important as well in the process of nation-state building. Changes in cultural identities, in Smith's word (1991:25):

refer to the degree to which traumatic developments disturb the basic patterning of the cultural elements that make up the sense of continuity, shared memories and notions of collective destiny of given cultural units of population. The question is how far such developments disrupt or alter the fundamental patterns of myth, symbol, memory and value that bind successive generations of members together while demarcating them from 'outsiders' and around which congeal the lines of cultural differentiation that serve as 'cultural markers' of boundary regulation.

With the incorporation of myths, memories, and values in any definition of cultural identity, it is unavoidable that emotional elements haunt any discussion of cultural identity. Knowledge is more often used to reinforce our ideology through selective absorption of information, than to adjust and prepare us for a changing world.
An absolutely objective observer of such complex issues is difficult to imagine. My approach might be viewed as a “hermeneutic” one embedded within my specific intellectual, historical, and geographical contexts, while situated in a certain ethnic context as well. The following discussion on the “Sinicized” history and geography of Taiwan reflects not only my “selective absorption” of certain theories about identity politics, but also my own stance on the issues at hand.

5.1 “Sinicized” Taiwan: Geography and History

The role of collective historical memories in the formation of any given “national consciousness” is well explored in the broadly defined instrumentalist approach of nationalism. The development of discourse of geographical knowledge and its inseparable relationship with strategies of power acquisition and hegemony played a significant role during the expansion of European colonialism and in the “Age of Empire” (circa 1870-1914) (Driver 1992). In contrast with the association of geography with specific spatial/territorial claims by modern nation-states, the use of “imaginative geographical knowledge” in the construction of nationalism seems to receive less attention from political geographers. I will use the process of Taiwan’s “Sinicization” implemented by the KMT since its arrival in 1945 to illustrate the role of “imaginative geographies” in the construction of totalitarian “Chineseness” in Taiwan.

During the important transitional period of the formation of a new ethnic identification, Taiwanese were entrapped between their loyalty to their, then, colonial “mother country” of Japan, and their supposedly ancient cultural and blood ties to China. At the end of the Second World War, the perceptions of Taiwan’s people
regarding the final outcome of the war oscillated dramatically between being a “winner” and “looser,” alternately as “invader” and “victim” as a result of almost fifty years of Japanese colonial rule. The dilemma ended soon, with the “help” from the KMT, and was replaced by the more favorable choice of superiority as the “winners” (Chen Tzung-han 1994: 40-41). Taiwanese feelings of superiority were manifested by their wholehearted welcome to the “liberating” army from the “father country” of China. This welcome message sent by many Taiwanese in 1945, along with the previous Chinese ties existing in some intellectual and political reform circles, were often interpreted by pro-unification advocates, as proofs of the predominance of a “Chinese consciousness” in post-war Taiwan (Chen Chao-ying 1995a &b). In their semi-primordialist discourse construction, this “China consciousness” was embedded with rhetoric related to the supposed strong, if ancient blood relations between the people of Taiwan and the Chinese of the mainland. Common culture, language, and historical memories of oppression by Western imperialists and the Japanese strengthened this consciousness. In the same vein, the “Sinicization” of Taiwan did not happen precisely because Taiwan has always been, culturally, part of China (Chen Chao-ying 1995a), but rather because the post-war KMT regime chose to focus on this selective aspect of history.

The story is quite different from the view of contemporary Taiwanese nationalists. The KMT promoted a form of orthodox Chinese culture in Taiwan through restrictive social and political controls on mass media (television, radio stations, and newspapers), textbooks, school curricula, budget allocation, public funding, censorship, as well as by limiting access to foreign information from 1945 to
the late 1980s. From the perspective of Taiwanese nationalists, the tacit intention was
to "re-sinicize" the Taiwanese, who were thought to be "Japanized" after fifty years of
colonial indoctrination. As such, from the KMT perspective, the loyalty of the people
of Taiwan was suspicious.

The most apparent example of (re)sinicizing people in Taiwan is manifested in
the mandatory universal education system. Although there is considerably more
information about Taiwan’s history and geography publicly available than ever before,
school curricula remain pervasively focused on China as a whole, even at the expense
of Taiwan and the island’s own history. Over the course of three years of junior high
school, five volumes of geography textbooks and six on history are issued to each
student. Among them, only two chapters out of each discipline incorporated any
material about Taiwan. A second example is found in the social studies textbooks used
in elementary school where only 30 of approximately 1200 pages of required material
mention Taiwan’s history or geography (Wachman 1994:82-83). As a result, the more
an individual is educated, the more likely he/she tend to identify with China, rather
than Taiwan, as the basis for his/her perceptions regarding nationality. This trend is
more significant particularly within the personnel of educational system and staff in
public sector (Wang Fu-chang 1993).

In short, an "imaginary geography" of China was, and still is, being taught to
Taiwan’s students before they enter colleges. The old names of the mainland’s cities,
provinces, and even names of the main trunk railroad lines used during the KMT’s
Republican Era (1912-1949) are still taught in the islandwide standard textbooks. At
the macroscale, the shape of the Republican Era national boundaries of KMT China

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are still portrayed as an imaginary "begonia leaf" that includes China proper and indeed all of Mongolia! This leaf encompasses a vast territory of fourteen million square kilometer to make it the second largest country in the world.

At the microscale level, hundreds of streets in Taiwan were re-named after the cities and provinces of China roughly according to their corresponding geographical locations. The island province of Taiwan, as the epitome of China, serves then to provide an "imaginary geography" for the ruling KMT elite. In essence, the projection of a comforting nostalgia possessed by early KMT leaders has become national policy in the depiction and delineation of space in Taiwan. Geographical knowledge, then, becomes instrumental for the political purpose in constructing an "imagined China" on Taiwan island.

This "epitomized China" in Taiwan illustrates itself best in the structure of Legislature and National Assembly. Both legislative bodies possessed "permanent" representatives from every province of ROC who were not subject to re-elections. A very limited number of these two congressional bodies was open to the contest of native Taiwanese so that a "provincial balance" could be maintained. In this way, the majority of KMT seats were perpetuated. The first comprehensive popular elections for seats on the National Assembly and the Legislature were only held in 1991 and 1992 respectively (nearly five decades after the KMT's arrival), when all the senior, permanent delegates were forced to "retire" from office (GIO 1997:679).

The orthodox Chinese history constructed by the KMT was embedded with a conformist Confucianism mentality with the well-known intention to stand in sharp contrast to the chaos of the Cultural Revolution which emerged in the mainland from
Portraying itself as the authentic representation of Chinese culture through various diplomatic efforts, the KMT was able to legitimize its international status as the sole government of China until 1971 when the People’s Republic of China replaced Taiwan as the recognized government of China in the United Nations. Externally, the Cold War structure enabled the KMT to construct its imaged China as part of the East Asian containment policy towards global communism. Internally, the pseudo-presentation of Chinese history and geography in Taiwan and the promise to eventually “counterattack” and regain the mainland serves not only to legitimize the KMT’s international status, but also to console and consolidate the loyalty of nearly two million political refugees and their offspring who first came to Taiwan with the KMT in 1949.

One of the central axes surrounding intensive debates presented in the Chung Wei Literature Monthly in 1995 was whether or not the native Taiwanese could be said to have a “China consciousness” or “Chineseness” under Japanese rule. A follow up question would be: “Did the KMT sinicize Taiwanese to eliminate their Japanese characters?” or “Did the KMT “re”-Sinicized Taiwanese to reassert their nature as Chinese (Liao Hsien-hao 1995; Liao Chao-yang 1995; Chen Chao-ying 1995a&b; Chen Fang-ming 1995)?” However, if we recognize that shifting cultural and national identities are not unusual in the process of nation-state building, the early characteristics of being “Taiwanese,” given that its origins were either Chinese or Japanese, has little to do with the new constructing process adopted either by the KMT or by the new social/political movements after the mid-1980s. The undeniable history is that the process of Sinicization did take place in Taiwan, and that the KMT
construction of an imaged geography and distorted history most certainly did play a significant role in this process. One thing worth noting is that resistance to the Sinicization policy was not apparent until the rise of discourse regarding Taiwanese nationalism in the mid-1980s. Early resistance against the KMT was more focused on demands for democratic reforms and related demands for a greater sharing of power for ethnic Taiwanese rather than a cry for independent statehood. I will introduce a detailed discussion on the history of ethnic relations under the KMT in the next section.

The debates mentioned above also raise another controversial question: “Who are the real victims of the colonial rule in Taiwan?” Both camps agree that the indigenous peoples of Taiwan have been the most subordinated subjects under these successive alien, colonial rules. The rise of indigenous movements and the discourse the movement represents has posed strong demands to require that the two sides revise their nationalist discourses. In Chapter 7, I will discuss the influence of recent indigenous movements on the overall discourse of nationalism not only in Taiwan, but also in other places.

5.2 Ethnic Relations under the KMT

In contemporary Taiwan, the underlying cause of ethnic tension can reasonably be credited in part to these different national identities, that is, a so-called “Taiwan consciousness” versus “China consciousness.” For advocates of Taiwan’s independence, the “China consciousness” has been deliberately superimposed by the KMT regime as a means of power consolidation, while Taiwanese consciousness is viewed as an evolutionary historical product (Chen Fang-ming 1995). The presence of
Taiwanese consciousness was first veiled by communal strife between the Holo and Hakka populations in the early stages of their migration history. In the Dynastic era, Taiwanese consciousness then was marginalized by Taiwan’s peripheral location in the entire Chinese empire. Only in the early 19th century, the construction of roads and railroads, and the related intensive colonial development by the Japanese transformed Taiwan into a politically and culturally cohesive entity. At this time, the island-wide Taiwanese consciousness transcended the individual ethnicity for the first time in the migration history of the island (Reitsma and Kleinpenning 1989:369; Sun Da-chuan 1995b). However, the formation of Taiwanese consciousness during the colonial era did not necessarily lead to the request for independent statehood. The call for Taiwan’s independence is a historical and geographical product, as I will argue in the next section. Ethnic tension is, at the least, one of the most important factors in the formation of “Han” Taiwanese nationalism.

Ethnic conflicts have been the very important political issues in post-war Taiwan. The tension between the KMT and Taiwan’s society resulted from the “alien” characteristics of the KMT regime, and from the historically-overlooked “228 event” which happened in February 28, 1947. In 1947, small scale civil unrest first erupted in Taipei City as a result of a conflict between mainlander detectives charged with stopping the sale of untaxed contraband and a native street vendor selling cigarettes. The chaos, and street fighting and military resistance which followed, inspired by deteriorating economic and social conditions quickly spread to every corner of the island. Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek finally had to send in troops from the mainland to crush the civil revolts and restore order. The full picture of the 228 event, which
cost 8,000 to 20,000 lives (Wang Jenn-hwan 1989), has gradually come to light only after five decades of official silence on the matter. The massacre created an almost invincible barrier between the KMT regime and native Taiwanese, at least for the Han Taiwanese. It might be unfair to say that the ethnic meaning of the “228 event” was superimposed only in the 1970s when the tension between the mainland rulers and native Taiwanese escalated (Sun Da-chuan 1995b). However, there is no doubt that a full appreciation of the ethnic implications of the “228 event” increased significantly during the political struggles between the two largest ethnic groups in more recent times.

Basically, three factors can explain the “228 event.” First, in the mid-1940s, the newly established KMT government confiscated all Japanese properties and enterprises. Because of the fact that during the late period of colonial occupation, the Japanese took over most Taiwanese enterprises, the action of the KMT regime actually resulted in the mass confiscation of a large proportion of property actually owned by Taiwanese. Moreover, the military government in Taiwan lacked the capability of dealing immediately and decisively with economic affairs on the island and led to serious inflation. Second, the native Taiwanese were discriminated against by the new military government in virtually all arenas. Staffs of the central government were filled almost exclusively with mainlanders. Third, fifty years of colonial control had rendered Taiwan a culturally and linguistically distinct region from China. To the mainlanders, the Taiwanese were more like Japanese, who were their unrelenting enemies during the war (Wang Jenn-hwan 1989).
The "alien" characteristic of the KMT, in the context of Taiwan, is evidenced in several domains. First, in the breakdown of the KMT's membership structure, which consisted of a majority of mainlanders rather than native Taiwanese until around 1972, though the former only constituted 15% of total population (Wang Jenn-hwan 1989). Second, with respect to persons filling virtually all high positions in the power structure of the KMT, most notably, its Central Standing Committee members and Cabinet ministers, native Taiwanese constituted only 32% of positions even in 1978 (Wang Jenn-hwan 1989; Wachman 1994:18). Even in earlier years, this proportion was markedly lower. Third, only after the ROC was expelled from the United Nations in 1971, was the KMT regime forced to seek support through alliances with the native Taiwanese, who had long been excluded from the KMT's most powerful echelons.

The process of the KMT's co-optation of native Taiwanese through both local political factions and economic interests, is dubbed the "Taiwanization" or "indigenization" (pen-tu-hua) policy (Arrigo 1994). The KMT realized that it had to turn "inside" to seek legitimacy among the ruled Taiwanese, rather than relying exclusively on the fading international Cold War structure and American promises of support as it had in the past. The process of the KMT's Taiwanization policy accelerated after 1988 when the first native Taiwanese, Lee Teng-hui, was sworn in as President following the death of Chiang Ching-kuo, the son of the Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek. Pragmatically, perhaps, Lee as the handpicked successor of Chiang Ching-kuo, pushed the Taiwanization policy within the KMT, and as a result, induced discontent among party hard-liners. Thus, the KMT was split into the Lee Teng-hui-led "mainstream," the "Taiwanese KMT" and the hard-liners' "non-mainstream,"
“Chinese KMT.” It is worth noting that the KMT’s internal split was roughly along ethnic lines. Mainlanders and their second generation constitute the majority of the non-mainstream members. The (Chinese) New Party was established in 1993 with core members who were original KMT legislators. Virtually all of them came from the second generation of mainlanders.

5.2.1 Ethnic Tensions among Han People

In the early period of Han Chinese immigration to Taiwan, ethnic conflicts erupted between principally the Holo (Minan people), who mostly came from Fukien province, and the Hakka people, mainly from Kuangtung province. The conflicts usually took the form of communal strife between these two major groups. Sometimes the conflicts occurred within the largest migrant group, the Holo people. Competition for lands and water resources intensified frictions, which plagued almost all of the Han-populated areas settled during the Ching dynasty (Hsu Wen-hsiung 1980). This communal strife, couple with competition for scarce resources, and a general lack of interactions between these groups prohibited the formation of an entire Taiwan-based consciousness. Not until the collective resistance against colonial rule, and the completion of the island-wide transportation system that connected various locations and conveyed island-related information during the Japanese occupation, did Taiwan consciousness actually begin to take shape (Chen Fang-ming. 1995; Sun Da-chuan 1995b).

Still, in contemporary Taiwan, ethnic tensions have mostly arisen between the two largest groups, native Taiwanese (primarily Holo and Hakka) and the mainlanders who came to Taiwan after 1949 (Chang Mao-kuci et al 1993; Chao Kang 1996; Shih
Cheng-fong ed. 1994). In mainstream discourse, ethnic backgrounds are usually referred to based on a person’s province of origin, as dictated by paternal lineage (lao jia, or “old home”). Mainlanders on Taiwan are known as wai-sheng-ren, which literally means people from outside the province. Native Taiwanese, including both Holo and Hakka, with no distinction, are called pen-sheng-ren, which means people from this (Taiwan) province (Wachman 1994:17). These two ethnic categories were codified during the KMT’s early war-time policy when representing whole China was an important means of legitimizing authority. People, and more importantly Congress members from every province of China, had to remain visible at the central government level, while the number of Taiwanese in public sector was curbed (Wang Jenn-hwan 1989). Thus, native Taiwanese were forced to give up political careers which had evolved under the Japanese, and transfer their energy to economic activities, at a time when the KMT sought to deepen connections to both domestic and international capital which was needed for economic development which further served to legitimatize KMT rule (Amsden 1985; Liao Ping-hui 1994). The overall trend, then, is that the native Taiwanese have tended to concentrate their efforts in primary and manufacturing sectors, and the mainlanders in the service sector; and native Taiwanese in the private sector and mainlanders in public sector. This inequity is especially true for education where fluent Mandarin was a necessary requirement for academic success or even to be a teacher in the highly standardized education system (Lin Chung-cheng and Lin He-ling 1993).

Still, in a general sense, political party affiliations and voting behaviors also reflects, in an important way, ethnic differences. The KMT has greater amounts of
support among the people originating from the mainland while the opposition party, the DPP, garners most of its votes from native Taiwanese (Wang Fu-Chang 1993). As the KMT has been forced to “Taiwanized” to maintain a majority of seats in Congress, its hard-liners removed themselves from the party and established the Chinese New Party (CNP) in 1993. The CNP is now considered by most observers to be the party most closely associated with the “mainlanders.” It effectively partitions the KMT’s traditional mainland supporters as the KMT becomes more and more “Taiwanized.”

Ethnic differences are also reflected in the issue of national identity. Under the current sociopolitical context, Taiwan and China are two polar opposites with no “gray” in between. More than half (54%) of the mainlander population reports they view themselves as having a “Chinese” identity, while only 19.8% of the native population has this same perspective. Only 7.3% of mainlanders identify themselves with Taiwan, while 29.1% of native Taiwanese claim a “Taiwanese identity.” The rest of population who responded to this question answered that it “doesn’t matter” (Wang Fu-chang 1993). Clearly, Taiwan’s different ethnic markers are rooted in differences of provincial origins, which lead to different perspectives on national identity. This situation is popularly known as the “provincial complex” (sheng-chi-ching-chieh).

Many factors contribute to the current ethnic tensions and identity crisis in current Taiwan. The longstanding concept of the Chinese “central kingdom,” which reflects the longstanding assumption of supremacy over peripheral peoples and nations renders the concept of multi-ethnic state foreign to the ideology of the KMT (Hsieh Shih-chung 1994c). Early on, the KMT’s claim to be the sole government of all of China prevented it from achieving full integration with local Taiwanese elites.
Moreover, the KMT had to limit the role and visibility of native Taiwanese in the state bureaucracy, especially in the higher positions, to justify its claim as the sole legitimate government of all of China. On the other hand, the Japanese characteristics and cultural prints which are a part of Taiwan's people and landscapes reminded the mainlanders of their wars against Japan. From the perspective of some early KMT leaders, the Taiwanese were "contaminated" by Japanese culture and so required a period of reindoctrination to become authentic Chinese. To the Taiwanese, the colonial legacy represents the loss of their own "subjectivity," which is constructed within, and through, discourses (Pratt 1994). The two opposite discourses forcibly imposed upon Taiwan by two different regimes within a span of fifty years have had a dramatic influence on the formation of the post-colonial Taiwanese identity.

In any analysis of ethnicity discourse, two points embedded in the discursive construction are self-evident, though they are often intentionally ignored. First, ethnic boundaries are not generated under isolated conditions. Rather, ethnic awareness is a product of interactions among peoples, time and space. The existence of the "other" is crucial to the formation of the ethnic self. Therefore, ethnicity and national identity as well, are dynamic processes, contingent instead of absolute, and partially inventive instead of totally traditional. Second, ethnic groups are by no means internally homogenous, although all ethnic discourses work to maximize inter-ethnic difference and to minimize the intra-ethnic variance. There are, of course, gender, class, power, knowledge, religious, and ideological differences within the people of every ethnic group.
5.2.2 Ethnic Relations between Han and Indigenous Peoples

In Taiwan, indigenous peoples are virtually absent from the current construction of the mainstream ethnic discourse because even in total they are too small in number; and taken one by one, the groups are too heterogeneous with respect to culture. Even within the “progressive” camp, in its construction of the discourse of Taiwanese nationalism, most intellectuals devote one or two paragraphs to describe the “uniqueness” (if they mention the issue at all) of what they consider as a “homogeneous” group of indigenous peoples. The many different aboriginal groups of Taiwan are treated for convenience as “one” of the ethnic groups that constitutes modern multi-ethnic Taiwanese society (Young Pi-chuan 1994; Huang Chao-tang 1994). Indigenous calls for a “national” status is basically overlooked.

While the Japanese discriminated against the indigenous peoples living in the mountains, and refused to confer Japanese nationality upon them (Lin Chia-ling 1996:49-51), the KMT regime recognized their full citizenship and called them “mountain compatriots.” However, the term continues to imply a Sino-central chauvinism that regards aborigines not as different peoples, but as only one of the constituents of the KMT’s nationalist imagination “Chung-Hwa-Min-Tzu,” the Chinese nation. The authoritarian military regime sought through its policies to absorb the indigenous peoples into Han social, economic and political systems and to transcend and eliminate group differences (Chen Tzung-han 1994:52). As the direct heir of the totalitarianism of its colonial predecessor (ATA, I Chiang, and Lava Kau 1995), the KMT opted to fashion a civil society of solidity, sameness and universality which subjugated the politics of difference during the entire martial law era.
Taiwan’s aborigines currently consider every regime from 1624 to the present, which established itself in either part of or all of Taiwan, as colonial regimes (ATA, I Chiang, and Lava Kau 1995). Different regimes exerted different degrees of control over indigenous territory depending on the level of statecraft and the extent of dominion over Taiwan’s mountain areas. Indigenous peoples’ struggles for ethnic survival are caught between an environment where competitors differ in political ideology but share the same Han ethnicity (ATA, I Chiang, and Lava Kau 1995). There was, and perhaps still is, a fear among the mainland population that once Taiwan becomes independent, all mainlanders will be “ousted” by native Taiwanese in the ensuing era. A parallel, if oversimplified, political rhetoric can also be found among some Han people who oppose indigenous calls for ethnic autonomy precisely because they fear being expelled from the island (see PPRA 1997a and 1997b). Nevertheless, considering the very limited political clout of the indigenous movements within the current Han-dominated power structure, this rhetoric is so exaggerated that few Han people can even take it seriously. This kind of outrageous political rhetoric is easier to understand as simply a ruse to counteract fears regarding the potential growth of the indigenous movement.

At the present time, the KMT continues to assign “protective quotas” to aborigines in terms of political participation to ensure their minimum representation. A few symbolic seats in Taiwan’s legislative bodies, at all levels from local positions to those within the central government, are reserved for indigenous peoples. However, the KMT’s interventions in areas with predominantly indigenous populations are thorough and highly organized, and the results of elections at all levels always
conform to the party’s will (Walsh YuGan 1994a; ATA, I Chiang, and Lava Kau 1995). Successful indigenous candidates tend to be either the KMT’s official nominee or else they are funded by wealthy Han people and so their stance on indigenous struggles must be questioned. Indigenous politicians may be receptive to voting and implementing policies in a particular way in return for Han capitalists’ assistance in political campaigns, most notably on local issues such as the deregulation of reservation lands and support for the local patronage system. This system either elevates Han people to the important posts in the hsian government after the aborigines are elected, or provides Han contractors with extra businesses, or steers government contracts towards the relevant political machine.

Pro-resistance elites, who are mostly members of the Alliance of Taiwan’s Aborigines, have suffered severe setbacks in almost every election. The frustrations associated with supposedly “democratic” elections not only led to recent re-adjustments of political strategies and campaign rhetoric, but also resulted in the decline of the ATA’s influence and popularity (Hsieh Shih-chung 1994c). These resistant elites have been forced to accept the reality that the seemingly significant concessions they received after negotiation from the government turned out to result in, at best, only superficial reforms (Hsieh Shih-chung 1994c).

As noted earlier, according to a provincial executive order titled, “Identification Standards for the Aborigines of the Taiwan Province,” the KMT classified indigenous peoples only by their current geographical residence. In a strict legal sense, there are only distinctions of “aborigines of the mountainous areas” and “aborigines of the plains” in the Constitution (Chen Hsin-yi 1993:9). The former refers to those who
were registered in the mountain areas during the Japanese rule, while the latter were registered in the plains in the Japanese era. The KMT informally inherited the Japanese anthropologists' way of categorizing Taiwan's aborigines which is now almost 100 years old and no longer is appropriate. The large influx of the indigenous peoples onto cities over the past few decades makes the category "urban aborigines," a purely location based classification rather than ethnicity-based category, reasonable and appropriate.

Upon marriage with a Han man, an indigenous woman loses her legal ethnic status automatically. On the other hand, a Han woman who marries to an aborigine still maintains her Han status (ATA, I Chiang, and Lava Kau 1995). Thus, by this sort of nomenclatural bias, Taiwan's indigenous population failed to grow at an island-wide rate. Of course, another side effect is that those people who intermarry are unable to select their own ethnic classification and develop their own self-chosen identity.

In 1945, immediately after the KMT took Taiwan from the Japanese, an order was issued to restore ancestral Han names and to discard the superimposed Japanese names. Thus, the family names of all Han people living in Taiwan were recovered and the family lineages, which are essential to the continuous operation of the Han patriarchal system, were maintained. In sharp contrast, indigenous peoples were not only unable to reclaim their traditional names, but further were forced to adopt Han names in order to register for citizenship (ATA, I Chiang, and Lava Kau 1995).

Cultural discrimination is among the most severe encroachments upon aboriginal self-confidence. As I mentioned in Chapter 4, the standardized textbooks for elementary and middle schools edited by the government are devoid of any
materials on different cultures, ethnic groups, and historical experience. Officially sponsored ethnic tourism manifest in the form of several aboriginal cultural parks is just another form of touristic consumption.

Since the previous regime in China (the Ching Dynasty) was founded by non-Han people (Manchus), both the KMT’s Republic of China (ROC) and Chinese Communist Party’s People’s Republic of China (PRC) worked to formulate ethnic policies which hold the multi-ethnic state in unity and keep order on the frontiers. The origins of the KMT’s ethnic policy can be traced to its two “founding fathers”—Sun Yat-sen and Chiang Kai-shek, especially as evidenced by Sun’s *Three Principles of People*, which although vague, became the dogma within the KMT. Sun’s theory was that the five major nations within China: Han, Manchu, Mongolian, Hui, and Tibetan form a single nation. This greater Chinese Nation existed by default through centuries of integration and assimilation (Sun Da-chuan 1995b; Hsieh Shih-chung 1994c). Chiang directed Sun’s theory to a more conservative turn and even denied the potential independence of each “nation.” In his thought, all members of the Chinese Nation came from the same origin (Hsieh Shih-chung 1994c). Therefore, there can only be one nation in China. Chiang’s philosophy obviously results in a Han-oriented ethnocentrism. However, as the two most important ideological figures in the KMT, Sun and Chiang’s theories were not only reflected in the design of the Constitution, but also in turn were adopted in the standardized school textbooks in Taiwan. The result is

Chinese, without the experience of recognition of multi-ethnic context in a state, always accuse people who show any ethnic consciousness, other than that of the Chinese nation, of betraying ancestors or being traitors (Hsieh Shih-chung 1994c).
Within the framework of “traditional,” the “Chinese” KMT’s ideology (in contrast to the “Taiwanized” KMT), Taiwan’s aborigines are only different racial groups in the frontier regions. Two articles of the Constitution justify the implementation of the paternalist administration of the KMT regime to the aborigines.

Article 168. The State shall accord to the various racial groups in the frontier regions legal protection of their status and shall give them special assistance in their local self-government undertakings.

Article 169. The State shall, in a positive manner, undertake and foster the development of education, culture, communications, water conservancy, public health and other economic and social enterprises of the various racial groups in the frontier regions...


It is these articles that justified the creation in 1929 of the Cabinet-level “Mongolian & Tibetan Affairs Commission” that surprisingly remains in charge of minority groups in the ROC, despite the obvious fact that very few Mongolians and Tibetans reside in Taiwan. Indeed few even come to visit. The status of the indigenous peoples in Taiwan is, by the KMT’s definition, as a frontier minority group. The state policy of modernization and assimilation truthfully reflects the KMT’s interpretation of the two articles in Constitution. Han-ethnocentrism, that is, the concept of the “Middle Kingdom,” considers that Chinese culture is, and has always been, superior to all others in proximity and because of this superiority all other groups encountering Chinese culture should be Sinicized (Hsieh Shih-chung 1994c).

Before the establishment of the Council of Aboriginal Affairs in December of 1996, in both the central and provincial governments, only a low-level administrative section within the provincial government was in charge of indigenous affairs. Again, the existence of the Mongolian & Tibetan Affairs Commission is a product of the
KMT’s vision of a single Chinese Nation, and stands as a symbol of the KMT’s longstanding territorial claims to all of China and Mongolia. On the other hand, the creation of Council of Aboriginal Affairs is the product of numerous street demonstrations and political reforms (see Section 5.3), but yet is also the result of the “indigenization” of the KMT regime.

From the above discussion, two separate justifications for ethnic nationalism can be identified in Taiwan. The KMT’s line of reasoning is antiquated as it was based upon expelling the Manchus out of China proper (advocated by Sun Yat-sen, Han people’s ethnocentrism) so that the Han majority would mobilize to found the ROC (state of multinationals), which occurred in 1911. Later, the established ROC could no longer rely exclusively on ethnic appeal to consolidate its legitimacy and thus, led to the creation of the Chinese Nation (a state of single nation). The course of development of Taiwanese nationalism as “mainlanders should go back to China” (expel those foreigners), uses an ethnic appeal for mobilizing the majority Holo people. Then the slogan shifted to “Taiwan belongs to native Taiwanese only, especially the largest Holo group” (nationalism of a single ethnic group). In the latest development when a narrow ethnic appeal no longer justifies political legitimacy, and when progressive forces also criticized this Holo ethno-nationalism, then, and only then, the new Taiwan Nation concept has been constructed. The new discourse is that the “four major groups, Holo, Hakka, mainlander, and aborigine, constitute a multiethnic nation-state” (after Sun Da-chuan 1995b). Even in this latest development of discursive construction, there is still tension between mainstream Taiwanese nationalism and this call for indigenous sovereignty. The similarity in reasoning in
these two national discourses is striking. "Different" peoples remain the first target of exclusion in the building of ethno-nationalism.

Any challenge to the myth of the fundamental homogenous nature of the KMT's Chinese Nation was a major taboo during Taiwan's martial law era. Han Taiwanese nationalists promote the concept of Taiwanese Nation in contradistinction to the KMT's "alien" Chinese Nation, while indigenous peoples advocated various repositionings of the indigenous nations within the larger political spectrum ranging from a moderate request for autonomy to radical rejections of the Han people's rights to majority rule (BaShang 1998). It may be true that the KMT-constructed national discourse and its associated perspective of cultural hegemony are in decline and disintegration, however, a new, overwhelmingly acceptable national discourse has not yet emerged (Wong and Sun 1998). The injection of indigenous requests into the construction is, however, totally new, not only for Taiwanese nationalism, but also within the broader theoretical concepts of the modern nation-state. I will discuss this issue further in Chapter 7.

5.3 Indigenous Movements and the Formation of New Identity

The rise and development of the indigenous peoples' movement, and in fact, almost every social movement in Taiwan, cannot be separated from greater socio-political and historical circumstances. I identify three major factors that shape post-war development of Taiwan, which in turn create the greater context for all social movements in Taiwan. First, there is the chronic external military threat represented by the PRC. Second, we must consider the so far "successful" economic development
policies of the KMT which transformed Taiwan in the post-war era. And thirdly, the recent political transition from authoritarian to democratic rule is also important.

The Chinese military threat enables and justifies the KMT’s oppressive control of Taiwan’s economy and society. Despite the constant threat of invasion from across the Taiwan Strait, however, Taiwan has experienced successful economic development, though at a great expense to certain social and environmental conditions. It must be recognized, however, that economic success provided a material base for later political reform. The relatively smooth and non-violent political transition had opened a space for the emergence of various social movements since the mid-1980s. The indigenous peoples’ movement was among 13 other movements identified by Hsiao Hsin-huang (1989) as newly emerging social movements in Taiwan in the 1980s. Each movement demands a range of reforms which must be implemented by the KMT regime in the fundamental nature of state-society relations and usually also includes requests for greater autonomy within the new, fragile, civil society which has recently emerged in Taiwan (Hsiao Hsin-huang 1992).

It would be misleading to identify a single factor or socio-political movement that “forces” this increasing tolerance of Taiwan’s authoritarian state towards civil protests which began in the 1980s. Even the most visible and popular political protest movements, mainly led by the Democratic Progressive Party and its predecessors, cannot alone be credited with this reversal. It was a combination of factors such as the successful economic transition, international pressures for reform, and the ROC’s increasing international diplomatic isolation that forced the KMT to seek internal support, which all contributed to the transformation from “hard” to “soft”
authoritarianism in Taiwan (Winckler 1984). Nevertheless, these newly emerging social movements have played a critical role in accelerating the transition process (Hsiao Hsin-huang 1992). In this sense, there is an on-going synergy between political reform and the greater political participation represented by all of these various movements.

5.3.1 The History of the Indigenous Peoples’ Movement in Taiwan

Different perspectives from different people have divided the indigenous peoples’ history into different periods (TaiBong SaSaLe 1993; Hsieh Shih-chung 1994c). The points which are found to be in common to all of these different views include the decline of aboriginal “master” status and the increasingly dominance of the “alien” powers. In the earliest era, aborigines were forced to either give up fertile plains areas to Han farmers, or else were relocated to other places which lacked ancestral connections. After this initial period, the Japanese isolation policy and the KMT’s protectionist policy also effectively delimited the boundaries between the majority (Han) and the minority (indigenous population). The lack of interactions between these two societies had the effects of both limiting the impacts of capitalism on the mountain subsistence economy, and deferring the modernizing process (TaBong SaSaLe 1993). Beginning around the late 1950s and early 1960s, many indigenous peoples, “pushed” by declining conditions within the mountain economy and “pulled” by the promise of better job opportunities in the plains, moved to urban areas. This was a “reverse flow of population migration” and resulted in a significant exodus to the cities (Chiu Yen-liang 1994; TaBong SaSaLe 1993).
The origin of the recent indigenous peoples' movement can be traced back to 1983 when the first underground magazine *High Mountains Are Green* was published by a group of indigenous college students living in Taipei (Chiu Yen-liang 1994; YiChiang BaLuer 1994; TaiBong SaSaLe 1993; Hsiao Hsin-huang 1992). The "Committee of Minorities" of the "Conference of Editing among Non-KMT Writers" was founded in April 1984. It claimed that the principle of the organization was to unite all people, aboriginal or Han, who were concerned about the rights of minority groups. This emphasis on uniting Han and aboriginal people with the same ideas has had deep and lasting impacts on the framework of later developments related to the indigenous movement (Hsieh Shih-chung 1987:63). It also signaled that the burgeoning indigenous movement was gaining support among, and from, political opposition forces, that is, the anti-KMT forces (Hsieh Shih-chung 1987b). In December 1984, the most important organization in Taiwan's indigenous movement, at the time, the Alliance of Taiwan Aborigines (ATA), was established with 24 founding members. Eight months later, membership had grown to 53 members, including 14 Han people and 39 aborigines (Hsieh Shih-chung 1994c). The ATA's members came largely from the people associated with the *High Mountains Are Green* magazine, but also included members of the "Committee of Minorities," clergy of the Taiwan Presbyterian Church, students from seminaries founded by the Presbyterian Church, and some urban indigenous workers (YiChiang BaLuer 1994).

The ATA and its members continue to be the major initiators of virtually all the important events in the indigenous movement. Although from the vantage point of the late 1990s, the ATA's political clout has declined significantly, its members and
supporters still play considerable roles in awakening indigenous cultural and political consciousness. As a “protesting” organization, mainly against the KMT regime and its myths and dominant ideology, the ATA's “historical mission” has almost come to an end (Interview E). Taiwan’s population is no longer considered to be a portion of the single Chinese Nation. Taiwan is now recognized by most to be the multiethnic and multicultural state. That it is this idea has been gradually appreciated even in mainstream ethnic discourse. For example, many traditional tribal ceremonies are undergoing a renaissance as part of a wider cultural revival and as a re-assertion of ethnic confidence and sovereignty, though there are still many problems left unsolved.

Land conflicts were one of the central concerns of the early ATA, which accused Han people and their regimes of invading aboriginal lands. For the ATA members, the absence of land with clear title meant no security, no distinct identity, and as a consequence, threatened cultural survival. The ATA in its early stage could only simply respond to problems with complaints and protests, rather than proposing a more integrated analytical framework for the indigenous land rights disputes. The goal to establish indigenous peoples' autonomous zones and the radical idea of “natural sovereignty” (see Chapter 6) developed later.

The ATA, basing their opinion on past conditions, claimed that the KMT state could, for the purpose of public use or the vague definition of “national security,” reclaim reservation lands, the titles of which belong mostly to the State. Thus the reservation land policy was viewed as the main element in the process of destroying indigenous peoples through the steady acquisition of their territories and in turn, their identity (DuoAo 1985, sited in Hsieh Shih-chung 1994c). In 1987, the ATA declared a
“Manifesto of Taiwan Aborigines.” Six out of the seventeen articles related to the land rights of indigenous peoples (Hsieh Shih-chung 1994c; Hong Chun-hu 1992: 91):

1. The aborigines have rights of basic protection for their lives (including rights of/to survival, work, land, property and education), autonomous rights, and a right to self-cultural identity (Article 2).

2. The traditional aboriginal territories must be able to practice local autonomy (Article 3)

3. The state must recognize the populations, regions, and social organizations of aborigines (Article 7)

4. The aborigines must have titles to lands and resources. Lands that were acquired by illegal measures in the past must be returned to the aborigines (Article 8).

5. The land rights must include surface, subsoil, and marine rights (Article 9).

6. Aborigines have the rights to take advantage of their resources for satisfying their needs (Article 10).

Central to the belief of the resistant elites in the ATA is the “truism of aborigines” (Hsieh Shih-chung 1987). That is, “the consciousness on territorial rights is based on the ATA’s interpretation of what rights the aborigines should naturally have” (Hsieh Shih-chung 1994c). On the one hand, the “natural sovereignty” of the indigenous people is favored by indigenous activists in their struggles to re-acquire ethnic pride. On the other hand, modern nation-states and their legal systems can seldom, in reality, bear the challenge to sovereignty waged by their “citizens.” Thus, the issue of “natural sovereignty” is more a political one than a cultural one. It is raised because two different political systems, based on two different social and
cultural behaviors have interest conflicts over the same space and each has evidenced claims for sovereignty over this space.

The furor regarding requests for indigenous land rights climaxed in three large demonstrations of the “Return Our Lands” movement from 1988 to 1993. The last march in 1993, which was also the International Year for the World’s Indigenous Peoples as declared by the United Nations, broadened its appeals to include the right of indigenous peoples’ survival. This appeal formally connected the land to the very survival of indigenous peoples and cultures and spearheaded the formation of indigenous peoples’ demands for “natural sovereignty.”

Studies in the successful mobilization of indigenous peoples in the “Return Our Lands” movements indicate several causes. First, the improper reservation lands policies led to the loss of land acquired due to the power and influence of capital coming from the plains investors. Second, the aborigines registered in plains areas, mainly concentrated in Taitung and Hualien Counties, have no rights to the reserves and are often accused of “occupying” public lands once they make use of traditional tribal territories, despite longstanding unofficial recognition of their tenure in these places. Third, the churches in mountain hsians have to pay significant rents to the State no matter where they locate, whether on public lands or on private lands owned by church members (Lee Tsu-min 1991:31; YiChiang BaLuer 1994). It is the last point that ties the leaders of “foreign” religions directly to Taiwan’s indigenous movement.

Unlike in the U.S. where some native Americans in certain areas were forced to convert to Christianity before 1930, the presence of Western religions neither implies
an aggressive invasion of a colonial power, nor represented a spearhead of imperial conquest to Taiwan’s indigenous population (Hsieh Shih-chung 1987b). In the former case of the American Indians, the State’s actions sometimes led to nativistic cultural revitalizations, the selective renaissance of traditional religion, and the conferment of symbolic values to the selected cultural elements (Linton 1943). In Taiwan’s case, the Western religions provided a new spiritual support for seventy percent of the indigenous population in Taiwan at a time when traditional religions were rapidly fading (The Voice of Taiwan Indigenous Peoples, TVTIP 1997, Hsieh Shih-chung 1987b; Table 5.1). Buddhism and Taoism are the principal religions of Han people and remain relatively unimportant within indigenous communities. Christianity, however, became a symbol of solidarity for aborigines from different tribes and a weapon for the resistance of the ongoing powerful assimilation trend. In brief, many Christian beliefs have been “internalized” into aboriginal culture (Hsieh Shih-chung 1987b).

Given the situation in Taiwan, where aboriginal traditional beliefs have long been disconnected from the daily lives and collective memory of the tribal members, though to some extent, cultural revitalization has occurred, no elements of traditional religions are involved in the cultural renaissance (Hsieh Shih-chung 1987b).

Possibly, the extinction of traditional religions offered a new “spiritual space” for the new beliefs to “anchor.” Among all Christian religions, the Presbyterian Church and the Roman Catholic Church are the two most popular denominations within the people of the mountain hsian. The common Christian symbols – God, Jesus Christ, the Cross, and the Bible – blended with Taiwan’s indigenous peoples’ beliefs and helped form a new indigenous identity. The development of the pan-aboriginal
identity and the burgeoning religious identity have added to the motivation and growth of the indigenous movements in Taiwan (Hsieh Shih-chung 1987a: 85).

Table 5.1 Self-Reported Religious Affiliations among Indigenous Peoples

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Protestant</th>
<th>Catholic</th>
<th>Buddhism</th>
<th>Taoism</th>
<th>No Religious Belief</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Indigenes in Mountain</td>
<td>56.19</td>
<td>27.75</td>
<td>2.06</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>13.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indigenes in Plains</td>
<td>32.67</td>
<td>36.71</td>
<td>9.66</td>
<td>9.51</td>
<td>11.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indigenes in Cities</td>
<td>47.09</td>
<td>26.95</td>
<td>10.58</td>
<td>2.49</td>
<td>12.88</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The history of Christian missionaries in Taiwan is long, reaching back to the 1600s when the Dutch occupied southern Taiwan, but the influences on the indigenous peoples’ movement are much more recent. The Taiwan Presbyterian Church set up its first seminary in 1949 intending to recruit indigenous students and clergy as future missionaries in tribal areas. The “localization” policy of the international Presbyterian Church won the trust of many of Taiwan’s indigenous peoples. To the indigenous peoples, church-related activities are more trustworthy than the state-sponsored mountain policies (Hsieh Shih-chung 1987a:85-6). Moreover, the Presbyterian Church not only encouraged its recruited indigenous clergy to preach in their own native tongue, which apparently violated the KMT’s official language policy, but also collaborated with political oppositional forces to push for national socio-political reforms. This further endeared the missionaries to the leaders of the indigenous movements. Because of these activities, the Presbyterian Church has remained at odds with the KMT regime for a number of years.
These local Christian clergy represent a new segment of the newly emerging indigenous elites distinct from those intellectuals who receive higher education in Han society. The foundation of the ATA gained support quickly from the church’s “religious elites.” In fact, some studies show that the church system provided the most extensive mobilization network for the spatially scattered indigenous settlements and that once the ATA initiated the “Return Our Lands” movement, they relied heavily on the church’s momentum and connections (Chung Ching-po 1990:68-77; Lee Tsu-min 1991: 49-53; Hsieh Shih-chung 1987a:83-7). This suggests indirectly that the personal connections established by the churches have effectively replaced, to some significant extent, traditional indigenous social and political organizations.

The close cooperation between the indigenous movement and the Christian churches in promoting the social movement does not suggest that there is no tension regarding other issues. Although the Taiwan Presbyterian Church possesses “relative progressiveness” (Chen Ying-chen, cited in Chung Ching-po 1990:99), compared to other overly apolitical and conservative denominations, there are doubts about what positions some of the Christian ministers will take regarding the indigenous movements if hard choices must be made. Some ministers may not participate in the “Return Our Lands” movement for the sake of the pending extinction of Taiwan’s indigenous nations. Nor do the Christian clergy always conform to the indigenous movement’s contentions that “land is life” and “land is identity.” What is clearly central to the mission of these clergy is to “deepen” the relationship between the church and the indigenous peoples (Chung Ching-po 1990:77). The resistant indigenous elites who are not converted have complicated feelings about the role of
Western religions in Taiwan's indigenous movements. This is especially true for the leftwing-oriented intellectuals who are active and relatively important in policy formation for these movements (Interview E).

One of my informants told me that he has still some doubts about the foreign religions (Interview E). Christianity, the churches themselves, and their priests and reverends have altered the spatial relationship of tribal members and their living space. Ancient sacred places are displaced by the churches. Some ancestor worship and other traditional ceremonies are forbidden or discouraged or simplified by the local religious elites and clergy (Interview E). From the perspective of one of my informants, the church is the medium of social cooperation. It is necessary to get along with the church clergy since many tribal activities are led by the church (Interview E). From his point of view, the church has to transform itself to become “indigenized” (see Chapter 5.2) as well, and change its “alien” characteristic to fit into the indigenous cultures (Interview E). However, only very limited “indigenization” actually occurs in churches and its extent also varies geographically. As an active promoter of nativistic culture, my informant did not conceal his dissatisfaction with the Western churches and some priests, though he himself is also a Christian (Interview E).

YiChiang BaLuer (1994) wishes to refute previous studies which emphasize the importance of using the mobilizing networks of the church and proposes a “mutual and reciprocal” linking of the ATA and the Christian church systems. Lee Tsu-min (1991:49) and Hsieh Shih-chung (1992 and 1994c) call the resistant indigenous elites “elites without people” given the fact that the initial ATA-led protests did not attain significant attention from the aboriginal communities all over Taiwan, and that in
reality the successful mobilization of the “Return Our Lands” movement relied mostly on church-based connections. YiChiang argues that although the branches of the Taiwan Presbyterian Church in the plains areas are relatively liberal, the churches in the mountain areas are still very conservative and in fact, remain under severe KMT party-state control (1994). The Presbyterian Church mainly provided the platform for mobilization and financial support, but the ATA was the actual group whose member carried out plans and promoted grassroots mobilization. For some, then, this is a complementary relationship. To argue that the ATA leaders have no tribal mass foundation and connections is incorrect, since many ATA caucus members are themselves clergy of the church and stay in constant contact with the grassroots organizations (YiChiang BaLuer 1994). However, the relations between Western religions and their proponents and these new indigenous movements should be situated and studied in broader cultural and historical contexts. Thus, to generate ethnic pride by challenging the existing Han hegemonic illusions and to reclaim the right of self-naming are additional goals of the current indigenous movement.

From the above discussion, it is obvious that indigenous movements involve not merely political mobilization and ideological conversion, but also struggles in cultural representation. The right of naming, as one of the most fundamental manifestation of cultural autonomy in the politics of multiculturalism, however, cannot be taken for granted by indigenous peoples, who still need to fight for this basic right of naming, their homeland, and landscapes for themselves.

One of the most significant breakthroughs in cultural politics is the dissolution of the myth of Wu-fang, who was said to be respected by the tribal members because
he sacrificed himself to teach the savage headhunting fans to stop the killing of humans. The “official legend” was adopted in the standard curricula of all elementary schools and constituted one of the major origins of the “stigmatized identity” designed to the aborigines. A hsian and a temple in Chiayi County were both named after Wu-fang. His statue was erected in front of the Chiayi City train station. The textbook, name, temple and statue could be considered as the embodiment of a Han hegemonic project (Chu Yen-liang 1994) and became major targets of protests. In 1988, Wu-fang hsian was renamed as A-Li-Shan hsian with all Han delegates voting against and all indigenous delegates voting for the proposal to change the name (YiChiang BaLuer 1994). Wu-fang’s statue was tumbled in 1988 with iron chains by the collective “illegal” efforts of a group of indigenous youths. Because of these efforts, Wu-fang no longer appears in the elementary school textbook as a hero who “tamed” the “savagery” of mountain people. The dissolution of such a state-sponsored myth signals the partial achievement of the “Name Correcting Movement” (see next section) at the local level.

The acquisition by Taiwan’s indigenous population of a proper name to replace the official government names of “mountain people,” “mountain compatriots” (shanpao), “mountain people in mountain areas” (shandi shanpao) and “mountain people in plains areas” (pingdi shanpao) reflects another prolonged struggle in the field of cultural politics. In 1984, the ATA promoted the use of Yuanzhumin, which literally means original inhabitants and was perhaps inspired by the English use of “aborigines,” to replace other traditional “stigmatized” names (YiChiang BaLuer 1994 and 1995). In North America, the existence of the indigenous peoples who had lived in
America for thousands of years before the arrival of white settlers is commonly recognized. In contrast, Taiwan’s school curricula under the control of the KMT regime did not provide similar information. Conversely, the standard textbooks propagandized Han settlers’ efforts to open the “wildness” of the frontier island. A “positive” recognition of the existence of non-Han peoples in Taiwan was not available through official channels. Therefore, the new name *Yuanzhumin* was, in fact, totally strange to the majority Han people in Taiwan (Hsieh Shih-chung 1987b). However, the use of new name quickly became widespread among some liberal mass media outlets, academics, non-KMT forces, and various religious groups. Even this level of adoption was beyond the imagination of the ATA leaders (YiChiang BaLuer 1994). Both the newly founded Democratic Progressive Party in 1987 and the Taiwan Presbyterian Church in 1989 declared their official support of the new name (YiChiang BaLuer 1994 and 1995). The support from the Presbyterian Church and the largest opposition party has far-reaching influence on the attitudes of indigenous political elites. Even the KMT’s indigenous elites who often opposed the ATA proposed reforms showed unprecedented support for the adoption of the new collective name for indigenous peoples (YiChiang BaLuer 1994 and 1995). It seems that the only serious opposition to the change came from the KMT’s most rigid ideologies (YiChiang BaLuer 1995).

In the 1992 National Assembly Conference for Constitutional Revision, the KMT insisted on the use of “mountain people registered in mountain areas” (*shandi shanpao*) and “mountain people registered in plains areas” (*pingdi shanpao*) as the official Constitutional names for Taiwan’s aborigines. Officially, the ATA strongly
disagreed with the KMT’s proposal for the following reasons (YiChiang BaLuer 1993):

1. The uses of “mountain people registered in mountain areas” and “mountain people registered in plains areas” not only represents vestiges of the Japanese colonial legacy but also negates both ethnic symbolic marks and indigenous peoples’ “national” status.

2. The character, pao, in Chinese means siblings or people with the same origin. To use pao as the official name for aborigines fairly demonstrates the KMT’s ethno-centrism and assimilation policy.

3. The dichotomy of indigenous population into “people registering in the mountains” and “people registering in the plains,” is associated with different administrative measures used to deal with these two groups and was disruptive to the solidarity of aboriginal pan-ethnic identity.

4. “Mountain people” (shanpao) is considered to be a discriminatory and obsolete name. Aborigines have their own many cultures, histories, ancestries and races. Their living space spreads over a broad territory and many aborigines currently live in the cities. Shanpao is then, in fact, a term which is itself the result of a distorted history and is not correct even with respect to the location of these people.

   Academics, including anthropologists and sociologists, supported the new name. They claimed that the ruling party, aborigines, or other citizens should not expect the academy to provide a “correct” or “best” name because the best name for minority groups was the name chosen by themselves (Huang Ying-kuei; Chiang Ping; Chen
Mao-tai; Shih Lei; and Chu Hai-yan 1993). The principle seemed especially true for
the indigenous populations of Taiwan. The academics also disputed the KMT’s
interpretation that the name YUanzhumin would be used to protest against the Chinese
Nation and would eventually lead to separatism (Huang Ying-kuei; Chiang Ping; Chen
Mao-tai; Shih Lei; and Chu Hai-yan 1993). Conversely, the deeply Sinicized
aborigines express their active participation in politics that is overwhelmingly
structured within the framework of Han culture.

Han people expressed concern that the recognition of the “shanpao” as the “first
masters” who were “indigenous” to the island would lead to the re-establishment of
aboriginal “traditional” land tenure system. However, this was over-romanticized and
was clearly an exaggeration of the power of a name as a symbol (Huang Ying-kuei;
Chiang Ping; Chen Mao-tai; Shih Lei; and Chu Hai-yan 1993) given the current ethnic
power relations in Taiwan. A name change, of course, will in no way guarantee
associated political and economic benefits, which depended mostly upon political
reality. Moreover, even the restoration of the traditional land tenure system will not
actually benefit all members of the indigenous population because the firmly
established and on-going capitalist development of the mountain areas has
significantly eroded any basis for the reestablishment of traditional livelihoods. Thus,
the leaders of a responsible, sincere, indigenous movement will have to take the real
world situation into serious account in their designs for a traditional cultural
renaissance or, indeed, in the establishment of any form of aboriginal autonomous
areas.
The name-correcting movement had partially achieved its original goals as of 1994. The name of shanpao (mountain people) was changed into Yuanzhumin (indigenous people), but not as originally expected Yuanzhumintzu (indigenous peoples or indigenous nations). The latter term placed greater emphasis on indigenous “national” status, while the former term only recognized “indigenous” status without regarding aborigines as another people or nation apart from the KMT’s central belief of “Chung-Hwa-Min-Tzu,” the Chinese Nation. However, by way of compromise, the dominant KMT delegates in the 1994 Constitutional reforms still dichotomized aborigines into “aborigines in mountain areas” and “aborigines in plains areas” despite tremendous ongoing pressures from indigenous organizations and massive social sympathy towards the aborigines.

The prolonged indigenous movements and radical sociopolitical changes in recent years have resulted in some changes of the attitudes of the pro-KMT indigenous elites. Aboriginal representatives are not as quiet and submissive as before. They have started to criticize unreasonable government policies and have come to question the distorted history and past discriminatory policies levied against the aborigines (Hsieh Shih-chung 1994c). However, those pro-KMT elites only played a passive role in all aboriginal struggles. At the initial stage of the indigenous movements, these indigenous KMT delegates often waged a counteraction or provided intimidating information to offset grassroots mobilization (Lee Tsu-min 1991:22; YiChiang BaLuer 1994). To some extent, these KMT indigenous elites did reap interests and benefited from the indigenous resistant movements.
Hsieh Shih-chung's observations (1994c) that the pro-KMT elites (in his term, party elites) support the traditional ideology of the unification of China and oppose ATA-initiated movements no longer applies to all party elites. That the ATA emphasizes identification as "indigenous nations" and tries to integrate all aboriginal groups under the common banner of a pan-indigenous identity remains true. However, to say that party elites emphasize identification with the Chinese Nation is problematic. Although the party elites still endeavor to maintain the current condition of cooperation with the KMT regime, they may no longer uphold the idea of the Chinese Nation. My interview with the chief of Hoping hsian indicated that even this indigenous politician, quite successful at the local level would first identify himself as Taiwanese, rather than Chinese (Interview B). The combined effects of rapid socio-political changes in Taiwan and the relative decline of the KMT's authoritarianism also encouraged party elites to be more outspoken so as to garner support from the newly emerging and gradually less manipulatable indigenous elites. Opinions and requests raised by the party elites in some aspects are identical to those in the ATA's earlier proposal.

The indigenous resistant groups grew to as many as fifteen during the period from 1984 to 1990 (Hsieh Shih-chung 1994c). This period is also considered to be the "golden period" of Taiwan's various new social movements. It was also the time when the nearly four-decade long martial law was going to be lifted and the forces within the more mature civil society were ready to erupt against the prolonged authoritarian control. A division of labor within these social movements groups gradually appeared. The extent of topics of concern broadened to cover other social and environmental
problems facing the indigenous population. Among them, saving indigenous child
prostitutes and protesting the nuclear waste site in Lanyu Island where the Dawu
people (originally called Yami) live, were the two major events which also drew
significant attentions from Taiwan’s society and the KMT regime. Other isolated,
sporadic demonstrations occurred through the late 1980s and early 1990s (TaBong
SaSaLe 1993).

The most recent indigenous peoples’ movements have developed around two
broad issues. First, there is a call for establishing a Cabinet-level government agency
to unify the dispersed authority dealing with the aboriginal affairs. Second, there is the
demand for an addition to the “Aboriginal Articles” to the Constitution to protect
aboriginal rights to autonomy, to veto (the aborigine-related legislation), and to
provide for a greater say in issues related to development, culture, education, and land
(National Assembly 1997).

The longstanding, if mis-named, Mongolian and Tibetan Affairs Commission
also became the target of protests during the struggling for the establishment of a
central government agency in charge of aboriginal affairs (Hsieh Shih-chung 1994c).
The Commission was considered as a concrete representation of the KMT’s Chinese
bias in that the ROC State would rather disguise its symbolic claim over China’s
“frontier” territory than sincerely face issues related to aboriginal sufferings in
Taiwan. The ATA led a demonstration in 1991 to demand the abolishment of the
symbolic agency of the Mongolian and Tibetan Affairs Commission and to promote
the establishment of a new Cabinet-level agency for minorities and indigenous
peoples. In December 1996, the Council of Aboriginal Affairs under the Executive
Yuan was founded during the government fiscal year. The immediate results of this poor timing included insufficient financial resources and an under-staffed institute since neither money nor personnel could be devoted within a fiscal year.

The passage of the bylaws of the Council of Aboriginal Affairs in November 1996, however, did not draw wide applause from the indigenous peoples because of the compromise made during the process of legislation. The plains Han people effectively lobbied the lawmakers (see Chapter 6) to add an additional resolution concerning the reservation lands used by non-indigenous people. The amended resolution requires that surveys on the lands leased to Han people by either the state or the aborigines, and investigations regarding the land transactions between Han and aborigines, be immediately conducted. When legal discrepancies are identified, they demand that sound and fair decisions be made. The additional resolution is interpreted by the resistant elites as an ominous prelude to the deregulation of aboriginal reservation land. In short, it was seen as a capitulation of the KMT administration to the demands of both Han hegemonic culture and more pragmatically to large Han business groups which are renown for their land speculation all over Taiwan’s cities (Chapter 6).

The new indigenous movement, after the achievements of partial restoration of traditional cultural dignity and the founding of Council of Aboriginal Affairs, has turned its attention to land rights and associated issues.

For the first anniversary of the creation of the Council of Aboriginal Affairs, a public hearing was held to examine the actual accomplishments of the new agency in the first year of existence. The chairperson was a former KMT indigenous legislator.
Various indigenous organizations and officials from different ministries were invited to the meeting. Overall, the performance of the Council was not found to be satisfactory, especially for the resistant elites. Severe criticisms were raised by the aboriginal resistant elites on the following issues (Interview C):

1. The Executive Yuan is contemptuous of the Council and not willing to allocate a significant budget which is required for accomplishing the stated goals of the Council.

2. The personnel and decision-makers of the Council were actually the KMT members who used to oppose the goals of indigenous movements. The Council must determine if such persons are suitable for the positions they now hold.

3. The Council lacks autonomy and relies heavily on the mercy of other ministries even for aborigine-related issues.

4. The Council can neither protect the reservation lands from the invasion of business corporations, nor does it have the capability of presenting sound vocational training and employment policies to improve aboriginal economic conditions and job opportunities.

5. The severe shortages of medical infrastructure and facilities in the mountain hsians have resulted in many avoidable tragedies.

6. Native tongues and traditional cultures are still rapidly disappearing. The indigenous music and dances promoted by the government only reinforce stereotypes of the aborigines.

7. The Council remains reluctant to speak about issues related to aboriginal human rights. The issues include child prostitutes, nuclear waste sites in Lanyu Island, and
most recently the forced relocation of indigenous peoples for the construction of the new reservoir in Pingtung County.

8. The KMT regime defers, or even destroys, the efforts of nongovernmental organizations to bring Taiwan back to the international stage under the name of Taiwan, rather than the government-preferred ROC. Thus, in the 1997 meeting of the United Nations’ Working Group on Indigenous Populations, Taiwan’s indigenous representatives were forced to remove “Taiwan” from their organizational name because of protests from mainland China. The diplomatic policy of the Council in the international indigenous community concentrates on little more than orchestrated displays of Taiwan’s aboriginal music and dance, while largely concealing the many problems currently facing the indigenous population.

9. The Council lacks the legal capacity and insights to design future relations between the central government and the future aboriginal autonomous areas.

Because many superficial programs dominated the Council’s agenda in its first year, the resistant indigenous elites repeatedly referred to the Council and the new government policy as a whole as a form of “educational colonialism” and “welfare colonialism” (Interview C).

The Constitutional “Aboriginal Articles” movement is another major ongoing indigenous peoples’ movement. Following the partial success of the “name-correcting” movement that established the term of Yuanzhumin in the Constitution, the “Aboriginal Articles” movement also aims at Constitutional reforms. The central concern of this movement entails the establishment of codified fundamental rights of the indigenous nations in a modern nation-state. Full recognition of these rights, such
as self-government, rights to the use of fisheries and other natural resources, education and language policies, rights to cultural intellectual property, and some forms of veto power over legislation and development plans related to indigenous land and territory, will signal a revolutionary change in the current conceptualization and ideology of the traditional nation-state.

Although the new Constitution conferred a seemingly suitable term, Yuanzhumin (indigenous persons) to the aborigines to replace the old expression shanpao (mountain compatriot) in July 1994, guideline regarding aborigines-state relations remains poorly specified in the Constitution. In the new additional articles which was added to the Constitution in 1994, the general right to political participation is firmly confirmed. This aboriginal article is as follow:

The state shall accord to the aborigines in the free area [i.e. the Taiwan area] legal protection of their status and right to political participation. It shall also provide assistance and encouragement for their education, cultural preservation, social welfare, and business undertakings. The same protection and assistance shall be given to the people of the Kinmen and Matsu areas (GIO 1997, brackets added by the author).

The original proposal by the aboriginal representatives, which demanded a minimum quota in congressional seats and further asked that the representatives be elected from each indigenous group (according to the principle of “ethnic group justice”), however, did not pass (National Assembly 1997). The much-needed right to traditionally held lands, autonomy, and a right to veto for relevant laws proposed mainly by the indigenous representatives and the Democratic Progressive Party, were also turned down during the National Assembly meeting in 1997. Moreover, these proposals were considered as dividing political spoils of Constitutional reforms among
major political forces in that "Aboriginal Articles" were simply issues which might best be described as trading interest for votes (Interview G).

To "dilute" the already symbolic and grudgingly awarded "national" status of the indigenous peoples, the aboriginal article actually passed by the National Assembly in 1994 was written in such a way as to intentionally include the people of the islands of Kinmen and Matsu (National Assembly 1997), which are considered to be "border regions in ROC’s free areas" under the KMT’s current political ideology. Like other minority people in ROC’s border area such as Mongolia, Tibet and Sinkiang (Xinjiang), the new document asserts that Taiwan’s indigenous people are also part of the great Chinese Nation, not a different "nation" or "people." Ironically, perhaps, Taiwan’s aborigines are now associated with the "border areas" of the current territory effectively controlled by the KMT state. The association of minority groups with the border, the frontier or "geographically peripheral" areas also suggests a Han-centrism embodied in the mainstream hegemonic culture. This "frontier colonialism" (in Mercer’s term, 1997) and the paternalistically assimilationist policy was simply converted to a less obvious form in the new Constitution. Colonialism has altered indigenous peoples and their territory from sovereignty independence to protectorates as mere third parties (Kariya 1993) in negotiation between dominating political forces or even perhaps between private developers and government in terms of resource exploitations.

The ATA’s resistant elites participated actively in various elections from the early stage of the burgeoning indigenous peoples’ movement. Less than one year from the establishment of the ATA, one member participated in an election of the
representative to the Provincial Council in the category of “mountain people registered in the mountain area” in 1985 but failed. Others participated in County Council, Provincial Council, and Legislative elections in 1986, 1989, and 1991. They all lost! In retrospect, the resistant elites with no local faction affiliations, still crucial to Taiwan’s local elections (Kao Te-yi 1996), expected unrealistically that their efforts in awakening the indigenous peoples would lead to subsequent electoral victories. Moreover, the KMT state’s compromises to the ATA’s demands apparently have not loosened the party’s firm control over the indigenous society (Hsieh Shih-chung 1994c).

YiChiang’s review of the indigenous movements provides several insights (YiChiang BaLuer 1994). First, the loose grassroots organization deters the development of the ATA. It is not because the ATA’s members are all urban elites without any tribal base and connections, but because the ATA’s members lack the requisite organizing skills. Thus, most of the ATA’s local chapters could not operate actively in the tribes and so had little influence on actual elections.

Second, there is a lack of cohesive forces among different pro-resistance organizations. Because of the lack of effective communication and cooperation, mutual trust rapidly eroded away and the result was internal rifts. The geographically scattered indigenous tribes with different cultural backgrounds and different local contexts and issues underscore the difficulty of waging island-wide resistant movements.

Third, the presence of the pro-KMT indigenous political elites counteracts the progressive indigenous movement. The current political elites are nominated by the
KMT first and then elected by their constituents later. Indeed, under this system, it would appear that no independent could win elections without KMT affiliation. Therefore, the indigenous political elites in the KMT establishment always stood in opposition to the pro-resistance elites and so offset the effect of the aboriginal movement’s progressive policies and candidates. This tension was somewhat alleviated by recent developments. However, when goals of the indigenous movement are contradictory to the KMT’s policies, the political elites still tended to side with the ruling party and failed to form a united front for the common interests of all of the indigenous nations.

Fourth, there is a lack of political resources which limit what the movement can do. The growth and development of Taiwan’s indigenous movements occurred earlier than subsequent political democratization and the growth of party politics in Taiwan. Social resources are often largely absorbed by party politics and in general there is insufficient attention paid to aboriginal affairs.

Finally, there might have been premature participation in the elections. Elections were considered to be one strategy which could be used to arouse indigenous consciousness and to disseminate the ATA’s ideas to the grassroots in more effective ways. However, the tribal members may consider that the ATA’s efforts merely resulted in competition with strong KMT nominees for same positions. Failure in early elections may have cast doubts on the “legitimacy” and “truisms” of the indigenous movements. Even at present, the “game” of electoral politics designed by the Han state is incompatible with the direction of the aboriginal movement. Premature participation in election politics may have siphoned off considerable resources in the movements.
while actually effecting little change. Understanding of this problem in hindsight has come to be viewed as a critical problem (YiChiang BaLuer 1994).

5.3.2 New Indigenous Peoples' Identity

Taiwan is on the verge of identity schizophrenia. On the one hand, the "Sinicizing" process imposed by the early authoritarian state had "misplaced" the identity of Taiwan's people to that of an "imaged country"- the ROC. On the other hand, the "Taiwanized" KMT regime, represented by the current president Lee Teng-hui, and the native opposition party, the DPP, have jointly advocated a policy of "Taiwan-prioritism" (Wong and Sun 1998) which affirms the priority of recognizing a Taiwanese identity. As a result, Taiwan people's national identities are characterized by confusion and ambivalence because of these conflicting national discourses (Wong and Sun 1998). As an added distinctive characteristic of Taiwanese nationalism, Taiwan's indigenous peoples have been given a symbolic place in the construction of new Taiwanese nationalism. However, this does not guarantee, or even deny, indigenous peoples' "national" status within this emerging new nationalist discourse.

From the aboriginal perspective, the subjectivity of indigenous peoples has been gradually lost to the encroachment of foreign colonizers in the past four hundred years. The various degrees of interactions with the Western powers, the Chinese Empire, the Japanese during occupation, and the KMT constitute unique historical contexts within which the identities of the various aboriginal groups were formed, transferred, interrupted, and consolidated.

Prior to 1895, only some points and areas of Taiwan were under the effective control of these various regimes. Even the settlers and local elites during the Ching
Empire had limited knowledge about the more remote areas of the Central Mountain
Range and the East Coast of Taiwan (Sun Da-chuan 1995b). Han settlers distinguished
aborigines unilaterally according to their degrees of Sinicization and assimilation. To
the aborigines, their identity and geographical imagination were bound by their own
“tribe” and their accessible hunting fields (Sun Da-chuan 1995b). No regular
organization was set up for inter-tribal communication even within different tribes of
the same indigenous group. Tribes formed the basic unit of the subsistence economy
as well as the organizations comprising the social and political structures (TaBong
SaSaLe 1993). Separated by rough terrain and new settlers, tribes in many ways
represented the boundaries of the indigenous social and political identities.

The first extensive field survey on the peoples and land of Taiwan led by
anthropologists and biologists was conducted by the Japanese colonial regime in its
early stage of control. The statecraft of the colonial regime was to apply western
scientific and rational methodologies to the study of ethnology for the foundation of
the colonial rule. The utmost purpose of these researches was to stabilize the order of
the “East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere” for the expanding Japanese war machine (Chen
Chao-ru 1992). According to languages and customs, the aborigines were divided into
six, seven, eight or nine groups (tzu) depending on different criteria (Pan Ying 1995;
Sun Da-chuan 1995b).

The classifications had certain functions in terms of colonial statecraft.
However, they also extended the aboriginal identity beyond the boundary of individual
tribes, collapsing geographically, linguistically, and customarily similar neighboring
tribes into the same group (tzu). Regardless of internal differences, for Taiwan’s
indigenous populations, nuances of cultures were transcended and group consciousness was formed for the first time as the result of the Japanese classifications (Sun Da-chuan 1995b). The name of each tzu, creating another “layer,” provided new distinctions that separated “we” and “the other” in addition to the geographical differences (Sun Da-chuan 1995b).

In the later period of occupation, the Japanese imperial military aggressively recruited Taiwanese youths during World War II to supplement the inadequate supply of domestic youth for the war machine. The Japanese systematically enlisted indigenous youths because of their relatively high degree of loyalty to the Japanese Emperor and their reputation for enduring hardship. The successful implementation of “Japanization” policy in aboriginal societies also brought a new experience to the aborigines – the creation of a national identity beyond the tribe (Sun Da-chuan 1995b). The effective mobilization of aborigines allowing the construction of loyalty towards the Emperor was the ideological base of enlisting young men and forging their identification with Japan. It was the first time the indigenous peoples developed a consciousness of the modern state, well beyond the boundary of their own tribes (Sun Da-chuan 1995a and 1995b).

The “honor” of identification with the Emperor did not come with the elevation of aboriginal status in the imperial division of labor. The primordial trans-tribal, trans-ethnic aboriginal consciousness constructed by the Japanese Empire remained completely with a backward, stigmatized stereotype. The naming by colonizers, field work by anthropologists, and the presumably misguided identification with the Japanese Emperor mainly constructed by the imperial military together marked the
beginning of the structural collapse of Taiwan’s indigenous cultures, their self-confidence, and ultimately their ethnic pride (Sun Da-chuan 1995b). Even before the arrival of the KMT regime, Taiwan’s aborigines experienced the indoctrination of the modern state apparatus (and had made considerable sacrifice for its sake), and seemed to be tame and not “dangerous” to another colonial foreign regime, the KMT.

The Japanese extended state surveillance to Taiwan’s indigenous societies to an extent which the Ching Empire had never achieved. The KMT regime, based on the Japanese policies, furthered this “control and assimilation” policy in the mountain areas. Since 1970s, the state-imposed conversion of traditional names into Han names, the loss of native tongues, the abolishment of tribal ceremonies, the resultant amnesia of culture and customs, the collapse of social and political structures, and the intrusion of foreign religions have replaced virtually all the clues and symbols for the formation of indigenous identities. Independent answers to the age-old question “Who Am I?” have become the most anxious concern for the aborigines in the 1980s (Sun Da-chuan 1995b).

The emergence of the indigenous movement in the mid-1980s was not an isolated event. The eruption of this movement was closely related to the ethnic power struggles among Han people, new conceptions of society stemming from the liberation of civil society versus the authoritarian state, and the concurrent nativistic cultural renaissance of the native Han Taiwanese, as the opposite of the “alien” Chinese mainlanders. Ironically, some of the KMT’s assimilation policies have inadvertently had the side effect of uniting aborigines from different groups and cultural backgrounds on the basis of speaking and writing the same language – Chinese.
Essentially, almost all the resistant elites can speak fluent Mandarin and can manipulate the codes of communication – the Han characters. Perhaps, the superimposed national language policy has backfired after four decades of implementation. The same language and communication codes which were introduced for the promotion of assimilationist policies provided the primordial foundation for the pan-indigenous movement (Lee Tsu-min 1991:43; Sun Da-chuan 1995b). The process of modernization, on the other hand, provides similar cultural background and collective memories for aborigines of different tribes (Chen Tzung-han 1994:115). However, the number of resistant elites is small and under a system where seniority is still an important factor, they are too young to have great influence within their tribes. Although democratically elected officials have replaced the traditional political leaders and the inherited aristocracy, the elders still remain more influential in many tribes than the youths. Because of these limits, the mobilization of people for the indigenous movement in the early stage had to rely on the support of non-KMT organizations or progressive Han intellectuals, as well as the networks of church members also an external ally (Sun Da-chuan 1995b).

The major cohesive forces of the early, urban-based ATA were largely recognition of the collective sufferings and stigmatized stereotypes associated with aborigines, and the anxiety over cultural extinctions (Hsieh Shih-chung 1987a; TaBong SaSaLe 1993). Pan-indigenous identity and the significance of ethnic politics were not the major concerns of these early resistant elites in the movement. Finding solutions to individual cases and problems were the main functions of the ATA, whose relationship with the urban aboriginal working class was built upon this sort of
“service in crisis” rather than upon similar political beliefs. An ATA member’s reflection points out that the service relationship was, on the one hand, to alleviate the responsibility of the KMT regime for the aboriginal sufferings; on the other hand, this relation and pragmatic approach did little to facilitate the awakening of aboriginal consciousness and further political resistance efforts (YiChiang BaLuer 1994).

The promotion of the proposed new name for Taiwan’s aborigines, *Yuanzhumin*, has had an unprecedented influence on indigenous elites, both those who are pro-resistance, and pro-KMT. The new name provides a new ethnic mark and represents a solid foundation for the formation of a new collective identity as Taiwanese indigenous people. That is, the name characterizes a pan-indigenous identity which transcends individual differences. Unlike Kazemzadeh’s definition of the so-called pan-movement, which is “dedicated to the unification of a geographic area, linguistic group, nation, race, or religion” (cited in Hsieh Shih-chung 1994c), Taiwan’s various indigenous peoples are separated by different languages, customs, socio-political organizations, and further are scattered throughout a vast geographical area. The prerequisites for forming a pan-movement are limited. Contrary to the observation of Lee Tsu-min (1991), even the KMT’s standard educational system and national language policy offers some function towards overcoming different cultural backgrounds (Hsieh Shih-chung 1992). The promotion of new name *Yuanzhumin* has contributed to the final formation of Taiwan’s aboriginal movement and has proved to be a rally point for the growing “united front” of indigenous elites, both the KMT and non-KMT members (Hsieh Shih-chung 1992). However, the merely symbolic value of a new code could not possibly provide sufficient impetus and material base for a
movement to grow. The differences between Han and Austronesian peoples, the changing socio-political environment in Taiwan, and the structural disintegration of ethnic cultures and prides are, perhaps, the fundamental reasons for the rise of indigenous movements.

An opposite trend has developed after the collective name for aborigines Yuanzhumin has been accepted by the majority of population. The collective bargaining position emerging from the name-correcting movement had partially achieved this goal. However, a more subtle differentiation between these two terms, Yuanzhumin and Yuanzhumintzu, was necessary to demolish some deep-rooted stereotypes. While Yuanzhumin (indigenous people) refers to only individual aborigines, Yuanzhumintzu (indigenous nations) brings up the concept that each individual indigenous group is in fact a unique people, or a nation. Taiwanese are in fact constituted by, neither a single nation, nor four ethnic groups as I mentioned in Chapter 1 (not to mention the traditional KMT-promoted Chinese Nation). From aborigines' perspective, Taiwanese are constituted by ethnic Han people and a diverse Austronesian people that contains many nations, and each indigenous group is qualified to be called a nation. This is a radical deviation from the orthodox, one-dimensional Chinese nationalist discourse and totally beyond the historical context that the old KMT and its hard-liners' (the New Party) can comprehend (Chen Chao-ru 1992).

Despite the fact that Taiwan's aborigines belong to some vague Austronesian macro-group, the origin of which is believed by many scholars to be in Taiwan, indigenous peoples do not choose to call themselves as "Taiwan Austronesian" or
simply Austronesian. During the process of establishing and strengthening their ethnic identity, the aboriginal leaders have not looked abroad toward the geographical South or East of the Pacific Realm where other Austronesian peoples live. Instead, they insist that they are “indigenous” to the island of Taiwan (Huang Ying-kuei; Chiang Ping; Chen Mao-tai; Shih Lei; and Chu Hai-yan 1993). This phenomenon reveals the indigenous elites’ identity with Taiwan, a quasi-nation state, rather than with other Austronesian peoples living in different countries. This difference of “inward looking” versus “outward looking” consciousness could be attributed to the geographical boundaries of nation states that confines the aborigines’ social and political imaginations. However, this “inward looking” orientation may also be interpreted as a careful evaluation of potential political leverage within Taiwan. In Taiwan’s settlers’ society, “indigenous” to this land embeds different meaning to other latecomers, and an associated “true” identity with this land. Therefore, the aboriginal leaders believe that the product of the “inward looking” name Yuanzhumin can serve to re-establish ethnic dignity and consolidate the ethnic interests (Huang Ying-kuei; Chiang Ping; Chen Mao-tai; Shih Lei; and Chu Hai-yan 1993).

The demarcation of geographical areas into different administrative regions reflects the operation of power and ideology over time and space (Sun Da-chuan 1995a). New national territorial planning and the subsequent re-designing of administrative units will involve socio-political contests over ideological and material interests. The final resolution of the indigenous peoples’ requests will inevitably encompass and incorporate this complicated spatial politics, which involves not
merely visible economic, political, and ethnic interests, but also invisible emotional affinities of place and identity.

In brief, this chapter provides a critical view on the KMT’s construction of Chinese consciousness in Taiwan to replace the Japanese colonial legacy. The KMT used an “imagined geography” to legitimize its authoritarian rule over Taiwan. The democratic movement roughly beginning in the 1970s not only loosened the KMT’s controls, but also inspired the development of the discourse of Taiwanese nationalism, to counteract the official infusion of Chinese nationalism. The rise of the indigenous movement in the mid-1980s, on the other hand, offers a critical re-examination on the discourse construction of Taiwanese nationalism.

The major goals of the indigenous movement in Taiwan are reviewed under the frameworks of political economy and cultural politics: the “Return Our Lands” movement, the “Name Correcting” movement (from the term “mountain people” to the term Yuanzhumin), and the “Constitutional Revision” movement. I also examine the always crucial but at the same time, controversial, role of Christian religion and its clergy in Taiwan’s indigenous movement. Finally, I argue that the development of indigenous movement has forged a new identity not only among the various aboriginal groups/tribes, but also posed important challenges on the dominant national and cultural discourse.
CHAPTER 6. LAND RIGHTS CONFLICTS, ETHNIC RELATIONS, AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS IN THE FIELD RESEARCH AREA OF LI-SHAN, TAICHUNG COUNTY, TAIWAN

The Li-Shan area is located in the upper stream of the Da-Chia River ranging in altitude from fifteen to twenty-two hundred meters. The whole Li-Shan area is within the watershed area of the Te-Chi Reservoir which was built between 1969 and 1974 (Chang Chang-yi 1981; Figure 6.1). A brief introduction on the history and resources of the Li-Shan area and its relationship with Taiwan as a whole are essential to understand contemporary ethnic conflicts and local politics. The official four ethnic categories: Holo, Hakka, mainlander, and aborigines are all present in Hoping Hsian. However, from aborigines' perspective, the first three groups can be generalized as Han people. The differences among these three groups are relatively minor compared to those between the Han people and the aborigines. Conflicts over land rights are concentrated on reservation lands where only aborigines can possess titles. In these instances, Han people can only hold lease rights transferred from aboriginal landlords, or in some cases from the State. Because of the reservation lands policy, land conflicts develop along this split of ethnic groups. In the case of the mountain hsian, ethnic divisions almost parallel the class division of rich and poor.

The extent of slopeland development in Li-Shan for temperate-zone agriculture extends beyond the boundaries of the reservation lands. Beginning in the 1970s, agricultural development was extended into national forest lands and created a serious environmental problem when the Te-Chi Reservoir was affected by rapid siltation which halved the projected life of the dam (Chang Chang-yi 1992). The problem was so severe that the government was forced to take actions to defer or halt the rate of
Figure 6.1 The Map of the Li-Shan Area

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deterioration. A provincial-level agency, the Li-Shan Administration Office, was set up in 1967, but in turn, was relegated to a township agency under the jurisdiction of Hoping Hsian in 1979. The “behind the scenes reasons” for this move were complex and ambiguous, but it was generally believed that the Office was unable to effectively coordinate local forces to perform its designated duty for planning and overseeing the developmental process in the whole area (Chang Chang-yi 1992).

Despite earlier efforts to promote apple production in the region, a disincentive for apple cultivation in the upper basin developed later. The KMT government liberalized its trade sanction on apples to import the fruit from, mainly, the U.S. in 1979. By the summer of 1980, the retail price for apples had plunged fifty percent and the income of fruit farmers fell to less than half the previous level (Chang Chang-yi 1992). In response to a new state policy, farmers became interested in the production of other fruits, such as pears, peaches, and varieties of “luxury” apples in order to once again minimize market risks.

Working to prolonging the life of the Te-Chi reservoir and to ensure the safety of downstream residents, the government endeavored to eliminate cultivation on all lands with a slope greater than 28 degrees. That is, all fruit trees on such slopes would be cut down. Given the fact that the average estimated cultivation slope is 30- to 35-degrees in the Li-Shan area (in some areas this even reaches 60-degrees) (Chang Chang-yi 1981), the government’s response to ameliorate the environmental crisis encountered tremendous resistance from local groups. The deadline for eliminating all unlawful cultivation was postponed from 1979 to 1989, and then to a currently undecided date due to effective lobbying and more importantly, severe public
resistance. Several arsons that resulted in the burning of some hundreds of hectares of forest were reported between 1983 and 1984 after the official announcement that the fruit trees in extreme slope areas would be cut (Chang Chang-yi 1992). Local farmers turned the mountain hsian into a “site of resistance” against the State policies.

The above discussion demonstrates that there are great profits to be made through the development of the reservation lands in the Li-Shan area, particularly for the cultivation of fruit trees. The economic potential of the region entangled with the ensuing environmental degradation has made the Li-Shan area a political “hot spot.” Land rights conflicts in Li-Shan have thus become charged not only in the arena of ethnic rights, but also for economic and environmental reasons.

6.1 Ethnic Tensions and the Rise of PPRA

In most cases, lands within the reservations are not actually owned by the occupants, either aborigines or Han people, but by the State, specifically the Taiwan Provincial Government. However, current state policy holds that ownership of reservation land can be conferred to indigenous people if they can establish proof of continuous use for five years. Still, reservation land cannot be pledged directly as security for mortgages and loans even though ownership has been conferred to some aborigine, partly because the land title can only be transferred among indigenous peoples. This lack of “real” ownership, arguably, restricts access to improvement capital and limits the motivation for the aborigines to improve their lands and intensify production. This “semi-public” ownership system contributes, at least partly, to the financial problems which are common among aborigines under the current profit-seeking banking system. While there are clear problems associated with land
ownership by indigenous peoples at the present time, those rights which are conferred
due to ethnic status do not extend to Han people living in the area.

6.1.1 The Emergence of the PPRA in Hoping Hsian

In early 1993, a group mobilized mainly through an appeal to Han residents in
the area was founded in several mountain hsians, the Association of Promotion Rights
for Plains People Living in Mountain Hsian (hereafter, Plains People's Right
Association, or PPRA). The PPRA is growing most rapidly in Li-Shan of Hoping
Hsian, Taichung County. Within four years, the organization has become a powerful
local political organization and pro-growth coalition which quickly absorbed
numerous several other small social groups in the Li-Shan area. The PPRA has three
major goals: first, to strive for the deregulation of aboriginal reservation land; second,
to lobby for the right of Han people to be eligible for candidacy for the political
position of chief of mountain hsian, the head of a subcounty unit; and third, to request
the government to change the current term, “indigenous peoples,” back to the original
legal term “mountain compatriots.”

The establishment of this organization was stimulated in response to the pan-
indigenous movement which climaxed in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Three major
demands of the aborigines were perceived by the organizers of the PPRA as major
threats which endangered their positions in the current establishment. First, the
“Return Our Land” movement which requested the State to return or restore
reservation lands that were either illegally utilized by the non-indigenes or taken by
eminent domain, back to aboriginal control. Second, the “Name-correcting
Movement” discussed earlier which called for the right to self-naming and demanded
an official name change from “mountain compatriots” to “indigenous peoples.”

Finally, the “Constitutional Revision Movement” which demanded for an “indigenous provision” in the Additional Articles of the Constitution to the guarantee of rights to development, self-determination, education, and cultural autonomy of the indigenous peoples. All these concerns and the PPRA’s political mobilization are justified by the principle of equal treatment of all ethnic groups in the Article 7 of the Constitution: All citizens of the Republic of China, irrespective of sex, religion, race, class, or party affiliation, shall be equal before the law (PPRA 1997a: 81).

At the present time, PPRA leaders request the complete deregulation of reservation land and support the sale of such land on the free market. This would return these lands to the jurisdiction of normal laws pertaining to land, instead of incorporating such land under the Provision. The official data shows that the area of the reservation land leased out to the plains people is slightly larger than the area actually used by the aborigines in Hoping (Table 6.1). Even these figures may be inaccurate. The actual area utilized by Han people, estimated by local residents and the PPRA members, is believed to be much larger (PPRA 1997a:60; Lin Fang-chi 1984:112).

Under current regulations, only indigenous people can legally own title in the above land categories. On the other hand, private companies are almost all owned by the plains people, including hotels, restaurants, pharmacies, stores, or supermarkets. Topsoil and tilling rights are ideally possessed exclusively by the aborigines. The vaguely defined “miscellaneous” category in reality constitutes a large proportion of the reservation land in Hoping hsiian. This apparent conflict was only clarified after
my interview with the chief of Hoping Hsian, Mr. Lin. The land assigned to the miscellaneous category refers to the private land transactions between indigenous people and Han people, but little proof of such transactions is available (Interview B).

Table 6.1 The Use of the Aboriginal Reservation Land in Hoping Hsian

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Area in Hectares</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Area</td>
<td>6323.92</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tilling Rights</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topsoil Rights</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forest Land</td>
<td>10.13</td>
<td>0.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction Land</td>
<td>2.10</td>
<td>0.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uses Without Fees</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State or School</td>
<td>98.46</td>
<td>1.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aborigine</td>
<td>9.35</td>
<td>0.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ownership</td>
<td>86.53</td>
<td>1.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leasing Rights</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3133.88</td>
<td>49.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aborigine</td>
<td>1319.61</td>
<td>20.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Han People</td>
<td>1726.69</td>
<td>27.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Company</td>
<td>87.59</td>
<td>1.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>2805.47</td>
<td>44.36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The State is also a highly visible player in the reservation lands controversy in Hoping Hsian. The state-owned Taiwan Power Company, the Ministry of National Defense, Forest Bureau of Provincial Government, and the public veteran farms run by the Vocational Assistance Commission for Retired Servicemen are actually among the biggest users of reservation land. In these cases, at various times, the State exercised its right of eminent domain to take the lands and then excluded these lands from the classification as aboriginal reservation land. From the perspective of a Han sovereign state that seldom takes into consideration problems related to human-land relationships, there is no difference between the state-owned lands and the aboriginal reservation lands. They both belong to the State, regardless of the appearance of laws promulgated to permit exclusive use of reservation land by indigenous peoples. In
other words, aborigines have essentially lost their sovereignty over their ancestral territory to the modern State.

The PPRA also requested another change in longstanding regulations. The PPRA demanded that the government opens the hsian chief candidacy to both Han people and aborigines to more democratically reflect the current population composition. At present, Han people outnumber aborigines by seven to three in Hoping hsian (Interview D). If the elected officials could be Han, they probably would be Han. The aborigines would have little chance to win any official posts given population and economic disparities. Aborigines under current laws are guaranteed to have at least one seat on the County Council and further hold exclusive rights for the position of chief for all of the thirty mountain hsians in Taiwan. This manifestation of Taiwan’s “Affirmative Action” has increasingly encountered resistance from mainstream Han society which requests equal treatment of all peoples. I shall discuss the “myth” of equality among the people of Taiwan in Chapter 7. The PPRA also find the use of the term “indigenous people” which was approved by the National Assembly in 1994 to be objectionable. There is more to this debate than just words. Given the current situation, the use of the term “indigenous people” reflects recognition of the long term occupation of Taiwan by these indigenous peoples which in turn at least holds a promise for access to land and land ownership. Once the Han people are seen as “non-indigenous people,” the PPRA argues, they will lose various rights in the mountain hsians (Interview D). In internal newsletters and petition letters to a variety of government agencies and representative bodies, the PPRA constructs an
interpretation which aims to deny the indigenous status of the aborigines while strengthening their own position under the rubric of social equity (see next section).

Many new political organizations have emerged in the post-martial law era in Taiwan. What makes the PPRA special is the party’s strategy to present itself as a marginalized, oppressed group of victims persecuted under current laws which, in its view, are overwhelmingly preferential to the aborigines. The organization’s broad political affiliations span three major parties and include abundant financial resource (as evidenced by the costly mailing of thousands of petition letters) (Interview D). The influence of the PPRA is most evident in Hoping Hsian but certainly also reaches the central government in Taipei where the PPRA mobilizes tremendous resources to lobby lawmakers and so successfully block or alter the directions of relevant legislation. Such gerrymandering includes stopping the revision of the “Provision of Development and Management of Mountain People’s Reservation Land” in the Executive Yuan (Election flyers, see interview H). The PPRA is both the product and consequence of the development of Hoping Hsian’s locally specific history and geography. A comprehensive analysis of the PPRA in terms of political, economic, social, and cultural aspects is essential to understand the ethnic tension in the Li-Shan area.

The emphases on social justice, and the protection and promotion of the rights of underprivileged indigenous groups were conceived as intimidation by some plains people living within the mountain hsian of Taiwan because their own lives have dramatically different social and historical contexts from those of the indigenous peoples. Cultural difference and, of course, economic interests also contribute to the
formation of the different views of these two ethnic groups. With the rise of the PPRA, racial discrimination seems to play an implicit role in the views of at least, some core members.

Locally, PPRA's demands include the request that land patents be conferred to the non-indigenous people who either lease or buy reservation lands from aborigines despite the fact that such transfers are currently illegal. Further, then, they request that all lands be subject to the rules of the free market for pledging and as securities for loans. Non-aborigines should also be entitled to continue to control other state-owned lands that were leased out to them, and again, these lands should be subject to the principles of the free market.

Nationally, the PPRA opposes the term, "indigenous peoples," and suggests a return to the previous term of "mountain compatriots" or the politically neutral, academic name of Austronesian. In fact, however, core members of the PPRA deny the existence of indigenous peoples in Taiwan altogether (PPRA 1997b). By denying the indigenous status of the aborigines, the PPRA suggests that the aborigines' demands represented by issues such as the "Return Our Land" campaign, request for official change in names, and self-autonomy will lose ground. With potentially tremendous support from some financial syndicate giants (tsai-tuan) which are renown for their real estate business and land speculations (Interview G), and well-connected political and social networks, the upsurge of the PPRA organization in several mountain hsians appears not only much easier, but also more effective in terms of achieving political gains than those of its indigenous counterpart, the Alliance of Taiwan Aborigines in urban areas. Starting from local small organizations in Nantou
and Taichung Counties, the PPRA has made itself a nationwide organization within
four years, but the organization’s base, and indeed most of the PPRA’s pragmatic
concerns, remain centered in Hoping Hsian.

The foremost political affinity of the PPRA is based upon the power of many
KMT’s delegates within the central government, including many legislators and
representatives of the National Assembly. However, the PPRA’s political connections
extend well beyond the KMT. The group also has sought support from the largest
opposition party, the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), and also from the smaller
New Party, which spun off the KMT in 1993 and is considered as more conservative
in the political spectrum. What makes the group so powerful is that grassroots
supporters of the PPRA encompass local partisans from all three parties, though
generally the DPP is considered friendlier toward the aborigines and their concerns.
Nevertheless, the KMT-inclined force is central to the goals of the PPRA because only
the KMT is able to exercise its influence over the mountain society through its
institutionalized connections and local control over a variety of important agencies.
These include the Farmers’ Association found in nearly every hsian, many board
members of local temples, the police, the head of the hsian Council, and the secretary
of hsian government (Ku Yu-chen and Chang Yu-fen 1997). Through the mediation of
these local leaders, a well organized mobilizing structure, and a highly efficient
political lobby, the PPRA is able to stir the blood of a massive number of Han
supporters, who previously were politically less important, such as fruit and vegetable
farmers, small business people, retired servicemen and policemen, and hotel owners.
The ubiquitous request for ownership of land with titles characterizes most of the
PPRA potential and current supporters in mountain hsian. However, instead of
directing criticism to the decision-makers of the ruling KMT, indignation and
antagonism are directed toward the indigenous peoples in order to realize the PPRA’s
political goal.

6.1.2 Ethnic Discourse and Tension in the Mountains

The emergence and growth of the PPRA clearly indicates that the current
reservation land policy and its enforcement neither satisfies the requirements of the
indigenous movement for greater autonomy, nor those of the land-starved new Han
settlers. An examination of the PPRA’s ethnic discourse that has mobilized Han
people living in aboriginal areas is essential to provide insights into the ethnic tension
in central Taiwan. The selected English name for “Plain People Right Association” is
the “Chinese Rights Association” which, hardly reflects actual interests, issues, and
political reality of its members in the mountain hsian. It does serve undeniably well to
delimit the boundary between “we” and “the other” by appealing to racial/ethnic
differences, and implies that aborigines are not “we,” the Chinese. Such a name also
demonstrates that the social cleavage in mountain society cuts through racial/ethnic
boundaries which are frequently mobilized by politicians. In order to produce an
effective political mobilization along ethnic lines, the constructed discourse must
incorporate an impending threat, be emotional, and easy to follow. The following
discourse appears widely in the PPRA’s newsletters, propaganda, petitions to the
government, and was restated in my interview with the organization’s president, Mr.
Wu. The PPRA argues that to enshrine aboriginal rights is a “racist threat” and
therefore is a violation of basic human and property rights for any other ethnic groups

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living in those areas. Further, once the indigenes acquire land titles and possibly establish an autonomous zone in the future, the plains people will be forced to give up their properties and land and will quickly be ousted by their “mountain compatriots” of the mountain hsian. To go even further, these distinctions parallel the contrasts used by the mainstream, KMT-promoted, national identity to discriminate between the “Chung-Hwa-Min-Tzu” (Chinese Nation) and the “Nan-Tao-Min-Tzu” (Austronesian). These distinctions, local and national, emphasize the differences between “we” and “the other.” From the PPRA perspectives, the aboriginal intention to elevate the legal status of the Provision from administrative decree to law, regardless the objection of the Han people in the mountain hsians, will “racialize” national territory and result into genocide (PPRA 1997b). Also the organization argues that a protectionist orientation for reservation land policy will create the prerequisites for the future establishment of an indigenous autonomous zone, which will inevitably lead to a dangerous split of national territory (PPRA 1997b).

There are also racist overtones to this dogma. Many members believe the “mountain people” possess different blood lineage and ideology, and so, think differently from the Han people (Interview D). However, an unexpected side effect of this PPRA discourse is to provide a catalyst to elevate the indigenous peoples’ movement to a “nation-to-nation” level. I will discuss the concept of indigenous peoples as nations in Chapter 7.

National identity is a highly controversial and not-yet-resolved issue in contemporary Taiwan. The raising of this identity issue not only shows the dominance of “Chinese identity” discourse in Taiwan, as I discussed in Chapter 5, but is also a
reflection of the political predilection of the PPRA. Indigenous peoples in Taiwan have been accused by the PPRA of not identifying with the “Chinese Nation.” Despite considerable academic proof to the contrary, the PPRA holds that the aborigines’ actual time of arrival in Taiwan was only four hundred years ago when the Dutch and the Spanish brought them to Taiwan as “hunting” slaves from Southeast Asia. In the same argument, they maintain that the “slave-needing” Western powers also relocated the Hakka people from Kuangtung to Taiwan as agricultural slaves (Interview D). In the PPRA’s petition letter, even the specific sources of the indigenous peoples are identified without any ethnographic support. Paiwan, Rukai, Yami (Dawu), Amis, and Puyuma are said to come from the Philippines. The Atayal and Bunun are said to come from Indonesia, and the Saisiat, incredibly from distant Nepal (PPRA 1997b).

When I asked for the sources upon which these spurious arguments were based, Mr. Wu replied that these must be kept secret for future use in debates with the members of the indigenous movement (Interview D). Using this argument, therefore, the PPRA maintains that the “so-called” indigenous people of Taiwan should be renamed as minority groups or mountain people, and maintains they are not “indigenous” at all. They argue that the real indigenous people in Taiwan are only the Pin Pu Tzu (the “cooked” fan or plains aborigines as they were referred to in the Ching Dynasty), who were assimilated by the greater Han population and so are nearly indistinguishable from the plains Han people. In short, they argue that, Taiwan is not the origin of human kind, and hence every ethnic/racial group migrated to Taiwan (PPRA 1997a: 108), so by this argument, there are no indigenous people. According to the PPRA dogma, the only difference between the groups which now people Taiwan is their
arrival time. Thus, the PPRA’s ideological conclusion is that as there are no indigenous peoples in Taiwan, the aborigines’ claim for ancestral lands and prior land rights should be rejected (PPRA 1997b).

It is not only the strategy, which might be called “if we go back time far enough, there would be no indigenous peoples anywhere”, that the PPRA adopts, which is objectionable. In fact, according to the hard-line PPRA position, there are no indigenous peoples in Taiwan since all of these groups are now assimilated into the KMT-promoted Chinese Nation, or else they are simply extinct (PPRA 1997a: 98).

The PPRA’s political strategy is clear. Fatuous arguments that the virtually extinct peoples, the Pin Pu Tzu, are the real indigenous peoples in Taiwan are a transparent attempt to negate the debate. From this distorted perspective, there are no existing peoples that are “indigenous” to Taiwan, so the current residents in the mountain hsians, both Han and indigenous people, have no legitimate position which can be used to claim prior land rights. In the end, the consequence of such unfounded opinions seems to be apparent as Han people with much more abundant capital will quickly buy out the reservation lands from aborigines. If these indigenous peoples lose their land, their identity may well be lost as well.

The PPRA also objects to the name of the Provision concerning the reservation lands. They officially suggest a return to the original name used in 1948, the “mountain area” reservation lands, be considered. Neither “mountain compatriots’ reservation lands” nor “aboriginal reservation lands” are acceptable terms to the PPRA because under either designation there is no space for Han people living in the mountain hsian (PPRA 1997b). Only those lands owned by indigenous peoples can be
called “aboriginal reservation lands”. PPRA officials argue that government-owned reservation lands should be correctly named as “mountain area” reservation lands to ensure the Han people’s share in the reserves (PPRA 1997b).

In addressing the land rights conflict, the PPRA offers its own solution, which to a large extent reflects their stereotypes of what the aborigines should be like. Following the model of publicly owned veteran farms near the Li-Shan area, the PPRA recommends the establishment of similar farms which could be collectively owned and run by tribes. Individual aborigines would then lease lands from the regional indigenous farms so that illegal land transactions can be stopped or limited. In advocating this policy, the PPRA argues that with such an approach the tribal culture and way of life can be preserved while the economy can be developed through a special production/marketing program (PPRA 1997b). This proposed solution is certainly predicated upon Han people’s cultural images of the aborigines and represents the unilateral desire of a dominant group to shape and reconstruct the way of life of minority groups with less political and economic power.

Complicating things further is the fact that the PPRA even has some aboriginal members who share similar views with respect to the resolution of reservation land disputes. As prominent players in local politics, it is necessary for the PPRA to co-opt aborigines to buttress its claim that the organization represents a multiplicity of ethnic groups and so dilute the effects which racial bias, embedded in its core members, has on new prospective members. Even an important figure from the early “Return Our Land” movement and the Alliance of Taiwan Aborigines is on the board of one organization, the Association of Promoting Land Resource Use, which is dominated
by the PPRA but also incorporates some aborigines as symbolic showcases. Although this organization does not seem to fulfill its functions as a lubricator of inter-racial tensions, and as the indicator of major aboriginal agreements regarding the relaxation of the restrictions on the reservation land ownership, it does demonstrate that the PPRA is aware of its own racial bias and is trying to minimize the negative publicity associated with racist sentiments.

6.2 Land Rights, Local Politics, and the PPRA

Despite the PPRA’s claim that it wishes to focus its campaign on the central government and congress, mainly the Legislative Yuan and National Assembly (Interview D), the PPRA is still deeply involved in many local level elections. The January 1998 election for the position of chief of Hoping Hsian was the first election in which the PPRA ever declared formal support for a certain candidate. Since the KMT is the only political party among the three major parties to extend its influence to the mountain hsian (Interview F; Ku and Chang 1997), it is not surprise to find that the incumbent who was the officially sanctioned KMT candidate, had to run against three other opponents who were also all KMT members. The PPRA’s president revealed that one of the four candidates was alleged to be “bought out” of the election by a donation of NT$500,000 (about US$ 16,000) to quit further campaigning (Interview H). Among the three “real” candidates, one’s political credibility was severely eroded by the widespread allegation about his withdrawing from the election and hence resulted in a loss of many potential votes. Only two candidates stayed in the election as legitimate competitors for the post of hsian chief. Political strategies, such as pre-election negotiations, trade-offs, bribes, the use of negative allegations, and rumors are
not unusual in local elections. What make Hoping special are these most severe land right conflicts and their association with ethnic cleavages in the hsian.

The only opponent who was wholeheartedly endorsed by the PPRA and affiliated organizations, however, posed a sharp challenge to the incumbent. Neither side ignored the issues that the PPRA brought to the table in the past few years regarding the deregulation of the reservation land. The candidates’ party affiliation in this level of election is not considered as important as in the legislators’ or county chiefs’ elections. Often, however, candidates of the opposition parties with their limited resources are unable to effectively participate and mobilize supporters. At this local level election, more typical is infighting within the KMT’s different local factions for administrative control over the resources and the ensuing profits, than party-to-party challenges representing opposite ideologies or political parties. While other parties have made inroads in national elections, in rural area, the KMT remains dominant.

The incumbent complained that the KMT does not provide any material assistance to him and that he must continue to campaign using almost exclusively, his own resources (Interview H). Just six months ago, in my first interview with him, he still claimed that he maintained a good relationship with the core members of the PPRA and reckoned that the PPRA’s proposition regarding the opening of land titles to the Han was a reasonable request (Interview B). However, this election destroyed his close relations with the PPRA, which was not satisfied with his moderate position on the deregulation of the reservation lands. Local progressive indigenous leaders, including the reverends of the local Presbyterian Churches, tended to support the
incumbent to counteract the influence of the PPRA's more extreme candidate. Surprisingly, the head of the local chapter of the Alliance of Taiwan Aborigines (ATA), in contrast to common political expectations, endorsed the PPRA's candidate. Local leaders of the Li-Shan Presbyterian Church use this as the proof of the betrayal of founding principles of the ATA and indicate that it is the evidence of local ATA's collaboration with the PPRA. The decline of the ATA in terms of political clout as an island wide indigenous organization, as I discussed in Chapter 5, exposed its local chapter to the manipulation of other better-organized and well-funded, possibly hostile Han groups. Thus in the Li-Shan area, the PPRA achieved its goal of a superficial integration of ethnic groups and was able to disguise its ongoing demand for land deregulation as representing a consensus of both Han and indigenous peoples.

In response to these manipulations, the local progressive indigenous leaders created two election flyers which implied that a powerful business group (tsai-tuan), renowned for its land and real estate speculations in central Taiwan, stands behind the PPRA as a major source of financial support. To counter, the PPRA also produced several flyers appealing mainly to Han people which touted the PPRA's accomplishments including the blocking of the Provision to become formal law, influencing legislation associated with the bylaws of the Cabinet-level of Council of Aboriginal Affairs, and fighting for Han people's ownership of both reservation lands and state-owned slopelands. The two sides both vowed to get permission to confer land titles for aborigines for the lands in question, and at the same time, promised to protect the continuation of leasing rights for the Han people. In a word, the main themes of this election are encircled around land rights and ethnic space conflicts.
between the dominant Han and the minority indigenous peoples. What distinguish these two candidates are not their political promise or ideology, but their individual supporting forces behind the scene. The contested and politicized space in the mountain hsian shapes local social and economic development and on some occasions, sparks discussions related to the creation of indigenous autonomous zones and national territorial planning.

Still, it was not the winning candidate's persuasive political agenda or even party affiliation that was decisive to the election results, since all candidates were KMT members. In the end, it was local connections, kinship relations, and the effective use of greater financial resources that matter. The incumbent beat the challenger by less than a hundred votes but the newly elected official clearly will not resolve the issues. Table 6.2 demonstrates the inadequacy, and incorrectness, of using a simple dichotomy to equate the PPRA with the KMT, reactionary forces, business interests, and a Han-exclusive organization. In turn, it is also incorrect to associate all aborigines with progressive, anti-KMT, and pro-indigenous peoples' legislation and policies.

Neither the PPRA nor the indigenous movements are internally homogenous. Most Han people and organizations involved in the indigenous movements can be appropriately portrayed as progressive. In fact, aborigines participate in the movements selectively, according to their personal interpretations of the issues at stake. The "Return Our Lands" movement drew a considerable amount of support from the aborigines while other movements attracted far fewer supporters. As we can see from Table 6.2 and from previous discussions, many aborigines are in fact KMT members, if perhaps not as staunch as their Han counterparts. The KMT still garnered
Table 6.2 The Three-layer Structure of the PPRA and Indigenous Movement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>PPRA</th>
<th>Indigenous Movement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Core Members</td>
<td>Business people (perhaps with higher connections), Retired servicemen, Heads of local chapter of Farmers' Association</td>
<td>Urban-based indigenous elite, Pro-DPP (or Pan-indigenous identity), Taiwan Presbyterian Church, Progressive Han people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-level Members</td>
<td>Local politicians from KMT, DPP &amp; NP, Small businesses operators, Heads of small, local farmers’ organizations, Some “co-opted” indigenes</td>
<td>Indigenous local opinion leaders, Local Presbyterian Rev.&amp; their local connections, Few support from public sector</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grassroots Supporters</td>
<td>Han farmers (without specific party inclination), mostly less educated, rely heavily on agriculture as major income source</td>
<td>Few! (with rising “indigenous consciousness”?) Better educated than the average Some farmers Many of them KMT members</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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the majority of votes from the indigenous people who voted in almost every election (Walis YuGan 1994a).

At the same time, the core and grassroots members of the PPRA also often have dramatically different political and economic "characters." Core members tend to be relatively wealthy and engaged in non-farming activities. The head of the PPRA is the president of a construction company based in Taichung City. Many powerful business groups, the *tsai-tuan*, with their close relations to government officials, invest in construction companies for both real estate and land speculation activities in Taiwan. These core members, then, possess effective political strategies to bring the requests of the PPRA to the media and further can establish broad connections with members of the Congress and the various local Councils across three major parties because of their prosperity. Again, aborigines seem to occupy only symbolic positions in the PPRA. Some enthusiastic local farmers, usually heads of farmers’ organizations, are among people that the PPRA eagerly seeks to absorb. The highest level of PPRA supporters are generally from farmers who have worked on orchards or vegetable farms for decades without earning land titles. My interview with a group of Han farmers enabled me to realize the heterogeneous characteristics which separate the core and the grassroots supporters of the PPRA’s. From the perspective of the Han farmers, their demands for land titles are, to a large extent, reasonable and relate quite simply to individual gain.

A situation which might be termed the “Paradox of Democracy” emerges in this case. Without the recent democratization trends in Taiwan, there would be no PPRA, a group that is now able to challenge the official KMT’s candidate in local elections.
With the recent democratic reforms in Taiwan, given the fact that in many mountain hsian, Han people outnumber the aborigines both numerically and economically, if the outcome is based simply on majority vote, indigenous people will probably no longer benefit from the protectionist reservation land policies established by the KMT. In all probability, any deregulation of the reservation lands will lead to the concentration of lands in the hands of a few, most possibly by the tsai-tuan (giant business group). Such an outcome would force even more aborigines to leave their homelands, seeking jobs in cities for their livelihoods. If the tension between the indigenous movement and the PPRA is considered as just another contest among interest groups for limited resources, that is, if we have to solve the problem of land rights in the context of interest-group pluralism as in many democratic countries, the paradox of democracy will work in favor of the majority or the more powerful. In fact, treatment of the indigenous movements as simply new requests by a newly emerging interest group is exactly the way the conservative scholars portray these indigenous movements (for example, see Hong Chun-hu 1992:87). I shall discuss more about this paradox of democracy and the effects of recent democratic reform in Taiwan on the indigenous peoples’ movement in the next chapter.

6.3 Responses to Han Dominance by Indigenous Peoples

In response to the macro-socioeconomic conditions facing the aborigines, various reactions ranging from political struggle to efforts centering on cultural restoration for the tribes have emerged. Still, this is more complicated as the issue also affects the development of mountain lands and natural resources and the call for autonomous zones by various indigenous groups with different ideologies and political
stances. Walis YuGan identifies two types of pro-KMT indigenous elites. First, under the cultivation of the KMT’s party-state apparatus, those elites favored by the KMT’s central authority are provided with power and resources which enable them to stay in the high positions associated with the current KMT power structure (1994a). Such people include the heads of the local party organizations, legislators, or officials in aborigine-related departments in the provincial or central government. Thus, they are socialized into the KMT’s cultural and political structures and maintain certain “haloes around their heads” to win respect from their respective tribes. At the same time, they inevitably alienate common members of their tribes by being unable to stay in residence long enough to build significant local relationships and tribal connections.

The second group, those elites who stay in the mountain area with their tribes members (Walis YuGan 1994a). By acquiring posts in local sub-county government, and because of factors such as relative higher levels of education, party-state support, personal wealth, and clan and religious connections, they are able to mobilize more resources than average tribal members. Internal colonialism, discussed in Chapter 2, constrains the opportunities of members of minority groups to move upward on social ladders. The higher the minority members move up, the greater confinement they reportedly experience (Hsieh Shih-chung 1994a). Limited by their minority status, discriminated by the majority population, and awaked by the reality that the Han elites occupy better positions than aborigines do, these indigenous elites are forced to stay in their mountain hsian to rely on more familiar local political and economic resources. These resources, in turn, support these local indigenous elites as they participate in local elections and help them build legitimacy and influence. In order to be successful
at this “bottom-up” strategy, elites must collaborate closely with the establishment and tend to engage in conservative or alternately reactionary activities to defend their personal political resources (Walid YuGan 1994a). This association, almost without exception, makes them conservative and pro-KMT (Walid YuGan 1994a). This process of conservative socialization and the financial and administrative benefits which pro-KMT organizations devote to co-opt indigenous elites, as in the case for the Mountain Development Association in Taiwan, enable the KMT to maintain its dominance in the mountains and indigenous societies.

I will next discuss other kinds of indigenous elites: those engaged in anti-KMT, culturally conscious indigenous movements. Such persons can also be divided into two “locational” types: those who live and work in urban areas, or those who went back to their tribes in the mountains after the climax of the beginnings of the “urban” indigenous peoples’ movement. The sites of resistance change, but the enthusiasm of these people for awaking the indigenous national consciousness remains the same. The early stage of the indigenous rights movement in Taiwan, as pointed out by Hsieh Shih-chung (1992), was initiated by indigenous urban elites who received higher education and were more familiar with the working of the Han-dominated political system. Nevertheless, the fact that these resistant elites did not actually live in tribal areas limited the capability of these urban indigenous elites to engage in grassroots cultural revitalization and reflection. Basically, their effectiveness was minimized precisely because they lacked the necessary influence in their respective tribes. The urban indigenous elites are, in short, elites alienated from the masses (Hsieh Shih-chung 1992).
The second type of progressive indigenous intellectuals chose to go back to their tribes, and turn peripheral mountain areas from space of oppression into sites of resistance (Keith and Pile 1993). These “grassroots indigenous intellectuals” developed different political strategies and faced different struggles from their urban counterparts. This is true at the present time as well as in the past. “Tribalism” is conceptualized as an embodying social, cultural and indigenous movement which emphasizes bottom-up, democratic participation, grassroots organization, local resistance, and cultural consciousness. It is an evolving concept and embodies a new set of guidelines for the grassroots indigenous movement (TaiBong SaSaLe 1993; Interview E). Such “tribalism movement groups” often must confront local vested interests also represented by tribal members. The grassroots, place-specific, nature of “tribalism” enables the development of both a positioned knowledge, and “alternative cultural politics” (Chiu Yen-liang 1994), which are situated in local social and historical contexts. Despite the fact that “tribalism” has mostly developed in southern Taiwan, the direct confrontation between the indigenous peoples and the PPRA in the Li-Shan area has become part of collective anti-colonial struggles to foster a pan-indigenous consciousness in Taiwan. In this sense, these local land conflicts are not only a major concern of the Atayal people in Li-Shan, but also of importance to all indigenous nations around the island.

The several revisions of the Provision in the past five decades reflect the dilemma that the KMT has faced as they seek some intermediate position between “protectionist” and “developmentalist” policies. From the beginning, the KMT, maintaining the earlier Japanese policy, designated the resources in the mountains and
forests as state-owned property. To avoid allegations that the KMT was appropriating aboriginal lands and resources, the State promulgated the Provision in the name of the protection and the promotion of indigenous interests. Nevertheless, capitalism always produces core and periphery in the formation of regional uneven development and accumulation. The peripheralization of the indigenous mountain economy, the reservation land policy alone clearly has failed to guarantee aboriginal land interests. Capital from plains investors utilizes loopholes in the Provision to penetrate into the mountain subsistence economy and over time has altered the whole production system. This has been going on since the KMT controlled Taiwan, and so is virtually impossible to reverse at the present time.

In 1985, another executive order, the Provision for Enhancing the Management and Promoting the Exploitation and Development of the Reservation Lands, forced the mountain administration to admit the reality that the leasing of reservation lands to Han people from the plains was common (Wal is YuGan 1994b). The mountain administration faced an even more severe problem ten years later, whether to permit Han farmers to officially hold title to the reservation lands that they had previously cultivated illegally (Wal is YuGan 1994b). In the administration’s efforts to elevate the Provision to law status, similar problems reoccurred: “Should the new law be protection- or development-oriented?” and “Should the illegal use of reservation lands be legalized, even though non-indigenous people are currently using a considerable amount of land without legal environmental constraints?”.

The position of the mountain areas in the national territorial plan is at the core of conflicts regarding reservation land rights. What is at stake is not only the issue of
management of the natural resources in mountain areas, but also the cultural politics which incorporates the attitudes of the mainstream towards the claims for "national" status by indigenous peoples. Thus, the territorial plan has always been in large part an ideological struggle for reaching a compromise among various interests and satisfies different ideological requests.

The PPRA's demands for the deregulation of both reservation lands and the candidacy of hsian chief, and the PPRA's seemingly plausible denial of aborigines' "indigenous" status have had dramatic impacts on the direction and strategies of the indigenous movement. Despite their various platforms on topics such as culture, education, health reform and land reform, the targets of the early indigenous movements have always been the state apparatus and the ideology which it promotes. The emergence of the PPRA in recent years has forced the major architects of the indigenous movement to re-direct their orientation towards resistance to the involvement of the gigantic business corporations, which, through their surrogates in the mountain hsians, speculate on reservation lands as prime real estate for the construction of high value mansions and similar types of developments.

As always, land is at the center of the definition of the indigenous nations in Taiwan. From the aboriginal perspective, the aggressive annexation of reservation lands by Han capitalists accelerated the emergence of demands for "natural sovereignty" (BaShang 1998; Interview G). Natural sovereignty refers to the collective ownership of Taiwan by various indigenous peoples based on traditional tribal territorial claims which existed before the establishment of any quasi-state or national-state organizations. That is, before the arrival of the currently dominant Han group and
the consolidation of ruling power in the form of a State, Taiwan's indigenous nations had, historically, sovereignty over this island. The long-term goals are to restore the traditional territory of each indigenous nation and regain the right of autonomy. The current reservation lands are the basis for future autonomous areas and therefore, need to be protected against further Han capitalist takeovers (BaShang 1998). The PPRA's denial of aborigines' "indigenous" or "primordial" status seems too fatuous to defend. The indigenous movement has chosen to move forward rather than to engage in debates with the PPRA over such baseless historical constructions. Still, these blatantly false claims catch on with many Han people living in the region for political, economic, and social reasons.

According to BaShang, an indigenous activist, the new version of the Provision needs no basis in law, unlike the preceding ones that were based on the law of Conservation and Use of Slopelands (BaShang 1998). Legal procedures and mechanisms of democratic negotiation in delimiting the boundaries of the reservation lands must now be established. To protect the Constitutional right to development, which was approved by the National Assembly in 1997, a restriction on the transfer of titles of the reservation lands whereby only aborigines can hold such titles is necessary for any sustainable existence of the indigenous nations (BaShang 1998). A supreme land court composed of Taiwan's aborigines should be set up to deal with the contradictions resulting from differences in provisions between common land laws and the future edition of the Provision. The aborigines must have the authority to review the land use applications filed by non-indigenes, and to circumscribe land use within a certain area, to maintain a relative majority of aborigines living within any
given political unit (BaShang 1998). This raises an interesting gerrymandering question in manipulating the demarcation of electoral districts. Democracy, besides its majority rule, has an implicit geographical dimension.

These proposals and goals discussed above are radical but they represent the ideal situation. Their feasibility is obviously questionable, given the fact that Taiwan has the one of the highest population densities in the world and further that there is already a spatial mix of ethnic groups which has lived in these areas for around fifty years since late Japanese era. However, these ideas do highlight the “national” status desired by the indigenous peoples and also reflect the social, cultural and political imaginations of a radical indigenous, democratic state. Cultural pluralism, which emphasizes the co-existence of different cultures, advances to alternative cultural politics, which in turn, not only stresses the co-existence, but also the empowerment, of minority groups in every aspect.

My interview with the current Hoping chief, Mr. Lin, represents, to a large degree, the perspectives of pro-KMT, conservative, indigenous elites on these issues. Lin is a typical KMT-cultivated local indigenous politician with a good education, a wealthy family, and possessing the skills required to manipulate the spoken and written codes of the dominant language. While he is an aborigine, Lin believes that Taiwan’s indigenous peoples were driven by land-hungry Han settlers into mountainous areas, a very popular mistake that is held widely in Taiwan. Anthropological evidence shows that Taiwan’s indigenous peoples have resided in the mountains since time immemorial (Shepherd 1993:2). During my interview, he insisted that the plains areas of Taiwan are the “real home” of aborigines and that
mental obsession with ancestral lands and traditional culture will restrict the pace of modernization in mountain areas (Interview B). From Lin's perspective, indigenous peoples are bound to their lands in the mountains and by such a “binding” lose economic and educational opportunities which are crucial for successful competition with the plains Han people. To focus on the land rights issue, from his perspective, is to exacerbate the ethnic problems in the mountain hsian and ultimately, he believes, provides no way out for the aborigines. In Lin’s view, the real issues at stake are improving the standards of living, increasing job opportunities, and providing better access to higher education. In a word, modernization is the only direction to go. The “Return Our Lands” movement alone cannot solve the problems facing the indigenes (Interview B).

Lin’s perspective on the “Return Our Lands” movement is NOT to get back lands which have already fallen into the hands of Han people who have been using these plots for decades, but rather to demand NEW reservation areas which could come from the existing stock of state-owned lands – mostly state forest lands. In my opinion, this is exactly how a local politician in the Li-Shan area would respond to the PPRA’s request, whose members are also within his constituency. By taking such a position, he will not offend Han people by stripping them of the rights of using the reservation lands already acquired, legally or illegally. Moreover, he can partially fulfill indigenous demands by arguing for the expansion of the area of the reservation lands. In short, by diverting the conflict from locals, either indigenous or Han, to the state, Lin would hope to garner local votes from both ethnic groups.
From my extensive interviews with Mr. Lin and observation of the overall political trends, it is obvious that the pro-KMT indigenous elites tend to adopt an assimilationist position and emphasize the development of the mountain economy, including capital investment represented by the construction of infrastructure and big public buildings. For such pragmatists, there is no need for an inquiry into the colonial relations between the State and the aborigines. The legitimacy of the KMT-state is "water under the bridge" and as such is not questioned. Loyalty to the Han-state is beyond doubt. In TaiBong SaSaLe's words, this kind of developmental trend is "development of the KMT's style" (Interview E). Little attention is paid to the formation or cultivation of an indigenous consciousness or the urgency of cultural survival, which are, indeed, the central concerns of the tribalism and radical indigenous movements. Local indigenous politicians do participate in the traditional harvest ceremony and some other cultural displays which are designed to appeal to tourists. As I discussed in Chapter 4, the relations between tourism development and indigenous cultural preservation are dynamic and dialectical rather than one-dimensional. Whether this tourism supports the "positive" development of minority cultures depends on the social, cultural and political forces that promote such activities. We hardly see any progressive plan from local indigenous politicians in their promotion of indigenous culture and ethno-tourism.

The critiques of the PPRA by indigenous groups seem unanimous. All the people I interviewed tended to treat the PPRA as a homogenous group with an openly racist ideology. The reluctance of resistant elites to consider the internal differences of the PPRA probably results from the hostile antagonism of the PPRA's leaders towards...
the goals and aspirations of the indigenous peoples’ movement. As a matter of fact, many of the grassroots PPRA’s supporters in Li-Shan are industrious fruit growers who have made their livings in contested ethnic space from as early as the 1960s under the auspices or the acquiesce of the State. These farmers, some of them “re-settled” mainlander veterans, make their living from lands on which, for decades, they have spent considerable capital and labor. The policy to develop slopelands and grow temperate-zone vegetables and fruits was in fact, developed and encouraged by the government in the 1960s. These Han residents who are also long-term residents repeatedly complained that the government did not offer any substantial assistance in either production or marketing because their leases on lands were illegal. This is the dilemma from the perspective of the KMT government. Providing governmental assistance would be tantamount to recognize the legitimacy of the many illegal leases acquired by these Han farmers. In fact, these farmers may actually contact the PPRA only when land disputes arise, but otherwise are not interested in the debates (Interview F). The Han farmers’ long term use of these lands represents a great challenge to any attempt to establish an indigenous autonomous zone in such ethnically contested space. It is not just an issue of compensation, in crowded Taiwan, it is also about livelihood and tradition for these people as well.

6.4 Land Use and Environmental Conservation in Li-Shan

The relationship between land use and environmental conservation was the main concern of the early geographers working in the Li-Shan area (Chang Chang-yi et al 1982; Chang Chang-yi 1989; 1992). Slopeland use, water resource utilization, and an assessment of environmental impacts of land use change were particularly stressed in
these early researches. Cultural differences, reflections on relevant laws, discourse on ethnic space, evaluations on the effects of the intrusion of capitalism, and the subsequent changes to the production system by new residents have not been covered by previous geographical studies. However, the environmentally oriented geographical studies associated with estimates of “carrying capacity” in the Li-Shan area and the direct threats to environmental safety related to the usable lifetime of the Te-Chi Reservoir were important in awakening early environmental consciousness in contemporary Taiwan. These environmental concerns are not only important in their own right, but also because they brought a wide range of issues, including ethnicity in the Li-Shan region, to a wide audience in Taiwan.

6.4.1 Agriculture and Environmental Degradation

Soil erosion due to the cultivation of steep slopes in the Li-Shan area was so serious that seventeen check dams in the upper reaches of the Da-Chia River built between 1976-80 in an effort to protect the reservoir had all silted up by 1980 (Chang Chang-yi 1992). Monitoring siltation of the reservoir was started as soon as the dam was completed in 1974. The annual average silt deposition was far greater than originally anticipated (1.16 million cubic meters between 1974-76, and 1.67 million cubic meters between 1976-78) (Chang Chang-yi 1989:66). As in many such cases around the world, there is little agreement on the major causes of the soil erosion in Li-Shan which resulted in accelerated sedimentation in the reservoir. The slopelands are prone to both high rates of natural erosion and landslides during the typhoon season. Road construction (the major cross-island highway, and the roads for the maintenance and management of the reservoir) are also responsible for some of the
problem. The problem, however, has clearly been aggravated by widespread intensive cultivation on slopeland. Some suggest that through even the most cursory observation, it is clear that improper slopeland cultivation is probably the main cause, although it is very difficult to quantify this contribution because of the presence of intervening natural possibilities (Chang Chang-yi 1989:65-66). Certainly, these problems have intensified as more and more slopeland is brought under cultivation.

Many factors contributed to the essentially unconstrained slopeland development in the Li-Shan area. The placing of economic gains over environmental concerns in the past few decades within both private and public sectors is an important reason. Shortsighted policies encouraged the pursuit of short-term profits at the expense of environmental deterioration. Chang Chang-yi identified another dimension, ineffective government actions due to the lack of a centralized authority in the Li-Shan area. He called for the establishment of clear-cut authority among of the many government agencies in the Te-Chi watershed area (Chang Chang-yi 1992).

The irony of history can be clearly seen thirty years later at the same geographical site. In the early years of the 1960s when the KMT needed to settle an enormous number of the retired servicemen who came to Taiwan with the KMT in 1949, the regime sought every possible way to promote development and the exploitation of natural resources in Taiwan. The first cross-island highway was constructed mostly by those veterans. In this sense, the cross-island highway represented a WPA (Works Progress Administration)-style effort for job allocation. The other goals associated with the opening of the highway were population dispersal, transportation network improvement, and the more effective use of water resources.
However, these goals, according to Chang Chang-yi, have still not been fulfilled. Even if some of these goals were achieved, the extensive degradation of the physical and socio-economic environments which resulted from cultivation on the steep slopes throughout the region virtually offsets any associated benefits (Chang Chang-yi 1989:ix). Environmental protection, indigenous cultural survival and ethnic space preservation were not priorities of the KMT's decision-makers in this early period. In 1957 and 1963 respectively, two large public farms, Fu-Shou-Shan and Wu-Lin were set up near Li-Shan to accommodate the retired military personnel. Large-scale orchards and vegetable farms were developed in these steep slopelands to grow temperate products because the altitude of these slopes permitted such a use.

The situation changed in the late 1980s when those veterans, once praised as heroes who opened the “internal frontier” in the mountains, were blamed together with the Atayal indigenous peoples and other Han farmers for the environmental degradation in Li-Shan area and the many environmental problems associated with shortening life of the Te-Chi reservoir.

6.4.2 Soil Erosion and Land Use as the Socioeconomic Results

Soil erosion, although in some cases is resulted from natural process, is often exacerbated by human activities. In turn, it becomes a social and political issue when the “problem” is manipulated by people who can affect public opinions, and further when the State decides on a particular course of action which invariably leads to conflicts of interests (Blaikie 1985, Chapter 1). The conflict of interests may explicitly be confined to soil erosion and environmental conservation issues, or more complicated but related political aspects, such as the struggle for control of territory or
for the appropriation of surpluses generated by lands in question may become a central aspects of the problem (Blaikie 1985: 2).

Once the relations between land use and soil erosion were recognized in the study area, they became politicized issues to be debated and discussed in a supposedly neutral and scientific manner. Intervention by state institutions, which inevitably had to take a side on the issue in order to engage in an “effective” action, quickly followed. Intervention, of course, affects the livelihood of the land users in eroded areas and sometimes has profound influences in other areas. The interventions may take the form of changes in the laws, the land tenure system, or even result in a new Constitutional provision related to the national territorial plan. These changes can also alter price/market mechanisms and credit/loan availabilities, and the foreign earnings capability of the State (Blaikie 1985:2). Foreign advisors and experts, usually from First World countries, are often invited to such affected areas to conduct more detailed and “convincing” research and to provide a more feasible and “objective” solutions. Not surprisingly, all of these measures were done in Li-Shan as discussed in Chapter 4.

Following the advice of American advisors, a special agency, the Mountain Agricultural Resources Development Bureau, was established in 1961 (Chang Chang-yi 1989:88). Ironically, the word “development” was still in the name of the bureau. The bureau’s main responsibilities were to plan development and manage the exploitation of slopeland, regulate development funds, promote ecologically and economically sound agricultural practices by farmers on the slopelands, and conduct field surveys and laboratory soil experimentation (Chang Chang-yi 1989:88-89).
Following the line of reasoning reflected in the bureau’s major functions and responsibilities suggests that land use patterns were considered to be the sole cause of soil erosion. Solutions for halting or restricting soil erosion were limited to just this technical dimension. In this manner, problem of soil erosion, and hence the siltation of the Te-Chi reservoir, was detached from all social, cultural and political contexts. Eventually, the bureau failed to perform its proper role, perhaps in part because these other dimensions were not considered.

As soil erosion continued and natural fertility declined, farmers have to apply more and more fertilizers. The intensive growth of fruit in large area makes the use of fungicides and insecticides necessary. Agricultural chemicals were, in turn, washed by the rain into the river and the reservoir, resulting in eutrophication that threatened water quality in the down stream urban areas. The two large public veteran farms and the numerous fruits and vegetables growers, Han and indigenous alike, soon became the objects of public condemnation. The environmental stress forced the government to take actions against widespread if “illegal” cultivation of the slopes. However, due to fierce local resistance, the forced felling of illegal fruits trees and the ensuing reforesting policy were not able to proceed (Chang Chang-yi 1992; Interview F).

To say that it was only the selfishness of the local vested interest groups resisting the implementation of the new environmental preservation policy is to oversimplify the multidimensional historical and geographical contexts of the problem. The historical role of the State in creating the problems is completely ignored. In fact, the State is among the biggest users of the slopeland in Li-Shan. The highway network, the hydroelectricity facilities in the Te-Chi reservoir, the army base,
the two veteran farms, and the national forestlands are all State's properties and projects. Further, the State initiated the “agriculture up to the mountains” policy to encourage the production of temperate zone fruits. Geographically, the inequalities of economic and power relationships between the urban areas and the mountain areas are both the results and causes of upstream land use patterns.

The people in the economically-marginal mountain areas have few choices to make a living other than exploiting natural resources. Also, people in mountain areas have less political clout to mobilize necessary supports and buttress persuasive discourses to defend their own actions and interests. The rapid growth of the PPRA among the Han farmers can partly be attributed to its familiarity with political operations in the core, urban area and its effective national Congress lobby. However, given the relatively common business orientation of PPRA core members, as widely recognized by the indigenous movement organizations and local leaders of the Presbyterian Church, the rise of the PPRA may eventually widen the gap between the core and peripheral areas.

There is at least one thing in common, if not more, between the Han and the aboriginal farmers. They all emphasize their efforts in preserving the soil from erosion and in cooperating with the government in promoting and instituting environmental protection. Han farmers stress that farmers will logically protect their fields from soil erosion because the land and soil are the material basis upon which they depend to make a living (Interview F). The indigenous minister of the local Presbyterian Church claims that the eutrophication occurring in the Te-Chi reservoir should not be blamed on the farmers’ use of fertilizers and pesticides. Instead, he thought the abundant
amount of trees that were submerged by the completion of the Te-Chi dam were to blame for the water quality problem (Interview G). Indigenous fruit-growers also assert that local farmers cherish their land resources and do every possible thing to prevent erosion from happening. They suggest that the sources of silt comes from natural processes, road construction, and the reforestation program which, ironically perhaps, cut down the old trees in order to plant the new ones (Interview G).

As I mentioned above, it is not an easy task to distinguish between natural erosion and the accelerated erosion caused by human actions. The local farmers in Li-Shan, regardless of their ethnicity, utilize their specific local knowledge in defending and preserving their livelihood from being disrupted by State intervention.

In the process of this resistance, various organizations were born. The organizations reflect the ethnic boundaries found in Li-Shan. For example, the Li-Shan Farmers’ Rights Committee was an indigenous group led by a former local Presbyterian minister. The Han farmers also formed a variety of organizations. However, these organizations were all short-lived and dissolved after the agreement to postpone the cutting down of fruit trees was achieved. Some of the Han people’s organizations were absorbed by the PPRA subsequently (Interview F). However, it is the PPRA’s ethnic-charged discourse that shifts the Han farmers’ frustrations originally aimed at the State, to a more divisive ethnic hostility towards the aborigines.

Local land use patterns deeply reflect the social, cultural, political and economic structures of a certain community as well as the natural potential of the land. They cannot be changed overnight by the experts’ calls for conservation. Conservation is a physical process as much as a social one. Its success depends mostly, not on the
technical (improved seeds, agricultural engineering, laboratory experiment on preservation, etc.), but on the social dimension (Blaikie 1985:50). In other case studies around the world, it is striking “how indigenous rights movements, conservation politics, food security, the emphasis on local knowledges and calls for access to, and control over, local resources crosscut the environment-poverty axis” (Peet and Watts 1996:35). The land degradation problem in Li-Shan proves that the application of merely technical solutions alone cannot be successful. Possible solutions may well be derived from the ecological wisdom of indigenous peoples around the world. The long-term sustainability of their way of life has not only been recognized but also highly appreciated in facing the global environmental challenge. The land itself possesses cultural and spiritual values for many indigenous peoples, in addition to economic value. However, any romanticization of the indigenous cultures and their way of life as ecologically sound are not only unrealistic but also misleading for a true understanding of the current situations. I will further discuss these environmental issues in Chapter 7.

In this chapter, I present a critical review on the rapid development of a Han people’s organization “Plains People’s Rights Association” (PPRA) in the Li-Shan area, a counterpart of “Alliance of Taiwan’s Aborigines” (ATA) in series land disputes. The PPRA has relatively abundant financial resources and political connections that enable its rapid growth in national and local political arena. The PPRA denies the “indigenous” status of Taiwan’s aborigines, argues that there are no indigenous people in current Taiwan, and accuses the indigenous activists of being separatists, who do not identify with the concept of Chinese Nation. The PPRA

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demands the deregulation of reservation lands, open the candidacy of the heads of mountain hsians to Han people, and revise the Constitution to call the aborigines as "mountain people."

On the other hand, the virtually unlimited development of slopelands in Li-Shan has resulted in serious environmental problems. The rapid siltation from the upstream agricultural cultivations threatens the safety of the Te Chi reservoir. I introduce a socio-political perspective into this seemingly "pure" scientific environmental problem, and argue that the problem cannot be fully comprehended without considering the "situated" local social, political, and historical contexts.
CHAPTER 7. CONCLUSION: THE IMPACTS OF THE INDIGENOUS MOVEMENT ON TAIWAN’S SOCIETY

Based on the above discussion, the chapter provides three major conclusions, which are all rooted in the land issues, as answers to the central question of this dissertation: the impacts of the indigenous movement, which is centered around land conflicts, on Taiwan’s society (including the indigenous societies, of course).

Among geographers, or more generally, practitioners of social science, many notions that were taken-for-granted by academic community have now been exposed to reexamination and renewed scrutiny in new social and political contexts. In Taiwan particularly, the transition from an authoritarian, one-dimensional regime to a more democratic and diversified society releases unprecedented forces and energy which radiates from the civil society and, in time, impacts the State. The rigid military regime has relaxed and the gigantic bureaucracy and its policymaking process have gradually opened up to the public domain. Different social movements have contributed different insights to reform both the society and the State, and as a consequence the value system as well has been transformed. However, the far-reaching influence and implication brought about by the new social movements are different from the dubbed interest-group pluralism which is prevailing in welfare capitalist societies.

Iris Young forcefully argues that the welfare society depoliticizes public life by restricting discussion and debate to simply distributive dimensions in a context of interest-group pluralism where each group competes for its share of public resources (1990:Chap 3). In such a social and political context, public support is not the necessary condition for victory, but rather successful negotiations with other interest
groups and the formation of political alliances are crucial to victory. Such “strategic”
politics fosters political cynicism: “those who make claims of right or justice are only
saying what they want in clever rhetoric. This cynical system often forces movements
claiming justice ... to identify themselves as merely another interest group” (Young
1990:72). Two major defects are embedded in such an evolution to interest-group
pluralism. First, the privatized form of representation and decision-making that the
interest-group pluralism encourages does not require the expression of group-interest
to appeal to basic principles of social justice. Second, the inequality of resources,
organizations, and power allows some groups to dominate the public forum while
other voices are muted (Young 1990:92). Thus, the “paradox of democracy” refers to
the phenomena that the materially and politically more privileged groups are more
likely, not only to promote their perceived interests, but also to successfully achieve
goals than those less privileged minority groups.

Young suggests possible solutions to this paradox (see Young 1990:92-95). An
extensive redistribution of wealth and restructuring of the control mechanisms for
capital and resources are necessary conditions to link democracy and justice. A
challenge to the given structures and procedures for making distributive decisions is
essential to advance the material equality necessary to faster more equitable political
participation. A greater democratic system, rather than limiting democratic decision-
making to certain aspects is another way out for the paradox. Democracy in one
institution will reinforce democracy in another institution. Thus, group members are
able to develop the capacities for thinking about one’s own needs in relation to the
needs of others. Finally, the paradox cannot be eliminated as long as any group is
being stereotyped, silenced, or marginalized by virtue of the group's essential
differences embedded in its cultural and physical characters. Only when the oppressed
groups are able to express their interests and needs in the public forum on an equal
basis with other groups can the paradox be terminated.

If Young represents the construction of social justice in a framework of
postmodern "celebration of differences," Harvey, then, will be the upholder of modern
"Enlightenment project" in his pursuit of universal justice. Since relationships between
individuals get mediated through market functions and state powers, Harvey insists
that we have to "define conceptions of justice capable of operating across and through
these multiple mediations" (Harvey 1996: 349).

"Only through critical re-engagement with political-economy,
with our situatedness in relation to capital accumulation, can we
hope to re-establish a conception of social justice as something to
be fought for as a key value within an ethics of political solidarity
built across different places"... Struggles to bring a particular
kind of discourse about justice into a hegemonic position have
then to be seen as part of a broader struggle over ideological
hegemony between conflicting groups in society. (Harvey 1996:
360-361).

In Taiwan's case, the juxtaposition of the dominating and the dominated groups
is manifested in the two groups which I have introduced as the PPRA and the ATA.
Despite their internal heterogeneity (see Chapter 6), the "characteristics" presented by
their core members reflect important contrasts. The PPRA portrays itself as the victim
of the KMT's mountain policies. However, in its petition letters to the government and
the propaganda it produces for the average audience, PPRA positions often blatantly
reflect Han people's cultural hegemony as well as stereotypes about the different
"other," the aborigines. For example, the PPRA proposes to establish indigenous
collective farms, following the model of veteran farms, to accommodate aboriginal land right claims and ethnic cultures (Section 6.1.2.). By such a measure, the "land" factor and its connection to indigenous culture are carelessly wiped out. The ATA, on the other hand, lacked financial resources and further, was a novice in the Han-dominated political arena. The indigenous movement was considered by most as simply another movement among many other social protests movements which emerged at the same time (Hsiao Hsin-huang 1992). In other words, only the political and economic aspects of the indigenous movement were emphasized, while cultural policy and territorial planning were not only neglected by the academics, but also by the indigenous elites themselves.

Overlapping and shared progressive ideas among many of these new social movements made it difficult to distinguish the particular indigenous movement impacts on world politics, or even more specifically, its influence on Taiwan’s state and society. However, it is undoubted that the development of the indigenous movement in Taiwan touches points which characterize the nature of the growing worldwide indigenous movement and further provides retrospection on the island’s history extending far beyond the four-hundred-year Han settlement. First, culturally, it challenges the Sino-centralism that has been promoted through the mainstream media and the Chinese nationalist ideology of the KMT as well as the various oppressions of colonialism on these minority groups. Second, politically, it contributes to the reexamination of the concept of the nation-state, not only in Taiwan, but also at the world scale. Third, environmentally, the traditional ecological wisdom manifested by
these indigenous groups is now being given attention while the ideology of “almighty modern technology” is simultaneously coming under scrutiny.

7.1 Cultural Hegemony, Colonialism, and Multiculturalism

Most commentators agree that hegemony is the key concept in Gramsci’s *Prison Notebooks* and his major contribution to the development of Marxism (Sassoon 1991). In his early writings, he used the term to refer to the system of alliances which the working class must forge to overthrow the bourgeois state and to serve as the social base of the new workers’ state (Sassoon 1991). In his prison writings, the term was applied in the way that the bourgeoisie establishes and maintains its rule (Sassoon 1991). The domination of ruling class over other classes relies not only on material and economic forces, but also on the conversion of the ruled to accept the belief system of the ruling class, its social, cultural, political and moral values, with involvement of less violence (Joll 1983). However, hegemony is not a static presence, but a “moving equilibrium,” dynamic and evolving process which is created and re-created in a web of institutions, social relations, and ideology (Lay 1994; Sassoon 1991). Later, the concept of hegemony goes beyond the class dominant relations to other social relations, such as racism and patriarchy (Lay 1994). In my research, I refer to hegemony as the presence of uneven ethnic power relationship in which Han State superimposes its value system to the “other” peoples, the indigenous peoples in Taiwan, through delicate social and cultural relations and institutes embodied in the KMT’s mountain policies.

Cultural hegemony not only serves to project values which are fundamentally alien to one group from a dominant group, but also in the process erodes dignity and
ethnic confidence that are supposed to be basic human rights. One of common features of indigenous peoples around the world is their suffering which results from this cultural hegemony. Hegemony deepens and solidifies inferiority by negating ethnic dignity and imposing a stigmatized identity. Moreover, hegemony incorporates more than the ideology of a dominant group. It also includes the embodiment of this ideology, the values and beliefs in everyday practices and socio-political institutional arrangements (Ley 1994). Under such socio-political circumstances, economically disadvantaged indigenous peoples are even more vulnerable to assimilation policies instituted by the dominant group.

Influenced by the aboriginal struggles and the advocates of multiculturalism within some First World countries, the earlier International Labor Organization (ILO) convention which stressed the integration and assimilation of indigenous population has been replaced by a new version of the convention written in 1989, which states:

Considering that the developments which have taken place in international law since 1957, as well as developments in the situation of indigenous and tribal peoples in all regions of the world, have made it appropriate to adopt new international standards on the subject with a view to removing the assimilationist orientation of the earlier standards....(ILO Convention no. 169, 1989; cited in Wilmer 1993: 179.)

The new convention urges governments to respect the integrity of indigenous cultures. This basic right is correspondent with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. However, this convention is not a document which is actually capable of protecting indigenous peoples from infringements on their basic rights by States. It is merely a report which prescribes a normative regulation that should be embraced by participatory States regarding indigenous affairs (TIVB 1994).
The State, of course, still keeps the rights of legislature and administration. In this aspect, it is different from the U.N. Universal Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which states:

> Indigenous peoples have the right to self-determination, in accordance with international law. By virtue of this right, they freely determine their relationship with the States in which they live, in a spirit of co-existence with other citizens, and freely pursue their economic, social, cultural and spiritual development in conditions of freedom and dignity....(U.N. Document E/CN.4/Sub.2/1991/36)

Under the articles of the Declaration, the sovereign authority of the modern nation-state is curbed by the relative autonomy of the indigenous nations. Only by empowering these indigenous nations can they be free from both state-imposed assimilation policies and reified stereotypes which are reinforced by mainstream mass media and other information distributors. This empowerment apparently does not exist yet in most parts of the world. As Kariya (1993) points out, in the current “establishment” constructed by the dominating group, the government agency charged with indigenous affairs is in a state of contradiction. On the one hand, it has the responsibility to assist indigenous peoples. On the other hand, it is generally perceived as the source of indigenous oppression, both in the past, and at the present time.

The representation of “the other,” the way “otherness” is structured and construed by the dominant, colonizing group, and the cultural imprints left on the colonized groups are some of the major focuses of post-colonial literature. Indigenous peoples around the world, as the objects of internal colonialism (see Hsieh Shih-chung 1994a; Walis YuGan 1994a for Taiwan’s case and Wilmer 1993 for others), are colonized through institutionalized social and political arrangements, such as
education, mass media, the legislature, the power of naming people and landscape, the
ethic division of labor, and the stereotype. It is a colonialism of wars and
exploitations, as much as it is about the colonization of minds and bodies (Corbridge
1993) and of ethnic space itself. Colonialism that is thus defined is much more
difficult to overthrow or transcend. Colonial values and practices can easily survive
long after political de-colonization (Corbridge 1993).

While “classical colonialism” is often associated with imperialism during
territorial expansions and economic exploitation (Watts 1994), internal colonialism is
often presented in tandem with cultural imperialism. This cultural imperialism
involves a universalization of the dominant group’s historical experience and culture,
and the formalization of this history, as common social norms (Young 1990:59).
According to this interpretation, cultural imperialism is similar to the concept of
cultural hegemony. In fact, according to Raymond Williams, hegemonism is use as an
alternative to imperialism in some current cases (Williams 1983:144). Despite the fact
that hegemony implies some notion of consent within the mass of the population – that
is, the acceptance, either willing or unwilling, of the value system and institutional
arrangements of the dominant group (Sassoon 1991), however, the ultimate foundation
of cultural hegemony, like colonialism, is still the military threat, or use, of force.

In Taiwan’s specific context, the efforts to integrate Taiwan into Japanese
empire were replaced by Sino-centralism since the end of World War II. History and
geography had their instrumental function in constructing and changing national
identity. The KMT’s conception of “Chinese” was portrayed as a highly homogeneous
culture and people incorporating five major ethnic groups (Han, Manchurian,
Mongolian, Tibetan, and Uighur). Ethnicity, then, is relegated to a secondary aspect of identity after nationality. Different ethnic groups came to solidarity under the banner of national security and economic development. In contrast, expressions of ethnic differences were perceived as threats to national solidarity. Taiwan’s “Local dialects,” such as Hakka, Minan, or Austronesian languages, were prohibited from being spoken in public; Taiwanese folksongs were kept outside the State-controlled mass media. Local geography and histories were restricted in school curricula and kept from the public arena. Han Chinese supremacy was taught as dogma in primary schools in sharp contrast to the portrayal of the headhunting savage aborigines.

According to the argument of Taiwanese nationalists, Han “Taiwanese” have also been oppressed by this cultural hegemony and the colonial rule of the foreign KMT regime (Chen Fang-ming, 1995). It should be reasonable to consider that Taiwan’s aborigines suffer a sort of “double oppression” from both Chinese and Taiwanese national discourses due to their ignorance of the aborigines’ request for national status. Given the early KMT ideology, indigenous social and cultural systems were dismissed as backward and worthless. Simply put, they needed to be modernized. However, indigenous peoples were, in accordance with the Constitution, to be giving status as citizens with the chance of assimilation so that in time, there would be no distinctions from other Han people IF they were willing to acquire Chinese language and culture. One major goal of the indigenous movement in Taiwan is to subvert the one-dimensional cultural politics imposed by the KMT regime created through these extensive social and political controls.
The emergence of the indigenous movement in Taiwan has its own peculiar backdrop. Many factors which are inextricably intertwined contribute to this remarkable outburst in the mid- to late-1980s. These include: extensive urbanization, a sound material base resulting from rapid economic development in the past few decades, the lifting of martial law, the intensifying exploitation of minority people under the capitalistic economy, and increasing tolerance toward social movements associated with the decline of the authoritarian party/state control (Hsieh Shih-chung 1987b). However, conservative scholars tend to eschew the issue that indigenous people are in fact “peoples” (or “First Nations,” to use the term of Canadian Indians), rather than just another interest group asking for their share of national resources, or alternately as but an underprivileged minority demanding more political and social equity. In Hong Chun-hu’s dissertation (1992:64-82), despite his discussion and review of Dependency Theory and World Systems Theory, Modernization Theory underlies his suggestions of “solving” the indigenous “problems.” Such “solutions,” in my view, are culturally biased and so are politically futile. Aborigines are often regarded in the same light as other economically and politically weak groups, such as workers, women, homeless people, and pollution victims. Clearly, the cultural dimension, including its special connection with particular spaces, is missing from either Hong’s or the PPRA’s considerations with respect to relations between the State and the indigenous nations.

Serious political reforms in Taiwan which started in the mid-1980s brought, of course, changes in other dimensions. Taboos were lifted and minds were emancipated. Staid cultural policies, as other social policies, are no longer a “given” condition, but
rather a field of contesting ideas, ideologies, and of course, cultural politics. Ideology, thus, is not a "fixed" product of either a certain mode of production or a specific economic structure, as the classical Marxism might argue, but rather is a new field of political struggle (Sassoon 1991). It is under these socio-political contexts, that the concept of multiculturalism, at least from my perspective, was developed to accommodate different perspectives and worldviews existing in a nation-state. This concept is, of course, evolved in the West but also rapidly spread to the rest of the world. The establishment of multiculturalism, as explicated by Kobayashi (1993), has experienced three stages:

"first, the ‘demographic’ stage, a state of ethno-cultural diversity towards which no coherent official policy exists; second, the ‘symbolic’ stage, wherein it is official policy to recognize and promote multiculturalism, without a firm commitment to bring about its objectives; and third, the ‘structural’ stage, at which legislative reform provides the basis for social change."

Canada was among the first countries to promulgate an official multicultural policy, the third stage in Kobayashi’s classification. This policy is a further step from the “original dual languages” and “dual cultures” policies designed especially for the two largest ethnic groups in Canada: the English and the French. However, this policy relinquishes the rights of cultural development of the First Nations and other immigrating groups (Chen Mao-tai 1993). The primary goals for the implementation of multicultural policy are not only to tolerate cultural differences, but also to countervail political centralization (Chen Mao-tai 1993), which often gives dominant groups privileged over minorities. The idealistic outcome of this multiculturalism is to create a social condition in which individuals can not only form one unity under a
single social and political entity, i.e. a nation state, but also permit the preservation of
a personal cultural singularity and the right to be different.

Industrial capitalism, personal rationality, democracy, equity before laws, and
civil rights are the essential conditions for Canadian multiculturalism (Chen Mao-tai
1993). However, uneven regional development, especially the differences resulting
from both different degrees of urbanization and industrialization often trigger ethnic
conflicts over economic issues (Chen Mao-tai 1993). The lack of integration in forging
an expected national “unity” renders the Canadian multiculturalism as only a
“multicultural mosaic” (Chen Mao-tai 1993). However, it is the expectation of some
future (national) integration which is implied in the multicultural policy that reveals its
defects.

Due to the inequity of resources and political clouts among different cultural
groups, an unreflective multicultural policy, or even an egalitarian, every-group-is-
equal cultural policy will inevitably lead to the situation that the policy strives to avoid
– the dominance of few larger groups. This is the result of the “myth of equality.”
Equal promotion and opportunity should be the minimum protection of minority
groups. Therefore, multicultural policy cannot succeed without considering extensive
resource redistribution in social, political and economic fields. Moreover, in an
arguably postmodern era when differences are supposed to be celebrated and
respected, the human “mosaic,” which emphasizes the individual singularity rather
than integration, is a less oppressive measure for ethnic minorities in their struggles to
resist assimilation policies.
In Taiwan, the reforms induced by the indigenous movement and other new social movements have currently propelled the State and mainstream social values to move forward the transition from the second to the third stage of multiculturalism defined by Kobayashi. Symbolic multiculturalism and respect of cultural differences are at least recognized among some State agencies and progressive groups, and are no longer conceived as threats to national solidarity.

It is at this stage that one of the most prominent ideas in post-colonial literature, "hybridity," comes into the focus. The idea of hybridity is that the transaction of the post-colonial world is not a one-way process. It is not that the oppression obliterates cultural traces of the oppressed, or the colonizer silences the colonized in absolute terms (Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin 1995). The capability for some distinctive aspect of the oppressed culture to survive, even under the most potent suppression, makes it integral part of the new cultural formations which arise from the interactions between the native and, if I may say, the imperial culture. Hybridity not only happens in post-colonial societies where colonial powers invaded to consolidate political and economic control. It also occurs when settler-invaders dispossess indigenous peoples and force them to assimilate to new social patterns (Ashcroft, Griffith, and Tiffin 1995). New cultural forms are produced even though the older forms continue to exist, perhaps with some modifications. The degrees that these new cultural forms become "hybridized" varies greatly across situations, between cultures, and from place to place (Ashcroft, Griffith, and Tiffin 1995).

Recently, the "hybridized dimension" of Taiwan's culture, that is, the combination of the influence of the Han Chinese, the Japanese, the Americans, and the
most unique to Taiwan, the indigenous cultures, are generally cited within Taiwanese national discourse (see the book edited by Shih Cheng-fong 1994). Although the term "hybridity" or "post-colonial" are not necessarily specified, terms such as "multicultural" or "multiethnic" gradually have become acceptable. Cultural hybridity seems to be a reality, rather than simply an abstract concept circulated only within the academic elite. However, this does not mean that Taiwan's culture as "hybrid" can be accepted by the majority of people when it comes to important political implications—that is, an "impure" and perhaps a new culture is developed in Taiwan independent of Chinese culture advocated by the old rigid regime.

I have discussed the impacts of tourism development on indigenous harvest ceremonies in Chapter 4. In my opinion, these ceremonies illustrate the "hybridity" most clearly in that they have become adapted to the changing socio-economic conditions and bestow different meanings upon what, on the surface, seem to be traditional customs. Traditionally, the harvest ceremony was held at a certain time of the year with complicated rites which were often linked to particular hunting and religious activities. However, the nativistic cultural revitalization movement which has evolved in Taiwan's modern capitalist society clearly reflects modifications. The time of the ceremony has been changed to weekends or holidays to accommodate the schedules of tribal members who, mostly youths, either work or study in the cities. Prolonged rituals must be cut short to fit both the needs of tourists coming from outside and the schedules of the young, working, tribal members. The sacred spaces in the mountains, perhaps, will be replaced by other places offering easier accessibility to the tourists and to the participants.
Some traditional rituals are "banned" by local churches and Christian leaders (Interview G). Commercial performances in aboriginal cultural parks that compete for "authenticity" (which is often turned into "exotic") of traditional cultures in order to seek to maximize tourism profits, and sometimes, mislead the ongoing process of this indigenous cultural renaissance (for example, see Hsieh Shih-chung 1994d). However, this current cultural revitalization, to some degree, does arouse ethnic identity and pride for some aboriginal performers, despite the fact that their performance/culture is no longer "pure." Perhaps, this "hybrid" culture will develop into a new form of "authentic" culture in the future as the product of social adjustment.

So, what are the nature and the direction of indigenous movements, particularly that occurring in Taiwan? Is the movement an ethnic movement embedded with exclusiveness? Or is it a means of functional social transition in a democratic society? These kinds of questions might be attributed to the lack of delicate discourse construction on the indigenous movement and Taiwan's aborigines' relatively restricted connections with an international perspective, due to Taiwan's international isolation. These questions also reflect the insufficient acknowledge of ethnic differences in Taiwan's society (Walid YuGan 1992), and therefore lack the consensus, experience, and social and geographical imaginations to find appropriate solutions. The indigenous movement, its ensuing nativistic cultural revitalization, and the concurrent calls for territorial autonomy have imposed upon every sincere social movement and its activists a moral demand. The indigenous movement demands every person to reflect upon the relationships among the State, the civil society, the impacts
of cultural hegemony on Taiwan’s population, the dying indigenous nations (see Sun Da-chuan 1991), and the human-land relations.

7.2 Indigenous Sovereignty and the Ideology of the Nation-State

The politics of representation is epitomized in the process of nation-state building in which the homogenization process demanded by mainstream nation-state ideology subjugate the representation of “otherness.” In other words, politics is involved in the formation of identity of nations and all incorporated ethnic groups. Thus, the prototype of the modern nation-state, quite opposite to common assumption, is not natural, primary and permanent so as to precede history (Hobsbawm 1990:14). Rather, the fundamental ideology of the nation-state, that is, nationalism, is a product of construction, manipulation, invention, and imagination (Anderson 1991; Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983). The boundaries of nations are thus artificially created, constantly floating, negotiating, and breaking up over time. Contemporaries are often unselfconscious about their uses of the term “nation” so that it means different things in different context at different places. From geographers’ viewpoints, the definition and organizations of modern nation-states are now essentially structured around territory, which links the construction of national discourse to this spatial dimension of national territory. Even those “nations without states” have a space to where they are spiritually linked. Following the restricting principles of both self-determination and the nation-state, it seems that a nation is assumed to form only one state and its citizens constitute one “indivisible whole.” Since states are, in the modern era, mostly spatially “fixed” and, on the contrary, peoples are spatially mobile, this notion of “one
nation, one state" neither fits the current reality, nor can such an interpretation judicate boundary, territorial, and national disputes across the globe.

When indigenous sovereign claims collide with modern nationalism, conflicts rise. The most prominent case comes from Quebec, Canada. Both French Quebecers and indigenous Inuits in northern Quebec are seeking recognition of their respective ethnocultural distinctiveness in Canadian state. Competition by these two groups was lively when Quebec political leaders rejected requests by First Nations people for indigenous sovereignty in recent years (Salee 1995). As a result, this tension led to a highly conflictual dynamic relation which renders a social and cultural coexistence extremely difficult (Salee 1995). The history of colonization shows that indigenous peoples, the First Nations, were not the beneficiaries of post-WWII independent statehood. This fact seems to be epitomized in the request of the Canadian First Nations. While French Quebecers asked to separate from Canada given a main reason of cultural distinctiveness, Quebec’s indigenous people’s demand for sovereignty, based on the same reason, was crudely turned down. So far, neither group has achieved political sovereignty.

7.2.1 Indigenous Sovereignty, the Chinese Nation, and Taiwanese Nationalism

In Taiwan, self-autonomy rather than the establishment of indigenous sovereignty is the goal of the indigenous movement. In the estimation of the indigenous elite, an appeal for complete sovereignty within an island state is practically infeasible and politically harmful to their future campaigns, despite the fact that the current Han-dominated KMT state has no legitimacy from their point of view.
Chinese anthropologists conducted research on minority groups in Southwest China during the Second World War (mainly because the KMT's Nationalist government had moved to Sichuan province). Their studies on those minority groups were later criticized as mostly used only extensive reviews of ancient literature to identify the origins of the minorities in question. Often, these studies led to a priori results that the current ethnic groups originated from some ancient groups mention of which are found in ancient Chinese historical records (Hsieh Shih-chung 1990, cited in Chen Chao-ru 1992). In a word, the early anthropologists lacked the concepts required to establish ethnic histories from their fieldwork (Hsieh Shih-chung 1990, cited in Chen Chao-ru 1992). Crude conclusions could be partially attributed to the limits of the wartime environment which forced these scholars to depend almost exclusively on such ancient records rather than actual field observations. However, their often a priori conclusion on the origin of ethnic groups could not be simply attributed to this difficult environment (Chen Chao-ru 1992). Again, it is more about ideology then the harsh wartime circumstances.

The problems embedded in the reports of these early anthropologists regarding ethnic origin become clearer once we review their theoretical construction with respect to the formation of the Chinese Nation.

"The major factor for the formation of the Chinese Nation is assimilation. Because the appropriate emanation of the Chinese culture, the peoples in surrounding areas are touched and generated some kind of centripetal, pulling force. This force enables these people to seek for light, so they are willing to come to merge with us" (Ruey Yi-fu 1953, cited in Chen Chao-ru 1992, translated by the author).
The above paragraph reveals at least two implicit messages. First, ironically, although early research on minority groups relied on extensive reviews of ancient Chinese historical documents, the final research results were often ahistorical. Second, these early studies indicate how subjective researchers can be as they sought to understand minority groups (Chen Chao-ru 1992). The orthodox Chinese cultural supremacy and one-dimensional Sino-centralism are haunting, and remain to the present.

Some of these anthropologists came to Taiwan with the KMT after 1949, but remained interested in the “origin” of Taiwan’s aboriginal minorities. Not surprisingly, studies related to this issue again resulted in the conclusion that the culture of Taiwan’s “mountain savages” is linked to common “Chinese” ancestors (Way Hui-lin 1967, cited in Chen Chao-ru 1992). Archeological discoveries in pre-historical sites of Taiwan were often used to prove this ancient connection of Taiwan with China by some subjective speculation (Chen Chao-ru 1992). The power of the Chinese ethno-centralism ideology is so prevalent that it infiltrates virtually every aspect of daily life and is even internalized into supposedly “impartial” social science.

As part of the measures carried out in the process of “empire building,” Japanese anthropological studies on Taiwan’s aborigines still exerted great influence long after the KMT took control of Taiwan. The early anthropologists who came to Taiwan with the KMT had to rely heavily on the Japanese studies to construct their theories on Taiwan’s indigenous peoples. However, the internalized Chinese orthodoxy inevitably led their academic researches into a linear perspective supposing a clear relationship among peoples and nations. In summary, the linear evolution is Han Chauvinism.
Chinese Orthodoxy → China’s Minority Groups → Taiwan’s Aborigines (Chen Chao-ru 1992). This ethno-central nationalism provided the ideological basis of later assimilation policies. Anthropologists, as well as geographers (discussed in Chapter 5), offer their knowledge and research for the construction of concepts favored by the ruling elites, intentionally or insidiously. These imaginative historical and geographical constructions generated by intellectual elites went unchallenged for decades until the mid-1970s when a mature civil society was ready to question the political taboos and set the stage for an eruption of challenges in the mid-1980s.

From the very beginning in the mid-1980s, the evolution of the indigenous movement has been inextricably intertwined to the development of socio-political reform movements in Taiwan. The publicity of Taiwanese nationalism, a breakthrough of the KMT’s political taboo, also stimulated the imaginary and theoretical constructions of potential “natural sovereignty” desired by the indigenous movement. However, the reality of true power relationships has subtly subordinated indigenous demands of either sovereignty or self-autonomy to the demand of Taiwan independence. The current political strategy is that Taiwan must be first independent from China, and then, and only then, it is possible for its aborigines to negotiate any further recognition of their cultural distinctiveness. Certainly, the premise of this strategy is that the new Taiwanese nationalism is more tolerate and willing to accommodate differences than the old Chinese nationalism.

The emergence of the concept of the “Taiwanese nation” has its material base embedded in rapid economic development, the islandwide traffic network laid by the Japanese, and perhaps as Anderson points out (1991), in the growth of print capitalism.
whose prerequisite is a high literacy rate. In Taiwan, current debates on nationalism centered mainly on different Han sub-ethnic groups. Only a small proportion of the debate is devoted to dealing with the relationship between the aborigines and the State (see the various essays in Chang Mao-kuei et al 1993). Chao Kang (1996), on the other hand, distinguishes two types of nationalism in the current Taiwan context. "Ethno-nationalism" refers to the nationalism that emphasizes "primordial factors" such as blood relationships (or kinship) and language. From this perspective, these are the essential conditions for forming a nation. In this situation, a nation is identical, then, with an ethnic group. The other concept of nation comes from progressive liberalism, with emphasis the equal union of a sovereign people. Common ancestors or language are not used to draw boundaries between "we" and "the other." Instead, "liberal nationalism" concentrates on expanding the base of solidity to strive for the universal rights for entire body of citizens (Chao Kang 1996). However, even this "liberal nationalism" cannot fully account for, and accommodate, the indigenous call for sovereignty due to its lack of consideration regarding marginalized groups. A (grassroots) "democratic nation" is proposed by Chao Kang within which a coalition is constructed among the socialist left, progressive liberals, and marginal groups. A Nationalism which aims at "increasing the country’s wealth and strengthening military force," which most likely will benefit dominant groups and international powers, is denounced by this vision of national imagination.

In fact, the evolution of Taiwanese nationalism is perhaps, more appropriately seen as centered around the changing concept of "Who are Taiwanese?" In tracing the evolution of this concept we can easily distinguish different phases for a collective
definition of what is meant by "Taiwanese." These phases are by no means clear cut and are subject to debate as far as who is incorporated is concerned. At the dawn of the Taiwanese nationalist movement in the 1970s, Taiwanese were referred to only as the Holo people, which is the largest ethnic group in Taiwan, whose language was called Taiwanese (taiyu). This literally means Taiwan’s language. Later, when the opposition camp needed to expand its social base to exert pressure on the ruling party, the Hakka group was incorporated into the formed definition of “Taiwanese.” The Hakka rights movement is, in fact, one of the eighteen social movements identified by Hsiao Hsin-huang (1992) as of 1989. The emergence of the Hakka rights movement reflected both a desire for a separate ethnic identity from the larger Holo group as well as the recognition that inadequate attention was paid to the Hakka group in the process of political democratization.

Ironically, indigenous peoples were recognized as “Taiwanese” only after their ethnic voices were heard and recognized after the mid-1980s. Indigenous peoples, the once sole masters of the island of Taiwan, have been subordinated and silenced by the succeeding alien regimes since their first contact with the outsiders some four hundred years ago.

Mainlanders, even to the present, are still hardly accepted as Taiwanese by hard-line nationalists. However, some Taiwanese nationalists are in fact, mainlanders or their second generation offspring. The definition of Taiwanese, then, was extended later to any people in Taiwan who identify themselves with Taiwan, rather than China.

Repeated newspaper poll surveys report that, after the early 1996 crisis in the Taiwan Strait when the PRC held several military exercises to intimidate Taiwan in
advance of its first ever popular presidential elections, self-identity of people as Taiwanese soared to the highest point while a self described “Chinese identity” reached the lowest ever level. The case exemplifies the fact that external threats can exert significant influence over domestic identity politics and help to form a sense of social coherence for the population as a whole. This external military intimidation of “China vs. Taiwan” gradually replaced the internal ethnic tension of “Taiwanese vs. Mainlander” as the largest socio-psychological force for mobilizing Taiwan sentiments. Indeed, these events led to a new construction of nationalism discourse. A KMT party now led by native Taiwanese and the shift of the party to a “Taiwanized” representation also substantially lessened its alien characteristics and helped gain support from the native population.

7.2.2 The Relationship between the Indigenous Movement and Han Taiwanese Nationalism

Although the indigenous movement is viewed by many as simply another social movement in post-martial law Taiwan, there is one dimension of the indigenous movement that is genuinely neglected by any other of the current movements; that is, the relations between the two “peoples” in a country where “quasi-colonialism” is still of great concern to many indigenous activists. The cultural and political implications of the indigenous movement cover a broad spectrum of socio-political reforms that would require radical institutional rearrangements ranging from a bona fides comprehensive territorial plan to significant changes in school curricula. This section will focus on the various possible interactions between the indigenous movement and Han-Taiwanese nationalism which might evolve in the near future. The discussion mainly follows the framework provided by Chang Mao-kuei (1995), but also

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incorporates my own re-interpretation and modifications based on more recent events and conditions.

I have discussed the status of Taiwan’s aborigines in the “Chung-Hwa-Min-Tzu”, or Chinese Nation in Chapter 5. Basically, within the framework of the Chinese Nation, Taiwan’s aborigines are not granted special status. They are not even included in the five major peoples that constitute Chinese Nation. Indigenous peoples are at most, minority groups or mountain compatriots in the “frontier:border areas.” On the other hand, the discourse of Taiwanese nationalism, especially the so-called “new Taiwanese” discourse, recognizes the aborigines’ as an integral part of the new Taiwanese nation. Aborigines, together with Holo, Hakka and the “new immigrants” (to replace the old, and sometime incorrect, name of “mainlanders”) are the four major components of the Taiwanese Nation. Indigenous peoples are, then, “nations within a state.” This dynamic framework keeps open the possibility of “adding” other new elements into the forming nation and relies less on blood relations or the belief of common ancestors.

The realization of this more idealist Taiwanese national discourse is still to contingent upon the result of Han people’s political struggles in the greater political economy (Chang Mao-kuei 1995). In the face of political interest conflicts, Han people’s interests are likely to take priority over indigenous peoples’ interests. Aboriginal affairs might be only a by-product in the process of compromise and political negotiation. Thus, it is a difficult task to find a right “spot,” or position for the indigenous movement in relation to the Han people’s nationalist movements, regardless of either a Chinese Nation or Taiwanese Nation outcome. It takes political
insights and strategies to situate the minority movements at a vantage point and to find a balanced place within the intricate socio-political conditions which currently dominate, so that the indigenous groups can play a role which might be called “decisive minorities” in the political arena dominated by Han people.

Table 7.1 shows the six possible relations between the indigenous movement and Han people’s nationalism. At a time when the independence/unification issue is considered as the “fundamental” problem on Taiwan’s future, the indigenous perspective offers a new way of thinking on this issue. Central to interpretations of the table are the definitions of two terms: “identify”, and “accept.” According to Chang Mao-kuei (1995), “identify” is defined as the status in which recognition, passion, value and activity are all in a balanced situation. It represents a positive attitude, which includes the tendency to adopt real supporting activities towards the identified object. “Accept” simply means some degrees of consent on dominant ideology and values. The latter term lacks the necessary sentimental attitude which is embedded in the term “identify.” To adopt an “acceptable” attitude towards either the Chinese or Taiwanese Nation could be the result of either utilitarian and opportunist approaches, or merely a choice conformable to the will of dominant ideology, without other options (Chang Mao-kuei 1995). In brief, “identify” means an active support while “accept” simply indicates a passive consent.

In situation (I), no efforts need to be taken or made. It follows the whole assimilation policies provided by the KMT and accepts the whole set of ruling institutional arrangements developed by the ROC government. Under this condition, Sinicization will continue to be prevalent in every aspect of daily life. Those KMT
Table 7.1 The Possible Relations between Indigenous Movement and Han People’s Nationalisms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Identify and Accept</th>
<th>Han People’s Nationalisms</th>
<th>Chinese Nation</th>
<th>Taiwanese Nation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1. politically Sinicized</td>
<td>1. politically Sinicized</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2. maintain status quo</td>
<td>2. one component of Taiwanese Nation, with the possibility of self-autonomy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(I)</td>
<td>(II)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Identify with But Acceptable</td>
<td>1. temporary alliance</td>
<td>1. temporary alliance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. becomes “pressure group” under Chinese Nation</td>
<td>2. becomes “pressure group” under Taiwanese Nation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(III)</td>
<td>(IV)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Identify with and Not Accept</td>
<td>1. total alienation</td>
<td>1. total alienation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. aboriginal-Han (Chinese) struggles</td>
<td>2. aboriginal-Han (Taiwanese) struggles</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(V)</td>
<td>(VI)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“mountain” legislators who always helped the KMT establish its legitimacy might fit into this category (Chang Mao-kuei 1995). Another possibility is that the indigenous movement might identify with another Han regime, the PRC. In this case, the aborigines will need to face the independence/unification choice just as their Han counterparts must face the issue. The leaders of the indigenous movement will then side with the pro-unification force in current Taiwan, and national identity will take priority over ethnic identity.

The second situation is to take the side of the progressive, idealistic forces within the largest opposition party, the DPP, and to identify with the Taiwanese Nation. The progressives are the sole, and most probable, supporters for indigenous autonomy (Chang Mao-kuei 1995). To identify with the Taiwanese Nation it is probably assumed that Taiwanese Nation will be more progressive and more tolerant to different cultures than the rigid concept of the Chinese Nation. However, taking this position poses two problems. First, the Taiwanese Nation may not be as progressive as it is supposed to be. The nature of Taiwanese nationalism will depend on what kinds of socio-political forces emerge in forging the character of the new nation-state. This, again, will be decided mostly by Han people’s political struggles. Second, it is quite possible that the aborigines’ cultural uniqueness will be lost in the resulting Sinicized politics. The indigenous movement has to take the risk to be co-opted into the pro-independence camp to fight the trend towards unification promoted by the KMT hard-liners, the Chinese New Party, and the PRC. Aboriginal affairs certainly will not be in the top priorities of the political agenda which will invariably be dominated by Han people.

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In situations (III) and (IV), the indigenous people do not identify with either the Chinese or the Taiwanese Nation. Rather, the position is chosen either because of instrumental or strategic positioning, or because there is no other feasible options at the time this choice must be made (Chang Mao-kuei 1995). Under these circumstances, the indigenous people will tend to partially accept the current institutional arrangements and government policies but strive for some extent of autonomy. This autonomy will maintain indigenous peoples’ status as effective “pressure groups” or we could anticipate them forming political alliances to escalate their influence (Chang Mao-kuei 1995). Thus, ideally, the indigenous movement will not be ignored or terminated by the overwhelming social, political, and economic forces associated with the unification/independence issue. Nevertheless, there is no exact way to figure out the “right distance” that should be kept between the movement and these two national discourses. In situation (III), the indigenous movement will ally with the “Chinese KMT” and the Chinese New Party, while in situation (IV), the alliances will be, perhaps, the “Taiwanese KMT” and the DPP.

Situations (V) and (VI) enable the indigenous groups to completely alienate themselves from the unification/independence issue surrounding Han people’s politics. The indigenous movement will deny the legitimacy of the current establishment and engage in the opening of some new fronts for aborigine-Han ethnic struggles (Chang Mao-kuei 1995). By so doing, there will be few alliances with any groups. The ensuing social disorders perhaps will cost the present achievements of the indigenous movement and might even bring even crueler persecution and suppression from the majority Han people (Chang Mao-kuei 1995).
As I pointed out above, the nature of the currently constructing Taiwanese nationalism may be different from that of Chinese nationalism. From the indigenous activists' point of view, Taiwanese nationalism might have more progressive elements which are willing to accommodate indigenous requests, such as self-autonomy, which is virtually impossible under the ideology of orthodox Chinese nationalism. Since a complete break with Han nationalism will probably "cost" too much for the indigenous movements, the real political situation tends to be a combination between (IV) and (V). That is, indigenous leadership neither identifies nor accepts the Chinese Nation, but maintains an allied relationship with Taiwanese Nation within the attitude of "not identify with but accept" the ideas of the newly formed nationalism (Chang Mao-kuei 1995).

Nevertheless, from my own observation, it seems pro-KMT indigenous leaders may oscillate between the situations of (I) and (II), reflecting power/ideology struggles inside the KMT party. This could also reveal the reality of the currently confused identity facing the KMT indigenous elites.

Another perspective regarding the future relationship between the indigenous movement and Han Taiwanese nationalism is to locate the indigenous movement on a geometric plane where the unification/independence issue forms the vertical axis and continuum of a left/right political orientation forms the horizontal axis. On this chart (Figure 7.1), there are four constant variables, the political Left and Right and the Unification or Independence of Han people's nationalism. The indigenous movement and its various factions will all assume some positions on this chart. Other social movements can also be located in this chart together with the indigenous movement.
Figure 7.1 The Chart of Left/Right and Unification/Independence
The tendency towards each “pole,” or the “degree” of the tendency can be measured by the distance from the center, where zero is politically neutral. In the case of the indigenous movement, a neutral positioning on the Unification/Independence issue can not be interpreted as “not identify with and not accept” any kind of Han people’s nationalism as define by Chang Mao-kuei. Rather, the neutral position should be interpreted as a “confused identity” or just mere indifference.

The selection of these four variables by no means imply that these are the more “fundamental” factors than others, or that the unification/independence issue should take priorities over other social movements. It simply means that these are the four important factors which have emerged from my approach on the relationship between the indigenous movement and Han people’s nationalism. For example, the Presbyterian Church-led indigenous movement would probably locate within Sector two (2) where a pro-independence stance is clear but has varying degrees of inclination towards the political right. The “tribalism” movement, with its goal on grassroots radical democracy and its emphasis on nativistic cultural rehabilitation, would be located within Sector three (3). The indigenous delegates associated with the Chinese New Party in the National Assembly would situate within Sector one (1). Some progressive indigenous activists who are influenced by certain old left-wing Han intellectuals, mostly political prisoners imprisoned during the forty-year-long martial-law era and now associated with the small Workers’ Party (lao tung dang), are best situated within Sector four (4). The overall trend, i.e. the “mainstream” indigenous movement, will be slightly left-oriented and heavily pro-independence. That is, the right and lower corner of Sector (3) within the area of (A).
There is a seemingly strong tendency towards radicalism within some of the indigenous activists. The more radical the person becomes, the greater justification the person tends to enjoy. This radical inclination tends to escalate and politicize all indigenous requests for reform and change to a state of nation-to-nation affairs where Han people are viewed as illegal intruders. By defining Han people in this way, the goal of peaceful ethnic co-existence is significantly undermined. “Natural sovereignty,” arguably the most controversial idea in the worldwide indigenous movement, at its most extreme form, could be another form of ethno-nationalism, where citizenship is only conferred to members of specific ethnic groups, in this case, the aborigines. In fact, some conservative forces, such as the PPRA, will co-opt the idea and polarize its implication to create an impression that all supporters of the indigenous movement aim to expel all the Han people to beyond the Taiwan Strait. However, in its “softer” form, natural sovereignty is a revolutionary concept in re-examining the dominant ideology of “state” sovereignty and could lead the way to building a culturally diverse political entity, which may not ultimately be in the form of current nation-state.

For the land-related issues, the prevalent radicalism within the indigenous resistant elites is epitomized in the ideas of one of my main informants. He insists that the “starting point” in the (future) negotiation between the aborigines and the Han government, should be the official recognition that the indigenous peoples are entitled to the original reservation lands as defined by the Japanese during the colonial era (Interview A). Although this is a justified argument to me in terms of ethnic justice, its feasibility remains highly doubtful. Its real implementation would inevitably trigger
extensive social disorder, which in turn, would possibly negate the present accomplishments of the indigenous movement and give rise to intense ethnic hatred directed quite locally as well as nationally at the indigenous population.

The much-publicized idea of aboriginal self-autonomy receives relatively little attention and discussion in terms of actual plans. The absence of any theoretical construction in the substantial details of the idea of self-autonomy would simply create another beautiful but empty radical slogan. The self-government issue involves intricate social, cultural, and political affairs that are specific to each geographical location. Different indigenous groups in different areas of Taiwan require special designs for the implementation of self-autonomy, not to mention the role which the direct application of previous experience abroad might possibly play in this new condition.

7.3 Nature, Landscape and the New Human-Land Relations

The watershed area of Te-Chi Reservoir has experienced more negative side effects from human activities than any of the other major reservoirs in Taiwan. The ecological consequence of excessive development of slopeland in the Li-Shan area was cautioned against long ago by many scholars, including geographers (Chang Chang-yi 1992). A landslide monitoring project is being built to watch closely the potential hazard.

As public environmental awareness increases in Taiwan, the steep slopeland cultivation practiced in the Li-Shan area immediately became the object of public condemnation. Both indigenous and Han farmers are blamed for the visible environmental deterioration. Virtually the whole environmentalists’ argument is
focused on slope cultivation and its possible consequences. The role of the government is thus confined to the elimination of "illegal" cultivation, which was set as the cultivation of any land exceeding 28 degrees. As the problem evolved, the state was tactically detached from assuming responsibility for its own policies which contributed significantly to the problem. Rarely did anyone blame the mode of production and the developmental ideology which the potentially dangerous land use patterns reflected. The "scientific fact" of the 28-degree limit encounters no challenge. Moreover, the continued use of the Te-Chi reservoir seems to be taken for granted by the academic community and environmentalists and continues to be justified by the developmental ideology long promoted by the government.

The environmental concerns in the Li-Shan area seem to give too much emphasis to the technical dimensions of the problem while at the same time ignoring locally specific social and historical conditions. Few look at the problem from the viewpoint of the greater political economy, which would probably reveal that the intensive utilization of marginal land is the result of displacement of both forestry land and the related subsistence economy by a profit-seeking capitalist mode of production. However, the political economy does not determine quite as many locally specific outcomes as some radicals would expect (Bebbington 1996). Of course, there are many perspectives on this issue that clearly involves more than just environmental issues in the plains areas, and the presence of the indigenous population. Often missing from most studies, is the question regarding how locally specific historical and geographical contexts help to shape the current social and political relations found in the Li-Shan area. What are the implications of the landscape changes which have
occurred in the past forty to fifty years? And how can we interpret these changes predicated on efforts to bring about “modernization”? Does the presence of indigenous peoples provide any unique perspective to the current situation? And lastly, perhaps, is the even more fundamental question “What is the relationship that we want between Nature and society?”

One of the most significant historical events in the Li-Shan area is the colonialism experience of the local aborigines. The Japanese established the Taiwan Power Company in 1919 to exploit the hydroelectric power potential of the upper reaches of the island’s major rivers (Chang Chang-yi 1989:39). Although hydrologic surveys were conducted on the Da Chia River by the colonial government in its attempt to develop mountain resources, the Te-chi reservoir was actually not constructed by the KMT government until 1969 (Chang Chang-yi 1989:61). The introduction of the capitalist mode of production and the commercialization of local agrarian products such as fruit following the opening of the cross-island highway in 1960 accelerated the displacement of the traditional indigenous way of life. Li-Shan’s high altitude not only enables the growth of temperate-zone fruits and vegetables in Taiwan, but also draws Han people, with their capital, and a different social and political economy into the mountains. With respect to changes in social and political structures, those with positions in public office and as clergy in Western religions have replaced the traditional symbols of authority. The heads of the hsian, the village, and the peasants’ organizations, and even the local cadres of political parties now exert more influence than traditional tribal authorities.
Human labor, together with capital investment from beyond the region transformed the “natural,” “primitive” landscape into a different “cultural,” if more “profitable” landscape (at least from the Han people’s point of view). The sacred landscapes, often associated with the traditional symbols of authority, are now viewed from a different, more secular stance. If landscape can be “read” as a “text,” the continual changing landscape can then possess different embedded meanings at different times, for different people, and for different places.

In the Li-Shan area, previous geographical studies focused on the conservation of nature, on deforestation due to slopeland cultivation, and on the safety of reservoir (see Chang Chang-yi 1989). The so-called “natural” landscape has never been problematized. As a matter of fact, in the discourse construction of the “natural” landscape, some people and voices are systematically silenced, or even erased, while certain voices are granted the authority to speak for others (Willems-Braun 1997). In Li-Shan’s case, the cultural meaning of the landscape for the aborigines is absent from previous studies. The cultural interpretation of the landscape gives way to the environmentalist’s explanation of “natural” landscape and “resource management,” to profit-driven commercialized agriculture, and to law-enforcement government agencies. However, the dichotomy of voice and voiceless does not necessarily mean that the separation is cut precisely along the ethnic lines, or that the indigenous people in Li-Shan are all silenced. Resistance does occur in various forms, including most importantly for this research, the re-assertion of ethnic identity. The heterogeneity within the indigenous people also makes internal divisions possible.
The nodes of this triangle of the new hegemonic discourse, thus, are the farmer, the environmentalist, and the state bureaucracy. Local indigenous people’s culture is disenfranchised from their surrounding landscape in the proposed “solution” for this local environmental problem. The new regimes of power and knowledge authorize particular visions and provide a new legitimate base for state intervention, while at the same time, either consciously ignore or unconsciously filter out certain visions/voices in the discourse construction of Li-Shan’s environmental problem. That is, the voices of the indigenous people who live in the area are ignored. In the fields of conservation and resource management, nature is made to appear as an empty space separated from indigenous cultural activities (Willems-Braun 1997).

Native village sites became tied to a traditional, nonhistorical culture, and separated from a surrounding landscape that was figured, in turn, as a field for the enterprise of a dynamic modern culture. Colonial discourse... did not erase, it displaced. Erasure occurred, to be certain, but not through lack of attention (Willems-Braun 1997).

In the “colonial gaze” of both the Japanese and the KMT, primitive culture and pristine nature in the mountain areas were the objects of colonial conquest. The relation between indigenous culture and nature were simply a subject of anthropological studies. In the construction of colonial discourse on resource management and development, “nature” in the indigenous territory was displaced from its local contexts and relocated into the abstract spaces of the nation-state (Willems-Braun 1997). In the context of the colonial history, nature was made available as a landscape of resources rather than cultural and social landscapes (Willems-Braun 1997). In this sense, nature becomes an object of “imaginative geography” (after Said 1986) in the process of socio-political construction for conquest and exploitation. This
nature, thus, is less a "natural" product than a human factor. Thus, the State was able to resolve the problem of indigenous rights of access, presumably by assigning aborigines certain portions of the "wilderness" as "reservation lands," while the rest of the "nature," with no visible signs or traces of culture, could be appropriated into the administrative space of either the empire or the nation-state. The whole "wilderness" was then subject to "rational" management, or conservation, or development. For a developmental state in which economic growth was the legitimate base of continued power, rational resource management in essence, was to encourage development, according to local geographical conditions. Li-Shan, therefore, became the largest area for the production of temperate-zone fruits in Taiwan.

For indigenous peoples in Taiwan, colonial relations with the state did not end when the Japanese empire collapsed after WWII. The new developmental programs imposed by the KMT threatened to re-inscribe colonial histories throughout the indigenous territories and erased the efforts of the present-day struggles for indigenous sovereignty. The natural "wilderness" of the Han people's rhetoric, which is subject to political and economic calculation for state administration and resource exploitation respectively, is a highly "cultural" landscape in the local aboriginal rhetoric (Willems-Braun 1997).

The ongoing "modernizing" policies and processes which occurred in the Li-Shan area have generally been considered as an example of domination over nature by modernization. After the emergence of the pan-indigenous movement in Taiwan, the "primitive" aborigines are, willingly or unwillingly, located "closer" to "mother nature," and considered to possess more environmental ethics associated with
sustainability. In fact, however, recently indigenous ecological wisdom has received wide attention throughout the world. It is so broadly conceived that some define indigenous peoples as having a special relationship with the earth. Indigenous peoples seem to exist inseparably with the nature and they are also inextricably connected with the concept of sustainable development in "alternative" development discourse (Merchant 1992:222-227). This is one of the most positive social representations and imaginations incorporated in mainstream constructions of indigenous peoples, despite the fact that aborigines' descendants may be assimilated into "modern" citizens and lose connections with the (mainstream construction of) "nature." Ironically perhaps, and despite these widely held perceptions, the process of land and resource appropriation is continuing in various indigenous territories. Those displaced are forced to relocate and frequently moved to even more peripheral areas where their connections with their own ancestral lands are terminated. Given the effects of mining, fishing, logging, and pollution in many indigenous areas, the World Council of Indigenous Peoples in 1981 identified multinational companies "as the most immediate and serious threat to the survival of Indigenous Nations of the Fourth World" (Wilmer 1993:128).

A simple bisection which stresses that modernity marks the transition from harmony with nature, to the exploitation of nature, is, however, problematic. Willems-Braun (1997) argues that,

...what differentiates premodern from modern relations with nature is not harmony versus domination so much as different knowledges and technologies that articulated nature as a social object and made it available to economic and political calculation in new ways. (original italics)
Knowledges and technologies are thus socially constructed and cannot be value free. This is particularly clear in the social movements which incorporate ideas of indigenous knowledge and practices into their alternative choices (Bebbington 1996). On the one hand, indigenous agrarian technology is not only "an instrument of environmental manipulations, but is a symbol speaking to rural people of their social history and relationships, a sign by which they read their identities and their relationships with past, present, and future" (Bebbington 1996). On the other hand, colonial knowledge as well as modern technologies help contribute to the creation of Li-Shan's current landscape and geography as Taiwan's biggest production area of temperate-zone crops.

A new human-land relationship which is inspired partly by indigenous ecological wisdom is evolving among environmentally conscious individuals and groups. A plan which incorporates traditional hunting ethics with modern wildlife-management is being put into practice in Southern Taiwan. Perhaps counterintuitive, the academics involved in this plan claim that hunting may actually help protect the environment and assure sustainable resource use (Chang Chin-ju 1997). The pressure on Taiwan's wildlife populations has rarely come from the aborigines who have practiced hunting for thousands of years. Rather, urbanization and capitalism not only brings environmental problems directly to cities where industrial pollution is prevalent, but also indirectly to the mountains by "luring" indigenous people to leave their homes for wage incomes. Thus, the deserted villages and empty households only make it easier for outside intruders to come in and "hunt" for profits. At present, rare and/or wild animals are sold as commodities without the full complement of
traditional religious, ethical, social beliefs, and cultural meanings. By returning these “natural” lands to indigenous people, involving them in resource management decisions, and “recovering” the ecological wisdom embedded in their traditional life, the possibility of sustainable development seems to be greater. This combination of modern academic and traditional knowledge can potentially also create new income sources to bring back youths from the cities. This return migration of indigenous youth is an important goal of the new “tribalism” (Interview E).

A solid material basis (viable economy, food, shelter, and water) is the prerequisite to sustain a cohesive cultural identity. However, under the current policy context, the material basis in indigenous territories is genuinely threatened either by the deteriorating conditions in the rural economy due to the uneven development found in these places in Taiwan, or by unsustainable developmental policies. To recover the economy in mountain areas demands the creation of new types of non-agrarian activities (Bebbington 1996). Eco-tourism is a solution proposed by one of my informants who is the major figure in the “tribalism” movement. He calls for returning the nature to the aborigines’ management with the cooperation from academics (Interview E). As “modern mountain guardians,” regulated hunting and harvesting by indigenous peoples, in fact, will not only maintain the health of the ecosystem, but also could possibly rejuvenate entire aboriginal communities both socially and economically. He argues that, by so doing, the young aborigines will have to learn traditional wisdom from experienced hunters to become professional tour guides in order to lead “eco-tourists” into the “nature” that is filled with “cultural” meanings. Through such activities and as a further benefit, urban dwellers will learn to
respect indigenous cultures and thus, aborigines will re-establish ethnic pride while at the same time, they will be able to deriving an income from traditional cultural practices.

The call of tribalism, in fact, corresponds to the new trend of international conservation strategies to involve indigenous peoples, whose ways of life and identity are tightly linked to particular places and territories, into resource management and establishment of protected areas (Stevens 1997). Historically, the establishment of many supposedly “uninhabited” national parks has posed major threats to the cultural survival and sovereignty of indigenous peoples (Stevens 1997). Through the involvement of indigenous peoples in conservation activities, both mainstream and indigenous societies are more aware of human rights and sovereignty issues raised by the establishment of national parks and other protected areas. This theory (and trend) of indigenous involvement in grassroots conservation can also be mirrored in the development of tribalism in Taiwan. “New” types of national parks based on this principle in which indigenous peoples share policy making and management responsibilities with government agencies, can be seen in many countries (Herlihy 1997; Nietschmann 1997). Indigenous peoples are not only involved in conservation activities, but also in re-gaining the “rights to interpret” their homelands by engaging in indigenous map-making projects initiated by scholars from outside (Herlihy 1998).

In Taiwan, another successful example of indigenous management of natural resources comes from Shanmei Village in Chia-yi County in southern Taiwan where the collective cooperative efforts of the villagers have systematically prohibited outsiders from electrocuting and poisoning the fish in Tanayiku River. The Thao
indigenous people set up their own protected area which stretches 15 kilometers along the river, and then established the “Shanmei Village Environmental Protection Association” in 1989 (Cheng Yuan-ching 1992). Many aboriginal areas drew capital from outside business groups for the development of tourism only to see their environment destroyed, but Shanmei is an exception (Cheng Yuan-ching 1992). Lands are held by the aborigines because of a democratically reached consensus among villagers to protect their lands and environment from commercial development. Although the villagers do not apply the term “tribalism”, such aboriginal conservation actions hold out hope for cultural preservation and possibly economic renaissance to the indigenous community as well as attracting youths back to their tribe.

The relations between society and nature are, of course, dynamic and constantly changing. The modernist binary discursive construction, however, tends to separate these two into “pure” and irrelevant domains and ignores their deeply interrelated realms (Swyngedouw 1996). In this discourse, nature belongs to the purely physical, natural world and is only transformed by the social (Swyngedouw 1996). Nature itself as a historical-geographical process is completely neglected so that the hegemonic culture has the legitimacy to exploit the “primitive” physical world. Nevertheless, when the concept of nature is considered as socially constructed and culturally varied, we also need to be alert to the danger of slipping into the extreme relativism (Proctor 1998).

A new human-land relation can only be constructed through a different dynamic natural-social process, and through respecting different cultural perspectives toward nature. Different cultures utilize and interpret nature in different ways, just like
different eco-systems, and as such these perspectives also have their own places in the physical world. If eco-diversity is crucial to the balance of the natural/physical world and the sustainability of resource management, similarly, perhaps, cultural diversity will be the essential way for humanity to raise its chances to survive on the earth (Ming Li-Kuo 1997). In this regard, however, I agree with the humanistic view that the current environmental protection and ecological conservation should not be the end to surpass human values, but a means to a more culturally diversified, livable world.
CHAPTER 8. RETROSPECT AND LIMITATIONS: THE FUTURE DIRECTIONS OF STUDIES

The final chapter will provide an extensive retrospect considering the research process and the obtained results. I also discuss some limitations of this research and offer other possible directions for further studies.

Although the land rights claims of Taiwan’s indigenous peoples is the major focus of my research, other issues are essential and unavoidable in dealing with the relationships between lands and aborigines. Under current socio-political conditions, a call for indigenous separatism, as many indigenous activists seem to suggest, is an impasse. Moreover, indigenous ethno-separatism will not only draw hostility from every social class and political platform, but also such radicalism will offset the previous efforts in constructing indigenous movements. As the movement was initiated by social minority and political underprivileged groups, it is worthy of sympathy and support. My observation is that the pursuit of radicalism misled some indigenous activists into either ethno-nationalism or indigenous chauvinism. The former, as I analyzed previously, cannot benefit the progressive movement. The later is simply another loser’s psychological desire to displace the winner’s hegemonic status. To use Fanon’s “Black Skin, White Masks” as a parallel example, the ideology of aboriginal chauvinism reflects only the deep frustration of self-esteem. Some indigenous intellectuals are aware of this possibility and call for a more tolerate and less self-centrist approach in awakening indigenous peoples’ consciousness at the grassroots level (Sun Da-chuan 1995b).

Indigenous youths, face both a rapidly deteriorating traditional culture, and an increasing lack of understanding of the ancestral lands, mountains, and forests.
surrounding the tribes. They must resist not only the tremendous pressures for further Sinicization, but also ignorance of their own cultures and traditions. Therefore, each individual expressions of aboriginal consciousness, such as speaking aboriginal languages, engaging in traditional hunting, participating in religious ceremonies, and becoming involved in nativist cultural activities, regardless these activities are carried out by Han or indigenous people, are resistances against hegemonic cultural assimilation. The study of the “geography of resistance,” either in daily life or in the national political arena, will deploy a new perspective in search for a more reasonable and egalitarian ethnic relationship. It is also from the accumulated successes of minor resistance that the minority groups may one day have their say in the formation of some form of “cultural hybridity” in post-colonial societies.

Land conflicts between indigenous peoples and the dominant groups around the world seem to surround economic interests. Many cases actually involve multinational corporations, and/or a coalition of State and business groups (Wilmer 1993:128-31). To indigenous peoples, land issues also involve the formation of identity, culture, religion, and way of life. The meaning of land is always far beyond simple economic interests. In this regard, the ecological wisdom of indigenous peoples has many issues in common with environmentalists. My concern is how the global environmental/ecological movements can combine both local knowledge and down-to-the-earth activities in order to be successful. The experiment of “tribalism” in southern Taiwan to involve indigenous people in local natural resource management presents a prospective alternative for the construction of a new society-nature relationship.
The capitalist modes of both mass production and mass consumption seem never suitable to the indigenous peoples', arguably, sustainable way of live. Any discussion on “sustainable development” without mentioning the alteration of the current economic system will be largely in vain.

From the global/local dichotomy, another interesting perspective is derived by an examination of the impacts of the development of both democracy and technology on various locations. On the one hand, the objectives of the “farmer-first” approach, introduced by Bebbington (1996), are to promoted farmers’ participation in agricultural development, to engage in the democratization of farmers’ organizations, and to “challenge prevailing ‘taken-for-granted’ power relationships in which the rural poor are always convinced of as ‘clients,’ recipients, and the objects of somebody else’s development strategy.” The democratization of farmers’ organization at the local level in Taiwan is a particularly urgent issue since heads of many local farmers’ organizations have a common reputation of being the surrogates for gigantic business groups or even underground gangster organizations. For farmers, simply having the right to vote for their organization’s head is not enough to improve the long power imbalance between farmers themselves and the agri-business networks centered in the metropolitan areas. So far, the farmers in Li-Shan still rely heavily on advice from private agri-business groups for critical information on the application of agri-chemicals to their crops. The private companies monopolize essentially all information sources of the Li-Shan farmers and enable the perpetuation of this uneven power relationship between rural farmers and core capital.
On the other hand, especially for the indigenous farmers in Li-Shan, the application of modern technology seems to signal an increasing distance from the past, from traditional "authentic" indigenous cultures, and reflects an increasing dependency on the elite groups (Bebbington 1996). However, this could also be an opportunity to escape from the old social relationship (i.e. domination, discrimination, and oppression) with the dominant groups. The result of the application of modern technology depends upon how the indigenous farmers are incorporated in the political economy context and through what ways the farmers are offered accesses to modern technology.

The establishment of indigenous autonomous zones might be a very remote but meaningful goal for activists. The demarcation of the autonomous zones in a small island like Taiwan requires, of course, a tremendous amount of negotiation, political compromise, and requires an imagination of a broad future picture. Not only the current administrative structures and boundaries require adjustment, but a new attitude towards "the others" is also needed in developing a peaceful and mutual beneficial solution. In my view, it is the inability, by all, to imagine both a new relation among ethnic groups and the possibility of "shared sovereignty" over a certain territory of a nation-state that manifests the largest obstacle in the creation of the true autonomous zones within a nation-state. The long-established idea of nationalism that demands both the homogenization represented by a "national culture" and the citizens' loyalty to the State erects an almost invincible ideological hurdle for founding a difference-sensitive multicultural nation-state. Thus, land conflicts also incorporate the political
struggles over cultural politics, once the geography-sensitive indigenous peoples are involved.

The suggestion from the core members of the PPRA to relocate the aborigines to collective farmland reveals the disrespectful mainstream attitude towards minority groups. The long-time stiff indoctrination of reactionary nationalism within the compulsory standardized education has certainly contributed to the formation of Han chauvinism in Taiwan.

As social values and “high” or “low” culture are defined and measured from the perspective of dominant Han culture, the indigenous populations in Taiwan have few items left for the formation of a positive ethnic identity. It is not surprising that the landscape has become the center of identity formation for indigenous peoples. What is a “natural” landscape of mountains and forests from a Han perspective, is the landscape full of cultural and religious meanings for aborigines. The interpretation of landscape in the development of tourism, frequently mentioned in the tourist brochures, thus, becomes another political arena for indigenous peoples to regain their rights to interpret the landscape that is possessed with cultural meanings. In fact, I find that new pan-indigenous identity in Taiwan is forged partially through the recovery of landscape meanings to local indigenous communities. For example, the peak of the Pei Da Wu Shan has recaptured its status as the sacred mountain for both Paiwan and Rukai peoples in southern Taiwan, while Da Pa Chien Shan is sacred for Atayal people in central Taiwan. Before the emergence of the indigenous cultural renaissance, these two mountains were simply the objects of conquest for both Japanese colonial mountaineers and modern urban mountaineers. Colonial relationship also vividly
expressed in Japanese “conquering” Taiwan’s Central Mountain Ridge when the resource surveys were conducted, and in the erection of a statue of one high-ranking KMT official in the top of Yu—Shan, the highest peak in Taiwan.

This struggle to recover the original cultural meanings of landscapes is another manifestation that resistance to cultural hegemony has occurred through some very common daily routines, at every possible geographical location, and in every potential arena.

This dissertation takes considerable space to deal with the development and retrospections of the many indigenous movements in Taiwan. However, my goal is not to provide a self-righteous, theoretically sound and practically feasible strategy or approach for the indigenous movements. Actually, it is probably beyond the capability and responsibility of any academic to point out a “correct” direction for the development of indigenous movements. However, I do not wish to imply that the academics should remain politically neutral and innocent. Rather, as the proponents of hermeneutics will argue, no researchers can eschew personal involvements, emotionally or academically, in their field studies of the research objects (see the argument of Duncan and Ley 1993). The representation and description of both individual persons and indigenous movements in which they participate are eventually based on the author’s own ideology and reflect the selective absorption of “field data” gathered and the outcomes of participant observation.

Another concern that is worth noting in the concluding chapter is the question regarding whether or not it is appropriate to apply theory and methodology developed in/from the Western World to the study of social phenomena in a society that has
completely different historical, geographical, social, cultural, and political contexts. In his insightful paper, Liao Ping-hui (1995) has already provided a critical examination on this concern, but I would like to pursue these thoughts further.

Despite the fact that many theories were developed in the West (academic colonialism?), what makes post-colonial theories special is that many of important figures in post-colonial literatures are from the Third World. These intellectuals had established their academic reputations in the West and through their internationally renowned celebrity, they have started to build up significant influences and help in struggles against the imposition of stereotypes on "the others" by the gaze of Euro-American "imperial eye" (Chen Kuan-hsing 1996). Liao Ping-hui in fact, not only problematizes the direct, uncritical application of the Western theories to Taiwan’s, or more broadly, East Asian societies. He actually opposes the direct import of post-colonial theories. However, post-colonial theory is hardly a homogenous theory/phenomenon, as no colonialism created the same impacts at different time and upon different cultures and peoples. Thus, colonial legacies always interact with local histories and geographies to produce each individual, unique post-colonial society.

Moreover, to debate the suitability to "qualify" Taiwan’s society as post-colonial, one might mislead and misuse the conceptualization of post-colonialism. As I argued at Section 2.1, post-colonialism studies in both the colonial "mother countries" and mostly, the Third World societies, which have not yet completely de-colonized in that their colonial past still works on the formation of new identities, cultures, and societies, should be a dynamic process rather than a fixed theoretical framework that confines our geographical imagination.
Finally, I will provide some other possible interesting directions for further research in related topics. However, before more detailed research in Li-Shan can be conducted, a long overdue extensive land use survey should be undertaken by the KMT government. This survey should clarify the ownership and leasing rights of the reservation lands. Only after the basic land data are publicly available can a realistic picture of contested autonomous zones be roughly sketched. Geographers and anthropologists who are really concerned about the future development of indigenous autonomous zones (and actually, benefit from studying the topic and the people) in Taiwan should take this social responsibility to push the KMT to enforce this comprehensive survey. They also need to prepare for the confusion which will follow if all voices are heard.

The aftereffects of the founding of Council of Aboriginal Affairs can be observed from the perspective that under what social and political conditions can the State apparatus co-opts radical movements into the establishment and eliminates the progressiveness of these movements. Another possible interaction between the State apparatus and indigenous movements is that the State absorbs the proposals and opinions from indigenous movements to further consolidate its rule over aborigines. However, the Council is too new to make any conclusion from its brief history of interaction with indigenous activists as of fall 1998. What is sure is that the Council has absorbed some indigenous elites into the establishment in the past two years.

Gender issues are basically absent from my analysis in all aboriginal affairs. In the patriarchal Han state and society, indigenous women often suffer "double
marginalization” from the outside world (the State, stereotypes constructed by mass media and education) and inside world (men’s chauvinism embodied in father, husband, and son). In identity politics, a frequently asked question by feminists is “What identity and in whose country?” because traditionally, politics is a men’s domain and the identity question is often treated, incorrectly, as gender blinded. Maternal social organizations did exist among some of Taiwan’s indigenous peoples, but the assimilating process significantly reduces the feasibility in practicing the traditional way of organizing a society. Indigenous women have to fight not only the paternal/military authority of the KMT regime, but also patriarchy deeply embedded in some traditional aboriginal cultures. This may cast a dilemma for some female activists as they try to recover the “authentic traditional culture” that includes the unbearable patriarchal system. Nevertheless, this dilemma could also provide an opportunity to forge a new indigenous female identity, which not only challenges mainstream discourse of national identity (i.e. the Chinese identity), but also defies the designated role of females by patriarchal authority. Furthermore, this dilemma also offers a dynamic view towards the formation of a new (perhaps, the real post-colonial) culture that is capable of changing itself and absorbing new elements in a dynamic world.
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Interview A. Hwang Jung-chuan, Minister of Taiwan Presbyterian Church, interviewed by author, 16 July 1997, tape recording, Fu Hsin Hsian, Taoyuan County.

Interview B. Lin Wen-sheng, head of Hoping Hsian, interviewed by author, 17 July 1997, tape recording, Hoping, Taichung County.

Interview C. Public hearing in Legislature Yuan, attended by author, 16 December 1997, tape recording, Taipei.

Interview D. Wu Tien-yu, president of the PPRA, interviewed by author, 27 December 1997, tape recording, Tung Shih Township, Taichung County.

Interview E. TaiBong SaSaLe, grassroots organizer of indigenous movements, interviewed by author, 2 January 1998, tape recording, Ma Chia Hsian, Pingtung County.

Interview F. A group fruit-growing Han farmers, interviewed by author, 23 January 1998, tape recording, Li-Shan, Taichung County.

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VITA

Yi-fong Chen received his bachelor of science degree in geography from National Taiwan University in 1990. After a two-month travelling in Western Europe after his graduation, he returned to National Taiwan University as a research assistant in the Department of Geography. He had made an extensive journey all over Taiwan before he came to the United States of America to pursue an advanced degree in July, 1991. He received his master of art in geography from the Ohio State University in 1993 and returned to Taiwan again to work for a labor organization. He has been a graduate student at the Department of Geography and Anthropology at Louisiana State University since August 1994. He is currently a candidate for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy which will be conferred at the December 1998 Commencement.

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Major Field: Geography

Title of Dissertation: Indigenous Rights Movements, Land Conflicts, and Cultural Politics in Taiwan---A Case Study of Li-shan

Approved:

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Dean of the Graduate School

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