

The Ethnic Movements, NGOs, and the Impacts on Ethnic Policies in Today's Taiwan

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I. Introduction

1. The Ethnic Diversity of Asia-Pacific

Northeast Asia: Japan, Korea, China, Taiwan

Southeast Asia: ASEAN 10

South Asia: India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Himalayan
States

The Pacific Islands: Austronesian peoples

2. The Ethnic Diversity of Taiwan

An Ethnic History of Taiwan

6000 years (dated) Austronesian “tribal society”

400 years (dated) Southern Chinese “Han immigrant society”

1895-1945 Japanese “colonial society”

1948-1980 Republic of China’s “local society”
under KMT

1980s-today The rise of a Taiwanese “national society”

1990s-today The formation of an ethnically diverse
“Taiwanese national society”
“Ethnic diverse, National unity”

3. The Ethnic Compositions of Taiwan (23 millions) (2011)

Indigenous Peoples (Austronesian peoples, Aborigines)(原住民族)	2%
Holo (Min-nanese) (福佬人, 閩南人)	69%
Hakka (客家人)	13%
Mainlanders (外省人)	13%
New Immigrants (Marriage Immigrants, 外籍配偶 and Foreign Workers外籍勞工)	3%

II. Changing Definition of “Ethnic Minorities” in Taiwan

1. Absolute Number vs. Relative Power Position
2. “Minority Rule” has dominated Taiwan’s domestic politics since 1895 under Japanese colonialism and lasted during Mainlanders-controlled KMT authoritarian rule between 1949 and 1987 under Martial Law.
3. Under “Minority Rule”, Taiwan’s ethnoscape was polarized by the dominated (ruling) Mainlanders and the discriminated (ruled) local Taiwanese (Holo, Hakka and Aborigines). Ethnic diversity was completely ignored and distorted, ethnic relationship was totally politicized. The “ethnic majority” (politically weak) was then discriminated against by the “ethnic minority” (politically powerful).

4. The turning point of the lift of Martial Law in 1987 marked the beginning of “Majority Rule” in ethnic politics and a new phase of democratic transformation in Taiwan.

5. The symbolic transition to the “Majority Rule” also signified the normalization of Taiwan’s ethnoscape and ethnic relations.

6. The redefined “ethnic minorities” of Taiwan have since then centered on:

Aborigines, Hakka, and New Immigrants (foreign spouses and foreign workers).

III. Characterizing Taiwanese Ethnic Minorities

1. Indigenous Peoples (Aborigines, Austonesian Peoples)

(1) Terminology changes

- 1950s-1980s: “Barbarian”(番人), “High Mountain People”(高山族), “Mountain People”(山胞)
- 1994: Legalization of “Indigenous peoples”, a total of 14 Indigenous (ethnic) nations
- Rediscovery of “Pin-Pu Indigenous Peoples identity” (平埔) (plain aborigines who have been “Hanized”漢化) since Ching dynasty in 17th century)

(2) General Situations

Economic: disadvantaged

Social: discriminated

Cultural: disappearing (all aspects)

Identity: lost

Political: protected (affirmative action)

2. Hakka

(1) Terminology

No obvious discriminatory terms referred to Hakka, though some stereotypical images are still applied

(2) General Situations

Cultural: disappearing (language)

Identity: eroding

3. New Immigrants (marriage immigrants from China and Southeast Asia and contract workers from Southeast Asia)

(1) Terminology

Foreign Spouses (外配): about 150,000 in residence

China Mainland Spouses (陸配): about 180,000 in residence

Foreign Workers (外勞): about 400,000 in residence

(2) General Situations

Economic: dependent

Social: experiencing prejudice of different degrees

Cultural: cultural shock

Identity: problems of retaining and adaptation

Political: human rights-related issues

IV. The Indigenous Peoples' Movements and Policy Impacts

1. Initial Phase: "Mountain Youth magazine", May 1, 1983 – calling for mountain peoples' self-awareness for ethnic group solidarity so as to avoid the crisis of "racial demise"

2. Organizational Protest Phase: "Taiwan Indigenous Peoples' Rights Promotion Association", December 29, 1984 –

demystification of "Wu Fong"; correct naming campaign; for self-autonomy and constitutional clause, anti-Orchid Island nuclear waste site, return my traditional lands, anti-Ma Chia Dam; Anti-Asia Cement construction, Free Tang Ying-Sheng drive, anti-human trafficking (teen prostitutes), protect ancestors graveyards, reform the Civic Association Law, abolishing Mongolian-Tibetan Commission.....

3. Policy Impacts

- The official name of “Indigenous People” was finally adopted in April 10, 1994
- The Ministry (Council) of Indigenous Peoples’ Affairs was established in Nov. 11, 1996
- An Equal Treaty was signed in 2000 by the President of ROC (Taiwan) Chen Shiu-Bian with Taiwanese Indigenous Peoples to launch a “new partner relationship” so as to “recognize their natural sovereignty”, “promote self-governance”, “agree to engage in land treaty”, “restore traditional names for villages, mountains and rivers”, “reestablish tribal and ethnic land areas”, “regain traditional knowledge of natural resources uses”, “tribal representation for Legislative Yuan members”
- An Indigenous Peoples clause was amended to constitution in Nov. 15 1999, and a brand new the “The Basic Law of Indigenous Peoples” was passed in Jan. 12, 2005, advocating the basic rights of existence, development, coprosperity, self-governance of Indigenous Peoples

V. Hakka Movements and Policy Impacts

1. Initial Phase: “Hakka Magazine” Oct. 25, 1987 – alarming Hakka’s cultural, language and identity crises, advocating for redefining Hakka’s political role and establishing Hakka TV and radio
2. Organizational Protest Phase: “Return My Mother- tongue Demonstration”, Dec. 28, 1988
 - 3 major appeals: open Hakka TV, revise Broadcast and TV law not to restrict and discriminate local languages, and formulate an open and diverse language policy for all ethnic groups.
 - Taiwan Hakka Association for Public Affairs (HAPA), Dec. 1, 1990, calling for the identity of “New Hakka”

3. Policy Impacts

- TNT (Hakka Radio Station), April 1994
New Hakka Radio Station, Feb. 1997
- Local Culture Learning Programs: 1998
- Hakka Associations on university campuses since 1991
- The Ministry (Council) on Hakka Affairs, June 14, 2001
- Hakka TV, July 2003
- Colleges of Hakka Studies in 3 national universities
National Central University, National Chiao Tung
University, and National United University
- The Hakka Basic Law (Jan. 2010)

VI. NGOs for New Immigrants and Policy Changes

1. The interflow of labor within Asia has been a common scene in Asia since early 1990s. Among the 400,000 foreign migrant workers currently (2011) in Taiwan, 166,261 (41.6%) from Indonesia 85,650 (21.4%) from Vietnam and 78,366 (19.6%) from the Philippine. Also, 207,000 (51.7%) working in manufacturing sector while the remaining 193,000 (48.3%) in “social welfare” sector, i.e., household help/ care and institutional care, the former is mostly undertaken by male workers (70%) and the latter is predominantly occupied by female workers (90%).
2. A total of 450,000 registered cross-national spouses were recorded between Jan. 1987 and May 2011 in Taiwan. Among them, 290,000 spouses’ origins are China, 10,000 from Hong Kong and Macau, the remaining 150,000 are mainly from Southeast Asia. But the numbers of actual residence in Taiwan are rather different. All 150,000 Southeast Asian and 10,000 Hong Kong and Macau spouses do reside in Taiwan, but only 180,000 China Mainland spouses live in Taiwan (the rest of 110,000 are still residing in China).

3. A significant percentage of the cross-national marriages and movement of labor force from Southeast Asia to Taiwan were made through marriage or employment “brokers”. “Human rights” related issues were detected because of the “brokerage systems” (obvious exploitation, unfair charges, possible human trafficking and blind marriages).
4. The compound human rights issues relating foreign workers and spouses living in Taiwan include unfamiliarity of local languages, cultural and social adjustments, economic dependence, mistreatment in workplace, domestic violence, sexual harassment, prejudice and discrimination.
5. Under the pressures of women and human rights NGOs, marriage brokerage (agencies) for profit were banned by the central government in September 2006. However, marriage agencies are still illegally run or turn into a underground practice. The so-called non-profit marriage agencies charge almost the same amount of fees.

6. The complex social-political-economic factors involved in the trans-border migration, the bilateral brokerage system of dispatching migrant workers to Taiwan from Indonesia, Vietnam, the Philippines and Thailand has been tightly institutionalized and remain intact, despite the fact under attack that the bilateral dispatching agencies charge as much as one year salary from the workers for fees in kinds.
7. The foreign workers can join the existing labor union, but they usually are not invited to join by the related local unions. They are, by law, not allowed to establish their own unions. They are permitted to stay for a fixed term of 3-6 years under specific employment contract, and they are not allowed to change employers under the signed contract. No right to form union, no freedom to change employer –the core of labor human rights issues.

Table 1: NGOs for Foreign Workers in Taiwan

	Name	Funded and established timing for foreign workers	Main goals
1	Stella Maris international Service Center	Presbyterian Church in Taiwan (1985)	To provide service and help to foreign crewman.
2	Hope Workers Center	St. Columban Missionaries (1986)	To advocate for foreign workers' welfare, help them to adjust to their life in Taiwan and help them to solve their problems.
3	Taiwan Grassroots Women Workers' Center	Presbyterian Church in Taiwan (1988)	To provide opportunities for factory women and family subcontractors to reform the male-dominated workers' unions, and to develop women workers' unions and workers' movements through the promotion of feminism.
4	Taiwan Association for Victims of Occupational Injuries (TAVOI)	self-financed (1992)	To organize the occupational accident victims and their families to help themselves and also each other.
5	Taiwan International Workers' Association (TIWA)	self-financed (October 1999)	The first local NGO in Taiwan to work for the rights of both foreign spouses and migrant workers. TIWA promotes inter-communication between local and migrant workers and defend for migrants' human rights. TIWA supports migrant workers' empowerment, including helping them to organize their own independent organizations, such as the Taiwan Indonesian Workers' Association (TIMWA) for the Indonesian workers and KaSaPi for Filipino workers.

6	Hsinchu Catholic Diocese, Migrant Concern Desk-- Vietnam Foreign Workers and Spouses Center	St. Columban Missionaries (2000)	To help foreign workers adjust to Taiwan.
7	Chung-Hua Center for Migrants' Concerns Center	Catholic Church	To help foreign workers adjust to Taiwan.
8	Catholic Migrant Workers' Concern Desk	St. Columban Missionaries	To help foreign workers adjust to Taiwan.
9	Presbyterian Church in Taiwan Labor Concern Center	Presbyterian Church in Taiwan	To help foreign workers adjust to Taiwan.
10	Rerum Novarum Center	St. Columban Missionaries (1994)	To demonstrate the God's love and stand up for social justice. To advocate disadvantage people's basic human rights and develop community work, social action and voluntary work.
11	Chinese Muslim Association	Muslim Association in Taiwan	To help all Muslims adjust to their life in Taiwan.
12	Catholic Saint Church	St. Columban Missionaries	
13	ST. Paul'S Church	Catholic Church	
14	Chinese Muslim Association Kaohsiung	Muslim Association in Taiwan	
15	Chinese Development Foundation	self-financed	To provide foreign workers with an emergency shelter when they are in trouble.

Source: Ying-Hsiu Tsai and H. H. Michael Hsiao, 2006, "The NGOs for Foreign Workers and Foreign Spouses in Taiwan: A Portrayal", *Asia-Pacific Forum*, No. 33, pp. 1-31.

Table 2: NGOs for Foreign Spouses in Taiwan

	Institutions	Service starting year	Services provided
1	Taiwan Nanyang Sisters Association	July 1995	To organize reading classes
2	Loving Sisters Association	April 2005	To provide personal counseling
3	The Pearl S. Buck Foundation, Taipei, Taiwan (Rep. of China)	2000	To provide care and assistance
4	Lanshin Women and Children Center	2001	To render help to the victims of domestic violence
5	Lite-On Cultural Foundation	2001	To offer reading and learning classes
6	Palette Association	2001	To provide care to the needed individuals
7	Good Shepherd Sisters Foundation (Kaohsiung Branch)	May 2003	To offer assistance to women and their children
8	Good Shepherd Sisters Foundation (Taipei Branch)	2003	To offer assistance to the domestic violence victims
9	Taiwan Fund for Children and Families (Yilan Branch)	2003	To provide assistance to the children
10	Taiwan Children and Families Fund (Penghu Division Office)	2003	To provide assistance to the children
11	Eden Social Welfare Foundation	2002	To provide direct services
12	Lucky Social Welfare Foundation	2003	To deliver services with government projects

	Institutions	Service starting year	Services provided
13	Hon-Yu Social Welfare and Charity Foundation	2003	Apply for the Ministry of the Interior and local government's projects
14	World Peace League	2003	Apply for government's projects
15	YMCA of Taiwan of Tainan	2003	Apply for local government's projects
16	Financial Group Legal Person Buddhism Kindly Aids The General Hospital Dalin Branch	2004	To provide services to those needed
17	Hsinchu Country Commonweal Charity Association	2004	To offer child care
18	The Judicial Association Taichung county	2004	To offer legal assistance
19	Nantou Living Rebuilt Association	2004	To provide services to the children
20	Catholic Hualein Diocese	2004	To offer legal and social services
21	The Methodist Church of Taiwan	2004	To offer personal assistance

	Institutions	Service starting year	Services provided
22	CAEIP Early Intervention Association for Children with Disabilities	2004	To offer assistance to the disabled children
23	Taiwan Lifeline International for (Chiayi County Branch)	2004	To offer personal assistance
24	Likes doubling the Community Service Association	2005	To provide personal assistance
25	Chinese Social Welfare Foundation	2005	To provide personal help
26	World Peace League	2005	To offer personal assistance
27	Taiwan Lifeline International for Nantou County	2005	To grant personal help
28	Joy Kind compassion Foundation	2005	To offer personal assistance
29	Child Welfare League Foundation, R.O.C. for Miaoli County Branch	May 2005	To provide personal assistance
30	Wind Dragon Education Foundation	May 2005	
31	Chung-Hua Voluntary Association	2005	To provide personal help

	Institutions	Service starting year	Services provided
32	St. Teresa Opportunity Center	2005	
33	Taiwan Fund for Children and Families (Chiayi Branch Office)		
34	Eden Social Welfare Foundation (Chiayi Branch)		
35	Christianity The Power Person To Develop Association		
36	Taiwan Fund for Children and Families (Hualien Branch Office)		
37	Taiwan Fund for Children and Families (Tainan Branch Office)		
38	Taiwan Fund for Children and Families (Nantou Branch Office)		
39	Chinese Association For Relief and Ensuing Services	1950	To offer assistance to foreign spouses only from China
40	Taiwan International Workers' Association (TIWA)	1999	To provide personal assistance
41	Taiwan Grassroots Women Workers' Center	2002	To provide personal help

Source: Tsai and Hsiao, 2006, op. cit.

8. Taiwanese NGOs for migrant workers are operating under the existing government regulations to provide reactive or symptom-oriented services rather than proactive or reform-oriented advocacy. Little involvement of migrant workers in related NGO organizing and activities.

9. The Taiwanese NGOs for marriage immigrants are mostly working under the government financial support in providing services approved by government policies. A few NGOs are in fact self-organized by themselves. However, little cooperation among different NGOs in joining efforts to push policy changes.

VII. Conclusion

1. Ethnic diversity in Taiwan was historically created and accumulated to be a social fact, but it was then politically distorted, disguised and even denied after 1949.
2. Under the “minority rule” dictated by the KMT authoritarian rule, Taiwan’s ethnoscape was unfortunately polarized. As a result, the “ethnic majority” (politically weak) was the discriminated against by the “ethnic minority” (politically powerful).
3. The democratic transformation after 1987 has finally normalized Taiwan’s ethnoscape and ethnic relations.

4. The redefined “ethnic minorities” of Taiwan have since then centered on: Austronesian aborigines, Hakka and new immigrants (foreign spouses and foreign workers). The democratization also provided the political milieu for the state and society together to face the real issues concerning ethnic minorities in Taiwan.
5. Taiwan experience, as judged by the ethnic movements of aborigines and Hakka, has proven that it is the self-mobilized minorities themselves that could have eventually pressured the democratizing state to take necessary policy changes to accommodate the demands of the two major ethnic minorities.
6. Taiwan’s success stories of the ethnic movements for the aborigines and Hakka, however, could not apply to the third minority, i.e., new immigrants, as there was no self-initiated and mobilized movements of the foreign worker and spouses.

7. Instead, it is the NGOs for migrant workers and marriage immigrants that were established by Taiwanese civil society to provide welfare-oriented assistance to the two subgroups of the new immigrants under the government's existing policies and regulations. Through the advices from the related NGOs, the state has then taken slow and hesitant policy modifications to improve the human rights and social welfare conditions for the new immigrants.

8. Though the exact applicability of Taiwan experience to the rest of Asia-Pacific societies is still to be determined, there is no doubt that ethnicity related social movements and NGOs in civil society should and could have played irreplaceable roles in changing the state policies on ethnic minorities.