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Regional Minorities and Development in Asia

Edited by Huhua Cao and Elizabeth Morrell

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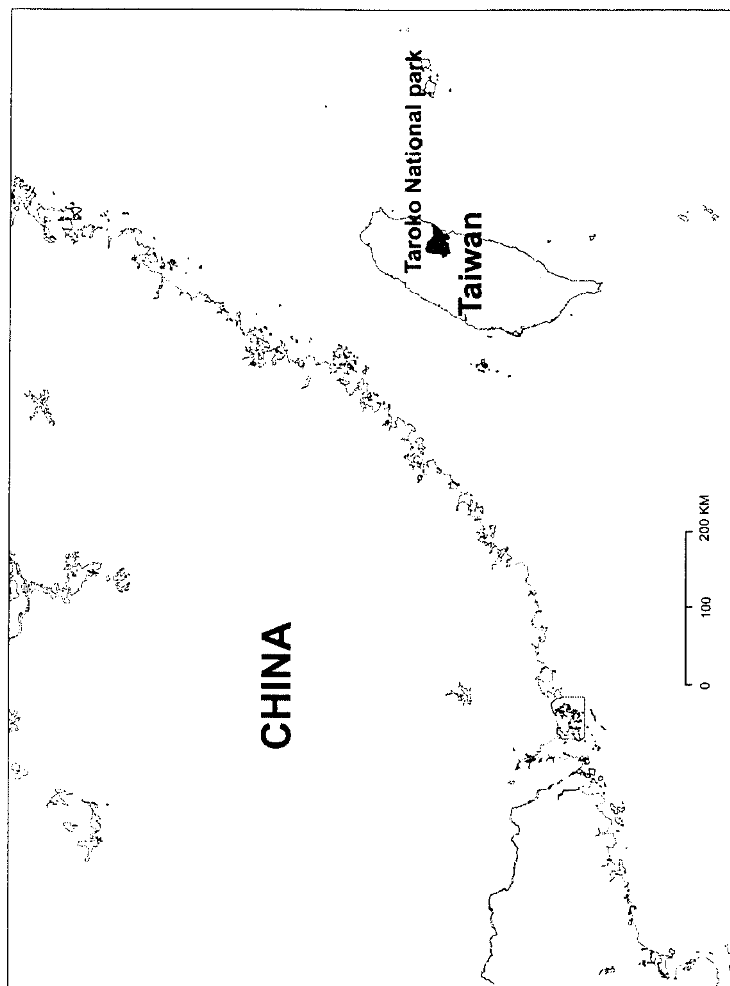

Map of Taiwan (Sources: Online Map Creation [http://www.aquarius.geomar.de/], with modification)

3 The hunter's spirit

Autonomy and development in indigenous Taiwan

Scott Simon[1]

In the past two decades, indigenous peoples around the world have made important progress in advancing social and political rights. The Austronesians of Taiwan, over 467,000 people in 14 officially recognized tribes,[2] have participated in this global process of indigenous decolonization. In the domestic legal framework of the Republic of China (Taiwan), the most important change to date has been the passage of the Basic Law on Indigenous Peoples (*yuanzhuminzu jibenfa*, 原住民族基本法) on 21 January 2005. As new legislation based on the Basic Law is drafted and implemented, Taiwanese indigenous peoples hope to regain many aspects of autonomy, including the right to organize their economies. In fact, Section 21 explicitly requires that any land development or use of resources on indigenous land has to be done with the permission and participation of the indigenous peoples concerned. In this new political climate, it is thus important to explore what development has meant to Taiwanese indigenous peoples and what autonomy will entail for development. This chapter, based on anthropological field research with the Taroko and related Seediq communities, is the beginning of such research.[3]

In many ways, the Seediq and Taroko are warrior peoples like the Mohawks of North America, who are known for resistance against any encroachment of their sovereignty. During the Japanese era, they struggled against the Japanese longer than other indigenous communities, culminating in the Wushe Incident of 1930 (see below). To a certain extent, they thus embody the warrior spirit of resistance against colonialism; and in fact have been used in Chinese Nationalist education as a symbol of anti-colonial resistance against Japan. Since their territory includes the world-class tourist attraction of the Taroko Gorge, however, they have also been the object of development plans intent on transforming them into service providers for the tourism industry. As in many developing countries (Stronza 2001: 271), the Taiwanese state promotes tourism partly as a strategy to encourage national unity. In the Taiwanese case, indigenous tourism was especially attractive to an independence-minded state from 2000 to 2008 because it contributed to the construction of a non-Chinese national identity.

The Taroko warrior past does not necessarily mean that they will resist tourism-based development interventions in their communities. Some individuals, in fact, see eco-tourism and other forms of entrepreneur-based development as the best way to assert cultural and economic autonomy in contemporary Taiwan

– as long as such initiatives remain in the control of the local community. In two former mountain villages, in fact, some of them are even using it as a way of reclaiming land rights within the park boundaries. This chapter, however, focuses on the Taroko people who live in Bsngan Village[4] near the entrance of the 'Taroko National Park'.

Although the Taroko National Park attracts 1,860,000 tourists annually and is the location of two luxury resorts, the neighbouring Taroko villages have not yet seen the arrival of tourists in their midst, at least not in important numbers. As Urry observed, the presence of tourists makes the ambience of tourism and attracts yet more tourists (1995: 138). The village of Bsngan has some small hotels owned by Han Taiwanese people. These are concentrated near the park entrance and attract some guests. Upon entry into the village, however, one enters into narrow lanes of rather dilapidated housing. The few pubs are small karaoke-establishments with a local clientele; but quite often the local people gather in front of their houses in the evening to barbecue meat and drink beer. Dogs, often hunting dogs returning home separately from their masters, roam the streets. To middle-class Taiwanese tourists, who often harbour racist sentiments about indigenous people (and sometimes still call them *hoan-a*, or 'savages' in the Taiwanese language), the village is scarcely an enticing location. To the locals, however, it is home, a cherished culture, and a place to be protected. Many, in fact, have told me that they resent the racism they have experienced in Taiwanese cities and value their villages as a place of refuge in a wider, often hostile, society.

This chapter is an attempt to understand the perspectives of the Taroko people on development and autonomy. How have they lost their mountain lands and become marginalized indigenous peoples at the foot of the Taroko Gorge? How have these life-worlds, livelihoods and practices been transformed by subsequent domination by Japanese and Chinese states? What does entrepreneurship mean to Taroko people and their communities? What do they think of plans to develop local tourism? Who accepts those plans and for what reasons? What resistance is there to tourism in the villages? In a context of both externally imposed development and demands for indigenous autonomy, do Taroko life-worlds offer alternatives to development?

Indigenous alternatives to development

Throughout the world, indigenous peoples have been marginalized by 'development' through the expansion of nation-states and the introduction of unfamiliar capitalist labour relationships into their territories (e.g. Blaser, Feit and McRae 2004; Bodley 1999; Gedicks 2001; Maybury-Lewis 1997). Tourism development in particular has a long history of marginalizing indigenous peoples, although recently some groups are embracing eco-tourism owned and managed by themselves (McLaren 1999). In the Naxi communities of Yunnan, China, for example, the tourists and entrepreneurs are largely Han Chinese, a situation that causes tensions between the minority Naxi and the dominant Han (McKhann 2001). Problems arise even where tourism is developed by local people. In the Hmong communities of Thailand, tourism as part of a larger process of monetarization of the economy has contributed to economic inequality in a traditionally egalitarian society (Michaud 1997). The problem in the latter case is perhaps that tourism activities are organized by individual *people* rather than by *peoples*, or culturally based communities.

Considering the unequal relations that often exist between would-be tourism developers and indigenous communities, it is important to look at tourism in a post-development perspective. Post-development critiques define 'development' as a discourse of power that justifies development interventions – by international aid agencies, state institutions, and market actors – in communities that were once autonomous in relationship to these agents (Escobar 1995; Ferguson 1990). In order to better understand these processes, as well as alternatives to them, Arturo Escobar challenges anthropologists to produce institutional ethnographies that highlight the socio-cultural production of 'development' by specific institutions in different contexts (Escobar 1995: 107). That is the goal of this chapter.

The post-development approach illustrates that development initiatives are far from neutral. Instead, they transform local cultures by bringing them into conformity with 'modern' values based on individuality, rationality and economy. Affected communities, of which the Zapatistas of Chiapas are one of the most well-known examples, have responded to development initiatives with social movements emphasizing values other than development and economic growth (Nash 2001). Other examples would be the Cree of Quebec, who protested when hydroelectric dam construction threatened their hunting livelihoods; and the affordable housing initiatives in major cities around the world. Although all of these people want better livelihoods, they are often willing to sacrifice some economic growth if necessary to protect their own identities and local autonomy. The possibility of alternatives to development has thus become an important subject of anthropological research (Escobar 1997). Even within these communities, however, different groups have divergent ideas about the desirability of specific forms of development. For the Taroko, however, it is of utmost importance to understand how the former masters of the mountains became indigenous people at the doorstep of a national park controlled by outsiders. This requires a new understanding of local history from an indigenous perspective.

A brief history of the Taroko

Since the seventeenth century, when the Dutch and the Spanish established colonies on coastal areas of the island, increasingly large parts of Taiwan have been occupied by the Dutch, the Spanish, the Chinese rebel Koxinga, the Manchurian Qing Dynasty, Imperial Japan, and the Republic of China. Koxinga and the subsequent Qing Dynasty focused their settlement and administrative efforts on the west coast, where innumerable indigenous people were killed in violent conflict with the Han and most of the surviving plains tribes intermarried with Han Chinese settlers (Brown 2004, Hsieh 2006, Shepherd 1993).[5]

The central mountainous and eastern coastal areas, the regions now populated

most densely by Austronesian peoples, were not even claimed as part of Qing administered territory until 1875. In those regions, the Qing state failed to administer their territories, submit them to the social control of the state, or systematically extract their natural resources for a world market. The Taroko and other mountain peoples were thus first incorporated into the world system, in the sense described globally by Wolf (1982), only after Japan took over administration of Taiwan in 1895. The Qing excluded the mountain peoples by labelling them as 'raw barbarians' (*shengfan*, 生番) on maps and forbidding Han Chinese from contact with them. Subsequent colonial regimes brought them into the nation-state, its discourse, and regimes of governance in new ways. Contemporary mountain tourism is in many ways merely an extension of this historical process.

In order to take control of the island's forests, as well as their mineral and other natural resources, the Japanese contained indigenous communities into 'mountain reservations', and opened up their traditional lands to natural resource extraction. They launched a number of violent expeditions into indigenous territory to quell resistance, including the 1914 'Taroko Incident' in what is now the Taroko National Park. In order to assimilate indigenous people, moreover, the Japanese encouraged them to take Japanese names and made Japanese compulsory in elementary school education. With the exception of three mountainous communities, including Skadang and Hohos in what eventually became the Taroko National Park, the Taroko were forced to move into the plains and adopt settled agriculture as a lifestyle.

The Seediq constituted the last indigenous community to be fully pacified by the Japanese. By the 1920s, Japanese administrators, police officers, military officials, business people and teachers were working all over the island, implementing new systems of social control and expropriating aboriginal natural resources such as camphor. It was especially the extraction of forest resources and use of slave labour to do so that brought the Japanese into direct conflict with Seediq and Taroko *gaya*, a spiritually sanctified moral code that included institutions of both private and collective property rights (Masaw 1998: 183–7). In the Wushe Incident of 27 October 1930, a group of over 300 Seediq warriors attacked Japanese spectators at a sports event in Wushe (Nantou County) and killed 134 people. It took Japanese forces two months, and the deaths of 644 aboriginal people, to completely quell the uprisings that followed (see Walis 2002). The survivors were moved for surveillance purposes onto a tightly controlled village built on a river island, where many of them subsequently died of tropical diseases or suicide. The members of that community remember the rigid military control as being 'like a concentration camp'.

After its defeat in the Second World War, Japan renounced sovereignty over its colonies, including Taiwan and Korea, in the 1951 Treaty of San Francisco. In 1945, without consulting the island's population, General MacArthur had in fact already transferred Taiwan to the Republic of China (ROC) to be administered by General Chiang Kai-shek and the Chinese Nationalist Party (Kuomintang, KMT). After the takeover of China by the Communist Party in 1949, the KMT retreated to Taiwan. For the island's indigenous nations and *métis*, 'native Taiwanese' of mixed Chinese and aboriginal descent, Taiwan's transfer to Chiang Kai-shek's

Republic of China was but a transfer to another colonial regime (Chiu 1999). From the perspective of the Chinese who arrived in Taiwan with Chiang Kai-shek, however, they were merely recovering territory that had been lost in 1895 and one that might be useful in regaining the Chinese mainland.

Like their Japanese predecessors, the Republic of China state implemented policies of assimilating indigenous people and expropriating their lands. Indigenous people were required to take Chinese names, and learn Chinese in school. The new Chinese state also relocated entire indigenous communities in order to make room for 'national parks', reservoirs and factories; or simply to facilitate administration and social control. The government nationalized the few remaining traditional territories, hunting grounds and ritual sites, forbidding the activities of hunting, fishing and slash-and-burn agriculture. Most lands with development potential were quickly turned over to either the government or Chinese capitalists (Simon 2005).[6]

For the Taroko, the most important land loss came with the establishment of the 'Taroko National Park' on their territory. The two villages of the Skadang and Hohos, whom the Japanese had permitted to stay in their mountains, were forced in 1980 to relocate into Minle District of the village of Bsngan to make way for the national park. With limited government subsidies, they constructed small homes in flood-prone land near the river. Although some individual landholders were compensated for their lands, they lost the right to hunt as well as the right to cultivate crops and construct buildings even on land that remained registered in their names. Most of them still hold title to land within the park, but their economic activities on their own land are restricted by park regulations. Taroko National Park opened in 1986.

The effects of land loss on all indigenous communities in Taiwan were severe, causing aboriginal men and women to stream into cities in search of work in manufacturing and construction during the period of rapid industrialization of the 1970s and 1980s. With the restructuring of the Taiwanese economy in the 1990s, which included the relocation of labour-intensive manufacturing to the People's Republic of China and the importation of foreign labour, however, aboriginal unemployment rose. No longer required to compete for workers in a labour shortage situation, companies were able to keep wages to the legal minimum rather than competing for workers with high wages and bonuses. When this research began in 2004, aboriginal people had an unemployment rate of 5.76 per cent, compared to a general unemployment rate of 4.41 per cent (Executive Yuan Indigenous Peoples Council 2004: 76).

Official unemployment statistics, of course, only reflect individuals looking for work through state-sponsored channels. Some indigenous activists estimate the percentage of aboriginal people without employment to be higher than 25 per cent. In this situation, aboriginal people have started moving back into their home villages, and have begun looking for new ways to sustain themselves economically in their own communities. They are doing so within a new political context. Whereas KMT governments historically pursued a largely assimilationist strategy of encouraging employment and development in indigenous communities, the

Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) has promised autonomous self-government as an alternative (Simon 2007). Although it is unclear as of the writing of this paper if these policies will actually become practice, they have inspired certain currents of the indigenous social movement and have made new social possibilities seem plausible. A movement towards identity politics and local autonomy has created new tribal forces and stimulated critiques of development.

Tribal identity and autonomy

Following Japanese colonial precedents, both the Seediq and Taroko peoples were classified as segments of the Atayal tribe under the rule of both Japan and the Republic of China, even though Japanese anthropologists had noticed important linguistic and cultural differences between the Atayal and the Eastern Sediq of what are now Nantou and Hualien (Taiwan Office of the Governor-General Provisional Committee 1996: 5). The Eastern Sediq, currently divided into the Taroko of Hualien and the Sejiq/Seediq/Sediq of Nantou, consists of speakers of three dialects: Truku, Tkedaya and Teuda. The spelling of the preferred tribal name in Nantou differs by dialect, respectively Sejiq, Seediq or Sediq; the literal meaning of the word being 'human being'.[7] The author uses the spelling Seediq because his research was done in a Tkedaya community.

Debates about tribal classifications began after the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) took the presidency in 2000, as the new ruling party placed strong emphasis on ethnic mobilization and the right to self-determination. Formerly classified into nine tribes, the state had already recognized five new tribes by 2008, for a total of 14 tribes. The Taroko of Hualien, who wanted legal recognition for at least the previous 40 years, were finally recognized on 14 January 2004 by the Executive Yuan Indigenous Peoples Council as an independent tribe. The newly formed Taroko tribe (太魯閣族), with a population of over 20,000 people, henceforth positioned itself to become Taiwan's first self-governing indigenous nation. The name of the tribe, especially in English translation, became problematic. The Executive Yuan Indigenous Peoples Council translated their name into English as the 'Truku tribe', and in fact 92.5 per cent of the members of that tribe in Hualien were speakers of that dialect (Hara 2003: 215).

In the summer of 2006, the Taroko Nation Autonomous Region Promotion Team voted to use the 'Taroko Nation' in all English language documents. They chose 'Nation' rather than 'tribe' because they wished to hold President Chen Shui-bian to his 2000 electoral promise that relations with Taiwanese indigenous peoples would in the future be 'quasi-nation-to-nation' relations. It was also felt that the term Taroko, based on Japanese precedents and the name of the world-famous 'Taroko National Park', would be perceived as more inclusive and welcoming of the Tkedaya and Teuda. They initially hoped that their eventual autonomous region would include the speakers of all three dialects in both Hualien and Nantou. The Sediq/Seediq/Sejiq of Ren'ai Township in Nantou County, however, refused the new ethnonym. They argued that the rapid legal change was done for political expediency and that the name Saideke (賽德克族) would be more appropriate.

They launched their own movement for a rectification of the name (Hara 2004), disassociated themselves from the advocates of Taroko autonomy, and were legally recognized as a tribe on 23 April 2008. Those near Taroko National Park, however, face more immediate challenges to their material livelihoods as the park attempts to incorporate them into their development strategies.

Entrepreneurial plans for the Taroko

Without a doubt, Taroko Gorge has the potential to become a world-class tourist attraction. These plans are not new. Seeing the beauty of the location, the Japanese had set up a preparatory National Park office in the 1930s, started bringing in tourists from Japan by boat, and even had plans to transform the Taroko people into entrepreneurs in the tourism business (Taiwan Office of the Governor-General Police Affairs 1999). The subsequent rulers of the Republic of China merely built upon these precedents.

Nearly a century later, a number of organizations are currently involved in promoting ethnic-themed tourism in the Taroko Gorge and nearby indigenous villages. Meetings, conferences and workshops on tourism are held several times a year by the Hsiulin Township Office, the Hualien County government, Taroko National Park, and numerous NGOs, sometimes with funding from the Executive Yuan Indigenous Peoples Council. These meetings provide information to potential aboriginal and non-aboriginal entrepreneurs on such topics ranging from management of bed-and-breakfast accommodation to the importance of intellectual property rights for aboriginal craftspeople. The training sessions often champion other indigenous villages as examples of successful development, usually avoiding questions of negative effects of tourism, whether the main beneficiaries are indigenous or not, or if village economies could be run by means other than tourism development.

I was able to participate in several of these meetings in 2005 and 2006, and, at the request of an aboriginal-managed NGO specializing in craft training, even held a workshop on Internet marketing in Canadian First Nations communities. The local Presbyterian Church also runs courses on tribal and community product development (部落/社區產業發展), but more emphasis is placed on organic farming. They also educate through small training groups and sharing of village experiences with other indigenous communities. Aboriginal individuals are much more active in the management of these events than in the others, which usually consist of non-aboriginal people lecturing to aboriginal people about how to 'develop'.

In the summer of 2005, the Taroko National Park hired a consultant from Taipei to conduct a study of tourism potential in Bsngan, the village at the entrance to Taroko Gorge. In a public hearing on 27 July, he presented his plan to interested community members at the National Park headquarters. Of the 13 individuals present, including the present researcher and an assistant as well as the consultant and his assistant, only three were indigenous. All three of them were men. One of them was the village head, and the other two have started NGOs with the goal of promoting tourism in their villages. The others present were the principal of the

local primary school, a low-level representative from the township office, and four members of the park staff.

In his professionally designed PowerPoint presentation, the consultant observed that the Taroko Gorge already attracts 1,860,000 tourists annually, the majority being weekend visitors from Taipei. Of these, only about 30,000 actually spend the night in Bsngan village. Even then, most of them come during the Lunar New Year Festival and stay in hotels owned by Han Taiwanese entrepreneurs (see below). Using the then-fashionable SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis, he concluded that the village could potentially become a tourism site if it were to make indigenous culture into an attraction and re-orient both public and private space to that end. Among other concrete measures to achieve that goal, he suggested that the people of Minle, who were forced to move to the village in 1979 from two mountain hamlets in what is now the national park, provide bed-and-breakfast accommodation to tourists. None of them were present at the meeting.

The logic behind the suggestion was that Minle is closest to the entrance to the park. Since they walk up and down the mountain frequently, moreover, they would make suitable guides for eco-tourists. Some members of that community, in fact, have lobbied for the construction of a road up the mountain. Since their former economic activities of hunting and mushroom growing are now forbidden by park regulations, some of them hope to run limited eco-tourism trips for small numbers of non-aborigines to learn about Taroko culture and subsistence

Plate 3.1 Taroko people purchase groceries from a Han Taiwanese entrepreneur (Scott Simon)

activities. Far more wish to construct a road in order to facilitate the transport of their bamboo sprouts and crops down the mountain, which is currently done by an expensive cable car operation. These demands have consistently been refused by the park administration on the grounds that it is ecologically unfeasible, although the park itself has blasted tunnels through the mountains, built roads and allowed Han Taiwanese-owned corporations to construct luxury hotels in the same area. This suggestion to convert their homes in the current village into bed-and-breakfast lodgings can thus be seen as an alternative to what they have themselves proposed in other contexts. Their failure to attend the meeting, in spite of the fact that their development association usually sends a representative to such events, is noteworthy.

This meeting on ethnic village tourism followed the promulgation of the 2005 National Land Rehabilitation Regulations (*Guotu fuyu tiaolie*, 國土復育條列), which prohibited all development but eco-tourism in areas above a certain sea level. It also prohibited road construction, with the exception of indigenous villages of 30 families or more. Since Taroko settlements were traditionally scattered over large areas and kept small even in the times when they roamed the mountains by foot, it is unlikely that they could set up a village of this size *without* construction of a road to get there.

At the conclusion of the meeting, I met one of the members of that community, who works as a park ranger, and asked what he thought of this meeting. He dismissed it entirely, saying it was 'just another fraud'. When I told him about the suggestion to convert his neighbourhood into a district for tourist lodging, he said it was ridiculous. 'The houses there are so small there is hardly room for the people who live there,' he said, 'Where will they put the tourists?' Repeating the common trope that Taroko men compete to prove their warrior masculinity, he said that the Taroko men attend only to show that they are strong men with leadership ability, but that little change ever results from such meetings.

Since the plan came from the National Park administration, and came with no offers of funding to actually finance such suggestions as transforming small homes into bed-and-breakfast lodgings, one needs to ask what purpose these almost ritualistic encounters serve in the village. The logic of the National Park administration is relatively easy to understand. They have already been the target of angry protests by indigenous groups demanding co-management of park territory; and they were criticized when they permitted a Han Taiwanese corporation to open up a new hotel on park lands. They thus need to reach out to the local community and show that they are concerned with development in the villages within the park in order to justify their own presence on the territory. Such meetings are useful in maintaining good relationships between the park and the village.

These meetings, however, provide little evidence that the Taroko are interested in large-scale tourism as planned by government authorities, especially as only a few members of the local elite attend the meetings. If anything, they hope to re-appropriate those resources for their own purposes. For example, one of the three Taroko participants later told me that he hopes he can get a grant from the government for tourism development. He said that he would like to redesign his

neighbourhood as a 'culture district' with a public space where local people could cook food for groups of tourists, adding that the only people with the time for such work would be older women and he is not sure that they would be willing to do so. When I asked him if there is a market of tourists interested in such activities, he said that it doesn't really matter. If they got the grant and built a public courtyard for tourists, he said, local people could still use it themselves and would benefit from an improved village environment. In fact, two years later he had managed to construct a small tea house on his own property with government funds; although there was no evidence of tourism to be seen in that neighbourhood. In short, state attempts to promote ethnic tourism in the village meet with a combination of elite capture and general apathy.

This appropriation of development, which above all demonstrates the ability of local elite to understand and benefit from government resources, does not mean that the Taroko are not interested in entrepreneurship. Bsngan village, in fact, already has a large number of small businesses. Although most of them run merely at subsistence levels, a minority of aboriginal entrepreneurs have learned how to accumulate capital and reinvest. This is difficult, however, in Taroko villages with a cultural logic of sharing. There is strong pressure to share the benefits of business with kin, and those who accumulate wealth are criticized by other villages as selfish. These businesses must be studied in order to understand Taroko economic logic.

Plate 3.2 A Taroko church choir sings for tourists at Taroko National Park (Scott Simon)

A census of village businesses

In addition to field research and participation in development-related meetings, we conducted a village census of business enterprises. In this census, we found that the village is home to 82 businesses, 55 of which are owned by aboriginal individuals, 21 by Hoklo Taiwanese, five by Mainlanders, and one by a Hakka woman who married into the community.[8] Since Hoklo Taiwanese comprise only 8 per cent of the entire village population, they are overrepresented in the population of entrepreneurs, showing a strong entrepreneurial streak in that ethnic group that is consistent with studies from the rest of the island (Shieh 1992; Simon 2003). Aboriginal individuals own 67 per cent of all businesses in the village. Although this is less than their 78 per cent in the village population, which includes a settlement of retired Mainlanders within its administrative boundaries, it demonstrates that aboriginal individuals can and do run businesses. What remains to be explored is what these businesses mean for Taroko people.

Almost all of the aboriginal businesses are micro-enterprises run by women out of their homes, mostly selling soft drinks, sundry goods and copious amounts of alcohol to neighbours. There are also a number of barber shops, karaoke stands, and three so-called 'Internet cafés' that are actually penny arcades set up in tin shacks for children and teenagers. Most of these stores open and close irregularly; simply closing up if the owner has to work in the fields or has other social obligations. Since most of these can only gross NT$500–1,000 (US$15–30) a day, they are best thought of as self-employment rather than as profit-oriented entrepreneurship. The general stores are important centres of community activity as both men and women congregate there, consume various alcoholic drinks, and chat.

Few of these businesses are rational enterprises with increased profit as the only goal. The general stores and karaoke stands are especially difficult, as the customers often insist on buying on credit and pay back slowly if at all. When one woman passed away, several general store owners complained that she left with large debts and that they are embarrassed to ask her surviving husband to settle them. The owners of such businesses often say that the main motivation is to earn spare money and to pass time by socializing with other villagers. Since they work at home, they can continue to take care of the children and the elderly while their husbands work in more profitable jobs, such as construction, outside the village. These women often contrast their business style with the motivations of Hoklo Taiwanese entrepreneurs, saying that the Hoklo only think about earning ever-increasing profits.

The most interesting difference between Hoklo Taiwanese and Taroko entrepreneurs, however, is their differential activity in the tourism industry. Of the 82 businesses in the village, 21 are aimed at the tourist market, some of them doing business in more than one category. These include nine hotels and motels (some of which are now designated as bed-and-breakfast establishments), eight craft and souvenir shops, seven restaurant or food shops (including one Hoklo Taiwanese-owned breakfast shop that gets a lot of tourism business, but excluding the small noodle stands that get only aboriginal clientele), the 7–11 store (which

attracts many tourists), and the gas station. Of these 21 tourism-oriented businesses, all of which require more capital investment than the micro-enterprises described above, 17 are owned by Hoklo Taiwanese entrepreneurs.

Only four of the remaining tourism-oriented businesses are owned by aboriginal entrepreneurs; and all of these are exceptional. One of them is a combination craft shop and bed-and-breakfast place. The owner is a woman with a Taiwanese father and aboriginal mother. She changed her legal identity to Taroko only after legislation was passed to permit aboriginal identity based on the mother's ethnicity; and said that she did so in order that she could legally purchase land in the village. She remains close to the other Taiwanese entrepreneurs in her neighbourhood, and is identified by other villagers as Hoklo Taiwanese. Another aboriginal enterprise was a roadside souvenir stand set up occasionally by the pastor of the True Jesus Church and his wife.[9] Finally, two aboriginal brothers are involved part-time in the tourism industry. One works at Asia Cement, but has a display of tribal facial tattoo photos in his home and sometimes accepts tour groups on rare occasions when he is not working at the cement company. He does so in order to sell postcards and other photos of tattooed elders. His elder brother runs a bed-and-breakfast place during the Lunar New Year and summer vacation. He is one of the three men who attended the meeting at the national park. Of these four cases, only two can really be described as aboriginal entrepreneurship and both are run by brothers in the same family. There is little interest in tourism in the community at large. Even for these examples, tourism is a part-time interest rather than a full-time profession. Unlike some of the Hoklo-run enterprises, none of them hire non-family labour.

In terms of space, all of the commercial space zoned for tourism is along the main highway from Hualien City to Taroko National Park. Tourism is concentrated outside the main gate to the park. Some of the Hoklo Taiwanese-owned businesses on that land have been there since the 1940s, when Hoklo prospectors came into the region panning for gold in the Liwu River. At that time, the Taroko thought the land they claimed by the river was marginal, flood-prone, and of little value. They thus permitted some Hoklo Taiwanese to move into their territory. In this area, the township office has designated land for commercial space and rented land to non-aboriginal entrepreneurs. This is the way that most Hoklo Taiwanese entrepreneurs get space in reserve land, which otherwise cannot be legally rented or sold to non-aboriginal individuals.[10]

At only NT$2,000 (US$60) a year, the rent for land in the area is priced within the reach of both aboriginal and non-aboriginal individuals. Aboriginal people do rent storefronts and run businesses in that area, although not a single one of them caters to the tourism market. Some run betel nut stands and karaoke places that are open until late at night and have an almost exclusively aboriginal clientele. In 2005, there was also a photo shop that was rarely open and got most of its business from local people who need photos for official purposes such as ID cards. The woman owner closed down the shop in 2006 when she gave birth to twins, but then installed a karaoke machine and started selling alcohol a year later to a local aboriginal clientele. The presence of these stores suggests some local aboriginal people are interested in business, but are not attracted to the tourism industry. This dynamic is best understood through conversations in the village, as Gudeman and Rivera did while studying development with rural people in Columbia (Gudeman and Rivera 1990).

Voices from the villages

Time spent in the villages talking to people and listening to their concerns reveals that there are concerns other than development. Quite commonly, people told me that the Taroko have little interest in the market economy, saying that they are content if they can grow enough to eat and earn enough wages to pay for other expenses.[11] To illustrate this point, one Taroko woman, who runs a bed-and-breakfast in another community, declared that 80 per cent of aboriginal individuals are 'lazy' and not interested in more than subsistence. Nonetheless, she added 20 per cent are interested in 'improving their lives'; and their numbers are increasing. The point of the numbers, of course, was not statistical accuracy, but rather to make her point that few aboriginal people are interested in capital accumulation. Her lifestyle, which includes sending one daughter to graduate school in Calgary, shows that she has already accepted capitalist logic. She is also different from most of the villagers since she spent most of her adult life married to a Hoklo Taiwanese man in Taipei, and returned to the village in middle age to open a business using her divorce settlement. Nonetheless, her observations are repeated by others in the village with very different attitudes.

Whereas Hoklo Taiwanese spend a lot of time talking about money, such as how stocks have performed recently, the Taroko seem to have other concerns. Taroko men, in particular, spend a lot of time talking about hunting; they argue that their main problem is loss of land rather than lack of opportunity to go into business. Boasting about how the Taroko can live off the land without cash, one hunter even told me, 'If China attacked, the indigenous peoples would survive. All of the flatlanders would starve, but we would still be able to live from the mountain.' This story, of course, assumes that a war would destroy Taiwan's market economy. It is also more of an assertion of ethnic identity than of fact. This dialectical form of identity, constructed in comparison with the colonizers and a romanticized version of their own lives, is common in other Austronesian areas as well (Keesing 1989).

In my time in the village, I constantly ran into men who claimed that they could live without wage labour; or at least with very little of it. One afternoon, as I was interviewing a general store owner, a shirtless man in his thirties came in with a can of Taiwan Beer in his hand. When I asked what he does for a living, he simply said, 'Look how dark my skin is.' After I guessed that he might work in construction, he said that he fishes. He said that he neither works on a fishing boat nor sells fish to Taiwanese middlemen, but simply fishes so that his family can eat. He said that he spends most of his days fishing, but also takes temporary day jobs when he needs money. The general store owner explained that he would have little financial worries, since he can earn NT$1,500 (US$45) for a day of temporary labour. Another time, I asked a young man in his mid-twenties what he does for a living. His drinking companions all laughed. One man said, 'He doesn't know how to

Plate 3.3 Taroko men protest for hunting rights at Taroko National Park (Scott Simon)

work. The only thing he knows how to do is hunt.'

These conversations fit into a general pattern in which men earn social prestige by demonstrating personal ability through hunting and the sharing of meat. Hunters are even said to have a certain 'spirit', known as *phaling* in Taroko language, which involves innate ability, knowledge of the environment, and an ability to provide for others. This hunter's spirit, said one man, comes from observing the moral order of *gaya*. This moral ideal contrasts strongly with the world of business, which many people associate with the selfish accumulation of cash for one's own affairs. It is likely that tourism is seen as an especially unsavoury business. One man told me that many people think it is shameful for Taroko people to serve flatlanders, which would be the main job entailed in any tourism business.

This emphasis on hunting as identity, rather than on participation in capitalist development of any kind, can be seen as an everyday form of resistance (Scott 1985). The strongest voice of resistance I heard, however, came from one social activist and minister who, like Nash (1989) explicitly called tourism development a new form of colonialism. He argues that the Han Chinese have gradually taken over the plains and prime agricultural land of Taiwan through the centuries. Now that they have enriched themselves through agriculture and industry, he said, they now want to make the mountains into a leisure space for themselves, a space in which they can escape the pollution and other pressures of Taiwan's cities. Development plans calling for the construction of bed-and-breakfast accommodation and other entertainment spaces are the means by which they try to get indigenous communities to go along with the plans. He thinks that tourism represents a serious threat, and the only way to deal with it is through legal autonomy. Section 21 of the Basic Law on Indigenous Peoples is intended to give indigenous peoples control over development on their territory; and in fact Taroko social activists invoked it in 2006 to halt the construction of a new hot springs resort in Taroko National Park. The formal legal mechanisms by which indigenous peoples can exercise control over development on their territory, however, are yet to be created and implemented.

Conclusion

The fact that the Taroko have not embraced the tourism industry, despite government attempts to encourage it since the period of Japanese administration, is the strongest piece of evidence that few individuals are interested in that kind of entrepreneurship. In Bsngan, they have not shown an interest in tourism in spite of the fact that they are located in one of Taiwan's prime tourist spots, at the gates of Taroko National Park. Instead, the Taroko recall other non-capitalist forms of development, and construct an ethnic identity around the tropes of subsistence hunting, sharing, solidarity and bravery. With the exception of a few village elites, the Taroko rarely attend the regular meetings held by state agents to promote tourism as an entrepreneurship. This contrasts with high attendance whenever there is a protest against the national park's policy against hunting. Tourism is generally seen as unnecessary, while the prohibition of hunting is seen as a violation of human rights. Obviously, these two forms of land use conflict in an area designated as a national park.

Entrepreneurship is weakly embedded in Taroko society. Whereas some women tend to run micro-businesses on a level slightly above subsistence level, the men tend to work temporary jobs or perform day labour. To a certain extent, many of them relate to the labour market in the same way that they once related to the forest: entering when the need for food arose and sharing the spoils of the hunt with villagers upon their return. This mentality is still seen when Taroko individuals treat their neighbours by barbecuing a pig or drinking heavily after payday. These behaviours are described by the villagers as an elaboration of their indigenous culture, and not a sign of 'laziness' as some Han Taiwanese bosses claim when they need to justify the use of foreign labour.

Nonetheless, there are important differences between the individuals in the community. Although the majority of the villagers seem uninterested in entrepreneurship, notable exceptions exist, such as the bed-and-breakfast owner mentioned above. In 2007, one of the main proponents of Taroko autonomy even constructed a bed-and-breakfast establishment in a neighbouring village. Development has already brought cultural change to the village, albeit in an uneven, non-linear fashion. Modernist thinkers, such as Daniel Lerner (1964), assumed that the modern rationality of capitalist development would inevitably win out in this battle of logics. The tenacity of Taroko hunters and others like them throughout the world, who put cultural identity and autonomy above profits, proves that modernism was mistaken. The Taroko hunters' values of equality and sharing have persisted to this day; and have been resilient to both Japanese and Chinese attempts to change them.

When these Taroko hunters refer to traditions of hunting, this act is more than romantic nostalgia for a past lifestyle. If anything, 'tradition' is a dream for a post-development future. In the contemporary period of cultural rights and indigenous autonomy, the Taroko hunters' spirit of *phaling* has gained new life. Their quest for autonomy and development sovereignty may give real hunters a chance to pursue their lifestyles legally on their own territory. Only if legal autonomy is gained can we learn if *phaling* is sufficient basis for a new post-development future.

Notes

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2 The indigenous peoples of Taiwan are Austronesians, members of the Pacific Islander linguistic family that extends from Taiwan in the north to New Zealand in the south, from Madagascar in the west to Easter Island in the east.

3 The author has been working with Seediq and Taroko community members since 2000, most recently having completed ten months of field research in 2005 and 2006 in Hualien County, Taiwan, and six months of field research in a Seediq community in Nantou in 2007.

4 This is the Taroko name for the place. The linguistic root of the name is *bais*, which means 'a couple or pair'. As one man told me, 'This was the place where we had to come down from the mountains in pairs, because we might encounter flatlanders'. Flatlanders, or pingdiren (平地人), refers to the Hoklo people of Taiwan.

5 There is sufficient evidence to support claims that most of the so-called 'Native Taiwanese' (Hoklo Taiwanese) have indigenous as well as Chinese ancestry. For an anthropological discussion of this topic, which remains well outside the scope of this essay, see Brown 2004.

6 For an excellent institutional history of indigenous land tenure systems in Taiwan, see Yan and Yang 2004.

7 The use of the word 'tribe' is considered problematic by some anthropologists and is rejected by First Nations activists in Canada because of its colonial connotations. In Taiwan, however, the word 'tribe' is used frequently in English translations, including those of the Executive Yuan Indigenous Peoples Council. In this paper, the word is used only in the sense of legal classifications created by state regimes. It is meant to describe a colonial relation with outside state powers.

8 The main non-indigenous ethnic groups in Taiwan are the Hoklo Taiwanese whose paternal ancestors came from Fujian Province of China before 1895, the Hakka who came largely from Guangdong in the same period, and the Mainlanders who arrived with the KMT after 1945. Collectively, they are known as Han Taiwanese to identify their common origin in China and distinguish them from the indigenous peoples.

9 In fact, this lasted less than two months.

10 A small number of non-aboriginal individuals have also illegally gotten access to reserve land in other areas nearby by registering the land in the name of an aboriginal individual in return for financial compensation. This practice is referred to as 'hanging a human head' (*gua rentou*, 掛人頭). Some run bed-and-breakfast establishments on such land. Instead of enforcing the laws prohibiting non-aboriginal people from renting or purchasing reserve land, local authorities provide assistance for their tourism activities.

11 This is similar to what the 'moral economy' of Vietnamese peasants described by Scott (1976), or what Russian economist Chayanov (1966) called the 'peasant economy' of subsistence logic.

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Part II

Development or underdevelopment?