

# Chapter 1: Research Journey for Finding the Paradigm of Indigenous People's Poverty Problems

## 1.1. The Policy Background

Recently, the issue of poverty amongst indigenous people has become one of the main research topics in development studies. According to Deruyttere, indigenous people can be defined as:

ethnic groups who have different languages, social organizations, worldviews, economic rationality and modes of production adapted to the ecosystems they inhabit and the descendants of the original inhabitants of geographic regions prior to colonization who have maintained some or all of their linguistic, cultural and organizational characteristics (Deruyttere, 1997: 1-2).

According to the World Bank (2005, a, b), 200 million indigenous people are living in over seventy countries and most of them are the poorest of the poor. Many literatures, discussing their social and economic problems, share the assertion, emphasising that most indigenous people have suffered from not transient poverty but long-lasting poverty (Beauclerk *et al.*, 1988; Deruyttere, 1997). According to Beauclerk *et al.* (1988: 3), indigenous minority groups have been faced with discrimination and

oppression by mainstream society and government through resource exploitation and development. Such exploitation and development have quite often induced huge social and cultural impacts on the lives of indigenous people (Clark and Clark, 1999). In addition, modernisation and globalisation are letting people know the values, thoughts and lifestyles of other people globally through the development of media and transportation. Indigenous people also have more opportunity to communicate with outsiders and to appreciate the living standards of mainstream society. As a result, they would be aware of the gaps and differences between members of the mainstream and themselves. For instance, there are gaps of educational backgrounds, occupational privileges and properties. In addition, they may notice that their views about the world are different from those of members of the majority. Such differences would influence the formation of their self-identity. That is to say, the nexus of identity and difference can be more firmly discussed from the viewpoint of such relational accounts of differentiated social and economic life, and in the nature of claims which emerge out of different social and economic positions (Bottero and Irwin, 2003: 465). About the causality of this differentiation, Goldthorpe (1980) points out that people tend to share similar values and activities with members of the same group. Namely, human beings have the desire and emotion to form and

keep interpersonal bonds with people having a similar cultural background (Baumeister and Leary, 1995). In this process, people are motivated to construct and maintain their self-identity as a group member through comparison with individuals of other groups (Turner *et al.*, 1979; Abrams and Hogg, 1988). At the same time, they tend to marginalise people who are in different social and economic positions (Kurzban and Leary, 2001). According to some researchers, this differentiation of social and economic positions (including differences in class, gender, ethnicity and religion) results in both unequal resources allocation and inequalities of recognition (Steele and Aronson, 1995; Stewart, 2001; Bottero and Irwin, 2003; Anthias, 2005). Of these backgrounds, in the discussion of inequality, de Haan (1994) emphasises social and cultural backgrounds which result in the shortage of resources for people in a vulnerable position.

However, at the same time, there is critical assertion about this viewpoint which emphasises structural influence rather than the agency of human beings. For example, Giddens (1996) and McNay (2000) strongly argue that people living in modernised days can be more reflexive and can choose their actions with their thoughts and knowledge because social change is breaking down the wall of the given social structure. Masaki (2004) points out the realistic possibility that social change can give

oppressed people who suffer from poverty the opportunity to challenge the existing social order. It is not enough for this thesis to focus on the inequality between mainstream society and indigenous people in order to understand their chronic poverty. Some indigenous people may acquire positions to exercise their active agency for improving their living standard, utilising these changes. On the other hand, there are people who cannot be in these positions. To understand their poverty issue, this thesis scrutinises why this inequality is shaped among them. To discuss the background of such inequality, researching the relationship of their corporeal dispositions and the pattern of their agency is important.

## **1.2. Discussions of the Poor**

First of all, this thesis considers a definition of the poor, before discussing poverty from which indigenous people suffer. There are numerous ways of discussing the poor. The usefulness of some of these discourses is considered here. Poverty itself tends to be a contested term and is subject to many different definitions and interpretations by researchers (de Haan and Maxwell 1998: 4; McNeish and Eversole, 2005: 10). For example, McKinley (1997) regards the poor as persons who have an acceptably low material standard of living. On the other hand, other

researchers regard the poor as people who suffer from deprivation of resources and capability (de Haan, 1994; McKay and Lawson, 2002).

According to Burden (2000: 43), originally the modern concept of poverty is derived from Rowntree who identified unemployment and low pay as causes of poverty. His definition of poverty is based on a precise calculation of the minimum income necessary to maintain physiological efficiency (Burden, 2000: 43). This approach to poverty inherently has the measurement that refers to subsistence below minimum, socially acceptable living conditions (Dessallien 2005). It means that the definition of poverty was originally examined from an economic viewpoint. That is to say, the focus of this view is that a poor family is confronted with poverty when their resources, including income and other resources for daily life, are below a particular level (Smith, 2000: 4; Howard *et al.*, 2001: 15). Indeed, the study of poverty has tended to focus on economic resources such as income and consumption poverty because the study of poverty focused on income and consumption generally uses panel data based on statistical surveys. Such studies have generally concluded in conceptualising poverty as material deprivation (Yaqub, 2003).

On the other hand, Hulme and Shepherd (2003) suggest a different perspective of the poverty concept in terms of a qualitative approach. They point out that it can be argued that what poor people are concerned about

is not so much that their level of income, consumption or capabilities are low, but that they are likely to experience highly stressful declines in these levels (Hulme and Shepherd, 2003: 408). In understanding this, qualitative research methods can let us analyse the poverty issue from multidimensional perspectives (Hulme and Shepherd, 2003: 408). This thesis agrees with this assertion of Hulme and Shepherd because understanding why some people are poor by referring to multidimensional perspectives is useful. Not a few researchers have discussed the poverty issue from various perspectives to clarify why some people are poor.

For example, Sen discusses the concept of poverty in terms of deprivation of a human being's capability for doing what he wants to do. According to Sen (2001: 20), this deprivation can be observed in any place, regardless of whether it is a developing country or a developed country. Deprivation of elementary capabilities can be reflected in unemployment, premature mortality, significant under-nourishment of children, persistent morbidity, widespread illiteracy and other failures (Sen, 2001: 20-21). Sen (1981, 2001) asserts that what is important for poverty research is not what people possess, but what it enables them to do. He especially pays attention to people's capabilities. Sen believes that capability is an important factor for people to participate in the social, economic and political activities of their society. Some people argue that

what people are capable of doing and being are absolutely necessary for them to spend their lives in society (Lister, 2004: 15; Chambers, 2005: 193). Through the deprivation of fundamental resources including skills, incomes and education, they are deprived of their capacities for realising what they want to do or to be.

On the other hand, Townsend (1975, 1993) argues poverty in terms of deprivation of resources. According to Townsend, “poverty can be understood as applying not just to those who are victims of a maldistribution of resources but, more exactly, to those whose resources do not allow them to fulfil the elaborate social demands and customs which have been placed upon citizens of society” (Townsend, 1993: 36). If people are denied access to sufficient economic resources and social services which allow them to play their roles as members of society, they are in poverty (Townsend, 1975: 15, 1993: 36). As O’Brien *et al.* (1997) point out, not a few current debates on poverty are concerned with not only the shortage of income or properties but also wider concepts including deprivation of capability and resources. The assertions of Sen and Townsend lead to the consideration that the lack of basic capabilities and necessary resources would make it extremely difficult for the poor to escape from poverty by their own efforts (Hulme and Shepherd, 2003: 407).

### **1.3. Inter-generational Aspect of Chronic Poverty**

For some people, it is difficult to acquire an opportunity to escape their poverty and to improve their living standard. Some researchers even argue that such difficulty tends to transmit to the next generation (Goldthorpe, 1975; Hulme and Shepherd, 2003). The background to the inter-generational aspect of poverty is discussed here.

To understand the reason why particular people continuously suffer from poverty, as Hulme and Shepherd (2003: 414) assert, the concept of marginalisation is useful. This concept describes the formation of poverty from a more dynamic viewpoint (Evans, 1998: 42). This concept leads to the consideration that certain individuals and groups are systematically barred, fully or partially, from any access to the goods, services, activities and resources within the social standards framed by rules or systems (Walker, 1997: 8; Durrani, 1999; Saloojee 2003: 2; Gore *et al.*, 2005).

Particularly, marginalisation can be conflated with the growing inequality and discrimination which accompany, in a variety of terms, deprivation and destitution (Rogers, 1995: 60; de Haan, 2005; Silver, 2005: 60). Townsend strongly believes that formation of the poor can be understood through discussing the correlation between deprivation and the proportion of resources which people have or acquire. To what extent they can acquire and hold resources is strongly related to their positions



in society such as social class, gender, race and disability and any spatial divisions (Townsend, 1975, 26-27; Lister, 2004: 177). According to Moore (2000) and Bevan (2004: 10-11), poor people are in long-lasting inequality including unequal resource allotment which benefit rich and powerful people and cause suffering to the poor. Goldthorpe (1975) points out power and advantage as the causality in the formation of unequal structure. Power can secure advantage, while certain advantages can bring more resources which are used in the exercise of power (Goldthorpe, 1975: 218). To put it concretely, economic resources may be used to gain status which can help to establish and reinforce authority or to create economic opportunities. And authority can confer status and command high economic rewards (Goldthorpe, 1975: 218). Huber (1995) and Kabeer (2000) state that to keep their positions and profits, privileged people make efforts to occupy the central positions for shaping the framework of rules and norms within which all the key decisions of special life are made. In addition, Goldthorpe (1975: 218) states that members in higher status generally tend to have strong motivation to hold resources for their position and use resources for their children. Because of such unequal structures and processes established by dominant groups, the people who are not in a privileged position tend to be systematically marginalised from access to economic and social resources, including high incomes and

advanced jobs or study in better educational systems (Howard *et al.*, 2001: 17). As a result, the unequal structure tends to produce inequality in future social and economic achievements between the poor and others (Goldthorpe, 1975).

For people who have experience of long-term deprivation of resources and are in a vulnerable position, chronic poverty would be transmitted to their children (Hulme and Shepherd, 2003). That is to say, as long as privileged groups make efforts to keep their position through formation of systems and rules, vulnerable people may suffer from social and economic inequality in the fields of employment, income, education and the ability to reflect their assertion in political decision-making. Such vulnerability can be seen as a long-lasting disadvantage as they are in positions which do not enable them to cope with unforeseen or foreseen changes or shocks in society. Such assertions lead this thesis to the consideration of chronic poverty. According to McKay and Lawson (2002: 25), chronic poverty is strongly related to a lack of resources (physical and social), for example, disadvantageous demographic characteristics such as high dependency ratios, and location in remote or disadvantaged areas, lack of physical assets in land and other properties and unstable occupational status, including seasonal jobs and low-paid jobs. Resources are indispensable for individuals to carry out their activities in their social and economic life.

Therefore, as Ruben *et al.* (2003) argue, the shortage of resources contributes to the deterioration of the lives of poor people, and prevents them from stabilising or improving their livelihoods. Against such a background, people belonging to a disadvantaged group substantially increase the likelihood of being in chronic poverty (McKay and Lawson, 2002: 25). As a consequence, as Cleaver (2005) says, these poor people tend to fall into the trap of the recursive reinforcement and reproduction of their own inequitable social and economic positions. Namely, due to this trap, their children are also continuously deprived of the opportunity to improve their living standard, suffering from the lack of resources.

#### **1.4. Discussions of Indigenous People's Poverty**

The concept of chronic poverty offers a wider viewpoint about the poverty issue of indigenous people. That is to say, their poverty does not only mean their economic problems but also social and cultural ones such as their vulnerable position in society and the shortage of resources. Particularly, as Eversole (2005: 36) argues, indigenous people are often generally defined as non-dominant groups who are not in a powerful position in relation to mainstream society. This section examines how their social position has influenced the formation of the kinds of problems

in their social and economic life, critically referring to definitions by researchers about the contents of their poverty.

Although there is a general lack of reliable national data on indigenous people in many parts of the world and the accuracy of data about their poverty is sometimes disputed between government authorities and the indigenous people (Plant, 2002: 31; McNeish and Eversole, 2005: 3), their poverty issue is one of the most severe issues in the world (World Bank, 2005 b). Not a few literatures assert that their poverty, which is long-lasting issue rather than transient, is because of their unequal social, economic and political relationship with mainstream society. For instance, Beauclerk *et al.* (1988: 3), and Clark and Clark (1999) strongly argue that indigenous people have been faced with discrimination, exploitation of their resources and oppression by the majority and these structural problems have made them more vulnerable. As a consequence, as the World Bank (2005 b) asserts, indigenous people tend to be exposed to physical and cultural deprivation. To put it concretely, the Inter-Commission Task Force on Indigenous Peoples (1997) mentions that their unique habits and customs tend to be exposed to socially and economically enforced transformation brought about by the failure of government policies and mainstream society's lack of knowledge and understanding about indigenous people. For instance, the imposition of religion, value

and education systems by governments and mainstream societies has weakened indigenous knowledge and customs (Beauclerk *et al.*, 1988). That is to say, because of their vulnerable positions as minority groups to deal with transformations brought about by outside factors, their lifestyles and cultures have been seriously damaged or changed.

Some researchers discuss the serious social, economic and cultural influences of mainstream society on indigenous people in the fields of social and economic activities, showing concrete examples of a few countries. For example, according to Davis (2003), indigenous people living in Latin America are more likely to be in a difficult position than any other human groups in the fields of employment, income and the quality of daily life, including education and health care. Eversole (2005) points out that the causality of their disadvantageous position is racial discrimination, indicating deeply embedded assumptions about the inferiority of indigenous culture vis-à-vis European culture. That is to say, the dominant languages, values and cultural expectations in the countries of Latin America are still overwhelmingly non-indigenous (Eversole, 2005: 31). People who cannot adjust to mainstream society, which is overwhelmingly a European culture, tend to be marginalised. Although some indigenous groups carry out movements to require the mainstream society to understand their position and to respect their culture, such

discrimination has not yet been eliminated (Eversole, 2005: 31). Rather, they still suffer social and cultural marginalisation from centres of commercial, intellectual and political power (Eversole, 2005: 30).

In a somewhat different example, some researchers point out that the Maori people who are indigenous people living in New Zealand have become one of the most disadvantaged groups within the country (Gibbs, 2005; Humpage, 2005). The Maori people inherently do not have any political and social leverage for making their voice heard in the decision-making of policies in government. Rather, the authority of New Zealand has historically a priority to modernise and civilise the indigenous people through integration with the main society through imposing “self-management and self-responsibility” (Rose, 1999: 257-258; Humpage, 2005: 164). Although this policy emphasising social inclusion of the Maori people can seemingly provide social and political advantages to the indigenous people, in actual fact this policy cannot resolve the unequal power relationship between mainstream society and the Maori and causes socio-economic disparities (Humpage, 2005: 177). In addition, this policy does not fully respect their unique culture as indigenous people and cannot cope with their needs. Rather, through the policy of social inclusion and integration, the government can press regulations on them with legitimacy (Humpage, 2005: 177). According to Gibbs (2005), despite such

a policy to promote the social inclusion of the Maori people, their disadvantageous social and economic position has not improved yet. For example, their rights to development are still limited by the willingness of the authority of the country, which does not want to give the Maori people many more rights for voicing their demands (Gibbs, 2005: 1374). In addition, the involvement of the Maoris in the economy tends to be as workers and consumers, rather than as owners, entrepreneurs or managers who have strong leverage to defend their rights and interests (Gibbs, 2005: 1369). Against this background, it is difficult for them to acquire the ability for developing their economy and society by themselves. As a consequence, the economic and social development of the Maori people lags behind that of others in New Zealand (Humpage, 2005: 1369). For these reasons, the Maori people still experience significantly poorer educational outcomes, higher unemployment, lower levels of income, lower rates of home ownership and poorer health than other New Zealanders (Gibbs, 2005: 1369).

The vulnerable and disadvantageous positions of the indigenous people have prompted the World Bank to give the following caution: ignorance and misunderstanding of indigenous knowledge and customs can contribute to worsening the poverty of indigenous people (World Bank, 2005 b). To put it concretely, ignorance and misunderstanding about the

unique customs and lifestyles of indigenous people on the part of mainstream societies and governments have raised serious issues which indicate that indigenous people cannot access sufficient opportunities to obtain stable jobs, incomes and social services such as education and health service. For example, according to Psacharopoulos and Patrinos (1996), due to the scarcity of social services (schools, clinics and drinking water) which contributes to their health problems and lower labour productivity, indigenous people globally have less schooling and most of them are concentrated in lower paying jobs with fewer employment opportunities as compared to non-indigenous people. As these examples illustrate, economic and social disadvantages and a vulnerable position would be general issues pertaining to the poverty of indigenous people.

### **1.5. Influences of Social and Economic Changes on Indigenous People**

In addition, disadvantages in the social and economic lives of indigenous people are related to not only domestic inequality with mainstream society but also to structural changes induced by globalisation. Some literatures mention that the social and economic life of indigenous people has been damaged by social changes, especially globalisation and such changes have pushed them to a more vulnerable



position (for example, Psacharopoulos and Patrinos, 1996; Deruyttere, 1997; McCaskill and Rutherford, 2005).

Castells (1998) and Beall (2002) point out that globalisation tends to influence the formation of duality within society. Namely, globalisation which emphasises a neo-liberal economy, de-regulation and an open economy, divides people and countries into two categories: groups who are incorporated into global production networks and can remain on the margins; groups who are incorporated at huge social costs (Castells, 1998; Beall, 2002). For the groups which are incorporated at huge costs, the influences of privatisation, deregulation of the labour market and reduction in public services seem to give countries more pressures to adopt a low-wage policy, a weakening of labour standards and a limitation in social welfare benefits (International Labour Organisation, 1995; Rapoport *et al.*, 1995; Bhalla, 1998; Bhalla and Lapeyre, 1999).

Psacharopoulos and Patrinos (1996) strongly point out that modernisation and globalisation have often failed to create a better life for indigenous people. As the economic and social structures change rapidly, indigenous people may not be able to adjust themselves to these rapid social and economic changes due to shortage of the sufficient resources required for their social and economic activities. Or they cannot acquire the opportunity for utilising these rapid transformations to improve their

lives because of their vulnerable and disadvantageous positions. Rather, the costs of rapid social and economic changes have placed indigenous people in an especially disadvantageous position (Deruyttere, 1997). As a consequence, social and economic changes cannot generally produce a smooth nexus with indigenous people (Kennedy, 2004).

For example, according to McCaskill and Rutherford (2005), indigenous people living in South East Asia are exposed to the swift social and economic changes induced by modernisation and globalisation. These rapid changes have a devastating effect on the indigenous people of these countries. The rich and ruling elites are in a superior position to exploit the opportunities afforded by globalisation as there are few existing rules to govern the new economic relationships and because investment capital, access to markets and information and technology are often prerequisites for benefiting from globalisation (McCaskill and Rutherford, 2005: 128). If the authorities in South East Asia do not take measures to cope with these uneven economic and social structures, the gap between the rich and poor will be widened and will lead to the increased poverty and exclusion of indigenous people.

However, some researchers discuss the causality of indigenous people's poverty in terms of unequal position and inequality of resource allotment among indigenous people rather than from the stance of emphasising the

unequal relationship of indigenous people and mainstream society. For instance, according to Zimmerman *et al.* (2001), the Kayapo people who are indigenous people living in the Brazilian Amazon have been exposed for a long time to the pressure on their lands and society, exerted by encroaching settlers, miners, loggers and ranchers. Zimmerman *et al.* (2001) point out that some Kayapo leaders who have acquired a position in which they can enter into contracts with Brazilian mahogany loggers and gold miners have used their position to provide themselves with houses and cars. On the other hand, Fearnside (1997) and O’Faircheallaigh (1998) point to an unequal opportunity to participate in development. Some indigenous people, who are managers of resource development programmes, tend to hire their family members and relatives as workers on these programmes. Others are not in such a position and do not have such access. As these discussions indicate, some indigenous people are in better positions to acquire economic and social resources more than other indigenous people. Their arguments lead to the consideration that not all indigenous people suffer from poverty and shortage of resources in equal measure.

In addition, Lane *et al.* (2003: 92) refer to one tribal group of Aborigines in Australia who are taking steps to resist the large-scale resource exploitation in their territory because they are concerned about the

damage to their lives and land caused by this exploitation. This argument tells us that indigenous people are able to acquire and hold the ability to carry out their value and plan their social and economic activities according to their values.

It is evident that the living standard of indigenous people is worse than that of mainstream society or the majority and that they are the victims of unequal structures which prevent them from acquiring opportunities to access sufficient resources. The argument that they are victims of unequal structures fails to provide an adequate role for human agency. Agents are capable of reflection and in explaining, evaluating, justifying and criticising their actions and altering them on the basis of this reflection (Fay, 2004: 64). Avruch (1998: 5, 17) strongly emphasises that the perceptions and identities of individuals are not always decided by social structures. In addition, society is rapidly changing its structure in the present day, due to development in transportation and communication on a global scale. As McNay (2000) mentions, because social changes are crumbling the wall of the given social structure, individuals can acquire greater opportunities for exercising their thoughts and knowledge to carry out their activities. Therefore, there is the possibility that poor people can utilise the structural transformations to implement their desires and

acquire opportunities in the power struggle with members of privileged groups (Masaki, 2004: 131-132).

## **1.6. Research Aims and Objectives**

Of course, as Fay (2004: 64, 66) admits, although human beings can perceive their situation, reason about it, knowingly act on the basis of this reason and reflexively monitor their action to see whether it produces the desired result, they cannot be completely free from the influence of social structures. Rather, human activities are always carried out within structural contexts such as class, family and religion which exceed the ability of individual human agents. (Fay, 2004: 66; King, 2005: 216). That is to say, the perceptions and activities of human agents have strong connections with such cultural and social settings. In examining the interdependent relationships of human agents and structures, this thesis aims to consider the following objectives in dynamically researching the poverty of indigenous people. These are:

- (1) Detailed and dynamic perceptions and actions of indigenous people.
- (2) The two-way relationship between the social structure and the behaviour of indigenous people: how social structure influences the formation of their perceptions and activities, and at the same time how their behaviour influences changes in the structure.

- (3) Discuss the discourses which indicate that the social structure one-sidedly decides the identity of individuals by analysing the empirical evidence.
- (4) Evaluate the power and influence between institutions and human agents by scrutinising the connection of the perceptions and actions of individuals and their economic positions and those of their families in society.
- (5) Provide the diversified and differentiated circumstances and experience of poverty amongst indigenous people.

### **1.7. Research Questions**

Based on the above, following research questions will be considered:

- (1) Why and how is the poverty of indigenous people reproduced over time and space?
- (2) How can this research understand patterns of differentiation between indigenous people?
- (3) What is the balance between structural opportunity and constraint in the lives of indigenous people?
- (4) To what extent do people exercise agency to cope with or overcome their poverty situations?

## **1.8. Organisation of the Thesis**

This chapter discusses that the issue of poverty amongst indigenous people seems to be complex and diverse. The given discussion of poverty, which emphasises economic aspects such as the shortage of income and properties, does not provide a clear understanding of such a complex and diverse issue. Rather, their poverty is not only an economic issue but also a social and historical one. For these reasons, a paradigm for observing their poverty from cultural, historical and social viewpoints is required.

The second chapter discusses aspects of a human being's perceptions and actions. In sociological debate, how to define the relationship between social structures and people's perceptions/actions has been a big argument. Human beings cannot be completely free from their social contexts. Rather, we are influenced by them, although we may have our values and thinking patterns. This thesis agrees with the assertion that indigenous people are suffering from long-lasting poverty due to inequality or unfairness. However, it is also important to consider: (1) how indigenous people consider their living environments and their social and economic positions; and (2) how they exercise their perceptions and actions in their social and economic life.

This thesis argues that discussions about the relationship between social structure and people's perceptions/actions, will enable a better

understanding of the diverse patterns in the actions of indigenous people in their social and economic lives.

In addition, this thesis hybridises the theoretical backgrounds, combining the paradigms of exclusion, inequality and the influence of social structure on people's perceptions/actions.

The third chapter discusses epistemological and philosophical backgrounds to support the viewpoints of this research.

From the fourth chapter, it will start to discuss in detail the poverty issue and its influence on individuals and their actions, using case studies. This chapter will discuss what kinds of social and economic issues the indigenous people in Taiwan are suffering. Taiwan is one of the highly industrialised areas of the world. However, indigenous minority groups living in Taiwan are in vulnerable and disadvantageous positions. Unlike most developing countries which do not have enough reliable national level data, Taiwan has abundant reliable data on the Taiwanese indigenous people in the fields of employment, education and health.

In chapters 5, 6, 7 and 8, based on the theoretical backgrounds discussed in the first three chapters, this thesis will examine the poverty of Taiwanese indigenous people by looking at the wider and more diverse patterns of their perceptions and actions within the unequal relationships



with the majority people of Taiwan. Finally, it will seek the conclusion of this research.

## Chapter 2: Agency, Embedded Habits in Minds and Social Division

### 2.1. Introduction

The discussions in the last chapter questioned the given paradigm of the research into the poverty of indigenous people which concludes that indigenous people have always been in vulnerable and marginalised positions. Such a conclusion seems too simplistic for understanding the complex dynamism of their poverty. A theory covering concepts of human reflections and perceptions is required to research the complex dynamics of indigenous people's poverty. This chapter seeks a more helpful paradigm, referring to the second, third and fourth research questions:

- (2) How can this research understand patterns of differentiation between indigenous people?
- (3) What is the balance between structural opportunity and constraint in the lives of indigenous people?
- (4) To what extent do people exercise agency to cope with or overcome their poverty situations?

This thesis agrees with the assertion that indigenous people are in a vulnerable position in society. However, with reference to their social

positions, to research the diverse patterns of their perceptions and practices is important.

The research questions of this thesis are strongly relevant to the huge and endless discussion in social theory. As stated by Lister (2004: 126), what happens in a society can be understood as the product of individuals' actions (agency) or of large social, economic and political institutions beyond individuals (structure) and this has been a central problem in sociological theory. In the huge debate of social theory, the following points are the most important for researchers to define and resolve: (1) how structure decides the perceptions and actions of individuals; and (2) how people exercise their actions (King, 2005: 216). This chapter considers this complex relationship of structure and agents, introducing some important concepts and ideas.

## **2.2. Structural Influence on Human Agents**

Some researchers have focused on the influence of structure, including culture, institutions and customs on individuals. Particularly, functionalism is one school of thought emphasising structural influence on the self-identity, perceptions and actions of individuals. Functionalism, which gives structural function priority, regards society as external to its members. Rather, society commonly has a system of dependencies or

combinations which causally bind its members to each other (Lawson, 1997: 64). Namely, collectiveness turns people toward ends that they hold in common with others (Durkheim, 1973: 162). Above all, functionalism emphasises “the function and role of institutions which are widespread collective values with legitimacy for which human beings come together” (Malinowski, 1979: 39; Douglas, 1986: 45). Institution implies that human beings stand in definite relation to one another (Malinowski, 1979: 39).

According to the idea of functionalism, human beings tend to organise collectively to achieve their purposes and reach an end, and the individuals’ thoughts and values for actions seem to be obscured. That is to say, each individual becomes impersonal. These collective values, once they become legitimate, can acquire and sustain manners to make individuals go by these collective values (Durkheim, 1982: 52). People gradually achieve an agreement for developing collectively represented valid principles or institutional actions and share these principles with one another. These principles can become culture. Culture is a complex set of values, beliefs and concepts which are commonly shared among people (Fay, 2004: 55). Moreover, culture can be a means and medium to give power and knowledge to human beings for achieving their ends, to create goods, to establish a standard for their life (Malinowski, 1979: 67). It means that culture may have its own decisions and standards which

determine how its members do in their society. For functionalism, culture has a strong decisive power to control the values, beliefs and lives of individuals. Namely, all human values, ideas, concepts, purposes and desires can be understood in the context of culture which is a collective agreement of practices shared among its members (Smith, 2003: 161). Individual actors are not independent of this wider system of collective practices and beliefs within which they are embedded.

However, Giddens (1983) is critical of functionalism because this concept ignores the ideas of the will and the reflexivity of individuals for carrying out activities.

### **2.3. The View of Human Agents: Giddens**

#### **2.3.1. The Ability of Agents for Actions**

This section considers the influence of people's actions on society.

The concept of human agent is a main point of discussion in this section. Agency refers to "the action of individuals and groups" (King 2005: 215) or "their capacity of doing" (Giddens 1986: 9). Human beings can be defined as having the capabilities for choosing actions with self consciousnesses, reflections, intentions and purposes (Weber, quoted in Morrison, 2004: 276). To understand society, we need to look at the actions of human beings in society. Society is not a physical entity which acts over the heads

of its members. In society there are various individuals having knowledge and capability for their actions. As Avruck (1998: 5) mentions, people's actions can result in the transformation or reproduction of the social and economic structure. Especially, Giddens enthusiastically clarifies the ability of agents to explain why they choose to do some actions and not to do other actions in their daily lives.

In his earlier writings, Giddens discusses the complex relationship between an individual's reflexivity and the function of structure in detail. First of all, Giddens examines structuralism and functionalism critically. According to Giddens (1983), some writings just look at the function of a social structure but omit to look at structural transformation caused by the actions of agents. In his earlier writings, Giddens (1983: 62) asserts that structure and agency are interdependently linked.

Structure provides its members (agents) with resources and rules. Resources can give them the possibility of actions and rules are guides as to how actions are to be performed (Giddens, 1986: xxxi, 25). Therefore, structure has both the roles of guiding agents to certain actions and of enabling them to do actions (Fay, 2004: 65).

However, it is agents who produce and reproduce this structure by their actions. Giddens (1983: 57) especially emphasises that agents have the capability to explain why they act as they do by giving reasons. How are

agents capable of explaining the reasons why they act as they do? Giddens looks in detail at the process of actions from the unconscious to practical actions in detail.

As agents, all human beings are able to acquire knowledge to use in the production and reproduction of day-to-day activities in their lives in their society (Giddens 1986: 22). About the day-to-day activities of agents, Giddens tries to express the process of actions from the starting point that agents have unconsciousness motivation for their actions to the point when they carry out practical action. Agents recursively continue their actions through this process, reflexively monitoring actions with their intentions and knowledge (Giddens, 1983: 56, 1986: 5).

To clarify the process of human beings' activities in daily life, Giddens distinguishes three levels of experience in the daily life of an individual agent: the unconscious, the practical consciousness and the discursive consciousness. Table 2.1 shows the definition of these levels.

**Table 2.1**

**The Three Levels of Experience in the Daily Life of Individuals**

The unconsciousness	This is the concept derived from Freud to outline that we are not fully in control, beyond our immediate intentions.
Practical consciousness	Actors know tacitly how to go on in the contexts of social life which is tacit knowledge.
Discursive consciousness	This is knowledge that individuals can describe and express in verbal terms what they are doing.

Source: Adapted from Giddens (1986:7, 49)

Firstly, the agent's ability to exercise knowledge of day-to-day activities is bound by the unconscious (Giddens 1986: 282). The unconscious can refer to subconscious motives described by Freud in psychoanalysis. The unconscious strongly connects with the basic security system whereby anxiety controls or represses an individual's intention or motivation for actions (Giddens, 1986: 49). Such a security system is formed from childhood.

Then the unconscious brings modes of intentions or motivations to consciousness. Consciousness can be divided into practical consciousness and discursive consciousness. Practical consciousness consists of tacit knowledge about how to act in society. However, practical consciousness



does not let agents clearly express what they know (Giddens, 1986: xxiii, 49). Discursive consciousness is that actors can express verbally their intentions and reasons for the actions they are taking.

Furthermore, consciousness consists of both memory and recall. Memory can be regarded as the temporal constitution of consciousness. Recall can be understood as the means of recapitulating past experiences in such a way as to focus a person upon the continuity of an action (Giddens, 1986: 49). If agents clearly take their memories from their life experiences accumulated since childhood, their consciousness can change memory to the modes of recall for practical actions. At this stage, human beings are in the stage of discursive consciousness. In addition, agents can clearly and discursively describe what they do and the reasons for doing it (Giddens 1986: 281). For Giddens, power is an important idea to explain why knowledgeable agents can practise actions.

### **2.3.2. Power, Self-Identity in Present Society**

Among many interpretations of power in social theory, two main perspectives appear. One is that power should be seen as a coercive force of the collectivity for pursuing collective goals (Parsons, 1963: 391, 1964: 121-122; Lukes, 1974, 27-28). Namely, power is conceived as a generalised

medium of effectively mobilising collective action which transcends individual interests and ego (Parsons, 1964: 122).

On the other hand, Giddens (1986) strongly argues the second aspect of power indicating capability of agents to achieve his will and purpose. That is to say, individuals have capacities to do some actions or not to do other actions. Their capacities are strongly related to power. He explains power in terms of the capacity of agents to achieve their desired and intended outcomes (Giddens, 1983: 88). For this reason, power is not inherently oppressive but the capacity to achieve outcomes (Giddens 1986: 257). The agent could act either positively in terms of attempted intervention in the process of events in the world or negatively in terms of forbearance (Giddens 1983: 56).

At the same time, power can be related to the process of interaction with other agents. There are some conflicts in social life. These conflicts are seen as power struggles. Such struggles can be regarded as efforts to utilise resources for yielding modalities to control those resources in society. By controlling resources, agents or some actors have the capacity to influence the circumstances of the actions of others (Giddens 1986: 283). As a result, a structure of domination emerges due to asymmetries of the resources employed by dominant actors for sustaining power in systems of interactions among actors.

Power has two aspects: (1) domination or sanctions ranging from the direct application of force or violence or the threat of such application, to the mild expression of disapproval; (2) the capability of agents to achieve their will.

Although Giddens mentions inequality among actors according to the unequal possession of resources, he is largely optimistic about the possibilities of individual agency (Cleaver, 2007). He points out that there is no mechanism of social organisation or social reproduction indicating that actors who appear to be in a disadvantaged position cannot get to know about their actions and their reasons for such actions (Giddens 1986: 284).

Giddens seems to consider that human beings are autonomous creatures although some people have more power and resources than others. Power can lead a person to choose and construct a coherent and viable sense of self-identity (Sweetman 2003: 528). It is up to individuals to construct a sense of identity for themselves.

Society is currently transforming rapidly because of globalisation and modernisation. Beck (1995) regards the transformation of society as reflexive modernisation. Societies which are currently transforming are politically and economically unforeseeable and uncertain. Some researchers express an optimistic view of such transformation of society.

According to Seur (1992: 119), social change can result from the fact that actors are capable of questioning the efficiency and legitimacy of the given social forms and practices. As such, political schemes encounter the resistance of citizens' groups, and industrial worlds are morally and politically criticised by motivated citizens' groups or consumers' organisations. These movements imply that everyone can be self-responsible in the uncertain and unforeseeable societies (Beck, 1995). In the modern era, people's identities are more ambiguous than in the pre-modern era when identities were firmly bound to coherent and integrative social practices (Wagner, 1994: 170). About this phenomenon, Giddens (1996) asserts that living in modern society which is de-traditionalised brings forms of increasing autonomy (Giddens, 1996). In addition, Bocock (1992: 145) also argues that the rapid transformation of the social environment can let individuals increasingly articulate themselves and others to achieve a sense of identity which may be autonomous from their membership of a traditional status group.

In the de-traditionalised modern society, people can go about constructing their identities, making choices on a day-to-day basis about who they are and how they want to represent themselves (Sweetman, 2003: 529). As Giddens points out, "the self is not a passive entity, determined by external influences; in forging their self-identities, no

matter how local their specific contexts of action, individuals contribute to and directly promote social influences that are global in their consequences and implications” (Giddens, 2005: 2). As the modern individual can go beyond the simple or organised identity which is closely tied to gender, ethnicity and class, and has a chance to affect the broader social system so the day-to-day activities of an individual today are globally consequential. For example, Giddens argues that “my decision to purchase a particular item of clothing, for example, or a specific type of foodstuff, has manifold implications, namely an extraordinary, and still accelerating, connectedness between everyday decisions and global outcomes” (Giddens, 1995: 57-58). Therefore, as all social bonds reach new levels of reciprocity, the individual is implicated in a radically reflexive relationship with social structure (Adams, 2006: 513).

However, critics argue that little attempt is made to differentiate between the experiences of people in diverse settings which are structurally positioned (O’Brien, 1999; Adams, 2006). Giddens focuses on the self-identity of actors more than their social embeddedness.

### **2.3.3. Criticisms of Giddens**

Particularly, in Giddens’s more recent writings, he mainly discusses the individual self-identity. Such discussions cannot lead us to an analysis of

social embeddedness in the individual's mind and self-identity (Savage, 2000). The absence of a view on social embeddedness, combined with the increased emphasis upon the reflexivity of the self, seems to obscure his past arguments about the nature of reflexivity in relation to the reproduction of social conditions for action (Adams, 2006: 513). Especially, recent works by Giddens on reflexivity are characterised by a relative lack of concern for the issue of embodiment (Turner, 1991). That is to say, Giddens tends to disregard the involuntary, pre-reflexive and entrenched elements in subjectivity (McNay 2000: 42). Indeed, reflexivity cannot be understood to be only cognitive. Rather, reflexivity must be understood to involve reflection on the unconscious categories of thought, that is, the uncovering of unthought categories of people's habits which are themselves corporealised preconditions of their self-conscious practices (Lash, 1995; Adkins, 2003). These criticisms of Giddens make it necessary to examine whether an individual's self-identity and thinking style are tied to social and cultural contexts.

## **2.4. Socially Embedded Minds and Identities: Bourdieu**

### **2.4.1. Habitus and Collective Values**

Bourdieu's stance with regard to the relationship between the formation of self-identity and society helps to explain how individuals can

acquire their patterns of thinking and their selfhood. Referring to Bourdieu's idea, this section explores how an individual's identity and behaviour are formed in social contexts.

The point of Bourdieu's assertion, which is different from Giddens' arguments, is the predisposition of an actor's thinking style, identity and habits. This section considers how the reflections, thinking styles and identities of actors are embedded.

Bourdieu (2007) emphasises the primacy of relations between (1) structure and agent; and (2) the collective values and the individual's perceptions and practices. That is to say, it could combine the influence of social structures and individuals' perceptions and practices in the formation of corporeal dispositions (*habitus*) (McNay, 2000: 23). To put it concretely, the formation of an individual's perceptions and identity can readily be understood in terms of the common or collective values and the individual's agency (Jenkins, 2006: 51).

The concept of *habitus* is important. *Habitus* is an individual's corporeal disposition. *Habitus* determines how individuals see the world and behave in their society. *Habitus* constrains an individual's perceptions and practices (McNay, 2000: 26). The formation of *habitus* results from societal and economic backgrounds. According to their occupations, the lifestyles of actors, including food, clothes, hobbies and

properties, are diverse and different. These diverse and different lifestyles result in the diversity of people's identities and values.

For example, the material and cultural consumption of members of the professions, who have more income and higher levels of education, are distinctly different from those of workers who have comparatively less education (Bourdieu, 2007: 114). According to Bourdieu, most members of the professions, who are from a dominant class (professionals or senior executives) are opposed in almost all aspects to people who are from the working or middle classes (Bourdieu, 2007: 114). People's habitus are historically constructed. This is to say that their habitus results from not only their economic backgrounds but also their families' economic positions in society, their parents' customs and habits. Therefore, habitus is the individual's body disposition with the social and economic life history of the actor's family. Such familial life history is embodied within individuals in the form of mental and corporeal schemata of perception, appreciation and action (Wacquant, 2005: 16). In this fashion, the formation of an actor's habitus is strongly influenced by the institutional or collective values which transcend each actor's agency.

However, habitus is not end-oriented rules but is a scheme which guides actors to choose or behave. Bourdieu (1991: 102) agrees with the assertion that agents have wishes and abilities for achieving their goals,



using their capitals and resources. For this reason, habitus enables the choices made by individuals in the pursuit of their ends to result in the transformation of social structures (Jenkins, 2006: 61). Habitus contains freedom in a human which permits the emergence of the concept of agency.

At the same time, habitus can generate the principle which enables agents to cope with unforeseen and changing situations; a system of lasting and transportable dispositions which integrates past experiences and functions as a matrix of agents' perceptions (Bourdieu, 1977: 72, 95). For Bourdieu, social actions are neither entirely determined nor entirely arbitrary. Habitus can be a dynamic intersection of structure and the actions of individuals. That is to say, habitus can generate and shape their practices. Habitus has a role that ensures the active presence of past experience, which is deposited in each person in the form of schemes of perceptions, thoughts and actions. Habitus tends to guarantee the correctness of people's practices and constancy over time (Bourdieu, 2005). The idea of habitus suggests a layer of embodied experience that is not immediately amenable to self-fashioning. However, the question remains as to how habitus inscribed is in human beings? The next section will consider this question.

#### **2.4.2. Habitus and Family**

How is habitus inscribed? People's habitus are transferred from their families.

When it is understood that the formation of subjectivity is not a one-sided process as an externally imposed effect, but is the result of a live relationship between an individual's social and economic position in society and his material relations such as food, habits and houses, then an active concept of agency emerges.

At every moment in each society, one has to deal with a set of social positions which is bound by a relation of homology to a set of activities or of goods that are themselves characterised relationally (Bourdieu, 1998: 4-5). This formula states the first conditions for an adequate reading of the analysis of the relation between social positions, dispositions (habitus) and position-taking, that is, the choices made by the social agents in the most diverse domains of practice in food, or sport, music or politics and so forth (Bourdieu, 1998: 6). Agents or groups are distributed in social space according to their position which is based on economic capital, such as economic wealth or income, cultural capital including educational credentials and cultural goods, and social capital which refers to the mobilisation of people through connections, social networks and group membership (Peillon, 1998).

First of all, the family is seen as the first reality transcending its members, a transpersonal person endowed with a common life and spirit and a particular vision of the world (Bourdieu, 1998: 65). The family is understood as a collective principle of construction of its member's perception and action within the habitus (McNay, 2000: 62). First, the house, conceived as family, household, property, means of production and reproduction, is the focus; individuals have to be considered primarily as a function of their place within a collective entity (Jenkins, 2006: 49). Second, definitions of the family are seen as having in common the fact that they assume the family exists as a separate social universe, engaged in an effort to perpetuate its frontiers and oriented toward idealisation of the interior as sacred. This sacred, secret universe, with its doors closed to protect its intimacy, separated from the external world by the symbolic barrier of the threshold, perpetuates itself and perpetuates its own separateness, its privacy, an obstacle to knowledge, a private secret (Bourdieu, 1998: 65). Therefore, the family is a principle of construction that is both immanent in individuals as an internalised collective and transcendent to them (Bourdieu, 1998: 67). As a tacitly internalised principle of perception, the family endows experience with a commonsensical or self-evident appearance, that is, the family appears as the most natural of social categories (McNay, 2000: 62). The family plays a

decisive role in the maintenance of the social order, that is, reproduction of the structure of the social space and social relations (Bourdieu, 1998: 69). In addition, the structure of the family is determined by the role it plays in the accumulation and transmission of economic, cultural and symbolic privileges, such as property, the family name and social capital (McNay 2000: 62). According to Coleman (1990: 302), social capital inheres in the relationship between parents and children. Namely, social capital can be regarded as a resource within the family that inheres in the structure of intergenerational relationships between parents and children (Coleman, 1990; Edwards, 2004: 6). Parents take care of and support their children and give them opportunities to increase their social and economic capitals such as income and educational achievement (Coleman, 1990). In the closed and exclusive relationship in a household, parents whose values and behaviour are exposed to their children, are in a position to have a huge impact on the formation of the self-identity and social and economic capitals of their children. Social capital has the function of glue and bond between adults and children living in a family (Edwards, 2004: 10). The family is characterised by constant maintenance work which turns the nominal bonds of family members into profoundly uniting, affective interrelationships and bonds.

At the same time, Coleman (1990) and Edwards (2004) point out the aspect of deficit and dilution of social capital in households where parents have many children and where one parent or both are working outside. Brannen *et al.* (2000) regard children as active agents in shaping the relationship with family members and others. Children as such agents also seek social bonds with their friends and others outside the family. However, at the point of the formation of self-identity, these outsiders tend to lack the institutional function which provides individuals with guidance and support for building their identity (Woolcock, 1998: 173). Rather, the formation of their identity and embedded disposition is more influenced and decided by the thoughts and behaviour of their parents in the closed and private space of the family.

#### **2.4.3. Embedded Family Habitus and Inequality**

The paradigm describing how the function of family influences the formation of an agent's ideas and thoughts is applicable to why poor children excluded from the main society also suffer from the same social issues as their parents. Economic and cultural resources and social capital are ubiquitous and continuously transmitted to the next generation and accumulated in ways that produce and reinforce social exclusion and inequality (Edwards, 2004: 6; Bourdieu, 2007). These capitals are in

relation to the position of individuals in society. Their position determines to what extent they can acquire and utilise these capitals. That is to say, in the case of households where parents have better and higher positions, they are in a position to consume resources more than others. On the contrary, a poor family tends to continuously suffer from a shortage of social, economic and cultural capitals. For example, Loury (1999), in asserting that poverty has strong social and cultural contexts, emphasises the influence of the innate family environment on its members. An individual, whose family suffers from a shortage of income or job opportunity and whose parents do not have the willingness to work or care about for their education, has such negative feelings transferred to him by his parents. The poor environment, such as housing, poor food, insufficient education and unstable jobs, is socially embedded in his family. Such social embeddedness is tied in with his thoughts and actions as his habitus. For this reason, it would be difficult for him to acquire an active willingness to overcome his poverty as well as that of his family.

Another reason why poor people tend to have difficulties to overcome their poverty or improve their living standard is the tendency that a family has in relation to other families. The family plays a considerable role not only in the transmission of the family's particular thoughts and customs to the next generation but also in the management of the

economic heritage, especially through business alliances which are often family alliances (Bourdieu, 1998: 71). Bourdieu draws attention to the homogeneous ties of solidarity between a family and others who have the same or similar social and economic backgrounds as them. For instance, bourgeois dynamics function like select clubs; they are the sites of the accumulation and management of a capital equal to the sum of the capitals held by each of their members. The relationships between the various holders make it possible to mobilise this capital in favour of each of them (Bourdieu, 1998: 71).

The concept of family alliances that Bourdieu asserts is applicable to the inequality issue in resource development among indigenous people. Generally, indigenous people are defined ethnic groups who maintain some or all of their particular and unique cultural characteristics (Deruyttere, 1997). One of these characteristics is kinship maintained by indigenous communities. Kinship or extended family groups form a key part of the social structures of most indigenous societies (O'Faircheallaigh, 1998). On the one hand, kinship can develop into a strong social network with relatives and provides individuals with security such as mutual assistance (Beauclerk *et al.*, 1988). On the other hand, this social capital includes some people and excludes others. As Narayan (1999) argues, those who belong to social networks which already have access to social

and economic resources are much more likely to continue to participate in social and political activities to exercise their power in society, rather than those who do not have such access. For example, O’Faircheallaigh (1998), citing the case of mining projects in Aborigine communities in Australia, points out that developments in indigenous communities tend to produce inequalities among indigenous people. On some projects, members of specific kinship groups are disproportionately represented in the workforce, “because individuals in supervisory position use their influence to recruit members from their own groups; or because information on employment opportunities tends to be contained within particular groups” (O’Faircheallaigh, 1998: 387). This example tells us that some indigenous people, who are in a better position to have resources, are able to exercise influence in the construction of an institution and system to sustain their social and economic positions and push them to others among their own kind. On the contrary, indigenous people excluded from the social network have fewer resources to exploit the power to question and change a given unequal social structure. For poor indigenous people, to acquire and hold social capital is not impossible. However, for some, their social capital would not help them to improve their poor living standard because of the following reason: most of their family members and relatives may be in



the same positions because they are also excluded from opportunity to increase their social and economic resources.

Bourdieu's assertion is that the formation of selfhood and identity of individuals is strongly influenced by the parents' and family's social and economic backgrounds such as positions, educational achievement, habits and lifestyles and as well as the individuals' own social and economic backgrounds.

#### **2.4.4. Criticisms of Bourdieu**

Bourdieu's idea is not without criticism. For example, he seems to mainly focus on the individual's disposition formed by the customs and habits of their families and their occupations. There is criticism that Bourdieu's idea is short of a developed theory of different types of agency in the complex struggle in people's minds (McNay, 2000; Adams, 2006). Bourdieu's theory is also seen as overly deterministic and allows little room for agency or reflexivity (Jenkins, 1992).

Although Bourdieu concentrates on the implications of power and position for a theory of agency, he tends to disregard the internally complex nature of subjectivity and how this is worked through at the level of motivation and self-understanding (McNay, 2000: 72; Adams, 2006: 516).

For an understanding of the complex relationship between individuals and the social and cultural contexts of their society, Adams (2006) strongly asserts that we can hybridise reflexivity and habitus. For example, the individual's reflexivity and autonomy and his habitual disposition can be viewed as complementary to each other for understanding the contemporary individual's perceptions and the relationship with rapid social change (Adams, 2006).

## **2.5. Understanding Diversified Patterns of Agency**

### **2.5.1 Hybridisation of Habitus and Reflexivity**

The hybridisation of the ideas of Giddens and Bourdieu, which Adams (2006) argues, can help us to understand the complex relationship of the diverse patterns of agency and social structure. In addition, here and in the next section, the following two points are also discussed: (1) the actions of human agents are carried out not only as a result of their strategic plan but also as a result of their emotional struggle; (2) exercising agency does not always provide people with the opportunity to use their autonomous reflexivity. Rather, some results of agency may increase the problem, indicating that some actors may not have choices except for accepting the structural constraints such as social exclusion or

long-term poverty, or may struggle with such constraints for improving their living standards.

McNay (1999: 105-106) points out that a human being has the possibility of reflexive self-awareness or the motivation or emotion for changing her social and economic environments. Especially, this possibility arises from the increasingly unforeseeable and unpredictable nature of modern society with the rapid transformation of social and economic environments surrounding individuals. Sweetman (2003: 536-537) similarly seizes on the possibility of reflexivity for agents with habitus where a disposition of anticipation of the future is a ready option. Due to rapid social changes, the habitus of people are subject to rapid, pervasive and ongoing changes (Sweetman, 2003: 541).

However, these assertions seem to overestimate the potentiality and possibility of an individual's autonomy in the current transformable society. In addition, these assertions emphasise that people's reflexivity and thinking style can be free from simple and organised structural contexts such as class, gender or race. But such social backgrounds do have connections with gaps in economic, cultural and social capitals. For example, as discussed in the first and second chapters, many indigenous people are affected by the shortage of resources in the modern era of rapid social transformation. Rapid social transformation may influence the

formation of a duality between people having sufficient resources and those who suffer from the shortage of resources. As Savage (1995: 16) states the importance to consider the impact of social divisions, which are based on the habits and tastes of each social class, on an individual's perceptions and activities (Savage, 1995: 16).

Discussion of autonomous agency in transforming society and the influence of structural contexts on agents can lead to the consideration about how to hybridise these two ideas. For example, as Adams (2006: 522) mentions, "an acknowledgement of the complex coexistence of reflexivity awareness and habitual dispositions can only take us, in coming to terms with the generation of contemporary identities and their relation, to an increasing differentiated social structure." While habitus restricts and conditions the choices of individuals in their social and economic activities, rapid social change will facilitate their reflexivity which can increase their autonomy to carry out their social and economic activities. That is to say, reflections and identities of individuals are embedded in the complex connections of habitual backgrounds and the own values of individuals. Structure and agency reproduce relationships of domination or they are the guarantee of change (Adams, 2006). Both tendencies seem to be occurring at the same time.

### **2.5.2 Sources of Human Behaviour**

The other important point which must be considered is how human beings choose their actions.

Mumby and Putnam (1992: 469) point out that “rationality tends to be defined as intentional, reasoned and goal-directed behaviour”. Parsons (1964) defines human action as intentional behaviour oriented to the realisation of an end. In addition, Schutz (1970) argues that social actors should have clear motivations for acting. According to Schutz, an actor’s motivation is divided into “in order to motivation” and “because motivation” (Schutz, 1970: 126-127). “In order to motivation”, for an actor, refers to his future. On the contrary, “because motivation” refers to his past experiences. Schutz focuses on the logical analysis that the actions of actors are chosen by their determination, life histories or their circumstances. When an action is accomplished, or when it has become an act, he may turn back to his past action as an observer of himself and can investigate by what circumstances he has determined to do what he did (Schutz, 1970: 127-128). That is to say, actors can find and trace the reason why they chose an action. Therefore, in our daily life, our routine action is deliberated in so far as it always relates back to the original act of deliberation which once preceded the building up of the formula taken by the actor as a standard for his actual behaviour (Schutz, 1970: 131-132).

Human actions are based on a process anchored in motivational functions of reasons and goals and guided by anticipations in the forms of planning and projecting. Namely, human actions occur in conditional circumstances that must be rationally calculated and utilised by actors in pursuit of their ends. Actors must accommodate and calculate upon conditions if their actions are to be successful (Holmwood, 2005: 93). The actions of human beings are rational and are adequate in terms of the knowledge necessary for the realisation of their ends (Holmwood, 2005: 93). Rationality is typically defined as intentional, reasoned and goal-directed behaviour.

However, this rational view about human action is criticised because this assertion ignores the emotional perspective such as ambivalence and contradictory impulses in human action and reflexivity (Bauman, 1993; Shilling, 1999). For example, the duality of people who can exercise their agency and people who cannot exercise their agency can be discussed in terms of emotionality. When agency is unable to act as a result of an unequal structure that limits and frustrates its power and resources, some individuals seem to shut out rational thought and tend to be left with incoherent feelings such as despair, rage and anger (Cleaver, 2007). Not only cognition but also emotionality has an effect on people's reflexivity and actions. Particularly, in the complex interrelationships with others, emotional aspects may have huge influences on the decisions of

individuals in the practices of their lives because people are physically and mentally engaged in the interaction with others (Goffman, 2005). For these reasons, as Smith (1992: 3) points out, we need to look at interactions, focusing on fluctuation, openness, non-equilibrium and the evolution characteristic of emotionally embodied interrelationship, with an analysis on passion, interest, excitement, motivation, danger, change, disorder, stimulation, and instability. Researchers have to consider and research how the emotional aspect influences the formation of an actor's identity and the embodiment of his practice in interaction with others in daily life (Archer, 2000: 193, 195).

### **2.5.3 Diversified Agency and Model of Agency**

Different from the assertion of Giddens that human beings have the ability to answer why they chose a action, actions are implemented by not only rational and clear plan but also complicated emotional struggle. To put it concretely, while some actors have the motivation or mobilisation to successfully change their environment, yet there are those actors who let off steam through domestic violence or alcoholism. In addition, there are people who may struggle to come to terms with negative feelings that their loved ones may have of them, feelings provoked by their inevitable failings and faults (Hoggett, 2001: 46). Human beings show various kinds

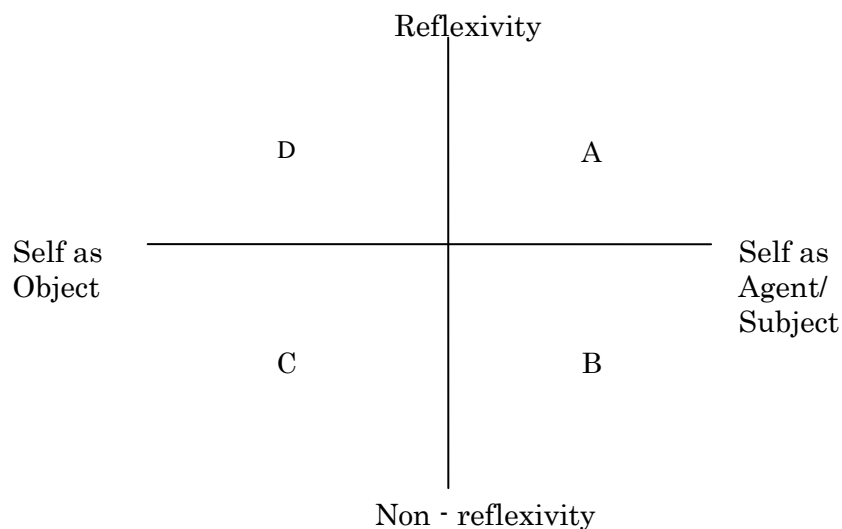
of complex perceptions and practices in their social and economic lives. Therefore, for researching the relationship between agents and structure, it is necessary to analyse human emotional embodiments, including the analysis of passion, interest, excitement, motivation, fear or conflict with others (Smith, 1992, Hoggett, 2001).

Here, this thesis considers models of agency which contain non-reflexive forms of agency acting on the basis of impulse, as well as reflexive forms of agency acting on the basis of conscious intent and calculation. In addition, the models which include the ideas of self-as-object as well as self-as-subject are considered.

Particularly, Hoggett (2001) and Greener (2002) divide agency into four quadrants: Quadrant A (reflexive, agent as subject agency); Quadrant B (non-reflexive, agent as subject agency); Quadrant C (non-reflexive, agent as object agency); Quadrant D (reflexive, agent as object agency). Both these researchers are exploring two aspects of agency (Figure 2.1).



**Figure 2.1**  
**Model of Agency**



Source: Hogget (2001: 48), Greener (2002: 689)

The first explores the reflexivity of people and a scale of non-reflexive and habitual behaviour which have little consideration and thought. The second aspect is the spectrum of self as subject and self as object. For example, people categorised into self-as-object agency are unable to impose their will on their surroundings (Greener 2002: 689). On the other hand, people, who are categorised into reflexive, agent as subject agency, seem to be primarily relevant to the agents asserted by Giddens (Hoggett, 2001: 47). In this category, people are active although they are under structural problems including gender, racial or poverty issues. However, at the same time, it must be noted that not all choices for actions are

equal, and that not all agents are equally positioned for making those choices for their practices and actions (Cleaver, 2007).

The model of agency which Hoggett and Greener suggest shows different patterns of actions in a wide range of people's perceptions and practices from self-as-subject to self-as-object, and from being reflexive and conscious to being passive.

## **2.6. Summary and Conclusion**

This chapter considered how individuals choose and carry out their actions. In examining the idea which emphasises one-sided structural influence on the formation of self-identity and actions of individuals it is found that this concept tends to ignore the role of the will and reflexivity in individuals carrying out activities.

The assertion of Giddens was helpful to clarify the process from considering actions to implementing those actions. Especially, Giddens argues that for their activities, people utilise their knowledge, referring to their past experience in the process of considering actions. The idea that human beings are knowledgeable actors who can clearly say why they choose a particular activity is an important point to emphasise. In addition to Giddens, Beck (1992) and Sweetman (2003) also place emphasis on the more reflexive nature of contemporary identities. That is

to say, unlike the pre-modern era, the identity of an individual can no longer be assumed. It now seems to be constructed from various available options (Beck, 1992; Giddens, 1995; Sweetman, 2003). These scholars pay attention to the dynamics in current society which are blurring people's identities which used to be formed by their social contexts and were more integrated. They strongly believe that now a person can acquire opportunities to exercise his reflexivity more than before.

However, Giddens seems not to define in depth the aspect of pre-reflexive process in people's minds. That is to say, the habits and customs of institutions or communities to which an actor belongs are embedded in his psychological aspects, including perception and identity or habit. Bourdieu explains that although human beings can be regarded as agents who can exercise their reflections, their thinking style, habits and actions are strongly influenced by collective tastes and values which are peculiar to people's positions, such as their occupations, incomes and educational and cultural backgrounds. Bourdieu, in discussing collective tastes and values, uses the term "habitus". Habitus influences people's thoughts and perceptions. According to Bourdieu (1998, 2007), collective values or tastes are formed by members who belong to the same social and economic positions. According to their occupations, people's tastes and habits seem to be different. These tastes and habits, which are diversified by their

occupations, shape the different patterns of people's perceptions and actions in their daily lives. Then, these different perceptions and practices result in diversified life standards. For example, some people can exercise their agencies to improve their current living standards. They can increase their social and economic resources such as income and education. On the contrary, others whose agencies are limited by structural constraints cannot increase their social and economic resources. Namely, on a pre-reflexive level, the actor is predisposed or oriented to behave in a certain way because of the active presence of his whole past embedded in the structure of habitus (McNay, 2000: 41). Bourdieu stresses the inherited experiences which lead to an accumulation or sedimentation of the systems of disposition of agents' action.

However, Bourdieu's assertion is not without criticism. It lacks the thought of the internally complex feature of actors and diversified agency. In addition, human beings struggle whether to accept common values decided by institutions with legitimacy. Namely, they sometimes decide how to act, struggling in their minds.

These discussions concluded that there is complex dynamics in that people cannot avoid the structural constraints in a society although they have the autonomy and reflexivity for questioning given social structures and for changing their lifestyles. The formation of an individual's

autonomy and structural constraints cannot be discussed in a simple way. A preferable approach is to hybridise the role of agency and structural constraints using the assertions of Giddens and Bourdieu whose concepts are important to understand structure and agency. Giddens and Bourdieu seek to explain the reproduction of social structures through the agent's action with the cultural background, rules and resources. Both are prominent scholars in social theory who try to define and draw the concepts of structure and agency in different ways (King 2005: 217). While human beings' perceptions and actions are embedded in customs or rules of the social structure, their actions are reproducing the social structure (King, 2005: 213).

Hoggett and Greener suggest useful models which show diversified patterns of agency within the paradigm indicating human reflexivity within social constraints. First of all, the pattern of actions implemented by each human agent is quite complicated. In addition, the interrelationship between structural influence, which includes social and economic positions, family and institutions, and agency is not simple. The reactions of people in relation to such structural contexts are differentiated and diversified. For example, some agents have the strong desire to change their living standards, but they cannot acquire sufficient resources to carry out their desire. In the case of such persons, there is

strong emotional behaviour. On the contrary, there are others who are unable or unwilling to attempt to escape from poverty because they are trapped into their social and economic position. The agency model can let researchers systematically categorise the social and economic actions of people into some types.

The combination of indigenous people's habitus and reflexivity in affecting the outcomes of their agency is important. The varied outcomes of their agency will answer the research questions of this thesis. Presumably, diversified outcomes of agency would produce diversified life standards among people. These issues are discussed later.

The complex nature of human perceptions and practices needs to be explored to arrive at a more dynamic understanding of the poverty issue. Which kind of methodology and epistemology are best suited for such analysis? This is discussed in the next chapter.

## **Chapter 3: Epistemological Background and Methodology**

### **3.1. Introduction**

The first and second chapters have discussed the possible diversified actions of individuals and the influence of structure on them in order to clarify the intertwined relationship between structure, such as inequality and modernisation, and the perceptions and actions of individuals. As a consequence of discussions, it found that the structure of poverty of indigenous people is not simple. In addition, some literatures point out that not all indigenous people are in similar vulnerable and disadvantageous positions, as some of them are in better positions than others for increasing their resources. This difference in opportunity and ability is quite an interesting point.

On the one hand, some researchers and international development organisations, regarding indigenous people as special tribal groups with particular religions and regulations and different social systems, primarily emphasise the promotion of an understanding of the regulations and identities of indigenous people as the most important discipline for a development policy (Posey, 1996: 1; Inter-American Development Bank, 2004:1). On the other hand, there are researchers who are critical of this idea. For instance, Nino and Montalvo (2005: 194) argue that indigenous people tend to be regarded as a homogenised group and their differences

are ignored in the ways in which they generate social change in order to ensure both cultural and material survival. This argument maintains that a society is comprised of individuals and a structure with dynamic interplay between them and institutions (Pawson and Tilley, 1998: 63). That is to say, the structure of poverty from which indigenous people suffer is of a multi-dimensional and dynamic nature. For an understanding of the dynamics of their poverty, discussing the relationship of structure and agency is indispensable. The second chapter showed that there is a close interdependent relationship between the structure of society and the perceptions and actions of human agents. That is to say, individuals are not simple dupes of the structure of their society (Sayer, 1997: 95-96) and can choose their actions according to their desires and plans, while their self-identity and perceptions are embedded in structural contexts such as theirs and their parents' social and economic positions. Discussions about this lead to the consideration that individuals show various patterns of actions in society.

In order to research the complexities of the chronic poverty of indigenous people, a suitable methodology is required. This should be one which facilitates the study of the regulation of structure and the variability of agency. The substance of this chapter is: to explain how the data for this study were collected and interpreted; to consider what



research ethics are involved; and what kinds of limitations and problems appeared.

### **3.2. Philosophical Background: Realism**

In order to research the complexities of the chronic poverty of the Taiwanese indigenous people, suitable epistemology and methodology are required. This should be that which facilitates the study of the regulation of structure and the variability of their agency. The influence of structure on the Taiwanese indigenous people and their agency are in complex relationships because within society, people, due to the diverse patterns of their agency, respond differently (Bhaskar, 1997: 104). In particular, because the social and economic structures in Taiwan are at present rapidly changing due to modernisation and globalisation, the interrelationship between the social structure and the Taiwanese indigenous people is fundamentally based on contingent and unforeseen events and circumstances. The unequal structure between the Taiwanese indigenous people and mainstream Taiwan society, which tends to be regarded as one of the main causalities of their long-lasting poverty, is dynamic rather than static. Therefore, the positivist stance which states that there is regularity between causality and result is not a suitable position to take. As Sayer (1997: 101) says, although  $x$  can presuppose  $y$ ,

that doesn't guarantee that  $y$  will happen. Social phenomena usually constitute a combination of diverse and unpredictable elements and forces, and therefore the future is open (Sayer, 1997: 87, 2004: 15).

Through the field research in Taiwan, this thesis aims to develop knowledge and understanding about the interdependency of a transforming social structure and agency, combining the following viewpoints: (1) the formation of the social and economic positions of the Taiwanese indigenous people in relation to their family; (2) the influence of these positions on the perceptions and activities of the Taiwanese indigenous people; (3) their autonomous and reflexive agency in an unequal but transforming relationship with members of the mainstream society; (4) their agency within the inequality of their society.

### **3.3. Methodology**

#### **3.3.1. Literature Review**

In order to abstract from given theoretical and conceptual backgrounds to set up the scheme and question of this research, literature review is indispensable. As Hart points, literature review is for an understanding of the research object and its problem; to justify the research topic, design and methodology (Hart, 2005: 13). When researchers set up their research designs and structures, their initial enthusiasm which contains

misconceptions often result in broad, ambiguous and ambitious contents. Through the literature review – the selection of available documents on the topic which contain information, ideas, data and evidence written from a particular standpoint to fulfil certain aims or express certain views of the topic – comes the progressive narrowing and focusing of the research design and structure (Hart, 2005: 13). In addition, during the process of literature review, literatures need to be examined to provide the background and justification for the research and to select theory and research methods. This process will normally be confined to indicating clearly what is known with regard to the research question (Blaikie, 2000: 24). That is to say, a research question is one which the research is designed to address, and that question will help to design a study which is focused rather than vague, but which can nevertheless be exploratory and fluid (Mason 2002: 19-20).

### **3.3.2. Qualitative Techniques**

The aim of this thesis is for understanding the different patterns of agent actions which are based on the habitus of indigenous people and their greater or lesser autonomous reflexivity. Therefore, it is necessary to communicate with the indigenous people, asking various sorts of questions which pertain to that aim. For this reason, rather than

quantitative research, which emphasises the measurement and counting of phenomena in society (Silverman, 2005: 29), a qualitative research method is suitable for collecting and analysing the collected data. Of course, referring to measurements about the social and economic gap between the indigenous people and mainstream society is important. The statistics published by the Taiwanese government provide data such as the rate of unemployment, unachieved education and health problems.

These official statistics and measurement of their poverty have profound limitations which cannot show the complex and diversified patterns of the activities in the lives of the indigenous people. Qualitative techniques can make up for this limitation. Especially, qualitative research lets researchers explore a wide array of dimensions of the social world, including the texture and weave of everyday life (Mason, 2002: 1). It is necessary to observe and understand people's views, beliefs and meanings which are the sources of their actions in their daily life. Brewer (2000: 35) strongly argues that researchers have to ask people certain sorts of questions about the research topic, approaching that topic in terms of the people's meanings, attitudes, beliefs and interpretations. Moreover, as their attitudes, beliefs and actions are often complex, communicating with them in depth is of great importance.

### **3.3.3. Research Strategy: Ethnographic Approach**

Bourdieu (2007: 101) argues that researchers have to bring to light successfully the analysis of the structure of an agent's lifestyle which tends to be hidden under the diversity and multiplicity of the set of practices performed in daily life. To research such structure, there must be research of the habitus of the indigenous people, the internalised form of their social and cultural condition and of the conditionings it entails. At the same time, there must be investigation of the impact of modernisation which can provide individuals with opportunity to exercise their autonomous reflexivity. For example, the gender relationship in the family, the educational system and the economic structure of their society have changed. Their minds and values are exposed to and influenced by such transformations of the social structure, regardless whether they wish to be in the modernised social structure. The interrelationship of structural influence on people and their agency is not static but dynamic. It is by living among them in their villages that such dynamic and diversified interactions may be observed. The ethnographic approach is suitable for such research. "Ethnography is a style of research for understanding the social meanings and activities of people in a given setting which involves close association with, and often participation in, this setting" (Brewer, 2000: 11). Ethnography is participating, overtly or

covertly, in people's daily lives for an extended period of time, watching what happens, listening to what is said, asking questions (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995: 1). Namely, participant observation, in-depth interviews and personal documents are commonly used as the methods of data collection in ethnography (Brewer, 2000: 11). Especially, habitus is strongly related to the elements of society, like family, community, class, religion, organisations of work, educational systems, which form the fabric of the daily life of ordinary people. It is by communicating with them and observing their life that data can be obtained to construct the set of agents who are placed in institutions which impose homogenous values, leading them to similar practices and to possess a set of common properties or goods, which are then embodied as their habitus.

On the other hand, there is a social and economic gap in the fields of education and occupation among indigenous people. While some people are carrying out a more active social and economic life, communicating with *Han* and *Hakka* people, in the fields of marriage, education and occupation, there are others who suffer from a shortage of resources, health problem and alcoholism. To what extent can they exercise their agency in modernised days is strongly related to the following conditions: (1) the behaviour of their parents in the household; (2) the educational and economic resources of their parents; and (3) their own resources.

These conditions and their agency have to be observed “in naturally occurring settings or fields by methods of data collection which capture their social meanings and ordinary activities, involving the researcher participating directly in the setting” (Brewer, 2000: 10). For observing their behaviour in their daily life and working closely with informants, the following methods of data collection can be combined: participant observation and in-depth interview (Brewer, 2000: 59).

The ethnographic approach is used in the fieldwork to clarify (1) the complex power relations and interactions between parents and their children and (2) interaction among indigenous people who have different occupations and educational backgrounds.

### **3.4. The Case Study: Preparation and Site Selecting**

Yin (1994: 117) describes case study as a strategy for doing research which involves an empirical investigation of a particular contemporary phenomenon within its real life context using multiple sources of evidence. Case study is regarded as the preferred strategy when “how” and “why” questions are being asked. Case study is a strategy concerned with research which focuses on “some particular phenomenon or sets of events” (Mitchell, 2000: 166). As Brewer (2000: 13) and Robson (2005: 177) argue, in case study, the case is not only an individual but also a group or

organisation, whatever it is that we are interested in. In this research the family and its members in the indigenous groups became case studies.

As this research is to investigate how inequality influences people's identities and values and how their agency influences the poverty issue, the ideal residence area of the indigenous people for the fieldwork is a place that is close to an urbanised area but is also segregated, such as a mountainous area.

Prior to the field research in Taiwan, contact was made with the Department of Social Policy and Social Work of the National Chi Nan University in Nantou County. The staff members of this department have impressive academic achievements on the social and economic issues of the Taiwanese indigenous people. Their information and experience of field research were useful in planning the field research for this study. It was finally decided to choose the Sediq and Atayal people in Nantou County for the case study to research the dual intertwined relationship in modernised days between their living in the high mountains, but comparatively close to large cities including the capital Taipei, and their reactions to the social transformations taking place around them. These two groups are in the same linguistic family and at the time of the research in 2006 they were classified as belonging to the Atayal tribe. (In 2008 they were recognised as two distinct tribes.) The fieldwork was



carried out in four villages: Greenriver, Yellowriver, Alanvalley and Peacevalley from February to August 2006. The reason why these villages were selected was that from the time when their ancestors had participated in armed resistances against Japanese colonial power to the present, the lifestyles of these villagers have been continuously transformed by impacts from the outside world. By studying these four villages, this thesis can explore and analyse (1) the intertwined relationship between their traditions and modernisation, and (2) the history of their actions from their grandparents and parents to the present people faced with rapid social transformation.

The following illustrations are maps of the four villages where the field research was carried out.

Illustration 3.1: Map of Greenriver

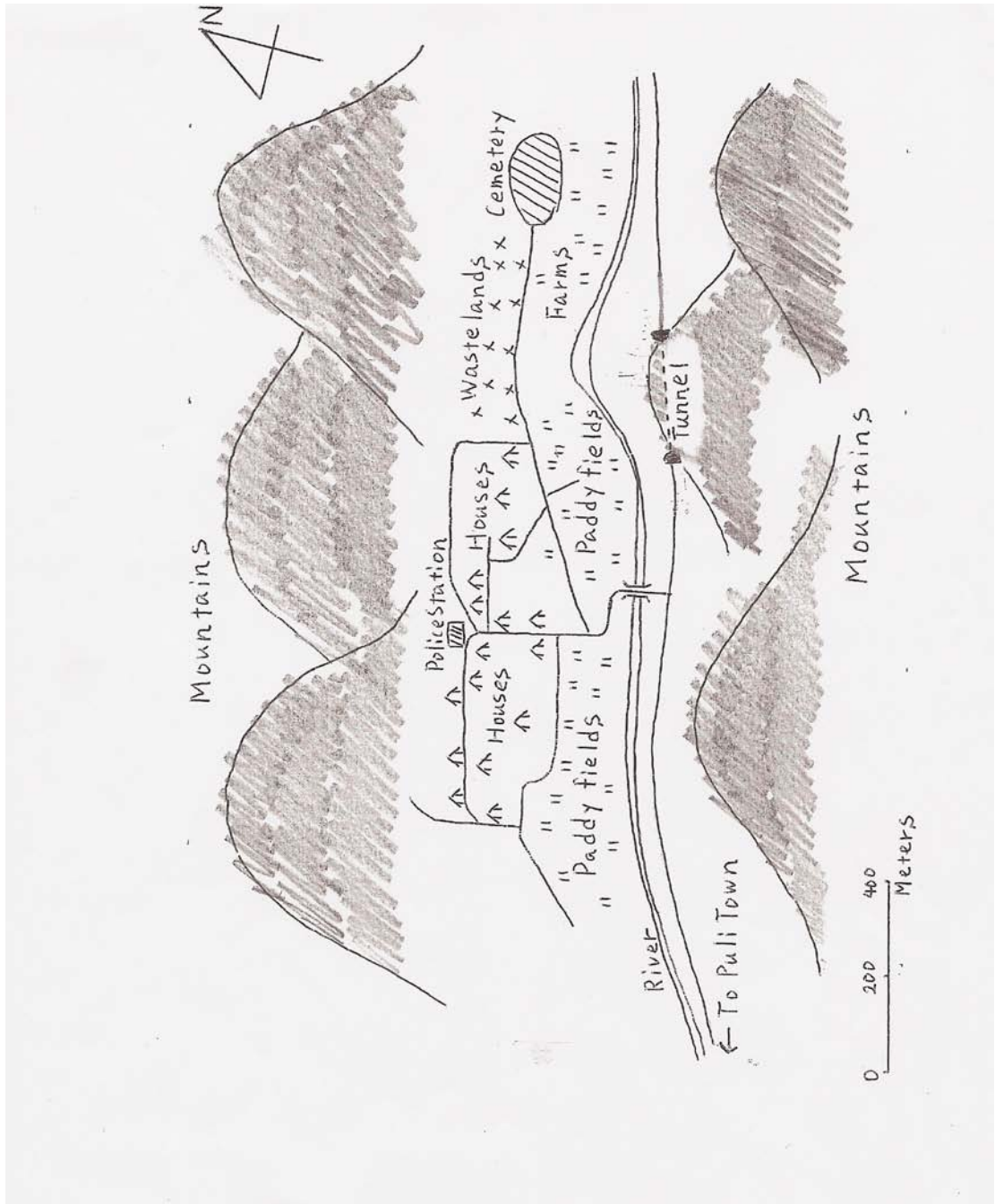


Illustration 3.2: Map of Yellowriver

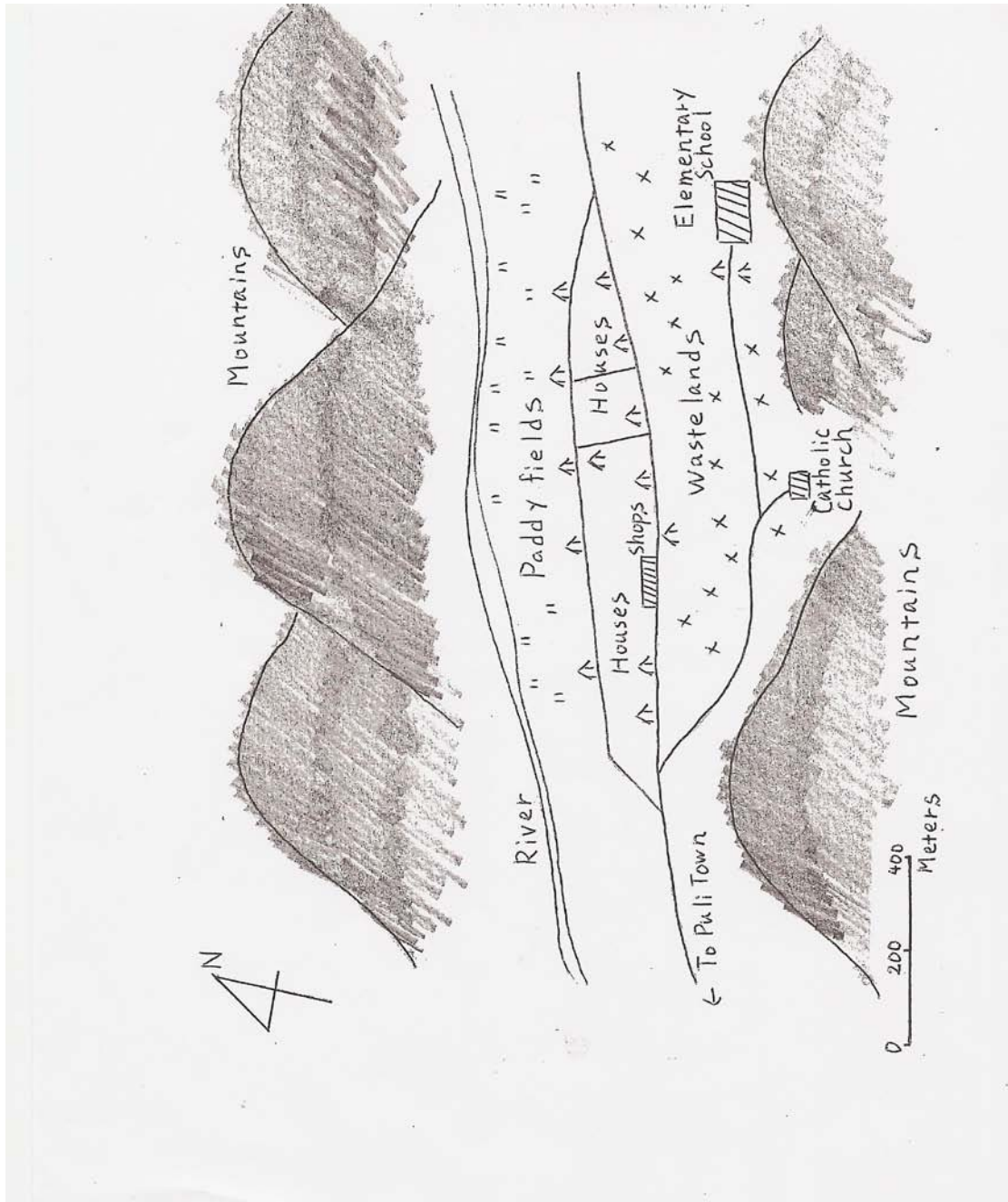


Illustration 3.3: Map of Alanvalley

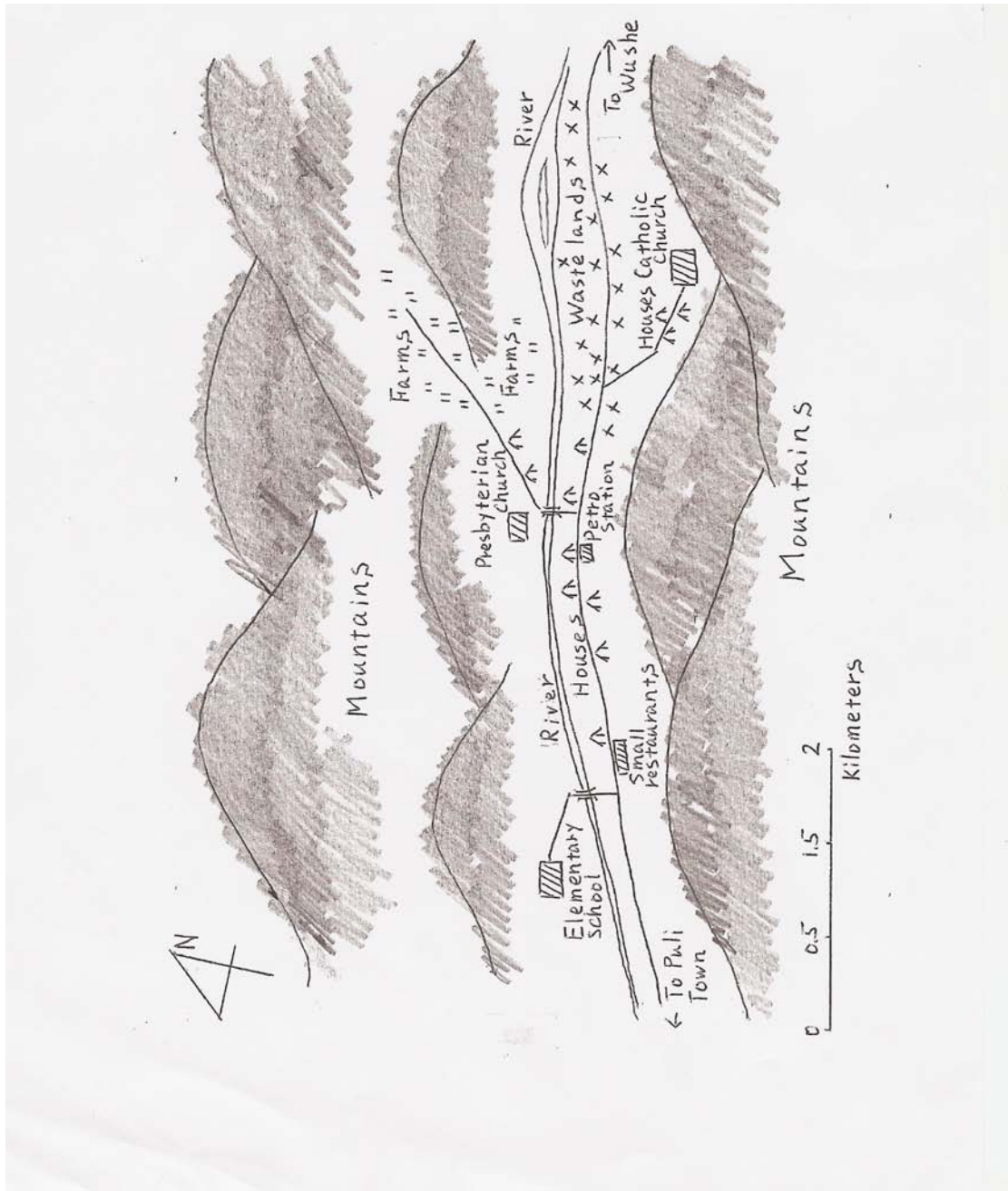
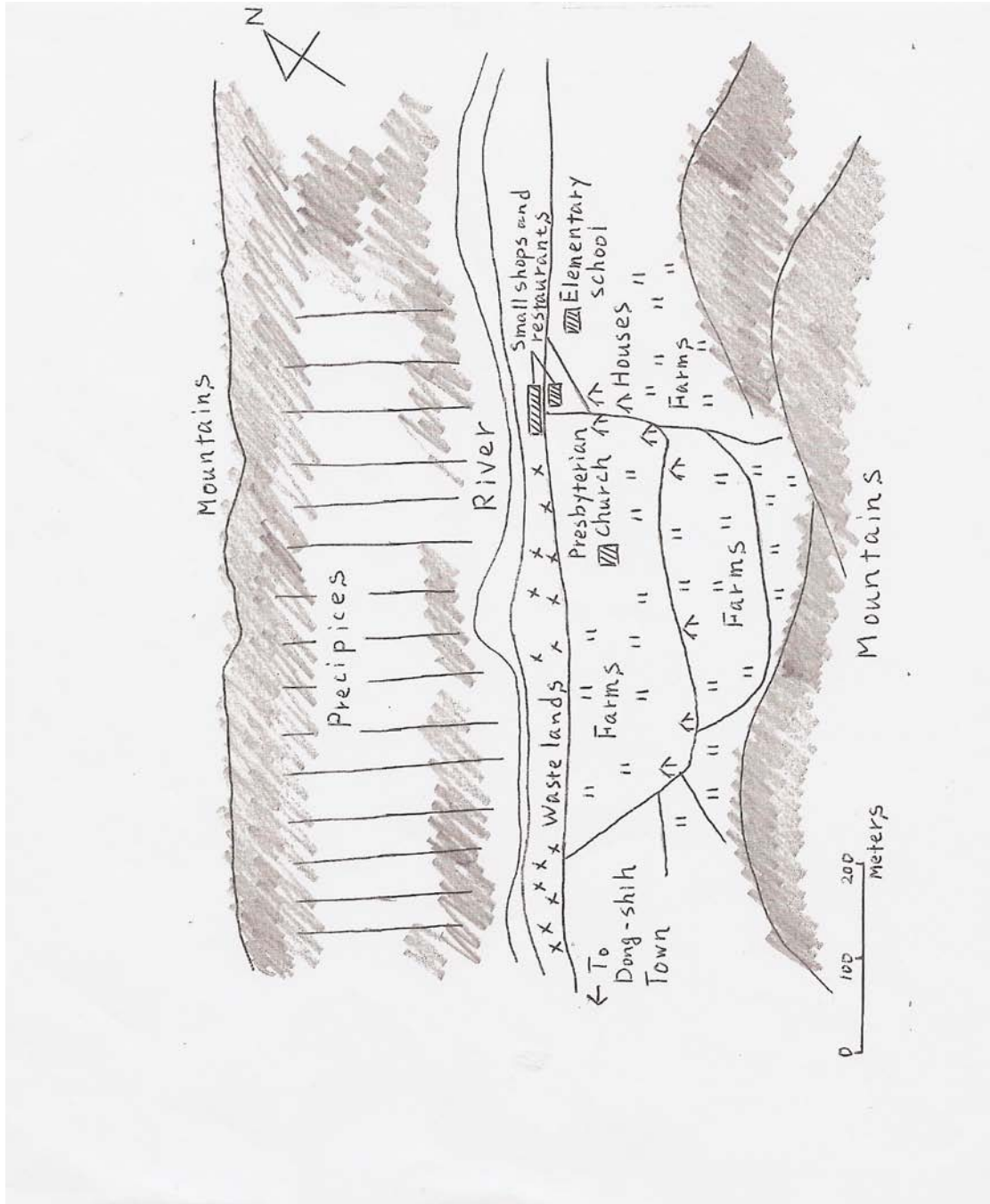


Illustration 3.4: Map of Peacevalley





### **3.5. Methods for Data Collection**

#### **3.5.1. Participant Observation**

Observation is fundamental to the field research. Participant observation involves data gathering by means of participation in the daily life of the informants in their natural settings: watching, observing and talking to them in order to discover their interpretations, social meanings and activities (Brewer 2000: 59). There are two main reasons why the method of participant observation was used: (1) the close involvement and association generate data on social interaction in a specific context as it occurs; (2) watching, listening, talking to and sharing the same daily life with the people under study makes it possible to discover their interpretations, social meanings and activities in a natural setting. Right from the start, by teaching English and Japanese to the indigenous people and attending Sunday service at the church used by many of the villagers, the researcher allayed any suspicion that the people might have and was made welcome, often getting invited for chats and drinks.

Data acquired through observation become generally deeper. Data acquired through such a personal way are affected by the intervention of the researchers such as their knowledge, attitude, interpretation or research purpose. As Burgess (1991, 45) argues, the main instrument of data collection in participant observation is the researcher. Researchers

who are participant observers have to develop certain personal qualities (Brewer, 2000: 59). During the months of fieldwork much care was taken to maintain a balance between the insider who shared the everyday life with the people under study, and the outsider who maintained a professional distance in order not to lose the critical stance for adequate observation and data collection.

For recording, field notes were produced for writing “more or less contemporaneously with the events, experiences and interactions that the researchers describe and recount” (Emerson *et al.*, 2001: 353). In practice these notes recorded the conversations and actions of the indigenous people gathering in a square, in people’s houses and in the karaoke shop. In addition, notes were also made of impressions about the physical and social infrastructures of their villages (i.e., road conditions, schools, the hygiene system and industries) and their lifestyles (i.e., homes, properties, meals and religions).

The field notes were analysed every day, each time coding the data in some categories, such as the parents’ behaviour, their reflexivity to historical events in their life and to social changes. Field notes are forms of representation, that is a way of reducing just observed events, persons and places to written accounts and to reconstituting that world in preserved forms that can be reviewed, studied and thought about time

and time again (Mason 2002: 98). That is to say, it is a double process of textual production and reproduction. This process begins with day-by-day writing up of observations and reflections concerning the fieldwork and settings (Atkinson, 1992: 5).

Field notes are selective in what they do include, since they inevitably present or frame the events and objects written about in particular ways, hence missing other ways that the events might have been presented or framed (Emerson *et al.*, 2001: 353). The interview is a means for making up for these missing parts.

### **3.5.2. Interviewing**

The use of interviews is compatible with participant observation. Participant observations may only represent the researcher's own perceptions about the everyday life of the researched, but interviews offer an access to the respondents' lived experiences in their own words. Questions asked at the interviews related to the data collected through observation.

Brewer (2000:65) points out that respondents might worry about the purpose of the research (i.e., why they are chosen or to what use the data will be put). With this in mind, the interviews were scheduled to take place only after the villagers had got used to the presence of the



researcher and had some idea of his work among them. There was the concern that the respondents might be inconsistent in that they do not actually do what they say they do, or they might be hesitant in answering questions. To deal with these concerns, the natural setting was used to implement face-to-face, informal and free communication. An interview typically began with natural conversation on topics which interested the indigenous people in order to make the interviewee feel relaxed. The conversation then developed into the interview itself, moving on to get to the heart of social issues, such as parents' attitudes and actions towards their children, their incomes and health problems. This approach of gradually developing an interview allowed the respondents to express their ideas, thoughts and impressions about social and economic issues freely and comfortably.

When communicating with the indigenous people, remembering the following questions was important to develop the interview to get to their thoughts:

- (1) Events and affairs at national and community level, for example, social and economic structural changes due to globalisation or the changes in political schemes.

- (2) Their life history: how did/do their parents bring up or educate them; how did/do their parents behave at home and in society; what jobs did/do their parents have?
- (3) Their wishes for their children: for example, education and occupation.
- (4) Their reflexivity: how did/do they react or overcome events or circumstances?

Semi-structured interviews were used, with the above predetermined questions as guides, but making changes in the words of the questions according to the situation and environment of the conversation. Of course, as Mason (2002: 77) points out, in conducting an interview it was important to bear in mind what it is that turns interviews into data, rather than chats or conversation. Interviews are not “about ascertaining acts or beliefs out there in the world” but for knowing “accounts of the subjective experience” of the respondents (Silverman, 2005: 90).

One of the strategies used was to have focus groups, based mainly according to age. According to this plan, the interviews were carried out with the members of families, from young people to the elderly of both sexes. In addition, to understand the facts of the poverty issue of the indigenous people, the semi-structured interviews were also conducted with key persons: community leaders, government officers, school teachers

and aid workers. Interviews with these people resulted in more objective and critical views of the social and economic issues.

Careful consideration was given to the sampling strategy and the method of snowball sampling was decided upon. Firstly, the host families were asked to introduce people who were willing to accept the request for interviews. After each interview, the interviewee was then asked whether he or she would be able to introduce some relatives or friends who would be willing to participate in the research. According to Robson (2005: 265-266), this sampling strategy can be similar to purposive sampling in that researchers can collect data from one case or a few cases. This method of sampling is quite often criticised for being biased. However, this technique does not attempt to seek statistical generalisation (Patton, 1982: 100, Robson, 2005: 265). Rather, the purpose of such a sampling strategy is to seek in-depth and detailed information about selected cases (Patton, 1982: 101). Snowball sampling allowed for the collection of detailed information about the diversified and differentiated life histories of the indigenous people. Altogether 39 people were interviewed. Of these, 31 were the subjects of the case study, the Sediq and Atayal people from the four selected villages. They were made up of 11 males, 19 females and 1 boy (12 years old). They were chosen over a range of ages, occupations, educational backgrounds and gender. The other 8 were persons engaged

in providing the selected people with services from whom useful information could be obtained about them. The number of interviewees is the consequence of compromise between a desire for diversity in the sample and practical concern about the limitation of finance and time. It was a choice of fewer but in-depth interviews.

Two methods for gathering the data from interviews were used: using a tape recorder and note-taking. In using a recorder, the researcher is able to concentrate on the topic and the dynamics of the interview. In note-taking, the researcher is able to avoid the problem that the respondents might worry that the tape will be used as evidence against them some day. However, each method has its demerit. When relying completely on tape recordings, the interviewer's observations, interpretations, experiences and judgements are often ignored (Mason, 2002: 77). For example, there was the possibility that the participants' eye contact or body language could be ignored. In addition, when the tape recorder was brought out during conversation, most people suddenly stopped their talking or changed the topic of the conversation. As a consequence, it was decided to use both methods: tape recorder and note-taking. During interviews when the tape recorder was used, key words were written down as notes. After an interview, the recording from the tape was immediately transcribed, with additional notes on non-verbal behaviour such as eye contact.

In interviews with people showing hesitation with the tape recorder, some written questions were taken to the interview and these were expanded in the course of the conversation. During the interview, key words and short sentences of their answers were written down and notes were made of their facial and other expressions. When the interview was over their responses were immediately written out in full.

As for the locations for the interviews, homes, workplaces and meeting places were visited and the participants were interviewed there. In the private areas the participants might have felt more relaxed and responded better.

As was carried out with participant observation, taped recordings and notes of the interviews were transcribed to the personal computer. In collecting data through participant observation and semi-structured interviews, it was important to bear in mind that “qualitative data can easily become overwhelming” (Robson 2005: 476). As an effective way of keeping the data manageable, coding the interview data into some categories was implemented.

### **3.6. Methods of Data Analysis**

Although data collected from the qualitative method is rich and full, it is a nuisance, unruly or messy and has a changing form and style without

attention to consistency and coherency (Emerson, *et al.*, 2001: 355, Robson, 2005: 455). For this reason it was necessary to consider (1) coding, (2) data triangulation and (3) reflexivity, for systematically categorising and analysing data.

First of all, coding collected data in categories is essential for narrowing down the scope effectively.

At the same time, care had to be taken to ensure the quality of qualitative data analysis by utilising the concept of triangulation. According to Robson (2005: 175), triangulation can help to counter the threats to validity of the data. Particularly, the concern was whether the indigenous people would be open when they were asked questions. For them, some questions may be sensitive and they may not express their ideas. Of course, it was impossible to forcefully insist that they answer the questions. Therefore, cross-checking evidence by combining different kinds of data resources and different methods (observation and interviews) are required.

Reflexivity is a useful way for minimising subjectivity. It was required to be always critical of the data collected from field notes and interview records, recognising that the data are influenced by the sensitivity of the topic, the power relations and interactions between the researcher and the indigenous people in the field. Such factors in turn strongly influence how

the data are interpreted and conveyed in the writing up of the results (Brewer, 2000: 127). Brewer (1994: 235-236, 2000: 132) asserts that ethnographic researchers, as researchers and authors of their theses, are required to critically assess their integrity and their experience during all the stages of their research and the strength and weakness of their research designs and strategies by considering the grounds on which knowledge claims are being justified (length of field work, the extent of the trust and rapport in communicating with the respondents). Reflexivity requires the researcher to ask himself a series of critical questions, the answers to which impinge upon and help to shape the data and the analysis and interpretation of the data.

### **3.7. Understanding People's Reflections**

In the analysis of the collected data, investigating and analysing the minds and attitudes of the indigenous people is most important. In particular, knowing how their minds and attitudes are formed is indispensable. For example, McNay (2000: 9, 62-63) points out that the process of subject formation such as self-identity, reflexivity and perception is realised through structural constraints such as familial background and a person's economic position in society, and her

autonomous agency. Methodologically, how can we know people's reflections?

For example, the school of post-constructionism focuses on an individual's discourse, linking what is said and written to the gesture of writing or to the articulation of speech. This idea is from the attitude which regards human beings as rhetoricians and arguers who are constantly engaged in exploring new ideas and knowledge by their reflections or expressing their emotions (Burr, 2003: 87, 128). Discourse is a means of representing our ideas, feelings and desires and our world (Burr, 2003: 87) and individuals are locating themselves in the position from which the discourse makes sense (Hall, 1997: 56). For this reason, researchers supporting post-constructionism strongly believe that discourse can let researchers discover or rediscover the intention of a person, her conscious activity, or the unconscious activities that take place in what she says or in the almost imperceptible fracture of her actual words or silent murmuring (Foucault, 2005: 30). That is to say, the school of post-constructionism mainly focuses on how discourse and linguistic patterns decide and produce a person's identity and thinking style (Knights and Morgan 1991; Mumby and Stohl 1991).

However Sayer (1997: 20) criticises as fallacy the post-modern thinking which asserts that knowledge can be carried and applied only through the



ways in which the meaning of spoken or written forms can be communicated.

McNay (1999, 2000) is also critical of the idea that discourse can let us know the formation of an individual's identity because it offers a one-sided account of agency and underplays the creative dimension present in the responses of individuals to changing social relations. With regard to the relation between the material and the symbolic, McNay (1999: 96) points out the limitation of an individual's embodiment in a symbolic account such as language. The primacy accorded to symbolic accounts of subjectification does not consider material dynamics in the process of identity formation.

For example, gender studies still remain largely within the thoughts of post-constructionism, meaning that a symbolic, or, more narrowly, a linguistic conception produces the construction of corporeal identity (McNay, 2000: 14). The issue of the social production of gender inequalities is often reduced to the narrower view of the symbolic construction of sexual identity. Although post-constructionism tends to regard that all social practices are to some degree linguistically mediated, these social practices are not necessarily linguistic in nature (McNay, 2000: 14). Of course, although the role of linguistics is important, it is not sufficient to understand people's reflections and thoughts. Rather, we

need to observe “the material dimensions of power” (McNay, 2000: 14). For example, social and economic inequality including employment discrimination or underachieved education, from which the Taiwanese indigenous people suffer, are deeply sedimented and complex and are reproduced in ways that the linguistic model does not adequately capture. The subjects can be understood in the course of engaging in social practices and this understanding is tied to the practical activity of agents. As discussed in Chapter 2, the formation of a subject such as his self-identity and perception is in the relation to the habits, occupations and values of his parents. As Bhaskar (1991) argues, individuals also intervene materially in the world, and they can know how to do something without being able to reflect much about this discursively. That is to say, human beings are influenced by physical process extra-discursively (Sayer, 2004: 37).

To arrive at an understanding of the indigenous people’s struggle against poverty, it is essential refer to both the paradigm of coping with structural constraints and the paradigm of understanding people’s thoughts and reflections. Therefore, it is necessary to move from the paradigm asserting that the subject is formed by symbolic construction and discourse to a more generative account of subject formation. Rather, the relationship between linguistic and the material power relationship

with family and institutions can be a generative account of the formation of the subject of agents.

### **3.8. Problems and Limitations**

#### **3.8.1. Criticisms of the Ethnographic Approach**

The ethnographic approach has been criticised by the natural science model of social research which asserts that data collected through an ethnographic approach are subjective and contrast sharply with numerate data which appear to be more objective (Brewer, 2000). However, knowledge of researchers is selective and contains their interest and a particular reason why they choose this or that research topic. That is to say, knowledge is moulded by a researcher's technical skills, and by his intelligence, by all that he wants, by his passion no less than by his objectivity (Gouldner, 1973: 78). Thus, as Dey (1993: 15) asserts, all data, regardless of methods, are produced by researchers, since they make the various choices about research design, location and approach. All methods are cultural and personal constructs and collect partial and selective knowledge. Therefore, this research methodology is strongly influenced by the researcher's interests, thoughts, values and beliefs. However, it does not mean that this research is able to avoid the criticism of subjectivity or that it does not need to deal with the issue of subjectivity.

The other issue which is relevant to this research method is that ethnographic researchers have been criticised on the grounds that their data cannot be generalised. A feature of the data collected through the ethnographic approach is that the quality and contents are rich and deep. On the other hand, collecting very detailed, rich and deep data is time-consuming and demanding (Brewer, 2000: 77). As a result this approach allows the researchers to do their fieldwork only in one or two sites. To deal with the criticisms which insist that the data collected through ethnographic approach cannot be generalised, Hammersley (1992) suggests that we should (1) obtain information about relevant aspects of the population of cases and compare our case with them; (2) coordinate several ethnographic studies. However, Silverman (2005: 250) criticises Hammersley's suggestions as too difficult and ambitious for the research student to carry out. A large sample size would make it more difficult for intensive analysis which is preferred in qualitative research (Silverman 2005: 249). In the case of this research, due to financial limitation, to stay too long in the field to collect data was difficult.

In addition, statistically collected and randomly selected huge samples cannot be applied directly to a particular social phenomenon or event. The aim of this research is for deepening an understanding of the dynamism of the poverty issue in a village of indigenous people at grassroots level,

observing people's actions and interactions in their daily lives. Therefore, this thesis would like to focus on intensive analysis. However, it has to consider the criticism of the lack of generalisation in sampling. What it can do is to combine different methods and data resources to examine a social phenomenon from different views and angles to enhance validity.

### **3.8.2. Problems and Limitations in Field Research**

Although going native is a high risk as the researcher could lose their critical views, ethnographers earn people's trust by showing a willingness to learn their language and their ways of life, to eat what they eat, speak like they speak and do as they do (Brewer, 2000: 85). In practice acquiring the trust of the indigenous people was not easy. There were various kinds of barriers between them and the researcher.

First of all, there was concern over the identity of the researcher as a Japanese man who cannot speak Chinese and the effect this might have on the indigenous people, given that they have a tragic historical relationship with the Japanese authority during the colonial days. Most of them, especially the elderly people, who had a Japanese education and can speak Japanese, were friendly and at times spoke with nostalgia, and therefore it became easy to communicate with them. Through their conversation, fundamental historical data of their villages in the past

which includes their lifestyles, families and education were acquired. Although they showed their friendship, it was crucial to always bear in mind their tragic history. During conversations with them about their historical background, especially about the Japanese colonial days, no comments were made on their views, especially when some of them criticised what the Japanese authority had done to them.

Sensitive consideration had to be given to the indigenous culture, values and lifestyles, above all their *gaya* which is their regulations and taboos. In this, care was taken not to give offence, especially to the elderly people. Precautions had to be taken in communicating with the females in order not to cause any upset among the elderly and the males. Casual conversations with individual young females were kept to a minimum. Meetings, especially those suggested by individual young females themselves, always took place during the day in the house of the host family. Invitations from females for drinks or Karaoke sessions were accepted only when there was a group of them. Despite the effort not to incur gossip, there was some speculation about the relationship between the researcher and a Taiwanese female research student whose help with translation from English to Chinese was often sought.

There was the problem of maintaining a balance between respecting the sensibilities of some of the villagers and gaining the acceptance and trust

of others. While the elderly generally disapproved of drinking alcohol as the cause of the depraved life of the indigenous people, drinking alcohol has become an undisputed part of the lifestyle among some of them. Participation in drinking with the villagers, besides being necessary for social reasons, also provided opportunities for observation. For example, it was observed that males seem to drink much more than females when they gather. On trips to the Karaoke shop with some of the villagers, it was noticed that they always bought rice wine and beer before buying tinned food.

The biggest barrier in the field research was the language problem as the researcher has only a poor command of the Chinese language. Communication with the elderly people was not difficult as they speak Japanese. Communication with the young people directly posed a problem at the beginning. There was concern that the data from interviews with young people would be less than the data from interviews with the middle-aged and elderly persons. Fortunately it was found out later that there were some Taiwanese research students with English skills living in the same village. With their help in translating, communicating with the young indigenous people became easier. In Alanvalley the host mother, who speaks fluent Japanese, was able to translate Japanese to Chinese at each interview.

Altogether 31 indigenous people who made up the case study group were interviewed. Some of them did not wish to talk about their life history. As a consequence, personal data were collected based on life histories from only 20 people (8 males and 12 females), including members of the host families in the four villages. They also shared their views about their society and the mainstream society. Furthermore, observation of their every day life was carried out. Data from these people are used to clarify the pattern of agency in terms of their occupational and educational backgrounds. The data from the other 11 interviewees, together with the views of these 20, serve as useful information about the more general social and economic issues of the indigenous people. Data from interviews with the 8 support services people who have contact with the villagers add to the picture.

### **3.9. Ethics**

Entering into and living in a society that has a different societal and cultural background it was essential to observe the way of life of the indigenous people with sensitivity and to respect their privacy. Research should not just leave participants unscathed but should also avoid infringing their rights. Murphy and Dingwall (2001) suggest a list of four points of ethics. (Table 3.1)



**Table 3.1**

**List of Ethical Points**

Non –Maleficence	Researchers should avoid harming participants.
Beneficence	Research on human subjects should produce some positive and identifiable benefits rather than simply be carried out for its own sake.
Autonomy and Self-determination	The values and decisions of research participants should be respected.
Justice	People who are equal in relevant respects should be treated equally.

Source: Adapted from Murphy and Dingwall (2001: 339)

The contents of Table 3.1 are related to how important it is for researchers to respect the thoughts, rights and privacy of their subjects when they implement their field research. First of all, it was important to acquire the trust of the indigenous villagers. Their trust was gained by taking care to respect their values, thoughts and privacy. The Taiwanese indigenous people tend to be wary of unknown people. For instance, some of the villagers of Greenriver clearly expressed their impression of researchers and criticised the attitude of those researchers who had been in their village who did not respect the customs of the residents. According to them, these researchers did their fieldwork without sufficient communication with them and did not give them anything in return. For this reason, as Murphy and Dingwall (2001) suggest, how to provide some reward in keeping with their culture was considered. It was decided to teach some major subjects to indigenous children because the educational

gap between members of the mainstream society and the indigenous people is one of the important research topics. Voluntary help in teaching English, Mathematics and Japanese was given in Greenriver where the host mother was teaching English and the tribal language at home to the indigenous children of Greenriver and Yellowriver. Voluntary lessons in Japanese were given to the villagers in the Catholic Church in Alanvalley. In Peacevalley, help in English and mathematics was given to the sons of the host family and some indigenous children.

Another way to repay the villagers lies in the future. Through publishing articles in journals or teaching in a Taiwanese university, it would be possible to inform non-indigenous Taiwanese of the poverty of the indigenous people and let them understand this issue. Through these efforts some members of the mainstream society of Taiwan will become aware and will try to help the indigenous people through social and voluntary work or in other ways.

Throughout the fieldwork and in analysing the collected data, care was taken to observe (1) confidentiality; (2) anonymity; (3) informed consent and (4) voluntary participation.

Although the Taiwanese indigenous people were generally respectful and welcoming, they were concerned about how the collected data would be analysed and what would be written in the thesis. During interviews,

not a few indigenous people asked for their names not to be mentioned in the thesis. Members of the host families have told some of their life histories and that of other villagers which are quite important and useful data. They also requested for their names not to be mentioned in the thesis. To respect their confidentiality fictitious names are used.

Informed consent is also an essential consideration with regard to the ethics of fieldwork. At the beginning of a stay with a host family, clear explanations were given about the research and what would be done in carrying out the fieldwork. Similar explanations were given to the people in a village before observation of their daily life began. At the start of an interview the interviewee was informed of the questions and the topics that would be covered. If there was any hesitation or reluctance to answer the questions the conversation would be changed to daily topics. Despite the attempt to keep them informed some of them refused to be interviewed. This was especially so if the questions were related to their private life history including their occupations and those of their parents, their educational level, the relationship with their parents and their spouses, their health problems and alcoholism. These questions seemed to be quite sensitive for some of the indigenous people. Although their responses to the questions would be important data for analysing their

reflexivity and agency, they were not pressed for answers when they hesitated to respond. It was a dilemma for this research.

As Robson (2005) mentions, real world research tends to make the researchers face ethical dilemmas especially when they come across violent or criminal activities. Despite all the precautions taken during the fieldwork, there was some unavoidable involvement with the social issues of the villagers. For example, during an incident when an attack was made by a drunken man on the house of the host family, the researcher had to intervene by asking the host mother to contact the police.

Ethics is not only about field research but also about data storage and writing up. When storing data in the computer, a password was set up to protect the privacy of the respondents. We may have the interest and curiosity about a social issue and wish to research it. At the same time, the researchers must remember the sensibilities of people who participate in the fieldwork. Especially, this research has to deal with issues which may make the indigenous people feel shameful. Ethics is a useful discipline for this research to balance between its interest and their concern.

### **3.10. Summary and Conclusion**

This chapter explained the epistemological background and the methodology which are suitable for this research to investigate the dynamics of the poverty of the Taiwanese indigenous people and their reactions to this social and economic problem. Especially, the main purpose of this research is to consider the complex relationship of the structural context, social transformation and individuals. While the social structure has huge influence on the formation of the self-identity and perceptions of individuals, it is not static but is rapidly transformed in the present day. This transformation also has a profound influence on changes in the interactions of structure and individuals. For example, due to modernisation, some indigenous people, more than others, are able to actively exercise their agency for acquiring more resources. There are various patterns in the activities in their daily life and their behaviour is unpredictable and diverse. For this reason, this research is exploratory, flexible and takes an open stance. To investigate the dynamics of the indigenous people's poverty, this research needs the framework which lets the researcher observe and research the dynamic transformation of the society and the diverse reactions of its members. An ethnographic approach is helpful for this purpose.

In practice, in the field research, there were problems and difficulties some of which were unpredictable until the fieldwork, including interviews and observation, actually started.

## Chapter 4: Contents of the Chronic Poverty Problems of the Taiwanese Indigenous People

### 4.1. Introduction

Taiwan is an island in East Asia (Figure 4.1). Despite diplomatic isolation, Taiwan has become one of Asia's big industrialised economies. Its GDP per capita in 2007 was 16,800 US Dollars.

Figure 4.1: Location of Taiwan



Source: Adapted from: <http://www.worldmap.org/region.php?region=East%20Asia> (Accessed: 30<sup>th</sup> January 2009)

However, like the indigenous people living in other countries, the Taiwanese indigenous people are vulnerable racial groups who are in disadvantageous positions, with low-paying jobs, few employment opportunities, the lack of social services, and suffering from the ignorance or discrimination by the mainstream society. Despite such a disadvantageous social and economic position, the existence of Taiwanese indigenous people, not to mention the disastrous effects of development in their areas, is not much known outside Taiwan (Simon, 2005: 53).

First of all, this chapter explains the reasons why the case of indigenous people in Taiwan was chosen for this research. One reason is that accessing national level data of the Taiwanese indigenous people is easy. These reliable data issued by the Taiwanese government show the severity of the socially and economically vulnerable positions of the Taiwanese indigenous people. The other reason is personal. As a Japanese, the researcher is interested to understand what happened to the indigenous people of Taiwan during the Japanese colonial days, with the hope that he might be able to contribute to help the Taiwanese indigenous people who still suffer from low standards of living in the developed and highly industrialised Taiwanese society.

In Taiwan, there are three major races: indigenous people (*Genjumin*), *Han* (offspring of immigrants from the Chinese continent) and *Hakkas* (a



different racial group from the Han people who emigrated from the Chinese continent).

The social and economic structures in Taiwan have historically been drastically influenced and changed by the Chinese monarchy, the Japanese colonial power and the present Republic of China. From 1895 to 1945, under Japanese colonial rule, Taiwanese society and culture were influenced by Japan. When Japan was defeated in the Second World War in 1945, Japan returned Taiwan to China ruled by the Chinese Nationalist Party. This party was defeated by the Communist Party of China in the Chinese Civil War in 1949. After this defeat, the Chinese Nationalist Party moved to Taiwan from mainland China.

Today, Taiwan is in a huge debate about its national identity. This huge debate is related to the complicated modern history between mainland China and Taiwan. Taiwan was recognised as China for a while by the international society under the official name of Taiwan – Republic of China. After some time most countries started to cut off formal diplomatic relationship with the Republic of China and recognised the People's Republic of China as China. At present Taiwan's status as a nation state in international politics is quite vague because the Republic of China is rarely recognised by most countries in the international society. Under such an unstable political environment there is an escalation of the

political debate about the identity of Taiwan, as to whether Taiwan should be unified with the People's Republic of China or should be an independent nation (Wang, 2000: 94). The Taiwanese indigenous people also have been historically involved in this debate regardless of their willingness or not to be part of it. For example, during the dictatorship by the Chinese Nationalist Party, their education had been focused on mandarin Chinese and Chinese history and culture.

On the other hand, Taiwan socially and economically has been exposed to rapid transformation which is accompanied by modernisation and globalisation. Taiwan is rapidly adopting market-led economic and social development. As a consequence, Taiwan is acknowledged as an economically successful country by outsiders (Gilpin, 1987; Wade, 1990). However, at the same time, the country has serious social and economic problems, such as a high unemployment rate and a reduction of opportunity to find well-paid jobs. The indigenous people of Taiwan have been continuously involved in these historical dynamics and transformations and their identities, habits and customs have been influenced and changed by them. Due to these transformations, their perceptions and practices in their social and economic activities are becoming diversified. Because of diversification in their lifestyle, some indigenous people can utilise these changes to their advantage, while

others still suffer from long-lasting poverty. Against this background, a main theme of this thesis is to research their life histories, values, beliefs and actions which are continuously influenced by the social and economic transformation of Taiwan.

This chapter discusses the detailed contents of the dynamism of their poverty.

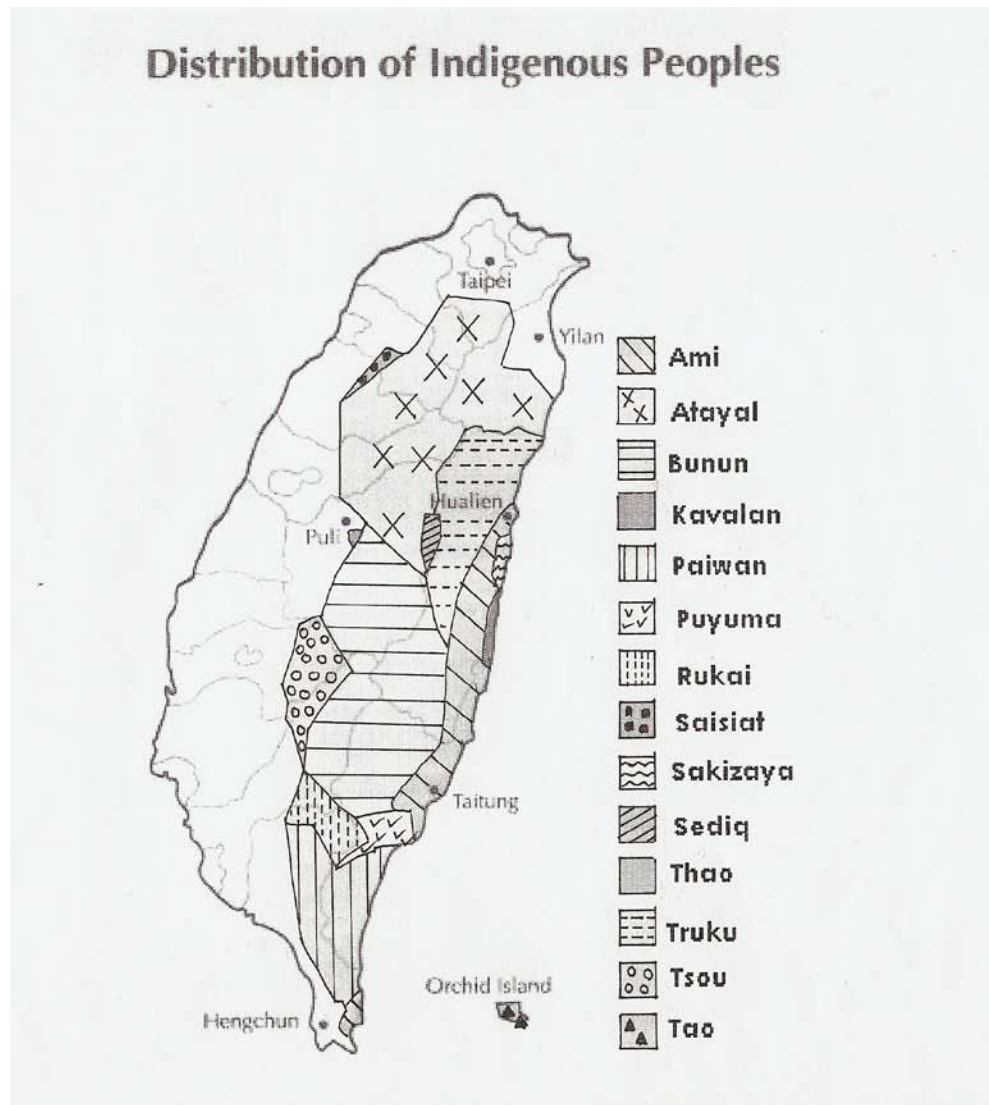
#### **4.2. Background of the Taiwanese Indigenous People**

The Taiwanese indigenous people are classified into the Austronesian linguistic family which extends from Madagascar to Easter Island and Hawaii, from Taiwan to New Zealand. A recent theory based on linguistic and genetic anthropology suggests that Taiwan may have been the starting point of the entire Austronesian dispersal throughout the Pacific and Indian Oceans after the indigenous people emigrated to Taiwan from south-east mainland China over six thousand years ago (Simon, 2005: 54).

In 2008 the Taiwanese indigenous people were officially divided into fourteen main tribal groups: Amis, Atayal, Paiwan, Bunun, Puyuma, Rukai, Tsou, Saisiat, Tao, Thao, Kavalan, Truku, Sakizaya and Sediq (Council of Indigenous Peoples, 2008 a). They mainly live in the central and eastern parts of Taiwan which are mountainous areas although some

people are moving out to areas near cities. Figure 4.2 shows the areas where they live.

**Figure 4.2: Geographical Distributions of Taiwanese Indigenous Peoples**



Source: Adapted from: <http://origin-www.gio.gov.tw/taiwan-wesite/5-gp/yearbook/ch2.html> (Accessed 30 January, 2009)

The *Pinputzu* is a tribe of indigenous people living in the plain. They are no longer regarded as a distinct indigenous group because of their assimilation with members of the mainstream Taiwanese society over the past three centuries (Liou, 2005: 4). Unlike the *Pinputzu*, the fourteen groups who are officially acknowledged as Taiwanese indigenous people have maintained their habits and culture, sometimes resisting the influence of the mainstream society. The number of indigenous people is approximately 400,000 out of a total population of 22 million in Taiwan, just 2 percent of the total Taiwanese population (Government Information Office, 2009). They are a minority compared with the *Han* Taiwanese.

The Taiwanese indigenous people have already inhabited Taiwan for a long time before the *Han* and *Hakka* people emigrated from the Chinese continent to Taiwan from the 1660s and before Westerners colonised Taiwan in the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> Century.

Kung (2000: 55) divides Taiwanese history into five stages:

1. Early aboriginal history (Prehistory to the 1620s)
2. Western colonialism (1624 – 1662)
3. Early *Han* People Settlement (late Ming and Ching dynasties, 1662 – 1895)
4. Japanese colonialism (1895 – 1945)

5. Republic of China ruled by the Chinese Nationalist Party (1945 – 2000)

The Democratic Progressive Party has been the ruling party since winning a presidential election in 2000. Therefore, in addition to the five stages of Taiwanese modern history, a sixth stage may be added:

6. Republic of China ruled by Democratic Progressive Party (2000 – 2008)

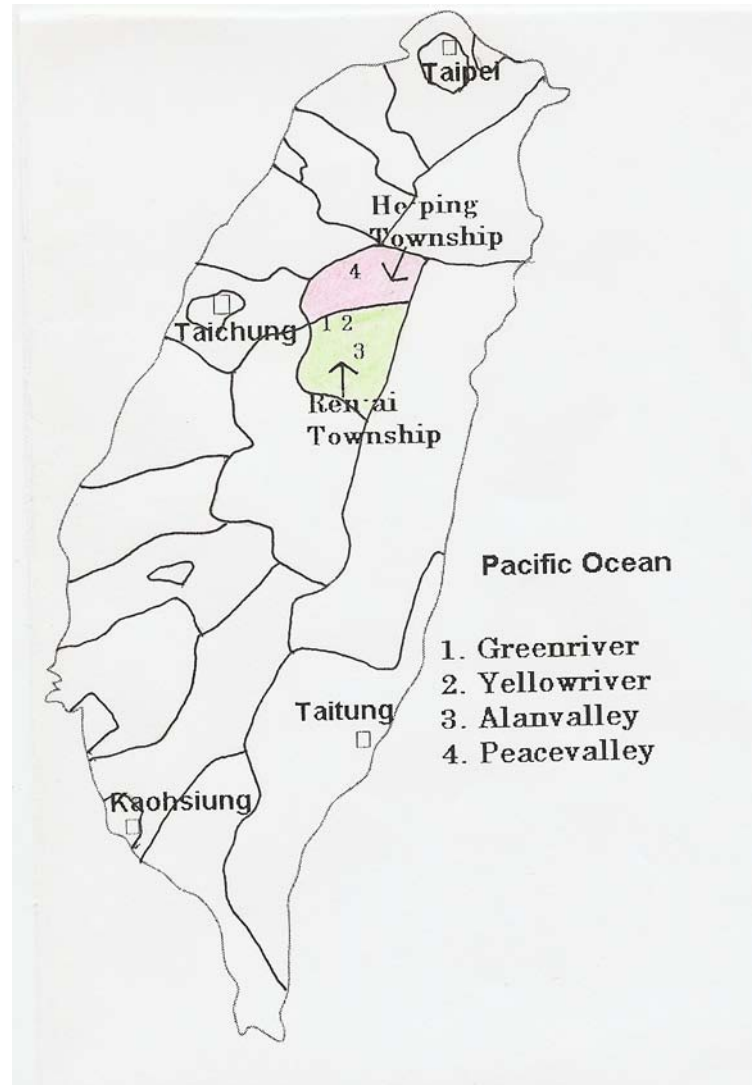
Historically, the indigenous people in Taiwan were moved to the mountainous areas and some islands in the eastern part of Taiwan by Chinese immigrants from the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Since then, the Taiwanese indigenous people have been continuously victimised. With the development of the country they were deprived of their natural resources and lands and were excluded from the profits of such development. Especially, during the Japanese colonial days and under the dictatorship of the Chinese Nationalist Party, the identities, habits and customs of the Taiwanese indigenous people have been largely destroyed or ignored by both the elite and the masses of the main society (Shih, 1999; *Minority at Risk*, 2004). The causalities of their chronic poverty problems are here examined in terms of the unequal relationship with mainstream society and the influence of social and economic transformations.

### **4.3. History and Culture of the Sediq People and Atayal People**

In order to analyse the data presented in this thesis, it is necessary to show the historical and social backgrounds of the Taiwanese indigenous people.

The first area for this research is Ren-ai Township in Nantou County which is in central Taiwan. Although this township is forty minutes by car away from Taichung, the third largest city in Taiwan, it is a mountainous area (Figure 4.3). The total population of Ren-ai Township was 15,540 in 2006. Among them, the population of indigenous people (Atayal, Sediq and Bunun) was 12,116. The three villages of Greenriver, Yellowriver and Alanvalley in Ren-ai Township (Illustration 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3) were picked for the field research and their names have been changed to fictitious ones to allay the concern expressed by the residents. The majority of the residents of these villages are Sediq people. Greenriver and Yellowriver administratively belong to the same village. The researcher lived in households in Greenriver and Alanvalley headed by females.

Figure 4.3: Location of Ren-ai Township, He-ping Township and Four Villages





**Illustration 4.1: Landscape of Greenriver**



Source: the Author

**Illustration 4.2: Landscape of Yellowriver**



Source: the Author

### Illustration 4.3: Landscape of Alanvalley



Source: the Author

The second area chosen was He-ping Township in Taichung County (Figure 4.3). The total population of this township is 11,016. Peace Valley was the fourth village used in the research (Illustration 4.4). The people living here are the Atayal people, the *Hakka* and the *Han* people. Although the Sediq people and the Atayal people were categorised into the Atayal group, the Sediq people are formally acknowledged as an independent indigenous tribe (Box 4.1). However, both tribes have various common linguistic and cultural backgrounds (Ren-ai Township, 2008). In this township, the researcher lived with an indigenous family with three

school boys and learned about the educational problems which those boys faced.

**Box 4.1: Introduction of the Atayal people: Sediq and Atayal people**

The Atayal people are one of thirteen indigenous groups which are formally acknowledged by the government of the Republic of China. The population of the Sediq and Atayal people is around 80,000 and makes up the second largest group of Taiwanese indigenous people. They are divided into two sub-tribal groups: the Sediq people and the Atayal people (Government Information Office, 2006 b).

Their living space is geographically dispersed throughout mountainous regions: Taipei, Taoyuan, Hsinchu, Miaoli, Taichung, Nantou and Hualien counties.

On 23 of April 2008, Sediq people became acknowledged as the fourteenth formal independent indigenous people in Taiwan (Council of Indigenous Peoples, 2008 b). Therefore, this thesis distinguishes the Sediq people from the Atayal people.

#### Illustration 4.4: Landscape of Peacevalley



Source: the Author

According to some elderly people who were interviewed, the villagers of Greenriver, Yellowriver, Alanvalley and Peacevalley grew yam, taro, millet and rice in the past. Especially, millet was quite an important product because the residents used millet not only as their staple diet but also as an ingredient for wine. Wine was an important item for the Taiwanese indigenous people in their daily social life and at ceremonies such as weddings.

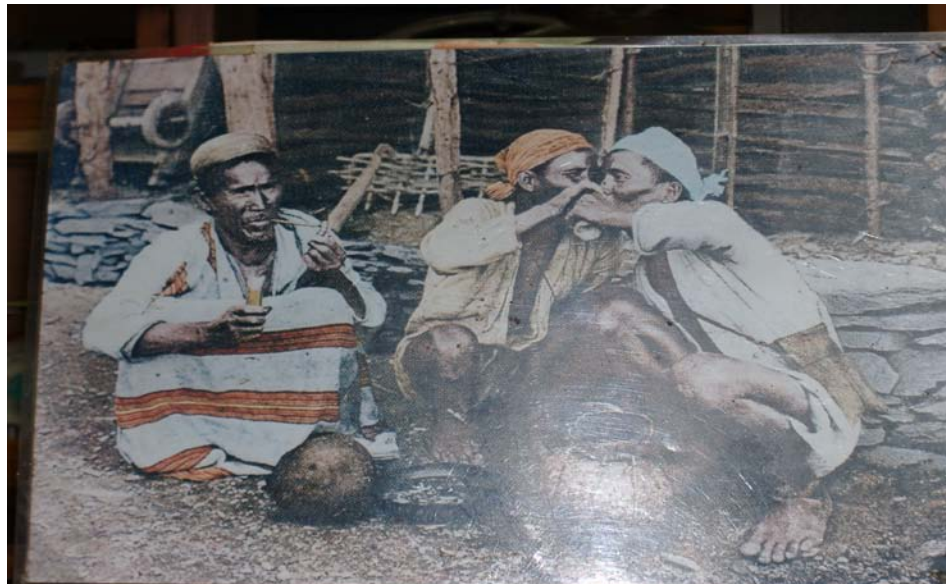


**Illustration 4.5: Millet**



Source: the Author

**Illustration 4.6: Sediq or Atayal Men Drinking Homemade Alcohol in the Past**



Source: Mr Jyun-Wei Jiang

Illustration 4.6 shows a scene in the past of two Sediq or Atayal men sharing a cup of alcohol made from millet. Sediq and Atayal men traditionally believe that through this action they are able to construct a bond of brotherhood or strong friendship.

While they grew agricultural products, the males quite often went to the mountains to hunt animals. The females wove and produced clothes, using hemp or pieces from Japanese *kimono*. Illustration 4.7 shows a Sediq female weaving cloth in the past. Weaving was one of the important housework for Sediq and Atayal females.

**Illustration 4.7: Sediq Female Weaving Cloth in the Past**



Source: Ping-jing Elementary School, Ren-ai Township, Nantou County, Taiwan, Republic of China (R.O.C).

In the past, when a girl reached the age of seven or eight years, she began to learn to weave. Skill in weaving was an important asset for girls to get married (Zeng, 2000: 12). In addition, according to Zeng (2000: 17), when a girl got married, she brought a lot of cloth to her husband and his parents.

However, in the present, the number of Sediq and Atayal females who can weave cloth is quite small. Unlike in the past, they now weave cloth not for themselves but as a business to sell their products to tourists or schools which use them in teaching traditional tribal dances. Illustration 4.8 shows Sediq girls wearing their traditional tribal cloths.

**Illustration 4.8: Sediq Girls during the Japanese Colonial Days**



Source: Ping-jing Elementary School, Ren-ai Township Nantou County, Taiwan, Republic of China (R.O.C).



**Illustration 4.9: Sediq People at Present**



**Illustration 4.10: Atayal People at Present**



Sources: the Author



The Sediq and Atayal people have lived in close-knit communities regulated by a moral order which is called *gaya* (in Atayal language, *gaga*) and by religious beliefs (Box 4.2).

**Box 4.2: Explanation of *Gaya***

*Gaya* is the traditional tribal regulations and taboos of the Sediq and Atayal people (or *gaga* in Atayal people's language). *Gaya* is quite strict with regard to their daily life such as hunting, planting, marriage, weaving. According to the elderly people, their ancestors had various kinds of *gaya* which stipulated various kinds of regulations and taboos. Here are examples of the contents of *gaya* mentioned by villagers in interviews carried out on 29/03/06, 22/04/06, 05/06/06, 10/06/06 and 05/08/06. Some of the regulations are non-scientific and irrational taboos.

For example:

1. A girl must not eat chicken legs and wings. If she does so, she would not weave well as her hands and legs would not function well.
2. If she drops threads on the ground when weaving cloth, she must not pick them up as she would suffer difficult delivery at childbirth.

There are some regulations which are related to the relationship between men and women, married life and divorce. For instance:

1. It is not until a girl can make her own beautiful ceremonial clothes, would she be regarded as adult, indicating that her weaving skills have reached maturity and that she has the ability to weave clothes for her husband and children (Jhang and Wei, 2002: 29).
2. If a girl becomes pregnant before marriage, her family has to kill a pig, and distribute the meat to all the people in the community. If they do not own a pig, they have to borrow one from others.

3. Young men and women cannot get married without permission from their grandparents or parents who decide spouses for their grand children or children.
4. They cannot marry relatives up to the fifth degree of kinship. This regulation indicates that the Sediq and Atayal people already know that marriage between close relatives might result in babies with physical or mental handicaps.
5. A female who divorces her husband cannot go back to her parents' house. If she goes back to her parents, they make her live in a hut in a field for while.

In other aspects of their lives too there are severe principles of *gaya*.

1. Young females cannot drink alcohol.
2. Men can drink mainly during festivals or ceremonies.
3. If a young female is detected drinking, she is criticised or scolded by her parents and others.
4. If a child commits an offence, the villagers would come to his parents' house to take a pig or cow by force and share the meat with all the villagers. The parents cannot object.

The other distinctive *gaya* of the Sediq and Atayal people is facial tattoos. Traditionally, for a female, a tattoo represents chastity before marriage as well as recognition that her weaving skills are mature and she is eligible for marriage (Jhang and Wei, 2002: 29). For a male, facial tattoo shows that he has the skills for hunting. Therefore, in the past no one would have wanted a partner without facial tattoo (Jhang and Wei, 2002: 29).

Their *gaya* contains the old stories related to supernatural creatures which exceed human knowledge and power – *utux* which signifies a kind of spirit and supernatural power as well as spirits of the dead (Ferrell, 1969: 31). They believe that all of nature belongs to *utux* (Simon, 2005: 56). Their awe for *utux* made them follow the principles of *gaya* because violation of *gaya* meant that they did not respect *utux*. Any violations of *gaya* were perceived to bring misfortune upon both individuals and the entire community (Simon, 2005: 56). For instance, premarital sexual relationships were an offence to *utux* and endangered the entire community, and must be expiated by specific rites and pig sacrifice (Ferrell, 1969: 31). According to Simon (2005: 56), property was divided into communal and private. Communal property included hunting grounds, mountains, forests, waters, uncultivated lands, animals, fishes and other mountain products. Private property included cultivated land, agricultural products and tools. The protection of property rights was regulated by *gaya* (Simon, 2005: 56). In general, the lifestyle, culture and daily activities of the Sediq and Atayal people were strongly related to principles of their *gaya* and their idea of *utux*.

Since the Japanese colonial days, the Sediq and Atayal people have been exposed to social and economic changes. The Japanese colonial government was the first power to have a direct and huge influence on the

life of both indigenous tribes. In order to take control of the resources of Taiwan such as timber, minerals and other natural resources, the Japanese set up reservation areas in the land of the indigenous people (Simon, 2005: 57). The colonial government limited the access of the indigenous people to these reservation areas. When the Sediq and Atayal people resisted against this policy, the Japanese colonial power used violence to put down their resistance. Finally, some Sediq people in six villages carried out an armed resistance in 1930 in Wushe (today, it is the centre of Ren-ai Township). It was one of the largest resistance campaigns against the Japanese colonial power. According to Ren-ai Township Office (2009), around three hundred Sediq warriors participated in this resistance and killed about 130 Japanese police/military officers and residents. The resistance was ruthlessly suppressed and the Japanese authority forcibly moved the indigenous people to more accessible areas to ensure authoritarian control over them (Ren-ai Township Office, 2009). The Japanese authority thought that by disconnecting indigenous people from their homeland the assimilation and acculturation of the uncivilised indigenous people into mainstream Japanese culture would be accelerated and would prevent further resistance (Liou, 2005: 94).

In order to assimilate the Taiwanese indigenous people into the Japanese culture, the colonial power encouraged them to take Japanese

names, founded elementary schools, taught the Japanese language to children in schools, and prohibited customs such as human head-hunting (Hsu, 1991: 13; Simon, 2005: 57). At the same time, some professional training was offered to the Taiwanese indigenous people. For the first time, the indigenous people had the opportunity to receive training as physicians, nurses, teachers and police officers (Hsu, 1991: 13). The effects of Japanese influence on the society of the indigenous people have lasted until today. Many elderly indigenous people can still speak Japanese. During the Second World War, many indigenous youth joined the war as members of the Japanese military and fought against the Allies especially in the southern Pacific Ocean.

When Japan was defeated in the Second World War in 1945 Taiwan was returned to the Republic of China ruled by the Chinese Nationalist Party. When the Chinese Nationalist Party transferred to Taiwan after the Second World War, the nexus and communication between the Taiwanese indigenous people and the *Han* people (mainland Chinese and Taiwanese) gradually increased. As a result the lifestyles and identities of the indigenous people came under the influence of the mainstream Taiwanese society.

#### **4.4. The Different Lifestyles of the Indigenous People**

Although the lifestyle of the indigenous people has been influenced through communication with outsiders such as the Japanese colonial power and the Chinese Nationalist Party, their traditional lifestyle and culture are still embedded in their social and economic activities in the present day. For example, in the evening, they tend to gather with their family members, friends and neighbours. Because their villages are small, they know one another well. They usually gather in the public space in the evening, chatting and drinking alcohol. The *Han* Taiwanese, who are the main members of the Taiwanese mainstream society, tend not to have as much close relationship with their neighbours. Those who live in urbanised areas may not even know who lives next to them. Although they tend to go out with their family members at the weekend, they seldom gather with neighbours to chat or drink, unlike the Sediq and Atayal people who are eager to have strong communication with other villagers.

Another aspect of their lifestyle which differs from the mainstream society is religion. In Greenriver, Yellowriver, Alanvalley and Peacevalley, most of the indigenous residents are Catholics or Presbyterians. In the late nineteenth century, a Presbyterian church was established in Puli Town which is close to Ren-ai Township. After the Second World War,

Catholic priests also started their missionary work in Taiwan. Besides preaching to the indigenous people, they carried out humanitarian aid, providing food such as oil, sugar, flour, butter and other materials in the villages of the indigenous people. The Catholic Church especially was deeply committed to the indigenous villagers through large-scale humanitarian aid, including education and medical treatment (Jian, 2002). The indigenous people gradually became Presbyterian and Catholic. According to Jian (2002: 161-162), Christianity has hugely influenced the disappearance of and the changes in the principles of *gaya*. However, in the present day, both churches show more respect for *gaya* in their missionary work. Some use the tribal language of the Sediq and Atayal people in the Sunday service. Compared with the *Han* people who tend to worship and pray at various kinds of temples, including Confucian and Buddhist temples, many Sediq and Atayal people tend to believe only in Christianity and go to church on Sundays. The offer of humanitarian aid could have drawn them to Christianity but at the same time their belief in *utux* can be complementary to Christianity, because both believe in one supernatural spirit and one God (Jian, 2002).

Another point of difference from the mainstream society is the lifestyle of children. In the mainstream society of Taiwan, children tend to go to crammer schools after school hours. Their parents are eager that they go

to a high-ranking university and acquire well-paid and advanced jobs. On the contrary, most of the school children in Greenriver, Yellowriver, Alanvalley and Peacevally play sports such as basket ball and baseball after school.

**Illustration 4.11: Indigenous Children Playing Together**



Source: the Author

The number of children in the four villages who went to crammer school is quite few. One of the main reasons is that the cost for crammer school is quite expensive for an indigenous family. They must pay not only for tuition but also for textbooks. In addition, as most of the crammer schools are in Puli town and Taichung city there is the cost of transport. For most



of the indigenous villagers who lack sufficient economic resources, it is quite difficult or impossible to send their children to crammer school. As a consequence, the educational gap between the indigenous people and people in the mainstream society of Taiwan is a serious problem.

#### **4.5. Educational Disadvantage of the Taiwanese Indigenous People**

Unlike the Japanese colonial power, the Chinese Nationalist Party, which was in power in Taiwan for a long time, granted more rights and privileges to the Taiwanese indigenous people. For instance, college or university examination standards are less rigid for the indigenous people and many of them have their tuition fees waived (Hsu, 1991: 14). In addition, some medical schools have been subsidised by the government to train young indigenous students as physicians or nurses.

On the other hand, the indigenous people have also suffered disadvantages. For example, during the dictatorship under the Chinese Nationalist Party (1945 – 1987), as it had been under the Japanese (1895 – 1945), the indigenous people were prohibited from speaking their tribal language. It was one of the efforts of the Chinese Nationalist Party to strengthen the identity of the indigenous people by means of identifying with the Chinese nation through learning its history, geography, culture, value systems and speaking Mandarin Chinese – the Taiwanese national

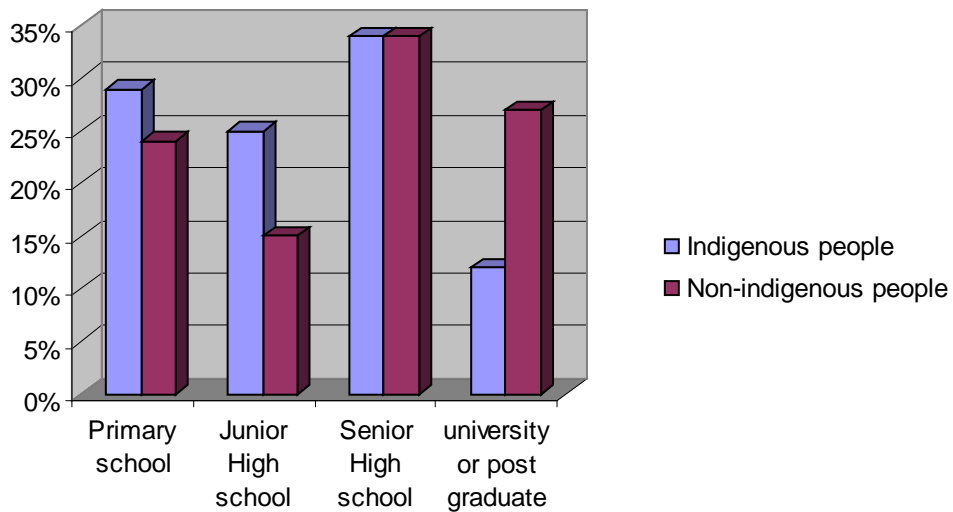
language (Kung, 2000:77). If teachers detected indigenous students using their tribal language for communication in school, as a punishment they forcibly made them wear a card saying “Speak in Mandarin Chinese”. The unique identities and values of the Taiwanese indigenous people were rejected by the educational organisations dominated by the majority, *Han* Taiwanese.

After the Democratic Progressive Party became the ruling party in 2000, the identities and culture of the Taiwanese indigenous people were acknowledged by the government. Learning their tribal languages and customs in schools became compulsory for indigenous students. The educational policy for Taiwanese indigenous people marked a social change for them.

However, the education level of the indigenous people is still lower than that of the *Han* and *Hakka* Taiwanese. According to Pu (2004: 65), although most indigenous children study in primary schools and junior high schools, and finish their studies at this level, the number of indigenous students who finish high school or commercial and technical high school has gradually become less. Moreover, the number of indigenous students who graduate from technical colleges, universities and postgraduate institutions has become fewer and fewer. Rather, many of them tend to drop out from their studies (Pu, 2004: 65). Figure 4.4

shows that the education level of the indigenous people is lower than that of non-indigenous people.

**Figure 4.4**  
**Comparison of Educational Background between Indigenous People and Non-indigenous People in 2002**



Source: Council of Indigenous Peoples (2004 b)

According to the Council of Indigenous Peoples (2004 b), the percentage of non-indigenous people who finished university or postgraduate school is 27%, while that of indigenous people is only 12%. The percentage of Taiwanese indigenous people who finished primary and junior high school is 54%, while that of non-indigenous people is 39%.

Educational background seems to be strongly relevant to the contents of jobs in Taiwan because Taiwanese society sets great value on the

academic achievement of an individual. People who do not have a higher education qualification have difficulty in finding stable jobs. Most of the indigenous people who only finished junior high/high school tend to have difficulties to find stable jobs. For most indigenous people the choice of a career is difficult: finding unstable jobs or going back to their home towns. Because of their disadvantageous educational background, 48% of unemployed indigenous people tend to go back to their home towns, engaging in agriculture, forestry, the fishing industry or livestock farming (Council of Indigenous Peoples, 2004 b: 93). Although they could go back to their home towns to engage in agriculture or other occupations, these occupations cannot guarantee stable incomes or lives because of rapid social and economic changes.

#### **4.6. Economic Disadvantage of the Indigenous People**

The social and economic issues of the Taiwanese indigenous people are induced not only by the main Taiwanese society but also by globalisation.

Certainly globalisation has its merits, including the massive creation of new jobs in export-led manufacturing countries, for example, South East Asia and the East Asian countries (Carr and Chen, 2004: 6).

Approximately since the 1960's, in order to promote national competitiveness in the world economy, the Taiwanese government and the

Taiwanese business world have tried to maintain Taiwanese economic vitality in the global economy by playing the role of the exporter of capital and products (Wang, 2000: 104). As a consequence, Taiwan has now joined the rapid expansion of the global economy and maintains the vitality of its economy in the world. We can say that the modernisation of the Taiwan economy is somewhat parallel to the trend of globalisation. To gauge the success of the Taiwanese government's economic policy, which emphasises the exportation of capital and industrial products, economists use Taiwan's economic model as a measure. For example, Gilpin (1987) and Wade (1990) conclude that the Taiwanese government's economic policy is a success because in adopting a market-led economy favouring competitive export industries, the Taiwanese economy has performed better than other industrialised countries.

On the other hand, globalisation exerts a pressure on Taiwan to liberalise her society and economy (Kong, 2006: 379). Indeed, globalisation has subjected Taiwanese social and economic structures gradually to a process of market-led development. There is a structural force driven by inexorable economic requirements and political decisions which dictate a free market, minimum state intervention, measures of tax cuts, privatisation and deregulation (Ku, 2004: 311). The impact of globalisation, which emphasises de-regulation and a free market-based

economy and cheaper labour costs, has brought some serious issues to Taiwanese society and economy.

First of all, capital and wealth are not distributed to all Taiwanese equally. Capital and wealth seem to flow to the privileged groups rather than to the labourers and farmers. Secondly, labour-intensive industries employing factory workers are no longer the main industries in Taiwan as they have been transformed to technology and capital-based industries.

As a consequence of unequal resource allotment, the fear of unemployment and the decline of wages, the largest concern in Taiwan now is the deterioration of social security, health and environmental standards (Ku, 2004: 312). According to Directorate General of Budget, Accounting and Statistics (2007), the rate of Taiwanese GNP was steadily growing during the 1996 – 2006 decade. Table 4.1 shows that the Taiwanese economic growth rate has improved since 2000 when economic growth was minus 2.17 percent. This table also shows that on the contrary the unemployment rate has worsened continuously.

**Table 4.1**

**Taiwanese Economic Growth, GNP and Unemployment Rate:  
1996 – 2006**

Year	Economic growth rate (%)	GNP per capita (US\$)	Unemployment rate (%)
1996	6.59	13,527	2.6
1997	4.55	13,904	2.72
1998	5.75	12,679	2.69
1999	5.77	13,609	2.92
2000	-2.17	14,519	2.99
2001	4.64	13,093	4.57
2002	3.5	13,291	5.17
2003	6.15	13,587	4.99
2004	4.07	14,663	4.44
2005	4.68	15,668	4.13
2006	4.58	16,030	3.91

Source: Directorate General of Budget, Accounting and Statistics, Executive Yuan, Taiwan.

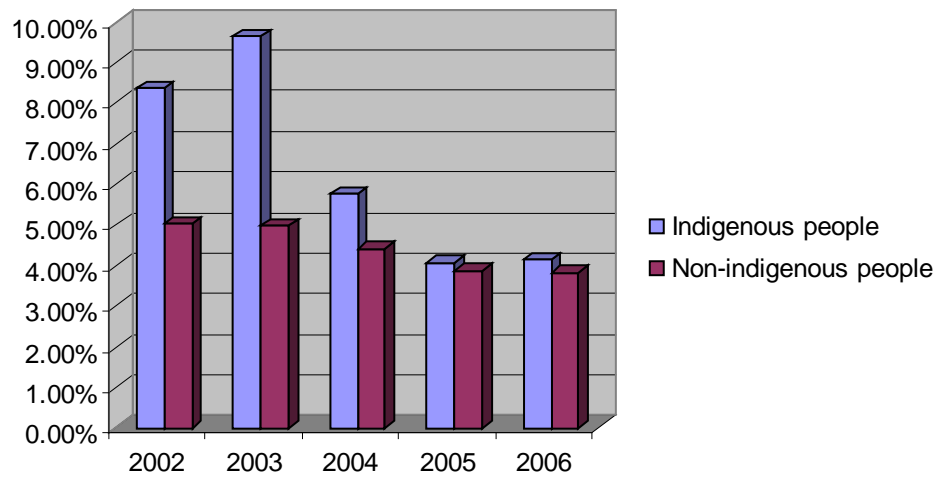
Since 2001 Taiwanese economic growth rate and GNP have recovered from the large-scale economic recession. However, as Table 4.1 shows, the unemployment rate has not improved. Rather, this rate remains high. In particular, the Taiwanese indigenous people, who are in a vulnerable and disadvantaged position, seem to suffer from a high unemployment rate, more than the *Han* or *Hakka* people.

Figure 4.5 shows a comparison of the unemployment rate of the Taiwanese indigenous people and non-indigenous people. The unemployment rate of the Taiwanese indigenous people is much higher than that of the non-indigenous people. Although the Taiwanese economy

has recovered from the large-scale recession, the Taiwanese indigenous people seem to still suffer more severely from an unemployment problem.

**Figure 4.5**

**Unemployment Rate of Indigenous People and Non-indigenous People**



Source: Council of Indigenous Peoples (2004 b)

In 2002, the unemployment rate of the indigenous people was 8.37% while the unemployment rate among non-indigenous people was 5.02%. In 2003, the unemployment rate of the indigenous people rose to 9.64%, while that of the non-indigenous people fell to 4.98%. In the case of 2004, the unemployment rate of the indigenous people came down to 5.76% while that of the non-indigenous people declined to 4.41%. In addition, the unemployment rate of the indigenous people went down to 4.07% in 2005 and 4.15% in 2006.

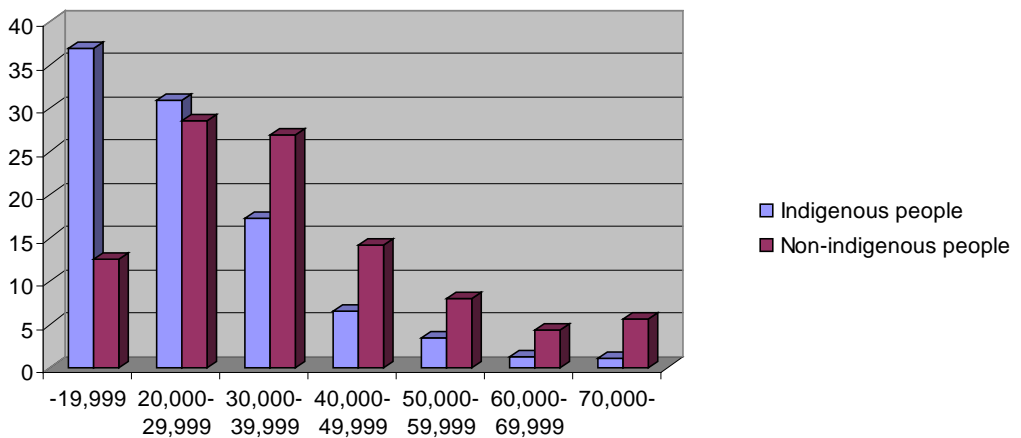


However, although the unemployment rate had generally tended to decline, the indigenous people seemed to be still suffering from a higher level of unemployment than the non-indigenous people (Munsterhjelm, 2002: 1).

The economic gap between the indigenous people and the people of the mainstream society can also be observed in the field of income. According to the Council of Indigenous Peoples (2008 b), in the case of the indigenous people who have any kind of jobs, the average of monthly salary is 25,425 Taiwan dollars in 2006 while the average monthly salary of the Taiwanese is 35,664 Taiwan dollars. Of special significance, the percentage of indigenous people whose salary is below 20,000 Taiwan dollars is 36.9% (Figure 4.6). This is the largest group among them. The second largest group is those whose salary is from 20,000 to 29,999 Taiwan dollars (30.9%). Namely, over 60% of indigenous workers and labourers are receiving salaries lower than the average salary of the Taiwanese.

Moreover, while the average annual income of non-indigenous households is 895,000 Taiwan dollars, that of indigenous people is 420,000 Taiwan dollars (Council of Indigenous Peoples, 2008 c).

**Figure 4.6**  
**Comparison of Monthly Salary between Indigenous People and Non-indigenous People**



Source: Council of Indigenous Peoples (2008 b)

The economic problem of high unemployment rate and low income, from which the Taiwanese indigenous people are suffering, is relevant to the inherent structural problems and social and economic transformations. The Council of Indigenous Peoples (2004 b: 87) argues that the indigenous people suffer from unstable employment conditions for two main reasons: (1) most of their jobs are seasonal and temporary; (2) their working places have been closed or scaled down.

One of the reasons why most of their jobs are temporary could be related to the image of the Taiwanese indigenous people held by people of the mainstream society. For example, the Taiwanese mainstream society has the following images about them: they like to play sports and dance, they like to sing songs, drink alcohol and they are over-optimistic (Dean

and Melrose, 1999, Epochtimes, 2008). Epochtimes (2008) reports a case. When an indigenous female attended a job interview, the interviewers asked her whether she liked to drink alcohol and told her that it is difficult for the indigenous people to adjust themselves to the mainstream society of the *Han* Taiwanese. To support the indigenous people to get better and advanced jobs, the Taiwanese government has introduced affirmative action, asking companies to hire them and provide them with job-training. According to the Council of Indigenous Peoples (2008 b: 28), 30% of indigenous people wish to attend computer and programming training and 28 % of them would like to attend job-training courses which can let them learn the skills of managing hotels and restaurants. However, according to the survey of 1111 Job Bank (2008), which is based on data from 746 companies in Taiwan, 61% of companies do not know about the affirmative action and 64% of them do not hire indigenous people at all. In addition, the companies were asked which kinds of jobs would be suitable for indigenous people. 1111 Job Bank (2008), which is a big online job shop in Taiwan, released data indicating that the largest number of answers to the question is as factory workers engaging in routine work (48.5%), the second largest number of answers is as labourers on construction sites (34.3%), and as professional sports players (29.2%). Given such huge gap, this organisation concludes that these images tend

to prevent indigenous people from acquiring jobs with regular salaries and some status (1111 Job Bank, 2008). In practice, the Council of Indigenous Peoples (2008 b: 50) points out that among the industries that indigenous people are working in, construction is the highest (18%), the second highest is agriculture, fishery and stock farming (15.7%) and manufacturing (15.7%).

#### **4.7. The Influence of Social and Economic Transformations**

Construction, agriculture, fishery and stock farming and manufacturing, the major industries in which indigenous people are engaged, are exposed to the rapid transformation in the social and economic structures of Taiwan. Particularly, under the neo-liberal economic system, companies tend to move the location of production from one country to another, in search of competitive advantages (Car and Chen, 2004). The market economy, emphasising cheaper labour costs and deregulation, pushes Taiwanese companies to move their factories to mainland China and the South East Asian countries. Domestically, many construction companies have started to hire cheap labour from South East Asia. In the cities the indigenous people are engaged in low-level jobs such as labourers in factories and on construction sites, drivers and machine operators. These low-level jobs are becoming scarce or are being filled by nearly 300,000

migrant workers from South East Asia (Simon, 2002: 3). The indigenous people are now exposed to strong competition with cheaper South East Asian labour for low-level jobs.

Agriculture is also one of main industries exposed to rapid social and economic changes. In the past the indigenous people could sell their agricultural products at good prices. However, competition with other countries has put the farmers in a difficult position. For example, Taiwan was a major country exporting plum. Now, instead of Taiwan, mainland China is a major plum-producing country because the price of plum produced by mainland China is cheaper than that of the Taiwanese plum. The problems of cost and marketing as well as exploitation by the middleman and price fluctuation have severely affected the agriculture of the indigenous people (Kung, 2000: 67). It means that it has become difficult for them to make a living by agriculture. The average income of indigenous farmers is just one-third of that of non-indigenous farmers (Council of Indigenous Peoples, 2008 c).

#### **4.8. Disadvantage of Health**

Health problems are among the serious issues related to poverty among indigenous people. Especially, alcoholism is a common serious social problem. Unlike in the past when they made alcohol from millet

themselves, the indigenous people can now buy alcohol in shops whenever they want. They tend to drink rice wine, clear liquor distilled from sweet potatoes or buckwheat, beer and synthetic alcohol mixed with various kinds of chemical ingredients. Although some kinds of western alcohol, such as wine and whisky, can be bought from small shops in their villages, the price of such alcohol is relatively expensive. Compared with western alcohol, domestic alcohol produced in Taiwan is much cheaper. The indigenous people who lack sufficient incomes consume domestic products such as rice wine and synthetic alcohol. Illustration 4.12 shows the kinds of alcohol in shops in their villages. Among them, ①clear liquor, ②rice wine, ③wine, ④beer, ⑤western alcohol and ⑥synthetic alcohol. ①, ② and ⑥ are popular among the Sediq and Atayal people.

Illustration 4.12: Alcohol drunk by the Sediq and Atayal People

**和平鄉原住民**  
**找回自我、促進健康～節制飲酒部落活力再現**  
**部落綠燈亮起！健康信號自己掌控**

● ● ●

為改善危害健康行為～適當飲酒精心設計生活中最重要的健康通行號誌～部落紅綠燈，幫助我們在健康大道上通行無阻。在通行的過程中，讓我們共同正視「促進健康～節制飲酒」學習之旅，以下列酒類每日限飲量，來評量自己的健康通行號誌。

● **安全**～控制在每日限飲量。  
 ● **危險**～超過每日限飲量。

**節酒**～現在開始永遠不遲，心動不如馬上行動

您或者您的家人、朋友....符合嗎？  
 如果不符合請互相叮嚀～**少喝一點，健康多一點**，知己知彼健康百分百。

如何才是適度飲酒？ 下列提供酒類每日限飲量...

<p>* 穀酒類 酒精濃度45%～60% 高粱酒、五加皮酒 茅台酒、竹葉青酒 每日限飲量60cc</p>	<p>* 米酒類 酒精濃度16%～22% 米酒、陳年紹興酒 花雕酒、紹興酒 每日限飲量180cc</p>	<p>* 葡萄酒類 酒精濃度10%～13% 白葡萄酒、玫瑰紅酒 紅葡萄酒、香檳 每日限飲量300cc</p>
<p>* 啤酒類 酒精濃度2.8%～4% 台灣啤酒、麒麟一番 青島啤酒、海尼根 每日限飲量720cc</p>	<p>* 洋酒類 酒精濃度42% 琴酒、茶姆酒、伏特加酒 威士忌酒、白蘭地酒 每日限飲量70cc</p>	<p>* 混合酒類 酒精濃度5%～8% 保利達B 威士比 每日限飲量120cc</p>

～少喝一點酒～可多活幾年～

Source: the Author

In 2006 at the time of the field research, the price of rice wine (750ml) was around 25 Taiwan dollars (between 40 – 50 pence). Rice wine and

clear distilled liquor contain over 50 percent alcohol. They tend to drink such strong alcohol.

Above all, cirrhosis of the liver, which is strongly related to alcoholism, is a serious disease among the indigenous people. The rate of cirrhosis of the liver among the Taiwanese indigenous people is 4.6 times as much as the rate of this disease for non-indigenous people (Council of Indigenous Peoples, 2004 a: 30). In addition, the indigenous people suffer from a high incidence of cardiac disease, gout, tuberculosis and accidents (Council of Indigenous Peoples, 2004 a: 30). As the result of a higher rate of various kinds of diseases and accidents, the average lifespan of the Taiwanese indigenous people is shorter than the average lifespan of the Taiwanese.

Especially, as Table 4.2 shows, the average lifespan of the indigenous male is much shorter than the average male lifespan.

**Table 4.2**  
**Average Lifespan of the All Taiwanese and Indigenous People**

	Average Lifespan of All Taiwanese		Average Lifespan of Indigenous People	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
2001	72.87	78.75	63.3	72.8
2002	73.03	78.82	65.2	73

Source: Adapted from Council of Indigenous Peoples (2004 a) and Government Information Office (2006 a)



A person's lifespan has some relationship to his lifestyle. As discussed in this chapter, it is the result of their disadvantageous social and economic position in Taiwan.

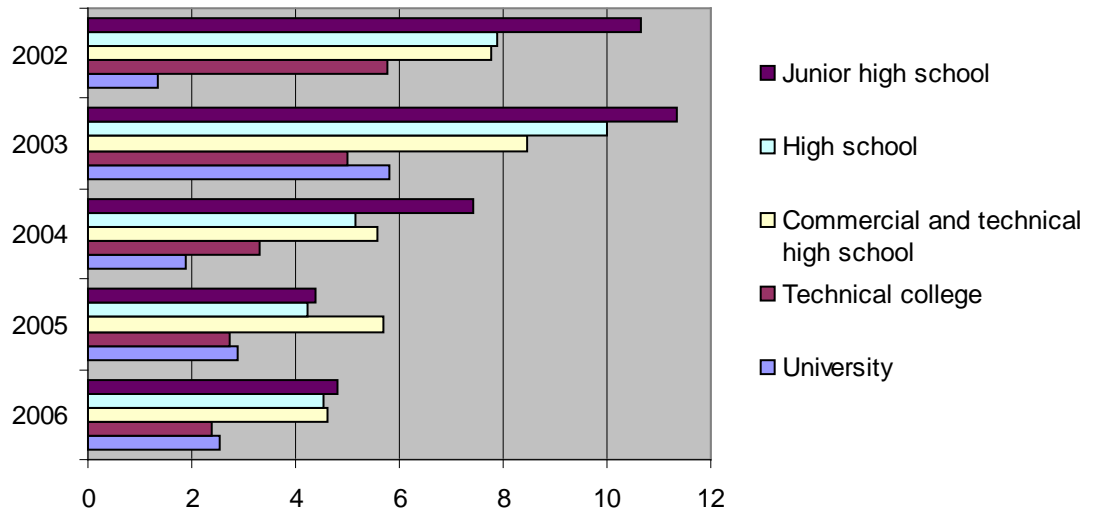
#### **4.9. Social and Economic Differences among the Indigenous People**

A common and convincing assertion shared by researchers about the Taiwanese indigenous people is that "their poverty issue mostly is due to their unfavourable position in the whole Taiwanese society and economic structure" (Chan, 2003). Thus, most discussions of indigenous people's poverty focus on their social and economic inequality with the mainstream society of Taiwan and their disadvantages in the fields of occupation and education. Statistical data issued by the Taiwanese government tell us that there is still huge social and economic inequality between the indigenous people and people of the mainstream society. In addition, the mainstream society of Taiwan still has a strong bias and discrimination against the indigenous people.

However, if we regard the Taiwanese indigenous people as agents who have the capability to reflexively decide their actions, we can observe their poverty more dynamically. That is to say, some of them may have the ability to utilise the transformations in the social and economic structures to benefit themselves. If they have the opportunities they can do what

they want to do or be what they want to be. At present, a small percentage of indigenous people are studying at universities or technical colleges; some of them graduate from high school; others drop out of their study. As a result we can observe the differences in their social and economic lives. The Council of Indigenous Peoples (2008 b) reports the social and economic gap among Taiwanese indigenous people. This organisation mentions that according to their educational background, the unemployment rate among them becomes different. Figure 4.7 shows how the unemployment rate becomes different according to education.

**Figure 4.7**  
**The Comparison of Unemployment Rate among Indigenous People**



Source: Council of Indigenous Peoples, Taiwan (2008 b)

Although the overall unemployment rate of the Taiwanese indigenous people is going down, the pattern indicates that since 2002 the

unemployment rate of the indigenous people who finished higher education, such as technical college and university, is always lower than that of the others (Council of Indigenous Peoples, 2008 b). To put it concretely, the unemployment rate of the indigenous people who graduated from junior high school and high school, including technical and commercial high school, is around 5% while that of people, who graduated from technical college and university, is around 2.4% and 2.5%.

In addition, the differentiation among them can be observed in their occupations. The Council of Indigenous Peoples (2008 b) points out that among the industries in which people who graduated from junior high school are working, agriculture, fishery and stock farming employ the highest (36.4%) and the second is construction (21.4%). Of the industries which employ people who have graduated from high school and commercial and technical high school, manufacture is the highest (19.9%) and the next is agriculture, fishery and stock farming (14.2%). 21.8% of people who graduated from technical college are engaged in health and social work, and 16.9% become civil servants, police officers and military officers. Among the industries in which indigenous people who graduated from university are engaged, education is the highest (27.8%) and the second is health and social work (11.8%). This pattern leads to the consideration that not all indigenous people are in disadvantageous and

excluded positions in Taiwanese society. The social and economic differences among them could be strongly related to their perceptions and actions.

An understanding of the diverse patterns of indigenous people's actions may be obtained by referring to some of the discussions of the gender researchers who are critical of the traditional idea that females are always in vulnerable and marginalised positions. Rather, they look into the diversified preferences of females and their strategies for surviving. Similar investigations would be quite useful for clarifying the diverse perceptions and actions of indigenous people. The next section will consider how gender researchers are critically discussing the traditional ideas of the female's social position and how they are looking at their perceptions and actions in society.

#### **4.10. Are They Always in Marginalised and Vulnerable Positions?**

An examination of some critical research on gender issues is made at this juncture to provide some useful ideas to discuss critically the traditional view with regard to indigenous people which asserts that they are always in marginalised positions, placed there by the rules and powers of a mainstream society or majority.

Some gender researchers question that the discussion of poverty has not always been analysed from the perspective of an unequal relationship between males and females. According to Kabeer (1997: 1), recent gender researchers have challenged the conventional poverty measurement and analysis which conclude that women's needs and interests were assumed to be identical to and subsumable under those of male household heads (Kabeer, 1997: 1). Such a traditional approach to poverty has missed a number of significant gender analytical insights into social relationships (Jackson, 1999 b).

Females have their own desires and ideas and they have struggled to realise their desires, competing with their husbands in households. Against this background, although some females suffer poverty, these poor females cannot be labelled intrinsically marginalised or deprived. For example, Scott (1999) states that gender is invoked and contested as part of many kinds of struggles for power. In a discussion of the household poverty level, a female's interests and needs are not necessarily unified with her husband's interests and needs. We must consider that within a household a female and a male compete, fight or negotiate with each other over economic and social interests or needs. Therefore, in a household there is quite a complex relationship between a female and a male.

At present gender analysis has tried to deconstruct the polarised relationship of women and men. Especially, it is critical of the traditional idea of “femininity and masculinity” (Connell, 1995; Hart, 1997; Jackson, 1999 a) and tries to separate women and men from this dichotomy.

In a research on resistance of female workers against their employers in Malaysia, Hart (1997) shows the diverse preferences and strategies of females for surviving within households. According to Hart (1997: 20-21), while male workers tend to be submissive to their boss, female workers tend to be more collective and militant in appealing to their boss to accept their demands. In addition, female workers are openly derisive of male attitudes because while males show their superiority to females in their homes, they show a submissive attitude to their boss. Females understand that although males say they have responsibilities for their families, they are incapable of putting their responsibilities into material practice in the domestic sphere (Hart, 1997: 21). The discussion of Hart’s shows the shift from the traditional view emphasising the harmony of household interests to the complexities of power and the struggles in households. This sort of analysis of family is quite important to this research because the role of family has strong influence on the formation of an individual’s perceptions and view for this world. That is to say, in the household, the power of a mother in constructing an agent’s identity and perception would be larger

than expected. The social and economic backgrounds of family, especially parents, may decide an individual's economic position in society. Inter-generational transmission of poverty can have close connection with the influence of family. This discussion will be carried out in the next chapter.

#### **4.11. Summary and Conclusion**

The causes of poverty among the Taiwanese indigenous people have multidimensional perspectives. This can be discussed not only in terms of economic aspects such as high unemployment rate and the shortage of income but also from the perspective of educational problems. In addition, their vulnerable social and economic positions have adversely influenced their lifestyles (for example, alcoholism and shorter lifespan).

Moreover, as the Taiwanese industrial structure is transforming from a labour-based industry to a capital- and technology-based industry, most of the indigenous people are influenced by this rapid transformation. For example, the competition with cheaper labour from South East Asia, especially work on construction sites which is major occupation for them, becomes severe.

This chapter pointed out a close connection between educational background and occupation. That is to say, among the indigenous people, the higher their educational background, the lower is their unemployment

rate. In addition, in the case of people who graduated from technical college and university, they are able to acquire opportunity to be employed in more advanced and better jobs such as education, health care, police and military, which bring regular salaries.

The problem of indigenous poverty can be discussed from the idea that human beings have the ability to choose their actions according to their values. In practice, some gender analysis provides a shift from a traditional view of poverty to a more dynamic concern with the dynamics of poverty. Namely, some gender researchers are discussing the shift of the debate on female poverty to the following idea: although females are placed in disadvantaged positions, they also have capacities to define their goals and devise their strategies for surviving. These researchers are quite critical of the traditional concept of poverty which asserts that in a household females are always in marginalised and disadvantageous positions, more than males are. Rather, they clarify and show that females also struggle to realize their wishes and desires, competing or negotiating with dominant people.

The discussions of these gender researchers introduce the consideration that indigenous people may also be able to compete or negotiate with people of the mainstream society and dominant groups with regard to their desires and wishes. While their social and economic actions are



influenced by the structural contexts in which they were born, indigenous people may also have the ability to exercise their agency. An analysis of the differentiated patterns of their perceptions and social and economic activities in terms of the dual relationship between agency and social structure would provide the opportunity to discover the dynamism of their poverty.

## **Chapter 5 Structural Influence on the Perceptions and Practices of the Taiwanese Indigenous People**

### **5.1. Introduction**

Theoretical backgrounds, which can clarify the more dynamic interplay of structure and agency over time and space, are important in considering the transformation of poverty. The dynamic relationships of the actions of the Taiwanese indigenous people and the constraints of society, including inequality and poverty, are discussed from this chapter to Chapter 8.

This chapter and Chapter 6 examine the structural influence on the indigenous people and their reactions to it. In Chapter 7 the patterns of the actions of the indigenous people are clarified. Chapter 8 analyses and considers how the actions of each indigenous person influence the formation of stratification in the reproduction and transformation of the social structure.

As Archer (1989: xii) says, a society consists of structure irreducible to individuals and of human agents. Bhaskar (1998) argues the interdependent and mutual relationship between the actions of human beings and society.

Society does not exist independently of human behaviour. The transformation and reproduction of society are caused by the actions of

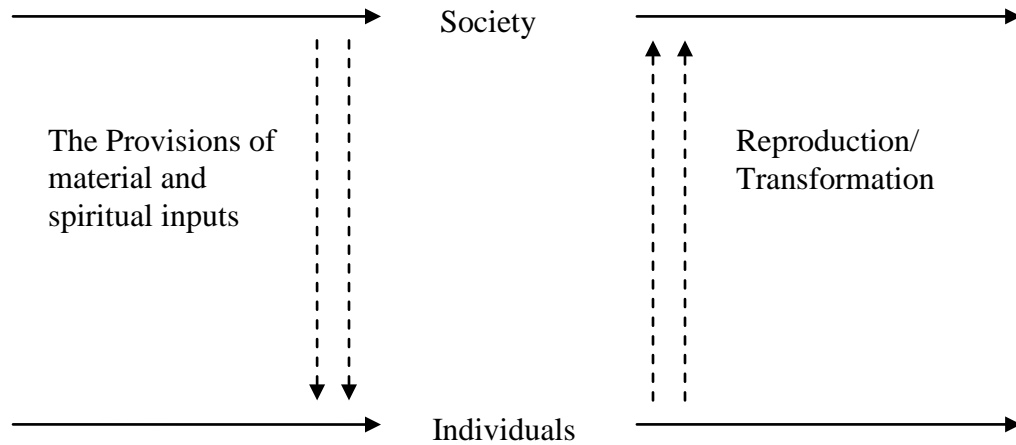
human agents (Bhaskar, 1998: 213, 215-216). As Giddens (1986) says, people have the process of actions which ranges from unconsciousness to intention or consciousness. In this process, human beings monitor their actions and the actions of others, referring to their past experience. Such monitoring lets people take retrospective commentary upon actions (Bhaskar, 1998: 215).

On the other hand, in the formation of their identities and perceptions human beings are influenced by the social structure. As Archer (2000: 253) says, “society does contribute something to make us what we are”. That is to say, society provides actors with material and spiritual inputs, such as resources, identities, ethics and religions, which are indispensable for reproducing and transforming society (Bhaskar, 1998: 213).

The provisions of material and spiritual inputs from society to actors and the influences of actors on the reproduction and transformation of society are repeated. Archer, who agrees with Bhaskar, argues that the social structure and the actions of agents can be regarded as complementary and inseparable terms of duality rather than as separated elements (Archer, 1995: 93). Figure 5.1 shows the mutual relationship of society and people asserted by Bhaskar.

**Figure 5.1**

**The Transformational Model of the Society – People Connection**



Source: Bhaskar (1998: 217)

It is habitus that influences the formation of an actor's perceptions and practices. The formation of an actor's habitus is strongly related to his position and his capital and to those of his parents. As Bourdieu (2005: 55) argues, habitus is the disposition of an actor and a set of historical accumulation of mental and corporeal schemata of perception and action within the actor's body. Through habitus, actors see the world and decide how to act in daily life.

This chapter discusses the influence of the social structure on the perceptions and actions of the Sediq and Atayal people who are indigenous groups in Taiwan. These people have in the past centuries kept their own culture and properties with uncompromising resistance to

both the *Han* Chinese and the Japanese colonial power (Simon, 2005: 55). The field research was carried out in the remote mountainous villages of Greenriver, Yellowriver, Alanvalley and Peacevalley where the agency of the Sediq and Atayal people was observed and the social structure in which they operate was investigated.

According to some elderly Sediq and Atayal people, their social regulations, *gaya*, have been a specially important and indispensable part of their life. They quite often mentioned the power of *gaya* in controlling their life. According to them, *gaya* has various regulations stipulating what they cannot do or must do. However, according to these elderly indigenous people their *gaya* has been changed or has disappeared due to the social transformation that has occurred since the Japanese colonial days (from interviews with Mr. Li (74), 22/04/06, Ms. Zeng (74), 15/05/06 and Ms. Li (77), 05/06/06). In concrete terms, the Japanese colonial power introduced Japanese education to their society until 1945 and the Republic of China brought Chinese education after 1945. In addition, modernisation is transforming the lifestyle of the Sediq and Atayal people.

As historical background this chapter discusses the formation of their habitus in terms of *gaya*, Japanese education, the educational policy set up by the Republic of China and modernisation.

## **5.2. Profiles of Greenriver, Yellowriver, Alanvalley and Peacevalley**

To provide a picture of the social structure of the indigenous people, the social relationships and economic activities of the villagers in the four selected villages are described.

### **5.2.1. Greenriver**

Greenriver belongs to Ren-ai Township in Nantou County. Most of the residents of this village are Sediq people. About 500 people live here. There is no hospital in this village. They have to go to Puli Town to see a doctor.

#### **Historical Background**

In October 1930, the Sediq people of six villages led a large-scale armed resistance campaign against the Japanese colonial power in Wushe. Over 130 Japanese were murdered. The Japanese colonial government sent the army to Wushe to suppress the resistance. The suppression was thorough and most of the indigenous people were murdered and some committed suicide. The following year, the survivors of the resistance were forcibly moved to Greenriver. After the move the Japanese colonial power executed men who were over 17 years old to remove the possibility of further resistance. Because Greenriver is in a basin surrounded by mountains and because the climate of this village is humid, many people were infected by malaria and died of this disease. On the other hand,

because they started to plant and harvest rice and vegetables, their living standards was improved.

During the Second World War, young men joined the Japanese military and fought against the Allied forces. Until the end of the Second World War in 1945, residents of Greenriver were under the observation of the Japanese police. There was an education centre next to the police station.

### **Social and Economic Background**

After the Second World War, many of the young people from this village attended a teachers' college or a police school and became civil servants. Some of them moved to and settled in Puli Town. The rest of the young males work on construction sites and are quite often away from the village. Besides the civil servants and labourers, there are a large number of farmers in this village. Especially, rice farming is a major agricultural industry in Greenriver (Illustration 5.1). This illustration shows the season of rice planting in spring.

**Illustration 5.1: Paddy Fields in Greenriver in Spring (March, 2006)**



Source: the Author

There are varying sizes of houses. Most of the two-storey houses are built of reinforced concrete. The few one-storey houses are built of simple materials. There are cable television networks in most of the houses. There are piped water supplies from water in the mountains. The toilets in most of the houses are flush toilets. As in other areas in Taiwan, the toilet facility is not efficient because of the low water pressure. There is always the risk of the water supply being cut off because of some breakage or a blockage of mud from heavy rain.



There is at least one motorcycle in each household, an indispensable means of transportation. In addition, many households also have cars (Illustration 5.2).

**Illustration 5.2: A Simple Structured House with a Car**



Source: the Author

### **Cultural Background**

There are many cultural activities in this village, especially among the females. They have formed a dancing group and practise their traditional tribal dances as well as modern dances. In addition, in the centre of this village, there is a computer room where many children play video games

and surf the internet. Most of the participants of these activities are young people. The young people communicate in Chinese and not their tribal language. While some elderly people do chat with the young villagers, most of them mainly communicate with other elderly people, particularly after Sunday service in the Catholic Church. Although most of the residents of this village are Catholic it is mainly the elderly people who always attend the church service.

### **5.2.2. Yellowriver**

Yellowriver is in Ren-ai Township which is in Nantou County. Greenriver and Yellowriver administratively belong to the same village. Around 600 residents live in Yellowriver. As in Greenriver, most of the residents of Yellowriver are the Sediq people. This village also does not have a hospital. There is a primary school. Children from Greenriver and Yellowriver study in the school.

### **Historical Background**

Originally, the Yellowriver residents lived in the mountainous area near Wushe. They were forcibly moved to Yellowriver around 1939 by the Japanese colonial authority because of the construction of a dam and an electric power plant. Around 160 households were moved to Yellowriver.

## **Social and Economic Background**

Most of the residents are engaged in agriculture and the construction industry. Most of young males are quite often away working on construction sites in city areas. Some of the females work in hotels or shops in the city. Those who work in the village are engaged in agriculture. From the main road, huge paddy fields can be seen (Illustration 5.3).

**Illustration 5.3: Newly Built Houses and Paddy Fields in Summer (May, 2006)**



Source: the Author

As with many houses in Greenriver, many houses in this village were also seriously damaged by a large earthquake in September, 1999. In addition, a result of the earthquake was mudslides and floods every rainy

season. Therefore, as illustration 5.3 shows, some families built new houses with subsidies from the government and mortgages from the bank. At the same time, old and simply structured houses also can be seen (Illustration 5.4). There are piped water supplies from water in the mountains.

**Illustration 5.4: Old and Simple Structured House in Yellowriver (May, 2006)**



Source: the Author

### **Cultural Background**

Unlike Greenriver, there are no cultural activities in Yellowriver. This village does not have any public space to facilitate communication among

the villagers. Along the main road there is a small restaurant where some residents eat, drink and chat. Because most of the young people are away working, only the elderly people and children are often seen in the village.

Together with people in Greenriver, the elderly people attend the Sunday service in the same Catholic Church and communicate with each other after the service. There is little opportunity for them to communicate with young people. Some young people are often seen drinking alcohol with their friends.

### **5.2.3. Alanvalley**

Alanvalley belongs to Ren-ai Township. Most of the residents are the Sediq people. This place is surrounded by high mountains. The population is around 1500. Because there is a main road connecting Puli Town with tourist resorts and hot springs in the mountainous area, there are some shops and restaurants in Alanvalley. As there is no hospital the residents they have to go to Puli Town to see a doctor. There is a primary school near the village.

### **Historical Background**

The villagers originally lived in the upper parts of Alanvalley. The Japanese colonial power moved them to the plain to control them. In the



valley which is close to Alanvalley, there was fighting between the Sediq people and the Japanese military.

During the Second World War, some young males joined the Japanese military and were sent to the battle fields in the Southern Pacific Ocean.

### **Social and Economic Background**

In the middle of this village, there is a main road connecting Puli Town and Wushe which is the centre of Ren-ai Township. Most of the villagers have motorcycles or cars. From this village to Puli Town, it takes about 20 minutes by car. There is a public bus service which some elderly people use for going to the town hall or Puli Town. Most of the boys and girls attend the agricultural high school in Wushe where the majority of students are indigenous people. Some families send their children to the crammer school and the high school in Puli Town (from an interview with Ms. Wang (60), 01/07/06).

The main industry of Alanvalley is agriculture, producing rice, tea and fruits. Illustration 5.5 shows greenhouses near Alanvalley.

**Illustration 5.5: Greenhouses in Alanvalley (July, 2006)**



Source: the Author

Most of the young people are labourers who work on construction sites in cities and have to be away from their homes for a long time.

This village has piped water from a source in the mountains. There are flush toilets. Because this village is surrounded by high mountains, Alanvalley tends to be easily damaged by natural disasters such as flood and mudslides. For example, in 2006, there was heavy rain for over two weeks which caused floods and mudslides (Illustration 5.6 and 5.7).

**Illustration 5.6: River Eroding Riverbanks in June, 206**



**Illustration 5.7: Road Broken by Mudslide in June, 206**



Sources: the Author



## **Cultural Background**

As has happened in other indigenous village, the traditional culture and tribal language here have almost become extinct. For example, young people cannot speak their tribal language and most of the females do not know how to weave textiles. The residents are now making efforts to revive their traditional culture. They have started cultural activities such as a dancing class and a class for learning to weave and dye textiles. A part of the cost of these activities is supported by the government.

The residents of this village are divided into those who are members of the Roman Catholic Church and followers of the Presbyterian Church. This division sometimes induces political conflicts when they have election campaigns. According to which church they belong to, they support different candidates and compete with each other to get more supporters.

### **5.2.4.. Peacevalley**

This is a small community of around 120 houses in a mountainous area. Peacevalley belongs to Zihyou Village with other five communities, in Heping Township which is in Taichung County. The Atayal people live here. In addition, *Hakka* and *Han* Taiwanese also live in this community.

## **Historical Background**

The villagers originally lived in the upper parts of Peacevalley. The Japanese colonial power moved them to the plain to control them because of a huge armed resistance campaign in 1930 by the Sediq people.

Since the colonial days, tuberculosis has been a serious contagious disease among the residents of this village. In the colonial days, a person who was infected by this disease was segregated in an isolated area far from the village.

## **Social and Economic Background**

A main road connects this village with Dong-shih Town. There is a bus service from Peacevalley to the town. It is used by some of the residents who work in Dong-shih Town. Most of the households at least have motorcycles. The farmers also have small pick-up truck for agricultural use.

This village has piped water from a source in the mountains. When there is heavy rain the water pipelines sometimes get blocked by stones and mud. There are flush toilets but the water pressure is low.

There is a primary school in the village but the children have to go to Dong-shih Town to attend junior high school.

The main industry is agriculture, producing vegetables and fruits, especially persimmons. Most of residents are farmers or labourers working outside.

Like the other indigenous villages in Taiwan, this village also suffers from serious alcoholism, tuberculosis and other health problems. To attempt to overcome these health problems, a nurse or a medical doctor periodically visits Peacevalley to explain the risk of alcoholism and the importance of health. There is support from a local non-governmental organisation for this (Illustration 5.8).

**Illustration 5.8: Lecture on Health Care by a Nurse in August, 2006**



Source: the Author

Illustration 5.8 shows a nurse teaching local residents the amount of alcohol they could safely drink per day and talking about the risk of alcohol damaging their internal organs. Since the small medical clinic in Peacevalley has been shut down the residents now have to travel to Dongshih Town to see a doctor.

### **Cultural Background**

Most of the residents are followers of the Presbyterian Church. Many residents, both the elderly and the young, attend the Sunday service which is conducted in Chinese and not their tribal language. Unlike the residents of the other three villages, the number of people in Peacevalley who can speak their tribal language is small. *Han* and *Hakka* people have opened shops and small restaurants. These are used by the indigenous people who have begun to communicate with them.

Not only their language but their traditions are also disappearing. Most of the houses have cable television network and the villagers enjoy sports and entertainment TV programmes.

### **5.3. *Gaya*, Perceptions and Reflections of the Indigenous People**

How the social structure influences the reflections and perceptions of the Sediq and Atayal people is discussed here.

The influence of *gaya* on the reflections and perceptions of the Sediq and Atayal people and the formation of communal values in their society is first looked at. *Gaya* seems to have a huge influence on people's minds and perceptions. But as human beings have emotions it is necessary to examine how they have accepted *gaya*.

Secondly, there is a possibility that people create or invent traditions when they realise that they cannot adapt themselves to social changes. When the elderly people emphasised the influence of *gaya* on their society, they tended to be nostalgic. To understand why people invent tradition, the concept of the invention of tradition suggested by Hobsbawn (1994) might be helpful. This concept is used to pursue the possibility of whether the elderly indigenous people invented traditions.

Thirdly, how the society of the Sediq and Atayal people has been changed and how these transformations have influenced them is discussed.

### **5.3.1. *Gaya* and Its Transfer in a Household**

For people, their families are the first social world. They grow up in their families from the time of their birth. The family can be seen as a transpersonal organisation transferring common values and tastes to its members in a household. Especially, the tastes, habits and values of their parents and grand parents have a direct influence on the formation of

children's identities, thoughts and tastes. As Bourdieu (1996: 20-21) argues, it is the family which constructs the habitus, the mental structure of an agent which is inculcated and input into the agent's brain. The perceptions and the practices of the agent are attributed to his family's values, tastes and views about the world.

According to some elderly indigenous people who live in Yellowriver, when they were children, they did not have the mass media such as television or the newspaper. Their main pastimes were listening to old tales and *gaya* from their fathers and grandfathers (from the interviews with Mr. Li (74) 22/04/06 and Ms. Zeng (74), 15/05/06).

Especially, Mr. Li (74) (22/04/06) said that his father used to talk a lot of their *gaya* to him and his siblings. Listening to old stories and *gaya* from his father was his main pastime when he was a boy. In addition, Mr. Li (74) used to go to the mountain with his father to hunt animals, during which his father told him what they could not do. This is an example of how the family has the function of transferring the principles of *gaya* to individuals, illustrating Bourdieu's (1996: 21) point that the family has a role as the social structure which provides its members with collective values and habits. The principles of *gaya* permeate the minds of children from their fathers or grandfathers.

The other reason why their *gaya* is inscribed in their minds is the acknowledged legitimacy of *gaya*. Collective values tend to acquire legitimacy. Because of their legitimacy, people are prepared to accept collective values. The next section, examines how the Sediq and Atayal people acknowledge the legitimacy of *gaya* and whether they accept its principles without questioning.

### **5.3.2. Acknowledged Legitimacy of *Gaya***

To be regarded as a guide in formulating the habitus of the villagers, the legitimacy of *gaya* has to be acknowledged by them. Acknowledging the legitimacy of *gaya* seems to be related to common values and institutions shared by the Sediq and Atayal people. According to Douglas (1986: 113), institutions hold the legitimacy which makes people follow or obey. In concrete terms, such common values and institutions can acquire legitimacy by using sacred symbols (Durkheim, 1973: 160). This sacredness can be understood in terms of being awesome. An acceptance of this sacredness creates the solidarity which makes its members keep in their mind that if the sacred is profaned terrible things will happen. If the sacred is attacked, this attack on the sacred tends to make people produce emotions in its defence (Douglas, 1986: 113). Through the solidarity of

sacredness members share the same feelings with other members and respect or fear it (Durkheim, 1982: 52).

In the case of the Sediq and Atayal people, the thought of a supernatural power, *utux*, seems to have a sacred role in making villagers acknowledge the legitimacy of *gaya*. According to Ferrell (1969: 31), their *gaya* contains old stories related to supernatural creatures which exceed human knowledge and power. *Utux* signifies a kind of spirit and supernatural power. Ms. Tsou (67), who is a villager of Greenriver, said that the residents are in awe of this supernatural power. They believe that if their behaviour is against their *gaya*, they are punished by *utux* (from an interview with Ms. Tsou, 05/03/06). According to Ms. Tsou, the concept of *utux* is the principle which gives *gaya* its legitimacy and commands the awe of the villagers (from an interview with Ms. Tsou, 05/05/06). Ms. Tsou strongly asserted that if they do wrong things against *gaya*, what dreadful punishment they would receive from *utux* (from an interview with Ms. Tsou, 05/05/06).

However, although Ms. Tsou stressed the influence of *utux* on the minds of the Sediq people, it is difficult to ascertain to what extent the concept of *utux* has in constructing the legitimacy of *gaya*. Other elderly people seldom mentioned this supernatural power when they talked of the relationship between them and *gaya*. Rather, most of the elderly



indigenous people mentioned the shame of the punishments meted out by other villagers. According to them, in practice the villagers punish people whose behaviour infringes the principles of *gaya*. Indeed, being punished by other villagers is quite awful and shameful (from interviews with Ms. Ling (72), 13/04/06, Ms. Zeng (74), 15/05/06, Ms. Ku (74), 15/05/06, Ms. Li (77), 05/06/06 and Mr. Wang (77), 06/06/06).

On the other hand, human beings tend to act, showing emotions, desires or weaknesses rather with rationality or logical reasoning (Harre, 1993: 121, 197). Therefore, there is the question of whether the Sediq and Atayal people can easily accept, respect and follow the principles of *gaya*. Archer (1995, 2000) and Porpora (1998: 347) mention the tension between the social structure and human agents. Although structure and human agents are in a mutual relationship, human agents do not always accept the collective values without question. For this reason, there is the possibility that people might react with their complex minds to the principles of *gaya*, such as rage, embarrassment or resistance while there is scope for negotiation with institutions. For instance, Ms. Wang (60) had the experience that when her grandfather chose her husband, she strongly resisted his decision although it is the traditional rule to marry a partner chosen by parents or grandparents (from interviews with Ms. Wang, 05/06/06 and 13/06/06). In the end she accepted the decision and married

the chosen male when she was fifteen years old. This case is an example of the struggle in the mind until the person decided to follow *gaya*.

As Archer (2000: 210, 213) argues, through emotional struggling and frustration and through the self-monitoring of emotions, people make decisions about how to behave. The Sediq and Atayal people also would have asked and answered how much they are prepared to accept the principles of *gaya*. Through such emotional struggling, they would have decided to accept and follow the principles of *gaya* in differing degrees.

Presumably, the actions for following the principles of *gaya* would have been repeated by the Sediq and Atayal people. As a consequence, this repeated behaviour has become “a cluster of practices” (Archer, 1995: 95) in their society. A cluster of practices constitutes a communal world (Archer, 1995: 95). In the communal world, rules, regularities or tendencies are produced while thoughts and values, which are incompatible with these rules, regularities or tendencies, are dismissed (Archer, 1989: 82). To follow rules, regularities or tendencies produced by the communal world means that people reflexively throw themselves to this world (Lash, 1995: 147). The communal world acquires a position for exercising power on individuals. This power can lead people to deny their individual autonomy and can ask them to follow its values, tendencies and customs (Archer, 1989: 82). In that meaning, when they decide to act in

their daily life with respect for the principles of *gaya*, *gaya* finally becomes the communal values and regulations for the Sediq and Atayal people.

#### 5.4. Nostalgia for the Past

In conversation and interviews with the indigenous people, especially the elderly people, some of them quite often mentioned *gaya*, saying that there is not *gaya* in the present day. Especially, they stated the following points: (1) the past was much more spiritually rich than today; (2) compared with the present with a lot of social problems, the past days were calm and peaceful.

Hobsbawn (1994: 1, 4) describes “invented tradition” as nostalgic minds or practices governed by the values or rituals and symbolic natures of the past. The elderly indigenous people seemed to not only express historical truth but also to invent or create older values and traditional symbols when they considered questions put to them about the current social problems. Of course they maintained that the principles of *gaya* would contribute to the formation of communal values because they have legitimacy. However, at the same time, there is the possibility that the elderly people might have dramatised the principles of *gaya* to some extent. For these elderly indigenous people, the older values and traditions might be in relation to the principles of *gaya*. In interviews,

there were two points about their life experiences in the past which they specially emphasised: (1) the serious attitude to work and (2) communal life.

According to some elderly people, the villagers of Greenriver, Yellowriver, Alanvalley and Peacevalley produced yam, taro, millet and rice in the past. Cooperating with family members and relatives was essential in growing and harvesting the crops. Ms. Yang (81) said that since she was six or seven years old, she worked hard helping her parents to foster and harvest agricultural products (from an interview with Ms. Yang, 21/03/06). Mr. Hwang (80) also said that after school he went to the field to help his parents (from an interview with Mr. Hwang, 29/03/06).

The concept of communal life was also mentioned by the elderly people. For example, Ms. Zeng (74), who is an elderly female living in Yellowriver, said that when some villagers got a cow by barter trading, they butchered it and shared the beef equally with other villagers (from an interview with Ms. Zeng, 15/05/06). Ms. Li (77) in Alanvalley mentioned that men who killed wild pigs in a hunt celebrated and shared the meat equally with the villagers (from an interview with Ms. Li, 05/06/06).

The experience of Japanese education also contributed to the formation of traditional values to some degree. According to Ms. Yang (81), the Japanese schools taught not only Japanese but also ethics which placed

emphasis on working seriously and good manners (from the interviews with Ms. Yang (81), 23/02/06 and 21/03/06). The Japanese were very strict with the indigenous students. For instance, if they forgot to greet them, the Japanese police officers would slap their cheeks or hit their heads (from the interviews with Ms. Yang (81), 23/02/06 and 21/03/06, Ms. Li (77), 05/06/06 and Mr. Li (74), 22/04/06). Moreover, Ms. Zeng (74) said that the residents living in Greenriver and Yellowriver were taught the importance of group working by Japanese police officers (from an interview with Ms. Zeng (74), 14/05/06). They were asked to work together to raise agricultural products and construct the physical infrastructures. For example, each household in Yellowriver planted hemp and donated the cultivated hemp to a police station (from an interview with Mr. Hwang (80), 15/05/06). In addition to the donation of agricultural products, the Japanese authority required the young people to work on the construction of roads (from an interview with Ms. Zeng (74), 15/05/06).

Of course, these educational and social policies implemented by the Japanese colonial power in their villages were compulsory assimilation denying indigenous culture and forced labour infringing their lifestyle. At the same time, despite such harsh policies, some of the elderly people mentioned that compared with present days, the Japanese colonial days were better because then there were no social problems such as crimes

and alcoholism (from interviews with Ms. Yang, 21/03/06 and Mr. Hwang, 29/03/06). The experience of the hardships in the past appears to have become romanticised in their minds.

### **5.5. Elderly People's Common Identities and Thoughts**

This section considers the background why elderly indigenous people tend to be nostalgic about the past. The notions of an older social structure are sometimes invented or created by people when they notice that these traditional forms are not adaptable or viable in the modernised era (Hobsbawn, 1994: 5). To put it concretely, according to Hobsbawn (1994: 4-5), the invention of tradition occurs more frequently under the following situations:

- (1) When a rapid social change weakens or destroys the social patterns for which old traditions had been designed.
- (2) When older values and structures no longer prove sufficiently adaptable and flexible in the current transformable society.

Through observation of and communication with the elderly indigenous people living in Greenriver, Yellowriver, Alanvalley and Peacevalley, it was found that whenever they talked of *gaya*, most of them tended to assert that in the present, the young indigenous people have various social problems, such as alcoholism, laziness and ill health. They

expressed complex feelings and impressions about the present. They conceded that their values are not adaptable or viable in the present although they would like to inculcate these values in the young generation.

Their romantic and nostalgic attitude for the past can let them express their emotions including disappointment, resignation, discontent, anger and wishful thinking rather than the historical truth. For example, during a conversation with Ms. Yo (89) in her house in Alanvalley, her grandson, who was a junior high school student, entered the house, smoking tobacco. The law prohibits minors from smoking. She said that although she tries to stop him from smoking, he does not listen to her at all. Moreover, she repeatedly said that smoking has become a common behaviour among the indigenous children in Alanvalley and they do not respect what elderly people suggest. (from an interview with Ms. Yo, 25/07/06). Ms. Ling (72), who is a resident of Greenriver, told of her experience. According to her, the young people now do not care about eating healthily. When she passed by a small restaurant at lunch time, she found young villagers drinking alcohol and eating tinned food. She repeatedly said:

“If they can drink alcohol, they are happy. They do not care about their health at all although they have to be well in order to work hard for their children. They become selfish. Present society emphasises freedom more than responsibility.

They think that if they do not give others trouble, they are permitted to do what they want. That is not right! It is not correct! They do not care about morality any more. Because of this, they just drink alcohol all day, from morning to night. I do not like alcohol at all!” (from interviews with Ms. Ling, 13/04/06, 29/03/06 and 27/04/06).

Are the thoughts expressed by Ms. Yo and Ms. Ling are shared by other elderly people? As Jenkins (2004: 79) points out, “common thought and identification evokes a powerful imagery of people who are in some respects apparently similar to each other.” People have the tendency to be conscious of having something in common with people who also have similar values and behaviour. This similarity cannot be recognised without simultaneously evoking differentiation (Jenkins 2004: 79). That is to say, the common values and tendencies can be confirmed by comparison with others who have different values and backgrounds (Turner *et al.*, 1979: 190; Abrams and Hogg, 1988: 327). From these conversations, the elderly indigenous people living in Greenriver, Yellowriver, Alanvalley and Peacevalley appear to have the common tendency to make critical comparisons between the old society and young people now, showing a nostalgic attitude for the past and the principles of *gaya*.



Just as Ms. Yo and Ms. Ling expressed their ideas and impressions about present society, other elderly people also revealed similar and common thoughts about the young indigenous people. To put it concretely, they generally expressed the following thoughts and impressions: (1) the young people just enjoy freedom and they do not care about morality and *gaya* at all; (2) they do not care about the education of their children, their health and life; (3) young people regard the thoughts of elderly people as out-of-date ideas and they do not listen to elderly people (from the interviews with Ms. Tsou (67), 05/03/06 and 05/05/06, Ms. Zeng (74), 31/03/06 and 15/05/06, Mr. Li (74), 22/04/06 and Mr. Wang (77), 06/06/06). These three points represent the common thinking of the elderly indigenous people.

However, there is the question of why elderly indigenous people tend to feel limited and have difficulty to exercise their power to accomplish the common tasks of influencing the behaviour of the young generation. Harre (1993) points out a condition for implementing common tasks. That is to say, if a common value can build norms and conventions which can play a leading role in managing agents' actions, human agents act together jointly and intentionally to accomplish common tasks (Harre, 1993: 56). If the common values of the elderly indigenous people can acquire legitimacy and a leading role, they would be able to construct norms and regulations

which can make the young indigenous people follow what they say. According to the elderly indigenous people, most of the young indigenous people do not listen to them. Why do they have such thoughts? In conversation and interviews with them they give the impression that they consider: (1) their lack of commitment to society and (2) their lack of knowledge of modern society. To discuss these points is important.

The elderly people meet together and communicate with one another when they attend the Sunday service in churches. Except for Sundays when they go to church, they seldom gather together. Ms. Chou (45), who was born and grew up in Greenriver, said that elderly people tend to isolate themselves or are isolated from society (from an interview with Ms. Chou, 08/04/06). As the elderly indigenous people spend their time apart, it seems to be difficult for them to be able to jointly exercise their influence for transforming society.

Some of the elderly indigenous people said that they are totally not in a position to understand the trends of current society. For instance, Ms. Yang (81) and Mr. Wang (77) said that because they were educated during the Japanese colonial days, they cannot understand Chinese well. As a consequence, it is difficult for them to acquire news and information about what is happening in current society (from the interviews with Ms. Yang, 23/02/06 and 23/03/06 and Mr. Wang, 06/06/06). Although Giddens (1986)

and Beck (1995) optimistically regard human beings as knowledgeable agents, the elderly indigenous people would have to make huge efforts to be such knowledgeable agents in the present modernised society. Therefore, it is quite difficult for them to acquire enough knowledge about the present rapid social transformations, including globalisation, modern culture, and development of the media and internet which young people like to utilise. As a consequence, elderly indigenous people tend to think that communication with young people is difficult and keep their distance from communication and negotiation with society. In these circumstances they tend to feel that it is difficult to exercise their influence on the current modernised society.

## **5.6. Modernisation and Its Influence on the Indigenous People**

While the elderly indigenous people keep to older values and traditions, referring to the principles of *gaya* or morality, the structure of their society is rapidly changing. This section considers how modernisation has influenced the perceptions and practices of the Sediq and Atayal people.

After the Second World War, Taiwan was drastically changed politically, from its status as a colony of Japan to an independent Republic of China. Economically, Taiwan started to focus on the development of manufacturing industries and technologies. Today's Taiwanese economic

scheme is different from that of the past. The Taiwanese economy is now mainly characterised by heavy industries, high technologies and the exportation of industrial products.

The Sediq and Atayal people's perceptions and practices have been drastically changed by these rapid social and economic transformations of Taiwan. The transformation of the Taiwanese main society has expanded to Greenriver, Yellowriver, Alanvalley and Peacevalley. To put it concretely, the following aspects of societal transformation can have an influence on their perceptions and practices in their social and economic activities:

- (1) The improvement of physical infrastructures such as roads and bridges.
- (2) Economic structural changes: the pervasiveness of a money economy in their villages and the changes in the ways for acquiring income and participation in the labour market.
- (3) The introduction of a new educational system requiring them to learn mandarin Chinese, Chinese history and other main subjects.
- (4) The flow of new information from the main Taiwanese society to their villages through the mass media such as television and the internet.
- (5) Awareness of other lifestyles learned from the mass media.

How have these transformations influenced the formation of the perceptions and practices of the villagers living in Greenriver, Middlesaward, Alanvalley and Peacevalley?

Giddens (1995) and Beck (1995) point out that modernised society makes people become more reflexive agents, and individuals are disembroiled from traditional values. In the present time, the activities of human agents are exposed to the extensive spread of modern trends and values which are partly universalised via globalising processes (Giddens, 1995: 57). For example, most of the households in Greenriver, Yellowriver, Alanvalley and Peacevalley have cable television network and they can watch entertainment programmes, news and Hollywood movies which people are globally watching. They are in communication with a global culture. Most of the young indigenous people know which singers and actors are popular in Taiwan and the world. In addition, boys like to watch baseball and basketball tournaments. Boys and girls playing basketball and baseball in school and public space were observed. Against this background, the perceptions and practices of the Sediq and Atayal people have become hugely influenced by cultural events which are outside their immediate sphere.

Socially and economically, they also have started to communicate and negotiate with members of the mainstream society of Taiwan. In the fields

of education, most of the indigenous children study in schools in their villages. Thus, they study with school mates who have the same tribal background. But from junior high school, they start to spend their school life with *Han* and *Hakka* students. For most of the indigenous children, this would be their first experience of communicating with members of the mainstream society on a full scale. After graduating from school, they continue to communicate, negotiate and compete with *Han* and *Hakka* people in their working place.

As a result of such contact with the mainstream society of Taiwan, they are put in a position to consider who they are. As Giddens (1996: 367) asserts, for some indigenous people, such transformation could alter the nature of their agency and lead to the establishment of novel values and identities. At the same time, social transformation promoting communication with mainstream society may push some of them to have a stronger identity as Taiwanese indigenous people.

### **5.7. The Influence of Modernisation on Indigenous Culture**

It may be difficult for the indigenous people to become completely separate from their identity as indigenous people. One of the reasons is the educational policy of the Taiwanese government. When this research was carried out in Taiwan in 2006, the government introduced measures

for the indigenous students to learn their tribal languages and culture at school. Once they have registered their racial identity as Taiwanese indigenous people, they have to attend examinations about their tribal languages and culture in order to have the opportunity to access government scholarships and educational subsidies. Namely, if they wish to acquire these benefits, they need to show proof that not only are they indigenous persons but also that they already understand the culture of their tribal groups through these examinations. For this reason, some young Sediq and Atayal people have to learn the principles of *gaya* to prepare for the examinations. Through such an educational policy which makes them learn their tribal cultural background, intentionally or unintentionally their consciousness and perceptions as indigenous people have become embedded.

The second reason is the influence of their family, especially their parents. As this structural influence on individuals will be discussed and analysed in the next chapter only a brief mention of it is made here. As has been explained, many elderly people consider that they cannot communicate with their grandchildren or impart to them their philosophy of life. However, although they cannot exercise their power and agency on their grandchildren directly, they have already implemented their power through bringing up their children. To put it concretely, through

education within the household, they are able to inform their children of *gaya* as their parents had taught it to them during their childhood. The formation of the habitus of individuals is strongly in relation to the values, habits and positions of their family. Namely, the perceptions and actions of these elderly people, which are closely connected with *gaya*, also influence the construction of familial thinking and culture. Of course, it does not mean that their ideas and values can always be easily transferred to their children and grandchildren. Some of their children may resist the values and thinking of their parents and grandparents, regarding them as out-of-date. Rather, they are more ready to accept modern culture. However, they cannot escape from the habits and customs of their family, which include the habits and ideas of the elderly people because family is the first important place for individuals to begin communication with others. In addition, the family is an indispensable institution for them to construct their perceptions and self-identity. Therefore, whether or not the next generation accepts the values of the elderly indigenous people who are strongly influenced by the principles of *gaya*, *gaya* would still influence the construction of culture in each indigenous family.

The third reason why the indigenous people regard themselves as indigenous is related to the increasing communication with members of



the mainstream society of Taiwan, the *Han* and *Hakka* people. In the last section, it was pointed out that such communication is an opportunity for the indigenous people to transform their self-identity and perceptions. However, at the same time, such communication can make them retain their self-identity as indigenous people.

Individuals confirm their self-identity through comparison and communication with others. In particular, if they have contact with those from a different cultural, social and economic background, they tend to become conscious about not only their own identity but also their social, cultural and economic background. For example, Ms. Ryu (34), an elementary school teacher in Yellowriver, pointed out that when they start to study in junior high school with *Han* and *Hakka* students, the indigenous students tend to notice the huge gap of knowledge in the main subjects between themselves and the others (from an interview with Ms. Ryu, 04/04/06). In addition, Ms. Ryu said that they notice the reason why their academic record is not as good as that of the *Han* and *Hakka* students. Namely, the parents of these students have sufficient economic capital to pay the educational costs including tuition fees at crammer schools. Many indigenous students notice that their families do not have such capital to allow them to study in a crammer school (from an

interview with Ms. Ryu, 05/04/06). This difference, noticed by the indigenous students, enhances their perception of themselves.

The Sediq and Atayal people have traditionally been conscious of various kinds of regulations imposed on their daily life through *gaya*. On the one hand, these regulations guarantee the security of their life and the order of their society. On the other hand, an individual's wishes and desires seem to be ignored or minimised by these regulations.

Modernisation promotes the structural transformation of the society of the Taiwanese indigenous people. Such transformation seems to have given the indigenous people an opportunity to transform their traditions and make them more reflexive. Particularly, indigenous females, who have been emancipated from the constraints of traditional habits, can acquire the opportunity to decide their future according to their wishes. For example, they can study at school and choose their own occupations.

However, can modernisation guarantee that each Taiwanese indigenous person can improve his living standard or bring him happiness? As far as could be observed of their society, it appears that while modernisation can give the indigenous people an opportunity to exercise their agency for changing their lives according to their plans and wishes, it also seems to produce a differentiation in their living standards which induces

stratification of their educational backgrounds and their economic positions in society.

## 5.8. Summary and Conclusion

This chapter discussed how the social structure has an influence on the formation of the perceptions and identities of the Sediq and Atayal people. In particular, it focused on the influence of *gaya* on their perceptions and self-identity.

A number of elderly people emphasised how much the principles of *gaya*, which are social regulations and taboos, have influenced their life. The extent of the influence of *gaya* on the formation of the habitus of the Sediq and Atayal people was examined.

First of all, the function of the family in transferring unique habits and culture to the next generation within a household was looked at. Many elderly people said that they learned the principles of *gaya* from their grandparents and parents when they were children. Compared with the present, in the past the family was exclusive space. Under such an exclusive social environment, the family acquired an important role in inscribing the contents of *gaya* on the reflections and perceptions of its members.

Secondly, this chapter discussed the legitimacy of *gaya* and that some people struggle whether to accept it or not. When *gaya* can acquire an legitimacy, *gaya* commands people to follow it. It is *utux* which is a supernatural power. They are told by their parents that if they infringed the principles of *gaya*, they would be punished by this power.

Thirdly, the possible part that nostalgia could play in the minds of the elderly people was also explored. In conversation, the elderly people seemed to be nostalgic about the past when they compared it with the present with its rapidly changing social structure. The assertion of Hobsbawn (1994), which mentions the invention of traditions, is quite useful in analysing this. When the elderly people considered that their values and thoughts are not adaptable and viable in the modern transforming society, they seemed, in a nostalgic frame of mind, to invent and create traditions relating to *gaya*.

Despite the elderly people's longing for the past, the society of the Sediq and Atayal people is being transformed by modernisation and globalisation. This social transformation has influenced the construction of the self-identity and reflections of the indigenous people, especially the young people. For example, compared with the elderly people, they have more opportunity to communicate with the *Han* and *Hakka* Taiwanese and to be in touch with their values, culture and lifestyle.

Due to the modernisation of their society which has weakened the wall of traditional values and customs related to the principles of *gaya*, the indigenous people in the present day are more able than before to acquire better positions to decide to do what they want to do.

However, *gaya* has not disappeared from their society. There is the possibility that this principle remains in the culture and customs of each indigenous family which is an institution that has profound impact on the construction of an individual's perceptions.

In addition, the increasing communication with the mainstream society enhances their awareness of their identity as indigenous people because they notice various kinds of differences between them and the *Han* and *Hakka* people in the fields of cultural and economic capitals. At the same time, social and economic gaps and stratification seem to be constructed within their society. To understand the differentiation and stratification within their society, it is essential to scrutinise how the structural changes in their society have influenced the formation of the life history of each indigenous person.

## **Chapter 6: Influence of Social Transformation on the Perceptions and Actions of Human Agents**

### **6.1. Introduction**

This chapter looks at how the rapid social transformation has influenced the perceptions and actions of the Sediq and Atayal people. The economic and social systems in their society have been hugely affected through the imposition of Japanese rule by the colonial power, the introduction of Chinese education, the increasing communication with the mainstream society, the flow of new technology such as the internet and cable television, and the development of infrastructures. How have these modernisations influenced the formation of their identities, thinking styles and customs? To what extent are their traditional and indigenous culture and habits kept in their minds?

Some researchers discuss the positive influence of modernisation on the reflexivity of individuals. For instance, Giddens (1996) and Beck (1995) strongly argue that modern society can blur traditions and the boundaries of each social class. In the modernised society, human agents have more autonomy for deciding their activities in their daily life, through communication, negotiation or competition with other people. Because of this, individuals can acquire strategies and awareness for their

perceptions and practices in their social and economic activities. As a consequence, as Lash (1993: 204) argues, increasing modernisation is accompanied by an increase in an individual's reflexivity which means the increasing ability of each agent to reflect on his society.

These arguments may indicate that an individual's perceptions to some extent can be freed of the traditional customs or tastes of the class to which he belongs and he can refer more reflexively to his values and thoughts. In particular, Beck (1992: 98) strongly asserts that contemporary individualised cultures break from the ascribed culture of the class to which they belong. For example, in *The Risk Society*, Beck (1992: 128, 130) strongly asserts that:

“The individual himself or herself becomes the reproduction unit for the social in the life world. Individualism is a process of disembedding, removal from historically prescribed social forms and commitments and the loss of traditional security”.

With such increasing autonomous individuals in the present day as described by Beck, some of the Sediq and Atayal people have actively acquired up-to-date culture and technology with their reflexivity and agency for improving their lifestyles. As a consequence, not a few indigenous people are moving to city areas and spend their social and economic life there, communicating and competing with the *Han* and

*Hakka* Taiwanese who are members of the mainstream society. There are a few young indigenous people who have moved to city areas to seek better and advanced jobs or to provide their children with a better educational environment. They said that they still regard themselves as indigenous people. Moreover, they register the racial background of their children as indigenous people with the government because their children can be eligible to access government scholarships and other support. In the case of these people, they may identify themselves as indigenous people, not only because of their embedded descriptions but also because of their strategic life plan. That is to say, although their self-identity and perceptions may be strongly related to their habitus, they seem to be able to decide their activities with strategy, communicating with the mainstream society.

On the other hand, according to Savage (2000), Giddens and Beck, in their search for a theory on individualisation, avoid the dualistic relationship between individuals and society, which is one of the classic and much discussed tensions in social theory.

Savage (2000: 103) points out that individualisation does not entail weakening the power of social structural forces. Although the rapid transformations of the present day are influencing the diversification of people's identities and lifestyles, they also create social issues. Beall



(2002) argues the formation of divided life patterns of people in modern society which may be accompanied by globalisation, characterised by the promotion of deregulation and free competition, and the reduction of social services. Some people can acquire advantages from such social transformation, utilising the opportunities provided by the creation of new jobs and industries. On the other hand, other people are incorporated at huge social costs into the changes produced by the structural adjustment or the reduction of public services (Beall, 2002). Especially, McNeish (2005: 229) points out the possibility that the lifestyles of indigenous people could be damaged by social transformation. The Taiwanese indigenous people tend to be in more vulnerable positions than members of the mainstream society in the fields of occupations and education. Moreover, it is difficult for them to reflect their assertion on political decision-making in the mainstream society because they are a minority in Taiwan. For this reason, in the present day, although individuals can acquire more opportunities in deciding to act or not to act according to their ideas and wishes, they cannot be free from structural forces and constraints (Savage, 2000: 104).

Moreover, at the same time, there is the other aspect of human agency indicating that not all people actively and willingly want to exercise their reflexivity for changing their self-identity and lifestyle. Namely, some of

them may feel satisfaction as members of a traditional culture, institutions and social class, refusing to adjust themselves to the changing society and to seek the construction of a new self-identity. For example, some indigenous people desire to shut themselves off from communication with the mainstream society of Taiwan and prefer to spend their daily life based on the income from agriculture obtained in their society. However, the rapid social transformation sometimes does not allow them to cling to this given social and cultural structure and pushes them to the situation where they have to communicate and negotiate with the *Han* and *Hakka* people. To put it concretely, they have to be involved in the educational and economic systems which have been constructed by the mainstream society. Many young indigenous people particularly are studying at school with members of the mainstream society and working outside, for example, on construction sites, in factories, hotels and schools where they cannot avoid contact with the mainstream society. In such a social and economic situation, they have to consider and decide how to behave, utilising their reflexivity. For this reason, as Savage (2000: 103) argues, the dynamic contemporary social changes force individuals to be reflexive.

## **6.2. Reflexivity and Agency under Social Transformation**

In order to research the influence of social transformation on the reflexivity and agency of individuals, a suitable theoretical background is required. The idea suggested by Bevan (2004) is quite helpful for researching how the dynamic transformation of society has influenced the perceptions and practices of individuals.

Bevan (2004: 9) strongly argues that the actions of people in their daily life can be considered in terms of the dynamics of the structure of their living area. These local dynamics together make up state level dynamics, which in turn influence structural dynamics at the global level. The formation of unequal and marginalised structures in a human agent's society is strongly related to the state and global levels politically, economically and culturally (Bevan, 2004: 9). This idea leads to the consideration that an agent's actions in his daily life are influenced by not only the structural dynamics of his living area but also by the dynamics at the state and global levels.

The interdependence of these kinds of dynamics and an actor's actions can be researched within the concept of time. Bevan (2004: 11-13) divides the concept of time into calendars, rhythms and histories.

The concept of calendar is based on the life course of people (Bevan, 2004). Through using calendar, an analysis can be made of what has

happened in their society and their country when people are alive. First of all, the calendar of each person is set up in calendar boxes that make up the period of their lives. Happenings induced by dynamic social transformation have an impact on the social and economic actions and lifestyles of individuals. The extent of this impact can be studied by using the concept of calendar.

Secondly, the concept of time can be described in terms of rhythms. The concept of rhythms states key periods and important events that take place at the personal, village and state levels. According to Bevan (2004: 14), elements of people's lives have particular time rhythms and cycles, which are structurally linked and culturally constructed. There are culturally constructed times when they finish school, when they get married or when they start to work. These social and economic key actions of people can be directly constructed through the dynamic events and structural transformations in their living areas. These key events in the living areas of actors cause the transformations which affect the structure and culture of society at the state level (Bevan, 2004: 14). Through the concept of rhythms, it becomes possible to research how the interaction between the actions of the Sediq and Atayal people and the social structure may transform, develop or decay as time passes.

The third concept of time brings our attention to history. As Bevan (2004: 15) says, people build their histories as they age, depending on what happens to them and what they make of it. We constantly live in a moving time. That is to say, as time passes there is a path of our life history connecting what has happened before, what is happening now and what will happen in the future. The Taiwanese society and economy have been continuously exposed to the rapid transformations produced by modernisation and globalisation. These transformations are influencing the changes in the society of the Sediq and Atayal people. Such social changes influence their reflections and their social and economic activities. The concept of history allows for research into how the Sediq and Atayal people have perceived and acted, when faced with the social changes and issues.

Fourthly, for considering how indigenous people have perceived and acted, being influenced by the dynamics of society, the category of reflection is added. Although the aim of this chapter is to research the influence of social structures and dynamics on the actions of the Taiwanese indigenous people, as Titterton (1992) suggests, the role of creative human agency has also to be considered. When discussing the reactions of the indigenous people, consideration is given to the aspects of

motivation (Baumeister and Leary, 1995), emotion (Mumby and Putnam, 1992), self-understanding and mobilisation (Adams, 2006).

An examination of the detailed episodes of individual life histories has to be made in order to analyse in detail their reactions to the dynamic changes in society. Although the Sediq and Atayal people in general were reluctant to talk about their lives, it was possible to obtain some life histories through communication with the host families. For this, six people and one married couple who were members of the host family were selected. Their life histories are discussed by examining how these individuals have thought and taken action within the structural dynamics, transformations and structural issues such as the shortage of economic resources and education.

Using Bevan's concept of calendar, rhythm and history, the following boxes briefly describe the dynamics of (1) Taiwanese society at state level (Box 6.1) and (2) the villages of Greenriver, Yellowriver, Alanvalley and Peacevalley at local level (Box 6.2). In addition to these concepts, the reflections and actions which have been implemented by the indigenous people (from Box 6.3 to Box 6.9) are scrutinised.

### Box 6.1: Dynamics of Taiwanese Society

	Calendar	Rhythm	History
Taiwanese Society	1930's- Present	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Japanese colonial power ruled Taiwan.</li> <li>2. After the Second World War, Taiwan was returned to the Republic of China.</li> <li>3. Taiwan was under the dictatorship of the Chinese Nationalist Party.</li> <li>4. Taiwanese economy developed under the dictatorship.</li> <li>5. Taiwanese politics was democratised.</li> <li>6. Taiwanese economy started to be exposed to globalisation.</li> <li>7. Factories moved from Taiwan to mainland China.</li> <li>8. Cheaper labour from Southeast Asia started to move to Taiwan.</li> <li>9. Taiwanese society suffered from economic recession.</li> </ol>	<p>1895-1945: Japanese colonial rule</p> <p>1945: Start of dictatorship under the Chinese Nationalist Party.</p> <p>1960's: Start of the internationalisation and globalisation of the Taiwanese economy and society</p> <p>1987: End of the dictatorship</p> <p>2000's: Policy emphasising indigenous identity</p> <p>2000's: Economic recession</p> <p>2000's: Cheaper labour started to move to Taiwan from South East Asia.</p>

**Box 6.2: Dynamics of Greenriver, Yellowriver, Alanvalley and Peacevalley**

	<b>Calendar</b>	<b>Rhythm</b>	<b>History</b>
Greenriver, Yellowriver, Alanvalley, and Peacevalley	1930's- Present	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Until the end of the Second World War, they were under the observation of the Japanese colonial power.</li> <li>2. After Taiwan was returned to the Republic of China, Taiwanese educational system was drastically changed to Chinese.</li> <li>3. Money and the market economy flowed into the villages.</li> <li>4. Many young villagers started to move to towns and cities for work or study.</li> <li>5. The gap in economic and cultural resources became serious among the residents.</li> <li>6. Alcoholism became serious in the villages.</li> </ol>	<p>1930: Huge scale armed resistance in Wushe.            1931: Sediq families, whose members participated in this resistance, were forcibly moved to Greenriver by the Japanese authority.</p> <p>1937-38: Some Sediq families living near Wushe were forcibly moved to Yellowriver by the Japanese authority.            1945: End of the Second World War.            1940's-1950's: The flow of money economy and motorisation.            1950's: Young people started to move to cities for work or study.            1999: A large earthquake hit the villages.            2000's: Because of cheaper labour from South East Asia, the villagers gradually lost the opportunities for working on construction sites.</p>



### 6.3. Intertwined Relationship of the Life History and the Dynamics of Social Structure

#### 6.3.1. Ms. Tsou's Case

##### Box 6.3: Reflexivity of Ms. Tsou

Actors	Calendar	Rhythm	History	Reflexivity
Ms. Tsou (67) Greenriver	1939- Present	From girlhood to present day.	1939: She was born. 1950's: She became a Catholic nun. 1957: She entered a university to study literature. After becoming a Catholic nun: She went to Rome to study for a PhD. After stopping being a nun: She started Educational projects for indigenous children. 2003: She started vocational training in Greenriver for poor female villagers.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. She strongly sees herself as a Sediq rather than a Taiwanese.</li> <li>2. She strongly believes that each person has the ability to contribute to a wholesome social culture.</li> <li>3. She does not think that drinking alcohol is her tribal culture.</li> <li>4. She thinks that in recent days, children of Greenriver do not study because of the influence of TV.</li> <li>5. She thinks that because they do not have confidence in themselves, they cannot escape from their social and economic problems.</li> </ol>

## **Profile**

Ms. Tsou (67) was born in Greenriver and she is living there now. She has higher educational credentials which is unusual for her generation, especially among the indigenous people. For a long time, as a Catholic nun, she was engaged in various kinds of voluntary work. She especially emphasised that education can provide indigenous people with opportunities for improving their lifestyles and living standards. For this reason, even when she was no more a nun she was engaged in educational projects, teaching English and her tribal language/culture to indigenous students. She severely criticised the young generation's social and cultural life, especially their drinking habits, because their attitude and behaviour are against *gaya* and the traditional habits of her tribe.

The case of Ms. Tsou shows what a difficult task it is to make the villagers look at their social and economic problems and to push them to improve their living standards.

## **Ms. Tsou's Perceptions and Practices**

Ms. Tsou (67) strongly sees herself as a Sediq person, not an Atayal person. The Sediq people were formally categorised as belonging to the Atayal tribe, together with the Atayal people in 2006, the time of the field research. However, she said, "The language and *gaya* of the Sediq people

are different from those of the Atayal people. Therefore, the Sediq people must be an independent tribe” (from an interview with Ms. Tsou, 19/02/06).

The background of her strong identity seems to be derived from her father. Her father participated in the armed resistance against the Japanese colonial power. It was the Sediq people who carried out the resistance campaign in October, 1930. Although her father participated in the campaign, he was not punished by the Japanese authority. According to Ms. Tsou, her father said that the Sediq participants fought in this resistance for the liberty and the honour of the Sediq people because the Japanese police treated them as slaves (from an interview with Ms. Tsou, 06/04/06). Presumably, her father told Ms. Tsou why the Sediq people led the armed resistance and how important their *gaya* was, for setting up a life of moderation and working seriously. The history of the armed resistance and the principles of *gaya* strongly permeated the mind of Ms. Tsou. Her life history is influenced by her father. *Gaya* and her father’s ideas became the fundamental dispositions of Ms. Tsou’s perceptions and practices in her life.

In addition to *gaya* and the history of the armed resistance for the honour of the Sediq people, two more thoughts might be inscribed in her mind: Catholicism and education.

Although her father emphasised to her the importance of studying hard, her parents did not have enough economic and cultural capitals to support her education. Ms. Tsou has seven siblings. It was difficult for her parents to let her continue her study. Instead of her parents, the Catholic Church provided her with the opportunity for study. Around 1950's, the Catholic Church started missionary work in Greenriver, Yellowriver and Alanvalley. As a part of the missionary work, the Catholic Church provided indigenous children, whose academic performances were excellent, with opportunities for study in Catholic schools and universities. Around 1950's, studying in Catholic schools was a way for the indigenous children living in Greenriver, Yellowriver and Alanvalley to continue their education. Some of the indigenous students from Greenriver or Alanvalley, who had high academic scores and wished to study, came to believe in Catholicism and entered Catholic schools to continue their studies. Ms. Tsou also came to believe in Catholicism and became a Catholic nun. She studied in a Catholic school and entered the National Cheng Gong University, which is one of the top universities in Taiwan. After finishing her study, she started her career as a nun and an educationalist. She worked for the Catholic Church as a nun and a high school teacher for long time. Through her work, she realised that although indigenous people originally have the capacities for improving their life through study

and work, they just do not know how to exercise their capacities (from an interview with Ms. Tsou, 06/04/06). She noticed that education is the most important for them to improve their living standard and to receive pride as indigenous people (from an interview with Ms. Tsou, 04/03/06). For this reason, she decided to give up being a Catholic nun to concentrate on an educational project in Puli Town which is a big town near Ren-ai Township. With the other staff she taught the main subjects, her tribal language and culture, including *gaya* and manners, to indigenous students for a long time. Now she is teaching English, the Sediq language and culture in her home village, Greenriver. The villagers of Greenriver and Yellowriver know of the academic achievements of Ms. Tsou. She publishes many reports and books researching the *gaya* and culture of the Sediq tribal group. The villagers realise that due to the flow of cheaper foreign labour to Taiwan, their opportunities for working on construction sites have become fewer and fewer. Therefore, not a few villagers make their children study in her educational programme. Although Ms. Tsou does not communicate with the members of the labouring and farming classes of Greenriver or Yellowriver, she accepts their children as much as she can.

In addition to the educational programme, Ms. Tsou has implemented simple vocational training in her house, being supported by the Taiwanese

government and other charity organisations. To let indigenous females, who had lost their jobs due to the large earthquake in 1999, acquire the skills required for occupations, the Taiwanese government set up vocational training projects. Utilising the fund of this project, Ms. Tsou started vocational training in 2003, offering six females from Greenriver and Yellowriver the opportunity to learn to weave textile and produce their tribal traditional artefacts such as clothes, bags and baskets. She strongly wishes that through this training, these females would acquire the skills to work and earn income (from an interview with Ms. Tsou, 06/03/06).

However, although Ms. Tsou has tried to help the villagers through education and vocational training, especially their children and some females, the children do not study hard and seriously and the females working in the weaving project tend to drink alcohol in working hours (from interviews with Ms. Tsou, 06/03/06 and 15/03/06). In addition, unfortunately not all the villagers of Greenriver and Yellowriver support her ideas and what she does. Especially, some members of the labouring and farming classes have mixed opinions of her, although they show their respect to her. There is a difference in the thinking and values of Ms. Tsou and the villagers of Greenriver and Yellowriver. For example, on the villagers' behaviour, Ms. Tsou expressed the following ideas:

1. The young people and young parents of the present do not know their traditional culture and their *gaya*.
2. The present parents do not take proper care of their children. Rather, they indulge their children. Most children spend time watching television programmes which contain violence or sex.
3. They do not have confidence in themselves. They escape to drinking alcohol and create various social problems such as domestic violence and divorces.
4. Drinking alcohol is not the culture of her tribal group.
5. Although she does not wish to communicate closely with the villagers, she has strong motivation to help them through education.
6. She strongly wishes that the villagers be proud of being Sediq people.

On the other hand, some of the villagers have the following opinions of her (from interviews with Ms. Ling (72), 24/04/06, Mr. Kuo (62) 04/05/06, Mr. Shigh (70) 07/05/06 and Ms. Zeng (74) 15/05/06):

1. Ms. Tsou has quite a severe attitude toward the villagers' lifestyles including their drinking and smoking habits.
2. She had lived in big cities for a long time. She has not lived in Greenriver for long.

3. She does not communicate with the villagers of Greenriver or Yellowriver.
4. In carrying out her weaving project she does not use it to provide any jobs opportunities to the villagers. They do not know what she is doing now.

Ms. Tsou has the traditional values which were shared by the villagers in the past. Namely, the villagers acknowledged their *gaya* as their rules and followed the principles of *gaya*, leading a life of moderation and working hard and seriously. However, the villagers, especially the members of the labouring and farming classes, have already begun to have different values and ideas from those of Ms. Tsou. For example, the attitude toward drinking alcohol is totally different between Ms. Tsou and the labourers and farmers. Ms. Tsou regards drinking alcohol as a main source of their social problems. She strongly wishes that instead of using their economic resources to buy alcohol, parents would use their income for their children's education. On the contrary, for the labourers and farmers in Greenriver, drinking alcohol seems to be indispensable for communicating with one another and for relaxing their exhausted minds. For example, the six females working in vocational training quite often brought alcohol to the work place. According to them, drinking alcohol gives them energy. However, Ms. Tsou thought that drinking alcohol is



their bad habit. When she found bottles of alcohol in their work place, she always asked them not to bring in alcohol (from an interview with Ms. Tsou, 15/03/06). She was concerned that if government officers visit her vocational training for assessment and find bottles of alcohol, they would stop supporting her training programme. As a consequence, these females would lose their jobs in this project and their salaries (from an interview with Ms. Tsou, 06/03/06). Although Ms. Tsou had such concern, it was observed that sometimes these females still brought a bottle of alcohol to drink in the morning.

She emphasised how much alcohol has damaged the life of the indigenous people, citing the cases of her relatives. For example, one of her cousins, who is a labourer working on construction sites, drank alcohol after his divorce and damaged his kidney seriously. In addition, she said many times that one of her granddaughters died from a traffic accident after drinking alcohol (from interviews with Ms. Tsou, 04/03/06, 06/03/06 and 15/03/06). For these reasons, she has quite a severe attitude about alcoholism among the indigenous people. At the same time, she is sad about the impression that members of the mainstream society have of the indigenous people. She mentioned that they have the image that the Taiwanese indigenous people like to drink alcohol and always drink it (from an interview with Ms. Tsou, 06/04/06).

However, some residents of Greenriver and Yellowriver do not share Ms Tsou's the idea about education and her concern about health problems. The gaps in the ideas and values between Ms. Tsou and the members of the labouring and farming classes are related to the differences between their economic and cultural resources. First of all, the labourers and farmers regard Ms. Tsou as a member of the educated class (field note, 28/04/06 and 03/05/06). For them, to obtain an education, which Ms. Tsou has, is quite difficult. In addition, Ms. Tsou had been away from Greenriver for a long time. For these reasons, the members of the labouring and farming classes do not regard Ms. Tsou as a fellow who has the same background or same resources as they have.

She quite often expressed her thought that while she can provide an opportunity for them to improve their living standard through education and vocational training, they must solve their problems themselves (for example, they can stop drinking alcohol or the children should study hard).

However, from what could be observed and from talking to her the conclusion is that she feels a huge limitation to fight the social and economic problems of the labourers and farmers, despite carrying out education and vocational training for the villagers to give them the opportunity to improve their life. The case of Ms. Tsou shows that (1) an individual may share the same social space with others who have different

cultural and economic capitals from herself; (2) she is struggling to keep a distance from the collective values and tastes of the labouring and farming classes, indicated by their use of alcohol and lack of concern for their children's education; and (3) at the same time, despite her ambivalent attitude, she is making efforts to help them to increase their cultural and economic capitals.

The next case illustrates a person who keeps a distance from the collective values and tastes of the villagers.

### 6.3.2. Ms. Hwang's Case

#### Box 6.4: Reflexivity of Ms. Hwang

Actors	Calendar	Rhythm	History	Reflexivity
Ms. Hwang (36) From Greenriver to Puli Town	1969- Present	From girlhood to present day. When she was a girl, her family suffered from poverty. After getting married, her life became better.	1969: She was born in Greenriver. 1970's: Her mother died. She was educated by her grandparents and Ms. Tsou. 1995: She married a Atayal man who is working for Ren-ai Township. 1990's: Although her husband was addicted to alcohol, she managed to stop his bad habit. 1996: She entered university through the support of her husband's family. 1997: She was pregnant and gave up her study. 2000: She started to teach weaving in schools. 2003: She became the manager of a weaving project for the purpose of the vocational training of females.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. She strongly sees herself as a Sediq rather than a Taiwanese.</li> <li>2. She strongly believes that <i>gaya</i> is important in her life.</li> <li>3. She does not think that drinking alcohol is her tribal culture.</li> <li>4. She thinks that she has to support her husband to be strong.</li> <li>5. She thinks that education is the only way for improving one's life.</li> <li>6. She says that to live in a city is good for her sons' education because they can compete with the <i>Han</i> and <i>Hakka</i> students. The educational environment in Greenriver is not good.</li> </ol>

## **Profile**

Ms. Hwang (36) was born of parents who were farmers in Greenriver. She is a niece of Ms. Tsou. Her parents were typical indigenous farmers who suffered from a shortage of economic and cultural capitals. Although her family did not have sufficient resources to let her study, Ms. Hwang did attend high school and university. How did this happen? Her social capital, namely her ties with her grandparents and Ms. Tsou, allowed her to study at high school and university. Social capital is a social tie which can bring productive resources at the level of individuals or households (Vaessen and Bastiaensen, 1999: 788). This social capital seemed to have provided Ms. Hwang with the profound opportunity to access more advanced economic and cultural capitals. Now she lives with her husband who is a civil servant, two sons and her husband's parents in Puli Town which is near Ren-ai Township. She said, "I am lucky because I am married to a man who is a civil servant. Thanks to him and his parents, we can buy a house in Puli Town and live there" (from an interview with Ms. Hwang, 16/02/06). As Lin (2001: 20) argues, a social tie is sometimes located in strategy and purpose. To a lesser or greater degree, her social capital has let Ms Hwang realise her wish and desire.

In addition, she has active reflection and perceptions. In particular, she exercises her active personality in her household. She is quite enthusiastic

about the education of her sons. Her two sons are studying in a primary school in Puli Town where the majority of students are *Han* and *Hakka* children. Although she has to spend much more money living in Puli Town, her life is better than that of the labourers and farmers in Greenriver. How did she escape from the social and economic problems which the members of this class suffer?

### **Ms. Hwang's Perceptions and Practices**

Ms. Hwang (36), like Ms. Tsou, is a person who has a strong willingness and wish to improve her life. She is from the class of farmers. Although she was poor during her girlhood (from an interview with Ms. Hwang, 06/03/06), she did not follow in her parents' footsteps. The impression she gave in conversation with her is that the tastes, habits and values of the farming class are not inscribed in her mind. Rather, she has made an effort to escape from the vicious spiral which pushes her to poverty. Ms. Tsou said that many children from the labouring and farming classes tend to give up their study because their parents do not have enough income or do not care for their education (from an interview from Ms. Tsou, 06/03/06). Why was it possible for Ms Hwang to escape from this spiral? The main reasons may be her strong will in not following her parents' behaviour, especially their drinking habits, and the social tie with her

grandparents and Ms. Tsou who is her aunt, and her tie with her husband's parents.

According to Ms. Tsou, the parents of Ms. Hwang used to drink alcohol all day and her mother died when Ms. Hwang was small (from an interview with Ms. Tsou, 03/03/06). She could have adopted her parents' behaviour like most of the children from such a household. However, she did not. When her mother died, her grandparents, who are the parents of Ms. Tsou, looked after Ms. Hwang (from an interview with Ms. Hwang, 06/03/06). Her grandparents were enthusiastic about education. Under the influence of their habits and customs which was stronger than the influence of her parents Ms. Hwang developed her perceptions and self-identity. Ms. Hwang expressed her gratitude to her grandparents (from an interview with Ms. Hwang, 06/03/06). In addition to the tie with her grandparents, her close connection with Ms. Tsou was also crucial in the construction of her life history. Her tie with Ms. Tsou allowed her escape from the vicious spiral of children following their parents. For example, Ms. Hwang studied at high school with the support of Ms. Tsou, in addition to the support of the government (from an interview with Ms. Hwang, 06/03/06).

At the same time, the tie with her husband and his parents also provided her with useful economic resources. When she was twenty-five

years old, she married an Atayal male who works for the town hall of Ren-ai Township. His family understands the importance of education and they manage a kindergarten in Puli Town. She attended university in Taipei City with the support from her husband's parents. Although she was in a position to get a scholarship from the government to study at high school and university, Ms. Hwang emphasised that it was support from her grandparents, Ms. Tsou and her husband's family that let her obtain advanced educational credentials (from an interview with Ms. Hwang, 15/05/06). Because of her life history, she emphasises how important education is for children and she makes an effort to provide her sons with educational opportunities (from an interview with Ms. Hwang, 15/05/06). One of the reasons why her family has settled in Puli Town is education. She (07/03/06) says,

“To live in Puli is good for my sons' education because they can compete with *Han* and *Hakka* students. In the indigenous community, the environment for education is not good. Villagers do not have enough money, therefore, they cannot send their children to good schools. The number of indigenous people in her son's school is not many. In a class of 36 children the number of indigenous students is about 6. The majority of students are *Han* and *Hakka* Taiwanese. Through competition



with them, my sons' academic records are excellent. One of my sons has a scholarship from the government”.

She shows a strong wish for her sons to acquire more cultural capitals if they study hard, competing with members of the mainstream society. This is her clear reflexivity about what she can do and has to do for her family. Her reflexivity and practices have a clear purpose: if her sons can achieve high academic performance, they can access sufficient support from the government and have a good opportunity to study in a high-ranking university (from an interview with Ms. Hwang, 06/03/06). At the least she may actively exercise her reflexivity in making decisions about the education of her sons. She seemed not to force her ideas and opinions on her husband and parents-in-law. Rather, her reflexivity and practices are related to her responsibility for her family members, especially for her sons. Family life includes “something akin to a team effort” (McCarthy *et al.*, 2003: 30). Within the hierarchical division of parents and children, and in the context of expectations of appropriate gender identities, the distribution of resources and exertion in a family, which is about togetherness, is meant to be based on love and responsibility rather than self-interest (McCarthy *et al.*, 2003: 30-31). In the case of Ms. Hwang and her family, according to her, her husband and parents-in-law are supportive of her educational policy (from an interview with Ms. Hwang,

06/03/06). To support the livelihood of her family, she has had a lot of jobs. At the beginning, she taught weaving in three schools on a part-time basis. After accumulating job experience including the skills of weaving, teaching and management, she became a manager of the vocational training project which Ms. Tsou had started in 2003 (from an interview with Ms. Hwang, 15/05/06). Although the scale of this project was quite small, she said her future project plan is to introduce the culture of the Sediq people to outsiders (from an interview with Ms. Hwang, 14/02/06). In this, she has strong self-identity as a Sediq person while she actively communicates with the mainstream society.

Some of the villagers of Greenriver and Yellowriver, including the six females working in the weaving project, do not have good opinions of Ms Hwang's lifestyle (field note, 18/04/06). First of all, they think that Ms. Hwang follows the lifestyle of the *Han* Taiwanese. They regard indigenous people as those who live in the mountain. According to their perception, Ms. Hwang lives in Puli Town and therefore she is not a genuine indigenous person (field note, 18/04/06). Ms. Hwang knows the opinions the villagers have of her. She apparently seems not to be concerned about their opinions. She seldom communicated with the other villagers of Greenriver except for the females working on the vocational training project. Rather, she keeps her distance from them.

Ms. Hwang had a conflicting view with Ms. Tsou about whether they ought to continue with the vocational training. Ms. Hwang wanted to continue and develop this project. However, Ms. Tsou was concerned about the policy of the Taiwanese government who supported her project because she had been informed that the subsidy would be reduced. If the subsidy was reduced, Ms. Tsou would have to pay more for this training project including, light and fuel and administration costs. Ms. Tsou felt limited about what she could do for this project. For these reasons, she said that she would like to stop the vocational training in 2007. Rather, she would like to concentrate on the educational programme of teaching her tribal language, history and culture to the indigenous students (from an interview with Ms. Tsou, 05/05/06). Together with the six females, Ms. Hwang was also uneasy about the next stage of the vocational training (from an interview with Ms. Hwang, 15/04/06). The year 2007 was quite important for Ms. Hwang whether she could get over this difficulty, using her reflexivity and agency.

An analysis of the life history of Ms. Hwang, makes clear the following aspects:

1. Social ties with others who have knowledge and resources can provide people with more productive resources and opportunities for improving their living standards.

2. Educational credential can help people to escape from a poor environment.
3. People who have strong self-identity and an independent mind tend to keep a distance from collective activities and reject being members of an institution.

Ms. Hwang is not fundamentally posited as a passive victim of her original class and of social transformation. Rather, she is an active and conscious shaper of her life history, using her social capital and reflexive agency.

The next person's case is opposite to Ms. Hwang. This person is a victim of the collective values, especially the habits and customs of family.

### 6.3.3. Ms. Wang's Case

#### Box 6.5: Reflexivity of Ms. Wang

Actors	Calendar	Rhythm	History	Reflexivity
Ms. Wang (60) From another village of Ren-Ai Township to Alanvalley	1946- Present	From girlhood to present day. Since she married a Sediq man, she has suffered from domestic violence from her husband. To escape from his violence, she started to work outside. After her daughters were independent, she divorced her husband. After that, her life became better.	1946: She was born. 1961: She got married. Her husband was chosen by her grandfather. 1960's: She started to work outside although her husband tried to prevent her. 1998?: She divorced her husband.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. She strongly sees herself as a Sediq rather than a Taiwanese.</li> <li>2. She strongly believes that each person has the ability to contribute to a wholesome social culture.</li> <li>3. She does not think that drinking alcohol is her tribal culture.</li> <li>4. She thinks that in recent days, children of Greenriver do not study because of the influence of TV.</li> <li>5. She thinks that because they do not have confidence in themselves, they cannot escape from their social and economic problems.</li> </ol>

#### Profile

Ms. Wang (60) was born in a village in Ren-ai Township. When she was fifteen years old, she got married to a Sediq male living in Alanvalley. Since then, she has been living in Alanvalley. In those days it was usual

for a girl to get married around fifteen years old. Marriage was strongly governed by *gaya*, in that a girl's husband was chosen and decided by her parents or grandparents (from interviews with Ms. Wang, 05/06/06 and 30/07/06). This system produced a problem. It was not until she got married that she could know the tendencies or personality of her spouse. Ms. Wang did not know her husband's personality until they started to live together. She suffered from domestic violence from her husband for a long time. However, she struggled to escape from his domestic violence. The struggle has influenced her thinking and social and economic actions.

### **Ms. Wang's Perceptions and Practices**

She was born in 1946. She was the eldest child of her parents. At that time, the Sediq and Atayal people seemed to be more directly influenced by the principle of *gaya* than the people today. As her father was away in his job as a police officer, her mother and grandparents looked after Ms. Wang and her younger siblings. Their perceptions and actions closely related to the principles of *gaya*. The formation of her perceptions and self-identity seems to be strongly influenced by the values, customs and identity of her grandparents as their perceptions and behaviour would have been transmitted to Ms. Wang to a lesser or greater degree through sharing space in a household. As a consequence, Ms. Wang's mind too

would be inscribed by *gaya* to some extent. Although the contents of *gaya* would be hugely changed or blurred due to the social changes caused by modernisation and globalisation, the habitus and embedded dispositions of Ms. Wang seem to be deeply related to *gaya* because she quite often mentioned it. As discussed in Chapter 5, a nostalgic mind can lead people to create traditions and old values, Ms Wang may be thus affected in what she said about the behaviour of the present young Sediq people. For example, when Ms. Wang talked with the elderly people, they quite often agreed that the present young people do not know *gaya* and they tend to misunderstand the meaning of freedom. If they have money, they tend to buy alcohol and do not care about their family and children. In the past, it was impossible for them to drink alcohol as they do now (field notes, 05/06/06, 07/06/06, 12/06/06, 13/06/06 and 18/07/06). She is nostalgic about the past to some extent and has sufficient knowledge about the principles of *gaya*. Because she was the first grandchild, her grandparents brought her up strictly. Her younger sister, Ms. Wei, who is ten years younger than Ms. Wang, seemed to be more modern in her attitude than Ms. Wang and said that she does not know what is *gaya*. The position of Ms. Wang as the eldest grandchild may have contributed to her disposition and identity which are strongly related to the principles of *gaya*, which she had absorbed from her grandparents.

On the other hand, it was observed that there was an uneasy historical relationship between Ms. Wang and her grandfather. When she went to agricultural school in Wushe she fell in love with her teacher's grandson and wished to married him. Her grandfather strongly opposed her idea because her teacher was a Chinese immigrant who came to Taiwan in 1949 with the Chinese Nationalist Party. Her grandfather did not permit her to marry any persons except the man whom he chose (from an interview with Ms. Wang, 05/06/06). For her, there was no option except to obey her grandfather. She said that because of *gaya*, a woman cannot choose her husband according to her wishes and has to accept a husband chosen by grandparents or parents (from an interview with Ms. Wang, 05/06/06). This custom brought Ms. Wang trouble and unhappiness. Because her grandfather had chosen her husband who was a Sediq farmer living in Alanvalley and did not give her any information about her husband, it was impossible for her to know his personality before marriage. She got to know his character after she got married. According to her, her husband readily vented his feelings on her and sometimes used violence on her, especially when he had drunk alcohol. She was afraid of him (from an interview with Ms. Wang, 05/06/06). To escape from her husband's violence, she started to look for jobs and began to get engaged in various kinds of jobs. However, he strongly opposed this and tried to



prevent her from working outside because he was worried that she would leave him to find another partner (from an interview with Ms. Wang, 05/06/06). For example, when she received an offer of a job in Ren-ai Township, her husband did not permit her to take it. However, although she suffered from this problem, she is not posited as a passive agent. Despite her husband's opposition, she had worked outside as a commission merchant for a long time, buying agricultural products from indigenous farmers and selling their products wholesale. In 2006 at the time of the field research, she was engaged in a welfare project, making lunch boxes for and checking the health condition of elderly indigenous people living alone in Alanvalley (field notes, 05/06/06, 14/06/06, 21/06/06, 29/06/06 and 10/07/06). This project was supported by the Council of Indigenous People.

As far as could be observed, she actively exercised her reflexivity and knowledge in her social life. Since she worked as a commission merchant, she has participated in economic activities, negotiating, communicating or competing with various kinds of people including *Han* and *Hakka* people, unlike her husband who stayed in Alanvalley. She has friends among the *Han* people and quite often communicates with them (field note, 17/06/06). At the same time, she knows that if she communicates more with the *Han* people than with the villagers of Alanvalley, they would exclude her from

village communication and connections. She has sufficient knowledge about the character of the indigenous people. As long as she lives in the village, she must avoid the possibility of being excluded. Therefore, she always visits the houses of the villagers to participate in their conversation, takes part in the activities of the Catholic Church in Alanvalley, and attends the culture club to make traditional crafts with other villagers (field notes, 14/06/06, 21/06/06, 28/06/06 and 27/07/06). She has seriously and carefully considered her behaviour within the institution of Alanvalley, and tries not to make her actions stand out to avoid being a target of marginalisation or adverse criticism. These actions result from an active, rather than passive, reflexivity and agency.

Her active thoughts and actions are exercised in the field of the education of her daughters. She said that she pushed her daughters to study hard to escape their environment of poverty and their father's domestic violence. As a consequence of their hard study, her daughters attended high school in Puli Town (from an interview with Ms. Wang, 09/06/06). She has a close relationship with her daughters who quite often visit her at home in Alanvalley. Although all her daughters are married and have children, Ms. Wang often gives them strict advice. She is especially concerned whether they really look after their children and

whether their children study hard (fields notes, 05/06/06, 07/06/06, 09/07/06 and 14/07/06).

At the same time, Ms. Wang's attitude tends to induce conflict with her daughters. Her reflexivity and practices are fundamentally influenced by *gaya* and she strongly regards herself as a Sediq person. Her view of the world seems to be similar to that of the elderly people living in Alanvalley. She wishes that her daughters would respect the Sediq culture and language as well as *gaya* (from an interview with Ms. Wang, 14/06/06). For instance, when Ms. Cai (40), who is a senior daughter of Ms. Wang, married a *Han* Taiwanese, Ms. Wang strongly objected because her partner is not a Sediq person. She said that many *Han* people still discriminate against the indigenous people (from an interview with Ms. Wang, 05/06/06). She heard of a joke from a *Han* Taiwanese saying that indigenous people are uncivilised because they eat a certain mountain vegetable (from an interview with Ms. Wang, 05/06/06). To completely permit the marriage of her daughter was difficult for her because of her concern about how her daughter would be treated by her parents-in-law who are *Han* Taiwanese (field note, 12/06/06).

Ms. Wang's concerns are not only about her daughters but also her grandchildren. She strongly wishes that her daughters would register their children as indigenous people (from an interview with Ms. Wang,

14/06/06). There are two main reasons. Firstly, she thinks her grandchildren are indigenous people. The second reason is that indigenous students do not need to pay the full tuition fees and the government will provide them with scholarships if they have an excellent academic record (from an interview with Ms. Wang, 14/06/06).

About the relationship with her daughters, the point that she strongly opposed her senior daughter's marriage with a *Han* Taiwanese is particularly interesting. According to Jenkins (2004: 45), we can be regarded as human beings who have complex facets of selfhood such as emotion, sensual memory, creativity, imagination and competence. That is to say, while Ms. Wang as an active agent has carried out her wishes and plans in exploring her life, she has shown strongly her emotion about the future of her daughters and grandchildren. Especially, Ms Wang is actively of the mind that there will be trouble for her daughters to think they can do what they want, while they regard her thoughts as out-of-date and obsolete (from an interview with Ms. Cai, 05/06/06). In her relationship with her daughters, it is difficult for Ms. Wang to exercise any power and ability to make her daughters respect her values and follow her decisions. There is a generation gap between Ms. Wang and her daughters and grandchildren. The perceptions and self-identity of Ms. Wang are related to some extent to tradition, including the principles of

*gaya*, while her daughters have been influenced by the culture of the mainstream society through education and occupation.

Unlike the generation of Ms. Wang, the current young generation may freely consider and cope with matters according to their autonomous ideas and thoughts. However, can they really freely think and behave without being limited by the collective values of their villages or families? The next section discusses this issue.

### 6.3.4. Ms. Cai's Case

#### Box 6.6: Reflexivity of Ms. Cai

Actors	Calendar	Rhythm	History	Reflexivity
Ms. Cai (40) Alanvalley and Taipei City	1966- Present	From girlhood to present day. When she was a girl, she suffered from her father's domestic violence. She went to junior high school and high school in a city. After getting married, her life has become better.	1966: She was born. 1981: She entered a high school in a city. 1984: She graduated from high school. Although she wanted to study at university, she gave up her wish to study because her family did not have money. She started to work in an international airport. 1990?: She got married to a <i>Han</i> Taiwanese man who is the owner of his construction company. 2003: She delivered a Daughter.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Since she was a girl, she saw her father's domestic violence. To escape from her father, she studied hard to get into a school in the city.</li> <li>2. She does not like her father because he always used violence on her mother and her.</li> <li>3. She thinks that her mother intervenes in her life. She says, "When I married my husband, my mother strongly opposed and complained a lot. My mother's idea is traditional and out of date. I can decide my life by myself" (Interview with Ms. Cai, 10/06/06).</li> <li>4. Although she complains of her mother's attitude, she cares for her mother.</li> </ol>

#### Profile

Ms. Cai (40) is the eldest daughter of Ms. Wang. She was born in Alanvalley. She would have seen her father's violent behaviour since she was a child. Since she was a school girl, she had been asked by Ms. Wang

to study hard and go to high school in Puli. Like Ms. Wang, she also has tried to actively exercise her agency with strong desires and wishes. Her husband, a *Han* Taiwanese, is an owner of a small construction company in Taipei City. Ms. Cai helps in her husband's construction business. They hire some Taiwanese indigenous people as labourers. For exchanging business information, Ms. Cai and her husband quite often contact other owners of construction companies who are *Han* Taiwanese. For this reason, she is in a position to acquire more knowledge about the dynamics of the society of indigenous people and the mainstream society than her mother.

At the same time, Ms. Cai is a person whose autonomy was hugely influenced by the institution of the Sediq society and the behaviour and habits of her parents. For example, she can speak the Sediq language. When she communicates with Ms. Wang and other villagers of Alanvalley, they quite often used their tribal language (field notes, 05/06/06 and 10/06/06). She has various occasions and opportunities to regard herself as an indigenous person. Ms. Wang, her mother, registered Ms. Cai as an indigenous person. In addition, Ms. Cai, whose husband is a *Han* Taiwanese, also registered her own daughter as an indigenous person. If either or both parents are indigenous persons, the children can be registered as indigenous persons. Whatever motivations she may have (for

example, to obtain a government scholarship or for tax reduction), she seems to identify herself as a Sediq person to some extent. There is also the ontological perspective indicating that she identifies herself as an indigenous person when she communicates and shares the space with *Han* Taiwanese in their business. In this communication, she seems to notice her difference from members of the mainstream society, such as colour of skin and birth place. She is a complex subject.

### **Ms. Cai's Perceptions and Practices**

Social changes in the 1960s seem to have influenced the personality and reflexivity of Ms Cai. In the 1960's when she was born, the social and economic structure in Alanvalley changed from the past. For example, motorisation had permeated Alanvalley and some villagers had begun to enjoy the benefits of this motorisation. They could purchase motorbikes or cars and go to the urban areas for work or shopping. In addition, in the 1960's, the culture of and information from mainstream society were pervasive among the villagers of Alanvalley. Young indigenous people moved to the city for work and study, using public transportation. As a consequence, through economic and cultural contacts, their ideas and habits are influenced by the values and thinking of the *Han* and *Hakka* Taiwanese. Their ideas and values were exposed to the influx of new ideas.



With these kinds of changes, they consciously or unconsciously may be freed from their traditions. Instead of relying on these traditions, some of the young people could acquire the occasions to exercise their autonomous reflexivity. Ms. Cai seems to be one of those in a position to enjoy the profits of the social transformation related to the modernisation of the society of the Sediq people. As a result of her mother's wishes and efforts and of Ms. Cai herself, she studied at high school in Puli Town (from an interview with Ms. Wang and Ms. Cai, 10/06/06). After she graduated from high school, she moved to Taoyuan City near Taipei City to work. It was her strong autonomy and desires that let her move to an urbanised area and build her life. Moreover, she got married to a *Han* Taiwanese who is the owner of a construction company in Taipei City. Although Ms. Wang strongly objected to it, Ms. Cai did not give up her marriage. Rather, Ms. Cai said, "My mother's idea is traditional and out of date. I have my own values and judgement. I wanted to choose my husband myself. Of course, I will decide my life by myself" (from an interview with Ms. Cai, 10/06/06). As far as it could be observed, despite her mother's misgivings, Ms. Cai has constructed a good and smooth relationship with her husband and he also cherishes his wife. In addition, Ms. Cai, as a senior daughter, shows her concern about her mother who lives alone after she divorced her husband (field note, 10/06/06). She sometimes gave severe but

constructive advice to Ms. Wang. Ms. Wang was engaged in some projects carried out by the Council of Indigenous People. Once, she carried out an investigation, using questionnaires, on the social problems suffered by the villagers of Alanvalley, such as health problems, underachievement in education and unemployment. Ms. Cai gave her mother some suggestions on the contents of the questionnaires, and critically mentioned that some vocational training projects of the Council of Indigenous Peoples do not sufficiently give the indigenous people the opportunity to acquire the required skills for jobs.

Ms. Cai often said that she and her husband are paying rather a lot of tax. Among the *Han* Taiwanese, there is a critical view about the policy for the Taiwanese indigenous people who may get more profits than the non-indigenous people but do not need to pay tax, except for taxation on their houses and cars (from interviews with Ms. Wang and Ms. Cai, 10/06/06 and field note, 17/06/06). Through communication with the indigenous labourers on construction sites, Ms. Cai can find out which job skills are really important or required of them. In addition, Ms. Cai said that some of the indigenous labourers working for her company drank alcohol in the night with their colleagues and were late for work. Although she wished they would work more seriously, she did not have solutions about this issue (from an interview with Ms. Cai, 10/06/06). Although Ms.

Cai is an indigenous person, as a manager she seems to look at other indigenous persons from a different perspective. That is to say, she has acquired and holds new values and habits which are hugely different from those of other indigenous people.

However, it does not mean that she can really be free from the structural constraints of the indigenous society, their families and their traditional collective values. Although Ms. Cai has more possibility to exercise her autonomous ideas and reflections, her autonomy seems to be still limited by the structure of her family and the interrelationship with members of the mainstream society.

First of all, her identity and habitus would be influenced by her parents. Until she graduated from high school in Puli town, she lived with her parents. Her father, who mainly stayed in Alanvalley as a farmer, expressed his perceptions, emotions and practices through violence. Especially, he quite often used violence on her mother to get her to obey him. Her mother started to work outside to escape from her father's violence. Her father showed his anger and rage to his family members more and more (from an interview with Ms. Cai, 05/06/06). Ms. Cai grew up in an environment with little tenderness. For example, after her mother divorced her father, Ms. Cai seldom communicated with him. The main reason may be her experience of witnessing his violence. That is to

say, her father's taste and practices were deeply inscribed in her mind. Although she had bad experience in her life, especially in her relationship with her father, she would still identify as an indigenous person.

Secondly, the formation of her present life is profoundly influenced by communication with the *Han* Taiwanese. Her husband, the owner of a small construction company, has to obtain contracts through negotiations with other construction companies owned by *Han* Taiwanese, to share contracts with them. He does not always obtain contracts (from an interview with Ms. Wang, 10/06/06). In his dealings with them Ms. Cai often joined in the gathering of her husband and his associates (Field note, 10/06/06). At these meetings the men and their wives smoked. Ms. Cai had to show that she shared their habit by smoking with them (from an interview with Ms. Wang, 10/06/06). This action indicates that she seems to have a strong wish to join in the circle of the associates of her husband. Although Ms. Wang, who worries about her daughter's health, advised her to stop smoking, Ms. Cai considers that she has to follow their habit to help her husband's business (from an interview with Ms. Wang, 10/06/06). While she has the ability to exercise her agency to cope with important and difficult matters, she cannot be free from the tastes and values of their classes. She now is a member of the class of small company owners and has to follow the tastes and habits of her new class. Ms. Cai's

perceptions and practices are based on a mixture of the tastes and habits of her original class and her new class. Ms. Cai has the internally complex nature of subjectivity.

The next person's case is similar to Ms. Cai's. However, unlike Ms. Cai, who still keeps her original family's habits and tastes in her mind, this person adjusts herself more actively to the new environment.

### 6.3.5. Ms. Wei's Case

#### Box 6.7: Reflexivity of Ms. Wei

Actors	Calendar	Rhythm	History	Reflexivity
Ms. Wei (50) From another village in Ren-Ai Township, to Alanvalley and then to Taichung City	1956- Present	From girlhood to present day. After getting a job at a veterans' hospital, her life standard has become better.	1956: She was born. 1980's?: She married an Atayal man who was a military officer. 1980's: She started to work in a veterans' hospital in Taichung. 1985: She had a son. Soon, she divorced her husband.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Different from Ms. Wang who is her senior sister, she does not identify with the Sediq people. She says, "I do not care whether I am Sediq or Taiwanese. I am not interested in the Sediq culture" (Interview with Ms. Wei, 01/07/06).</li> <li>2. She wanted to move to the city when she was a girl.</li> <li>3. She is afraid of men because she suffered from her husband.</li> <li>4. She strongly believes that if a female has a job and stable income, she does not need to get married.</li> <li>5. She thinks that her son's education is the most important. She pushes her son to study hard.</li> </ol>

#### Profile

She was born in a village surrounded by high mountains in Ren-ai Township. Ms. Wei (50) is a younger sister of Ms. Wang. She is ten years younger than Ms. Wang. From communication with her the impression

obtained is that the perceptions and practices of Ms. Wei are different from those of Ms. Wang's. Namely, she has more modernised and progressive thinking about her social and economic life. Although she has different thoughts and values from Ms. Wang, she has quite a close relationship with her elder sister and quite often visits Ms. Wang in Alanvalley. According to both of them, they quite often go travelling together. However, unlike Ms. Wang whose mind is strongly inscribed by the culture of the Sediq people including principles of *gaya*, Ms. Wei did not express a strong identity as an indigenous person. For example, she says, "I am not interested in whether I am an indigenous person or *Han* Taiwanese" (from an interview with Ms. Wei, 01/07/06).

However, in the course of a conversation she said that she would go back to the mountainous area where she was born (from an interview with Ms. Wei, 30/07/06). If she does not have any consciousness of her self-identity as an indigenous person, she would not mention this point. Although she is already settled in Taichung City and enjoys the culture of the mainstream society, she would still identify as a Sediq person to some extent. Namely, although Ms. Wei has flexive perceptions and practices, she cannot be completely free from the structural constraints of the values and tastes of her indigenous culture.

### **Ms. Wei's Perceptions and Practices**

She was born in 1956. In the 1960's, when she was a girl, young people began to move to cities to study or work. She seems to be influenced by this social development. Her village is surrounded by mountains and there is no major industry except for agriculture. For young people like Ms. Wei, staying in a mountainous area was not a good option for building their life. For this reason, she wanted to move out to work when she was a girl (from an interview with Ms. Wei, 01/07/06).

For over twenty years she has been living in Taichung City, which is the third largest city in Taiwan, working at a national hospital as a nurse. She has settled down and enjoys the economic and cultural benefits of a city life. For example, she bought a house in Taichung city (from an interview with Ms. Wei, 23/07/06) and drives a car. She quite often goes on outings in the car with Ms. Wang, enjoying food and sightseeing (from an interview with Ms. Wei, 24/07/06). In addition, she actively communicates, negotiates and competes with the *Han* and *Hakka* Taiwanese in her social and economic activities. Therefore, her daily life is really influenced by the culture and values of the Taiwanese main society. Since she divorced her husband she has brought up her son alone. She has built the environment for her son to study hard, utilising her economic capitals for the educational costs of her son. She mentioned that when he was a small boy,



she paid a lot of money for a helper to look after him. When he started school, she sent him to a crammer school (from an interview with Ms. Wei, 01/07/06). As a consequence, he entered one of the top-ranking Taiwanese universities in Taichung City.

Through conversation and interviews with her it was found that Ms Wei has quite active reflexivity and agency in her personality. From the beginning, she gave the impression that she is good at setting up her life plan utilising her ability and resources. Unlike Ms. Wang who tends to have conservative ideas, she has more progressive thoughts and ideas about human life. For instance, Ms. Wang said, “Females had better get married and have a few children. Of course, today, it is difficult for them to make a living only on the husband’s salary. Therefore, females also have to work outside. If a husband can help his wife in the house work, they can survive well. But my younger sister has a different idea from mine” (from an interview with Ms. Wang, 01/07/06). On the other hand, Ms. Wei said: “If a female has a job and a stable income, she does not need to get married. She can do what she wants to do with her income” (from an interview with Ms. Wei, 01/07/06). She apparently keeps a distance from communicating with the Sediq culture and habits and prefers to adjust herself to the mainstream culture and customs. For example, she said, “I do not know the contents of the Sediq culture. I do not have any

idea about traditional culture. My senior sister (Ms. Wang) knows traditional culture well. And she can enjoy traditional dance. But I cannot do so” (from an interview with Ms. Wei, 01/07/06).

However, it is questionable whether she can be completely free from the structural and cultural contexts of the Sediq society. Her perceptions seem to be still influenced by the Sediq culture to some extent. For example, while she showed such an indifferent attitude about the Sediq culture, it could be observed that she relied on this culture. One day, she visited the house of Ms. Wang to meet an elderly Sediq male who is a shaman. She suffered from a cold which the doctor could not cure. As a final solution, she decided to see the shaman (field note, 18/06/06). Ms. Wei reported that he asked her some questions and then said some magic words over her (field note, 18/06/06). According to Ms. Wang, such a ceremony is now seldom performed because such traditions are not transmitted to anybody (field note, 18/06/06). It was a surprise to observe Ms. Wei relying on this tradition. Her relationship with the Sediq culture seems not to be cut off yet.

In addition to this relationship, it would be difficult for her to cut off her past experience and the habits, and practices of her family. For example, she has progressive ideas about marriage but at the same time she gave the other reason why she would like to be alone. She said, “I do not want

to get married again. I am afraid of men, because my ex-husband totally changed his personality after marriage. I suffered a lot from him” (from an interview with Ms. Wei, 01/07/06). There was no discussion about her married life because she hesitated to talk about this issue. She just mentioned that after marriage he began to be unreasonable with her.

Despite her past experience which had given her pain, she has constructed her life history by herself. She is always warm towards her son, a university student. In addition, she seldom interferes in his life. For example, although he has a girl friend who is a *Han* Taiwanese, Ms. Wei does not oppose their friendship. Rather, she said, “If my son gets married to a *Han* person, I do not care. It is up to him” (Interview with Ms. Wei, 01/07/06). She seems to respect his ideas and thoughts because he has already come of age.

### 6.3.6. Mr. Wei's Case

#### Box 6.8: Reflexivity of Mr. Wei

Actors	Calendar	Rhythm	History	Reflexivity
Mr. Wei (21) Taichung City	1985- Present	From boyhood to present day.	1985: He was born in Taichung City. His mother divorced soon after. He grew up in Taichung City. 2003: He entered a high- ranking university in Taichung City.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Although he is aware that he is an indigenous person he does not know the indigenous culture.</li> <li>2. He is not bothered whether he is regarded as indigenous or Taiwanese.</li> <li>3. He likes to live in Taichung City.</li> </ol>

#### Profile

Mr. Wei (21) is the only son of Ms. Wei. He was born in Taichung City. He has never had any indigenous friends because he was educated with members of the mainstream Taiwanese society. He does not have any communication with his mother's indigenous tribe. As a consequence, he does not know about the indigenous culture in any detail and cannot speak his mother's or his father's tribal language. His life history has been really influenced by the *Han* Taiwanese social and economic lifestyles. It seems to be the result of the social and economic activities of his mother

that he does not have the opportunity to have any contact with the indigenous people's values and practices. When he was a small boy, his parents divorced. He has spent his daily life with his mother. With this background, his perceptions and practices are indeed influenced by his mother's values and ideas.

### **Mr. Wei's Perceptions and Practices**

Mr Wei (21) was born in 1985 in Taichung City. His mother is Ms. Wei who is a Sediq person and her ex-husband is an Atayal person. When he was a little boy, his mother divorced his father and he lived with his mother. It means that in his life with his mother he was strongly influenced by the tastes and habits of his mother more than those of his father. His mother's position in society and her values may have a strong influence in the formation of the cultural and economic capitals of Mr. Wei and of his self-identity. As far as could be observed, his perceptions and practices are similar to those of his mother's. For example, when he took an entrance exam, he chose a course in hospital management which is related to his mother's work (field notes, 01/07/06, 23/07/06 and 24/07/06). After graduating from university, he wishes to work in the management section of a hospital. In addition, he has the same type of car as his mother has.

His mother's attitude and her social and economic activities, indicated by her choice to settle down in Taichung City and work in a hospital there, would have a profound influence on the formation of Mr. Wei's perceptions and practices. In concrete terms, ever since he was born in Taichung City, he has contact and communication with members of the mainstream society in his school and elsewhere. Namely, he mainly looks at the values and habits of the Taiwanese mainstream society, not those of the indigenous society. It means that he has already adjusted himself to the social and economic lifestyles of the Taiwanese main society. For example, he said that all his friends are the *Han* Taiwanese and his girl friend is also a *Han* person. According to him, they know his parents are indigenous people although he is registered as *Han* Taiwanese. In addition, he often said, "I do not know the culture of the indigenous people although I am interested in their culture. Of course, I know alcoholism among them is quite serious. I do not like the kinds of alcohol they like to drink. Rather, I like to enjoy whisky and V.S.O.P. I do not drink so much. I like the atmosphere where I can share time drinking with my friends. If I can drink a little, I am all right" (from an interview with Mr. Wei, 01/07/06). Although he mentioned that he regards himself as an indigenous person and he is interested in indigenous culture, it does not mean that he practically would like to make any connection or make

friends with the indigenous people. This point is quite interesting. While he belongs to the institution of the mainstream society, he sometimes considers his identity as an indigenous person. When asked about this contradiction, he replied that he has never deeply considered such a problem (from an interview with Mr. Wei, 23/07/06). Through communication with him, the impression was that the mainstream society accepts him as a member, while he enjoys the habits and culture of this society without reluctance.

### 6.3.7. The Sie Family Case

#### Box 6.9: Reflexivity of the Sie Family

Actors	Calendr	Rhythm	History	Reflexivity
Mr. Sie (45) Ms. Sie (38)	1980's- Present	They got married and had sons. When he was young, Mr. Sie worked in Taichung City as an engineer. After going back to Peacevalley, he could not get a stable job. In stead of him, Ms. Sie works in an NGO office in Peacevalley.	1980's: They got married. 1991: They have a first son. Later, they have two more sons. 2000: Ms. Sie started to work for an NGO office in Peacevalley.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Both of them wish their sons to study hard and go to university.</li> <li>2. However, they know that they do not have enough money to let them study at university.</li> <li>3. They made their eldest son study at a night high school. They expect him to study at a night school while working in the day time. This is the only way for him to go to university.</li> <li>4. They have great expectations of their second son because his academic record is the highest all of their sons.</li> <li>5. Mr. Sie feels a strong responsibility for his family. However, he cannot find a stable job. So, he sometimes lets off his stress on his family. Ms. Sie understands her husband's mind.</li> </ol>

#### Profile

This family lives in Peacevalley. Mr. Sie (45) is an Atayal labourer who is engaged in some part-time jobs in He-ping Township. Ms. Sie (38), who is also an Atayal person, works in the office of a local non-governmental organisation in Peacevalley. They have three sons. Like the other villagers



from the farming and labouring classes, they also suffer from the shortage of economic and cultural resources. Mr. Sie especially cannot find any stable jobs and feels frustrated. However, they do not share the collective values of the members of the labouring or farming classes because of Mr. Sie's strong sense of responsibility and Ms. Sie's attitude as a manager and a carer. Rather, they have been making efforts to escape from their poor environment. For example, they push their sons to study hard, although they do not have enough money to send them to the crammer schools.

### **The Sie Family's Perceptions and Practice**

Mr. Sie (45) and Ms. Sie (38) live in Peacevalley. They have three sons whose ages are 15, 12 and 6 years. They live on Mr. Sie's income from his part-time jobs and Ms. Sie's salary from a local NGO. The contents of Mr. Sie's jobs are mainly seasonal help to harvest agricultural products such as bamboo shoots or various kinds of fruits. When he was young he worked in an electric shop in the city as an engineer. Ms. Sie works in a local NGO's office in Peacevalley as an accountant. Their educational backgrounds are not as low as that of the other villagers of Peacevalley. Mr. Sie graduated from high school and Ms. Sie from technical college. Because of their educational background, they understand that education

is important and they wish their sons to study hard to enter university. It is not only their educational backgrounds but also their sense of responsibility that make them hold these wishes for their sons. Both of them are serious members of the Presbyterian Church. Mr. Sie does not drink alcohol at home. In addition, he does not use violence on his wife or his sons although he is strict with his sons when he asks them to study. Ms. Sie really looks after her sons and always makes sure that they have done their homework before playing with their friends.

It is usual in the household of indigenous labourers and farmers, that the parents suffer from alcoholism and there is domestic violence in the family. Then, their children tend to hang around in their village to escape from the domestic violence. As a result, they come to lose their confidence and give up trying to escape from their poor environment. They also tend to segregate themselves from making any connection with the Taiwanese main society.

Unlike the ordinary members of the labouring or farming classes, Mr and Ms Sie strongly believe that if they work hard and can accumulate their economic resources, their children can have the possibilities of gaining better educational qualifications which will help them to acquire better and advanced jobs (from an interview with Ms. Sie, 16/08/06). Mr. Sie makes serious attempts to seek part-time jobs to get a more stable

income to meet the cost of his sons' education. For example, he quite often telephones the owners of agricultural farms or factories in He-ping Township for part-time jobs (Field note, 11/08/06). Mr. Li (30) who is a representative of a local NGO said, "In Peacevalley, a man tends to depend on the income of his wife and he tends to drink alcohol with his friends all day. However, Mr. Sie has a strong sense of responsibility as a father. He quite often feels stressed because he cannot bring sufficient income to his family" (from an interview with Mr. Li, 20/08/06). At his age, it is quite difficult for him to find better jobs. Moreover, he suffers from gout. He sometimes complains to his wife about the difficulties of finding jobs and his low salary (from an interview with Mr. Li, 23/08/06). Ms. Sie understands her husband. She usually tries to soothe him and gives him suggestions for finding jobs. Instead of Mr. Sie, Ms. Sie works hard and is trusted by Mr. Li. Ms. Sie actively communicates and negotiates with her colleagues including the *Han* and *Hakka* Taiwanese. The impression obtained from observing the Sie family is that Ms. Sie's values and ideas are reflected in the tastes and habits of the family through the relationship between Mr. Sie and Ms. Sie. Mr. Sie fundamentally regards Ms. Sie as the domestic manager and carer of the family. Mr. Sie strongly trusts Ms. Sie's ideas and attitudes. For example, Mr. Sie said, "My wife is a wonderful and wise person" (from an interview with Mr. Sie, 01/09/06).

Mr. Sie's strong sense of responsibility is complementary to Ms. Sie's serious attitude to work and for caring for her family members. Many indigenous labourers and farmers suffer shocks and disasters, such as the effects of economic recession or unemployment, which lead to a downward spiral. In the case of the Sie family, it was very noticeable that their mutual assistance protects them and their sons from falling into the vicious spiral: the shortage of income results in habits such as alcoholism or domestic violence among the parents which are then imitated by their children.

Although both of them have tried to work hard, it seems to be still quite difficult for the Sie family to escape their poor environment. For example, they are faced with the problem that they do not have sufficient income and property to use in the education of their sons. Although Mr and Ms Sie have strong wishes for their sons to go to university and engage in better and advanced jobs, their present incomes cannot realise their wishes. From September 2006, their eldest son started at high school in Dong-shih Town which is near Peacevalley. He had wished to go to an ordinary high school, but had to choose the night school because the tuition fee is much cheaper. Although the government subsidises one-third of his tuition fee, his parents have to pay for the cost of text books, lunch and transport. Mr and Ms Sie expect their eldest son to work part-

time during the day to support himself. According to them, this is his only way to continue his study (from an interview with Ms. Sie, 20/08/06).

Mr and Ms Sie have special expectations of their second son because his academic performance was the best in his school in Peacevalley. From August 2006, he started to go to a junior high school to attend a pre-session course in Dong-shih Town. The majority of the students in his junior high school are the *Hakka* Taiwanese. He noticed that their knowledge of the main subject is more advanced than his (from an interview with the second son of the Sie family, 16/08/06). It means that there is a huge educational gap between the indigenous students from Peacevalley and the *Hakka* students most of whom live in Dong-shih Town. According to him, most of the *Hakka* students have attended crammer school at the elementary school level (from an interview with the second son of the Sie family, 07/08/06). The Sie family does not have enough economic resources to send him to a crammer school. Because Mr and Ms Sie know the difficulty to realise their wish despite their strong willingness to use their income for their sons' education, their frustration is becoming serious.

#### **6.4. Summary and Conclusion**

There is a difference between the standpoints of Giddens (1996) and Beck (1995) on the one hand and Savage (2000) on the other with regard to modernisation and the individuals. Giddens (1986) and Beck (1995) argue that modernisation frees the individual from the constraint of tradition to allow him the choice to be more reflexive. Savage (2000) believes that the individual is more linked to the social relations such as family and social class. It is quite difficult to say which thought is more plausible. Whether the Sediq and Atayal people become more reflexive or constrained by social factors, there seems to be the possibility for them to exercise their reflexivity and agency in their daily life. At the same time, the formation of their reflexivity and actions is influenced by the structural contexts of their lives, including traditional values and the shortage of their cultural, social and economic capitals.

From the conversations and interviews with them, the conclusion is reached that social changes at both the local level of their villages and at the level of Taiwan as a country may have influenced the transformations of their identities and reflexivity. The theoretical scheme of Bevan (2004) is helpful to examine the influence of the social transformation on the diverse patterns of their reactions and struggles against their chronic poverty and the rapid social transformations.

The research of their life histories has led to two considerations: (1) although their life is constrained by the social structure, they react to the structure with their own thoughts and values; (2) modernisation does not seem to always bring profits or opportunities to indigenous people. The indigenous people who have been observed in their villages or cities, can be divided into: (1) people who have acquired or can acquire advantageous positions for accessing economic and cultural resources; (2) people who did not or cannot acquire such positions.

However, to understand the complex and dynamic system of their poverty, the next chapter looks at the patterns of people's agency in detail, including a person's emotion, motivation or mobilisation with the model of agency which breaks down the type of agency.

## **Chapter7: Reflexivity, Emotion and Practices of the Indigenous People in Modernised Days**

### **7.1. Introduction**

This chapter examines to what extent indigenous people can exercise their reflexivity and agency in the constraints of their poverty and the structural transformations of society. The model of agency provides a breakdown of the patterns of their perceptions and actions in their social and economic life.

Giddens (2005: 183, 187) points out that individuals are living in the world in a different sense from the previous eras of history. In the present day, the drastic transformation in the relationship between society and human agents, engendered by modernisation, is strongly connected to globalising influences. The influence of the change on human agents has two aspects: universality and fragmentation (Giddens, 2005: 189). Due to the development of the media, such as television and telecommunication, people can easily acquire news and information on current social, cultural and economic topics from outside. Such news and information are integrated into the framework of personal experience and form a person's lifestyle (Giddens, 2005: 189-190). If human beings are continuously exposed to universalised media, will their self-identity be integrated?



Giddens (2005: 190) argues that such unification would be accompanied by fragmentation and diversification of their self identity. While modernisation promotes universal mass media, it has blurred the traditions and old values which seemed to integrate the self-identity of human beings.

In the case of the Sediq and Atayal people, as mentioned in Chapters 5 and 6, through the construction of social infrastructure, the flow of the economic system, cable television and the internet, new information and culture from outside now pervade their villages, influencing the values and identities of some of the people. As a consequence, these new cultural flows enable them share habits including clothes, foods, thoughts and values with the *Han* and *Hakka* Taiwanese.

At the same time, modernisation is emancipating them from traditions and older values about gender. For instance, Beck (1992: 105) argues that females are released from traditional forms and ascribed roles in the search for a life of their own. Some researchers are therefore critical of a simplified view about the role of gender. For instance, Shaffer (1998: 2128) points out the problem of such a simplified view of gender which masks individual variation. That is to say, a simplified view tends to prevent us from considering much wider roles of females and males in their social and economic activities. Jackson (2002: 502) suggests that

discussion about the roles of females should adopt more active viewpoints. In the modernised world where we no longer regard females as weaker than men, we need to consider the disciplines which can conceptualise females as agents who can follow or resist the social structures in their interests (Jackson, 2002: 502). Like Ms. Cai (40) and Ms. Wei (50), some of the Sediq and Atayal females have demonstrated in their life histories that they have made efforts to selectively utilise their knowledge and reflexivity for implementing their plans and desires in their social and economic life. Some females have actively built their social and economic life with motivation and interest. In addition to them, like Ms. Sie, other females have struggled to realise their wishes within structural constraints such as the shortage of their cultural, social and economic capitals.

However, although such new habits and values pervade their society, did their traditions lose the power to influence the self-identity and perceptions of the indigenous people? Although the structure of their society is rapidly changing and the elderly indigenous people say that there is no *gaya* in the minds of the young people, their traditions, including *gaya*, still have influence on the formation of their perceptions and actions to a lesser or greater degree. For this reason, the selfhoods of the present indigenous people seem to be more complicated because they

are exposed to (1) traditions including their identity as indigenous people and the customs sustained in their village since the past; and (2) new customs and thoughts from the mainstream Taiwanese society and outside. Therefore, the indigenous people in the present day show diversified patterns in their actions exercised in their social and economic life.

However, the perspective of Giddens' argument seems to be mainly on individuals. His recent works do not discuss the structural influence on their selfhoods and identity so much. That is to say, individuals cannot escape from a pattern of actions which seems to be peculiar to the social class to which they belong. As discussed in Chapter 2, human beings tend to share similar actions with other members of the same class, defined by their occupations, educational backgrounds, tastes and hobbies (Goldthorpe, 1980, Bourdieu, 2007). For this reason, the minds of human beings have dual aspects, indicating their diversified selfhoods and their embedded dispositions which are related to their habitus.

Presumably, human beings may keep seesawing between both these aspects when they carry out their actions. The question arises as to whether human beings can always exercise their knowledgeable and reflexive agency in choosing their actions under such a complex structure. Rather, the actions of human agents are not always from their plans or

motivation. As Hogget (2001) asserts, human beings do not always choose their actions from rational or reasonable backgrounds. Human beings are ambivalent and some of the choices for their actions are from contradictory impulses (Bauman, 1993: 10-11). Especially, the disordering outcomes of actions may be associated with strong emotions (Shilling, 1999: 552). They may do many things which are not countable, let alone with any reasonable purpose or calculable rewards (Bauman, 1993: 33).

These assertions of Hogget and other researchers suggest that some people have the tendency to act from their strong emotions with calculated or strategic purposes. For example, they may not exercise active agency but passively react to social transformations or structural constraints. Therefore, as Lash (1993: 202-203) suggests, consideration must be given to the more detailed concepts of people's agency which includes a subject, an object and a medium of reflection.

For this reason, as Hogget (2001) and Greener (2002) strongly argue, there needs to be a model which can provide us with opportunities to think in terms of non-reflexive as well as reflexive agents, action induced by impulse or ambiguous attitudes as well as actions produced by calculations and conscious intent.

For categorising the pattern of their agency, this chapter utilises the data of a number of people. In the next section, to understand that besides

outside standard causes, their perceptions and practices are the other causes of their poverty, it will seek the patterns of their agencies in their social and economic lives, referring to the model of agency mentioned above.

## **7.2. The Pattern of Agency of the Sediq and Atayal People**

While the Sediq and Atayal people are reflexive, subjective and creative, their perceptions, their reflexivity and actions seem to be strongly influenced by the contexts of the social structure such as their family and their occupations. The paradigms of types of agency suggested by Hoggett (2001) and Greener (2002) are used here to categorise their agency. In practice, these researchers categorise agency into the following quadrants: (A) reflexive, agent as subject agency; (B) non-reflexive, agent as subject agency; (C) non-reflexive, agent as object agency; (D) reflexive, agent as object agency. This model of agency is adopted here. Using data from the socio-economic backgrounds and the actions of 20 persons, their patterns of agency are categorised and analysed. The 20 persons include the six persons and the one married couple discussed in Chapter 6.

First of all, an explanation of why this model of agency is used. As has been mentioned in the previous section, human beings have complex selfhoods containing their strategic plans or motivations and embedded

dispositions which are related to a pattern of behaviour. In addition, human agents are exposed to the dynamics of social transformation while they are influenced by traditions. Such an intertwined environment would have a huge impact on the formation of the self-identity and dispositions of the Sediq and Atayal people. Of course there is a critical view, questioning whether human beings with such multiple selfhoods can be clearly categorised with only four models. The model of agency suggested by Hoggett and Greener cannot be regarded as an absolute standard. Among the indigenous people under study, it is observable that each person has his own disposition and pattern of behaviour to some extent. Each person's disposition and behaviour are strongly related to his amount of economic, cultural and social capitals and that of his parents, and the habits and values of his family. Goldthorpe (1980) asserts that people having a similar social and economic background share a communal behaviour. That is to say, occupations, habits and tastes have an effect on the formation of common perceptions and actions among the members of the same class. An analysis is made to ascertain whether a person tends to have an active disposition in his daily life or tends to be a passive agent. The agency model is then used to systematically categorise each person into subject or object agent and reflexive or non-reflexive.

**Box 7.1: Pattern of the Sediq and Atayal People's Agency and Reflexivity**

Name	Quadrant	Occupation	Reflexivity	Actions	Name	Quadrant	Occupation	Reflexivity	Actions	Name	Quadrant	Occupation	Reflexivity	Actions
Ms. Tsou (67) Greenriver	A	Teacher, aid worker	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Active reflexivity</li> <li>2. Strong identity as an indigenous people</li> <li>3. Strong wish, motivation and desire for realising her wishes and plans</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. She keeps the principles of <i>gaya</i> in her mind.</li> <li>2. She has made efforts to realise her wishes to study at university and implementing educational projects for the Sediq children.</li> <li>3. She quite often criticises her siblings and neighbours when she thinks that their actions are against ethics or <i>gaya</i>.</li> <li>4. While she deeply communicates with the Taiwanese main society, she tries to keep a distance from it.</li> </ol>	Ms. Wang (60) Alanvalley	A	Housewife, aid worker	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Active reflexivity rather than passive</li> <li>2. Strong will and desire to realise some of her wishes</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. She has made efforts for realising her wishes and desires to get rid of the hardships from which she has suffered.</li> <li>2. She does not have any hesitation in communicating or negotiating with Taiwanese main society.</li> </ol>	The Sie family Mr. Sie (45) Ms. Sie (38) Peacevalley	Mr. Sie: D Ms. Sie: D	Mr. Sie: Labourer, farmer Ms. Sie: Aid worker	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Active desire and reflexivity</li> <li>2. Much anger against the shortage of their cultural and economic capitals</li> <li>3. Highly stressed by their situation</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. They have ability and knowledge for setting up long-term plans, especially their wishes that their sons go to university and acquire advanced jobs.</li> <li>2. They feel strongly stressed by the shortage of their economic resources.</li> </ol>
Ms. Tsou (21) Greenriver	A or B	Unemployed	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Complex but active reflexivity</li> <li>2. Strong desire for acquiring up-to-date information and culture but strong hesitation to communicate with Taiwanese main society</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. She fundamentally has enough knowledge and ability to change her current situation.</li> <li>2. She has huge hesitation to communicate and negotiate with Taiwanese main- stream society.</li> </ol>	Ms. Cai (40) Alanvalley and Taipei City	A	Housewife	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Active reflexivity</li> <li>4. Flexible and strong thoughts and desire for avoiding issues in her life</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. She has struggled with structural problems such as the violence of her father and the shortage of economic resources.</li> <li>2. She does not have any hesitation in communicating and negotiating with Taiwanese main society.</li> </ol>	Mr. Wei (21) Taichung City	B	University student	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Rather passive reflexivity, influenced by his mother</li> <li>2. Sufficient knowledge and ability for realising his plans and wishes</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. He quite often follows his mother's ideas and wishes.</li> <li>2. He has already adjusted himself and his ideas to Taiwanese main society.</li> </ol>
Ms. Hwang (36) Puli Town	A	Housewife, aid worker, manager of weaving factory	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Active reflexivity</li> <li>2. Strong identity as an indigenous person</li> <li>3. Strong wishes, motivation and desire for realising her wishes and plans</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. She has made practical efforts for realising her wishes for study and her sons' studies.</li> <li>2. In her weaving project, she struggles with finance, personnel and advertisement problems.</li> <li>3. She does not have any hesitation in communicating or negotiating with Taiwanese main society.</li> </ol>	Ms. Wei (50) Taichung City	A	Nurse in a national hospital in Taichung City	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Active reflexivity</li> <li>2. Strong desires and ideas for realising her long-term life plan</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. She does not identify strongly with the indigenous people.</li> <li>2. She has exercised her knowledge for acquiring more economic and cultural resources.</li> <li>3. She already has much knowledge and ability for communicating and negotiating with Taiwanese main society.</li> </ol>	Ms. Ma (39) Puli Town	A	Office worker in a national hospital in Puli Town	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Active reflexivity and desires</li> <li>2. Sufficient knowledge to set up long-term plans for her life</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Her mother did not care much about education. She felt stressed by her mother's attitude.</li> <li>2. With advice from her father, she decided her plan about her future.</li> <li>3. She does not identify strongly as an indigenous person.</li> <li>4. Rather, she strongly thinks that she is a Taiwanese.</li> </ol>

Name	Quadrant	Occupation	Reflexivity	Actions	Name	Quadrant	Occupation	Reflexivity	Occupation	Name	Quadrant	Occupation	Reflexivity	Actions
Ms. Hong (36) Greenriver	B	Housewife	1. Passive reflexivity rather than active 2. No strong desire for realising her wishes	1. She may have the ability for realizing her plans and wishes. 2. In daily life, she mostly follows the decisions made by her husband and her parents-in-law.	Ms. Chan (28) Near Greenriver	A	Civil servant	1. Strong reflexivity 2. Strong desires and wishes for catching up with up-to-date information including health and culture 3. Sufficient knowledge for realising her long-term plan	1. She does not strongly think that she is an indigenous person. 2. She has made efforts for realising her wishes and plans, reacting and responding flexibly to the transformations in society. 3. She does not have hesitation to communicate and negotiate with Taiwanese main society.	Mr. Li (40) Alanvalley	C	Labourer	1. Passive reflexivity 2. Strong emotions 3. Stressed as a result of his father's behaviour	1. He quite often loses his temper with his father when he drinks alcohol. 2. He seems to give up exercising his reflexivity for changing his vulnerable social and economic position.
Mr. Hwang (80) Yellowriver	A	Farmer	1. Complex reflexivity including active and passive aspects	1. He utilized his economic resources for his sons' education. 2. He has a strong desire for escaping from the shortage of economic capital.	Mr. Hsu (36) Near Yellowriver	D	Farmer	1. Complex reflexivity including active and passive aspects 2. Strong desire for changing his lifestyle 3. Poor knowledge for realising his plan and wishes	1. Although he has strived to change his current life standard, he could not change it because of the shortage of his cultural and economic resources. 2. He has strong hesitation to communicate or negotiate with Taiwanese main society.	Mr. Chen (40) Greenriver	D	Farmer	1. Sufficient knowledge to understand what he has done in his life 2. Not enough stimulation for changing his vulnerable social and economic position	1. He has knowledge and ability to understand what he is doing. 2. He does not have any motivation for changing his vulnerable social and economic positions.
Ms. Yang (81) Greenriver	A	Farmer, housewife	1. Strong reflexivity, motivation and desire 2. Sufficient knowledge and ability for realising her long-term plans and wishes	1. She has made her efforts for letting her sons study in teacher's colleges. 2. She has strong desires and will for realising her plan to escape from poverty.	Mr. Fan (30) Greenriver	C	Labourer	1. Passive reflexivity	2. Although he may have the capacity and knowledge to change his current life, he cannot exercise them. 3. He does not show any motivation and desire for changing his life. 4. He cannot arouse himself to set up long-term plan or change his vulnerable position.					
Ms. Ling (72) Greenriver	A	Housewife and owner of a small hotel	1. Strong reflexivity 2. Sufficient ability and knowledge for realising her wishes 3. Strong desire and motivation for realising the long-term plan for her life	1. She has made efforts for realising her plan to provide opportunities for her sons' higher education. 2. She has a lot of complaints and anger against the indigenous people of today in terms of ethics and morality.	Mr. Wang (77) Alanvalley	A	Farmer	1. Active reflexivity 2. Strong desire for acquiring up-to-date information 3. Sufficient capacity and knowledge for realising his plan and desire	1. He has made efforts to exercise his ability for realising his plan and wishes. 2. He has huge power for coping with the social transformations and structural problems. 3. His strong desire and emotions may stimulate him to do what he can do.					



### **7.2.1. Quadrant A (Reflexive, Agent as Subject Agency)**

Members of this class have active attitudes. Firstly, they can exercise their agency maximally in their social and economic activities. As Greener (2002) says, people who appear to behave in a highly reflexive way are prepared to exploit social and economic schemes to receive benefits. Secondly, they are posited not as passive victims of social problems but as active and conscious shapers of their life (Hoggett 2001).

The assertions of Pearlin and Turner (1987) and Titterton (1992) in particular describe the active tendencies of human agents. They emphasise the active reactions of creative human agency to threats and risks in their life. These researchers point to strategies for coping with (1) incidents which are happening in a person's external environment; (2) psychological problems such as stress and depression; or (3) illness. Such strategies can be considered as involving efforts to (a) change and alleviate a difficult situation; (b) alter and reduce the perceived threats of the situation; and (c) manage the symptoms of stress arising out of the situation (Pearlin and Turner, 1987: 156, Titterton, 1992: 12). In this assertion, people are responsible agents who can decide their choices with their autonomy rather than be constrained by their social environment and structure.

At the same time, they are regarded as planners who consider and establish long-term strategies such as survival or livelihood strategies (Lister, 2004: 134, McCrone, 1994: 80, Rakodi, 2002: 8). As McCrone (1994) says, people are coping with everyday living, solving the problems which households and individuals encounter on a day-to-day basis. Some people are able to reassess and change their plans in case of the confrontation of unforeseen or unforeseeable events (McCrone, 1994: 76).

In Greenriver, Yellowriver, Alanvalley, Peacevally and other places where the Sediq and Atayal people live, as far as could be observed, the elderly indigenous people and members of the office workers class, including civil servants, have active reflexivity and capacity for realising their long-term plans.

For example, Ms. Chan (28), who is working in the Ren-ai Township office, originally studied accounting when she was a student at a technical college in Taichung City. However, she noticed that accounting was difficult for her and she changed her main subject from accounting to economics. She then performed well academically (from an interview with Ms. Chan, 05/08/06). At the same time, she thought that economics would be a useful subject for a civil servant. She had the knowledge to predict what she had to do for her future and a high capacity for realising her long-term plan.

Some elderly indigenous people described what a difficult life they had when they were young parents. Most of all, they emphasised how important education is for children. They made efforts to collect information on schools and to earn sufficient money to prepare for the educational cost of their children.

When Ms. Ling (72) was a primary school student, the Taiwanese educational system was chaotic because Taiwan was changing from a Japanese colony to being a part of the Republic of China. Ms. Ling said that she could not predict what would happen to her at that time (from an interview with Ms. Ling, 29/03/06). Although she was in a chaotic situation, she made efforts to seek the opportunity to study subjects such as mandarin Chinese, mathematics and other subjects in school.

Ms. Li (81) and Mr. Wang (77) have also been influenced by the transformation of the social structure from Japanese rule. During the colonial days, according to them, indigenous children did not have opportunities to continue their study in junior high school after they had finished at the educational centres (from interviews with Ms. Li and Mr. Wang, 28/04/06, 06/06/06). Most of them said that although they wanted to study, they could not do so because of poverty. When they had sons and daughters, these elderly people made an effort to provide opportunities for them to study at military schools and teachers' colleges.

The common aspects of these persons are they can attribute more strategic choice to past decisions than they actually saw at that time. Moreover, in their telling of the difficulties and unforeseen events with which they were confronted in the past, it was evident that they used their abilities and knowledge to find substitute ways to realise their long-term purposes. In their conversations and in interviews with them they gave the impression that they are people with strong desires and wills.

Hoggett (2001: 47) says that people, who can be categorised as reflexive agents, are not passive victims of gender relations and poor environment but are active and conscious shapers of their life. They may be responsible for their choices made as much as for the choices discarded or avoided.

At the same time, some people in this category show the opposite behaviour to our expectation that they should be able to build their lives by their reflexivity. If they think that it may be best for them to segregate themselves from communication and negotiation with the Taiwanese main society, they would actively try to do so.

### **7.2.2. Quadrant B (Non-reflexive, Agent as Subject Agency)**

The actions of members of this category seem to be strongly based on the habitual nature of their interaction with their social structure and environment (Greener, 2002). Although it does not mean they cannot

exercise their reflexivity or are not capable of monitoring their actions reflexively, their agency is constrained by the environment surrounding them.

Their agency and their actions are limited by the structural problems because of their position and class in society (Greener 2002). That is, their habitus strongly influences their perceptions and practices in their social and economic activities. Especially, the habits and values of their families seem to have a huge influence on the formation of their perceptions and actions in their social and economic lives. As Pearlin and Turner (1987: 143) argue, family is the place where conceptions of self, both as they are and as they would like to be, begin to take shape, and it is also the place where they look for approval and approbation of what they are and what they are becoming. The family can be regarded as an institution which exceeds individuals. However, the family is a very complex and differentiated institution because its members, who are exposed to stresses and frustration outside through work, study or relationships with neighbours, try to find their way in the family domain (Pearlin and Turner, 1987).

For example, Ms. Hong (36), whose husband is an engineer working on construction sites, tends to follow the decisions set by her father-in-law or her husband at home. She expressed her values and thoughts about the

society of Greenriver where she lives, and her ideas for her daughters' education (from interviews with Ms. Hong, 14/03/06, 26/04/06). However, it was evident from observation of her lifestyle that she did not try to show or push her values and ideas at home. In her home, her father-in-law and mother-in-law have strong powers to decide the rules and institutions of their family. It appeared that her father-in-law and mother-in-law exercise their strong agency against Ms. Hong. As Greener (2002) points out, for people who are categorised as "non-reflexive, agent as subject agency", what is important is to accept the existing rules and attempt to make the best of them rather than trying to challenge or protest against these rules. Ms. Hong may have decided to follow the decisions and rules set by her parents-in-law rather than challenge them. Instead, Ms. Hong mainly concentrates on house work, including her daughters' training and education. Because her husband receives a regular income, she is able to engage in her house work instead of having to look for a paid job.

Her behaviour and attitude in her daily life is a positive influence on her family. She does not drink alcohol or smoke. Because she works at home, her father-in-law and mother-in-law trust her (from field notes, 14/03/06, 25/04/06 and 26/04/06). It may be good way for her to coexist

with members of her family within the taste and habits of her husband's house rather than to show her strong reflexivity or values to them.

Mr. Wei (28) was born in Taichung City which is the third largest city in Taiwan. His mother, Ms. Wei (50), has exercised her strong reflexivity with regard to Mr. Wei's life since he was born. For example, she has provided him with opportunities which let him continue his studies (from an interview with Ms. Wei, 01/07/06). Although Mr Wei seems to exercise his agency, his mother's behaviour towards him in fact makes him respect and accept her decisions. In his case, since he was a small child he has spent time with only his mother. This environment would make him respect his mother and follow her wishes.

A feature of people who are categorised in this quadrant is that they do not need to exercise their reflexivity much for improving their life because they have enough economic resources inherited from their families (Greener, 2002). The research indicates that the number of Sediq and Atayal people who can be categorised in this quadrant, seems to be quite few because of their lower social and economic positions in Taiwanese society. That is to say, regardless of their occupations, most of them are in relatively lower social and economic positions than the *Han* or *Hakka* Taiwanese.

### **7.2.3. Quadrant C (Non-reflexive, Agent as Object Agency)**

In this category, agents are severely restricted in their range of possible actions due to structural or habitual constraints (Greener 2002). This quadrant is the opposite of the self-help model, meaning that agents in this quadrant are trapped in their social position, unable or unwilling to attempt to escape. They are not self-aware or sufficiently empowered to change because a lack of education, confidence or awareness does not let them know how to cope or how to achieve (Greener 2002: 696).

According to Galtung (1998: 130), when some people understand that they have to live in an unknown socio-cultural structure, they tend to passively react to the unknown structure. People who are categorised in this quadrant are such persons. Those who belong to quadrant C tend to stay in the same social positions as their parents have done, without questioning or protesting against their vulnerable or disadvantageous positions. That is to say, they are unaware of the constraints upon them or of the capability for changing their vulnerable environments.

Most of the members of the classes of labourers and farmers seem to be in this quadrant. They are trapped in their socially and economically vulnerable positions. They are limited in exercising a range of possible actions to raise their living standards or to escape from their current poor environment. At the same time, they are not aware of these constraints



because a lack of opportunity or resources is normal and common among them (Greener, 2002).

According to Wilson and Herbert (1978: 181), people and families who suffer from long-term poverty have been exposed to stress for long periods of time and this situation tends to result in behaviour patterns which may appear to be deviant or maladjusted, lacking in ambition or irresponsible. The deviance of these families can be explained in terms of failure to obey rules or regulations considered important in mainstream society.

For example, Mr. Li (40) and Mr. Fan (30) are typical indigenous labourers who periodically work on construction sites. Their cycles are: (1) working on construction sites building houses or physical infrastructure for a few months; (2) going back to their villages for a few weeks; and (3) coming back to work. Most of the labourers are thrown into this cycle as they do not have options except for participation in this working cycle.

Bourdieu (2007) explains that according to their occupations, the contents of people's cultural capitals including arts, the media, music, electric apparatus, cars, clothes or food, are quite different. For example, Ms. Ma (39) and Ms. Chan (28), who are civil servants, always used the internet for acquiring up-to-date information about health or hobbies and news.

Unlike them, Mr. Li (40) and Mr. Fan (30) had never shown any interest in their health or hobbies. They quite often showed an interest in drinking alcohol. Why do they show such strong interest and desires for alcohol and drink so much? Some of the elderly people mentioned the habits of parents picked up by their children (from field notes, 16/02/06, 20/02/06, 14/06/06 and from an interview with Ms. Tsou (67), 04/03/06). There may be other reasons why they have such habits. Firstly, as Jackson (1999 a) points out, labourers and farmers enjoy drinking alcohol to release their exhaustion. Secondly, in conversation with Ms. Ma (39) and her friend who is an Atayal female from another village in Ren-ai Township, this friend mentioned that because of the lower temperature in the mountainous area, they drink alcohol to warm their bodies (from an interview with Ms. Ma and her friend, 07/07/06). The reasons they are addicted to alcohol are diverse.

However, whatever the reason may be why they drink alcohol, the alcoholic habit and violence in households have a profound impact on the formation of their children's behaviour. The family is the closed place where members' identities and characters are shaped (Pearlin and Turner, 1978). In addition, the family is also a principle of construction that is both immanent in individuals and transcendent to individuals (Bourdieu, 1996: 21). Above all, parents can exercise their strong influence on their

children through the formation of rules or regulations in a home (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1992: 6). For this reason, the alcoholism of Mr. Li (40) and Mr. Fan (30) might be related to the behaviour of their parents, especially their habit of drinking alcohol. In addition, spending time drinking alcohol with friends seems to be a common social action among some villagers, especially members of the labouring and farming classes. As Turner *et al.* (1979) point out, members of the same group can share in-group favouritism and exclude members of other groups. Empirically, Mr. Li and Mr. Fan tended to spend time drinking alcohol with their colleagues or their friends who are also labourers or farmers in their houses or the houses of their friends.

Moreover, in-group favouritism, common habits and tastes tend to result in the formation and enhancement of differential sentiments towards all things which are connected with in-group and out-group (Turner *et al.*, 1979: 189). In the field research in the villages, in-group favouritism was observed in the common habits and values of the young Sediq and Atayal labourers and farmers gathering and drinking alcohol. Most of them expressed strong emotions toward the Sediq and Atayal people who are civil servants and who live in urbanised areas. They quite often said that indigenous people who live in urbanised areas are not real indigenous people but *Han* people who follow the lifestyle of the *Han*

Taiwanese (from field notes, 14/04/06 and 28/04/06). People, who are categorised in this quadrant of non-reflexive, agent as object agency, nonetheless have quite complex thoughts about members of the mainstream society and themselves. The research finds no evidence of any active reflexivity among them, and they appear not to be in positions to exercise the capacity and the potential to exercise agency with their own ideas and strategic plans.

Their passive behaviour and segregation lead to the consideration that their chances of acquiring secure incomes and assets are minimal and their opportunity for upward social mobility is quite poor. For example, their educational achievements are really lower than those of civil servants and their families. Taiwan is a society which pays attention to people's educational background. If person wants to acquire advanced jobs, he has to be a graduate from a high-ranking university. For indigenous labourers or farmers, to enter such educational establishments or to send their children there is quite difficult because they suffer from a shortage of knowledge and capital. As Greener (2002) argues, people in this quadrant are not sufficiently self-aware or empowered to attempt another way for changing their lifestyles and living standards. For this reason, labourers, farmers and their family members seem unable to confront

their problems and tend to exercise negative agency toward themselves and others.

#### **7.2.4. Quadrant D (Reflexive, Agent as Object Agency)**

The members of this category are strategic in that they are aware of their own relationship with the society in which they reside (Hoggett, 2001, Greener, 2002). As Cornwall (2004: 82) mentions, people in vulnerable positions also can have strategic knowledge to cope with their problems. However, although people in this quadrant are reflexive agents, they lack sufficient capital to change their poor environments because they are trapped by structural impediments such as unequal relationship or social exclusion. As Lukes (1974: 41) points out, of course powerless people are also able to think and experience. Those categorised in this quadrant can be reflexive about their actions in their social and economic life but they do not have enough power and resources to exercise agency because they cannot access sufficient resources.

The research indicates that most of the labourers/farmers and their family members may be categorised in this quadrant. Most members of the classes of labourers and farmers are trapped by various kinds of shortages of cultural and economic resources, including their incomes and

education or because they have few opportunities for accessing sufficient resources.

Fundamentally, they are reflexive agents and understand their environments. When they understand the structural limitations and constraints, they tend to feel frustrated about these impediments. For example, they have capacities for understanding the inequitable distribution of social and economic resources between the Taiwanese indigenous people and the *Han* Taiwanese. They can also understand the negative aspects of globalisation, indicating that competition with cheaper labour from South East Asia has made jobs on construction sites become scarce. It was not surprising to find that when they knew that nothing is being done to alleviate the structural impediments they expressed their frustration. For instance, they know that education can give them the opportunities to raise their living standards. At the same time, they also understand that acquiring higher educational credentials is difficult for them because of the shortage of their parents' or their own economic resources. The Sie family is an example. Although Mr. Sie and Ms. Sie have strong wishes and desires to let their sons study and enter university, they know the difficulties to realise these wishes because of the shortage of opportunities to get advanced jobs and acquire a higher income.

Mr. Chen (40) knows why he cannot access the opportunities for advanced jobs and a better income. He said, “I dropped out of high school because I did not like to study. Therefore, I could not acquire advanced jobs. My school mates became engineers or civil servants. If I had finished high school, I would be able to settle down in a big city to work. I really feel shamed that I dropped out of high school” (from an interview with Mr. Chen, 03/05/06).

Mr. Hsu (36) has a similar pattern of perceptions as Mr. Chen. Mr. Hsu also has the capacity to understand the social and economic environments surrounding him. He also understands the structural limitations and obstructions. He expressed strong emotions especially when he mentioned his senior brother who is a police officer and lives in Puli Town with his family (from an interview with Mr. Hsu, 09/04/06). Mr. Hsu is a single man who wishes to marry. However, according to him (09/04/06), “for a poor man who does not have sufficient economic resources, it is impossible to find a wife”. He (09/04/06) said, “Nowadays, females tend to check the financial ability of men. So nobody looks at me. I really do not like females who just look at my financial ability. They are rubbish!” He gave the impression that he feels inferior to his senior brother who has built a comfortable material life.

People who have strong desires to change their poor life but cannot do so due to the shortage of cultural and economic resources tend to experience strong depression or frustration. This came across strongly in conversations with them.

### **7.3. Outcome of Analysing Agency and Tendency of Actions**

An analysis of the patterns of their perceptions and practices in social and economic activities arrived at the following conclusions: (1) Most of the civil servants, their family members, the elderly farmers and some housewives with outside jobs can be categorised in quadrant A (reflexive, agent as subject agency). These members have active reflexivity for changing their living standards. (2) A few people who have economic resources but do not have active purposes or plans for their future would be categorised in quadrant B (non-reflexive, agent as subject agency). (3) Many labourers, farmers and their family members seem to belong to quadrant C (non-reflexive, agent as object agency) or quadrant D which is reflexive, agent as object agency (Box 7.2).



**Box 7.2: Types of Agency and Their Occupations (Unit: Persons)**

Quadrant	Civil servants and their family members	Labourers and their family members	Farmers and their family members	Unemployed and their family members	Housewives and Others
A: Reflexive, agent as subject agency	4	0	3	0	4
B: Non-reflexive, agent as subject agency	0	0	0	0	2
C: Non-reflexive, agent as object agency	0	2	0	0	0
D: Reflexive, agent as object agency	0	1	2	0	1
A or B	0	0	0	1	0

Note: civil servants include police /military officers, nurses/doctors working in public hospitals and teachers of public schools.

In their life histories the indigenous people who can be categorised in quadrant A (reflexive, agent as subject agency) have resisted and fought against various structural limitations, including their unstable incomes or underachievement in education. They made efforts to adjust themselves to the transformation of society. Most of them admitted that the Taiwanese indigenous people are far behind the *Han* and *Hakka* Taiwanese in economic and educational backgrounds. At the same time, they positively

said that the indigenous people have the opportunity for catching up with the *Han* and *Hakka* Taiwanese through educational achievement.

The indigenous labourers and farmers, who can be categorised in quadrant D (reflexive, agent as object agency), showed their strong frustrations or their deep resentment against the structural limitations. In addition, they also felt frustration about the underachieved aims in their life, or their under-achieved educational credentials, or the difficulties for providing their children with educational opportunities.

On the other hand, the indigenous labourers and farmers, who may be categorised in quadrant C (non-reflexive, agent as object agency) showed a different behaviour from those in quadrant D. To put it concretely, the young indigenous farmers tended to seek psychological comfort in sharing a similar condition with their friends and colleagues and tended to be satisfied that they have the same problems as their friends and colleagues. As Baumeister and Leary (1995: 504) argue, people expect more favourable reaction and fewer objections from members of the same group. If they know that their friends and colleagues also have the same problems as they have, and that their friends and colleagues agree with them, they tend to be satisfied and have no plans about what they want to do or have to do for their future.

As Hoggett (2001: 47) argues, the model of agency can let us think about the different positions of people. The model of agency provides a picture of the divided patterns of perceptions and practices of the Sediq and Atayal people in terms of their social and economic backgrounds, especially their occupations.

However, not all the people under study could be categorised into a quadrant. For example, the case of Ms. Tsou (21), who is a daughter of Ms. Tsou (67), is complicated. Although she is quite a reflexive and active person, she has segregated herself from the Taiwanese main society. Ms. Tsou (67) provided her with abundant opportunities by letting her study in a junior high and a high school in big cities. Despite her mother's efforts, she abandoned her study in these schools and came back to Greenriver. For example, Ms. Tsou (21) went to Taichung City to attend a two-day computer training course but came back home after the first day. Ms. Tsou (67) got angry and said that she, Ms. Tsou (21), does not have ability to accomplish anything (field note, 15/05/06). It is possible to consider Ms. Tsou's (21) action from two perspectives. One is as Ms. Tsou (67) said, because Ms. Tsou (21) does not have a strong will or a strategic plan, she gave up the course and came home. The other possibility is that she exercised her reflexivity in indicating that as she did not need to attend the computer class, she stopped attending. Through interviews with Ms.

Tsou (67) and by observing the actions by Ms. Tsou (21) it was discovered that she had the power to carry out her wishes or desires, but she did not use it to solve her problems such as underachievement in education and being unemployed. Because of this uncertainty, categorising her in a particular quadrant was impossible.

#### **7.4. Summary and Conclusion**

The aim of this chapter is to clarify how far each indigenous person has exercised her ability and knowledge in her life history. An analysis of people's life histories and the activities in their daily lives found that they have implemented their activities, not only in building strategic and long-term plans but also in coping with their emotions including anger, frustration, anxiety or desire.

As Giddens (2005) argues, we are living in a world that is changing globally. Due to modernisation which is accompanied by changes of habits and systems in their society, the Sediq and Atayal people are exposed to new ideas and different cultures from outside. However, modernisation does not always let a human being to exercise his reflexive agency or to acquire ability for deciding his activities with strategic planning. First of all, while changing the lifestyle of the indigenous people and giving them the opportunity to acquire a wider range of jobs, modernisation also has

produced differentiation of their living standard. Such differentiation seems to result in divisions of common activities shared by members of different social classes.

Analysing the complicated aspects of individuals, such as their perceptions and embedded dispositions, is quite an important but difficult task. The model of agency suggested by Hoggett and Greener opens up the different patterns of reflexivity and actions of people in a society and allows a systematic categorisation of the actions of each person into subject or object agent and reflexive or non-reflexive. Empirically, members of each occupational group show similar patterns of perceptions and practices in their social and economic activities. For example, civil servants and their families tend to emphasise the importance of education. Realistically, they have the capacity to use their economic resources for the education of their children. They actively collect new information and news through television or the internet or through communication with the *Han* or *Hakka*. On the other hand, complex behaviour among the labourers and farmers was observed. Some of them mentioned that their living standards are worse than that of others and they want to change their life. At the same time, they also understand the difficulty and the structural obstacles in finding stable jobs such as office workers or civil servants, which can provide them with regular incomes.

However, it was found that there is a limitation in the agency model. This limitation is related to the definition of active and reflexive agency. The reason why Hoggett invented the model of agency is from his critical view about the definition of agency suggested by Giddens. That is to say, not all human beings are reflexive or knowledgeable agents (Hoggett, 2001). However, as Giddens (1986) mentions, the exercise of power by agents is not always for implementing the actions of what they want to do or to be. In some cases, they can also use agency and reflexivity for not doing or stopping actions, the result of their thinking and knowledge (for example, for protecting themselves from some risk). For these reasons, while persons in quadrant A (reflexive, agent as subject agency) are defined as those having strong desires and wishes to realise their wishes, purposes and desires, this quadrant would also contain persons who willingly and purposefully do not carry out any actions. For example, persons, like Ms. Tsou (21), who shut themselves off from communication with the mainstream Taiwanese society on purpose, may also be categorised into quadrant A. In practice categorising such persons is quite difficult. The model of agency cannot provide a clear solution about this problem. As a consequence, it was decided to categorise persons into the various quadrants by focusing on whether they have the ability and power to carry out some practical actions to improve their living standard.

Despite the limitations, by analysing the patterns of agency using the model of agency, it becomes possible to find differentiated allocations of resources among the Sediq and Atayal people. As Anthias (1990, 1998) points out, for social positions, different levels of social and economic resources are allocated to individuals. For example, it is understandable that civil servants and their family members relatively have much more access to cultural and economic capitals than others. It appears that the different perceptions and activities of social actors, which have a close interrelationship with their social position, would have an influence on the formation of the stratification in their society. The next chapter considers how the perceptions and behaviour of the indigenous people influence this formation, making a comparison of their actions in their social and economic life.

## **Chapter 8: Production and Reproduction of Social Structure: the Outcome of Agency, Institutions and Stratification of a Society**

### **8.1. Introduction**

The purpose of this chapter is to seek insight into the stratification in the society of indigenous people, rereading the arguments of the interdependence between agency and structure which have been discussed in previous chapters.

Indigenous people tend to be regarded as victims of social and economic transformation or development because of their vulnerable social and economic positions (Clarke, 2001). As has been pointed out in Chapters 1 and 4, this assertion lacks the consideration of the various patterns of their reactions as agents to the unequal structure. Moreover, this argument does not examine the manoeuvres or struggles of agents or the influence of their reactions on the structure of their society. As Giddens (1983, 1986), Bhaskar (1998) and Archer (1995, 2000) argue, agency and structure are in interdependence. The structure inscribes its culture and values on the identities and thoughts of people, but structure is also produced or reproduced by the actions of people.



When considering the interdependent relationships of agency and structure, it is necessary to look at the influence of modernisation and globalisation on society in the present days. The global cultural transformation is blurring the boundary of traditions and older values which have decided the identities of people. Therefore, as Giddens (2005) and Beck (1992, 1995) argue, in the present days, more than before, there is much more possibility for human beings to be reflexive. Due to modernisation or globalisation, the Sediq and Atayal people can acquire the opportunities to consider how to build their future more reflexively or strategically. For instance, they have more opportunities to study in high schools or universities in order to acquire stable jobs and incomes later.

However, as Chapters 5 and 6 found, not all indigenous people can exercise their reflexivity or agency for improving their lives. That is to say, modernisation could be a causality of differentiation or stratification within their society. For an understanding of the process of stratification, the previous chapters are reread: Chapter 5 and Chapter 6 (the structural influence on their perceptions, identities and actions), Chapter 7 (varied patterns of their social and economic activities in modernised days).

Their habitus is the first important factor for considering the formation of stratification. Habitus can be understood as a system of dispositions shared by individuals who have similar social and economic positions such

as occupations, properties, educational backgrounds or habits (Bourdieu, 2007). Social and economic positions are closely related to the differentiation of lifestyles (Crompton, 1998:146). In Greenriver, Yellowriver, Alanvalley and Peacevalley, the occupations of the people are generally divided into office workers (especially civil servants working for local government, hospitals and school teachers), labourers and farmers. The lifestyles, tastes, hobbies and knowledge about what they want to do or have to do seem to be differentiated according to their occupations. Such differentiation builds sets of collective values or institutions. The values shared by office workers and their family members are different from the values shared by farmers and their family members. This chapter discusses two main points: (1) why the socio-economic positions of the Sediq and Atayal people have been differentiated and (2) to what extent this differentiation has influenced the stratification of their society. Before discussing the first point, it is necessary to consider the influence of modernisation on the reflexivity and actions of human agents. At present human beings are living in a rapidly changing society. Such transformation is changing their values and daily lives. The next section discusses how modernisation changes an agent's thinking, identity and lifestyle.

## 8.2. Modernisation and Diversified Social and Economic Positions of Individuals

This section considers to what extent the process of social and cultural transformations in the modern era has an influence on the formation of inequality among indigenous people.

Chapters 6 and 7 mentioned the influence of modernisation on the transformation of the lifestyles of the Sediq and Atayal people. While the elderly people emphasise disappearing traditions and social issues such as alcoholism or health problems, their society is changing due to modernisation in relation to globalisation. Particularly, young people are in touch with the culture and ideas of the *Han* and *Hakka* Taiwanese society: jobs, food, clothes, pop-culture, computers, motor bikes, cars and other modern products. Young (1996: 4) points out that the characteristics of a modernised society are heterogeneity, cultural interchange and diversity. Through the development of transportation and telecommunication on a global scale, modernisation promotes intercultural communication which transcends old identities and results in a hybridised culture, mixing the given and traditional with a culture which is newly introduced from outside. For instance, some of the indigenous students see their identity as Sediq and Atayal people, but at the same time they mentioned that they are Taiwanese (from field notes,

13/04/06 and 23/06/06). People now are not dominated by a single identity of a social group. In discussing identity, Anthias (2001: 621) strongly argues that the recent argument of multiple belongings in modern society rests largely on the dismantling of the unitary notions of gender, ethnic or racial identity.

The diversity of social and economic positions exists within as well as between social groups (Anthias, 2002: 276). Anthias (2002) explains this, giving an example of white females. They tend to be subject to sexually unequal relationships with their husbands. However, at the same time, they are agents who can react strategically to disadvantages and are in better social and economic positions than other females, such as migrant females or black females (Anthias, 2002: 275-277). Within a group of females, inequality or hierarchy is constructed. For instance, it was observed that there is differentiation and stratification among young indigenous females in the villages of the Sediq and Atayal people. At the time of the field research there were three weddings in Greenriver. All the brides were practically high school students who were around seventeen or eighteen years old (from field notes, 23/04/06, 29/04/06). Some of the indigenous girls living in the villages tend to get married in their teenage years. Some girls are already pregnant at the time of marriage. According to some indigenous people they tend to give up school to have their babies

and to look after them (from field note, 23/04/06). On the other hand, Ms Ryu (34), who is a teacher of an elementary school, said that some girls in her school study hard to get into vocational high school or a school for nurses and to find jobs outside their villages (from an interview with Ms Ryu, 05/04/06). Such social divisions are strongly related to their stratified socio-economic positions and their differentiated social and economic resources which include income, occupational prestige and educational credentials (Sorensen, 2005: 121). Different positions in relation to unequal resources and power turn our attention to differentiated class as well as race or ethnicity (Anthias, 2001: 626). For this reason, the indigenous people can be regarded as human agents acting as competitors with other indigenous people, trying to acquire more economic and cultural capitals. As a consequence of exercising their agency, inequality in their society is formed because of unequal possessions of resources among them. Why has stratification arisen among them? There are three aspects which have to be considered: (1) the actions of parents; (2) common and collective values shared by people in the same or similar social class; and (3) different characters among them. These three aspects seem to have connections. Firstly, parents have decisive roles in developing the agency of their children. While being influenced by the values and habits of their parents, individuals develop their agency. Their

agency is quite an important factor in deciding their activities in their social and economic life. Their agency would be diversified and results also would be differentiated. These differentiations seem to lead to stratification among the indigenous people.

To explore and clarify these aspects, a comparison is made of their actions, analysing their reflexivity, thoughts, activities in their daily life and the outcome of their agency, referring to the model of agency.

### **8.3. Differentiated Values and Socio-Economic Resources**

The aim of this section is to find the patterns of their actions in their social and economic life and the outcome of their agency. To do this, reference made to the outcome of the discussion about the type of agency in Chapter 7. Chapter 7 picked out 20 persons including one married couple to discuss the patterns of their agency using the model of Hoggett (2001) and Greener (2002). The number of persons in each quadrant is as follows (Table 8.1):

**Table 8.1: The Number of Persons in Each Quadrant**

Quadrant	Number of person
A: Reflexive, agent as subject Agency	11
B: Non-reflexive, agent as subject agency	2
C: Non-reflexive, agent as object Agency	2
D: Reflexive, agent as object Agency	4
A or B	1

The family, especially parent(s), has a central role in the early development of individuals and they ensure the transmission of particular values of education to children (Silva, 2005: 84). Through discussing the actions of individuals in each quadrant, the following observations are made: (1) if parents successfully push their children to study hard and let them enter higher education, including college and university, their children would acquire opportunities to access advanced and better jobs; (2) most children from families which do not care about their education would tend to suffer from poverty and social problems such as alcoholism and domestic violence. The thinking and policies of parents on their children's education have profound influence on the formation of the socio-

economic positions of their children, such as their educational standing and occupations.

Although there is indication that some children from poor families made efforts and raised their living standards, their perceptions and activities were influenced by their parents' tastes, thinking and behaviour to a greater or lesser degree.

The concept of quadrants shows the different patterns and outcomes of their agency, including their socio-economic positions and their thinking and behaviour in their social and economic life. Next, based on the discussion of the patterns of agency in Chapter 7, this section seeks the common values and thinking of the people in each quadrant.

### **8.3.1 People in Quadrant A (Reflexive, Agent as Subject Agency)**

Their ages range from 20's to 80's. Their occupations are also diversified, from farmers to civil servants.

One common distinctive feature of the people in this quadrant is the strong desire to give their children education. Bourdieu (2007: 120) argues that persons who have high educational qualifications tend to invest their resources on their children's education. The indigenous people who participated in this research, especially the elderly people, do not have sufficient educational credentials. After finishing four years of school, they



started to work with their parents in cultivating agricultural products or they got married.

However, those in Quadrant A are not passive victims of family problems although they do not always have the ability to carry out their desired actions. They have strong desires to provide their children with opportunities to study in high schools, colleges or universities. As Savage *et al.* (2005: 44) emphasise, using economic resources on children's education allow children to acquire better educational qualifications. And higher educational qualifications can be translated into advanced jobs. They said that they worked hard to provide their children with chances for education because they did not want their children to suffer the same problems as they had. For example, Ms. Yang (81) told her life history:

“When I was 18 years old, I got married to a Sediq farmer. After marriage, my husband participated in the Second World War for four years as a voluntary soldier to support the Japanese army. After he came back, we had our children. We have seven children, three sons and four daughters. I wished them to study hard for their future and tried to give them the chance to do so. For this my husband and I worked so hard. However, my husband liked to drink alcohol too much. Once he began drinking he would drink for a few days. I was sad. So,

I trained all the children strictly and I also imposed severe discipline and control on myself. I definitely wanted all my children to go to university. Two sons trained at a teachers' college and became school teachers. My eldest son is working in a local government office. Although my husband was opposed to letting daughters go to university, I let my youngest daughter study at a teachers' college and she is the principal of a junior high school now. My other three daughters got married after finishing senior high school. I strongly wished all my children to find their way through education but it was a pity that I did not have money and could not let my other daughters go to university" (from an interview with Ms. Yang, 07/03/06).

Ms Yang had limitations about what she could do for her daughters. At the same time, her story tells how much she had struggled to get her children to study and to give them the opportunity to improve their living standard.

In another case, Ms. Ling (72) also had a hard life history. Although she lives in Greenriver, she quite often goes to Puli to see her sons who are school teachers. She told the following story about her life history:

“As my husband was a school teacher we had a regular and stable income. However, he used to drink a lot of alcohol every day and he got cancer. He died at the age of 44 years. I was 39 years old. With three sons and no income we could not survive. I hit upon the idea to move to Puli Town for their education. In the school in Yellowriver, my sons got the first prize. But when they went to school in Puli they had to compete with the Taiwanese. At first their academic performance was very poor, but they gradually improved their academic record. It was good for them to compete with the Taiwanese. To provide for my three sons, I started to weave clothes to sell. At the beginning I got a good income. In addition, I bought a piece of land in Puli Town and let it out so I was able to get renting fees from the tenants. I worked hard for the education of my sons. All three sons entered the national senior high school. Although the subsidy from the government was not enough I did not have to pay a lot for their school fees. But I paid a huge cost to let them to live in the school dormitory. For this I had to work much harder. Then it became difficult for me to sell clothes because of the flow of cheaper machine-made products. I had to seek a new job as the manager of a small hotel in

Wushe. As a hotel manager I was able to continue to support my sons. My eldest and third sons became junior high school teachers, and my second son works in a primary school in Yellowriver” (from an interview with Ms. Ling, 29/03/06).

When both Ms Yang and Ms Ling were young they had strong wishes and the desire to study at school. They said that against their desire, they had to unwillingly give up their study, because of their parents’ lack of economic capitals. The drinking habits of their husbands had put pressure on them. Despite such disadvantageous positions, they set up their strategic plans and carried them out through practical actions.

People in this quadrant seem to apply strategic plans to support their subsistence. For example, Mr. Wang (77) is one of these persons. He said:

“In the past we had planted rice but we then stopped producing rice because we could not sell it for a good price any more. Now vegetables bring good profits. To ensure good produce that we can sell in the market we need to use chemical fertilisers and pesticides. I always consider the best time to sell my vegetables which is after a typhoon when the price of vegetable is high. Recently the price of vegetables is high. So now is a good time for me to sell vegetables” (from an interview with Mr. Wang, 06/06/06).

In the case of the young generation, in addition to the ability to set up strategic plans, they would not hesitate to communicate with the *Han* or *Hakka* Taiwanese and accept their customs and habits. As discussed in Chapter 6, Ms. Cai (40) and Ms. Hwang (36) who have settled in cities are in active contact with members of the mainstream society. Some young indigenous people living in mountainous villages also communicate with the *Han* and *Hakka* people. For instance, Ms. Chan (28) who lives in a village near Greenriver actively utilises the culture and habits of the mainstream society in her social and economic activities, communicating with them. She said:

“My neighbourhood contains *Han* Taiwanese families. Over the beck, it is a *Han* Taiwanese area. Half the population of this area is indigenous people and the other half is *Han* Taiwanese. Of course I quite often talk with them. I speak Taiwanese when I communicate with them. My mother always talks to me in the Sediq language but I reply in Chinese.

I have studied from primary school to college with *Han* and *Hakka* Taiwanese. I have friends who are *Han* and *Hakka*. I like cities. Of course, I also like the mountainous area. I know some principles of *gaya*. I learned Sediq dances from my mother. However, I do not know much about the indigenous

culture. Rather, I like to surf the internet to acquire information about health care. I always take exercises for my health” (from an interview with Ms. Chan, 05/08/06).

Ms. Chan seems to identify as an indigenous person to some extent. At the same time, she has kept a distance from the young villagers of Greenriver because they are addicted to alcohol. She does not like the custom of drinking among indigenous people. Although she apparently seems to have her own values and ideas, her life is strongly influenced by her mother. For example, about her future husband, her mother strongly opposes that Ms. Chan gets married to a *Han* male because she believes that Han men are not faithful to their wives and have affairs. About these comments of her mother, Ms. Chan did not say anything. The impression was that she would not know how to reply to her mother (field note, 05/08/06).

The people in this quadrant seldom clearly mentioned their impressions of the *Han* and *Hakka* Taiwanese. However, Ms. Ling (72) said, “Many of them are kind and friendly. I have many *Han* Taiwanese friends” (from an interview with Ms. Ling, 29/03/06). Ms. Chan said, “Indigenous friends are highly emotional. They express their emotions honestly to me. On the contrary, *Han* Taiwanese friends seldom show their emotions on their faces. I feel a distance with them. They are cold” (from an interview with

Ms. Chan, 05/08/06). Ms. Wang (60) said, “They tend to work hard. In addition, they really look after their parents when they are aged. However, *Han* males tend to have affairs with their lovers” (from an interview with Ms. Wang, 11/06/06). They have different opinions and impressions about members of the mainstream society whom they calmly analyse and describe.

An analysis of their thoughts and actions concludes that they have the following common resources, abilities and power, more than the others:

- (1) Strong and concrete desires and wishes about what they want to do for the future.
- (2) Ability for acquiring knowledge and information which are important to them.
- (3) Sufficient ability and power for acquiring cultural and economic capitals.
- (4) Higher educational levels and economic capitals such as income, occupation and property.
- (5) Social capitals which are useful for improving their living standards.

### **8.3.2 People in Quadrant B (Non-reflexive, Agent as Subject Agency)**

In the case of people who could be categorised into this quadrant, there were few opportunities to communicate with them. However, from the

little communication that there was with them, information was obtained about their thoughts and ideas on their socio-economic activities, including their attitude to education and jobs. As Chapter 7 pointed out, persons in this category seem not to have active reflexivity because they rely on the economic resources of their parents and spouses. For this reason, they would not be in a position to acquire and exercise a strong willingness to implement their wishes and desires (for example, to push their children to study hard).

Ms. Hong (36), a villager living in Greenriver, who have three daughters, expressed her ideas about education in the following:

“I have three daughters. Senior daughter is 10 years old, the middle daughter is 5 years old and youngest one is 1 year old. If they say they want to go to university to study, I will let them do so. But I will not push them to study hard to go to university. Do I want to move to Puli Town for their education? Oh, no. No, I will not do so. I do not know what I can do there. I do not have hobbies. I would feel bored if I live in Puli Town. In addition, I do not have enough money to settle in Puli Town. If we have a job we can at least make a living. It is enough for us to survive. We do not need to desire to have many things” (from an interview with Ms. Hong, 14/03/06).



She has only daughters, not sons. In a society where people wish to have sons, she seems not to be enthusiastic to push her daughters to study hard. If she has a son or sons, she may show more enthusiasm and a strong desire to actively give her sons an educational opportunity.

As discussed in Chapter 7, she does not exercise her power in her household because of the parents of her husband. Her position in the family is quite an important point in considering her agency. Her father-in-law and mother-in-law exercise power in deciding most family matters. In addition, they depend on the pension of her father-in-law and the incomes of her husband, Mr. Hong (40), and her mother-in-law. As a consequence, Ms. Hong does not have sufficient power and ability to exercise her agency in any decision-making. It was noted that the grandparents seem not to have any strong wish or desire to make their granddaughters study hard or they think that girls do not need to go to university (from field notes, 28/03/06 and 02/04/06).

Ms. Hong is a member of another indigenous tribe, the Paiwan people, who live in the southern part of Taiwan. She showed her nostalgia for her original home when she compared the culture of her original place with Greenriver. For example, when asked about her impression of the Sediq society she replied:

“In Greenriver, people tend to smoke and drink as they like. On the contrary, Paiwan society is based on Catholicism and people do not smoke or drink. Here, people can go out freely. Their lifestyle has already become similar to the lifestyle of the *Han* Taiwanese. They can get information quickly. People living here do not believe strongly in God. They do not care about their living environment outside their home. You can see a lot of rubbish in this village. They just care about their houses. If their houses are fine, it is all right. They think that they can build their houses beautifully but I do not think so. There are no rules and regulations in Greenriver. In my village houses are orderly built and one building is divided into a few households. Houses in Greenriver are independently built. It is not beautiful.

And here, children cannot speak their mother tongue. But in my community, they can speak their mother tongue. Here, I can see many people drinking. I know that this village has a culture of weaving clothes. However, except for some elderly people, nobody weaves any more. My village also has the same culture of weaving clothes. The cloth design of our tribe is more beautiful than the Sediq one. Young people in my

village organise sports teams and enjoy sports. In this village, they do not have such sports teams” (from an interview with Ms. Hong, 26/04/06).

When she mentioned her tribal culture and society, she showed strong emotions. Particularly, she thinks that the Paiwan people, who are her tribe, sustain the traditions of indigenous culture more than the Sediq people. Since settling in Greenriver ten years ago, she has tried to communicate with the villagers and to get into their circle. For example, she participates in the social activities, such as joining the dance club and computer class. From what could be observed, some villagers have gradually accepted her as a member of their village. In addition, they, especially the elderly people, respect her because she does not drink alcohol or smoke at all (field notes, 28/03/06, 14/03/06, 24/03/06 and 07/05/06). Fundamentally, she has quite a gentle character and it would be easy for the villagers to talk to her. But she has her own quite complex ideas and emotions which she keeps to herself. Despite her participation in activities, she feels difficult to be truly a member among the residents of this village because she is proud of her own tribal society and culture and keeps a distance from the habits and culture of Greenriver.

Through observation and communication with Ms. Hong, it appears that she has the ability to exercise her agency in not adopting the habits of the villagers, especially their drinking habit.

The findings about the thoughts and activities of people in this quadrant are:

1. They tend to depend on parents or spouses who have the economic resources, power and ability to make decisions, and therefore they are not in a position to reflexively or autonomously exercise any decision in what they have to do in their socio-economic activities.
2. They tend to be passive in exercising their power in front of people.
3. However, it does not mean that they do not have the ability for exercising their reflexive agency at all.

At the beginning, as in the case of Ms. Tsou (21), it was a difficult task to categorise Ms. Hong. That is to say, it is thinkable that she would exercise her power and agency in not implementing her actions so actively in her social and economic life. However, it was decided to categorise her into quadrant B because of her passive attitude about the education of her daughters.

### 8.3.3 People in Quadrant C (Non-reflexive, Agent as Object Agency)

People categorised in this quadrant tend to suffer from serious alcoholism and damage to their health. For example, Mr. Li (40) and Mr. Fan (30), who are labourers working on construction sites in big cities, were often seen drinking alcohol. Communication with them was difficult because both of them were usually away working and because they tended to be aggressive and offensive when drunk. In addition, they were rude and unfriendly. Although direct communication with them was difficult it was possible to know their life histories through interviews with Ms. Tsou (76) and Ms. Wang (60) who are their relatives. According to both of them (from interviews, 19/02/06, 04/03/06 and 10/06/06), the parents of Mr. Li and Mr. Fan also used to drink alcohol and fought in front of them. In addition, they did not care about their education. In the case of these persons, the habits of their parents, especially alcoholism and indifference to their children's education, seem to have a profound influence on the habits and values of their children. They would imitate their parents in drinking alcohol, gambling or giving up school. These ideas were also expressed by other indigenous people.

Although there seldom was an opportunity to communicate with Mr. Li and Mr. Fan, there were opportunities to observe their activities in the village. They quite often invited their friends home to drink alcohol,

especially rice wine. This product contains a high percentage of alcohol, around 50 percent and is cheaper than other products. They tended to drink it without diluting with water and without any food.

According to Mr. Guo (31), who is a Sediq pastor of the Presbyterian Church in Alanvalley, all social problems result from the behaviour of parents (from an interview with Mr. Guo, 12/07/06). This pastor has carried out educational projects to help the children of this village to do their homework with *Han* university students who are members of the Presbyterian Church. He visited the families who are members of his church to listen to their problems and to give them advice. Based on his experience of communicating with villagers, Mr. Guo talked of the serious influence of parents on the perceptions and practices of their children:

“Although they receive salaries or incomes from construction companies or their agricultural businesses, they soon spend most of it buying alcohol or gambling. At home, instead of caring for their children, they spend their time drinking alcohol or gambling with family members or friends in front of their children.

In addition, a man quite often uses violence on his children and wife. When she asks him to refrain from alcohol, he does not listen to her. They quarrel and fight with each other in

front of their children. Because of their violence and drinking their wives divorce them” (from an interview with Mr. Guo, 12/07/06).

What Mr. Guo said gives an interesting insight into the gender relationship, especially, the role of females in a household. For males, alcohol consumption seems to be necessary for recovering from the exhaustion of hard work and money is used to buy alcohol rather than for housekeeping (Jackson, 1999 a: 103). According to Jackson (1999 a: 103), alcohol abuse among men is often taken to represent the opposite of women’s familial contribution. While men regard alcohol consumption as a good reason for numbing the exhaustion of hard work, females have to sacrifice their time.

The different attitude towards alcohol between males and females might be closely related to divorce. Males, who drink alcohol quite often, tend to have the risks of high mortality and morbidity (Jackson, 1999 a: 104). Their wives tend to reprove their husbands for drinking and the husbands then fight their wives with violence. In conjugal violence, females can intentionally or not resist and thwart their husbands’ power and ideas (Moore, 1994: 6 and Jackson, 1999 a: 94). In practice, according to Ms. Tsou (67) and Ms. Wang (60), some females find other partners and run away. Males, who have divorced their wives, tend to damage their

health by alcoholism (from interviews with Ms. Tsou, 19/02/06 and 04/03/06 and Ms. Wang, 10/06/06). Mr. Li (40) and Mr. Fan (30) have been divorced. After divorce, the amount of alcohol they drink increased (from interviews with Ms. Tsou, 19/02/06 and 04/03/06 and Ms. Wang, 10/06/06). According to Lister (2004: 140), people who are in poverty may explode their anger and despair through destructive actions against themselves and their family members. Thus, domestic problems would push parents to release their emotions, such as anger and irritation on their children. These actions have profound and serious effects on the formation of the perceptions and lifestyles of their children. Mr. Guo repeatedly said:

“On the way to the families of my church members, I quite often see children gathering together with their friends. They drink alcohol and smoke cigarettes. At that time when I saw them, there were four or five children doing it. I asked them where their parents were. They told me that their parents do not care them. I think more children would suffer from such domestic problems and start to drink alcohol and smoke cigarette secretly. After drinking alcohol, their father and mother tend to fight with each other. Children are violated by their father. Their mothers also explode their emotions and anger on their children. In such an awful situation, of course



the children want to go out. They think that staying in their house is not good for them. They do not want to go home after finishing class because of their parents' behaviour. For these reasons, their children start to hang around the village with their friends. Their friends also suffer from the same domestic problems. In the case of high school students, after drinking alcohol they sometimes are violent towards their parents” (from an interview with Mr. Guo, 12/07/06).

These clear explanations of Mr. Guo show the reason why children tend to repeat the behaviour of their parents, such as alcoholism, domestic violence and divorce. For people in this quadrant, to escape from this deteriorating cycle is quite difficult. For instance, Mr. Fang (40), who is a teacher in a junior high school where *Han* and *Hakka* students and indigenous students are studying together, pointed out that most of the indigenous students cannot have any dream of a good future (from an interview with Mr. Fang, 28/03/06). Mr. Fang (28/03/06) said the following about the households of indigenous people:

“Most fathers of indigenous students are engaged in unstable part-time jobs such as working on construction sites or as farmers. They are away for half the year working. They do not have time to care for their children. When they are at

home, they just drink alcohol and gamble. The mothers cannot stop them from drinking alcohol. Rather, they tend to run away from their families. In such an environment, how can children study hard? Most of them give up their dream for a future because they tend to think that they do not have the opportunities to be office workers or civil servants. Although over 80 percent of our indigenous students enter high school, many of them drop out. The main reason is that their parents cannot support the educational costs because their jobs are unstable and their incomes are not enough to pay the educational costs”.

What Mr. Fang said tells of the close correlation between the low income levels of parents and the low educational level of their children.

These people have negative impressions about members of the mainstream society. They said that *Han* people always cheat them. They are proud of being indigenous people as they think that indigenous people are real human beings (field note, 14/03/06). According to the elderly people, “Sediq” and “Atayal” mean real human beings. Some of the villagers said that as the Taiwanese indigenous people have lived in Taiwan longer than the *Han* and *Hakka* people they must be the true Taiwanese (field notes, 16/03/06, 03/05/06 and 07/06/06). Such thoughts

are shared among many villagers. Particularly, farmers and labourers tend to have a strong identity as indigenous people. A few farmers said that *Han* middleman bought their agricultural products cheaply and they always think of means to cheat the indigenous farmers and take profits from them (field notes, 03/05/06, 04/05/06 and 07/05/06).

Although it was difficult to communicate with people in quadrant C to collect their own ideas and values, observation of the activities of Mr. Li and Mr. Fan and interviews with Ms. Tsou, Ms. Wang, Mr. Guo and Mr. Fang provided the data to analyse their agency. As a consequence, the following conclusions are arrived at about the attitudes of people in quadrant C:

1. Parents suffer from a lack of education. Therefore, they do not have sufficient knowledge about how to help their children to study.
2. Because of the poor economic resources of their parents, children might have to give up their studies and thus suffer from a lack of education themselves.
3. Such children adopt their parents' behaviour and take to alcoholism or domestic violence.
4. Like their parents, they also suffer from a shortage of economic resources such as jobs and incomes.

#### **8.3.4 People in Quadrant D (Reflexive, Agent as Object Agency)**

The shortage of economic resources is a serious issue for people in quadrant D who have a strong desire to improve their living standards. People in this quadrant showed their frustration because they know that it is the shortage of their economic resources which constrains their ability to realise what they want to do or what they want to be. For example, the Sie family showed strong frustration and disappointment for their limited ability to give their sons educational opportunities. Mr. Hsu (36) and Mr. Chen (40), who are farmers, expressed their resignation in not being able to change their living standards. In addition, they said that the shortage of their economic resources and their lack of educational credentials do not let them realise what they want to do or want to be. Therefore, they tend to have strong feelings of frustration and disappointment about their life (from interviews with Mr. Hsu, 09/04/06 and Mr. Chen, 03/05/06). Especially, Mr. Chen said that because he had to give up his study at high school, he could not become an office worker or engineer but had to be a farmer instead (from an interview with Mr. Chen, 03/05/06). As Mr. Chen spoke Japanese as fluently as a native Japanese, it was possible to communicate with him in Japanese. His mother (81) was educated during the colonial days. He grew up listening to his parents' conversations in Japanese. In villages of the Sediq and Atayal people, not a few indigenous

people who were born after the Second World War can speak Japanese. Like Mr. Chen, they have listened to the Japanese conversations of their parents and grandparents and have acquired the Japanese language.

Like the people in quadrant A, the people in this quadrant continuously have wishes and plans, particularly, strong hopes about the education of their children. When Mr. Chen found out that the researcher of this thesis was a research student from a university in the United Kingdom he was very envious of him (field note, 03/05/06). He continued to say the following:

“I have a small son. I gave up my study at high school so it is difficult for me to find a job. I really have expectations for my son. I want to push him to study hard and get an advanced job in the future” (from an interview with Mr. Chen, 03/05/06).

Mr. Chen (40) has the ability to analyse why it is difficult for him to find advanced and well-paid jobs. He ascribed his failure to himself and to structural problems. He knew what has happened to him because he gave up his study. Therefore, he strongly wished that his son would study hard and go to university. At the same time, he expressed his anger against the Democratic and Progressive Party which was the ruling party in 2006. In

this year, the Taiwanese media reported corruption scandals committed by one of the leaders of this political party. He said:

“The government ruled by the Democratic and Progressive Party is not good. They did not do anything good for us. Rather, some leaders and their family members are embezzling public money to buy luxurious goods. The Taiwanese are not good. The next presidential election in 2008 is too long for us as we still have two more years” (from an interview with Mr. Chen, 03/05/06).

Because of his occupation as a farmer, like other indigenous farmers, he also has the impression that the *Han* Taiwanese always try to cheat the indigenous people for their profits. These comments revealed his complex mind which indicates that he is suffering from present problems such as the shortage of cultural and economic capitals, feeling regret giving up his study, and anger against the present Taiwanese politics. People in this quadrant have the same or similar feelings. For example, Mr. and Ms. Sie also understand that, despite their strong willingness, because of the shortage of their economic capital, they cannot realise their purpose, especially their wish to give their sons the opportunity for education.

Communications with them and observations of their actions lead to the following conclusions:

1. They have strong wishes for their children to study hard and enter university.
2. They suffer from the shortage of economic resources and their low level of education.
3. As a consequence, they feel frustration about the shortage of capitals which prevents them from realising their aims and hopes.

The model of agency suggested by Hogget and Greener shows the reasons why the perceptions and practices of the indigenous people are differentiated. In addition, the definition of habitus led to the consideration that their social and economic positions such as income, occupational prestige and educational level are stratified in their society. In particular, the profound influence of parents on the stratification of the social and economic positions of individuals is noted. As Silva (2005: 87) points out, the economic and social positions of parents have a huge influence on the life course of individuals. The social and economic positions of parents and the stratification of society would be key factors for seeking an insight into “the nature of class culture” (Bottero 2004: 986).

#### **8.4. The Influence of Family on Individuals**

Bourdieu (2007) stresses the central role of family in individual development and social position. Particularly, according to Bourdieu

(2007: 13, 265), the social origin of an individual, which is strongly related to his social position or class, is defined as deriving from the occupation, income and educational qualification of his father. The role of a female can be mainly defined as domestic work taking charge of everything concerned with aesthetics and more generally with the management of the public image and social appearance of her husband and children (Bourdieu, 2001: 99-100).

However, Silva (2005: 86) criticises this view because Bourdieu researches the social origin of individuals, inquiring about the educational qualifications and occupations of fathers, not about the mother. Silva (2005) strongly argues that the roles of females in a household are more crucial than Bourdieu considers. Kabeer (2003: 103) also points to the important role of females for children. That is to say, females tend to use resources for their children. Analysis of the collected data finds that indigenous females, as mothers or home-makers, are able to have crucial roles in formulating the earlier development of the perceptions and actions of their children. Resources allocations managed by females are able to produce positive effects on the socio-economic positions of their children.

Some of the Sediq and Atayal females told their life histories, describing how hard they have to work in their homes and outside. They



have a lot of work, cooking meals, looking after their children, tending agricultural products or working in offices or shops. In addition, most of their husbands drink alcohol and damage their health. However, females, especially those in quadrant A, emphasised their responsibility in their household. They said that they could not change the attitudes and behaviour of their husbands. Despite such an unequal relationship of power with the males, they have the ability and power to reflect their ideas in the household in making decisions about the education of their children. Moreover, their husbands' behaviour, especially their drinking habits, is a strong reason for them to work hard to raise money and to support their children's education.

If the females do not participate on equal terms in household decision-making, their preferences or ideas would not be reflected in the household (Kabeer, 2003: 102). For instance, in the families in quadrant C, some of the females cannot escape from the cultural constraints prevalent among those in this quadrant, such as the shortage of resources, alcoholism and the domestic violence of their husbands. As Kabeer (1999: 457) points out, in a context where cultural values constrain the ability of females to make strategies and plans for their lives, what they can do to act against these constraints is likely to remain limited. For them, it is not easy to access the capitals for exercising their power or ability to cope with family

problems or to reflect their ideas in household decision-making. As a result, they sometimes decide to ignore the obligation to look after their children or, in the worst case, they leave their family. Analysis of people in quadrant C shows that without the deep and profound commitment of the female in a family, the children would not be secure with sufficient educational resources.

Of course, the male also has a profound role in the formation of the social and economic positions of individuals. However, not only fathers but also mothers have roles in deciding to what extent individuals can acquire better socio-economic positions. Realistically, each quadrant shows that if parents have made efforts to use their economic resources for their children's education, their children are able to acquire the opportunities to better their education and economic status. On the other hand, in families which do not use their money for their children's education, the children drop out from their study and are limited to access better jobs. In the worst case, they repeat the behaviour of the parents. The behaviour of parents is a major causality of the differentiation of an individual's educational credential and economic status, including occupational prestige and income.

There are common and collective perceptions and actions among the people within each quadrant. The collective values, which are

differentiated according to the quadrant, are related to the stratification of their lifestyles.

### **8.5. Collective Values and Social Divisions among the Indigenous People**

This section argues and considers how differentiated educational credentials and economic positions induce the social divisions in the society of the Sediq and Atayal people.

The last section showed that the actions of parents have a profound influence on the formation of differentiated socio-economic positions of individuals. The model of agency tells that people's actions and reactions may have patterns or tendencies which are peculiar to their social class. Class continues to shape people's social identity because "the culture of their classes which is viewed as modes of differentiation and variety" (Savage 2000: 102) and is "a key mechanism which individuals utilise in placing themselves and others" (Reay 1997: 226). As Goldthorpe (1980: 261) and Bourdieu (2005) argue, people who are in a similar or same social class have common values and actions in society. The homogenising practice of agents belonging to the same class can lead us to the consideration of collective values or institutions, meaning "practices which are inclusive laterally in the sense that those practices are widespread among the members of their community" (Giddens 1983: 80).

For example, compared with those in other quadrants, people and families in quadrant A tend to have strong desires to improve their living standards. In addition, to fulfil their ambitions and wishes, they have exercised strategic plans in their life histories. Particularly, they quite often emphasise the importance of educational opportunity for children. As discussed, they have pushed their children to study hard to enter university and get advanced and well-paid jobs such as civil servants and school teachers. They have the following knowledge: (1) sufficient education can help their children to acquire the opportunity to engage in well-paid occupations; (2) many *Han* and *Hakka* students go to crammer schools because studying at school alone is not enough to pass the examinations to high-ranking universities; and (3) competing with these students would increase the academic performance of their children. For acquiring useful information, they actively contact and communicate with members of the mainstream society.

On the other hand, the people in quadrant C tend to think that they cannot acquire the opportunities to achieve the life they hope for and give up such considerations. Some of them choose to buy and drink alcohol and tend to use violence in their households. Persons in quadrant D, like those in quadrant A, have strong desires to change their life. However, most of them tend to give up their wishes and desires because of the shortage of

their cultural and economic capitals and they feel frustrated. People in quadrant B tend not to have any strong motivation to carry out their wishes because they can rely on the economic capitals of other family members. As in the case of Mr. Wei (21) and Ms. Hong (36), they or their parents tend to have sufficient economic resources. Such distinct perceptions and actions among the indigenous people are related to their economic positions in society, the habits of their family and their psychological make-up. For example, in the case of the young generation in quadrant A, they tend to be office workers such as civil servants or school teachers. People in quadrant C and D tend to be engaged in the same jobs that their parents had, such as farmers or labourers.

As Crompton (1998: 119) and Bourdieu (2007: 102-103) point out, these differentiated individual characteristics arising from socio-economic positions in relation to occupations, incomes and educational levels lead to the consideration of stratification. Of course, stratification in a society appears not to be recognised by the people themselves (Bottero 2004: 987). However, the concept of stratification appears to be highly pertinent for considering unequal structure (Savage 2000: xii). Anthias (1998: 513) points out that structural inequality can be seen as the result of the social evaluation and the amount of economic and cultural resources of individuals which are allocated according to their socio-economic positions.

The unequal structure can involve different levels of resources allocation which would be in relation to an individual's socio-economic position and power to exercise agency.

### **8.6. Inequality and Individual's Power and Resources**

Here, the relationship between inequality and differentiated resources or power is clarified. As Giddens (1986) mentions, resources are media of power. At the same time, power has meanings of control or influence which can affect individuals (Lukes, 1974: 40). If it is considered that power can be regarded as an individual's ability or capacity to make choices not to do as well as choices to do (Lukes, 1974: 41 and Kabeer, 1999: 436), indigenous people who keep a distance from mainstream society could then be regarded not only just as people oppressed or marginalised by the mainstream society, but also as agents. Namely, not all indigenous people do equally exercise their power to take action. Rather, some of them can exercise their power to stop actions by thinking of not taking action. Through an analysis of the patterns of agency in the last chapter and in this chapter, it was found that whether they exercise their power to implement or not to implement action has a close connection to the contexts of structure, such as the culture of their family and the collective actions of their class.

This research has found evidence that collective values exercise power on individuals in the society of the Sediq and Atayal people. Namely, there is an institutional control of individuals in their society. There are tendencies of collective perceptions and actions which are peculiar to each quadrant. These perceptions and actions are conflated as a common value and exercise power to control or influence its members. As Archer (1989: 77-78) argues, this institution is the product of human beings but at the same time its values and thoughts are embedded in their minds. Thus, once the institution is constructed among people, it transcends individuals (Archer, 1989).

For example, in the case of many of the people in quadrant C and D, shutting off communication with the *Han* and *Hakka* Taiwanese and segregating themselves from the mainstream society seem to be distinctive phenomena. Ms. Tsou (67) pointed out two reasons to explain why they decide to keep apart from the main society: (1) they do not have confidence in their ability; and (2) some *Han* Taiwanese say that all that the indigenous people do is to drink alcohol and they tend to look down on them (from an interview with Ms. Tsou, 06/03/06. These two reasons are examined here.

They would know that they cannot compete with members of the mainstream society in the fields of education and occupation. Lukes (1974:

33-34 and 40) and Kabeer (1999: 438) point out that there is a dimension of power which relates to agency: “power over”, indicating that the capacity and activities of a human agent is overridden by the agency of others. People in quadrant C and D already understand that the social and economic power of the *Han* and *Hakka* Taiwanese override their power. Certainly in contrast to people in quadrant A, who can access sufficient education and jobs, they are confronting “the deprivation of basic needs which means inadequate shelter, food, education and health” (Kabeer, 1997: 3, 1999: 167). For instance, when many indigenous students began to study with *Han* and *Hakka* students in school, they tend to notice the huge gap in academic performance. In addition, they seldom have the opportunity to engage in occupations which they want, for example as computer engineers and office workers. Rather, many indigenous people have to work on construction sites or in factories as labourers and to be farmers. As a consequence, they give up their dream. Of course, this issue can also be looked at in terms of regarding indigenous people as the victims of inequality.

However, at the same time, they possibly are willing to shut themselves off from contact with the mainstream society. For example, Mr. Chen mentioned that as long as they have farm lands for producing agricultural products, they would be able to survive (from an interview with Mr. Chen,



03/05/06). That is to say, their farm lands are the economic space which can guarantee them a minimum living. In addition, these lands are also their origin, on which they can psychologically rely. Although they work on construction sites in cities which are far from their villages, their farm lands let them identify themselves as indigenous people living in a mountainous area. Therefore, despite the tragic history of being forcibly moved to mountainous areas by the *Han* Taiwanese since the 17<sup>th</sup> Century and being oppressed by the Japanese colonial power, the indigenous people, including the farmers and labourers, tend to be proud of their identity as indigenous people. Moreover, they tend to emphasise their unique culture, including their tribal language and weaving skills which are different from the culture of the mainstream society. For example, some of them said that the Taiwanese indigenous people are genuine and orthodox Taiwanese because they have already settled in Taiwan for a few thousand years. They emphasised that the *Han* and *Hakka* people are descendants of immigrants who moved to Taiwan in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century (field notes, 16/03/06, 03/05/06 and 07/06/06). Such comments show that they lack the confidence to communicate, negotiate and compete with members of the mainstream society. However, it is also possible that they may be reluctant to do so because of their pride as indigenous people and because they hold the view that as indigenous people they must live in the

mountainous area with their traditions, they prefer to live in the mountainous area.

It is possible to look into the exclusion and discrimination of indigenous people from a different viewpoint. As has been pointed out, in the households in quadrant C, they tend to repeat the same socio-economic activities as their parents have done before. That is to say, if the parents do not care about their children's education and if they usually drink alcohol, their children would tend to follow the same activities. With a lack of education and economic resources, it would be quite difficult for them to exercise their ability and power to improve their living standards. It is difficult for the people and families in quadrant C and D to acquire the means to solve the social problems which they suffer, such as unstable employment, lack of income and education. These people, who suffer a chronic shortage of their cultural and economic capitals, tend to think that they are excluded from the opportunity to access higher education and advanced jobs. At the beginning, when they were asked whether there is discrimination, they said that there is no social exclusion or inequality. However, as the discussion of the social and economic issues progressed, they gradually mentioned the difficulty for improving their living standard because the *Han* Taiwanese always cheat them and take profit from indigenous people. Because of the flow of labourers from Southeast

Asia and global competition, the position of the indigenous labourers and farmers has become more difficult than before. The unemployment rate of the indigenous people is higher than that of the whole Taiwanese recently. Under such detrimental economic and social transformation, they tend to be frustrated with the government and to have enmity against members of the mainstream society. Therefore, it is understandable for them to regard their problems as a consequence of the inequality between indigenous people and members of the mainstream society.

However, there is another viewpoint for looking at these issues. Namely, to discuss the issue of the indigenous people such as inequality and the gap in cultural and economic resources, it is also important to consider how members of the mainstream society regard the indigenous people and what impressions they have of the indigenous people.

A few *Han* Taiwanese stated that there is no exclusion in Taiwan. The indigenous people themselves choose to segregate themselves from the Taiwanese main society. Moreover, these Taiwanese said that the indigenous people increased the inequality themselves (from a field note, 20/03/06). In addition, Ms. Ling (72) whose friends among the *Han* people have their own factories, expressed their negative impression about the indigenous people:

“They say that they do not want to hire indigenous people. Indigenous people quite often drink alcohol with their colleagues who are also indigenous people until midnight and they tend to delay coming to work or do not come. Moreover, they complain because their salary is not high” (from an interview with Ms. Ling, 29/03/06).

This impression is shared by not only the *Han* people but also by some indigenous people. In a conversation between the host mother and an indigenous owner of a tea factory, the owner made similar comments about the indigenous people. She said:

“Indigenous people quit their jobs easily. If one person quits his job the others follow. And they do not work hard. When I hired indigenous people from this village, they quite often drank alcohol from morning, and then they did not work hard. In addition, they quite often chatted during work time.

On the contrary, *Han* workers work hard and continue in their jobs. For example, if I hire twenty people, these twenty people can work for me for many years. They do not ask me to increase their salaries. After lunch, they start to work soon. They do not chat during work time and do not drink alcohol.

Therefore, hiring *Han* Taiwanese is a huge advantage” (field note, 15/06/06).

Ms. Cai (40), whose husband is the owner of a construction company, also said the following:

“Some indigenous workers tend to drink alcohol with their colleagues until the next morning. They are late coming to work. In addition, they always complain that their salary is not enough and ask me to let them drink alcohol. I do not want to hire such people” (from an interview with Ms. Cai, 17/06/06).

Of course, not all indigenous labourers are such kind of persons. Ms. Wang (60) pointed out that there are indigenous labourers who work seriously in the company of Ms. Cai’s husband (from an interview with Ms. Wang, 17/06/06). These comments tell of the other aspect of the shortage of economic resources among the indigenous people. Namely, their problems arise not only from a structural reason that is beyond an individual’s ability but are also the results of their own actions and attitudes.

As Anthias (1998: 506) argues, the stratified allocation of resources, the differentiation of socio-economic positions and the social division, which operate on this basis, are characteristic of modern social formations. The

social division and stratification are strongly related to the differentiated agency of the indigenous people. Their agency is constructed by their socio-economic positions, reflexivity, emotions and values, and habits of their parents. The discussion in this chapter shows that the result of agency does not always produce profits for individuals.

### **8.7. Summary and Conclusion**

The discussions and analyses of the diversified patterns of agency in the society of the Sediq and Atayal people led to the following conclusions: (1) the collective values and thoughts which are peculiar to each quadrant; and (2) there is also the power for choosing not to carry out actions.

First of all, the common values and institutions have a profound influence on an individual's ability and power to make strategic life choices and to acquire resources. Of course, modernisation and globalisation are permeating the society of the Taiwanese indigenous people and can change their lifestyles. There are some indigenous people who utilise the modernised social and economic systems to fulfil their strong desires and to carry out their plans.

Collective values and thoughts influence the perceptions and activities of individuals although they fundamentally have their agency and ability to do what they want to do or to be. Namely, human agents cannot be free

from the influence of these structural forces. For example, one of these forces is family or parents. Parents have profound roles to influence not only the formation of perceptions and identity but also the socio-economic positions of individuals. Particularly, educational credentials highlight the importance of inherited dispositions and social positions of individuals (Silva, 2005: 99). In the case of the parents in quadrant A, they exercise their power and ability to push their children to study hard. As a result, most of their children acquire the opportunities to access higher educational levels and advanced jobs.

On the other hand, some indigenous people, especially the labourers and farmers in quadrant C and D, might not have enough opportunity to exercise their ability and power to change their life. Most of them suffer from a lack of educational opportunities and economic resources. Thus, most of the labourers and farmers cannot acquire sufficient economic capitals for the education of their children. Due to the lack of opportunity to access education and advanced jobs, they undergo strong emotions, such as stress, anger and disappointment. To release their emotions, they tend to violate their partners or children or drink alcohol. Their perceptions and behaviour are influenced by the structural constraints such as unstable employment, the lack of economic resources and education, alcoholism, domestic violence and health problems. Although

not all the people in quadrant C and D are influenced by these constraints, these problems are transferred to their children through the behaviour of parents.

At the same time, people in quadrant C and D hesitate to communicate with the *Han* people and segregate themselves from the main society. One of the reasons is the lack of confidence to communicate and compete with members of the mainstream society. As the other reason, they may choose not to communicate with the *Han* and *Hakka* people. At this point, they can exercise their power not to do so. For some of the indigenous people, the real Taiwanese are the indigenous people, not the *Han* or *Hakka* Taiwanese, and real indigenous people must be those who live in the mountainous areas. For these people, their land in the mountainous area can be an origin of their identity as indigenous people. Although such thinking is shared by most of the indigenous people, those who are labourers and farmers in particular tend to think this way more than others.

Through the observations and communications with indigenous people, the diversified and stratified system in their society became evident. For example, some indigenous people, who work in the local government office and the hospital, keep some distance from the villagers who are labourers and farmers. Some of them mentioned that because of the alcoholic and



lazy habits of the labourers and farmers, they seldom associate with them. Within the society of the Sediq and Atayal people, there are stratified cultures and life standards which are in relation to the socio-economic positions and which are differentiated by the present social changes.

## **Chapter 9: Concluding Discussion**

The purpose of this thesis is to seek the dynamics of the poverty of indigenous people reproduced over time and space. To carry out this purpose, the following points were mainly discussed (1) the intertwined and complex interrelationship between the ability of individuals as agents and the structural constraints of the society where they were born; (2) patterns of differentiation of their agency among the indigenous people; and (3) the formation of stratification in their living standards as a consequence of their differentiated activities in social and economic life.

This concluding chapter firstly revisits the key theoretical backgrounds about structural constraints on individuals and their agency. Then, in revisiting key theoretical backgrounds, it considers the original contribution of this thesis to knowledge about the poverty issue from which indigenous people suffer. The problems and limitations of this research are pointed out and finally, future research and policy implications are discussed.

## **9.1. Revisit of Theoretical Approaches**

### **9.1.1. Views in Terms of Unequal Relationship between the Indigenous People and the Mainstream Society**

In the literature review it was found that most of the material that discusses the poverty of indigenous groups focuses on the relationship of the majority population and the indigenous minority. For instance, Beauclerk *et al.* (1988: 3) strongly argue that indigenous people have been faced with discrimination, exploitation and oppression by the mainstream society. In support of this argument, Deolalikar *et al.* (2002) and Davis (2003) assert that indigenous people are in marginalised and vulnerable positions economically, socially and politically. That is to say, because of the unequal relationship with the mainstream society, they have generally suffered for a long time from unemployment, shortage of income, unachieved education, health problems and deprivation of their resources. These assertions are fundamentally correct. As discussed in Chapter 4, the Taiwanese indigenous people are generally in a worse position than members of the mainstream society in the fields of education, annual income and employment. The shortage of these economic and cultural capitals tends to be transferred to the next generation (Goldthorpe, 1975, Hulme and Shepherd, 2003). To gain an insight into such social and economic problems, first of all, attention was focused on their

marginalised and vulnerable positions in the mainstream Taiwanese society. For example, in the field of education, as Pu (2004: 65) points out, while most indigenous children finish their studies at the level of primary school and junior high school, the number of indigenous students who finish high school or commercial and technical high school has gradually become fewer. Moreover, the number of indigenous students who graduate from technical colleges, universities and postgraduate institutions has become fewer and fewer. Rather, many of them tend to drop out from their studies (Pu, 2004: 65).

In addition to education, they are also in a disadvantageous position in the economic field. Many companies in Taiwan tend to have fixed ideas and images of the Taiwanese indigenous people, regarding them as people who have an over-optimistic outlook, who like to drink alcohol, and are good at playing sports (Epochtimes, 2008). These images have influenced the attitudes of these Taiwanese companies when they consider what kinds of occupation are suitable for the indigenous people. Most of the companies tend to think that jobs as factory workers engaging in routine work, labourers on construction sites and professional sports players are suitable for them (1111 Job Bank, 2008). On the contrary, the indigenous people wish to engage in occupations such as computer programming and management of hotels and restaurants (Council of Indigenous Peoples,

2008 b). In the case of the rate of unemployment, although the average rate has improved, the indigenous people still suffer from a higher rate than the whole Taiwanese.

While there are these enormous differences between the indigenous people and members of the mainstream Taiwanese society, there are educational and economic gaps among indigenous people themselves. For example, the unemployment rate of the Taiwanese indigenous people who just finished junior high school or senior high school is higher than the unemployment rate among those who graduated from college or university. In addition, while people who finished junior high school tend to become farmers or labourers where job security is uncertain, those who graduated from colleges and universities tend to engage in education, welfare or administration work which can let them acquire stable and regular salaries.

In seeking for an insight of the process of their poverty, this thesis has emphasised the importance to research not only the unequal relationship between the indigenous people and the mainstream society but also the backgrounds which explain why their living standards have become differentiated and stratified. For an understanding of such differentiation and stratification, attention is focused on the complex interdependency of human agents and structure.

### **9.1.2. Individual's Agency within Collective Values**

This thesis has taken a critical attitude about the ideas of the functionalism school that emphasises that social structure has the exclusive power to decide the identity and personality of individuals. Rather, each person is regarded as a human agent who can form his own values and make plans for action within structural constraints. Chapter 2 discussed the interactions of the contexts of structure and agency, referring to the theories of Giddens and Bourdieu. Giddens regards human beings as agents having knowledge about why they choose to do an action. Giddens (1986, 1996) particularly focuses on the perceptions and reflections of individuals, rather than their embedded dispositions which are influenced by the structural context, while Bourdieu (1996, 2007) focuses on the influence of dispositions on the actions of individuals. For example, Giddens (1995) emphasises the autonomous activities of human agents in a modernised society. Namely, modernisation can blur traditions and constraints, such as social class, which have a profound influence on the formation of the identity of individuals (Beck, 1992, Giddens, 1995, 2005). Thus, human agents can acquire more opportunity to do what they want to do, being free from traditions which have constrained their self-identity. Thanks to such effects of modernisation, individuals can acquire more autonomous reflexivity in their activities and have more opportunity

for exercising their ideas and realising their plans according to their desires or motivation. Because of such social transformations, some of the indigenous people acquire the opportunity to access the culture of the mainstream society and participate in that society as members. Their cultural and economic capitals are thus diversified and differentiated. Differentiations and diversification of their resources and their social and economic activities have the power to influence the structural transformations of their own society. For instance, as Avruck (1998) and Fay (2004) point out, the social structure in all societies is constantly changing. According to Archer (1989) and Bhaskar (1998), such change arises from the actions of human agents. To put it concretely, it was observed that among the indigenous people who participated in this research, there are distinct differences in their thinking and actions based on the institutions which they belong to within their society. The social and economic activities of each human agent have in their turn contributed to the formation of these differentiated institutions. Some elderly people mentioned their hard life when they were young and emphasised the efforts they had made to use their economic capitals for the education of their children. Thanks to their efforts their children could build careers which are different from the careers of their parents. The

social and economic actions of these children would contribute to the formation of new institutions in their society.

At the same time, some indigenous people have tried to escape from the institutions to which they had first belonged. Namely, they found jobs outside their villages, and settle in cities. Moving out means that they can keep a distance from and resist those institutions, including ideas and habits, shared by the indigenous people living in the mountainous areas. As Schotter (1981: 149) asserts, human beings have desires and wishes to freely consider and cope with important and difficult matters using their own ideas while minor decisions get off-loaded in institutional processing. They want the freedom to act and to use resources and power for their actions. As mentioned previously, all human beings have their own thoughts and values. Based on their values and thinking, they can exercise their agency within a structural context. Bourdieu also agrees with the assertion that agents have wishes for achieving their goals, using their capitals and resources. Moreover, Bourdieu is critical of the simple dichotomous view which tends to simplify the complex nature of freedom and constraint in society (Bourdieu 1991: 102). When observing the actions of individuals within an institution, we need to consider the diverse patterns of their actions, dismissing the simply dichotomised logic that individuals are either dominated by the institution or resist it. Given



the complex and split actions of agents, the institution's role in the formation and stabilisation of such actions is not always inevitable. There is indication of tension between the institution and individuals. Douglas (1986: 55) also argues that until the institution can be stabilised and accepted as an authorised one by its members, there is tension within the minds of individuals, such as incentives for spending their time and energy to cope with difficult problems, and the temptation to sit back and let the founding analogies of the surrounding society take over.

### **9.1.3. Power and Constraints of Collective Values on Individuals**

As Douglas (1986) points out, once people acknowledge the authority of institutions and decide to leave important decisions to their institutions, they just follow these institutions. Any institution keeps its shape, gaining legitimacy by the rightness in nature and in reason (Douglas 1986: 45, 112). Such a kind of institution is used in the sense of a legitimised major social grouping. In the process of the formation and stabilisation of institutions, individuals intentionally alter and are ready to suffer on behalf of a system of collective organisation (Parsons, 1987: 103). Archer (1989) and Bhaskar (1998) also point out that when cultural habits have been formed, human beings tend to be constrained by such habitual and

collective actions. That is to say, the institutions do contribute something to make them what they are.

As Chapters 4 and 5 clarified, the Sediq and Atayal people originally have their social regulations, *gaya*, and these social regulations became the institution for them. There were some elderly indigenous people who criticised the social behaviour of young people because they do not respect *gaya*. In the interviews and conversations, these people strongly emphasised that they had to respect the principles of *gaya* when they were young. There are two possible reasons for their attitude to *gaya*. One possibility is the transfer of *gaya* from their parents. As Bourdieu (1996) argues, the family has an exclusive power, exercising profound influence on the construction of the self-identity and perceptions of its members. Some of the elderly people said that they learned their *gaya* from their fathers. In the closed space of the family, their perceptions and self-identity were thus formed in relation to the principles of *gaya*. Of course, as Hobsbawn (1994) argues, when people understand that their values are no more applicable in their society, they tend to create traditions or old values. Some elderly people who feel that nobody now respects their ideas and values tend to be nostalgic and create stories indicating that in the past people respected *gaya*.

However, their *gaya* has not completely disappeared from the minds of the Sediq and Atayal people. Although many elderly people said that the young people do not follow the principles of *gaya*, these principles still remain in their institutions in lesser or greater degrees. For example, Ms. Hwang (36) and Ms. Chan (28) said that they cannot marry their relatives because of *gaya*. Although not all the principles remain in their minds, some would still be transferred from parents to their children. In addition, the present Taiwanese government has asked indigenous students to learn their tribal languages and cultures, and thus the principles of *gaya* are passed on through education.

This thesis has also pointed out that although the cultural and economic structures of their society are being transformed by modernisation to new ones, they cannot escape from their self-identity as indigenous people. Although through communication and contact, they have accepted the universalised culture from the mainstream society and outside Taiwan, most of the indigenous people notice the differences in the values and habits, and the educational and economic gaps between themselves and the others. For example, Ms. Chan (28), who is working in the town hall of Ren-ai Township and has active and autonomous reflections, cannot feel close friendship with the *Han* people because she does not find them honest and open. Although she keeps a distance from

some of the habits and culture of the indigenous people and seldom communicates with villagers, she seems to identify herself as an indigenous person in her communication with her friends who are *Han* people.

There are also examples among a few indigenous people who have settled in city areas. These people share the institutions of members of the mainstream society. However, they also retain their identity as indigenous people. For example, there is Ms Cai (40) who was discussed in Chapter 6. She is married to a *Han* male. From the observation of her activities, she shared space and time with the *Han* Taiwanese to support the business of her husband and made efforts to participate in their institutions and activities, such as by smoking with them and talking to them. At the same time, she usually went back to her village to see her mother at weekends and communicate with her in the Sediq language. Although she did not show any strong intention to communicate with other indigenous villagers, she retained her identity as an indigenous person.

Through research of these people, it was found that even the actions of people who can exercise knowledge and an active agency are always implemented within the framework of some cultural institution. It is quite difficult for human agents to keep a distance from the influence of

institutions. At this point, the assertion of Beck (1995) and Giddens (1995) emphasising that modernisation produces autonomous agents appears somewhat over-stated.

Some researchers criticise such assertions. For example, Cleaver (2007) criticises the argument of Giddens who asserts the characteristic of agents as optimistic. Savage (2000) argues that modernisation cannot produce individuals who can be completely free from the influence of social structure, such as their social class or the taste and habits of their class.

Bourdieu (2007), particularly, strongly believes that the corporeal dispositions of individuals (*habitus*) are formed by the taste and habits of the class to which they belong. This is related to resources which include occupation, property, income, education and hobbies. There are some critical views about Bourdieu, such as the assertion of McNay (2000) who emphasises that Bourdieu does not mention the ability of individuals in exercising their reflexivity and agency to implement actions. While such criticisms are valid, this thesis fundamentally supports Bourdieu's view. Especially, in considering the relationship between collective values, such as class and a person's agency, the perceptions of the indigenous people were examined. Although people may not be conscious of social class, the same or similar behaviour and corporeal dispositions are shared with persons who are in their same social and economic positions. Namely, as

Goldthorpe (1980) and Bourdieu (2005, 2007) point out, people tend to share common values and actions with those who are in the same or similar institutions such as social class.

#### **9.1.4. Differentiation and Stratification in the Society of the Indigenous People**

This thesis has sought to clarify among the communities of the indigenous people under study the relationship between the institutional actions, shared by people who have the same and similar occupations, educational levels, thinking and lifestyles, and the stratification of their living standards. For researching this relationship some theoretical background was needed to systematically analyse the patterns of their activities in their social and economic life. The model of agency suggested by Hoggett (2001) and Greener (2002) is quite helpful for the analysis of differentiated and complex actions. For analysing their diversified and differentiated agency, the model of agency which consists of four quadrants was used: (quadrant A) reflexive, agent as subject agency; (quadrant B) non-reflexive, agent as subject agency; (quadrant C) non-reflexive, agent as object agency; and (quadrant D) reflexive, agent as object agency. These quadrants embody the concepts of (1) Giddens on reflexive agency emphasising ability and knowledge; and (2) Bourdieu's

model of activities related to the position of parents and the culture of the family (Greener, 2002). For this reason, these quadrants are helpful to construct patterns of the social and economic activities of the indigenous people, referring to their occupations, educational backgrounds, the habits of their families, and to their desires, motivation and their selfhood, including their ability to set up and carry out strategic plans. During the field research samples of Sediq and Atayal people having various life histories and ideas were observed and interviewed. Analysis of the data resulted in the categorisation of their occupations into civil servants, farmers, labourers, unemployed persons and housewives. Their differentiated social and economic positions are related to their lifestyles, including the differentiated exercise of agency and emotions. As McNay (1999: 110) notes, “reflexivity cannot be an evenly generalised capacity of individuals but arises unevenly from their embeddedness within differing sets of power relations”. Power is not only the ability of individuals to carry out what they want but also the force influencing others (Lukes, 1974) and collective coercive force (Parsons, 1963, 1964). In practice, the indigenous people are under such a coercive institutional power and unequal relationship with the mainstream society which has more economic and political power than they. Within such power which is beyond the ability of the individual, the indigenous people have different

reactions. The reflections and activities tend to be unevenly generated and implemented by each agent.

With regard to the complex actions of human beings, this thesis has emphasised the emotional factor influencing the perceptions and actions of individuals. Human agents act not only through their rational strategies or plans but also their impulses, rage or other emotions. As Hoggett (2001) argues, most of the choices for activities in daily life are taken with ambivalence, messiness, ambiguity, tragedy, fantasies and impulses. In addition, the notion of split and fragmented perceptions and actions within individuals was also considered. That is to say, human agents have several selves characterised by different voices and different moods, some of which they identify with and feel close to, some of which seem unfamiliar and alien (Hoggett, 2001: 41).

According to the field research, most of the civil servants and their families are classified in quadrant A (reflexive, agent as subject agency). They know the importance of education to improve their economic position and they have a high level of knowledge and the ability to carry out actions to realise their wishes and desires. In addition, they actively communicate, negotiate and compete with the *Han* and *Hakka* Taiwanese to acquire and learn their customs and culture. Through observation of and interviews with people in quadrant A, it was noticed that while they



have a high level of ability to build strategic plans, they also have strong emotions. These emotions have stimulated them to realise their plans and desires. Their impressions of members of the mainstream society are significant. People in quadrant A tend to communicate with the mainstream society to utilise its values and thinking to improve their own capitals. However, it does not mean that they like the culture of the *Han* and *Hakka* Taiwanese whom they do not fully trust. They retain their identity as indigenous people and their respect for their traditions, their tribal languages and *gaya*. Ms. Wang (60), Ms Tsou (67) and Ms Hwang (36) are examples.

Young farmers, labourers and their family members generally may be categorised in quadrant C (non-reflexive, agent as object agency) or quadrant D (reflexive, agent as object agency). They are not able to acquire the means and power to utilise the existing social and economic systems to improve their living standards. Their social and economic resources are not sufficient to change their lives. Some of them tend to drink alcohol for relaxation. In the family some parents fight each other to release the stresses of their life. Some are violent to their children who then escape to spend their time on the streets, drinking and smoking like their parents. Moreover, because most of the parents do not have a high educational level, they cannot help their children to study at school. An

analysis of their social actions concluded that the extent of a family's capitals has a profound role in deciding the perceptions and self-identity of individuals.

It was also found that there are some labourers and farmers and their family members who tried to escape from their present socio-economic position. These persons are categorised into quadrant D (reflexive, agent as object agency). These persons tend to have strong motivation and desires for changing their lives. However, they understand that their lack of education results in little opportunity to access advanced jobs. A consequence of the shortage of cultural capital is a lack of economic capital. Moreover, they do not have persons whom they can rely on for improving their living standards as their family members and relatives also tend to be in similar or the same positions. The shortage of capitals prevents them from carrying out their wishes and plans. Being aware of this, they tend to show strong emotions like rage, irritation and disappointment. People in this category are responsible and clean-living who are frustrated with their present position.

Among the Sediq and Atayal people, there are differentiated consciousness and views about their life, their society and the mainstream Taiwanese society. These differentiated thinking and attitude are strongly related to how they choose their actions within the structure of power and

the various institutional constraints. For some, it is beyond their ability to do much because of inequality with the mainstream society, their shortage of resources and the socio-economic transformations that are taking place. There are other indigenous people who have chosen their activities based on strategic plans or strong motivation, being stimulated by their strong desire to change their life. On the other hand, some people have selected their behaviour, being influenced largely by their emotions rather than constructive thinking. Such people tend to keep a distance or shut themselves off from communication with the mainstream society, drinking alcohol and being violent to their family members rather than utilising their economic capitals to improve their living standard. These diversified and differentiated activities among the indigenous people contribute to the stratification of their living standards and their resources.

How have the differentiated activities of the indigenous people been directly constructed in the first place? This thesis has focused on the family as the primary influence for such actions.

#### **9.1.5 Roles of Females in the Family**

In the decision-making of a family, parents or grandparents have exclusive power to influence their children and grandchildren. Their actions in the family, based on their values, self-identity and thinking,

seem to be a part of the culture of their family. In the construction of the culture of a family, the role of males and females must be re-considered.

Bourdieu (2007: 13, 265) asserts that the social origin of an individual, which is strongly related to her position in society, is derived from the occupation, income and educational qualification of her father. A mother may have a main role which is defined as domestic work, taking charge of everything concerned with aesthetics, and more generally with the management of the social appearance of her husband and children (Bourdieu, 2001: 99-100).

On the other hand, as discussed in Chapter 8, Silva (2005: 86) is critical of Bourdieu, because he inquires about the educational qualifications and occupations of fathers, not about the mother. In addition, Silva (2005) strongly argues that the roles of females in a household are more crucial than what Bourdieu considers. Particularly, the extension of the industrial society beyond its gender-specific division has transformed the contents of parenthood and sexuality. Some researchers strongly assert that females are not always in the position of being weaker compared to males. For example, Jackson (2002) argues, that as agents, females also can act for or against the social structures. This thesis found that the modernised society can give females more opportunity to exercise their reflexivity and agency in the participation of decision-making in a family.

However, there is still the question of to what extent the indigenous females can be free from traditional gender roles in the household. It is helpful here to recapitulate the power and agency of females in the construction of the self-identity and activities of individuals.

First of all, modernisation has a close relationship with the diversification of gender role in the Sediq and Atayal society. Chapter 6 showed the case of a few females who, although the victims of violent husbands, have exercised their reflexivity and agency to solve or escape such social problems. They chose to divorce their husbands and made a choice to work outside the home. At this point, they were not passive victims. In the interviews, they showed their active and positive thinking and reactions, believing that if they have jobs and incomes they would be able to build their own lives without their husbands. Ms. Wang (60) and her younger sister, Ms. Wei (50) are examples of females who have built their own lifestyles. Both of them, after divorce, have worked outside and have successfully brought up their children with their own economic resources, and they now enjoy travelling together sometimes. Such active behaviour may be related to the structural transformation of their society. The social and economic positions of some indigenous females have been drastically improved in modern times. Namely, the present social and economic opportunities have emancipated them from the constraints of

traditions, allowing them to participate in social and economic activities more than in the past when their life was mainly based on their villages.

In addition, some indigenous females are able to actively participate in the decision-making of the family, particularly decision-making about the education and occupation of their children. For example, Ms. Ling (72) and Ms. Hwang (36) have exercised their power and reflections for the education of their children. Both females strongly believe that high educational qualifications would support their children to access well-paid and advanced occupations. Ms. Ling, a widow, worked hard to give her sons an education and they are now school teachers. Ms. Hwang, from a poor farming family, was given an opportunity for education by her aunt, Ms. Tsou (67), her grandparents and her parents-in-law. She now lives in Puli Town and in turn sends her sons to a primary school there for the chance to compete with and excel among the *Han* and *Hakka* students. Through the scrutiny of their active social and economic lives, this thesis found that some indigenous females can acquire more opportunity than males to exercise their influence on the construction of the socio-economic positions of individuals.

However, at the same time, there is the question of whether all indigenous females are as successfully influential in changing their lives and that of others. As Beck (1992: 105) says, are females released from

traditional forms? To what extent are females in the modernised society really removed from the constraints of gender? For example, as Chapters 7 and 8 discussed, not a few indigenous females are victims of their husbands' violence and have no power to stop their husbands from drinking and gambling. In addition, these females are in positions to shoulder a lot of housework including the care of their parents-in-law. In the villages during fieldwork their behaviour under such conditions was observed and investigated. Chapter 2 mentioned Hart's (1997) findings that females working outside to make up for the shortage of their husbands' income tend to form groups to resist unreasonable bosses and regard their husbands as irresponsible with respect to the material practice of their family. However, the field research discovered that not a few females living in Greenriver, Yellowriver, Alanvalley and Peacevalley tend (1) to choose divorce or run away with new partners; (2) to redirect their stress and frustration into violence on their children; and (3) not to care about housework and to hang around with their friends drinking alcohol and singing in Karaoke shops. From the observations and by talking to villagers, it was found that in families with alcoholic and violent husbands, many females are apt to stay away from cooperating with their husbands in decision-making in their families. These activities are different from Hart's (1997) assertion.

There is also the question of the extent that females are liberated from the constraints of traditions. Greenriver, Yellowriver, Alanvalley and Peacevalley, which are in mountainous areas, still have traditional habits with regard to the role of gender although these villages have been exposed to modernisation. For example, as Chapters 7 and 8 pointed out, not a few parents and grandparents still think that girls do not need to study at university or even at school and should get married as soon as possible. Of course, some girls do go to high school or schools for nurses. However, quite a few girls in their teenage years tend to get married.

While some of the indigenous females are in a position to be a strong and deciding influence in changing their families, for others to change habits and resist structural and institutional constraints is difficult. Moreover, for these females, it is difficult (1) to escape from social problems such as male alcoholism and domestic violence; and (2) to acquire sufficient ability and capitals to carry out socio-economic activities.

## **9.2. Limitations of Research**

As this thesis stated, human beings have multiple selfhoods. The model of agency suggested by Hoggett (2001) and Greener (2002) is divided into four quadrants, and it was difficult to categorise the diversified selfhoods of each person into one of the quadrants. For instance, although some



indigenous people are classified in quadrant C (non-reflexive, agent as object agency) as those who do not have the ability to exercise their agency or reflexivity, these persons could, on the other hand, actively implement their reflexivity and agency by not doing or by stopping their actions. Namely, as Lukes (1974) and Giddens (1986) mention, power can be defined as the ability to stop doing something. For example, people who are categorised in quadrant C tend to shut themselves off from communication, negotiation or competition with members of the mainstream Taiwanese society. The possibility that they do so willingly must be considered. These people quite often emphasised their identity as indigenous people. For them, the definition of indigenous people is those who live in a mountainous area with a unique culture and a tribal language. Some, with land for cultivating agricultural products, see the land as an important symbol of their identity as indigenous people. They believe that they, the Taiwanese indigenous people living in the mountainous areas, are the genuine Taiwanese. If they purposely segregate themselves from the mainstream society of Taiwan, they could be regarded as active agents who do not want contact and negotiation with the *Han* and *Hakka* people. Although such a possibility was considered, it was decided to categorise them into quadrant C on the basis

that they do not have the social and economic resources to change their lives.

On the contrary, people in quadrant A (reflexive, agent as subject agency) also expressed their strong emotions. Although they tend to be active agents who can quite often exercise their ability to build and carry out their strategic plans, it is difficult for them to be free from the influence of structural constraints. Some females have constructed their lives by themselves after divorcing their husbands. But they still feel frightened or scared whenever they are reminded of domestic violence. Some young indigenous people have a better sense of security communicating with their own indigenous people than with the *Han* or *Hakka* Taiwanese although they actively acquire up-to-date culture and information from the mainstream society. These examples tell that the indigenous people in quadrant A also exercise their agency under the influence of the institutions of the indigenous people to greater or lesser degrees. Such discussions show that although the model of agency can be used to categorise them systematically, this model ignores or overlooks the multiple and complex subjects of each agent.

In addition to the difficulty of analysing the data, there was some difficulty in collecting the data. To understand their life histories which indicate how they have acted within structural constraints, it was

necessary to ask questions in relation to their privacy. Many people, the young more than the elderly, were not forthcoming in this intrusion upon their private past. The other communication difficulty was the researcher's poor command of the Chinese language. Although a Taiwanese student and the host mother helped by translating the questions it was sometimes difficult to inform them of the details to be covered. There were also the limitations of time and finance. Although a longer stay of at least a year would have produced more detailed data this was not possible and the fieldwork had to be completed within a much shorter time.

### **9.3. Results of Research and Policy Implications**

Despite the many difficulties and problems this research was able to clarify that the structure of the poverty of the indigenous people is diversified and dynamic. In addition, it is evident that although the resources of the indigenous people are generally less than the resources of members of the mainstream society, there are stratified living standards among the indigenous people. Such stratification is related to the culture, habits and amount of capitals of each indigenous family.

This thesis clarified the diversified activities of indigenous people. Indigenous people have their own worldviews, desires, strategic plans and

emotions. In this, they would be regarded as human agents. However, at the same time, it was found that how they exercise their agency is strongly related to what extent they have capitals. Particularly, in the case of people who are trapped because of a shortage of capitals, there are profound difficulties to get rid of such obstacles and improve their living standards. Because children from these poor households which do not have sufficient economic capitals tend to give up their study, they have little opportunity to acquire well-paying jobs. They tend to engage in occupations similar to their parents', such as working as labourers or farmers. For indigenous people who do not have enough capitals, the products of modernisation, such as structural transformation and emancipation from old values, cannot become opportunities for exercising their autonomous agency to get rid of poverty. These people tend to express their emotions violently and stay in their indigenous society and culture, harbouring a strong distrusting attitude toward the mainstream Taiwanese society and *Han* people. These attitudes seem to prevent them from acquiring the capability to monitor their social and economic activities and construct new strategies for improving their living standards. An increasing gap is produced between them and other indigenous people who are active in utilising the culture and lifestyles of the mainstream society.

What the Taiwanese government needs to do to help the indigenous people who are in a poverty trap is to let them acquire and build up confidence in communicating and competing with members of the mainstream Taiwanese society. The government has provided indigenous people with financial support and job training projects. However, in addition to these projects, they must consider how to construct a social and economic environment which can let indigenous people voluntarily participate in the mainstream society, helping them to change their distrusting attitudes toward the mainstream society. First of all, the Taiwanese government needs to construct strategies for dealing with the habits of the poor indigenous families, such as alcoholism, domestic violence and health problems, which are the causes of their poverty. Secondly, it also needs to encourage the mainstream society to alter their biased image of the indigenous people as those who like to drink alcohol and are suitable to work only as labourers and as sports people. In this it is important to target companies so that more indigenous people will be employed.

#### **9.4. Future Research**

What this thesis discussed is fundamentally based on the phenomena in 2006 when the field research was carried out in Taiwan. Their society is

still transforming at this moment. For example, in 2006, the Sediq people were formally categorised as Atayal people with the Atayal people. However, in 2008, the Sediq people became formally acknowledged as the fourteenth independent indigenous tribe in Taiwan. The Sediq people are now independently acknowledged as an indigenous group, but their economic structure will still be seriously influenced by the global economy. Since 2008, the Taiwanese economy has been exposed to the serious global recession. Although the unemployment rate of the indigenous people has improved in recent years, it is not certain how the economic recession will affect it. The transformation of the social and economic structures will continue to impact on the indigenous people. For these reasons, it is important to continue to research how the Taiwanese indigenous people behave within such transformation.

## **Appendix A: Time Schedules of Field Research in Villages**

The field research was carried out in the villages of Greenriver, Yellowriver, Alanvalley and Peacevalley from 10 February to 10 September 2006.

### **1. Greenriver and Yellowriver in Ren-ai Township**

Because these villages were the first places for this field research, the researcher lived in here for a long time. Walking around these villages to observe the lifestyles of the residents promoted the communication with them. The research in Yellowriver which is close to Greenriver was carried out at the same time.

Date of arrival at Greenriver:	12 February
Date observation commenced:	14 February
Date I began to teach English and Japanese to indigenous students to help Ms. Tsou:	20 February
Date communication and interviews commenced:	19 February
Date field research finished:	31 May

### **2. Alanvalley in Ren-ai Twonship**

The research in this village experienced a few accidents related to alcoholism and attack by drunken persons. The beginning of June was the rainy season with very heavy downpours for a few weeks. As a result there was difficulty to carry out observation and interviews.

Date of arrival at Alanvalley:	1 June
Date observation commenced:	5 June
Date communication and interviews commenced:	5 June
Date field research finished:	6 August

### 3. Peacevalley in He-ping Township

The researcher lived in the house of the Sie family. The observation and communication with them were carried out for understanding the culture of the Sie family. To ease communication with them, teaching their sons English and some main subjects was implemented. At the same time, interviews with social workers and residents of this village were also commenced.

Date of arrival at Peacevalley:	6 August
Date observation commenced:	7 August
Date communication and interviews commenced (including with members of the Sie family):	9 August
Date field research finished:	10 September



## Appendix B: List of Interviewees

The researchers interviewed a total of 39 people. In the list below, the 8 persons (from categories 1 – 3) who have contact with the indigenous people provided useful information and insight about them.

The indigenous people from the four villages are the main persons who participated into this research and mentioned their ideas and impressions about (1) the social and economic issues which the indigenous people are generally suffering; (2) their tribal culture; and (3) their relationship with the mainstream society. After most of them told their life histories, the extraction of important data from the discussions and interviews with these people was commenced. In addition, the communication with other indigenous villagers and their comments were also useful for the analysis of agency and activities.

The field research in the four villages took place from 15 February to 10 September 2006.

The number in bracket against each person's name indicates his/her age.

<b>1. School Teachers</b>	<b>Dates</b>
Mr. Fang (40): <i>(a junior high school near Greenriver)</i>	28 March
Ms. Ryu (34): <i>(an elementary school in Yellowriver)</i>	4 ,5 April
Ms. Fu (51): <i>(an elementary school in Alanvalley)</i>	12 July
<b>2. Aid Workers</b>	
Mr. Wah (32): Greenriver	28, 31 March, 7, 25, 26 April
Mr.Li (30): Peacevalley	20, 23 August
<b>3. Persons of Religion</b>	
Father Ho (58): Roman Catholic Church	10, 12 April
Mr. Guo (31): Presbyterian Church	12 July
Sister Wai (70): Catholic Church	16 March

#### 4. Indigenous people

#### Dates

##### Greenriver

Ms. Yang (81)

23 February,

7, 21, 23 March

Ms. Ling (72)

29 March, 13, 24, 27 April

Ms. Tsou (67)

19 February, 3, 4, 5, 6, 15

March, 6 April, 5 May

Mr. Kuo (62)

4 May

Ms. Chou (45)

8 April

Mr. Chen (40)

3, 7 May

Ms. Hwang (36)

14, 16 February, 6, 7 March,

15 April, 15 May

Ms. Hong (36)

14 March, 26 April

Mr. Fan (30)

5 April

Ms. Chan (28)

5 August

Ms. Tsou (21)

3 March, 5 May

##### Yellowriver

Mr. Hwang (80)

29 March, 15 May

Ms. Ku (74)

20, 22 April, 15 May

Mr. Li (74)

20, 22 April, 15 May

Ms. Zeng (74)

31 March, 14, 15 May

Mr. Shigh (70)

7 May

Mr. Hsu (36)

21 March, 9 April

##### Alanvalley

Ms. Yo (89)

25 July

Ms. Li (77)

28 April, 5 June

Mr. Wang (77)

6 June

Ms. Wang (60)

5, 6, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 17 June,

1, 30 July

Ms. Wei (50)

1, 23, 24, 30 July

Ms. Cai (40)

5, 10, 17 June

Mr. Li (40)

17 June

Mr. Wei (21)

1, 23, 24 July

##### Peacevalley

Ms. Sang (61)

3 August

The Sie Family:

Mr. Sie (45)

5, 6 August, 1 September

Ms. Sie (38)

5, 6, 16, 20 August,

1 September

The second son (12)

*(a junior high school student)*

7, 16 August

Ms. Hwei (22)

22 August

**Puli Town**

Ms. Ma (39)

5, 7, 13 July

**Appendix C: Guidelines (Format) for Interviews with Teachers, Social Workers and Persons of Religion**

**Questions:**

**Teachers:**

1. How long have you been in your work places?
2. Can indigenous students follow the pace of the class?
3. Do you think that there is a gap in the academic scores between indigenous students and non-indigenous students?
4. If there is such a gap, what is the reason and background for this gap?
5. Have you met their parents or visited their houses?
6. What are your impressions about their parents?
7. Do indigenous students have dreams for their future?
8. Which subjects do they prefer and dislike?
9. After graduating from this school, what do they do?

**Social workers:**

1. How long have you been in your work place?
2. What kinds of projects have you implemented in your village?
3. Have the villagers actively participated in your projects?
4. Do you notice any social and economic gaps among the villagers?
5. If there are such gaps, what are the reasons and background for the gaps?
6. Have you visited the houses of the villagers?
7. What impressions do you have whenever you visit them?
8. What problems do the poor households have?
9. Have you felt any difficulties to solve their problems?
10. What kinds of reaction do they have about their problems?
11. In such poor families, what behaviour do the children tend to have?
12. What kinds of occupations do these children engage in?

### Religious persons

1. How long have you been in your parish?
2. Besides your church service, what kinds of activities have you implemented in your parish?
3. Have you noticed any social and economic gaps among the villagers?
4. If there are such gaps, what are the reasons and background for the gaps?
5. Have you visited the houses of the villagers?
6. What impressions do you have whenever you visit them?
7. What problems do the poor households have?
8. Have you felt any difficulties to solve their problems?
9. What kinds of reaction do they have about their problems?
10. In such poor families, what behaviour do the children tend to have?
11. What kinds of occupations do these children engage in?

## Appendix D: Guidelines (Format) for Interviews with Indigenous People in Their Villages

### Questions:

#### Cultural backgrounds

1. Do you know the contents of *gaya* (*gaga*)?
2. If you know them, how did you get to know?
3. Are you regarding you as an indigenous person or others (particularly Taiwanese or Chinese)?
4. What are your impressions about the culture in the mainstream society?
5. To what extent do you know the history, culture and language of your tribe?
6. Do you think that *gaya* and other traditional culture still remain in your village?
7. To what extent do you know the contents of culture of the mainstream society?

#### Social life and family

1. When were you born?
2. What did you want to do or to be when you were child?
3. When you were child, how did your parents behave in front of you?
4. Were the educational policy of your parents severe to you?
5. What is your final educational background?
6. When did your village approximately changed?
7. How have your villages changed?
8. What did you expect for your children?
9. What did you do for realising the expectation of your children?
10. Do you have close brothers, siblings or relatives?
11. Which kind of occupations do they have?
12. Have you been socially or economically helped by them?

#### Economic backgrounds

1. What were your parents?
2. What jobs have you had/do you have now?
3. What occupations do your children have?

## **Appendix E: Content of Interviews and Discussions with the Indigenous People**

### **1. Ms. Tsou (Greenriver) and Ms. Wang (Alanvalley)**

Through interviews and communication with both persons, it was able to receive important key information about the culture of the Sediq people, the contents of their social and economic issues, including education, occupation, alcoholism and other health problems. However, the research about their villages was not influenced or directed by what they told me. Namely, it does not mean that their comments necessarily represent the values and self-identity of the people of their villages.

The following points in discussions and interviews with them were covered:

1. Their life history: personal history and family background.
2. Power relationship and interactions among the villagers.
3. The contents of the present issues of their villages.
4. Their views about the society of indigenous people and the mainstream society.

### **2. Elderly People**

Most of them can speak fluent Japanese because they were educated during the Japanese colonial days. Thanks to this, villagers like Ms. Yang and Ms. Ling were able to give abundant information, particularly the dynamic history of their villages since the colonial days. In addition, the information about how their villages have been transformed due to modernization was also received. They were generally cooperative to this research and tended to express their nostalgia for the past. Therefore, they were apt to be critical of the present society. The interesting is to understand how they look at their society.

The following topics in discussions and interviews with them were covered:

1. The history of their villages, including how their villages have been socially, culturally and economically transformed.
2. Their personal history and family background.
3. Their ideas and opinions about social and economic issues such as education and occupation.

### **3. Young and Middle-aged People**

Although it was difficult for me to have opportunities to chat and communicate with the young indigenous people, through talking to Ms. Wang and others, the researcher collected a great deal of data about their self-identity and life history. When they understood that this research showed concern about their social and economic issues and indication to try to help them through education, many people started to show their thoughts. Through discussions with them, this research found that while they like the culture of the mainstream society, many of them still feel a distance with members of the mainstream society.

In addition, through observation, the researcher collected data about their social and economic activities and habits which include their favourite types of alcohol. It was only possible to observe the behaviour of those who were always drunk alcohol because of difficulties to discuss with such people.

In discussions with and interviews to them, the following questions were asked:

1. Their life history: personal history and family background.
2. Their ideas and thoughts about their education and occupations.
3. Their self-identity: do they identify as indigenous persons or as Taiwanese?
4. Their views about the society of indigenous people and the mainstream society.

### **4. The Sie Family**

None of them can speak Japanese or English fluently. Therefore, other ways to collect data related to their self-identity, values, emotions and thoughts were found. First of all, the researcher asked Mr. Li (30) who is a social worker and knows this family well. Discussion with him for asking questions about the Sie family was started. However, Mr. Li was quite a busy person and therefore the task for asking him was not smooth. Secondly, writing questions in Chinese characters and showing the questions to them was carried out. This way promoted the communication with them in writing. Thirdly, direct communications with them in the Chinese language were commenced. Mr. Sie can speak a little Japanese and English so the researcher could ask him to explain his ideas through simple Chinese or Japanese. Fourthly, observation of their actions at



home made up for the language problem. Through discussions and communication with members of the Sie family, the case of the influence of family on each of its members was scrutinised.

The following in my observation was focused:

1. The power relationship between Mr. Sie and Ms. Sie (including how they exercised their power when they communicated with each other)
2. Their actions for their sons (including to what extent they were committed to their sons)

In discussions with them, the following points were important:

1. Their attitudes and ideas about the education of their sons.
2. Their wishes and hopes for their sons.
3. Their views about their social and economic position.

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