



與鹿共舞

# 臺灣原住民文化(一)

*The Struggle for Renaissance*

Taiwan's Indigenous Culture (I)



鄭元慶等 編著



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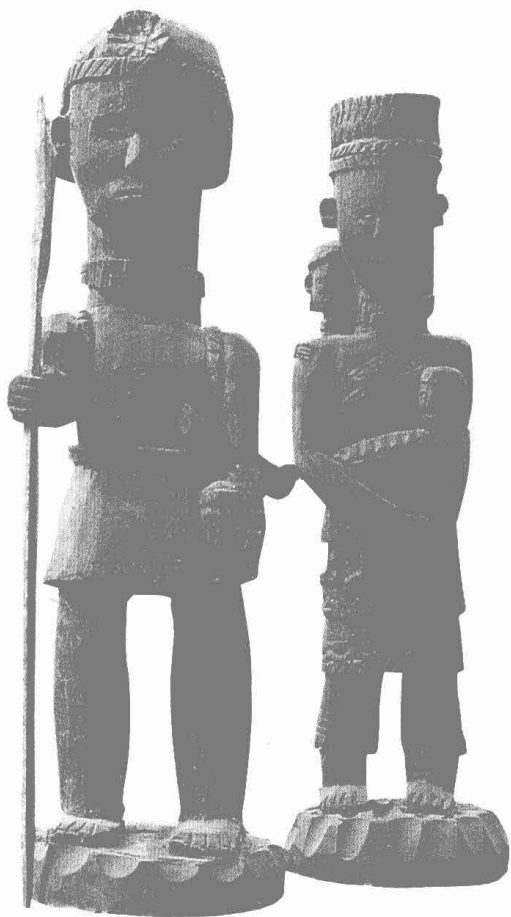
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### 「高

山青，澗水藍，阿里山的姑娘美如水，阿里山的少年壯如山……」，許多類似這種描述原住民的歌曲，一般人都耳熟能詳，也使民眾對原住民的形象產生一種憧憬。可是一般媒體對原住民的報導，卻常以負面事件居多，難免使人感覺到不協調。

多數人不瞭解，原住民數千年來都生活在自己的文化系統裡面；後來因荷據、日據及政府遷臺等時期的影響，他們爲了生存，必須要學習另外一種價值完全不同的文化，因而產生了文化調適問題。例如，原住民的公有共享、以物易物的想法，和大社會的私有財產觀念完全不同。直到目前爲止，還有若干老一輩的原住民不會使用貨幣，因爲在他們的文化裡，沒有金錢這種東西。

然而，多數人雖從未與原住民有過任何接觸，卻早已對他們存有刻板印象，總認爲載歌載舞的慶典、身強體壯的獵戶、普遍落後的生活、粗重辛苦的勞力，甚至酗酒宿醉的飲食，就是原住民的全部了。

鑑於這種情況應該加以重視，「光華」從民國七十二年，就開始製作與原住民相關題材的報導，這在當時可算是個創舉，因爲很少刊物將注意力放在屬於弱勢的原住民身

上。

一本官方刊物，爲什麼要去涉及原住民的主題呢？「光華」編輯群認爲在臺灣地區這個生命共同體裡面，這卅多萬住在較偏遠地區的原住民，是被多數傳播媒體所忽略的一群。而他們的生活、傳統文化、宗教信仰等，卻有許多珍貴的寶藏，值得重視和有系統的加以報導。

光華相信，正確的訊息若能多多傳達，應可成爲一座溝通的橋樑，消除某些因隔閡而產生的誤解，更進而帶動其它媒體共同關心原住民事物。

在這種出發點之下，「光華」選擇能反應原住民一般生活和傳統文化的題材，派員深入山區部落採訪，以取得第一手的資料。但因山區的交通不便，加上各族群間的文化互有差異，每接觸到另一個族群，就掀開原住民文化的新層面，所以無法每一期都有主題刊登，往往集數月才完成一稿。

「光華」在採訪、執筆及拍攝、選取圖片時，都盡量採取中性的角度，卻也不避諱談論問題；不過儘量不用單方面的陳述，以求客觀、公允而得其真貌。

經過「光華」多年的努力，加上社會的進步，一般媒體也逐漸重視原住民事物，到目



“The mountains are green, the flowing waters blue; the lasses of Alishan are as graceful as the water, the lads as rugged as the mountains...” Songs like these describing the aboriginal peoples of Taiwan are familiar to most, and they give people an inspiring impression of these indigenous peoples. But in general the media focuses on negative things when reporting about the aboriginal peoples, leaving readers in a state of confusion.

Many people do not realize that the aboriginal peoples had been living within their own cultural systems for thousands of years. Later, with the Dutch occupation, the Japanese occupation, and the arrival of the Republican government in Taiwan, they have been forced to learn from cultures with completely different value systems, creating problems of cultural adaptation. For example, the collectivist spirit and the exchange of goods for goods of the aborigines conflict with the emphasis on private property in the larger society. Even today there are a few elderly aborigines who do not understand how to use currency, because there was never money in their culture.

Nevertheless, most people have never had first-hand contact with the indigenous peoples, but instead have stereotyped ideas about them. Many believe that all there is to know about aborigines is that they sing and dance well, are rugged hunters, have a low standard of living, do hard physical labor, and even that heavy drinking is part of their culinary culture.

Aware that this situation requires attention, *Sinorama* began writing reports on the indigenous peoples of Taiwan back in 1983. This was a significant innovation at that time, because very few periodicals paid any attention to disadvantaged groups like the native peoples.

Why would a government-sponsored publication be interested in the aborigines? The editors at

*Sinorama* were convinced that, in the shared community of Taiwan, these 300,000 people, living in relatively remote areas, were being ignored. Yet there has always been much to treasure, and much that deserves attention and systematic reporting, in their traditional lifestyles, cultures, and beliefs.

*Sinorama* believes that by issuing accurate reports it can act as a bridge, helping to resolve misunderstandings that have arisen because of the lack of direct contact, and thereby spurring other media to be more deeply concerned with Taiwan's native peoples.

With this as the starting point, *Sinorama* has over time selected topics which can reflect the daily lives and traditional culture of the indigenous peoples. Reporters have been sent to remote villages deep in the mountains in pursuit of first-hand information. But reporting these stories is not easy: Transportation is inconvenient in the mountain areas, and there are differences in culture among the different aboriginal tribes and villages, so that each meeting with a new group opened a window on a different level or aspect of aboriginal culture. As a result, it was not possible to produce stories frequently; often months of work were required for a single piece.

In reporting, writing, and the selection of photographs, *Sinorama* has made every effort to remain fair and unbiased, but without avoiding discussion of hard questions and problems. Moreover, the reports avoid having only single sources of information whenever possible, and strive constantly for objectivity and balance.

After years of effort by *Sinorama* as well as progress in Taiwan's society, the media have gradually directed more attention to the indigenous peoples. There have been a number of objective reports done, of which the public television program "Green Mountains, Spring Sunrise" is one example; the producers of that program went into the mountains

前為止，已經有不少以原住民文化為主題的客觀報導，如公共電視節目「青山春曉」就是個例子。製作小組的成員扛著裝備，深入各部落，詳實地將他們的生活影像記錄下來。另外，也有人類學者本著學術的理念，以原住民觀點拍攝成記錄片，稍微扭轉這方面的印象。

各廣播公司設於原住民部落的地方分台，近年來在政府的支助下，也有計畫地加強原住民母語廣播節目的製播。由於主播的記者都是由當地族人擔任，製作的題材都能切中問題，更能反應當地民情。

從出版品的角度來看，和其他的暢銷書比較，原住民類別的書籍算是相當的冷門，目前也僅有臺原、晨星、稻鄉、南天等幾家出版社，願意印行這類可能不賺錢的書刊，為原住民文化的傳承和傳播盡一份心力。

現在「光華」將文章集結成書，也是本著擔任溝通橋樑的一貫想法，一方面希望民眾能瞭解，原住民文化是多元文化中不可或缺的一環；另一個目的是讓原住民族群間也能相互認識彼此的文化；更可讓我們共同的下一代，認識原住民族群文化的優美與價值。



and recorded the images of aboriginal life in detail. Also, some anthropologists have built on a scholarly foundation to make documentaries from the aboriginal point of view, contributing to changing widely-held stereotypes.

In recent years, small local radio stations in the mountain areas (run by the large radio networks) have, with government support, strengthened programming in aboriginal languages. Because the reporters are all local aborigines, their reports can accurately assess problems and reflect local sentiment.

In terms of publications, aboriginal books are rather unpopular compared to the best-sellers, and only a few publishing houses are willing to publish these unprofitable titles. Still, they are doing what they can to assist in the transmission and dissemination of indigenous culture.

*Sinorama* is releasing this work at this time as part of its longstanding commitment to serve as a bridge between cultures. On the one hand we hope that the public will come to understand that aboriginal culture is an indispensable link in a pluralistic culture. On the other hand, we also hope to assist Taiwan's diverse native peoples to understand each other better. This effort can allow the entire next generation to come to more deeply recognize the beauty and value of aboriginal culture.



發行人

胡志強

Publisher

# 一種平等對話文體的誕生

## The Birth of a Dialogue Between Equals

原住民的存在，可以讓我們思考的問題很多。

首先，是有關歷史和族群的。其實一直到前不久，在許多臺灣漢人的腦海裡，原住民不僅僅是一片模糊、遙遠、零碎的印象，而且代表著落後、野蠻、無知和怪異；除了「教化」和各式各樣的「德政」，沒有人真正關心他們的處境、主體感受和文化的未來，甚至經過四百年連他們的族名我們一個也叫不上來……。的確，在我們過去的思考邏輯裡，原住民是可有可無的存在。

然而隨著時代的推移，民國六十年代以來，臺灣政經、社會的變化，以及國際間對第三世界許多少數民族命運的深刻反省，使原住民的議題逐漸浮到檯面上來。「本土」和「國際」，共同形成了一個全新的思考視野。我們不但漸漸地理解到臺灣歷史的縱深不只是四十年或四百年；同時多元族群的文化價值，也將大家推向一個更遼闊的文化對話場合當中。原住民的存在，因而挑戰了我們對臺灣史的思考結構，跳開漢族群「獨白」的自戀情結。我們今天思考臺灣的歷史時，不能只從「光復」這個角度來看，也不能以「明鄭」為起點，日據、滿清、荷蘭、西班牙

The presence of the aboriginal peoples gives us a great deal of food for thought.

First, there are questions of history and identity. In fact, many Han Chinese in Taiwan have only obscure, remote, and fragmentary impressions of the indigenous peoples, and these impressions suggest backwardness, barbarism, ignorance, and strangeness. Except for some "beneficent policies" like "civilizing education," little real concern has been devoted to their condition, autonomous sentiments, and cultural future. Indeed, after 400 years many Chinese still do not even know the tribal names. As far as most people have been concerned, to their way of thinking there would be little difference if the aborigines existed or not.

But times change. Since the 1970s, a combination of social and political change in Taiwan with greater concern for the problems of indigenous peoples the world over have brought the problems of Taiwan's aborigines into view. "Localism" and "internationalism" have combined into a completely new perspective. We not only have come to realize how far back Taiwan's history runs — that it is not merely 40 or even 400 years — at the same time the diversity of cultures has pushed us toward an ever broader cultural field of action. The existence of the aborigines challenges us to escape from the egocentric focus on the Han Chinese that dominates the structure of thought on Taiwanese history. To-

牙、平埔各族以及四、五千年來原住民各族的活動，都將是我們歷史思考的主題。這才是名副其實的「臺灣史」。

其次，是有關臺灣原住民和主導社會的適應與互動。近百年來，和全球其他少數民族的遭遇一樣，臺灣原住民正面臨人口、土地、文化、社會、語言等全面崩解的命運。「調適」的問題，因而成了原住民主、客觀與內、外在必須嚴肅面對的課題。如何在適應現代社會與族群文化認同之間找到一個平衡點？如何在融入大社會的同時能繼續保有自己民族的主體性？如何解決長久以來被破壞的人格統一性、民族尊嚴以及文化創造力？如何克服日益嚴重的原住民社會、經濟和教育等之具體困境？這都是對當代原住民各族的嚴酷考驗。

而這樣的一個考驗，從整體臺灣各族群命運與共的角度來看，主導的漢族群也絕對無法置身事外。事實證明，臺灣這幾年的發展，使許多漢人朋友在面對原住民時，已逐漸能夠擺脫「單向」的思考方式，他們開始理會到原住民文化生活智慧中，存在著他們失落已久的人性要素。「雙向」的思考，正在形成一個健康、相互適應的族群關係。我們認為這當中隱含著臺灣邁向真正現代化、民主化的奧秘。

此外，如果大家稍為留意一下臺灣原住民社會在民國七十年以後的發展，不難發現：原住民文化復振的現象，正一波又一波的鼓

盪開來。許多原住民朋友在面對考驗時，不再是被動的委順，而是轉過身來、迎向前去，與黃昏搏鬥、與文明拔河；以祭典、以雕刻、以編織、以舞蹈、以歌聲、以文學，來見證自己民族文化的存在。這些鮮活的人物風姿，本身就構成臺灣當今文化建構活動中，最具活力、最動人的畫面。這不是充斥政治、金錢、權力、色情、暴力的漢人社會，所能理解或淹沒的。我們可以預見：原住民在族群苦難中所激盪的人性自覺，將會是未來整個臺灣文化歷史的中流砥柱。原住民的存在，終將成為臺灣的良知。

我因而極樂意為本書作序，因為這裡所收錄的文章正好見證了這些年來原住民在各方面的努力和變化。它不但幫助我們從考古、人類學的反省，理解到臺灣原住民綿延流長的歷史縱深，賦予我們「本土化」的思考一個更深沉、遼闊的面相；同時它也為我們描述了原住民在面對漢文化和現代社會時，所遭到的種種困境以及他們所作的種種回應。尤其令人感動的是，本書的許多漢人作者，上山、下海，探查、採訪，以鏡頭、文字與他們的對象——原住民——共同創造一個寬容的對話空間。我相信在他們的意識和情感裡，必然早已烙上了原住民的印記。

不是政令宣導，不是民俗採風，更不是論文報告，這裡的文字，體現著一個新的嘗試，一種原住民與漢人平等對話的文體……。

S

臺灣原住民文化發展協會祕書長

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Sun, Ta-Chuan

day, when we think about history in Taiwan, we start not with "retrocession" in 1945, nor with the recapture of Taiwan from the Dutch at the end of the Ming dynasty. We must consider the Japanese occupation, the Ching dynasty, the Dutch and Spanish colonizers, the Pingpu aborigines of the plains who have long since been assimilated into the Han mainstream, and the four or five thousand years of continuous activity by Taiwan's mainly mountain-dwelling aborigines. This is what truly deserves the name "the history of Taiwan."

Secondly, there are issues of adaptation and interaction between aboriginal society and mainstream society. Over the past century, like native peoples around the globe, Taiwan's indigenous peoples have faced the collapse of their population, territory, culture, society, and language. "Adaptation" has thus become the core problem that aboriginal peoples must face, objectively and subjectively, externally and internally. How can a balance be found between adaptation to modern society and identification with the traditional group? How can aborigines assimilate into the mainstream culture yet still retain autonomy? What can be done to stop the long-term destruction of the continuity of character, of dignity and pride in the traditional group, and of cultural creativity? How can the increasingly serious concrete problems of aboriginal society, economy, and education be dealt with? These issues pose serious tests for the indigenous peoples today.

Moreover, from the point of view of Taiwan as a single body with a collective fate, the dominant Han Chinese cannot evade facing this type of issue. Recent experience shows that progress over the past few years has brought many Han Chinese to gradually abandon the "one-way street" way of thinking when making contact with the aboriginal peoples. These people have begun to comprehend the humanistic element in the wisdom that is inherent in aboriginal attitudes toward life, and that has long since been disappearing from mainstream culture. "Two-way" thinking is helping to create a healthy, mutually adapting relationship among peoples. We feel that herein lies the secret of Taiwan's progress toward a truly modern democratic society.

Further, if people would take note for a moment

of the development of aboriginal society since the 1980s, it is not hard to discover wave after wave of cultural renaissance. Many aborigines have abandoned passivity and fatalism in the face of the new challenges and are actively meeting these challenges and struggling against fading off into the sunset. They are using religious rites, sculpture, weaving, dance, song, and literature to reaffirm the existence of their people and culture. The posture of these vigorous individuals has become one of the most inspiring and moving sights in the ongoing construction of contemporary culture in Taiwan. This is not something that can be either understood nor stopped by the Han Chinese culture of politics, money, power, sex, and violence. We can foresee that the humanitarian self-awareness pouring forth out of the tribulations of the aboriginal peoples will stand strong amidst the mainstream culture of the future. In the end, the indigenous peoples will prove to be the conscience of Taiwan.

Therefore I am delighted to write an introduction for this work, because the articles collected here testify to the efforts made and changes experienced in all aspects of aboriginal life in recent years. It allows us to see, through archaeology and anthropology, the long thread of aboriginal culture in Taiwan, and to have a deeper and broader understanding of the idea of "nativism" in Taiwan. Moreover, this book depicts the problems that have arisen as the aboriginal peoples have come up against Han Chinese culture and modernization, and also how the indigenous people have responded. It is especially moving that the writers, who are Han Chinese, have gone into the mountains and explored, using words and pictures to create a new space for dialogue between themselves and their subject, the aborigines. I feel certain that they have burnt a deep impression of the indigenous peoples into their consciousness and emotions.

These are not government policy statements, nor are they snippets of quaint native customs, and still less are they heavy-handed scholarly treatments. The articles you will find here are instead the manifestation of a new start, an effort to create a dialogue of equals between the aboriginal peoples and the Han Chinese.

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# 可曾觸動彼此的心靈

## A Meeting of Hearts and Minds

中 研院的人類學者，在我剛開始接觸原住民題材時，就灌輸我「不同的文化因為立足點不平等，最好不要去相互評斷比較」的觀念。

他同時舉例說明，大意是說：多數城裡小孩的數字觀念，應該比原住民的小朋友好，但不能用此來推斷都市兒童一定比部落小孩優秀。反過來說，山上孩子的體力一般要比城市小孩強壯；但也不能用這來假定原住民小孩一定比城市小孩優秀。

其原因是，若將兩者的角色、地位對調，原佔優勢的籌碼恐無用武之地。雖然都市學生的數學程度極好，但若將他丟到野外，則他的數學將無法用來辨識野菜、爬高山。而原住民小孩進城，他的野外常識也派不上用場。

### 撇開文化情節

這個比喻一直存在腦中，也在不斷的採訪中獲得印證，而傳播媒體也經常在報導原住民的相關題材時，加進這種觀念；但是一般人仍沒辦法用這種角度來看原住民及其他文化族群。

文化應該沒有高低、優劣之分，只有實用與否的區別；不論哪個種族、住在什麼地方，都會因環境的關係而發展出不同的文化。

這種經驗的累積，從自我族群的觀點來看，當然是既生活化又實用。但若從另一個群體、另一種觀點來看，可能會覺得不可思議。

就舉一個最簡單的例子，臺灣本島民眾近年來經常有機會到蘭嶼遊覽，可是他們看到雅美族人下海補飛魚、住半穴居房舍、穿丁字褲、怕惡靈、吃芋頭，時常會覺得不可思議。可是有多少人會想到，雅美族人由於海洋、氣候、天然資源、土地等因素，再經長期的生活經驗累積，才發展出這種十分獨特的雅美飛魚文化？

因此怎樣去調和兩者之間的觀念差異，先將自己的立足點放開，盡量「入境隨俗」，從對方的角度看事情，就顯得格外重要。

從食的文化來看，都市人吃的是經過精緻烹調的食物；但是原住民以往物資較缺乏，許多食物都只是水煮而已，吃慣山珍海味的人可能就很很不習慣。

### 十項全能之外

哪天若去豐年祭，吃到全部落分食、只撒些鹽巴水煮豬肉，雖不習慣，卻不能表現出厭惡的態度，必須很有禮貌的吃一點，再委婉地加以推辭。若是表現的過於激烈，生性和善的原住民因為是主人，當場不會立即反應，但茶餘飯後，可就會大加抱怨。



When I first touched on the subject of Taiwan's indigenous (or aboriginal) peoples, an anthropologist at the Academia Sinica put the idea in my head that "different cultures have different anchoring points, so it is best not to make critical comparisons."

He gave me an example, which I paraphrase here: Most city children have a better grasp of mathematical concepts than kids from aboriginal villages, yet this doesn't mean that the city kids are superior. On the other hand, most aboriginal youngsters are in much better physical condition than urban children, but this should not be taken to mean that the former are superior to the latter.

The reason is that if you simply reverse their roles and positions, the original advantage is no longer relevant to the new situation. That is, city children may very well do better in math, but if you put them up into the mountains their math skills won't be very useful in distinguishing edible roots or in climbing steep slopes. Whereas an indigenous child would find no place to employ his outdoors skills in the metropolis.

**Break through the cultural complex:** This example was constantly running through my brain, and was repeatedly verified in the course of my reporting. Moreover, the mass media are generally sensitive to this notion when they report on things related to the indigenous people. The problem is that most ordinary folks are not capable of taking this approach when looking at aboriginal or other outsider cultures.

Cultures should not be distinguished as high or low, superior or inferior. They should only be assessed in terms of whether they are functional or not. No matter what race or national origin, people will inevitably evolve different cultures depending upon their immediate environment. From the point of view of the group in question, this accumulation of experience naturally seems both functional and an integral part of daily life. But those from an outside culture might find certain things incomprehensible.

Let's take a simple example. In recent years, many people from the main island of Taiwan have

had the chance to travel to offshore Orchid Island, home of the Yami aboriginal people. When they see the Yami diving to spear-hunt for flying fish, living in half-buried homes, wearing T-shaped loincloths, avoiding evil spirits, and so on, the visitors simply find the local culture incomprehensible. But few bother to consider that it was only through long, cumulative experience in this oceanic environment, with its particular climate and natural endowments, that the Yami developed this unique flying fish culture.

The question then becomes how one can adjust for the gap between the two cultures. The first thing to do is to open one's own mind, and as much as possible to "do as the Romans do" in the aboriginal Rome. It is exceptionally important to look at things from the other person's point of view.

Just look at culinary culture. Chinese in the city want their food meticulously prepared. But aborigines have always been short of material goods, and they just boil a lot of their food. People used to indulging in a wide variety of delicacies might find it hard to adjust.

If visiting during the harvest festival, if you are invited to share with everyone else in the pork, which has simply been boiled and then had a bit of salt thrown on top, don't show distaste no matter how unaccustomed you may be to it. Do the polite thing: eat a little bit, and then decline more as gracefully as you can. If you seem too agitated, your aboriginal hosts, though by nature too gracious and friendly to respond at the time, would feel aggrieved afterwards.

**Beyond decathletes:** Most aborigines grow up close to nature, and through cumulative experience each one has a rich knowledge of plants and animals. With a bit of salt and a source of fire, they can survive in the wilderness. Moreover, they have been physically active all their lives, so most aborigines are in excellent physical condition.

I remember the first time I climbed up Yu Mountain. It was early spring, around the lunar New Year. One of my colleagues from work slipped and fell down a rocky slope on the north face. Fortunately his backpack broke his fall. The

原住民從小在大自然裡成長，因為生活經驗的累積，每個人對動、植物都有豐富的知識。給些鹽巴和火種，把他們放在荒郊野外也能生存；而且他們從小經過勞力訓練，體力負荷能力極強。

記得第一次在上玉山時正在初春時節，同事不幸滑落北峰碎石坡，幸好籐製背包緩衝了墜落的力道。經過嚮導簡單救助，在山坳裡生火取暖、待了一夜，後經布農族原住民山青背負下山救了一命。

布農族人因為地理位置的關係，自小在山區活動，熟悉山區路徑，山友們以往經常僱用他們當嚮導。從日據時代開始，他們就是高山嚮導，因此被喻為「臺灣的雪巴」。翻開早期的登山圖片，早期的山友若沒有他們的幫忙，恐怕「百岳」就不是那麼容易可以登上。

可是，為什麼當山友喜孜孜地慶賀「百岳」壯舉時，不會想到這些原住民嚮導也有部分功勞呢？

記得多年前，當日本大恒山協登山隊，僱用布農族人的高山嚮導史進攀登玉山，回程中史進墜谷受傷，而致雙腿行動不便，不能再爬山。出事後多年，史進得到原大恒山協登山隊員之助，大家輪流背他登上日本第一高峰富士山，一償宿願。此事當年在日本曾轟動一時，電視台也轉播報導。

再看早期協助國內山友登山的東埔布農族人，多人因長期負重登山，而致膝關節受傷，不能工作，境遇實不能相比。

### 族群向晚天

這些文化差異終因大社會的關係，使得原

住民文化近年來有逐漸瓦解之勢，無怪乎擔任東吳大學講師的卑南族人孫大川，就經常以「黃昏族群」來形容卑南族的未來。

幸好這種悲觀的實況，已有略為緩和的跡象。

中研院民族所許木柱研究員，於民國八十年曾對臺灣地區的九個原住民族群，做過一次全面性的問卷調查，結果顯示，對「山地語言、文化、風俗習慣是否應該繼續維護」這個問題，有將近九成的原住民主張要盡力保存維護山地文化；與十年前的同類調查相比較，持肯定人數增加了一倍。

由這項調查數據可看出，雖然各族群文化仍不免被主流文化所融合，但各原住民族群對各自的傳統文化，在經歷多年的震盪後，終於覺醒到自己的文化也有優越的一面。

去年是國際原住民年，原舞者赴歐巡迴演出三個月；之前他們也曾應紐約林肯中心之邀，在該中心做戶外演出。演出後，極具影響力的世界性媒體紐約時報，給與高度的評價。另由國家兩廳院製作的「原住民族樂舞系列」已經過了四個年頭，

隨著對自我文化的肯定，原住民知青有了一些尋根的作為，像「魯凱族重回舊好茶」、「布農族丹大尋根」；在個人方面，夏曼藍·波安回到蘭嶼，親身體會雅美的飛魚文化，其他還有許多人在部落做田野調查、教導母語、追尋部落遷移史、重建族譜、搜集神話傳說、學習傳統歌謠。搭配上各地方政府要求在中小學實行的原住民母語教育，對原住民下一代的文化傳承，似乎有了一線生機。

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鄭元慶 Chang Yuan-cheng

guide gave him some preliminary first aid, and then we built a fire for warmth and settled in to wait overnight. Later, members of the Bunun aboriginal tribe carried him down the mountain, saving his life.

Because of geographic proximity, the Bunun spend their lives in the mountains, and are old hands at all the trails. In the past alpinists routinely hired Bunun to serve as guides. They have been mountain guides since the Japanese occupation period and have earned the nickname "Taiwan's sherpas." Early mountaineers in Taiwan attempting to "conquer 100 peaks" would have had a hard time without them.

But why is it that when people recount such climbing feats they don't think about how much a contribution was made by indigenous people?

Many years ago, when the Ogaki Alpine Association from Japan hired some Bunun men as sherpas to ascend Yu Mountain, one of the Bunun, Shih Chin, fell and broke his back, losing the use of his legs and ending his mountaineering days. Years later, with members of the Ogaki group taking turns carrying him, Shih Chin was brought to the top of Mount Fuji, Japan's highest peak, allowing him to realize a longstanding dream. This caused quite a sensation in Japan at the time, and was even reported on television.

But looking at the Bunun who have long been helping local mountain climbers to reach new heights, many have severe knee problems from carrying heavy loads for so long, and can no longer work. The situation is very different from that of Shih Chin.

**Twilight of a people:** These cultural differences have, in the context of the larger society, driven aboriginal culture toward disintegration in the past several years. No wonder Sun Ta-chuan, a Puyuma aborigine who is now a lecturer at Soochow University, usually uses the expression "twilight people" to describe the condition and uncertain future of the Puyuma.

Fortunately this pessimistic trend shows signs of moderating of late.

Hsu Mu-chu, a researcher in the Institute of

Ethnology at the Academia Sinica, did a comprehensive questionnaire survey of all of Taiwan's nine indigenous tribes back in 1991. Responding to the question "Should aboriginal languages, culture, and customs be carried on?" nearly 90% of the respondents agreed that everything possible should be done to preserve and maintain indigenous culture. This was double the number of positive responses in the previous survey taken a decade earlier.

From these figures we can see that, although inevitably all aboriginal cultures will to some extent absorb elements of the mainstream (Han Chinese) culture, the peoples of all the aboriginal tribes have, after years of turbulent change, awakened to the idea that their traditional cultures have their aspects which are valuable.

Last year was the International Year of Indigenous Peoples, and the Formosa Aboriginal Dance Troupe did a three month tour of Europe. Earlier, they had been invited by the Lincoln Center in New York to do an outdoor performance. After their performance, the New York Times, one of the most influential papers in the world, gave them high praise. Back home, the "Aboriginal Music and Dance Series" sponsored by the National Chiang Kai-shek Culture Center is now in its fifth year.

Following a reaffirmation of their own culture, many young aborigine intellectuals are now seeking out their roots. There are special events like the "Back to Old Haucha Village" activities among the Rukai, or the "Bunun Search for Roots in Tanta Village." In terms of individual efforts, Syman Rapongan returned to Orchid Island to understand the Yami "flying fish" culture. Many others have gone to aboriginal villages to do field research, teach their mother language, trace the migrations and origins of their people, reconstruct clan lineage histories, collect myths and legends, and study traditional music and dance. As part of these activities, primary and middle schools in many areas have added classes in aboriginal mother tongues, opening a lifeline for the transmission of aboriginal culture to the next generation. 