

Culture and Development: When Indigenous Weaving Becomes Community Heritage

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The UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICHC) reflects the wider context of the debates on the relationship between culture and development and criticised the notion that (traditional) culture hindered development in the 1970s, introducing the concept of endogenous development. This conceptual shift values the culture of local communities and ethnic minorities and connects culture with development. Recognising the interdependence of culture and development, the ICHC emphasises that safeguarding ICH ensures the sustainable development of a community. Heritage and identity have gradually become incorporated into the concept of culture and development. However, whether cultural preservation is equally as essential to development, particularly in indigenous communities, remains unclear.

In the 1990s, the Taiwanese government adopted the objective “to indus-

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trialise culture and to culturalise industries”. This highlights the paradox of culture and development, created by the intersection of long-term historical consequences in Taiwan. One thread corresponds to the introduction of modern capitalism (no later than the 1920s) to indigenous weaving craft, creating a heritage market by replacing indigenous weaving practices with modern techniques, materials, tools, and aesthetics for tourism and export purposes; this continues into postwar and contemporary production. The other thread concerns the reconstruction of an endogenous knowledge system, protected through a community-centred approach. The confluence of the threads stems from the implementation of a community development programme in the 1990s and of the Cultural Heritage Preservation Act of Taiwan and its 2016 amendments, which are based on the ICHC. On the basis of six years of empirical data, field work, and literature review, this study adopts the indigenous weaving heritage in Taiwan as a case to study the paradox of culture and development in the context of cultural heritage and community movements.

Keywords: Intangible Cultural Heritage, Indigenous Weaving, Community, Culture, Development

Departing from the designation of Paiwan national weaver

In July 2020, as one of the national craft heritage committee members, I came to this very south county of Taiwan for pre-assessing candidates of the national preserver from two county-level preservers of Paiwan weaving heritage. Both weavers were simultaneously announced by the county government to be the preservers of the “Traditional Craft Heritage: Paiwan Weaving” just in the previous year. According to the law, they were eligible for competing the national preserver status as they were preservers designated by the local government. There are currently sixteen officially recognized Austronesian-speaking indigenous tribes in Taiwan. The total population accounts for 2.5 percent of the entire population. Paiwan is the second largest indigenous tribe and has the population around 102,730 people (as of January 2020).¹ Paiwan tribe is well-known historically for their exquisite crafts of weaving, beading, embroidery and applique. This process of designating the final national preserver of Paiwan weaving was full of controversies. It represented that the relationship between “culture and development” was tightly interwoven with power relations during the entire process of heritagization.

To our surprise upon arrival, the two candidates were not only designated by the county at the same time, but their studios were also located merely

¹ According to the Council of Indigenous Peoples of the Executive Yuan, Taiwan (原住民族委員會 2024).

150 meters apart. They belonged to the same community of Paiwan tribe. We visited the studio of preserver L first while an assistant of the legislator who supported the other preserver pushed us to moving faster for the other candidate. In addition to supports from different indigenous legislators, the candidates presented differing opinions on “weaving as Paiwan heritage”. Their disagreement largely focused on the “twill inlay weaving technique (*xiewen jiazhi* in Mandarin)”, which has long been widely recognised as the top skill of Paiwan weaving. Preserver C strived to demonstrate her ability in managing the “twill inlay weaving technique” during the visit of committee, yet the preserver L disclaimed the technique-centred heritage value.

The nomination dossier of preserver C emphasised “among the various weaving techniques, inlay weaving (*jiazhi*) is the most difficult and requires the highest level of skill. The twill inlay weaving technique (*xiewen jiazhi*) of the Paiwan mourning cloth is the most well-known indigenous textile craft. Ms. C [...] realised the danger of losing the traditional weaving techniques and successfully revitalised the Paiwan twill inlay weaving technique by studying various folk weaving techniques.”² This view of Paiwan weaving is commonly shared by the public and academics because it is based on anthropological records, particularly those from the Japanese colonial period. Her accentuation showed the expectation from academics and the professional weaving circle to recognise a “national master”.

2 Meeting Material of the 2020 Indigenous Heritage Examination Committee — the first meeting of the National Important Traditional Craft (109 年文化部原住民族文化資產審議會：重要傳統工藝 第一次會議資料), page 131.

In contrast to the aforementioned view on the value of Paiwan weaving, in her nomination dossier, preserver L argued that to privilege a specific technique or a set of techniques of traditional textiles was to adopt a cultural conceptualisation of the indigenous community rooted in Western and Chinese modes of thinking. The cultural memory of the Paiwan is captured through experiences and recorded with Paiwan terms, transmitted from senior to junior weavers. These terms serve as reminders of living experiences in the environment shared by generations. According to the document, “the Paiwan calls the patterns on *tjemenun* (Paiwan textile) as *vinecikan* (writing the patterns), and the formation of patterns is associated with specific terms in the Paiwan language such as *vinengeti* (to tie), *cinikalj* (to lift up the warp yarns), *sinejutj* (to pick up warp yarns) and *siniravavan* (to float the weft yarns). Paiwan weavers make patterns on one piece of textile by taking multiple movements and thus techniques. It is not possible to use a single term such as *jiazhi* to cover the whole piece of textile.” The document further mentioned that “literature and research reports on indigenous textiles mostly define the pattern on Paiwan textiles by the Mandarin term *jiazhi*. This ready adoption leads to the loss of Paiwan wisdom built by weavers in generations who used Paiwan terms to instruct junior weavers by associating them with experiences (recorded by the terms).”³ In comparison with the more object-oriented value of weaving expressed by Ms. C, Ms. L’s argument drew upon a different con-

3 Meeting Material of the 2020 Indigenous Heritage Examination Committee — the first meeting of the National Important Traditional Craft (109 年文化部原住民族文化資產審議會：重要傳統工藝 第一次會議資料), pp.59-63.

cern about the cultural memory of weavers and its importance in transmitting immaterial experiences of the practice.

The mourning cloth of the Paiwan has been praised by researchers and collectors as being one of the most unique and most skilfully made textiles of indigenous weaving in Taiwan. Ms. C argued for her suitability based on her ability to weave the twill inlay patterns on mourning cloth, and Ms. L challenged this stereotypical view of Paiwan weaving. In her book (Hsu 2021) and on numerous occasions during our interactions, L argued that there is not a fixed category of “mourning cloth”. During Paiwan funerals, people wear their most exquisite textiles in their unique styles, however, after the mourning period, these textiles are then used in everyday life. As their function changes, so do the names of the textiles. She asserted that this long-held misconception originates from colonial records.

The two candidates expressed different understandings about the heritage value of Paiwan weaving. Their understandings corresponded to the changing approach of the law from preservation to craft heritage. Ms. C’s emphasis of her personal skill in the most challenging technique of Paiwan weaving reflects the nomination criteria before 2016, which was based on outstanding artistic and technical skill; Ms. L’s argument relates to the “endogenous knowledge” (Rist et al. 2011) or “traditional ecological knowledge” (Berkes 1999) that is embedded in Paiwan weaving and that corresponds to the indigenous heritage designation criteria under the amended law. This amendment largely adopts concepts from the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the

Intangible Cultural Heritage.

Ms. L, who was eventually designated as the national preserver, explained that the training of a Paiwan weaver has always involved the training of becoming a complete person. Paiwan knowledge is primarily orally transmitted, and the patterns and practices of weaving are forms of documentation used instead of writing. Hence the weaver of a community is not simply a skilled individual but also the person responsible for recording and transmitting the community's knowledge and history; this is encapsulated in the Paiwan term *tjemenun*, which means "writing patterns". Hence the training of a weaver is not simply about teaching weaving skills, but also about nurturing a competent person who can manage, preserve, and transmit community knowledge regarding social norms, character development, and harmony with the natural environment. The Paiwan language is central to the transmission of weaving knowledge; the warping song is one example of this. Therefore, as Ms. L argued, the aim of training a Paiwan weaver is to teach a *pu lima* (skilled person) to become a *pu qulu* (a person with wisdom) and finally to become a *pu valung* (a person with heart). *Pu valung* refers to a person whose mindset is like her initial state when embarking learning with her master weaver and who can pass this mindset to junior weavers. In terms of production, the farming and processing of ramie fibre is central to the knowledge of weaving.

Paiwan weaving, like other Austronesian communities, was once transmitted primarily through families, from mother to daughter. However, it is also possible to learn from a senior weaver outside the family by following

the norms and rituals of “acknowledging the master”. Ms. L learnt weaving through domestic transmission and the rituals of master acknowledgement, while Ms. C gained her knowledge through weaving classes, as do most contemporary indigenous weavers. This situation developed along with the industrialisation process over nearly a century.

In the final discussion of the committee, a point was central to the debate: “cultural tradition” or “cultural creativity”. Committee members who supported preserver L mainly focused on her capability of transmitting Paiwan oral tradition and the ground loom weaving, which were considered core heritage values of authenticity of Paiwan intangible culture. While other committee members accentuated the skill of inlay-weaving and creativity of preserver C to re-modify the loom that could be beneficial to the community economy. The different opinions reflected two threads of “culture and development” once divergent and now came into confluence in the process of heritagization. This confluence emerged when “community building” appeared in public discourse and became leading policy in Taiwan since the 1990s.

Heritage Turn

The role of community in preserving cultural heritage is the focus of the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH 2003). According to the convention, community recognition is necessary for the identification of intangible cultural heritage (ICH), and ICH

can only be safeguarded through the continued transmission of cultural practices. The convention recognises the interdependency of a cultural community and its environment and attributes the continuation of cultural practices to human creativity. It emphasises that the safeguarding of ICH can secure sustainable development for a community.⁴ As Blake (2008) suggests, the adoption of the convention reflects the wider context of debates on the relationship between culture and development. The final version of the ICHC came into place following sustained criticism of the previous discourse that (traditional) culture hinders development that was applied to the African and Latin American contexts in the 1970s, and it paved the way for the concept of “endogenous development”. This conceptual shift values the culture of local communities and ethnic minorities and links culture with development (Arizpe 2004, 2007; Blake 2008). In the mid-twentieth century, “development” was equated with economic growth and modernisation of “poor countries” and was expected to replicate the Euro-American models. The conception was implemented by various funds, programmes, loans and aids of international institutions, especially the UN. Yet this developmental thinking was gradually criticised while failures of the previous paradigm in the African and Latin American countries were evident. The “cultural turn” of development was seen since the 1980s following the aforementioned practical failures (Radcliffe 2006). Since the 1970s, practitioners, grassroots actors and thinkers based in the African and Latin-American contexts contributed to a new thinking toward the relation-

⁴ Please refer to Article 2 of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (UNESCO 2022).

ship between culture and development. That was how the idea of “endogenous development” arose to bridge the concept of community with culture and development.

The Taiwanese situation is very much similar when the Western model of development, particularly the US model, applied in Taiwan during the Cold War period. Along with the poverty reduction programmes supported by the US aids as well as the Chinese nationalist agenda of the postwar authoritarian government, the indigenous people in Taiwan were devoured by the developmentist drive. Indigenous culture, if not part of tourism projects and souvenir market, was quickly abandoned and people merged into the force of modernisation, a replica of the US model. A different model of development was proposed in the context of the “community building movement” during the 1990s by governors, local practitioners, academics and indigenous community activists. This new development model, instead, focused on nurturing civil society, nativist identity, place making and community participation. It provided a discursive environment for centering “endogenous knowledge” and accentuating the linkage between culture and development.

Prior to the “community building programme”, the central government legislated the Cultural Heritage Preservation Act in 1982. It was amended several times afterwards and the notion of “community” gradually came to the central stage of the Act. The local consensus on heritage preservation taking shape during the community building movement served as one major factor of this change. The 1982 version already incorporated the concept of

intangible heritage through protection of two heritage categories: “traditional arts” and “folklore and related objects”. It reflected the impact of Japanese folklore studies and its own Act on Protection of Cultural Properties. However, the designation protection mainly targeted Han (ethnic Chinese) Taiwanese cultural expressions. The official inclusion of legal clauses for indigenous heritage only came with the 2016 modification.

In 2016, the amended Cultural Heritage Preservation Act of Taiwan came into effect. Similar to the UNESCO convention, the legislation contained a new section regarding ICH. “Community” featured as prominently in the act as it did in the ICHC. Another significant change was the addition of an article (art. 13) directly concerning indigenous heritage. An additional piece of legislation, Regulations Governing the Indigenous Cultural Heritage, was promulgated the following year. This was the first time that indigenous heritage received a special legal status under heritage law. “Community” has always been a key concept in Taiwan’s heritage politics because Taiwanese legislation on cultural heritage preservation was developed in the context of postcolonial nativism. Heritage preservation consciousness was later reinforced in the discursive environment of the new narrative of Taiwanese identity (Chiang 2012). The indigenous community is a core component of the multicultural mosaic of the new identity narrative. However, the formal legal support for the preservation of indigenous heritage only came into place with the 2016 amendment.

Not preoccupied with legislative changes, indigenous communities in

Taiwan, especially artisans and artists⁵, have endeavoured to revive their cultural practices since the 1990s using four major discursive strategies: materiality, visual display and performance, indigenous cultural research, and knowledge transmission (Varutti 2015). Communities have not only preserved their practices and knowledge but have also reframed them as “heritage” in the name of “tradition” (*chuantong* in Mandarin). The pursuit of identity is central to the discourse of heritage-making endeavours in both national institutions and indigenous communities. I argue that discourses concerning heritage and identity have gradually become entangled with the discourse of “culture and development” in a specific social and historical context.

Among all indigenous cultural practices undergoing a revival since the 1990s, “traditional” weaving crafts have played a key role in the indigenous identity movement. The influence of weaving crafts can be seen from the legal heritage inventories of local and national governments after 2010. The phenomenon of legally recognising indigenous weaving heritage gained momentum since the early 2010s and became even more prominent after 2016. Following the amended legislation, five indigenous artists were designated as preservers of important craft heritage (commonly called “national living trea-

5 I use ‘artisans and artists’ here to reflect two dimensions: first, since the 1990s some indigenous craft practitioners largely involve in various forms of art practices and are also recognised as artists. This is encouraged by Taiwan’s cultural policy. The motivation to and exercises of craft-making greatly differ from making indigenous crafts for daily use (*ziyong gongyi* 自用工藝). Second, the classical discussion tends to build a hierarchy between art and craft with artisans seemingly inferior to artists. Although it has been criticised and gradually changed in recent three decades, this conception is still widely received and leads to an inferior image of ‘artisan’ even within the circle of craft practitioners. Hence, I use both artisan and artist for referring to the craft practitioners especially in the post 1990 context..

asures”) between 2017 and 2022, and only one was designated as such before the amendment.⁶

Over the past six years, I have participated in national and local craft heritage review committees and served as a supervisor for the preserver apprenticeship programme. Thus, I experienced the the regime transition from the original preservation act to the amended version influenced by the ICHC. Although my observations are naturally limited by the nature of my role, my position on the heritage committee allows me access to the discourses that indigenous artists, experts, and official heritage bodies employ in framing indigenous weaving as community heritage in the nomination process. These observations constitute the empirical basis of my research, which is supplemented by field and literature research. I explore how the concept of community is expressed through the heritage practices of indigenous weaving crafts, particularly during the processes of ICH designation and transmission, and the relationship between culture and development in the context of heritage practices. Among the five designated important indigenous heritage crafts, particular attention is given to the traditional weaving craft of the Paiwan (designated in 2021 based on the amended law).

6 Including: Atayal Dyeing and Weaving Craft (2016), Paiwan *tjemenun* Traditional Weaving (2021), Paiwan *Kinavatjesan* Traditional Embroidery (2021), Seedig *Gaya tminun* Traditional Weaving (2021), Kavalan *ni tenunan tu benina* Weaving (2021).

The Development's Cultural Turn: Taiwan in the Global Context

As Radcliffe (2006) mentioned, “[d]evelopment thinking in the past decade has experienced a cultural turn.” Since the late 1990s, “culture” emerged as the heart of global debate of development thinking. “[C]ulture in its broadest sense needs to be brought into the development paradigm” (Davis 1999: 25) gained a general agreement among development practitioners “from applied anthropologists through to World Bank economists” (Radcliffe 2006: 2). She concludes that five factors background the “development’s cultural turn”: “the failure of previous development paradigms; perceptions of globalization’s threat to cultural diversity; activism around social difference (gender, ethnicity, anti-racism); the development success stories in East Asia; and the need for social cohesion.” (ibid: 3) Similarly, Taiwan experienced the development’s cultural turn in the 1990s when major political, social and economic challenges came along, “culture” was taken as a remedy. I will discuss this in the later section of this paper.

In 1986 the value of export of handicraft reached the highest amount, NTD\$ 154 billion, and soon plummeted afterwards (Lin 1986: 20).⁷ It represented the end of the handicraft export period of Taiwan, as well as the shift of Taiwan’s role in the global market and in the post-cold war international relations. The Export-led Handicraft Policy of Taiwan started in close relation to the US-aid International Cooperation Administration (ICA in short)

⁷ Total amount was NTD\$ 154,069,059,000. The data was from: ROC Monthly Statistics of Custom Imports and Exports (中華民國海關進出口統計月報).

programme applied to the anti-Communist mutual defense areas including Taiwan, Japan, Vietnam, Cambodia, Thailand and Hong Kong. This sort of projects tended to propagate “the American idea of modernism as the “formal cultural expression of a nation that confidently assumed the moral and material leadership of the non-Communist ‘free world’”.⁸ It also showed the tendency to provide humanitarian economic aids by using the more “indigenous method” rather than directly imitating the US way of living, for instance using local materials and methods for building modern infrastructures. The more “cultural” concern of development thinking was shown early in this kind of international projects.

Efforts to industrialise indigenous weaving did not occur independently but were supported by the state to promote an “export-led handicraft industry” (外銷手工業) in the sociopolitical context of the Cold War. In June 1955, the US government assigned the International Cooperation Administration to research and assist the native handicraft industries of developing countries, especially those within US military defensive frontiers. This project was part of the US Foreign Aid programme (Kikuchi 2008). Taiwan (under the name Republic of China) was part of this programme, and in 1956, after Russel Wright’s visit and his recommendations, the Taiwan Handicraft Promotion Centre (THPC in short) was established with funding from the US foreign aid and United Nations. The objective of THPC was to develop cottage hand-

⁸ Kikuchi, Yuko (2006: 1) Russel Wright’s Asian Project and Japanese Post-War Design. In: Connecting conference, International Committee of Design History and Studies (ICDHS) 5th Conference.

icrafts into export products, particularly for the US market. Russel Wright Associates was assigned to lead the product design in the period until 1960. The organisation of THPC included research and product design, production, and skills training. After the cessation of US aid, the government of Taiwan introduced a new policy for promoting an export-led handicraft industry, and THPC retained its central role, particularly for providing skills training for government projects including those organised with diplomatic allies, prisons, and domestic village development projects. Training indigenous communities to produce handicrafts for export was part of the programme. The Export-led Handicraft Industry of Taiwan rapidly arose even after the termination of US aids. The rise was due to the policy programme “Well-off Family” (小康家庭計畫) introduced by the Taiwan Provincial Government in 1972.⁹, “to promote community production and well-being business, and to build up ‘living-room factories’”¹⁰ was one major project of the programme. Under this policy, skill training classes were widely opened in communities all over the island, including indigenous areas.

Aiming to developing Export-led Handicraft Industry, training programmes for indigenous people (Handicraft Training Programme for Mountain People in the Plain Area 平地山胞手工業訓練班)¹¹ were held by the Taiwan Provincial Government since 1955. The Nantou County Handicrafts

9 The full name of this policy was Taiwan Provincial Government Plan for Poverty Elimination (臺灣省消滅貧窮計畫綱要).

10 「推行社區生產福利事業、建構客廳即工作場所」。

11 Mountain People (Shanbao 山胞) was the official term used to call the Austronesian-speaking indigenous people in the postwar period.

Training Programme (南投縣手工藝訓練班), led by Yan Shui-long, was in charge of the training. Since the 1970s under the “Well-off Family Programme”, local governments were put in charge of organizing home economics classes and training courses.. This kind of training programmes were designed to learn through production. In the process of making products to meet export orders and tourism needs, learners also came to grasp the knowledge of making products as designed by orders. Although a substantial amount of indigenous people joined the training and production, the handicraft industry was nothing related to the continuation of indigenous crafts. Considering the aforementioned tribe where two Paiwan preservers are from, their weaving craft nearly disappeared when anthropologists visited the tribe in 1994 (Lü and Bin 1994). According to the record, at the time only one weaver could still weave, even though the tribe itself was historically well-known for weaving among Paiwan people. This weaver later became preserver L’s teacher.

In 1994, the same year when the Integrated Community Building Programme was kick-started, the Indigenous Skills Training Centre was established by the Taiwan Provincial Government and later transferred to the Council for Indigenous Affairs in 1995. The Centre was established to assist the economic development of indigenous people. Courses provided by the Centre included various vocational trainings for indigenous people. Weaving was one of them. In this case, instructors of weaving courses were not necessarily from indigenous communities. For instance, two influential weaving

instructors, Ms. Jian and Ms. Feng, former students of Yen Shui-long who later came to be recognised as the father of Taiwanese handicrafts, were invited to give lessons at the Centre in 1996 after the completion of their studies in Japan (National Taiwan Craft Research and Development Institute 2016). The aforementioned Paiwan weaving preserver C, learned weaving from these two Han Taiwanese teachers at the Centre. Similar to modern industrial skill trainings conducted in the colonial and the post-war period, group training for individual capacity building was the central approach. Most of the weaving courses, especially in the early years, were taught with modern looms which were more productive. It was common to have students of mixed ethnicities. Indigenous weaving seemed to be a homogeneous practice in this context even though each member was often asked to adopt elements from their own community backgrounds onto their woven works. Such training centres followed the method developed during the period of export-led handicrafts, and continued to evolve when the Community Building Programme waged the campaign “to industrialise culture and to culturalise industry.”

Simultaneously, another approach of recollecting and transmitting indigenous weaving heritage along the line of identity building was launched by indigenous practitioners. Many of these actions aimed for “self-determination and representation in heritage” (Waterton and Smith 2010) against the unequal status resulted from colonial modernisation projects and did not necessarily bond with imperatives of economic development. I remember this presentation from an Atayal young weaver who gave in a dialogue panel with

a Philippine weaving researcher, she responded firmly to the audience that she did not weave to sell, but only gave weaving lessons for transmitting and promoting her own culture. This is a common situation in contemporary Taiwan, comparing to many neighbouring areas where weaving is still a form of livelihood and product making is a major concern. The aforementioned preserver L is also one of those who mainly teach and receive honorarium. Most of her courses are funded by central and local governments. Handicraft industry and heritage preservation were the two equally salient development of indigenous weaving in the post-1990s, the social environment and discourses of heritage created by the community building movement was crucial. Furthermore, the discourse of community, culture and development was reformulated by the process of heritagisation especially brought by international institutions such as the UNESCO.

Community, Culture and Development: The Context of Taiwan

In 1994, the government of Taiwan announced the policy programme “Integrated Community Building” (Shequ Zongti Yingzao 社區總體營造). This programme was initiated by the Council for Cultural Affairs, and later joined by nearly every governmental department. The term “community” was already adopted in the policy sector as early as the arrival of the postwar KMT government. Brought from the “Western” (mainly the US) postwar notion of community, the term was translated to *shequ* in Mandarin. Promoted

by the United Nations (the UN in short), the idea and practice of *shequ fazhan* (community development) was brought to Taiwan in 1964 and the Guiding Principle of *Shequ Fazhan* (社區發展工作綱要) was formulated by the central government in 1968 (Chen 2000). In line with this developmentist agenda of community development (Luo 2007), “community” that was widely conceived as “a rural-based, face-to-face and traditional collection of people” in the 1960s and 70s was re-examined by Euro-American sociologists and later led to the publication of *Imagined Communities* by Benedict Anderson in 1983 (Waterton and Smith, 2010: 6). This “Western” notion of community, especially those bridged by the UN, was merged with the idea of “rural development” (*xiangcun jianshe* 鄉村建設) from pre-war China (Lee 2011), re-appropriated and implemented in Taiwan through a number of postwar policy programmes such as poverty reduction, living quality improvement, social welfare and educational projects. The indigenous people were included in this sort of development scheme, indigenous handicrafts such as weaving, rattan basketry and tailoring were included in the rural agricultural production (Sino-American Joint Commission on Rural Reconstruction in China 2024). This idea of *shequ* gradually transformed before and during the “Integrated Community Building” programme.

The idea of the 1990s’ “Integrated Community Building” was greatly influenced by the Japanese model of *machizukuri* (literally means “neighbourhood-making”) which refers to the Japanese movement concerning civil participation, community building and place making initiated since the post-

war era (Ministry of Culture (ROC) 2023).¹² According to the later official narrative of the Ministry of Culture, the mission of the Integrated Community Building Programme was to “use architectural spaces, industrial culture and art events as the public sphere for triggering the self-autonomous awareness as a citizen of a local place and as a member of the community, in order to build up a new civil society and a country of culture.”¹³ It can be seen that in the following two decades, “culture” and “community” have served as keywords in major policy schemes and official narratives in Taiwan.

Actually, before the formal inauguration of the Integrated Community Building Programme, “culture” has already been one of the major themes of state policy. For instance, in 1990, the Executive Yuan drew up the Four Schemes of Development of the Country (國家建設四大方案) comprising cultural, economic, social and political schemes. In 1992 cultural policies proposed in the First National Culture Congress were incorporated in the Six Year Plan of National Development (國家建設六年計畫) for implementation. The rising role of culture in policy rhetoric was related to the emerging Taiwan-centred identity narrative and refiguration of Taiwan’s self-identification in the international politics, as well as seeking for transformation under Taiwan’s changing industrial structure. In the 1970s Taiwan (so called the Republic of China) under the postwar KMT rule was forced to withdraw from the United Nations and discontinued official diplomatic relations with the

12 Its meaning is vague and evolutive. The analysis of its development and cases refers to Watanabe 2007.

13 Translation and underline was made by the author.

US and Japan. In 1987 the 30-year Martial Law in Taiwan was lifted, and the country was formally opened for democratic development, ending the authoritarian period. Along with the political changes, Taiwan's industrial structure was bracing major sectoral changes. Being one of the Asian Tigers, Taiwan in the 1990s faced the dramatic drop in agricultural and light industrial sectors, including once prominent export-led handicraft industry. It was in the need to find out new routes for industrial transformation.

The slogan "to industrialise culture, to culturalise industry" was firstly adopted as the theme of the Nationwide Cultural and Arts Festival (全國文藝季) in 1995, all local government and non-governmental organizations had events developed accordingly. In the opening, the Councillor of Cultural Affairs Zheng, Shu-Min remarked, "this is the first time in the history of Republic of China to juxtapose culture with industry" (Chen 1995). The 1995 Nation-Wide Cultural and Arts Festival closed with the 3-day "Culture · Industry" Conference (文化·產業研討會)¹⁴ organised by the Taiwan Provincial Handicraft Research Institute, in partnership with the Council for Agriculture of the Executive Yuan, Small and Medium Enterprise Administration of the Ministry of Economic Affairs, Bureau of Tourism of the Taiwan Provincial Government as well as the Japanese Chiba University whose faculty Professor Miyazaki advised many area revitalisation projects of the Handicraft Institute. The participants comprised cross-departmental civil servants, academics and a large number of local cultural workers, amateur

¹⁴ The conference was held on 19-21 May 1995 at the Taipei International Convention Center.

historians, community representatives and practitioners from cultural and industrial fields. After intensive discussions during the conference, the rhetoric usage of “culture and industry” was widely distributed in the public sphere and included in government policy. Deputy Councillor for Cultural Affairs, Liu, Wan-Hang, once elaborated “to industrialise culture, to culturalise industry” in the policy narrative in 1999. “(T)he industrial culture we used to promote was not limited to handicrafts, but included also the cultural landscape, historic monument, antiques and archives, cultural and folk activities of significant background *et al.* If we could promote them with marketing activities, to commodify them and hence to enhance their material or conceptual value, I believe we could successfully get rewards from the marketing efforts. This is what we meant by ‘to industrialise culture’. And if we could add the attached value to industry through packaging with local characteristics, this is so-called “to culturalise industries”. The Council for Cultural Affairs paid attention to such issue since 1994 and hence proposed the Integrated Community Building Programme” with the main idea to create local affairs mindful people for consensual development. This is a way to keep population stay in the locality” (Chen et al. 1999). This thought was incorporated into the policy of “Cultural and Creative Industries” proposed in 2002 and legally implemented since 2010 through the legislation of the Development of the Cultural and Creative Industries Act.

As mentioned by the Deputy Councillor Liu, “cultural heritage” consisting of objects (such as crafts and archives), sites (cultural landscape, historic

monuments et al.) and cultural and folk activities, was the core of this ideology, “to industrialize culture, to culturalize industry”. This rather “materialized” conception of cultural heritage has long been interwoven with the community-building movement through governmental programmes or autonomous civic practices. Although community building is not necessarily related to economic rewards as Chen Chi-Nan, the deputy councillor of Council for Cultural Affairs, stated in the early stage of the movement, the expectation of instrumentalising cultural heritage to solve social, political and economic problems inevitably bond the pursuit of identity to the pursuit of development.

The term *shequ* was used in both scenarios of the postwar period and the 1990s. It was translated to “community” in both scenarios however reflects different connotations and calls for diversified imaginations of development. As the community-building programme proceeded, “culture” was bonded up with “industry” in the official narrative. Two weavers, L and C, stepped onto different roads of weaving activities in this discursive context, at a time of cultural vacuum when the export-led handicraft industry was in need of transformation and the indigenous cultural revitalisation movement was just emerging with the community building movement. Ms. L decided to return to ground loom weaving and to involve in cultural revitalisation, while Ms. C joined the training programme at Indigenous Skill Training Center for more prospects for occupational capacity building. As the community building movement comprised of a mixture of intentions, one seeking heritage concern

while the other industrial intention. Both ways were greatly invested by different institutions under the grand policy programme.

Community, Culture and Development: The Indigenous Weaving “Heritage” after the 1990s

The Cultural Heritage Preservation Act entered into force in 1982. Until 2022 it was amended at least eight times (Lin 2023). The changes concerning indigenous heritage also reflect the conceptual transformation of community. This change leads to diversified understandings about the relationship of culture and development.

Although the indigenous movement started early in the 1980s, the official legislation concerning indigenous heritage was relatively late. In 1982 the first Cultural Heritage Preservation Act was promulgated and craft, together with performing arts, were placed under the category of “ethnic arts” (*minzu yishu*). According to the law, the Ministry of Education awarded the Important Ethnic Art Masters (*minzu yishu yishi*) in 1989 and 1998 for their contributions in transmitting traditional craft skills and performing arts. Different awards and exhibitions were also presented by various government institutions such as the Ethnic Arts Transmission Award (*minzu yishu xinchuan jiang*) from 1985 to 1994 by the Ministry of Education; Ethnic Craft Award (*minzu gongyi jiang*) from 1992 to 1996 by the Council for Cultural Affairs;

Award of Traditional Art (*chuantong gongyi jiang*) from 1998 to 2000 by the National Center for Traditional Arts; and the National Craft Achievement Award (*Guojia gongyi chengjiujiang*) since year 2007 by the National Taiwan Craft Research and Development Institute. However, with the increasing concern for folk arts, indigenous artists and works were not included in the lists. In 2010, Indigenous Crafts Transmission Award (*yuanzhuminzu gongyi xinchuan jiang*) was first presented by the Council for Indigenous Affairs and continued until 2012 (Chiang, 2018). Next year, the first two indigenous traditional craft preservers were designated by Hualian and Miaoli County respectively, both of weaving craft (Chiang, 2020).¹⁵The first national preserver of indigenous weaving Yuma Taru was designated in 2016. In the same year, the Cultural Heritage Preservation Act was amended. This time, two important modifications related to indigenous heritage were incorporated: first, an article specifically attributed to indigenous heritage was included, and on the foundation of this article, the Regulations Concerning Indigenous Cultural Heritage was formulated. Second, the spirit and terms of the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage were adopted by the new version of the law, which officially regulated the designation and preservation of indigenous heritage.

The Cultural Heritage Preservation Act entered into force in 1982, yet its rhetoric in relation to “community” went through constant changes over the years. In the first version, the term “national community” (*minzu*) was

15 Bunun Traditional Male Textiles Weaving in Hualian County (preserver Shi, Ju-hua) and Atayal Dyeing and Weaving in Miaoli County (Yuma Taru).

adopted to describe national cultural representative arts, such as the “art of national community” (*minzu yishu*). This idea of “national art” was closely related to the spirit of Japanese Cultural Property Protection Law which aimed to protect the cultural representative expressions of the nation. In the later modified version, the term “*minzu*” was replaced by “ethnic community” (*zuqun*), showing the impact from multiculturalism and community building movement. The 2016 version formally adopted the term “intangible cultural heritage” and included the specific term of “indigenous community” (*Yuanzhuminzu*) in the legal articles. It is noteworthy that this 2016 version largely adopted concepts and terms from the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage. In this 2016 version together with its Enforcement Rules, the term *zuqun* remained yet another term *shequn* (社群, social community) was introduced.¹⁶ This rhetoric change represents the idea that the notion of community varies in responding to domestic and global heritage discourses, by which the imaginative prospect toward community development is anchored.

Regarding the definition of “intangible cultural heritage”, the 2017 version of the Enforcement Rules does not fully follow the official Chinese text of the UNESCO convention even though almost the entire paragraph is exactly the same as the convention. The definition as set out in the ICHC Chinese text adopts two phrases: *shequ* (社區; the more spatial notion of community) and *qunti* (群體; groups) instead of combining them into *shequn* (社

¹⁶ For instance the Article 8 of the Enforcement Rules of the Cultural Heritage Preservation Act.

群) as the Taiwanese law does. Also, the idea of ethnic community (*zuqun* 族群) is not included in the convention. As the definition of community is not provided by the convention, it opens for locally contextual reappropriations. In Taiwan, the term *shequn* contains various social relations formulated since the community movement, for instance a large number of community development societies (*shequ fazhan xiehui* 社區發展協會). Moreover, the text of ICHC clearly states that “[f]or the purposes of this Convention, consideration will be given solely to such intangible cultural heritage as is compatible [...] with the requirements of mutual respect among communities, groups and individuals, and of sustainable development.”¹⁷ The capacity of “sustainable development” is the criteria to identify the ICH. The interrelation between cultural community and sustainable development is accentuated.

As Blake (2008) suggests, the central role of “cultural community” was given by the ICHC. It also shows the “evolution in thinking about ‘culture’ in international policy-making over the last quarter century – moving from a high art to a more anthropological conception [...]” (pp. 46) The view that “cultural heritage as the source of cultural identity plays a key role in development” is reinforced by The UN World Decade for Cultural Development (1987–97). It provides the background for the 2003 Convention which regards the practice of safeguarding ICH “as one of the major assets of a multidimensional type of development” (UNESCO 1990: para. 209, cited in Aikawa 2007. Here quoted from Blake 2008: 48).

¹⁷ Article 2 (UNESCO 2002).

The process of heritagization the two preservers underwent in the beginning of this paper represents the subtle relationship among community, cultural heritage and the mentality of development. The conceptual complex is strengthened by the “authorized heritage discourse” in transition. The accentuation of preserver C about technique superiority reflects the notion of individual artistic achievement and hence the nationalist cultural achievement implemented by the heritage policy programmes since the enactment of the original heritage act. This “individualised” community heritage accommodates a more homogeneous image of indigenous weaving heritage nurtured during the export-led handicraft industry. Learning her skill from the Indigenous Training Center whose clear goal was to use indigenous culture as a means for economic development, preserver C garnered and incorporated skills from modern weaving and multiple other indigenous communities to achieve the Paiwan in-lay weaving which was hailed by scholars and collectors since the colonial period. This inlay weaving technique could represent one achievement of national art (*minzu yishu*) yet may not be necessarily community-related.

The final designation of preserver L shows that the notion of community heritage in the craft category has undergone a change which is in close relation to the concept introduced by the UNESCO convention on ICH. Yet it is necessary to point out that the community movement played an important role and paved the way to this transition in the society of Taiwan. Instead of accentuating skill superiority, the preserver L centered on the integrity of

community knowledge demonstrated through weaving. This view is much closer to the “endogenous knowledge”. The two preservers also represent two divergent paths adopted by the contemporary indigenous weaving revitalisation movement: one, represented by L, devotes to recollect and transmit the knowledge for reclaiming community identity, economically supported mainly by government teaching programmes; while the other, like C, makes products for selling. As the ground loom is not an efficient tool for economic production, the latter uses other modern forms of weaving looms while the former, encouraged by the heritage sector, mostly adopts ground looms in teaching.

Conclusion

Community is central to UNESCO’s ICHC. This approach is largely reflected in the spirit and even letters of the convention. Taiwan’s recent amendment to the Heritage Preservation Act in 2016 has enhanced the role of community at all levels of heritage practice. In addition, indigenous heritage gains a special legal status and heritage practices related to this new status have benefitted and challenged legal implementation. Although situated within the specific communal context and the heritage movement of Taiwan, the weaving crafts of indigenous communities provide an experimental ground to test and examine the implementation of the ICHC and Taiwan’s Heritage Preservation Act, as well as critical issues around community as addressed by

the legislations.

Because the ICHC recognises that “communities, in particular indigenous communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals, play a key role in the production, safeguarding, maintenance and recreation of the ICH, thus helping to enrich cultural diversity and human creativity” (UNESCO 2022), it asserts that the continued practices of cultural communities benefit cultural diversity and human creativity and hence aid the sustainable development of communities. The interconnectedness of culture and development is similarly exhibited in the discourses surrounding Taiwan’s policy aim to “industrialise culture and culturalise industry” in the 1990s. The intersection of both concepts becomes the locus of indigenous weaving “heritage”, taking forms in object-orientation or personalised knowledge.

Although promoting cultural diversity and thus human creativity is the purpose of the ICHC and preservation law, the drive toward homogenisation can be observed in the heritage-related practices of knowledge transmission. Weaving knowledge, to many communities, is a kind of “secret knowledge” only transmitted through familial linkage, within which diversity and creativity are generated. Cultural heritage requires knowledge sharing to survive, to prevent the loss of weaving, and to aid in recognition of indigenous weaving as a shared heritage of people in Taiwan. This drive toward homogenisation is further entangled with another much stronger tendency in place long before the heritage movement. As part of the colonial industrial project, modern group training was introduced to boost industrial development during the Jap-

anese colonial period and was reinforced in numerous industrial projects. The image of one unified indigenous community seemed to be promoted by these industry-focus group training programmes. Later in the contemporary context of “industrialising culture and culturalising industry” and the emerging cultural creative industry, many training courses adopt the narrative of indigenous heritage and identity without any clear sense of a community’s identity.

The case of weaving craft heritage also reflects the internal conflict of intangible heritage discourse, as under the definition of ICHC intangible heritage means to be the living practice of the community, how the intention of cultural preservation can be divorced from freezing the cultural process is ambiguous (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 2004). In the case of indigenous weaving, only when the demand of weaving continues, the craft can be sustained. When the “endogenous knowledge” is recognised as the source of cultural creativity and assets for development, it means that at the same time “change is internal to the cultural process”. To maintain the core and momentum of “endogenous knowledge” while at the same time opening the craft for profitable production is the core issue for being “living”, which means to maintain a lively community practice and to keep weaving as craft for livelihood. Limiting intangible heritage only in the heritage sector is shrinking the possibility of sustainable living practice. There may be an alternative to “culture *for* development”; if it is possible, we can do well “to look beyond both the economic and the instrumental value of cultural heritage *for* development...and to explore its intrinsic value in reimagining development *as* a cultural project,...particularly as a

culturally context-specific project” (Basu and Modest 2015, p 26).

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文化為了發展？ 當原住民織布成為社群文化資產

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《聯合國教科文組織保護非物質文化遺產公約》的通過，反映「文化」與「發展」關係的辯證以及其脈絡，總結 1970 年代以來對於「傳統文化阻礙發展」論述的批判，也為「內生發展」的概念開闢路徑。這個概念的轉變，看重在地社群文化以及少數族群，並且進一步連結文化與發展，然而究竟文化保存在發展的過程中是否得到對等的比重仍是課題，尤其對於原住民社群而言。「文化產業化，產業文化化」是 1990 年代臺灣政府所提出的標語，正暗示了上述的課題。2016 年文資法的大幅修訂，導入非遺公約的概念和語言，再一次強化社群的核心價值，但也再次顯現和發展導向間的拉鋸。本文以臺灣的原住民織布文化資產為例，藉由 2015 至 2021 年間的實務參與、觀察，以及文獻研究，再現社群和遺產保存脈絡中所產生的「文化與發展」課題。

關鍵字：非物質文化遺產、原住民織布、社群、文化、發展

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