

**The Effects of Cultural Appropriation: A Case Study of Taiwan's
Urban Indigenous People**

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Abstract

Do we appropriate the cultural symbolic elements from other ethnic cultures? Do we know the effects of cultural appropriation? This paper focuses on what Taiwan's urban indigenous group experience in terms of the effects of cultural appropriation. In the context of commerce and politics, cultural appropriation occurs to mark how people gather and interact by using different cultural symbols, signs and characteristics. However, people may not notice when they are doing appropriation.

With In-depth interview and media analysis, I designed the research to explore some indigenous people who share experiences of cultural appropriation. I have found that urban indigenous are now trying to preserve their culture while trying to compromise with reality. Thus, the impact of cultural appropriation depends on the motivation and mindset of the user.

In conclusion, when culture is used in a proper and correct way, it can be beneficial to both parties. Before using culture, make sure that respect and equality are achieved to avoid harmful appropriation.

Keywords: cultural appropriation, indigenous people

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INTRODUCTION

Background

In this graduation project, I will focus on the issue of cultural appropriation associated with indigenous groups in Taiwan. Nowadays, there are diverse cultural elements covering all aspects of our daily life. That is manifested in different forms. For example, the clothes we wear, the movie we watch, the food we eat, and the languages or accents we speak are closely related to culture. We may not have noticed how the cultural differences show up in our dress code or media representation. Yet, the dominant culture of the majority group is sometimes taking advantage of other minority or small cultures. People might lack knowledge what difference is between groups. Therefore, I seek to explore what phenomenon of cultural appropriation has been addressed and critiqued in Taiwan.

Cultural appropriation refers to a relatively powerful group of people using symbolic and expressive elements of the culture (such as clothing, language, music, etc.), which are belonged to relatively disadvantaged groups without their consent. In 1945, the term cultural appropriation appeared in print for the first time in an essay by professor Arthur E. Christy, who was writing about “European cultural appropriation from the Orient.”¹ Cultural appropriation is an issue that has existed for a long time. In this globalization era, cultural resources are flowing rapidly. Different cultural elements are infiltrating our lives. Thus, the phenomenon of cultural appropriation occurs more often. Also, in *Oxford English Dictionary*, the phrase ‘‘appropriation’’ means: the act of taking something that belongs to somebody else, especially without

¹ Steph Auteri, "Educate & Activate: Cultural Appropriation," <https://www.feministbookclub.com/educate-activate-cultural-appropriation/>.

permission. According to Richard A. Rogers (2006), “Cultural appropriation, however, is an active process and, in this sense, retains the meaning of a “taking.” Mere exposure, for example, to the music or film of another culture does not constitute cultural appropriation. The active “making one’s own” of another culture’s elements occurs.²” It shows that culture is seen as a tool and resource, it is taken and used to achieve other purposes. In this process, it may cause some problems and have some detrimental impacts. Therefore, cultural appropriation literally has no negative connotations, but it is a controversial topic today.

When cultural appropriation occurs, culture is commonly seen as a recourse or a means for the dominant group to fulfill its goal. In contemporary contexts, such as cultural economy, cultural policy, cultural diplomacy, and cultural commodification, the official institutions and private sectors constantly use culturally diverse means for achieving political and economic ends. In some diplomatic cases, for instance, cultural appropriation might be consciously practiced in different settings and forms, such as ceremonies, promoting events, and exhibitions, in order to celebrate the friendship between countries. Some are cultural exchanges with good intentions, (eating food from another country or learning another language), while others use the culture of another group for their benefit, and use the wrong way to interpret it, such use may result in the term “cultural appropriation” with negative implications. Thus, the consequences of appropriating minority groups’ cultural symbolic elements remain unclear until we look at different cases in specific contexts. Thus, I want to focus on the ethnic minority in Taiwan – indigenous people.

² Richard A. Rogers, *From Cultural Exchange to Transculturation: A Review and Reconceptualization of Cultural Appropriation* (2006).

There are famous examples of ethnical appropriation. The theatrical costume "blackface" was popular between 1830 and 1960. An American white girl who wore a traditional Chinese dress- cheongsam to her prom. Or Kim Kardashian West named her shapewear brand Kimono, which is a traditional Japanese costume. These are all cultural appropriations to do with particular ethnicities or races.

However, cultural appropriation has different dimensions. Richard A. Rogers identified four categories of cultural appropriation: (1) Cultural exchange, (2) Cultural dominance, (3) Cultural exploitation, and (4) transculturation. Appropriations like cultural exchange are usually voluntary. For example, using other languages and listening to other music are pretty common hobbies. It is a mutual influence of culture in a state of reciprocity.

However, cultural dominance and cultural exploitation are less selective about appropriation. When cultures exchange and collide with each other, there is usually one dominant culture and another relatively minor one. In Taiwan, for example, the indigenous culture is weak and secondary compared to the Han Chinese culture.

In Taiwan, The Han Chinese is the big Culture that represents the largest ethnic group, accounting for 96.42% of the total population. In comparison, 2.48% of the population in Taiwan are Taiwan indigenous made of 16 ethnic groups. And the rest people only account for 1.10% that include ethnic minorities from China, people from Hong Kong, and Macau, and foreigners. ³The indigenous groups are small cultures that only make up a very small portion of the population in Taiwan and are a relative disadvantage group compared to the Han Chinese. During the periods from the rule of the Qing Dynasty, Japanese colonization, to the arrival of the Nationalist government. The indigenous culture was lost and assimilated as the mainstream culture of Taiwan

³ 內政部、客家委員會、原住民族委員會, "族群," (2022).

is impacting and even replacing the culture of the indigenous community at an alarming rate. It was not until the late 1990s when multiculturalism has been seen as politically correct, people have started to pay attention to the culture of the indigenous. It includes the phenomenon of cultural appropriation of indigenous culture on many occasions to present Taiwan's multicultural characteristics.

In our daily life, therefore, we can find a wealth of examples of cultural appropriation. For example, our government takes ethnic minorities as cultural resources. Diplomatic, economic and cultural policies show the government at different levels care about those ethnic minorities, which become cultural display to the world that Taiwan is a multicultural country. Advertisers also use minority cultures to achieve publicity. In 2018, the well-known underwear brand *EASY SHOP* produced a special advertisement for "Tribal Princess Counterattack" in response to Mother's Day.⁴ It caused a mounting sense of dissatisfaction among indigenous groups. The actors in the advertisement wore traditional Atayal⁵ costumes. However, among the indigenous tribes in Taiwan, only the Rukai Tribe⁶ and Paiwan Tribe⁷ have aristocratic systems. Moreover, in the advertisement, the bride and groom use the "Paiwan sacrificial cup" to drink the wine. The advertisement did not strictly examine ethnic clothing and culture. ⁸This will distort the traditional Atayal culture, and even more "consume aborigines". It will mislead the public's cognition of the traditional

⁴ 陳睿哲, "Easy Shop 母親節廣告惹議 原民籟影片下架道歉," <https://pnn.pts.org.tw/project/inpage/513/64/156>.

⁵ The Atayal, are Taiwanese indigenous people.

⁶ The Rukai are one of the indigenous people of Taiwan. They consist of six communities residing in southern Taiwan (Budai, Labuan, Tanan, Maga, Mantauran, and Tona), each of which has its dialect of the Rukai language.

⁷ The Paiwan are an indigenous people of Taiwan. They speak the Paiwan language. They are the second-largest indigenous group in Taiwan.

⁸ 陳睿哲, "Easy Shop 母親節廣告惹議 原民籟影片下架道歉".

culture of the aboriginal people.

To sum up, people from different countries have different opinions regarding the cases of cultural appropriation. In the United States, people are aware of the phrase of cultural appropriation so that they are more sensitive to things like cultural appropriation. In 2018, an American girl wore a traditional Chinese dress, and a cheongsam went to a dance and posted pictures on the Internet. This incident caused a lot of criticism. Opponents argued it's not her culture and her behavior is extremely rude and disrespectful. However, many Asian netizens still hold a positive attitude as they might lack awareness of cultural difference or intercultural communication. Given the existing cases, few argued against cultural appropriation, showing ignorance of seeing the girl who loves Chinese culture and expressing her love for cheongsam. In Taiwan, people don't pay too much attention to this issue or don't even know this word. In the news media, it is common to see "misuse" and "consume" others. Therefore, this essay will try to explore how Taiwan's indigenous people are affected by cultural appropriation.

Motivation

After watching so much news about cultural appropriation happening in English-speaking countries, I began to wonder why Taiwan barely uses the term. In Taiwan, people don't know or use the term "cultural appropriation", but that phrase seems so common in the English-speaking countries. With regard to the same issue, as I mentioned above, the culture of indigenous groups in Taiwan is often appropriated on particular occasions. Some of these usages are a positive impact on both sides, but the others are negative and harmful to the indigenous groups. Therefore, this research enables me to how some cultures of indigenous groups are used in Taiwan. And I

hope to know how people understand whether they accept or not when symbolic and expressive elements of minorities are appropriated.

Research Purpose

The purpose of this study is to find out how much minority groups know about cultural appropriation and the impacts it has brought about in different cultural contexts.

Research Questions

1. How do Taiwan's indigenous peoples experience cultural appropriation?
2. What are the effects of appropriating the culture of Taiwan's indigenous peoples?

Contribution

The contribution of my research is to make people know more about cultural appropriation. It also makes people aware that so much appropriation in Taiwan happened in the past and continues to happen in the present society. This research will not only let people have a better understanding of cultural appropriation but also see how it affects the indigenous people of Taiwan. It will help readers to rethink the cultural appropriation issues they encounter in their lives. Thus, my readers might develop more awareness and respect for different cultures, to learn from each other, understand each other, and avoid stereotypes caused by cultural appropriation.

Limits

Due to the limitation of time, and their similar reaction to cultural appropriation, there are only 5 interviewees for data analysis. However, it could bring a clear message to think about this issue and help us to understand the current situation of cultural appropriation in Taiwan. On the other aspects, the interviewees of the study are unable to encompass the entire 16 indigenous tribes in Taiwan, but these indigenous have roughly reflected the social conditions of the indigenous in Taiwan.

Delimits

The finding of this study will reflect the impact of cultural appropriation. Taiwan's indigenous people will be the study population to help us to understand their feeling of cultural appropriation in the current context. Due to the limitation of the study population, I also add media resources to increase the understanding of the effects of cultural appropriation on urban indigenous people.

LITERATURE REVIEW

There will be three sections in this chapter. The first is the background of Taiwan's ethnic culture. Second, I will define culture as a resource. Finally, there will be the introduction of different types of cultural appropriation.

Ethnic Culture in Taiwan

Taiwan is a multicultural and immigrant society after new cultures out of different races and ethnicities change the way of life the indigenous people of the island over last hundred years. Due to such historical changes, Taiwan has gradually developed into a multi-ethnic society. According to the Taiwan Executive Yuan's national profile, Taiwan's ethnic groups today are divided into the Han Chinese, Taiwan's indigenous peoples, and the new aborigines.⁹ In its nearly 400-year cultural history, however, a part of Taiwan has been under the colonial rule of the Netherlands and Ming Zheng, as well as the longest rule of the Qing Dynasty. Taiwan was dominated by the Chinese culture at some points, but it was also deeply affected by the Japanese culture after the late Qing was defeated by the new Empire in Pacific Aisa region. In 1945, Japan surrendered to the allied counties that ended the Second World War. Then, Taiwan was taken over by the Nationalist Government, which came from the mainland representing the big Culture of Han ethnic group. After the Second World War, the global economy had a new beginning. The removal of colonial and newly independent countries, transnational and trans-regional migration, and the expansion of multinational organizations and enterprises. As a result of globalization, there had been a lot of cultural exchange, and a lot of new media

⁹ 行政院, "土地與人民," (2022).

circulation. In this context, Taiwan's culture today is more diversified and richer. However, there are also many cultural problems under the influence of various political and cultural interactions. Taiwan's indigenous group has been seen as a small culture given the multicultural development.

Indigenous Groups in Taiwan

The indigenous people of Taiwan are South Islander-speaking people, called Austronesian-speaking people. The so-called Taiwan indigenous now refer to the descendants of various Austronesian language groups living in Taiwan earlier than the Han Chinese who immigrated to Taiwan in the seventeenth century.¹⁰ There are 16 officially recognized indigenous tribes in Taiwan: *Atayal, Paiwan, Amis, Bunun, Puyuma, Rukai, Thao, Kavalan, Truku, Sakizaya, Sediq, Hla'alua, Kanakanavu, Tsou, Saisiyat, and Yami*. Every tribe has its language, customs, lifestyle, social structure, and food.

At the beginning of the Qing Dynasty, the indigenous in Taiwan were divided into "*Shengpan*" and "*Shufan*". The former mostly lived in the mountains, they did not surrender and pay taxes to the Qing court and did not Sinicize. While the latter was the more Sinicized indigenous. They lived in the plain, surrendered to the Qing court, and could live peacefully with the Chinese. During the Japanese- Occupied Period, the Japanese divided Austronesian-speaking people in Taiwan into the Mountain indigenous people and Plains indigenous people which corresponded to the "*Shengpan*" and "*Shufan*" groups of the Qing Dynasty.

Indigenous culture is now one of the most important features of Taiwan. What makes indigenous culture so special is not only that they are a minority group, but

¹⁰ Wei-Cheng Lin, "The Introduction of Taiwan Aboriginal Cultures," (2007).

also their way of life used to be very different from that of the Han Chinese. There are sixteen indigenous tribes in Taiwan. Each tribe is very different in its beliefs, clothing, housing, and social organization. Such a diverse culture makes Taiwan a multicultural country.

The Rise of Multiculturalism

After the Second World War, many countries began to break away from the colonial powers. The *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*¹¹ and the *Awareness of Human Rights Treaties* spread around the world and the idea of multiculturalism is gradually emerging. According to Will (2010) “Prior to the Second World War, ethnocultural and religious diversity in the West was characterized by a range of illiberal and undemocratic relations” (p100). There are many hierarchical relationships. For example, the relations of conqueror and conquered colonizer and colonized, master and slaves, and so on. Such ideology showed and propounded the superiority of some people and cultures and their right to rule others.¹² However, after the Second World War, many colonies seek independence and liberated from colonial rule. India, Indonesia, the Philippines, and many countries all gained independence.

People's concern and awareness of human rights spread around the world after World War II. *The Universal Declaration of Human Rights* was proclaimed in 1948, the first article stated that “*all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights*”¹³ and emphasized the right to freedom and equality. The concept that all

¹¹ UN. Department of Public Information, "1948-1998 :#the Universal Declaration of Human Rights," <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/258082>.

¹² Will Kymlicka, "The Rise and Fall of Multiculturalism? New Debates on Inclusion and Accommodation in Diverse Societies," <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/j.1468-2451.2010.01750.x>.

¹³ UN General Assembly, "Universal Declaration of Human Rights," <https://www.un.org/en/about->

human beings are born free and equal replaces the old discourse of class differences between communities. The idea of multiculturalism in the world gradually emerging. United Nation and other international organizations have gradually established various international rules and norms to protect the rights of minorities. For instance, the convention to protect Indigenous people, *Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, C169* that published by International Labour Organization (ILO)¹⁴. And the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*¹⁵, adopted at the 61st United Nations General Assembly in 2007. This day is an important historical moment in the development of human rights for the indigenous people. The Declaration covers the individual and group rights of indigenous peoples and is an important basis and indicator for the government of how to deal with indigenous affairs and eliminate the violation of rights, discrimination, and marginalization of indigenous peoples.¹⁶

Multicultural Development in Taiwan

In this era of globalization and rapid economic development, the dissemination of international information is rapid, and the distance between people is getting closer and closer. Many countries have implemented multicultural policies. Multiculturalism emphasizes the diversity of society, which occurs when people of different races, ethnicities, religions, and nationalities come together to form a community. A diverse society recognizes, values, and respects the cultural differences of its people.¹⁷ In

us/universal-declaration-of-human-rights.

¹⁴ International Labour Conference, "C169 Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989," (1989).

¹⁵ United Nations (General Assembly), "United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples," (2007).

¹⁶ 高德義, "從政治冷門走向國際政治舞台：全球原運與國際社會的轉變."

¹⁷ Robert Longley, "What Is Multiculturalism? Definition, Theories, and Examples," (2020).

1987, the government announced the lifting of political martial law, which launched the democratization of Taiwan's society. With the development of the indigenous people movements and Hakka movements in the 1980s, the phenomenon of multiculturalism was gradually emphasized in Taiwan's society.

In Taiwan, policies related to multiculturalism have been in place since 1980. For example, in 1996, when the *Kuomintang* was in power, the Council of Indigenous Peoples of the Executive Yuan was established to coordinate the planning of aboriginal affairs.¹⁸ The rights of indigenous people have been widely recognized as legitimate in society.

Since 2000s, the Democratic Progressive Party has taken further concrete measures to promote "multiculturalism" by establishing the Hakka Affairs Councils. Formal recognition of the Hakka ethnic group. Important deeds also include the establishment of Hakka TV (2003). There are also various policies on language and education. The government has integrated multiculturalism into education. In addition to Mandarin, elementary school students in grades 1-6 must study any of the three native languages, including Taiwanese, Hakka, and Indigenous languages.¹⁹

Nowadays, due to multiculturalism and policies' development, many universities in Taiwan have indigenous and Hakka departments. For example, Master of Indigenous Studies in Sociology from National Sun Yat-sen University and Hakka Language and Social Science from National Centre University. These examples show the government's institutional arrangements and policy changes for multiculturalism.

¹⁸ Council of Indigenous Peoples, <https://www.cip.gov.tw/zh-tw/index.html>.

¹⁹ Yi-Ling Chen, "The Possibility of Implementing New Policy of Language Education to Reconcile and Unify Different Ethnic Groups in Taiwan," (2008).

Culture as Resource

Culture is a combination of many things in our life. *Sir Edward Burnett Taylor*, an English anthropologist. In his most important work, *Primitive Culture (1871)*, defined culture as “*The complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, law, morals, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society.*”²⁰ Culture represents tangible and intangible things. Tangible stuff like clothes, customs, food, and intangible things such as ideology, beliefs, and views.

There are many ways to define culture. I would like to divide culture into three usages. Culture could be the ways of living, arts, and could be seen as resources as well. However, if culture is only seen as a resource, it will be at odds with culture as a way of living and arts. Therefore, when we discuss cultural appropriation, how we define culture affects the way we see things. This paragraph will try to focus on the definition of culture.

As Raymond Williams mentioned in his early classic *Culture and society*, “*the history of our idea of culture is a record of our reactions, in thought and feeling, to the changed conditions of our common life.*”²¹ Our lives are tied to our culture. For example, that involves social relations within industry and art with the common life of society. Anthropologist Victor Barnouw wrote in *Culture and Personality* that “*A culture is a way of life of a group of people.*”²² It means a particular way of life, of a people, and a period or a group. The structure of the family, the structure of organization within a country, social interaction patterns, consumption patterns, entertainment patterns, wear patterns, and religion. Take Taiwan for example, there are many breakfast shops in Taiwan. Taiwanese people think that breakfast is the most

²⁰ Edward Burnett Tylor, *Primitive Culture* (1871).

²¹ Raymond Williams, *Culture and Society: 1780-1950* (1983).

²² Victor Barnouw, *Culture and Personality* (1979).

important meal of the day. These kinds of dietary habits are from Taiwan's historical background of post-war immigration and government policies.²³ Religion is indispensable to Taiwan. People's lives are intertwined with it. Whether it is the temple fair culture or the Chungyuan Pu Tu²⁴, all have a deep impact on people. For example, the building of a house depends on geomancy. In August, people burn incense for their ancestors. Government authorities, companies, communities, and temples will prepare ritualistic food offerings. These are a particular way of life. The way people live create our diverse global culture.

Another type of culture is arts. The most widespread use is music, film, sculpture, painting, poetry, dance, photography, architecture, etc. Art has been used to express and represent the culture of society. Through the works of different eras, people can understand the culture of the time. In our daily life, people are often exposed to cultural arts. In terms of art and culture, it is common to make a distinction. People divided cultural art into high culture and popular culture. High culture consists of specific consumption patterns, lifestyles, literature, beliefs, and attitudes.²⁵ It includes ballet, opera, classical music, etc. In the past, high culture is the culture of the upper class. The contrast with high culture is popular culture. Popular culture is considered vulgar when compared to the refined tastes of high culture. However, in this era, popular culture is just a culture that is enjoyed by a large number of people and has no negative connotations. For instance, K-pop, street dance, hip hop, etc.

²³ 王婉育, "This Includes Social Interaction Patterns, Consumption Patterns, Entertainment Patterns and Wear Patterns, Etc.," (2018).

²⁴ A salvation ceremony in Taiwan's Ghost Month.

²⁵ Admin, "Difference between High Culture and Popular Culture," <https://www.differencebetween.com/difference-between-high-culture-and-vs-popular-culture/>.

As stated above, culture could be the ways of living, arts and could be seen as resources. I have mentioned culture as the ways of living and arts, these two are what people usually think of as cultures. As for culture as a resource, this keeps happening and people use culture as a resource to reach their goals. Fashion shows, national occasions, entertainment, music video, and movie, are the places where cultural appropriation often occurs. However, culture as a resource will overlap with culture as art and culture as a way of life.

The book *THE EXPEDIENCY of CULTURE*²⁶ describes that culture, as a resource, circulates around the world at an ever-increasing rate. Used as an attraction or capital and development and tourism, a driving force for cultural industries, and an inexhaustible driving force for new industries that rely on intellectual property.²⁷ Culture is no longer just art but pervades the entire civic structure. It is increasingly used as a resource for socio-political and economic improvement. Cultural policy, a word that often heard in modern times. Literally, it is obvious that culture is used as a tool and a resource. Tourism is a good example of culture as a resource. The government strives to promote local culture, including public art installations, combined with local performing arts. Whether the purpose is to preserve and promote local culture or through cultural development projects to get the economic benefits that come with it, culture is considered as a resource here. Culture is often used by governments not only as a method of economic development, but also as a political tool to stabilize the regime. The Chinese Cultural Revival Movement Implementation Committee was established by President Chiang Chung-Cheng of Taiwan to counter the Cultural Revolution on the mainland in 1966.²⁸ This is a type of cultural policy

²⁶ GEORGE YÚDICE, *The Expediency of Culture Uses of Culture in the Global Era* (2003).

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ "戰後台灣文化政策演變歷史," <http://nhuir.nhu.edu.tw/retrieve/27245/090NHU00673020->

that serves both political and cultural purposes. Not only the government but also the people will use culture as a tool. Chinese new year, moon festival, and dragon boat festival, these traditional festivals that have been seen as a resource to improve business interests.

Types of Cultural Appropriation

In this chapter, I consider Richard A. Rogers's classification of cultural appropriation in his book, *From Cultural Exchange to Transculturation: A Review and Reconceptualization of Cultural Appropriation*. He identified four categories of cultural appropriation: Cultural exchange, Cultural dominance, Cultural exploitation, and transculturation.

1. *Cultural exchange: the reciprocal exchange of symbols, artifacts, rituals, genres, and/or technologies between cultures with roughly equal levels of power.*
2. *Cultural dominance: the use of elements of a dominant culture by members of a subordinated culture in a context in which the dominant culture has been imposed onto the subordinated culture, including appropriations that enact resistance.*
3. *Cultural exploitation: the appropriation of elements of a subordinated culture by a dominant culture without substantive reciprocity, permission, and/or compensation.*
4. *Transculturation: cultural elements created from and/or by multiple cultures, such that identification of a single originating culture is problematic, for example, multiple cultural appropriations structured in the dynamics of globalization and transnational capitalism creating hybrid form(p477).²⁹*

In cultural exchange, “reciprocal” is a key point. This type of appropriation is generally voluntary. However, it is difficult to identify pure cases of cultural

003.pdf.

²⁹ Rogers, *From Cultural Exchange to Transculturation: A Review and Reconceptualization of Cultural Appropriation*.

exchange. When two cultures exchange, there is usually one dominant culture, and the other is a relatively weak culture. Classifying the conditions and behaviors of cultural appropriation is complex, as is identifying symmetrical and asymmetrical relationships of powers between cultures. Therefore, cultural exchange is an ideal that is generally considered to be non-existent.

The second category of appropriation is cultural dominance. This type of cultural appropriation shows a relative lack of choice on the part of whether to use the receiving culture due to the sending culture's greater political, economic, military, and cultural power.

An example of cultural dominance in Taiwan is the Kominka period from 1937 to 1945.³⁰ Kominka movements include the national language movement, replacing Chinese names with Japanese, and trying to change the religion and customs of Taiwanese. Japanese government widely set up institutes for Taiwanese to learn Japanese, and Chinese newspapers and Chinese classes in school were all banned. They asked citizens to go to Shinto³¹ and enshrine their God. This is also called institutional assimilation, replacing a subordinated culture with a dominant culture. In this case, the Japanese are the dominant culture, Taiwanese are the subordinated culture. The Japanese imposed their culture on the Taiwanese. When Taiwanese use Japanese culture in such a state of unequal power is cultural dominance.

The third type is cultural exploitation. Cultural exploitation has a lot to do with the culture as resources that I mentioned earlier. It involves the appropriation of elements of a subordinate culture by the dominant culture, that can be "mined" and "transported home" for consumption.³² In nowadays, this type is the most commonly

³⁰ Wan-yao Chou, *The Japanese Wartime Empire, 1931-1945* (1996).

³¹ Naofusa Hirai, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Shinto>.

³² Rogers, *From Cultural Exchange to Transculturation: A Review and Reconceptualization of Cultural*

used in acts of cultural appropriation. In Roger's book, he mentioned that there are four concerns of this cultural exploitation. The first is cultural degradation.

Appropriation may have implications for exploited cultural integrity, since the act of appropriation may misuse the appropriated culture.

The second is the preservation of cultural elements. This argument suggests that the integrity of marginalized cultures should be protected rather than being culturally exploited on the grounds of cultural preservation. Those things that are culturally symbolic can be best understood in a local context. New-age producers and consumers may use other cultures without understanding them, which creates distortion or disrespect. Moreover, in many modern ceremonies and events, there is a phenomenon of "cultural smorgasbord", which will produce some other cultures (new cultures), thus affecting the integrity of the original culture.

The third concern is the deprivation of material advantage. Cultural products are being "wrongfully exploited for financial gain".³³ These types of negative effects have occurred in the past and continue to occur today. And the fourth concern mentioned by Rogers is the failure to recognize sovereign claims. (2006, as cited in Ziff & Rao, 1997). This argument is related to commodification, for example, the relationship between indigenous art, crafts, and tourist demand for souvenirs, which can be very complex. The article mentioned the fact that the dynamics of tourism and economic survival may drive the indigenous people themselves to participate in the transformation and commercialization of their heritage.³⁴ Local handicrafts may be commercialized for tourism purposes, resulting in the loss of their traditional meaning and function. After the commodification of culture, it is difficult to classify which

Appropriation.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid.

culture it belongs to.

Based on Rogers's theory, transculturation involves on going, circular appropriation of elements between multiple cultures, including elements that are themselves transcultural. It is also problematic to identify a single culture of origin because it is a cultural element created by multiple cultures.³⁵ Transculturation is very common in this era of cultural integration. Cultures influence each other, and the relationships in between are intertwined. It is a continuous process of absorption and transformation, which is dynamic. Globalization, neocolonialism, and the dominance of transnational capitalism are all conditions for transculturation.

Taking Taiwanese popular songs during the Japanese occupation period as an example. Taiwanese pop songs originated in the 1930s and were gradually formed under the influence of the culture of colonial sovereign Japan and traditional Chinese culture. However, this is not just a simple interweaving of Chinese and Japanese cultures. Japan was promoting "new folk music" in Taiwan. The so-called "new folk music" is a style of music based on Japanese traditional music, which was developed in Japan in the early 20th century under the influence of the introduction of American jazz music.³⁶ This is an example of appropriating elements between multiple cultures, which is a more complex integration than the first three cultural appropriations.

Based on these four types of cultural appropriations, we have a deeper understanding of cultural appropriation and can understand that the different ways of appropriation are also related to the power relations among cultures. Acts of appropriation are always shaped by social, economic, and political contexts. Therefore, when cultural appropriation happens, it is important to understand the

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Chi-Hsin Yi, "日治時代台語流行歌曲," <https://chihsinyi.wixsite.com/musicculture/1930s>.

cultural context, the identity of individuals and groups as well as sociopolitical positions.

METHODOLOGY

This research will focus on the cultural appropriation of Taiwan's indigenous people, including how their cultural elements are appropriated, their feeling, and the impact on them. This research adopts two approaches of in-depth interview and media analysis. From the literature review in the Chapter Two, Rogers ³⁷identify four types of cultural appropriation. In order to find out Taiwan's indigenous people's situation and feeling, in-depth interview will be used to gather information on how Taiwan's indigenous cultures are used and how it affects them. Media analysis will be used to supplement the cases provided by interviewees.

Research Design

In this thesis, in-depth interview is the first way to collect information from indigenous people in Taiwan. On the other hand, media analysis section is the other approach to further explain and justify the decoded information provided by the interviewees. I will find some useful data from sources like news or papers about cultural appropriation, which are adequate to add to the transcripts of the interviewees. For example, the news of cultural appropriation happened in Taiwan, and some magazines that discuss indigenous culture.

This paper focuses on the impact of cultural appropriation on the indigenous people of Taiwan. It mainly uses the oral conversation between the interviewer and the interviewees to discover and analyze the feelings and attitudes of the interviewees. Moreover, the main topic of this paper is cultural appropriation. However, as I mentioned before, Taiwanese people don't pay too much attention to this issue or

³⁷ Rogers, *From Cultural Exchange to Transculturation: A Review and Reconceptualization of Cultural Appropriation*.

don't even know this word. To avoid misunderstanding the definition of cultural appropriation, I will show a short news video for improving clarity so that interviewees can express their feeling.³⁸ The short news was mainly about an advertisement misusing indigenous culture for marketing purposes.

In order to investigate the most realistic feeling of the respondents, this survey will be conducted anonymously. Questions are designed to answer personal experiences, opinions, and feelings about certain cases of cultural appropriation. In addition, the perception of cultural appropriation is closely related to ethnic understanding and the sense of identity. Therefore, questions related to ethnicity understanding and participation will be included in the interview.

Data Collection

Data will be collected through in-depth interview with 5 interviewees. The target interviewees are sampled through my indigenous friends and their family. Since some of my friends live in other counties to study, I will conduct interviews in the form of google meet. The others will be face-to-face interviews. The table below shows a demographic detail of the interview.

³⁸ 原創基地台, "內衣廣告扭曲泰雅文化 部落怒轟消費原民," <http://ctm-indigenous.v.m.nthu.edu.tw/news-20180502/>.

Table 1. Introduction of interview

No.	M1	F1	F2	F3	M2
Interview location	Coffee shop	Google meet	Google meet	My home	Google meet
Interview time	42 minutes	32 minutes	22 minutes	29 minutes	30 minutes
Date of interview	Sep.23, 2022	Sep.23, 2022	Sep.28, 2022	Sep.28, 2022	Oct.4, 2022
Way of interview	Face to face	Online	Online	Face to Face	Online

DATA ANALYSIS

In this research, I interviewed 5 indigenous people in Taiwan. All of them are from Paiwan tribe. I gave each of them a number code to clarify easily. Table 2 shows their basic background, including gender, age, education level, ethnic group, location, and how long they stayed in their tribe.

The table shows every interviewee is from Paiwan tribe, and they all live in the city now. Ordinarily, they live in the city and go to their tribe on weekends or on vacation.

Table 2 Information of interviewees

No.	M1	F1	F2	F3	M2
Gender	Male	Female	Female	Female	Male
Age	21	21	19	21	21
Education level	College	College	College	College	College
Ethnic group	Paiwan	Paiwan	Paiwan	Paiwan	Paiwan
Location	Kaohsiung	Taipei	Kaohsiung	Kaohsiung	Kaohsiung
Length of time in the tribe	2 months	Never living in tribe	About 8 years	About 7 years	About 7 years

Cultural appropriation is considered a complex phenomenon because of varieties of usages of cultural elements, such as dress code or language. Thus, how a person perceives cultural appropriation has a great deal to do with his or her sense of cultural identity and belongings. This helps me figure out how to decode the transcript

draft. First, therefore, I will analyze the interviewees' identification and perception of their own culture. The second is their viewing experience of the news video. I here divide some likely themes as follows.

1. Sense of cultural identity
2. The viewing experience of the news video
3. Cases of culture appropriation

Sense of Cultural Identity

When exploring the topic of culture, cultural identity is an important indicator. Cultural identity also profoundly affects how people view their own culture. From the interview, we can see most of the interviewees now live in the cities, and the time they return to and stay in their tribe is once in a while. With the influence of industrialization and capitalism, the traditional economic structure has undergone tremendous changes, resulting in the concentration of large numbers of people in urban areas. Many indigenous people have abandoned their traditional livelihoods of farming, hunting, and fishing, and moved to the city. Changes in their living environment and lifestyle have also affected how they view their culture, their level of cultural participation, and their understanding of their history.

Ethnic Activities

Indigenous people of Taiwan have many traditional activities of their own, which are very important to them. There are different kinds of indigenous rituals, and each group has different rituals. For various reasons, many “urban” indigenous people no longer participate in traditional activities. The level of participation shows how much one values the culture of the ethnic group.

M1 in the interview said,

“ I left the tribe in Taitung when I was 2 months old. The whole family moved to Kaohsiung. I have to work part-time now, so I rarely participate in activities now.”

F2 in the interview said,

“I moved out of the tribe in 2nd grade of elementary school. Moved to Pingtung Chaozhou Town to live, because it is more convenient. I rarely participate in ethnic activities. Because my father has a lot of restrictions, I didn't have a lot of time for myself in high school before. I usually only participate in the Masalut (harvest festival), but also only participate in the last round of dance activities.”

All the interviewees don't live in the tribe now, and most of them return only when there is an important ceremony. M1 and M2 also motioned that their family moved to Kaohsiung because both of their fathers served in the military, and it was more convenient for them to live in Kaohsiung. In the past, many policies forced the indigenous people to leave their tribes and go to live in the city. For example, the Japanese government's "Kominka Movement " from 1937 to 1945, and the Kuomintang government's "The Mountain Administration Reform project" after retreating from mainland China to Taiwan in 1949, forced the indigenous people to gradually leave their homeland through “assimilation.”³⁹ In addition, in order to get a better life, many indigenous people have moved out of the tribe to live in cities that have more job opportunities.

³⁹ Jun-shiung Liu, "Subjectivism of the Indigenous Peoples and Its Challenge: The Mountain Administration Reform Project in Postwar Taiwan, 1950-1954," (2021).

The Understanding of Their Own Culture

As I mentioned before, many indigenous moves to the city, for the sake of a higher quality of life. Therefore, whether they understand their own culture is a good way of measuring cultural identity.

F1 in the interview said,

“I think I might be familiar with Paiwan culture because I am in the leader’s family. Because of the family environment, they talk about our culture, especially since we didn’t grow up in the tribe, so my parents sometimes introduce and talk about it. “

M1 in the interview said,

*“I think I kind of understand my ethnic culture, such as totems, every tribe has a different totem. I know the animals and plants that represent our tribe as well, such as the *Deinagkistrodon acutu* (a kind of snake that presents the Paiwan tribe) that everyone knows.”*

When M2 mentioned related traditional topics, he also has a basic understanding of his own culture. According to the F1, it suggests they usually learn from their family. Even though those interviewees have lived in the city for a long time, they have not forgotten their own culture and still have a certain understanding of it.

Ethnic Pride

M1, F2, and M2 in the interview said they are proud to be an indigenous person.

“I would feel proud to be an indigenous person. Since a lot of people would be quite envious of it, in all aspects. They may envy

our physical strength and strong motor nerves, and also we have many social resources. But I am mainly proud of my ethnic group, I think it's cool, and I don't feel ashamed because we are indigenous people. Instead, we feel a sense of accomplishment or pride.” (M1)

“ I feel like I have something that no one else has as if I have a more identity.” (F2)

“I am very proud of it. I think the culture of Taiwan's ethnic minorities is very distinctive.” (M2)

These three interviewees all think that being an indigenous person is special and they are proud of it. As I mentioned in the literature review. In Taiwan, policies related to multiculturalism have been in place since 1980. However, before the rise of the indigenous movement in the 1980s, the discrimination and stigma against the indigenous tribes in the plain Han society was blatant and would not be criticized by public opinion. Many middle-aged tribal people have experienced being humiliated or ridiculed by teachers, classmates, employers, and colleagues during their studies and job. But now with the rise of multiculturalism, people know how to respect each other and don't dare to ridicule. So, they don't feel ashamed to be indigenous people.

Cultural Heritage

Cultural heritage is essential to a community, and without it, a community is likely to disappear. The Taiwanese government has been promoting cultural heritage. As mentioned in the previous literature, the government has incorporated multiculturalism into education. Elementary school students are required to learn any of the three mother tongues, including Taiwanese, Hakka, and Indigenous languages. This is not only to promote multiculturalism but also to pass on Taiwanese culture.

M1 in the interview said,

“I would like to try my best to preserve my own culture because after all, these things are very precious. But it should be said that many people now attach great importance to this, so I will care, but not worry. Because more and more indigenous people will stand up and return to their hometowns to protect our traditions.”

He mentioned that many indigenous now try to protect and find ways to actively preserve their own culture. However, there are some interviewees who see it in a different light. They pointed out the concerns that many young indigenous people may have today.

F2 in the interview said,

“I'm trying to preserve the culture, but I think it comes and goes because sometimes there are a lot of restrictions that can sap the passion. Because I used to be very young, my family had many restrictions. My parents don't think it's necessary to participate in those activities, they think it's most important to study now.”

F3 in the interview said,

“ I care about the development of my own culture, but not actively to save it. Because after all, I cannot do it for a living.”

M2 in the interview said,

“ I am busy with work, in fact, I also occasionally forget this thing (to active preservation culture). We all have to live, if I am older, when I do not work, I may try it.”

Through these interviews, it can be seen that there are very reality problems. In order to obtain resources, improve education, and live a better life, the indigenous do not have the extra energy to actively preserve their own culture. F2 also mentioned

that it seems she learns languages just for exams. This is because if the indigenous people get their ethnic language certification, they can get extra points in their studies. Even their native language teachers said, *"Learn your native language quickly because you can get extra points."* She felt as if she was not learning her mother tongue for the sake of preserving culture.

These are the phenomenon we can observe from the interview. Interviewees care about and love their own culture. Although they cannot actively participate in cultural transmission and preservation activities, they still have a certain understanding of their own culture.

The Viewing Experience of The News Video

The news video points to the misuse of indigenous culture by underwear advertisers, they combined the cultures of different indigenous tribes. The content is about the princess of an indigenous tribe. The characters in the film are wearing Atayal costumes, but there are no princesses in the Atayal tribe. Moreover, the young Atayal men and women in the advertisement are holding wooden cups from the Paiwan tribe. This is a real scissors-and-paste job, also a kind of cultural appropriation.



The source of the news video:

<mailto:https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QbN3Zhoo7oA>

M1 in the interview said,

“I feel disrespected. Most people, maybe middle-aged and elderly people, still have bad thoughts about indigenous people. Some things are deeply rooted and passed down. So, I think it is not good for our community if advertisers advertise in such a biased or discriminatory way. It will only allow similar prejudice or discrimination to continue to spread.”

M2 in the interview said,

“I think it is strange that you use it without researching and mixing things together. You will not only give the public a wrong perception but also create a stereotype of the indigenous people, which is a kind of consumption for them. I feel a little disrespectful.”

After watching this news, they felt disrespected and worried that it would mislead the public's understanding of the traditional culture of the indigenous people. However, they don't think their culture 'cannot be used at all, if it's used in the right place and they have enough knowledge of the culture, it will be good a marketing strategy.

F3 in the interview said,

“It's a pity. If you use it well and introduce it well, it will be good a marketing strategy and introduction. If others have not stepped into this field, it also is a role model. If it is done well, people can feel that this subject is promising. But if not used well. Not only did it not let the public understand, but also left a stereotype.”

M1 also mentioned that people who are not from their tribe are welcome to participate in indigenous activities. Since he feels that his culture is seen by everyone.

He thinks people can use it, but he hopes people maintain a good attitude. If people keep a positive and good mentality, it is very welcome, because their culture can be known or promoted by more people. From F3 and M1 perspectives, they think that if people use their culture in the right way and with a good mentality, it will be a good promotion for their culture.

The Cases of Cultural Appropriation

To understand how the Taiwanese indigenous experienced cultural appropriation and how it affected them, it is important to understand their actual experiences. In this section, I will use the cultural appropriation theory categorized by Richard A. Roger to analyze what kind of cultural appropriation the interviewees are talking about.

Among all the interviewees, three people have heard the term “cultural appropriation”. However, they didn’t know what this term means. Only one person, F1, knows it. She mentioned she heard it in class which is from her school’s indigenous center. But she was not sure what constitutes cultural appropriation. Even though they don't quite understand cultural appropriation, they offer some related cases.

Cases on Politics

F1 mentioned her real experience. During the election period, there was a non-indigenous candidate who participated in the annual festival and wore the ethnic clothes of the indigenous tribe to express their closeness and friendliness.

“I think his original intention was to make others feel that he accepted this group, so he did this, and I wouldn't be disgusted by an example like this”. (F1)

As I mentioned earlier, cultural appropriation is not necessarily a negative word but is related to the current environment and situation. In this situation, it matches the

definition of “appropriation” which is defined by the *Oxford English Dictionary* as “the act of taking something that belongs to somebody else, especially without permission.” Though we are not sure if the candidate got permission or not but F1 did not feel disgusted and thought it was okay to use it in this way. Moreover, in this case, the candidate did not wrongly use indigenous culture. This shows that culture is seen as a tool and resource, which is used for other purposes. At the same time, from this situation, we can see that the way the user uses it and the perception of the indigenous people affects whether the cultural appropriation constitutes harm or not.

When people use a culture without understanding it and interpret it in the wrong way, it can have a negative impact. F2 mentioned in the interview that during the election, some candidates are not indigenous people, but they wear indigenous' clothes.

“They don't wear ordinary clothes. The clothes they wear have feathers or expensive-looking necklaces. Our tribe has a hierarchy, roughly divided into four classes: chiefs (mamazangilan), nobles, warriors, and commoners. Feathers can only be worn by chiefs and nobles, and there are still differences. Only chiefs can wear three feathers”. (F2)

In this example, a relatively powerful group of people (Han Chinese people) used symbolic and expressive elements of the culture of relatively disadvantaged groups. He used it without fully understanding the culture of the other people, which may cause people who do not know the culture of the indigenous to have a wrong perception of indigenous costumes. Traditionally, only the chief can wear three feathers in the public festival, the nobles are one to two feathers, the commoners are not allowed to insert feathers, and the costume pattern also has certain regulations.

Even the indigenous themselves have to abide by traditional norms, the way non-indigenous people dress may misrepresent the culture of the indigenous tribe.

Similar examples also occur at national ceremonies. In 2022, during the flag-raising ceremony of the President's Office on New Year's Day, five men who claimed to be Amis men in costume, and the background music is *Gao Shanqing*. The song *Gao Shanqing* is made from some past stereotypes of indigenous of the movie and then produced. Moreover, the boys and girls in the lyrics are referred to Cou instead of Amis.

The “Indigenous youth front” on their Facebook mentioned⁴⁰,

“It's not hard to imagine that this is another attempt to show the great integration of ethnic groups, but whether it is renting the wrong costume or using the classic stereotype song Gao Shanqing, it is a very inappropriate choice.”

Misinterpretation of ethnic culture may lead other ethnic groups to have a wrong perception of the culture. “Indigenous youth front” also mentioned they feel pity for the repeated misinterpretation of ethnic groups, spearheaded by government agencies.

In terms of Richard A. Rogers's four categories of cultural appropriation. This case can be assigned to cultural exploitation. Cultural exploitation usually refers to the dominant culture using the relatively disadvantaged culture to serve the interests of the dominant. In the literature review, I have mentioned four concerns expressed about acts of cultural appropriation by dominant from subordinate cultures. The first concern is cultural degradation. It could have “corrosive effects on the integrity of an exploited culture because the appropriative conduct can erroneously depict the

⁴⁰ 丁世傑, "原民服飾被「文化挪用」 原青陣要求總統府道歉," <https://www.chinatimes.com/realtimenews/20220102002655-260407?chdtv>.

heritage from which it is drawn.”⁴¹ In Taiwan, the Han Chinese culture is the dominant culture, while the indigenous culture is a minority culture and relatively weak. When the Han Chinese erroneously depict the indigenous culture in this way, it may lead to cultural degradation. The first concern is related to the second concern, the preservation of cultural elements. This argument holds that cultural objects, symbols, and practices are best understood in their native contexts and that the priority should be to protect the integrity of marginalized cultures.⁴² The government's misguided combination of different indigenous tribes in this “cultural smorgasbord” way will affect the cultural integrity of the indigenous cultures.

Cases on Tourism

In the interview, interviewees talked about some cases of cultural appropriation on tourism.

F2 in the interview mentioned,

“There is a video in which a tour guide took a group of people to the indigenous cultural park. They imitated the indigenous people to worship their ancestors or imitate the indigenous people to dance around. But that dancing gesture was not right. They seem to feel like they were experiencing indigenous culture, but they were just experiencing it, they didn't care if it was right or not, and they didn't care if there are any taboos.”

In this case, it could be assigned to cultural exploitation that was classified by Roger. Cultural tourism may reduce poverty, create jobs, and generate income for local communities. However, in the process of cultural tourism, the problem of commodification often occurs. This also ties in with the third concern mentioned in

⁴¹ Rogers, *From Cultural Exchange to Transculturation: A Review and Reconceptualization of Cultural Appropriation*.

⁴² Ibid.

Roger's article, deprivation of material advantage: cultural product. When people come to the festival, they do not care about the culture they are participating in. However, they care more about the feeling of being a tourist and don't want to understand culture attentively. It does not help to preserve the culture at all. When those festivals, dance is only regarded as a "commodity" and a means of attracting tourists. It is easy to become a superficial skill or cheap performance that might lose the connotation and spirit of traditional culture. More seriously, the indigenous tourism boom may lead to the consumption and loss of indigenous culture.

Indigenous tourism has been around since the 1980s. In 1986, under the policy of respecting multiculturalism, the Hualien County Government held the "Joint Harvest Festival" of the Amis, Bunun, and Atayal ethnic groups. The problem with this method of cultural promotion is that it is initiated by the government, the state put the emphasis on attracting tourists, and the spiritual meaning of those rituals may be lost in the process of cultural tourism.

In the article "indigenous sight," the author said⁴³,

"Local governments are gradually using "joint festivals" to organize traditional festivals. The purpose of holding them may not be for sightseeing at first, but as part of cultural rejuvenation. However, this top-to-bottom "cultural rejuvenation" is divorced from the existing cultural context and has been questioned by tribes as "the form of performance is greater than the function of cultural inheritance." No matter what kind of "joint festival" it is, the "colonial gaze" is not actually removed."

Tourism brings abundant resources. However, if the rulers cannot take the tribe

⁴³ Hafay Nikar, "都市原住民 怎麼來又走向哪?," (2019).

as the main body to consider the development of tourism, it will easily hurt the tribal culture.

As stated in the roger article⁴⁴,

Ultimately, many acts of appropriation, even under the banner of "honor motives" such as cultural preservation and cross-cultural understanding, undermine the appropriated culture and serve the interests of the dominant one."

If we can focus on the main body of the indigenous community and let the local community develop their own ways of preserving and promoting their culture, rather than allowing external forces to change the tribe, then we can still maintain the local community and culture in the face of tourism development. It can also reduce misperceptions and stereotypes of indigenous culture.

Summary of Data Analysis

In the previous chapter, I mentioned a few points, the phenomenon of indigenous culture being appropriated in Taiwan, their understanding of cultural appropriation, how urban indigenous respond, and the effects of cultural appropriation.

From the conversations in the previous interviews, it's clear that these interviewees are urban indigenous people. With Taiwan's rapid economic development, indigenous people who used to live in tribal areas are gradually moving to cities in order to obtain resources, improve their education, or meet the expectations of our society. The interviewees are no exception. From the information

⁴⁴ Rogers, *From Cultural Exchange to Transculturation: A Review and Reconceptualization of Cultural Appropriation*.

given by them, we can see the trend and reasons for leaving their hometowns, which illustrates the social change. Indigenous people are moving to the city for better resources and education. In face of the preservation of traditional festivals, it suggests the trend of being structured by a bigger context. Most of the time, they don't have the energy to actively participate in the preservation of their own culture, since they need to live, study, and have a better life. Interviewees have to compromise, realism might make them less sensitive to the problem of cultural preservation.

Three of the five interviewees were aware of the term cultural appropriation and its general phenomenon, but they are not sure what constitutes cultural appropriation. However, in the interviews, they talked about “consuming” indigenous people and “misusing” indigenous culture. And these words are common vocabulary in Taiwan and these phrases sound similar to cultural appropriation.

When interviewees mentioned that their culture had been misused, they mostly felt that the people who misused their culture were ignorant and disrespectful. However, they don't object to their own culture being used, and it would be good if it could be promoted and used properly. Since the community doesn't need to close it down, if it's used correctly, it is also a good business.

When culture is used correctly, it can be a good way to promote. However, when culture is misused, it will have detrimental impacts on minority groups. Among the examples cited by interviewees, non-Indigenous people wore feathers that only nobles could wear during election campaigns, this kind of appropriation created a cultural misconception. Appropriation can have an impact on the cultural integrity of the exploited group and result in cultural degradation. The phenomenon of the joint festival, “cultural smorgasbord”, will cause the problem of preservation of cultural elements and commercialization. To sum up, cultural degradation, preservation of

cultural elements, and commodification are the problem of the possible impact of the misappropriation of indigenous culture.

CONCLUSION

This study set out to explore how urban indigenous people in Taiwan view cultural appropriation, how they experience it, and see the effects of cultural appropriation on their groups.

Cultural appropriation is occurring more frequently in the age of globalization as more communication and interconnectivity already shortened the distance between people. When cultural appropriation occurs, culture is commonly seen as a tool and resource for the dominant group to fulfill its goal. In our daily life, cultural appropriation can be found in various contexts such as economics, politics, and diplomacy. Official institutions and the private sector continue to use culturally diverse means for political and economic purposes.

However, in different contexts, people have different feelings about cultural appropriation. Sometimes, it is only cultural exchanges with good intentions, and other times it might be cultural exploitation which may result in the term “cultural appropriation” with negative implications. In order to investigate the consequences of appropriating minority groups’ symbolic elements. I focused on the ethnic minority in Taiwan - the indigenous group.

This research adopted in-depth interviews to collect information from interviewees and used media analysis to explain the decoded data. Moreover, I prepared a news video for interviewees so that they can express their feeling about cultural appropriation and then further provide more cases of cultural appropriation.

In the course of the research, the findings revealed that indigenous symbolic culture is often used in the following ways.

Politics

During the election period, candidates wore indigenous clothing to express closeness and friendliness. However, some candidates wore indigenous clothing incorrectly, such as wearing accessories that only the chiefs can wear.

Public Ceremony

In 2022, during the flag-raising ceremony of the president's office on New Year's Day, there was a case of misrepresentation of indigenous culture.

Tourism

Cultural appropriation also happens when people are doing sightseeing. Because in the process of sightseeing, people will encounter cultures that are different from their own, so cultural appropriation often occurs. For example, tourists are able to imitate indigenous ancestor worship, but the gesture is usually wrong.

In terms of the effects of cultural appropriation, how a person perceives it has a great deal to do with their sense of cultural identity. The research has also shown some fact:

1. The phenomenon of urbanization of the indigenous people in Taiwan

The influence of the social environment caused the indigenous people to leave their hometowns and moved to the city in order to improve their education and obtain resources. They are not only moving between cities and cities but also travelling back and forth between their tribe and city during the holidays. However, at the same time, they still have some understanding of the indigenous culture due to their parents' teaching since childhood.

2. Social change and social expectations influence the preservation of ethnic culture

In order to get a better life in the city, urban indigenous people have to compromise with reality. Social change, social reality and social expectations all influence them to participate in their traditional activities.

I would conclude my finding of the effects of cultural appropriation with the following points

1. Stereotypes

When advertisers use a culture without understanding it and interpret it in a discriminatory way, it will create stereotypes of the indigenous people. Moreover, it will mislead the public's understanding of traditional culture.

2. Cultural degradation

Appropriation may have implications for exploited cultural integrity, since the act of appropriation may misuse the appropriated culture. When the Han Chinese erroneously depict the indigenous culture, it may lead to cultural degradation.

3. Preservation of cultural elements

“Cultural smorgasbord” often happens in public event. Such cultural fusion affects the integrity of a culture and affects its preservation.

4. Commodification

In the process of cultural tourism, the problem of commodification often occurs. Cultural elements may be commercialized for tourism purposes, resulting in the loss of their traditional meaning and function.

This research has also revealed that the mindset and the way of using cultural appropriation determine whether the word is positive or not. Furthermore, it determines the effects of cultural appropriation. Correct appropriation benefits both

sides, while the wrong usage of culture can lead to cultural degradation, preservation of cultural, commodification and stereotypes as I stated before.

Moreover, many acts of cultural appropriation, which seem to be aimed at cultural protection and cross-cultural understanding, are only for the purpose of the dominant group.

Ultimately, things that have cultural symbolism are best understood in their local context. The indigenous people are not just songs, dances, costumes, and performances, but a set of living wisdom that has emerged from the long history of the people and their environment. All culture needs to be preserved and protected, when appropriating culture, must respect the culture and understand it, which is the best for both sides.

APPENDIX

Interview Questions

訪談問題

您好，我是文藻外語大學國際事務系學生，目前正在進行一項研究，本研究旨在探討「文化挪用對台灣原住民的影響」，希望進行深度訪談。非常感謝您對學術研究的支持，願意接受訪問。訪談時間約 15-40 分鐘。

為保障受訪者工作權益，本研究將採匿名性處理，研究者於訪談過程將全程錄音，再轉譯為逐字稿，一切資料僅作學術論文之用，感謝您的合作!詳細問題如下列。

文藻外語大學國際事務系學生

一、 **基本資料**（自我介紹包括性別、年齡、教育程度、職業、居住地、哪時候搬離部落）

二、 **文化認同感**

1. 平常會參加族群活動嗎？
2. 對於自己的族群文化了解嗎？
3. 你平常會願意向別人介紹自己的族群文化嗎？
4. 你會對自己的文化感到自豪嗎？
5. 你會關心自己的族群文化未來發展，並想積極保存嗎？

三、 **文化挪用**

1. 您是否聽過文化挪用？
2. 你的族群文化常被其他族群的人使用嗎？例如？
3. 你對於你們族群文化被使用感到如何？
4. 若你族群的服飾、語言、象徵性的符號被其他族群錯誤使用你感到如何？
5. 有時候這種借用文化是一個好生意，您有什麼看法？（促進外交、利益）

四、影片

<http://ctm-indigenous.vm.nthu.edu.tw/news-20180502/>

1. 你怎麼看待類似這種對原住民文化帶偏見、歧視、錯誤使用文化的事件？
2. 類似這樣的經驗多不多，有什麼例子，大多是用在什麼地方？（商業、政治？）是外部還是內部？
3. 對於你上述的事件，你有什麼看法？

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