WOUNDED LAND AND WOUNDED PEOPLES: ATTITUDES OF PAIWAN PEOPLE AND TAO PEOPLE TOWARD NUCLEAR WASTE. [1]


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In 2008 and 2010, Taiwan Power Company (TPC) consecutively selected two Paiwan villages as candidates of the nuclear waste repository site. Surprisingly, Paiwanese villages are willing to accept storing nuclear waste on their homeland for the hope of local development with TPC's monetary compensation. Compared to Paiwanese villagers' positive attitude, Tao islanders have been demonstrating a contrasting manner towards nuclear waste since they found the state-owned "fish can factory" is actually a nuclear waste repository. The overarching question I would like to ask is why there are different attitudes from different people on the issue of nuclear waste. Drawn from previous literature on nuclear relevant issues, three theoretical perspectives including environmental justice, sense of place and tourism are used to interpret why the two indigenous communities hold different attitudes toward nuclear waste. Based on my fieldwork at Nantian Village and Lanyu Island, I confirm that the fluid relationship between people and land is affected by the contextual factors such as the economic system, colonial history, religions, and etc. More importantly, I found the concept of environmental autonomy is very helpful to predict the indigenous people's attitude towards the nuclear waste. Actually, environmental autonomy is deeply influenced by the fluid relationship between land and human. Simply put, the fluid relationship between people and land goes first and subsequently shapes the indigenous people's environmental autonomy and the environmental autonomy finally influences the attitude toward nuclear waste. Environmental autonomy plays a bridge role that connects the fluid relationship between people and land to the indigenous people's attitude toward nuclear waste.

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