



# VIENNA TAIWAN LECTURE SERIES

The Department of East Asian Studies/Sinology and the Vienna Center for Taiwan Studies are pleased to announce a lecture by



## Dr. Helmut Opletal

University of Vienna, journalist of the Austrian Broadcasting Corporation (ORF) (retired)

### Taiwan's political developments and the status of its indigenous people

維也納大學漢學系

#### ABSTRACT

Taiwan's 500.000 „aborigines“ are looking back on a history of domination and gradual assimilation by colonial powers and mainland Chinese settlers and officials. Christian missionaries and Japanese overlords tried to eradicate traditions labelled „barbarian“, but they also brought some economic development. After 1945/1949 the KMT's general policy of „sinization“ struck indigenous people as much as the regional Chinese-Taiwanese identities (Hoklo, Hakka). Only after the lifting of martial law in 1987 a new constitutional clause promised protection of the culture and languages of Taiwan's indigenous people. Civil rights groups demanded the return of former aboriginal land, recognition of personal and geographic names in indigenous languages as well as anti-discriminatory measures and steps to alleviate the wide-spread poverty. Later Chen Shui-bian's emerging green camp placed indigenous people highly in a strategy to enhance a distinct Taiwanese identity at the expense of formally dominating mainland Chinese. At the beginning of the 21st century, Taiwan's indigenous people, despite some ongoing discrimination and wide-spread social misery, have succeeded in obtaining a clearly more positive image in public opinion, even though this often focuses on folkloristic aspects.

**HELMUT OPLETAL**, born 1952 in Linz/Upper Austria, studied journalism, political science and Chinese language in Vienna and Peking. In 1976 he joined ORF (Austrian Broadcasting Corporation), 1980-85 he became Asia correspondent in Peking, reporting for various media in Austria and Germany. Later he continued as a reporter and editor for ORF radio and TV and as a lecturer and fellow at the University of Vienna and the Diplomatic Academy. In 1998 he received the Dr. Karl Renner Journalism Award for reporting on Asia. He also produced a number of special reports on Taiwan. In 2010 he held the post of a visiting professor at the Department of East Asian Studies at the University of Vienna.

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Time: 18.15 PM

Location: SIN 1, at the Department of East Asian Studies/Sinology,  
Altes AKH, Campus, Spitalgasse 2, yard 2, entrance 2.3  
<http://campus.univie.ac.at/plan-universitaere-einrichtungen>

Introduction and discussion lead by Prof Dr. Agnes Schick-Chen – University of Vienna  
The lecture is open to the public without charge or prior registration