Dealing with socio-genetic marginalization in Asia

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Dealing with Socio-Genetic Marginalization in Asia

Few will dispute that new genetic technologies will become very useful in the prediction of disease and diagnostics. Nonetheless, the health and position of some social groups and individuals may be adversely affected when genetic information is applied in any social context. The concept of socio-genetic marginalization draws attention to the practice of relating the social to the (assumed) genetic make-up of people and brings out its consequences. Certain groups and individuals may find themselves isolated as a consequence of discrimination on the basis of genetic information, and suffer the psychological burden of the knowledge, feelings of social inaptitude, and a sense of financial uncertainty.

During our ICASt meeting we explored the ways in which government/state policies affect the fate of the socio-genetically marginal, and the role that researchers play in the process of developing and applying the fruits of genomics. According to Tsai Dujian (National Yang Ming University, Taiwan), consensus building can have a mediating role in Taiwanese genomic policy. So-called ‘organic intellectuals’ (Gramsci) ought to provide a challenge to the one-dimensional logic of technocratic programme coordination of the IIAS Socio-Genetic Margin-