ASSERTING SOVEREIGNTY THROUGH STRATEGIC ACCOMMODATION: THE RUKAI PEOPLE AND COLLABORATIVE CONSERVATION IN PINGTUNG, TAIWAN

By

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ABSTRACT

ASSERTING SOVEREIGNTY THROUGH STRATEGIC ACCOMMODATION:
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This dissertation examines how the Rukai, an Indigenous people of Taiwan, have engaged in community-based ecotourism and the state's conservation projects in order to assert Indigenous sovereignty over traditional territories. This study focuses on the Adiri and the Labuwan communities, which are communities of the Rukai people living in the Wutai Township in Pingtung, Taiwan. The two Rukai communities have actively collaborated with the government on various conservation projects although the relationship between Indigenous peoples of Taiwan and the settler state's forest governance system has been riddled with conflicts.

Existing research has portrayed collaborative environmental governance either as an instrument for co-optation of Indigenous interests or as a catalyst for a more equitable relationship between the state and Indigenous peoples. This dissertation builds on and extends this body of work by examining how the Rukai people have continued to assert sovereignty in the community-based ecotourism and collaborative conservation projects. Using a combination of ethnographic observations, interviews, and archival research, this dissertation explores how the Rukai community members have positioned themselves vis-à-vis the government and non-Indigenous society and how the Rukai people have articulated their relationship to ancestral lands in ecotourism and conservation projects.

My findings suggest that the Rukai people have used ecotourism and collaborative conservation projects as a strategic platform to ensure their needs and goals for land-based self-

determination are met and to assert sovereignty over ancestral lands, while remaining wary and critical of the colonial dimensions and constraints of the state's laws and policies. I argue that the positions and actions taken by the Rukai people were the "third space of sovereignty" (Bruyneel 2007; Diver 2016) that is neither outright resistance nor full compliance with the settler state's political and cultural systems. My analyses indicate that the Rukai people's engagement with the state's conservation projects was not simply a form of co-optation into the dominant discourses and practices; instead, it was one of the strategies employed by the Rukai people to seek their broader goals of Indigenous sovereignty and self-determination given the political and economic realities and available options.

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Dedicated to my parents and family for their love and endless support.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

On the cloudy morning of April 27, 2017, Chia-Fang[1] gave me a ride from Neipu in Pingtung County, Taiwan, to the former site of the Adiri community (阿禮部落), located at an elevation of approximately 1,200 meters (4,000 feet) higher than the community's current site on the Pingtung Plain. Chia-Fang was a research assistant in the Community Forestry Laboratory at the National Pingtung University of Science and Technology (NPUST). She had become a close friend of many Adiri community members since the Adiri began working with NPUST and the Taiwan Forestry Bureau to develop community-based ecotourism in 2008. In fact, the partnership between the Adiri and the two agencies became even closer after the Adiri were affected by Typhoon Morakot in 2009. When some Adiri community members strived to return to and reconstruct their homes, they sought help from NPUST and the Taiwan Forestry Bureau to apply for community conservation projects, which gave them resources and legitimacy to stay on their devastated homeland that had been deemed unsafe for habitation.

When Chia-Fang and I arrived at the site of the old Adiri community, Chief Abaliwsu had already donned his traditional clothing and headdress and was rehearsing the welcome ceremony with other Adiri community members at the *kalatadrane* (a ceremonial and gathering place) in front of his house. A group of visitors from a walking workshop was expected to arrive two hours later, including professors and graduate students from Taipei Medical University (TMU) and government officials from the Taiwan Forestry Bureau, as well as the renowned Canadian scholar Dr. Fikret Berkes, invited by Professor Lin Yi-Ren from TMU. As not many Adiri community members were able to take leave from work on a Thursday morning, the Chief

[1] I have changed the names of my friends and informants mentioned in this dissertation, except for a few well-known people, to protect their privacy.

asked the Community Forestry Lab to help set up the event venue and record the activity for the community.

As soon as the visitors arrived, the Adiri started singing traditional songs and placed headdresses made of fern leaves and flowers upon every visitor's head. The Adiri have had this type of welcome ceremony for outside guests since their community-based ecotourism business started in 2008. In his welcome speech, Chief Abaliwsu thanked TMU for facilitating the international exchange event and said he looked forward to advice and comments from the TMU scholars and Dr. Berkes regarding environmental co-management on their traditional territories. To show the Adiri's hospitality, Chief Abaliwsu invited professors and government officials to drink the millet wine with him standing side by side and using a traditional wooden dual cup. The rest of the visitors were also offered small glasses of millet wine. With experience being an ecotourism guide, Chief Abaliwsu not only explained the cultural meaning of the dual cup in detail, which represents the forging of an alliance and friendship, but also emphasized the environmental benefits of using reusable drinkware instead of plastic cups.

Figure 1. The Adiri chief, Chief Abaliwsu, invites visitors to drink millet wine. **Photo by the author.**

After the welcome ceremony, visitors' attention was directed to a large 3D map of the traditional Adiri territories. The Adiri elders used the map to talk about the Adiri's traditional hunting areas and historical incidents, which occurred much earlier than the presence of modern nation-states.

Figure 2. An Adiri elder talks about the community's history and traditional territory. **Photo by the author.**

The Adiri are an Indigenous community (部落, *buluo*[2]) of the Rukai people[3]. The primary objective of this walking workshop was for these outside experts and visitors to learn about the Rukai people's traditional knowledge and about practices of socio-ecological systems management, including their experiences of post-disaster recovery. Chief Abaliwsu invited Dr.

[2] According to the Indigenous Peoples Basic Law (*yuanzhu minzu jibenfa*, 原住民族基本法), the Mandarin term *buluo* (部落) refers to "a group of indigenous persons who form a community by living together in specific areas of the indigenous peoples' regions and following the traditional norms" (Council of Indigenous Peoples 2005). In the Rukai language, the word for *buluo* is *cekele*, which means "one's home village." Although the Mandarin term *buluo* is frequently translated as "tribe" in Taiwan's official English translation of legal documents, including the Indigenous Peoples Basic Law, I translated *buluo* as an Indigenous community and avoided using "tribe" in this dissertation because the term "tribe" is steeped in colonialism and racially derogatory views in the Western context (Fluehr-Lobban, Lobban, and Zangari 1976).

[3] The Rukai people, who currently number around 13,532 as of July 2020, consist of sixteen Indigenous communities (*buluo*), living in Kaohsiung, Pingtung, and Taitung of southern Taiwan.

Chen Mei-Hui, the director of the Community Forestry Lab, to talk about the collaborative process between the community, the university, and the government. Not surprisingly, the professors and graduate students at TMU cast a critical eye toward the role of the Taiwan Forestry Bureau due to the long-standing conflicts regarding governance of land tenure and natural resources between Taiwan's Indigenous peoples and the state. Even though the Taiwan Forestry Bureau has been seen as the biggest enemy to the Indigenous peoples of Taiwan, Chief Abaliwsu still showed his appreciation of the continuous support from the Taiwan Forestry Bureau for Adiri's reconstruction. He also appealed to the visitors to collaborate across agencies in order to help resolve the contradictions between Indigenous peoples' inherent sovereignty and current legislation.

What happened at the old Adiri community that day is a microcosm which reflects the emerging opportunities and challenges faced by Taiwan's Indigenous peoples. Environmental governance, which refers to the institutions and interventions through which political actors influence environmental actions and outcomes (Lemos and Agrawal 2006), has been at the heart of Indigenous-state conflicts since the colonial governments took over the majority of the Taiwanese Indigenous peoples' traditional territories a century ago. To meet the social and economic needs of the community in a sustainable way, Indigenous peoples have to learn how to embrace new ideas and partnerships, such as ecotourism and co-management, while still struggling with the rectification of historical and ongoing injustices and with achieving Indigenous sovereignty.

When I first participated in Indigenous ecotourism in Pingtung in 2014, I was intrigued by how the partnership among the Indigenous communities, the university (NPUST), and the Taiwan Forestry Bureau was forged and maintained. During my ethnographic research from

2016-2017, I witnessed the establishment of the Council of the Rukai People[4] (*lukaizu minzu yihui*, 魯凱族民族議會), which serves as a representative body of the Rukai people to demand self-government and recognition of Indigenous sovereignty over their traditional territories and natural resources. The following questions came to my mind: How does the Rukai people's participation in community-based ecotourism and co-management change their relationships with one another, with government partners, and with their homelands? How do these changes relate to their strategy of pursuing the recognition and implementation of Indigenous sovereignty? What kinds of sovereignty are the Rukai communities asserting? Through this dissertation, I hope to shed light on how Indigenous communities exercise their agency and assert sovereignty in the context of decentralized and collaborative environmental governance.

1.1 Indigenous Peoples and Environmental Governance

The past several decades of state-centered environmental governance and the expansion of capitalist markets worldwide have often led to unsustainable and unjust outcomes. In light of concern about these trends, alternative models of environmental governance have emerged to reduce the role of the state, including the transfer of state power and responsibility of governing environmental resources to non-state institutions or local communities; such solutions have included community-based conservation efforts and co-management, as well as market-based governance such as ecotourism, which provides social and economic incentives for local communities to participate in conservation (Lemos and Agrawal 2006; Medina 2015; Neumann 2015).

[4] In the Rukai language: *Kadaenganeta ka Ngungadrekai*.

Within academic literature regarding Indigenous peoples and environmental governance, there are two competing perspectives: one portrays community-based ecotourism and co-management as worthwhile endeavors that achieve political and socioeconomic empowerment of Indigenous communities (e.g. Pinkerton 1989; Scheyvens 1999); the other views them as projects that co-opt Indigenous communities to align their interests more closely with state agendas or capitalist market rationality (e.g. Nadasdy 2003; West and Carrier 2004). My research is concerned with understanding how Indigenous communities strategically respond to state-based institutions and outside interests seeking ecological and economic collaboration, given existing power asymmetries. Drawing on literature of environmental governance and anthropological theories of sovereignty and agency, this study hopes to speak to deeper possibilities of and challenges to Indigenous sovereignty in the context of community-based ecotourism and co-management.

1.1.1 State-centered Environmental Governance and Community

Many scholars have viewed the proliferation of community-based environmental resource management and conservation as a direct response to the failure of state-centered environmental governance that dominated the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in both colonial and postcolonial contexts (Agrawal and Gibson 1999; Brosius, Tsing, and Zerner 2005; McCarthy 2007). The states' top-down approaches to environmental governance, such as the creation of national forests or national parks, are generally characterized as territorializing state power over the environment and people, which involves demarcating specific territories and environmental resources in the territories as state property as well as controlling people's

behavior and resource use within those geographic boundaries (Vandergeest and Peluso 1995; Peluso and Vandergeest 2001, 765).

Before community-based resource management gained popularity worldwide, state monopoly over forest management was a dominant trend in many previously colonized countries. The centralized frameworks of forest management in these countries were initially established by colonial administrations in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, generally using the methods of scientific forestry[5], with the aim of consolidating the colonial states' political and economic power (Gauld 2000; Sundar 2000; Peluso and Vandergeest 2001; Singh and van Houtum 2002; Hung 2018).

Scientific forestry, which was originally developed in Germany in the late eighteenth century and later exported through the world via colonialism, exemplified the modern colonial states' self-confidence in scientific and technical progress and its desire to impose order upon the aspects of nature and society that the states needed to understand and control (Scott 1998; Singh and van Houtum 2002, 254). As Scott (1998) argues, the colonial states sought to simplify land ownership and standardize measurements whereby forests and people could be centrally recorded and monitored. To facilitate management and extraction of forest resources, the states' centralized planning favored Western rational science and excluded local practices of measurement and landholding because they were too complex and "illegible" to the states (Scott 1998, 24). Forced relocation of local communities was also part of the colonial states' efforts to make forest landscapes "legible" and manageable because the states deemed local communities' activities as a threat to forest management routines and revenue flows (Scott 1998, 18).

[5] Scientific forestry can be defined as "the application of scientific methods to forest ecology in order to achieve the most efficient means of producing timber for commercial ends" (Lanz 2000, 100).

Following the World War II, the colonial lands were subject to growing unrest, and many countries in Asia and Africa gradually moved toward independence; however, most of these new states' environmental governance frameworks were still largely built on the legacy of former colonial governments (Dressler et al. 2010). In the 1960s, in the context of modernization and the growth of donor aid, numerous developing countries and international donors intensified and extended a centralized approach to environmental resource management and conservation (Dressler et al. 2010, 5). Furthermore, the growing environmental awareness and movements in the second half of the 20th century led to a proliferation of international environmental agreements, which gave primacy to the role of nation-states in determining national conservation agendas and in managing all environmental resources and the behavior of resource users within their national boundaries (Peluso 1993; Tauli-Corpuz, Alcorn, and Molnar 2018).

Protectionist or fortress conservation is another centralized environmental governance approach that was adopted by many governmental and nongovernmental agencies worldwide between the 1970s and late 1990s (West, Igoe, and Brockington 2006, 252–53). Endorsed by many conservation biologists and environmentalists, fortress conservation is based on the belief that biodiversity protection is best achieved by establishing protected areas, such as national parks, wildlife sanctuaries, and protected forests, to allow ecosystems to function in isolation without human disturbance (Brockington 2002; Doolittle 2007). Fortress conservation not only reproduces the Western binary view of nature and society but also gives nation-states and international donors the legitimacy to control human-environment relations through a centralized territorialization processes (West, Igoe, and Brockington 2006; Neumann 2015). The shifting emphasis in Taiwan's forestry policy towards protectionist conservation and the creation of

several protected areas on the island country in the mid-1980s and 1990s also reflected the global expansion of the fortress conservation paradigm.

Conservation policies and scientific reports of that time period often portrayed the goals of conservation as incompatible with the interests of local communities because they often simplified the complex relationships between local populations and the environment as only resource use and assumed that local people tend to exploit these resources in irrational and destructive ways (Agrawal and Gibson 1999; West, Igoe, and Brockington 2006; Stevens 2014). By viewing any unauthorized human presence as a threat to scarce resources and biodiversity, governments' coercive approaches to conservation, such as "fences and fines" and even brutal evictions of local and Indigenous communities, have been justified as necessary to protect biodiversity and have been backed up by international conservationists (Peluso 1993; Stevens 2014).

The overlap between the world's protected areas and the lands of Indigenous peoples and local communities is estimated at 50-80 percent, resulting in constant confrontation and conflicts between governments and the local populations dependent on the environmental resources within those lands (Stevens, Broome, and Jaeger 2016; Tauli-Corpuz, Alcorn, and Molnar 2018). Forced evictions from protected areas often led to Indigenous and local communities' loss of livelihoods, exacerbating their risk of poverty and marginalization. The bans on subsistence hunting and the criminalization of slash-and burn agriculture have also eroded Indigenous peoples' food sovereignty and lead to a loss of traditional ecological knowledge (Tauli-Corpuz, Alcorn, and Molnar 2018). Indigenous peoples' spiritual links with their territories within protected areas were also disrupted under fortress conservation (Stevens 2014). However, in

most cases of violations of Indigenous rights in the context of conservation measures, no access to justice and remedy was provided (Tauli-Corpuz, Alcorn, and Molnar 2018).

By the last quarter of the twentieth century, states' top-down approaches to forest management using the principles of modern scientific forestry faced a growing crisis of legitimacy as they were not able to provide the commodities and public goods promised by advocates of scientific forestry (Gauld 2000; Sundar 2000; McCarthy 2007, 180). Fortress conservation was also subject to heavy criticism during the early 2000s for being a source of injustice for Indigenous and local communities (Brockington 2002). Many protected areas have been criticized for their ineffectiveness to conserve biodiversity largely due to shortages of financial and human resources. In developing countries, governments rarely have resources and capacity to manage vast landscapes of protected areas, leading to so-called "paper parks," where conservation only exists in legal documents (Ostrom and Nagendra 2006; Bonham, Sacayon, and Tzi 2008). The poor outcomes of centralized conservation approaches have prompted policy makers and scholars to reconsider the role of local communities in resource use and conservation (Agrawal and Gibson 1999). Increasingly, environmental scholars and practitioners have argued that local communities are in the best positions to protect the environment--with some external assistance--because they have already relied on and managed the environmental resources for a long time (Dressler et al. 2010).

1.1.2 The Rise of Community-based Conservation

Since the 1980s and 1990s, community-based natural resource management (CBNRM) or community-based conservation has been promoted as an alternative for meeting conservation objectives while improving the position of local or Indigenous communities who have been

denied rights to participate in decision-making that can affect their livelihoods and well-being (Agrawal and Gibson 1999; Brosius, Tsing, and Zerner 2005; Horowitz 2015). This dissertation focuses on community forestry, which is defined by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (1978) as "any situation which intimately involves local people in a forestry activity." Like other types of CBNRM projects, community forestry varies from place to place and country to country but is generally characterized by devolving some degree of environmental management responsibility to local communities, providing communities access to and benefits from protected areas, and promoting sustainable resource use that is compatible with conservation (Charnley and Poe 2007; McCarthy 2005).

CBNRM projects are often implemented through community-based ecotourism (CBE), especially in the developing world (Swatuk 2005; K. L. Miller 2008). While the term "ecotourism" is frequently debated, it is defined by the International Ecotourism Society (2015) as "responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment, sustains the well-being of the local people, and involves interpretation and education." Ecotourism is often viewed as a market-based instrument for environmental governance that aligns market and individual incentives with self-regulatory processes (Lemos and Agrawal 2006; Duffy 2008; Medina 2015). As for community-based ecotourism, in theory, it emphasizes a community's substantial involvement and control over ecotourism's development and management as well as receiving a major proportion of the economic benefits (Denman 2001). Both CBNRM projects and CBE involve the devolution of environmental management power and responsibility from centralized governments to local communities, and both are characterized by the rhetoric of local knowledge, capacity building, and empowerment (Lemos and Agrawal 2006; Stone 2015).

Advocates for CBNRM have argued that the participatory approach to conservation has improved monitoring and management of environmental resources, which are local livelihood sources or tourism products, as well as benefiting local communities through participation in decision-making (Long 2004; Mbaiwa 2004; Jones and Weaver 2009). Because CBNRM was proposed as a panacea by many conservationists, considerable resources have been earmarked for community-based conservation projects by almost all types of international donor agencies. Without much understanding of the realities of communities, these donor-funded projects have often been vulnerable to corruption and capture by elites at the local level (Platteau 2004; Hoole 2009). Anthropologists and other social scientists have thus proposed a shift away from the romanticized view of a community as a small-sized, territorially fixed, and homogeneous group with a shared understanding and identity. Instead, they have suggested a stronger focus on the divergent interests of multiple actors within local communities (Brosius, Tsing, and Zerner 1998; Agrawal and Gibson 1999); the politics of representations of communities concerning struggles over resources (Li 1996; Walker 2004); and the effects of social differences on local people's actual participation in CBNRM and access to resources (Nightingale 2002; Thoms 2008).

Current critiques of CBNRM focus particularly on its relationship with neoliberalism (e.g. McCarthy 2006; Holmes and Cavanagh 2016; García-López 2019). Since the 1980s, the term "neoliberalism" has been used to describe regulatory transformations that privilege market exchange as a guide to all human action (Harvey 2005). It can be viewed as a macro-institutional agenda that involves reconfigurations of the boundaries between the market, the state, and civil society that consolidate the power of the capitalist class while exacerbating socioeconomic inequalities (Harvey 2005; Wolford 2005). Simultaneously, some researchers draw on Michel

Foucault's view of neoliberalism as mechanisms of government that work by creating individual subjectivities and instilling economic rationalities (P. Miller and Rose 2008).

From this neoliberal perspective, CBNRM's emphasis on the transfer of resource management responsibilities to communities is compatible with a neoliberal concern to downsize bureaucratic functions and cut costs (Tsing, Brosius, and Zerner 2005; Li 2007). Researchers have argued that CBNRM projects under the neoliberal regime often fail to empower local communities because the transfer of forest management authority from the states to communities has been incomplete (Charnley and Poe 2007; Cronkleton et al. 2010). In some circumstances, CBNRM serves to extend instead of devolving the power of the state and international donors[6] since the rights and benefits derived from CBNRM are conditional and can be revoked if local or Indigenous communities do not adhere to the conditions imposed by the state and donors (Li 2002; Schroeder 2005). Recent CBNRM projects have also been criticized for facilitating interventions that predominantly promote livelihood designs in line with free market principles (Dressler et al. 2010). In Taiwan, scholars have made similar critiques of increasingly hegemonic market rationalities as ecotourism has become a dominant approach to community-based conservation in this country (Chang 2011; Hsiao 2012).

While CBNRM has emerged as a promising means of integrating conservation and development objectives, it has paid much less attention to social justice and Indigenous land rights (Dressler et al. 2010). As Stevens (2014) argues, instead of changing how protected areas are managed, many CBNRM projects have focused primarily on development in the areas outside of protected areas, in the hope that this will reduce local people's resource use within

[6] While much of the research on CBNRM has been in the context of development projects sponsored by development organizations and NGOs from the Global North, Taiwan's community forestry was established and launched by the Taiwanese government on its own as an independent country (Republic of China) without partnerships with other international donors.

protected areas. In some cases, CBNRM projects are entwined with buffer-zone conservation projects which spatially extend governments' administrative oversight as well as imposing new conservation goals and land-use regulations on local communities (Stevens 2014). Although these CBNRM projects are well-intended, they are also deeply imbued with problematic assumptions and attitudes, thus further marginalizing the local community members these projects aim to empower.

1.1.3 Environmental Co-management: Transformation or Co-optation?

As another decentralized approach to environmental governance, collaborative management or co-management of environmental resources was developed to mitigate the failures of ineffective state policies for managing resources and to resolve the social conflict between local and state-level forces (Jentoft, McCay, and Wilson 1998; Spaeder and Feit 2005). Co-management refers to decentralized institutional arrangements involving the sharing of environmental management power and responsibilities between the state and local communities (Berkes, George, and J. Preston 1991; Pomeroy 1995; Carlsson and Berkes 2005; Spaeder 2005). In the literature on the relations between Indigenous peoples and state-owned forests or protected areas, co-management is a more commonly used theoretical and practical model for environmental governance as it requires a clear commitment on the part of state agencies to ensure more equitable power sharing with Indigenous peoples who strive to regain sovereign control over their homeland and environmental resources (Pomeroy and Berkes 1997; Diver 2016).

The term "co-management" was first used in court decisions in the 1970s providing U.S. Treaty Tribes in Washington State with the right to "concurrent management" of fishery

resources with the government and has since evolved to mean “collaborative” or “cooperative” management between state agencies and local/Indigenous communities (Pinkerton 2003; Diver 2016). While the usage of the term co-management is relatively recent, the practice of power sharing of environmental resource governance between the government and communities can be traced back to earlier times. For example, in the area of forest management, state-community collaboration existed in the community forests of Kumaon, India, during the 1920s and 1930s (Agrawal 2005) and in the council forests in Kirinyaga, Kenya, during the 1930s and 1940s (Castro and Nielsen 2001). Early examples of co-management of protected areas include the Kakadu National Park in Australia, which has been jointly managed by the Aboriginal peoples in Kakadu and the Australian government since the late 1970s; however, co-management of protected areas did not become widespread globally until the 1990s (Berkes 2009).

Researchers have emphasized the potential of co-management to transform environmental resource conflicts to achieve a more equitable partnership between the state and Indigenous peoples. In the literature, several transformative mechanisms in co-management are highlighted, including incorporating local/Indigenous knowledge, bridging organizations, and social learning in environmental management processes (Berkes 2009; Diver 2016). Some researchers have used the term “adaptive co-management” to highlight the importance of innovative institutional arrangements and strategies that foster trust and collaboration among communities, researchers, and policy makers as a response to the complexity and uncertainty in socio-ecological systems (Armitage et al. 2009; Plummer 2009).

By accounting for local ecological knowledge and interests, co-management has been found to produce desirable social and ecological outcomes, such as more prudent use of resources, reduced hunting pressure, and improved local livelihoods (Gadgil et al. 2000; Moller

et al. 2004; Berkes 2012). Various scholars have pointed out that linking different levels of governance and knowledge systems can be facilitated by bridging organizations, such as NGOs, local associations, or co-management boards (Olsson et al. 2007; Berkes 2009). As Hahn et al. (2006) suggest, bridging organizations provide an arena for knowledge co-production, building trust, and conflict resolution among different stakeholders. Researchers have also argued that co-management can transform social relations during the process of collaborative learning and joint problem solving in the co-management arrangements (Pinkerton 1992; Berkes 2009).

In addition, co-management is often conceptualized as a spectrum of various arrangements that constitute a continuum between the state's top-down governance and Indigenous governance (Borrini-Feyerabend 1996; Stevens 2014). Different kinds of co-management arrangements exist, from informal consultation to full sharing of decision-making authority with Indigenous peoples. However, in practice, full and meaningful power-sharing between the states and Indigenous peoples has been relatively rare due to the persistence of power imbalances between the two sides (Stevens 2014; Diver 2016). Moreover, co-management agreements can be difficult to implement as there are insufficient levels of legal accountability, funding support, and enforcement personnel (Mabee and Hoberg 2006; Diver 2012).

In addition, scholars have argued that the bureaucratic structures in co-management privilege state positions and dominant knowledge systems, replacing Indigenous ways of thinking, talking, and acting with those sanctioned by the state (Nadasdy 2003; Stevenson 2006; Blaser 2009). Sharing Indigenous knowledge with state agencies through co-management is also problematic since the socio-cultural context of Indigenous knowledge tends to be stripped away or simplified in favor of the extracted information being easily integrated into the conceptual framework of the state's scientific resource management (Spak 2005; Nadasdy 2005). From this

perspective, co-management can be a tool for co-optation of Indigenous interests and a form of neocolonialism (Nadasdy 2003; Spaeder and Feit 2005).

The theories that view Indigenous peoples' engagement in co-management as being co-opted into the colonial agenda, however, preclude the possibility of Indigenous peoples' agency and political transformation. In some cases, Indigenous peoples have been able to leverage co-management to achieve incremental gains of self-determination, such as creating a new Indigenous institution that promotes broader community engagement in resource management decision-making (Natcher 2000) or enhancing communities' de facto control over resources in the absence of legal arrangements (Galappaththi and Berkes 2015).

Some researchers have focused on the political potential of co-management from Indigenous peoples' perspectives and argued that Indigenous communities have leveraged co-management as a strategic forum for advancing self-determination while recognizing its limitations. Willow (2015) uses the term "strategic accommodation" to highlight the agency and astuteness of Native North American leaders who have participated in various institutions of the settler, including collaborative conservation, to ensure their own needs and goals of land-based self-determination are met. In her ethnographic research of co-management negotiations involving the Karuk Tribe and the U.S. Forest Service, Diver (2016) demonstrates how the Karuk Tribe used co-management as an interim strategy to increase access to their ancestral land although there were structural barriers to equity in the co-management process. My research builds on and extends this emerging body of work by examining how the Rukai people use CBNRM and co-management as a strategic platform to assert Indigenous sovereignty and how they exercise agency regardless of structural power imbalances.

1.2 Anthropology of Indigenous Sovereignty and Agency

1.2.1 Indigenous Sovereignty and Settler Colonialism

Sovereignty has often been used as a neutral term in academic literature to describe the power of a governing body, particularly the power of a nation-state. It is commonly defined as an attribute of statehood, which is characterized by a series of qualifications, including a permanent population, a defined territory, the presence of government, and the capacity to enter into relations with other states (Hannum 1990, 15–16). Only recently a deeper interrogation of the concept of sovereignty has occupied an emergent role in anthropological work.

Bonilla (2017) argues that the ideas of civilization and personhood during the Age of Discovery are closely tied to the conception of sovereignty–the European power legitimized its need for conquest and settlement of lands populated with peoples deemed uncivilized and thus unsovereign. The concept of sovereignty provided a legal foundation for the colonizers to claim ownership of "unoccupied" lands (*terra nullius*), to dispossess Indigenous communities, and/or to establish treaties with Indigenous peoples in ways that incorporated them into an order of civilizational difference (Bonilla 2017).

Today, sovereignty is not just a Western idea; instead, its notion and ideology have been taken up by subaltern populations since the mid-twentieth century in hopes of entering the system of nation-states and transforming their status into equal sovereigns (Bonilla 2017). While the origins of the persistent power asymmetries between Indigenous peoples and the settler societies in each country are different, they all involve different understandings of the relationships among nationhood, citizenship, and self-determination. In many countries, Indigenous peoples have used the term "sovereignty" in Indigenous movements to demand recognition of their status and rights as First Nations that pre-existed settler states. The meaning

of sovereignty here is different from the traditional ideas of sovereignty that highlight a unified supreme authority, territorial integrity, and individual rights (Moreton-Robinson 2007). As the Australian Indigenous scholar Brady (2007) argues, Indigenous sovereignty is formed through a combination of ancestral, spiritual heritage, and communal relationships with their lands. For Indigenous peoples, relinquishing their land-based sovereign rights would mean denying the generational, spiritual, and cultural core of their identity.

The emergence of the discursive framework of Indigenous sovereignty can be viewed as a response to settler colonialism (Sturm 2017). According to Wolfe (2006), the primary motive of settler colonialism is to gain access to Indigenous lands and build new settler societies, which leads to the ideological justification for the dispossession of Indigenous peoples and elimination of their political authority over territory. In addition, settler colonialism should be understood not merely as an event in the past, but as an ongoing structure of oppression in which settler nations' declarations of sovereignty have been used to justify their rights to continuously occupy Indigenous peoples' territories in the present (Wolfe 2006; Sturm 2017). From this perspective, the assertion of Indigenous sovereignty aims to challenge the persistent nature of colonialism and to counter the logic of elimination by maintaining and strengthening Indigenous continuity.

While Indigenous peoples' strategic use of the concept of sovereignty has made some progress towards effective assertion of autonomy, some scholars contend that the notion of sovereignty, which entails other assumptions (such as citizenship, territory, jurisdiction, history, and so on), can remain contained by the normative power of settler nations and can limit the political potential of Indigenous alternatives (Alfred 2005; Nadasdy 2017). However, with regard to Indigenous-state relations, Indigenous peoples' demands for self-determination while establishing new relationships with settler states cannot be understood simply as a form of co-

optation by the states (Morgensen 2011; Willow 2015; Diver 2016). Bruyneel's (2007) concept of the "third space of sovereignty" locates sovereignty in the actions of Indigenous peoples who engage with the states but not on the states' terms. As Bruyneel argues, these Indigenous peoples have refused the colonial impositions of choices usually framed as binary oppositions, such as inside or outside, modern or traditional, removal of settler states' sovereignty or being assimilated into it. Many Indigenous peoples have positioned themselves in an ambivalent space on the boundaries, which is neither fully inside nor fully outside the settler states' political, legal, and cultural systems, in order to transcend the zero-sum battles over Indigenous territory and sovereignty.

Diver's (2016) study extends Bruyneel's concept of the "third space of sovereignty" to the realm of environmental governance and argues that co-management arrangements are always operating within the constraints of existing state institutions; nevertheless, Indigenous peoples can choose for themselves when and how to operate within these constraints. From this perspective, Indigenous peoples' participation in co-management creates a liminal space that can be possibly co-opted and confronted by Indigenous assertions of sovereignty.

Recently, instead of treating sovereignty as an abstract and finished concept, anthropological researchers argue that sovereignty should be understood as tentative and contested and continuously brought into being through a combination of various forces and practices (Hansen and Stepputat 2006; Rutherford 2012; Lindner 2013; Bottos 2015). For example, the creation of boundaries, resource conflicts, wars, extreme conditions, and marginality are the sites of performance of sovereignty by state actors or Indigenous actors. In this dissertation, I will draw on the idea of the "third space of sovereignty" (Bruyneel 2007;

Diver 2016) and use a performative lens to examine how the Rukai people's sovereignty was brought into being within their co-management arrangements with the state and non-state actors.

1.2.2 Rethinking Agency

In addition to sovereignty, agency has also become a central term in anthropological research that investigates how Indigenous peoples engage with the colonial powers. Giddens (1984) argues that human agency and structure cannot be separated. According to Giddens, agency "refers not to the intentions people have in doing things but to their capability of doing those things in the first place" (p. 9). Although structures are generally quite stable, they could be changed through intended or unintended consequences of action.

Many debates over the nature of power relationships have viewed agency in sharp opposition to structure and tended to equate agency with resistance; however, such an approach may flatten the complexity and nuance of a subaltern's actions within power structures. Some scholars problematize the conflation of agency with resistance and argue that there can be different modalities of agency, including acceptance, accommodation, ignoring, resistance, and sometimes a mixture of all at the same time (MacLeod 1992; Ahearn 2001). In her book "*Politics of Piety*," Mahmood (2005) examines different modalities of agency that emerge in a Muslim women's mosque movement in Egypt. Drawing on Foucault's and Butler's work on subjection, Mahmood (2005) conceptualizes agency as a capacity to act, which is created and enabled by the power relationships in unforeseen ways. She argues that we should pay attention to the forms of reasoning that are internal to the agents' actions and be open to different concepts of responsibility and effectiveness.

Additionally, agency is often treated as a synonym for socially unfettered "free will" by researchers, particularly in the literature of action theory; however, such an approach tends to focus primarily on the nature of reasons in human activity and locate agency solely in the power of individual "Great Men" (Ahearn 2001). As Lalu (2000) suggests, "[T]he question of agency, it seems, may be posed in ways other than in terms of the autonomous subject or authorial subject… [We] may have to think of the ways in which agency is conditioned by the norms, practices, institutions, and discourses through which it is made available" (p. 49-50). Instead of viewing agency as free will exercised by completely autonomous individuals, I argue that treating agency as a socio-culturally mediated concept will be more helpful to explore the agency in individuals and communities of Indigenous peoples within the settler society.

Indigenous peoples' identities vis-à-vis the non-Indigenous society are largely shaped through their economic, social, and cultural marginalization and struggles over land and resource sovereignty (Niezen 2003). In many cases, Indigenous peoples' positions are not reducible to positions of resistance, cooperation, adaptation, or subjugation, but are active in employing various strategies to advance their goals of self-determination (Dietrich 2017). Moreover, despite being embedded in structural power relationships, Indigenous communities are able to gain strength and affirmation by making alliances with other Indigenous peoples or with national/international NGOs–a kind of "scaling up" or "jumping scale" (Brysk 1996; Cupples 2013). Instead of adopting the model of domination/resistance as a matter of course, I argue that to understand an Indigenous community's relationship with the state, it is necessary to examine how the Indigenous community and individuals engage with the settler state and what actions are enabled in the process.

In the case of the Rukai people's relations with colonial powers in Taiwan, the subordination of Indigenous communities started under Japanese colonial rule (1895-1945) and continued under the Kuomintang (KMT, the Chinese Nationalist Party) government's forced assimilation policies (1945-1987). Taiwan's rapid socioeconomic transformation during the last quarter of the 20th century posed further challenges to Indigenous peoples' culture and socioeconomic well-being. Additionally, the structural constraints and power imbalances have made Indigenous communities more vulnerable to the effects of natural hazards. I argue that the Adiri and Labuwan communities were able to transform the colonial histories and natural disaster experiences that once subordinated them into sources of strength by strategically engaging with the settler state and society. After Typhoon Morakot in 2009, the Adiri and Labuwan communities used community-based ecotourism as a post-disaster reconstruction strategy. Since then, they have sought to make and maintain alliances with the Forestry Bureau, NPUST, and other governmental and nongovernmental organizations to meet various needs of their communities and to pursue larger goals associated with Indigenous self-determination.

Taking an anthropological approach, this dissertation aims to understand the relations between the politics of environmental governance and Indigenous peoples from a perspective that positions the agency of the Rukai communities and individuals at the center of the analysis. Drawing on the work of Bruyneel (2007) and Diver (2016), I use the concept of the "third space of sovereignty" as an analytic tool to examine how the Rukai people have used community-based ecotourism and co-management as sites of political resistance and maneuvering through which Indigenous sovereignty is continuously brought into being. Specifically, I explore how the Rukai people have engaged with the state's existing conservation policies and institutions along with

the limitations of these state institutions while simultaneously challenging those institutional frameworks and addressing their communities' self-determination goals.

1.3 Research Context

This dissertation focuses on the partnerships among the Rukai communities (Adiri and Labuwan), the Taiwan Forestry Bureau, and the Community Forestry Laboratory at the National Pingtung University of Science and Technology (NPUST) in community-based ecotourism projects, which eventually led to de facto co-management arrangements between the Indigenous communities and the state. The Taiwan Forestry Bureau has used the term "co-management" in its official policy of community forestry since 2002[7]. Although the Taiwan Forestry Bureau has maintained an Indigenous peoples' advisory committee for forest resource co-management according to Article 22 of the Indigenous Peoples Basic Law (*yuanzhu min jibenfa*, 原住民基本法) since 2005, the agency's meaningful collaboration with Indigenous communities is relatively recent.

I chose the Adiri and Labuwan communities as my ethnographic sites because the two Rukai communities' collaboration with the Taiwan Forestry Bureau over the past few years exemplifies meaningful collaboration between Indigenous communities and state-based agencies--an emerging de facto co-management governance system in Taiwan. The two cases are also important because of the Rukai people's commitment to Indigenous self-determination and persistence in negotiating to increase access to their ancestral territory.

[7] Co-management was framed as the ultimate stage of the community forestry projects, which is conditional based on the communities' good performance in previous stages of the projects.

The Rukai people reside in Taitung, Pingtung, and Kaohsiung in southern Taiwan; many also live in other cities throughout Taiwan. Rukai traditional territory covers approximately 238,000 acres (96,114 hectares), only 11% of which is Indigenous Reserved Land (*yuanzhumin baoliudi*, 原住民保留地) (Council of the Rukai People 2017). The rest of the traditional territory overlaps with state-owned forests and protected areas (Fig.3 & 4).

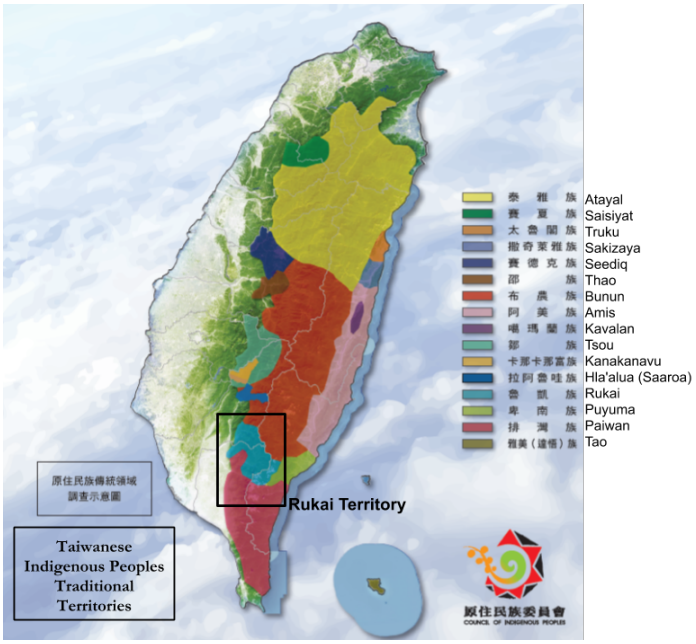

Figure 3. Map of Indigenous peoples' traditional territories in what is now called Taiwan **(the Rukai People's traditional territory is in blue). Source: Council of Indigenous Peoples, Taiwan**

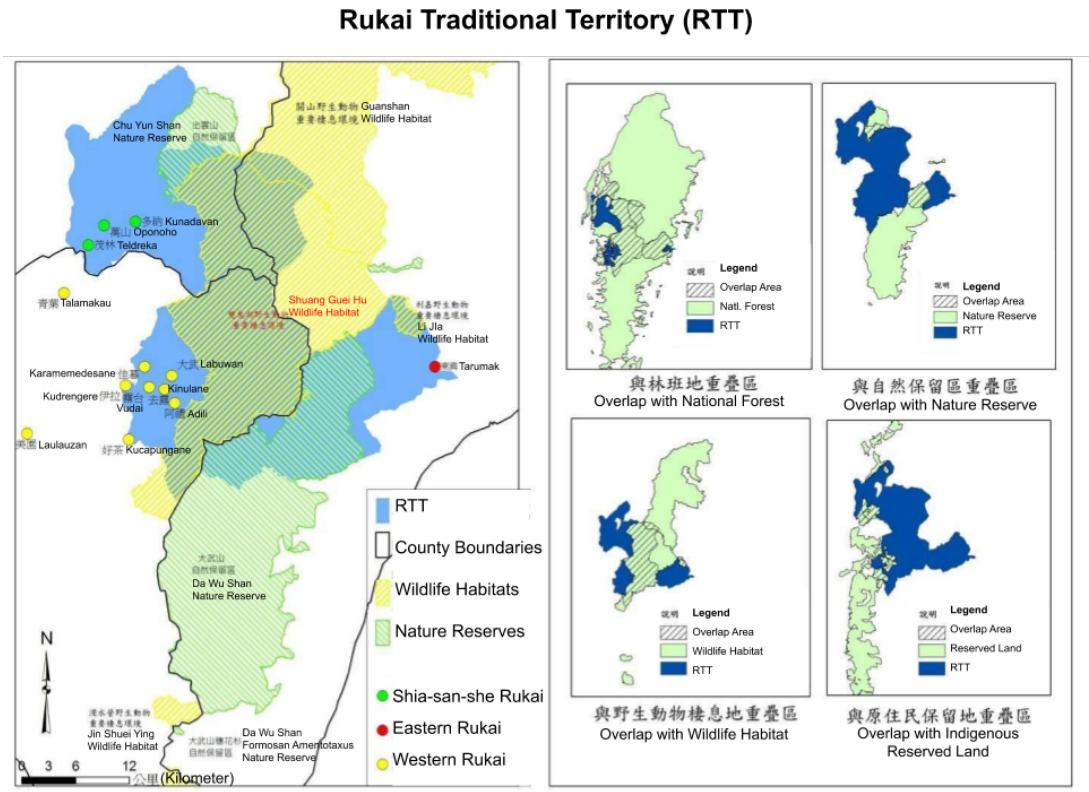

Figure 4. Map of the Rukai People's traditional territory its overlap with state-owned forests and protected areas.
Source: Taiban, Sasala (2017)

The Rukai people use the term *cekele* to refer to their home village and to refer to an Indigenous community. For the Rukai people, a typical *cekele* within the Rukai's traditional hierarchical society has a defined territory and a stable community consisting of a hereditary chief (*yatavanane* or *raedre*), nobles (*talialalai*), and commoners (*lakaukaulu*) (Qiao 2001, 16; Taiban 2014, 117). In the pre-colonial Rukai society, sovereignty was an affair of the *cekele* which had its own political and economic system and warriors to defend its territory (Taiban 2014, 117). The traditional form of governance was based on leadership by the chief with the assistance of the chief's advisor/spokesman (*marudrange*). Before Japanese colonial rule (1895-1945), the Rukai chiefs and nobles owned almost all the lands, rivers, hunting grounds, and resources within each community's traditional territory. The commoners could use the lands and

rivers for planting crops or harvesting resources and were required to pay taxes to the chiefs and nobles (Qiao 2001, 9). However, during colonization, the Rukai people gradually lost the majority of their lands and traditional forms of governance (see Chapter 2).

In the Rukai context, it is hard to express the meaning of "sovereignty" with a single Rukai word; nevertheless, it can be understood as "*Tengane ka yakai ku thimithimi*"—to truly exercise *thimithimi* (Tanubake Rakerake, personal communication, February 16, 2019). For the Rukai people, *thimithimi* is the privilege of the chief/nobles or granted by the chief/nobles. The privileges of the Rukai chiefs and nobles are embodied in their noble names, tattoos, decorations of their traditional clothing, as well as in their headdresses (Taiban 2014, 119). If a community member's behavior reflects their cultural values, such as fighting the enemies to defend the community's territory, the chief will grant that person the privilege/*thimithimi* to wear a headdress with the symbols of honor (feathers or lilies) in the Rukai culture (Taiban 2014, 120). The commoners can also be granted the privilege by the chief/nobles through gift offerings and ritual processes.

In essence, *thimithimi* is the core of the Rukai's customary governing system, in which the traditional chief possessed the ownership of the territory as well as the political, economic, and religious authority. At the same time, the chief was entrusted with responsibility by the community to take care of the fellow community members and to ensure their traditions are respected and kept alive (Tanubake Rakerake, personal communication, February 16, 2019). In sum, the concept of sovereignty in the Rukai context is closely related to *thimithimi*, which has several layers of meanings. The meaning of sovereignty for the Rukai people—to truly exercise *thimithimi*—can thus be interpreted as having real control over their land, culture, and way of life.

1.3.1 Adiri (阿禮部落)

Prior to Typhoon Morakot in early August, 2009, the Adiri community lived on Indigenous Reserved Land located upstream of the North Ailiao River on the north-western side of Wutou Mountain. The Adiri were located at the highest altitude in the Wutai Township of Pingtung at an altitude of 1200 meters above sea level. There were approximately 350 registered residents in the Adiri community. The Adiri were surrounded by mountains and forests that had and still today have great biodiversity. Adiri's natural and cultural heritage had remained largely intact due to its remote geographic location.

This Adiri community in the Wuati Township consisted of the upper settlement (*Balriu*) and lower settlement (*Wumauma*). In early times, *Balriu* was the Adiri's primary residential area and *Wumauma* was their farmland. *Wumauma* later became a settlement due to population growth. Like other Indigenous communities in Taiwan, about 85% of the residents migrated to cities and suburbs to access education, healthcare, and job opportunities, while others, particularly the elderly, stayed on their homeland as subsistence farmers and/or seasonal forestry laborers hired by the Taiwan Forestry Bureau (Abaliwsu 2012; Taiban 2014). Since most of the Adiri's traditional lands have been designated as state-owned forest lands and protected areas, the development of the Adiri community became inseparable from state forest management. The Community Forestry Project was one of the first efforts to bridge the conflict-ridden relationship between the Adiri and the Taiwan Forestry Bureau.

In a context wherein access by Taiwanese Indigenous peoples to forest resources is restricted by complex legal constraints, ecotourism has been promoted by both the government and academia as a more appropriate way to carry out community-based forest management near

protected areas because it is non-extractive and provides economic incentives for communities to engage in conservation. Since 2008, the Adiri community has collaborated with the Pingtung Forest District Office of the Taiwan Forestry Bureau and the Community Forestry Laboratory at NPUST to develop community-based ecotourism, and some degree of trust has been established among these groups. While the ecotourism development efforts were successful in the first year, Typhoon Morakot hit Southern Taiwan in August 2009 and devastated many local communities, including the Adiri community.

According to the Post-Typhoon Morakot Reconstruction Special Act (莫拉克颱風災後重建特別條例) promulgated by Taiwan's former president Ma Ying-Jeou on August 28, 2009, if an area has been evaluated as unsafe for living by experts, central and local governments must reach a consensus with residents to specify regions where habitation is restricted or completely prohibited. Residents in the "special districts" are subject to compulsory relocation to safe areas even when the proposed sites for relocation are still open for discussion.

After being hit by Typhoon Morakot, although the lower part of the Adiri was seriously devastated, its upper settlement was only slightly damaged. The Adiri community was in agreement that only the lower Adiri would be designated as a special district as a whole, while households of the upper Adiri could decide on an individual basis whether to relocate. However, during the process of assessing the Adiri community's post-disaster living condition and landslide susceptibility, the government's discussion with the Adiri was nearly nonexistent (Abaliwsu 2012, 122). As a result, the government delineated the whole Adiri community as a special district even though most houses of the upper Adiri community remained intact. The Adiri community members were forced to relocate away from their ancestral land on the

mountain to permanent housing[8] in the Changzhi Township (Changzhibaihe Community, 長治百合園區) on the plain, which was outside their traditional territory and much closer to urban areas (see Fig.5), but four households insisted on returning home and safeguarding their ancestral territory.

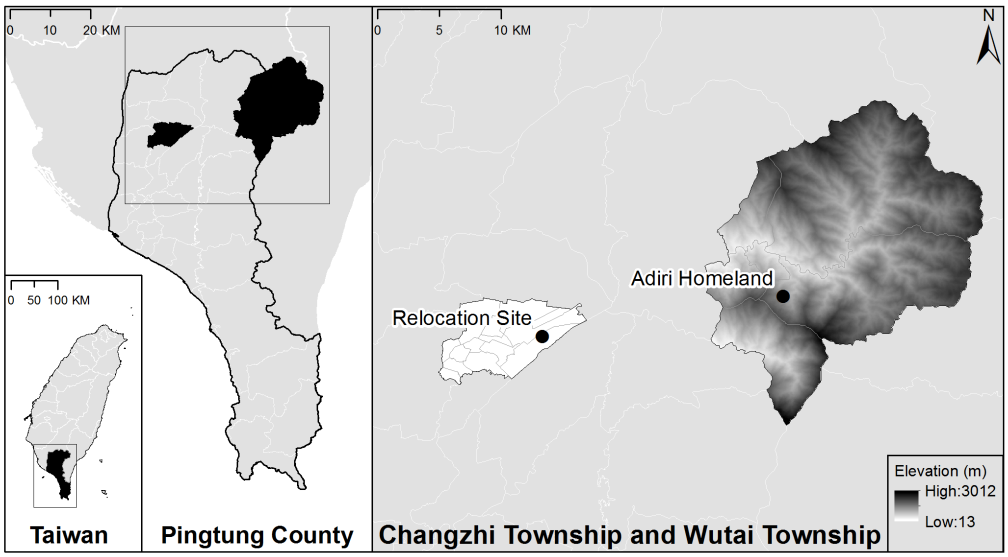

Figure 5. Map of the Adiri homeland in the Wutai Township (right) and the relocation site in the Changzhi Township (left)

The Adiri community members who decided to return home were faced with stressful situations because the central government (primarily the Executive Yuan's Morakot Post-Disaster Reconstruction Council) hoped to prevent residents from returning to live in unsafe areas. Nevertheless, with the assistance of the Community Forestry Laboratory, the Adiri received funds from the Taiwan Forestry Bureau to initiate a two-year project for post-disaster ecological monitoring of the protected area (Shuangguei Lake Major Wildlife Habitat, 雙鬼湖野

[8] The land at Changzhibaihe Community still belongs to the government (National Property Administration 財政部國有財產署 and Veterans Affairs Council 退除役官兵輔導委員會) rather than the current residents. Although residents retain the right to live there and pass on a house as an inheritance, they do not have the right to rent or sell the properties.

生動物重要棲息環境). The collaborative processes among the Adiri, the Community Forestry Bureau, and the Taiwan Forestry Bureau in the post-disaster context as well as during the ecotourism development before the disaster can be understood as adaptive co-management, which involved social learning and collaboration among multi-level stakeholders in order to cope with social and ecological uncertainty.

In the collaborative project, the Adiri community members were responsible for patrolling the forests and monitoring wildlife population within the protected area as well as planting trees in communities and forests affected by the typhoon. The Adiri's participation in ecological monitoring and patrolling not only helped prevent illegal logging and hunting but also provided timely financial assistance to the community members during the post-disaster period. The data collected from ecological monitoring were also used to inform the development of ecotourism, which served as a one of the strategies in the post-disaster recovery.

1.3.2 Labuwan (大武部落)

The Labuwan community is located upstream of the North Ailiao River close to the old Adiri community in the Wutai Township. Before migrating to their current site in 1947, the Labuwan resided at Kalabuwanane (the old Labuwan), which was close to Dalupalringi (*Daguei* Lake, 大鬼湖). Like other Rukai communities in the Wutai Township, the Labuwan live on Indigenous Reserved Land while the majority of the Labuwan's ancestral territory has been designated as state-owned forest since Japanese colonial rule.

The Labuwan dialect Labuan is different from Budai, the dialect used by the majority of Rukai communities in the Wutai Township. Over the past decades, young Labuwan community

members gradually out-migrated to cities for education and job opportunities. Finding a way to keep their own dialect and culture alive has been a prime concern for many Labuwan.

After Typhoon Morakot in 2009, the Labuwan community was evaluated as safe for living; however, the residents were still not able to return home because the road to their homes was still vulnerable to landslides when it rained. During the rainy season, many Labuwan community members moved to a temporary shelter in the Lziuci Laulauzang community (三和村) in the Majia Township (瑪家鄉). Unfortunately, the shelter was declared as an illegal construction by the Pingtung County Government so the Labuwan community members had to be evicted in 2012. This incident, as well as their concern over cultural continuity, made the Labuwan more determined to return to their ancestral land in the mountains even though the road back home was a long haul.

Since 2011, the Labuwan community has actively sought collaboration with the Community Forestry Laboratory at NPUST to develop community-based ecotourism and agroforestry as post-disaster reconstruction strategies. During the collaborative process, the Community Forestry Laboratory has served as a bridging organization that facilitates the formation of social networks among the Labuwan, the Taiwan Forestry Bureau, universities, and NGOs. With the financial and technological support from the Taiwan Forestry Bureau and NPUST, several Labuwan community members started to make a living by growing herbal crops and raising free-range chickens under forest canopies. As the road conditions in the Labuwan improved significantly, the Labuwan community members undertook the ecotourism training offered by the Community Forestry Laboratory and started a community-based ecotourism business in 2014.

1.4 Methodology

1.4.1 Archival Research

I conducted archival research to examine how policies regarding neoliberal regulatory transformation in Taiwan have shaped the relationships between the Indigenous population and forest landscapes discursively and materially since the 1990s. I collected data from official reports and policy documents concerning community-based conservation from the archive and the official website of the Taiwan Forestry Bureau. Documents of government policies regarding Taiwanese Indigenous peoples since 1996 were retrieved from the Indigenous Peoples Resource Center at the National Taiwan University and the digital archives of the Council of Indigenous Peoples of Taiwan. These include policy documents and government-commissioned research reports related to Indigenous lands, cultural industries, infrastructure, and other social and economic development programs for Indigenous communities.

1.4.2 Participant Observations

The primary data of this study were collected via participant observation in Pingtung, Taiwan between July 2016 and June 2017. I attended community meetings and co-management consultation sessions at the Pingtung Forest District Office, participated in Adiri and Labuwan ecotourism activities, assisted with ecotourism training workshops, and observed community ceremonies and subsistence activities. The roles that I played include assistance in writing meeting minutes, documenting ecotourism activities for the community, and serving as an interpreter when the Adiri and Labuwan interacted with English-speaking tourists. I also attended the Taiwan Forestry Bureau's conferences on forest co-management and the Wutai Township government's planning sessions on the NCESA--natural, cultural, and ecological

scenic areas (*ziran renwen shengtai jingguanqu*, 自然人文生態景觀區), which is an existing state law employed by the Wutai Township government to manage overtourism in Rukai communities.

Alongside my research, I worked with the Community Forestry Laboratory at NPUST that builds connections between the Rukai communities and state-based institutions, nongovernmental organizations, and businesses that support the Rukai people's cultural revitalization and conservation-based economic development. I was involved in the Community Forestry Laboratory's community engagement services in the Rukai communities and assisted in a variety of tasks and activities associated with community-based ecotourism and conservation projects. Because of my affiliation with the Community Forestry Laboratory, I was able to build rapport and trust with the Rukai community members who had already established close relationships with the Community Forestry Laboratory.

1.4.3 Semi-Structured Interviews

During my one-year fieldwork in Pingtung, I conducted individual and groups interviews with nine key informants in the Adiri and Labuwan communities. The key informants were community members who participated in the collaborative conservation projects from the very beginning. They had knowledge about the processes, happenings, and people involved in collaboration with the government and ecotourism development in their own communities. Interviews followed a semi-structured format. The interview questions focused on interviewees' views on ecotourism development in their community and their relationships with the Taiwan Forestry Bureau and the Community Forestry Laboratory at NPUST as well as their perspectives on the Indigenous peoples' position in Taiwan's conservation policies.

1.4.4 Data Analysis

I used NVivo12 (QSR International Pty Ltd. 2019) to analyze my data, including observation field notes, interview transcripts, and archival documents. I paid particular attention to the Rukai informants' perceptions of ecotourism, the government, and collaborative conservation projects. As I coded and analyzed the data, I followed an iterative-inductive approach (O'Reilly 2005, 18) and moved back and forth between theory, data analysis, and interpretation. The themes that emerged in the iterative research processes include conservation, community values, Indigenous-state relationships, and human-land relationships.

1.5 Summary of Chapters

In Chapter 2, I provide a historical overview of the relations between Indigenous peoples and state-led forest governance in Taiwan in order to examine how Indigenous peoples of Taiwan, the earliest inhabitants of the island, became gradually dispossessed and marginalized under various colonial regimes. I trace the history of how Indigenous people of Taiwan lost massive portions of their territories under Japanese colonial rule and how their collective control over land was further undermined by the Kuomintang (KMT) government's land tenure system. I also explore the shift in the relationships between Indigenous peoples and the state since the emergence of Indigenous movements in the 1980s and the decentralization of environmental governance in the late 1990s.

In Chapter 3, I explore the processes and practices of community-based ecotourism development in the Adiri and Labuwan communities and argue that the Rukai people's self-representations in the tourism setting serve as a site of performing and asserting Indigenous

sovereignty. I present the stories and narratives provided by Indigenous guides and examine how they articulated their enduring relationships with their ancestral lands in these narratives. Additionally, I focus on how the community members responded to their self-commodification and how they performed their Indigenous identity to non-Indigenous ecotourists. My analyses indicate that Indigenous guides used ecotourism as a platform to author their Indigenous history and challenge the dominant worldviews in the settler-colonial narrative.

In Chapter 4, I examine the clash between the state's conservation policies and Rukai people's perceptions of the human-nature relationship and demonstrate how the Rukai sovereignty was brought into being as the Rukai community members affirmed the value of their own environmental management practices. I present ethnographic examples of how the Rukai communities perceived the state's conservation laws and their impact on their livelihoods and argue that the Rukai communities chose to collaborate with state-based agencies in various conservation projects to meet their community needs while resisting the colonial legacies embedded in these conservation policies. Finally, I explore the emerging discursive alliance between conservation, sustainable development, and rural regeneration in the state's current policies. These policies, which focused on idealization and commodification of the rural culture and ecology, failed to address the political and ethical dimensions of the socio-ecological problems faced by rural Indigenous communities.

In Chapter 5, I explore how the Rukai people's sovereignty claim was formed and promoted through the establishment of the Council of the Rukai People and how local community members strived to defend their sovereignty over traditional territories and manage tourist intrusions by employing existing state policies. I focus on the struggles of the Rukai community members regarding collective control over their traditional territories that explain the

grounds for their decisions. I also explore how the micropolitics within the Rukai communities affected the decision-making process.

In Chapter 6, I provide an overview of key findings from my research and situate them within anthropological theories of environmental governance and sovereignty.

CHAPTER 2: A HISTORY OF STATE-LED FOREST GOVERNANCE AND INDIGENOUS STRUGGLES IN TAIWAN

Summary

This chapter provides a historical overview of the relations between Indigenous peoples and state-led forest governance in Taiwan. The first subsection focuses on the historical context of colonialism in Taiwan and its ongoing effects on the struggles of Indigenous peoples for land and resource sovereignty. The second subsection examines the emergence of Indigenous social movements in Taiwan and its implications for the consequent institutionalization of Indigenous rights over lands and environmental resources. The third subsection focuses on the relationship between Indigenous peoples and the state in contemporary forest governance arrangements that involve a broader range of institutions and actors in the decision-making processes.

2.1 Introduction: Taiwan and Its First Nations

Taiwan is 35,883 square kilometers (about 8.8 million acres) in size, and 60.71% of its land area is covered by forests (Taiwan Forestry Bureau 2015). The island's steep mountains host a range of forest types, from subtropical forests in the lowlands to temperate and alpine forests and have nurtured a variety of Indigenous peoples' cultures. The forests have, thus, been inextricably intertwined with Taiwan's colonial history, ethnic relations, and socio-economic changes over the past century.

Taiwan's Indigenous peoples, currently accounting for 2.35% of the population in Taiwan, were the earliest inhabitants of the island. Archaeological and historical linguistic studies suggest that Taiwan's Indigenous peoples may have been living on this island for five to

six thousand years before a major Han immigration from China began in the 17th century (Blust 1999; Bellwood 2006). Currently there are 16 officially recognized Indigenous peoples living throughout Taiwan: the Amis, Paiwan, Atayal, Bunun, Truku, Puyuma, Rukai, Seediq, Saisiyat, Tsou, Tao, Kavalan, Sakizaya, Thao, Hla'alua, and Kanakanavu (Table 1).

Table 1. Population of 16 officially recognized Indigenous Peoples of Taiwan

Name		Population
阿美族	Amis (Pangcah)	214,499
排灣族	Paiwan (Payuan)	103,298
泰雅族	Atayal (Tayal)	92,556
布農族	Bunun	59,827
太魯閣族	Truku (Taroko)	32,536
卑南族	Puyuma (Pinuyumayan)	14,634
魯凱族	Rukai (Drekay)	13,532
賽德克族	Seediq	10,532
賽夏族	SaiSiyat	6,761
鄒族	Tsou (Cou)	6,712
達悟族	Tao	4,706
噶瑪蘭族	Kavalan (Kebalan)	1,518
撒奇萊雅族	Sakizaya	1,000
邵族	Thao	819
拉阿魯哇族	Hla'alua (Saaroa)	421
卡那卡那富族	Kanakanavu	370

(Source: Council of Indigenous Peoples, July 2020)

Indigenous peoples of Taiwan are comprised of diverse ethnic groups with their own cultural, social, and political institutions. For example, the Amis, Puyuma, Paiwan, Rukai, and Tsou peoples are identified as hierarchical societies while the Tao, Bunun, and Atayal peoples are identified as egalitarian societies. The majority of the Indigenous peoples of Taiwan have

been living in the mountains and hills for generations, including the Atayal, Bunun, Tsou, Saisiyat, Paiwan, and Rukai. It has been argued that the earliest inhabitants of the mountains chose to settle in the mountain environment because it was ideal for swidden cultivation of millets and also provided natural shelters from the heat and diseases (such as malaria) of the lowlands (Wang 2010, 33).

Forests have been an important subject of state governance in Taiwan since Japanese colonial rule began in 1895. The establishment of the state-led forest governance system involved military conquests and forced relocation of Indigenous peoples from their traditional territories, leading to long-standing conflicts between Taiwan's Indigenous peoples and the settler governments. The continuing impact of colonialism and the expansion of global capitalism have altered the relationships between Indigenous peoples and their traditional lands. In the following section, I use a historical analysis to contextualize Taiwan's state forest governing practices across time and to demonstrate how they are related to Indigenous peoples' dispossession and ongoing struggles for access to land.

2.2 Indigenous Peoples and the Colonial History of Taiwan

Taiwan's Indigenous peoples have been deprived of rights and access to their traditional territories and environmental resources by a series of foreign colonial powers (Fig. 6). From 1624 to 1988, Taiwan was ruled by a succession of six colonial regimes, including (1) the Dutch (1624-1662); (2) the Spanish (1626-1642), who established a small colony in northern Taiwan while the Dutch East India Company (VOC[9]) maintained a colony in southwestern Taiwan simultaneously; (3) the Zheng (鄭) family kingdom (1662-1683); (4) the Manchu Qing empire

[9] Dutch: Vereenigde Oostingische Compagnie.

(1683-1895); (5) the Japanese (1895-1945); and (6) the authoritarian regime of the Chinese Nationalist Party (*Kuomintang*/KMT, 國民黨) (1945-1987).

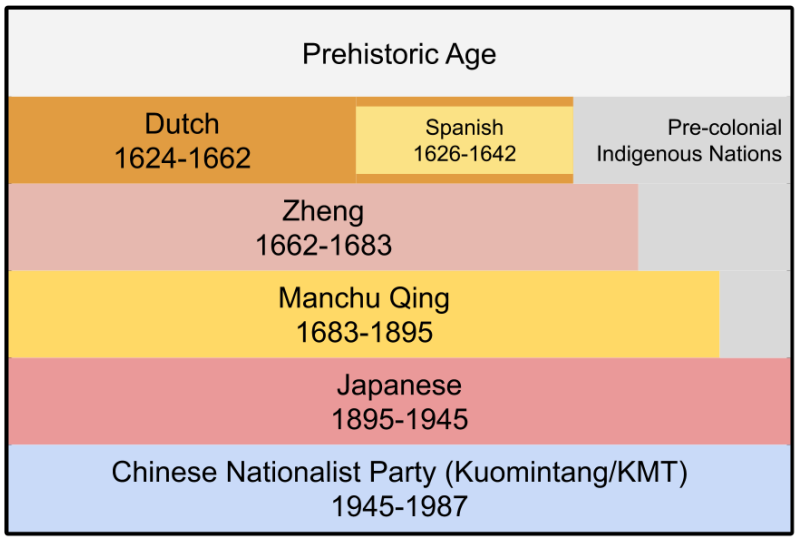

Figure 6. Timeline of Taiwanese History

2.2.1 European Period and Qing Dynasty Rule

In the context of the Age of Discovery, the Dutch East India Company established its presence in Tayouan (大員)[10] in 1624 with the initial intention to use it solely as a trading port for Dutch commerce with Japan and the coastal areas of China. The Dutch later decided to take more control over the hinterlands for fear that rival power (such as Japan or Spain) might stir up the Indigenous people against them (Shepherd 1993, 49). In 1626, two years after the Dutch occupied Tayouan in southern Taiwan, the Spanish established a small colony on the northern tip of Taiwan in present-day Keelung and used it as a base from which to protect their trade with the Japanese and the Philippines from Dutch interference and as a stepping stone to promote Catholic missions in East Asia (Fig. 7). The Spanish presence in Taiwan was ended by Dutch

[10] It is located in present-day Anping (安平) District of Tainan City in southern Taiwan.

forces in 1642 due to the unwillingness of the Spanish colonial governor in Manila to commit more troops and material to its defense (Shepherd 1993, 58), thus giving the Dutch more control over the island.

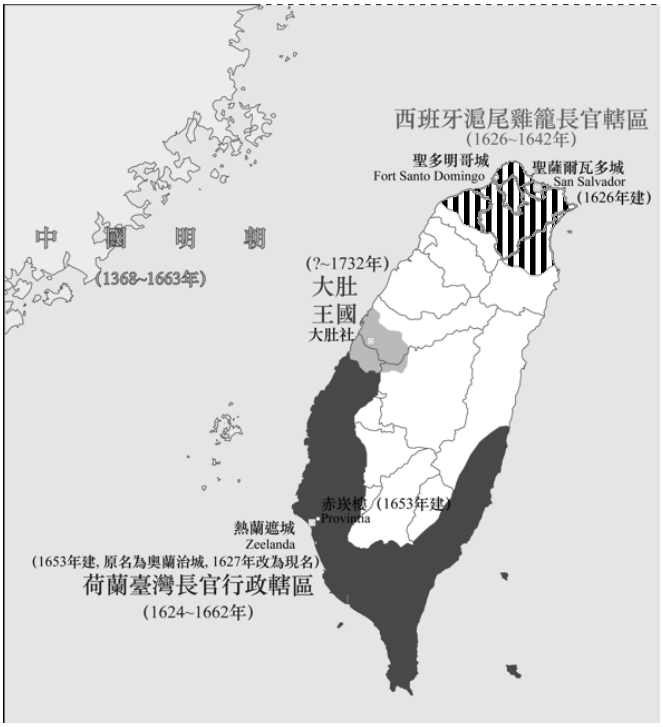

***Figure 7. The areas in Taiwan colonized by the Dutch (in dark gray) and by the Spanish (vertically striped) in the 17th century*. Image credit: CC by Wikipedia Commons.**

When Taiwan was under the colonial rule of the Dutch and the Spanish in the 17th century, male Han Chinese settlers began to move into Taiwan, initially as plantation workers for the Dutch East India Company. In 1662, the Dutch were evicted by the Ming loyalist forces of Zeng Chenggong (鄭成功), who then established the Zheng family kingdom in southwestern Taiwan as part of the loyalist movement to restore the Ming Empire which had been overthrown in China by the Manchu-led Qing Dynasty.

The short-lived Zheng family kingdom was defeated by the Qing Dynasty government in 1683. The Qing Dynasty's two-century rule over Taiwan was characterized by a marked increase

in the number of Han Chinese settlers on the island. As the settlers gradually occupied the lands of Indigenous peoples on the western plains, the mountains and forests were still deemed the home of mystical and dangerous beasts by early Han Chinese settlers. In the *Gazetteer of Taiwan Prefecture* (臺灣府志, 1684), the Taiwan Prefecture Magistrate Chiang Yu-Ying (蔣毓英) wrote:

> There are numberless majestic high mountains in Taiwan…where birds, deer, monkeys, wild boar, and half-human, half-animal creatures live. There are also ghosts and monsters lurking around. Legend has it that there is gold in the mountains. Although people covet the gold, the rugged mountainous regions, which are home to wild savages, are remote and dangerous, not to mention that people don't know exactly where to find and how to access these areas (Chiang 1993, 13).

The "wild savages" described in Chiang Yu-Ying's gazetteer refer to the Indigenous people who lived in the mountainous areas. As the rule of the Qing Empire expanded in Taiwan over decades, the administrators adopted a system that defined the Indigenous peoples relative to their hostility or submission to the Qing rule. They used the term "raw/wild/uncivilized savage" (*sheng fan*, 生番) to describe Indigenous people who had not submitted to the Qing rule and used the term "cooked/tamed/civilized savage" (*shu fan*, 熟番) to describe those who had pledged their allegiance through tax payment and assimilation. The terms *Gaoshan*[11] (高山, meaning the high mountains) and *Pingpu*[12] (平埔, meaning the plains) were also used interchangeably with the epithets "uncivilized" and "civilized".

[11] The usage of *Gaoshan* (高山, meaning the high mountains) as a name for the "raw savages" who lived in mountainous areas was first seen in Huang Feng-Chang's (黃逢昶) *Records on Taiwan's Raw and Cooked Savages* (臺灣生熟番紀事, 1885) (L.-W. Hung 2009, 48).

[12] The book *Records from the Mission to Taiwan and Its Strait* (臺海使槎錄, 1722), written by Huang Shu-Jing (黃叔璥), the first Imperial High Commissioner to Taiwan under Qing rule, was believed to be the first written work that used the term *Pingpu* (平埔, meaning "the plains") to describe the "cooked savages" who primarily lived on the plain areas.

Besides farming, the Han Chinese settlers also developed a camphor industry, beginning in the lowlands. As they gradually expanded to foothills and mountains in search of more camphor trees, the Qing government established the "earthen oxen borders" (*tuniu jiexian*, 土牛界線) that separated the Han settlements from Indigenous territories to avoid conflicts and to prevent alliance-making between the two groups which might result in uprisings against the Qing rule (Ka 2001). Although Qing rule redefined the earthen oxen borders several times in order to move the borders towards the mountainous areas, the Qing government still was not able to effectively extend its control over the majority of the mountains and forests in Taiwan (Kuan 2014b).

2.2.2 Japanese Rule: The Origin of State-led Forest Governance in Taiwan

The Qing Dynasty of China and the Empire of Japan fought over control of Korean in the First Sino-Japanese War (*jiawu zhanzheng*, 甲午戰爭) of 1894-1895. After the modernized Japanese forces defeated the Chinese forces, the two sides signed the Treaty of Shimonoseki (*maguan tiaoyue*, 馬關條約) in April, 1895, by which the Qing Empire ceded Taiwan to Japan as part of the settlement of the war. At the beginning of Japanese rule (1895-1902), the colonial government took a passive appeasement approach towards Taiwan's Indigenous peoples in order to avoid Indigenous peoples' joining forces with the armed resistance of the Han people (Fujii 2001). As the Japanese enterprisers attempted to occupy more of the Saisiyat[13] people's land to obtain camphor, the conflicts between the Saisiyat people and the Japanese colonizers eventually led to the Nanzhuang uprising (南庄事件) in 1902, which made the Japanese colonial

[13] The Saisiyat people (賽夏族) are an Indigenous people of Taiwan.

government conclude that appeasement was no longer a feasible approach to governing Taiwan's Indigenous peoples and their lands (Fujii 2001).

After the Nanzhuang uprising, the Japanese colonial government established policies referred to as *Li Fan* (理蕃, meaning "savage control"). Mochiji Rokusaburō (持地六三郎), the Counselor of the Japanese colonial government at that time, played a leading role in developing and promoting the *Li Fan* policies. He formulated his theory of *Li Fan* based on his experience investigating the Nanzhuang uprising and on the study of U.S. policy toward Native Americans at the time (Fujii 2001). In his "An Opinion on the Aboriginal Problem" (關於蕃政問題意見書), Mochiji asserted that the "aboriginal problem" should be defined as a land problem and be addressed from an economic perspective:

> The problem of aboriginal land has yet to arrive at a successful solution. Yet if we do not solve this problem, our countrymen will likely fail to realize their great potential for overseas expansion. Occupying 50 to 60 percent of the entire island, the aboriginal lands constitute a treasure trove rich in forest, agricultural, and mining resources. Unfortunately, we have not succeeded in unlocking this treasure trove because ferocious savages block our access to it…If we fail to exploit these resources and eliminate the trouble these savages cause, we will not be able to carry to completion the economic development of Taiwan…How can we neglect to deal with this pressing problem? Let me state clearly that when I refer to the problem of aboriginal lands: from the point of view of the empire, there is only aboriginal land but not an aboriginal people. The problem of aboriginal land must be dealt with from an economic perspective and its management is an indispensable part of fiscal policy…It is not a problem that one can hope to resolve by ethical means.[14]

In Mochiji's opinion, Indigenous peoples' resistance was regarded as an obstacle for Japan's capital accumulation and colonial expansion. He argued that Indigenous peoples had to be separated from their land and Indigenous lands had to be reclassified as ownerless so that the Japanese Empire could extract Taiwan's rich environmental resources.

[14] The full text of Mochiji's opinion is reprinted in *Riban shikō*, a collection of Taiwan policy statements toward Indigenous peoples published in 1918. The excerpt is translated by Robert Thomas Tierney and is taken from his book *Tropics of Savagery: The Culture of Japanese Empire in Comparative Frame*, 2010: 44.

The Japanese colonial government later took more aggressive measures to control Indigenous peoples and their territories through a series of military conquests, surveying, mapping, and cadastral registration (Chang 2004; Cheng 2012). Using the method of scientific forestry, the colonial government designated much of Taiwan's forests as state-owned and further demarcated them into "reserved forests" (要存置林野) and "non-reserved forests" (不要存置林野). The reserved forests, which constituted the greatest proportion of the state-owned forests, were managed by the colonial government for the purpose of soil and water conservation as well as timber harvesting for the state-owned timber industry; the rest were categorized as non-reserved forests and delegated to Japanese capitalists, Chinese gentry, and local governments for agroforestry development (Yeh 2011, 120; Hung, Lo, and Istanda 2019, 59). The colonial government later demarcated parts of the reserved forests as "quasi-reserved forests" (準要存置林野), which were designated as reserve lands (蕃人所要地) for the use of *Gaoshan* Indigenous peoples[15]. The demarcation of forests and subsequent relocation of Indigenous communities were all part of the Japanese colonial state's efforts of creating "legible" forms of forest governance.

After the Wushe Uprising[16] (霧社事件) in 1930, the Japanese colonial rulers started to force a large number of the *Gaoshan* Indigenous peoples to relocate to the quasi-reserved forests to make them more governable. During the 1940s, more *Gaoshan* Indigenous communities, including the Rukai and Paiwan peoples, were targeted by the forced relocation policy, which

[15] The *Li Fan* policies focused primarily on control over the *Gaoshan* Indigenous peoples and their lands as the *Pingpu* Indigenous peoples were deemed deeply assimilated into the Han culture and therefore excluded from the *Li Fan* policies under Japanese rule (W.-L. Huang 2012). The Rukai people were classified as one of the *Gaoshan* Indigenous peoples and subjected to the *Li Fan* policies.

[16] In 1930, a group of Seediq people in Wushe took up arms against the Japanese colonial officials in response to colonial oppression and exploitation.

involved moving the Indigenous communities from their traditional territories to regions where they had no previous geographical and social connections and even mergers of communities who were in hostile relationships with one another (Yap 2017). To exploit more resources in the uplands, the colonial government regularly relocated Indigenous communities and decreased the areas of quasi-reserved forests. The final areas of quasi-reserved forests, which were the predecessor to the Indigenous reserve land (原住民保留地) in Taiwan, were only one-eighth the size of Indigenous peoples' traditional territories (C.-M. Lin 2001).

In addition to land grabbing and mass relocation of Indigenous communities, the Japanese colonial government also confiscated Indigenous peoples' hunting guns as the government regarded these firearms as a threat to its governing authority. The Wutai Incident (霧台事件), which was the most significant uprising among the Rukai communities under the Japanese colonial rule, took place in October, 1914, as a result of a rebellion against Japan's colonial policy of gun confiscation. The uprising involved Rukai people from several communities, including the Vudai, Kabalelradhane, Adiri, Karamemedesane, Kucapungane, Kinulane, and Talamakaw. After a week of violent attacks on the Rukai communities, the Japanese government brutally suppressed the revolt and confiscated 543 firearms and 89 gun barrels held by the Rukai people at the end of the uprising (Taiban 2014, 93).

The later stage of the *Li Fan* policies shifted the emphasis from military oppression to cultural assimilation. To make Indigenous peoples more "civilized" and loyal to the Japanese Empire, the colonial government established elementary schools for Indigenous children to instill Japanese culture from a young age. The colonial authority also promoted agriculture and discouraged hunting practices among Indigenous communities in an attempt to transform Indigenous people from "savage hunters" into "docile farmers." (Fujii 2001, 115). To ensure

effective subjugation of Taiwan's Indigenous peoples, the Japanese colonial government also deployed police forces across Indigenous peoples' territories to secure its control over Indigenous communities. For example, police officers were in charge of managing Indigenous children's elementary schools, supervising hygiene maintenance and inspection, and conducting day-to-day administrative affairs on local matters (Fujii 2001).

To exert further control over Indigenous communities, the Japanese colonial government not only invented chiefdoms in the egalitarian societies (Masaw 1998, 42) but also incorporated the traditional chiefs of hierarchical societies into the state's administrative system. In 1933, the Japanese colonial authority bestowed imperial medals on 431 chiefs to officially recognize their leadership and status (Fujii 2001, 145; Taiban 2014, 120–21). However, the official recognition actually served as a means of monitoring the conduct of these chiefs to ensure their compliance with policies and rules. The chiefs' medals and leadership could be revoked by the colonial government if they deviated from the government's policies.

In the hierarchical societies, such as that of the Rukai people, the political and economic authority of the traditional chiefs was also diminished by the colonial policy that prohibited commoners from paying taxes (such as crops and game) to the nobles and chiefs. On the other hand, the Rukai people who worked for the Japanese police officers gradually became as respected as the chiefs because they could use their wages to purchase goods that were scarce in the communities, such as salt, metal, and cloth, thus increasing their social status and influence in the communities (Qiao 2001, 14; Taiban 2014, 121). From 1937 to 1945, the Japanese colonial government's "imperializing" (皇民化) policy was the culmination of its assimilation approach, which successfully mobilized thousands of Taiwan's Indigenous peoples to serve for the Japanese Army in World War II, including many Rukai people.

2.2.3 Indigenous Peoples and Their Lands Under the KMT Rule

After the defeat of the Empire of Japan in World War II in 1945, the nationalist government of the Republic of China (ROC, 中華民國), led by the KMT (*Kuomintang*, 國民黨), took control of Taiwan. For Indigenous peoples of Taiwan, the KMT was another colonial regime that maintained control over their traditional lands and imposed Chinese nationalism and assimilation policies (F. Y. L. Chiu 1999). The KMT took over the scientific forestry system from Japan where large amounts of Indigenous traditional territories remained demarcated as being national forest lands.

Since the 1950s, the Taiwanese government and proponents of mainstream development have considered the Indigenous people's ways of living as "backward" and claimed that the lives of Indigenous people could only be improved through modernization and assimilation into Han society. The series of assimilation policies included enforcing the use of Mandarin while severely restricting the use of local and Indigenous languages in public settings. Additionally, Indigenous communities were either forced or rewarded for relocation from mountainous areas to locations that were easily accessible by public transport. As a result, many Indigenous communities in Pingtung, including several Rukai communities, relocated from the mountains to designated sites at foothills or on plains in the name of modernization (Taiban 2014, 78). However, these new sites hastily designated by the government were not ideal places for Indigenous communities to survive and thrive. Some of the Indigenous communities have continually struggled with the serious consequences to their communities of relocation, including having their survival jeopardized and having their already disadvantaged position in society exacerbated.

The disastrous experience of the Rukai community Kucapungane (*Haocha*, 好茶) is a well-known example of the marginalization of Indigenous peoples caused by ill-planned relocation policies[17]. In a community meeting in 1974, the majority of the Kucapungane residents voted to relocate to have better access to education and health care services. In 1978, the Kucapungane were moved to a location on the river terrace of the South Ailiao River designated by the government; however, the designated site Tulalegele (*New Haocha*, 新好茶) did not include sufficient arable land for cultivation nor any ceremonial space, and, worst of all, it was prone to natural hazards (Taiban 2013). After being affected by typhoon-induced landslides and floods in 1996, 2006, and 2007, the Kucapungane community faced relocation once again. Such forms of displacement have led to a severe impact on the health, livelihood, and culture of Indigenous communities.

To assimilate Indigenous peoples into the dominant Han society, during the 1950s, the KMT government also encouraged Indigenous individuals and households to engage in settled agriculture and tree planting, which required them to cultivate the same land for long periods of time, thus paving the way for individualization of land tenure on Indigenous territories (Kuan 2014, 176; Chan 2019). From 1968 to 1975, the KMT government began the first wave of legal registration of individual titles to the Indigenous reserved land[18] (Executive Yuan 2015, 2). However, recognition of individual rights actually undermined Indigenous peoples' collective control over their traditional territories and made them more vulnerable to capitalist exploitation

[17] Another example is the Kala community (卡拉社部落) of the Atayal people. They were forced to leave their ancestral land because of construction of the Shihmen Dam (石門水庫) in the 1950s. Soon after the government moved the Kala community to a new site at Daxi (大溪) in Taoyuan, the new site was destroyed by Typhoon Gloria in 1963. The Kala community was then relocated again to another site the Guanyin District (觀音) in the same city, where many community members were later killed or sickened by cadmium released from a local factory's industrial emissions (Kuan 2014b).

[18] This does not mean that Indigenous peoples have real ownership of the land because the state is still the ultimate owner of all Indigenous reserved land. Indigenous peoples only have rights to occupy or use the reserved land.

(Kuan 2014a, 15). According to the Regulations on Development and Management of the Land Reserved for Indigenous Peoples (原住民保留地開發管理辦法), Indigenous individuals who have been granted the right to cultivate or build upon Indigenous reserve lands can be given the title to the land, and the title can only be inherited or transferred to another Indigenous individual. The rest of the Indigenous lands that were not registered for cultivation by Indigenous people, most of which were Indigenous communal lands and hunting territories, were ceded to the government to be used for various public purposes.

In the case of the Rukai people, only 11% of the Rukai traditional territory has been registered as Indigenous Reserved Land, while 77% of the traditional territory remains overlapping with state-owned forests and protected areas (Council of the Rukai People 2017). There were a number of factors that hampered Indigenous people's application for land registration, and one of the major factors was a general lack of information and communication about the policy in rural Indigenous communities (Executive Yuan 2015, 4). When I conducted ethnographic fieldwork in Rukai communities in Pingtung, I was told by informants that many community members lost their land because they did not understand the legal formalities and procedure required to obtain ownership of the land in the first place. Additionally, when the land that Indigenous people wanted to register overlapped with protection forests[19] (*baoan lin*, 保安林), which were designated as such by the Taiwan Forestry Bureau for natural hazard mitigation purposes, such applications were rejected by the government (Executive Yuan 2015, 5).

On the other hand, while the law stipulated that the Indigenous reserved land could not be sold or rented to non-Indigenous people, receiving a registered land title that recognizes individual property rights does not guarantee social and economic security to Indigenous

[19] Protection forests accounted for 22% of Taiwan's forests (T.-F. Chiu 2016, 37).

communities. As Indigenous peoples became more marginalized by the capitalist economy, some people had little choice but to cede land usage to non-Indigenous investors in informal land sales (Yen and Yang 2004; Simon 2017). In many cases, local authorities played a role in pressuring Indigenous people to relinquish their land rights so that the government could lease the land to outside investors to exploit environmental resources or to build hotel complexes (Kuan 2014a; Simon 2017).

As industrialization and rapid economic growth began in Taiwan in the 1960s and 1970s, more and more Indigenous people migrated to cities seeking employment or educational opportunities. Many Indigenous people who live in cities have maintained connections with their Indigenous communities in rural areas; nevertheless, living outside of their Indigenous communities has made it more challenging for these people to participate in community affairs and local land-use discussions and decision-making (See Chapter 5).

2.3 The Emergence of Indigenous Movements in Taiwan

In the late 1980s, the abolition of a 38-year period of martial law (May, 1949 – July, 1987) and the following democratization in Taiwan made it possible for Indigenous peoples to organize and express their political views. Indigenous people's social movements in Taiwan began to call for an end to historical and ongoing colonial injustices that disproportionately affected Indigenous peoples' lives.

As mentioned earlier, the relocation policies, the loss of communal control over land, as well as Taiwan's rapid economic growth during the last quarter of the 20th century all contributed to the disruption of the relative self-sufficiency of Indigenous communities. As a result, many Indigenous people were compelled to migrate to cities for the prospect of better

opportunities. While cities might have seemed to offer numerous opportunities, Indigenous people faced systemic discrimination, exploitation, and exclusion in the non-Indigenous society. As already marginalized groups, Indigenous peoples had limited political power to influence the policies and institutions that determined their lives. They were dispossessed of their ancestral lands and deprived of their resources for physical and cultural survival by the legacies left by former colonial rulers as well as the modern nation-state. Against this background, Indigenous movements in Taiwan should be understood as Indigenous peoples' resistance to centuries of colonial domination and assimilation.

Early efforts of the Indigenous movement in Taiwan were born out of the experience and networks of urban Indigenous intellectuals. In May, 1983, several Indigenous students at National Taiwan University published the first pan-Indigenous newspaper *Gaoshan Qing* (Mountain Greenery, 高山青) in Taiwan, which aimed to tackle long-standing discrimination against Indigenous peoples and raise Indigenous people's political consciousness. This radical publication marked the beginning of Indigenous movements in Taiwan (Hsieh 2004; Juan 2015). One year later, a broader pan-Indigenous activism grew out of that with the first NGO established to defend Taiwanese Indigenous people's rights--the Alliance of Taiwan Aborigines (ATA, 台灣原住民族權利促進會).

In the early stage (1984-1987), the ATA focused on addressing human rights and social welfare issues for Indigenous individuals, such as the problem of Indigenous girls being sold into prostitution and the Haishan coal mining disaster (海山煤礦災變) that killed many Indigenous mining workers (Taiban 2014, 106). As the ATA realized that the disadvantaged position of these Indigenous individuals was often a result of the state's structural oppression, the activist

group moved its mission to political and policy-oriented agendas for collective Indigenous rights (Ku 2012; Taiban 2014).

The pan-Indigenous movements in Taiwan were initiated by Indigenous intellectuals in the ATA and several Indigenous organizations in order to challenge the state's colonial policies and articulate their Indigenous identity through street protests and publications. The movements were also informed by and in collaboration with global Indigenous movements of the time (Ku 2012). From 1988 to 1993, three "Return Our Land" movements (*haiwo tudi yundong*, 還我土地運動) mobilized thousands of Indigenous people to demand the government's return of lands to the original inhabitants. This pan-Indigenous activism opened the space for Indigenous people's political participation, resulting in the establishment of the Indigenous Peoples Council (*yuanzhu minzu weiyuanhui*, 原住民族委員會) as a cabinet-level ministry in 1996. It also led to the revisions to Taiwan's constitution in 1997 that allowed for legal classifications as an Indigenous nation/people (*yuanzhu minzu*, 原住民族) as well as revisions that recognized the political, social, and economic rights of Indigenous peoples. However, as several Indigenous activists were incorporated into government administration, the pan-Indigenous movement gradually lost its energy (Simon 2008).

In the mid-1990s, in response to the growing disconnection between the pan-Indigenous movement and the life experience of Indigenous people in the communities, some Indigenous intellectuals returned their attention to Indigenous communities and argued the importance of focusing on the local communities as sites of resistance and cultural revitalization rather than solely relying on making transformations through state institutions (Peongsi 1999). This new approach to Indigenous movements at the community level was characterized by local protests organized by community members to directly express their disapproval of the corporate-led

development and state-led conservation projects on their traditional territories (Taiban 2014). Notable examples included the Truku people's protests against Asia Cement (亞泥) in Taroko, the Rukai and Paiwan peoples' movement against the construction of the Majia Dam (瑪家水庫) in Pingtung County, and the conflicts between the Atayal people and Shei-Pa National Park (雪霸國家公園). These local Indigenous movements particularly challenged the legitimacy of the state's control over Indigenous traditional territories that are critical to the survival of Indigenous peoples.

2.4 Indigenous Peoples and Contemporary Forest Governance in Taiwan

2.4.1 From Fortress Conservation to Community Forestry

The state-owned timber industry under KMT rule made timber one of Taiwan's top exports of the time. Since the 1980s, against the backdrop of emerging global environmentalism and conservation discourses, the Taiwanese forestry policy has shifted from timber production[20] to forest conservation due to increasing costs of timber harvesting and intensifying environmental concerns (J.-X. Li and Hsu 2010). Simultaneously, the state government established several protected wildlife areas and national parks across Taiwan that included large amounts of Indigenous traditional territories (C.-M. Lin 2001).

That fortress conservation approach in Taiwan over the past decades has resulted in displacement of local/Indigenous communities from protected areas along with their exclusion from participation in protected area governance. Additionally, fortress conservation was not able to effectively stop illegal logging within protected areas or national forests, causing it to be

[20] In 1989, the Taiwan Forestry Bureau ceased all logging operations and changed from a self-financing public enterprise to a public sector funded through taxation (J.-X. Li and Hsu 2010).

criticized as an ecological and moral mistake. To address the conflicts between protected areas and local residents, the government recognized that the governance of environmental resources should be devolved in a way that incorporated the participation of local resource users. An example is the Taiwan Forestry Bureau's community forestry project (*shequ linye*, 社區林業), which promoted community participation in the conservation of forest resources.

Taiwan's public policies in the 1990s were characterized by a shift of focus to the community, which was interpreted by many Taiwanese scholars as a neoliberal transition that championed devolution and deregulation (e.g. Tsai 2010; Y.-K. Huang 2012; Hsiao 2012). The lifting of martial law proclaimed by Taiwan's President Chiang Ching-kuo in 1987 marked the end of authoritarian rule under the KMT[21], which was followed by a transition to democratization and market liberalization. Since the mid-1990s, Taiwan has witnessed swift social and economic transformations, which were regarded as Taiwan's neoliberal policies and phenomena that leaned towards a diminished role of the state, including privatization of state-owned enterprises, economic liberalization, the rapid emergence of large corporations and NGOs, and the rise of localism and "community development" (*shequ zongti yingzao*, 社區總體營造) in Taiwan's post-industrial society (Hsiao 2012).

The community forestry project launched by the Taiwan Forestry Bureau in 2002, which aimed to decentralize and devolve forest management responsibilities and benefits to local communities, can also be viewed as a product of Taiwan's neoliberalization. There are three stages of the community forestry project (see Taiwan Forestry Bureau 2008). The first stage of the project focuses on promoting conservation education for local communities. Communities that do well in the first stage can participate in the second stage of community forestry, which

[21] Soon after, the KMT became merely one political party in Taiwan's democratic political system.

focuses on actual participation by local communities in forest management with assistance provided by experts of forest resource management. Finally, communities that perform well in the second stage can take part in the third stage--developing forestry co-management arrangements for shared decision-making with the state. However, there has been no community that has been able to participate in the third stage of community forestry so far. A major challenge faced by communities in implementing community forestry projects in the first and second stages is a lack of administrative experience and skills at the community level (Lu et al. 2011). The state-led community forestry approach has also been criticized for not going far enough to address Indigenous peoples' rights to use and manage environmental resources within their traditional territories (Lu et al. 2011).

In fact, many community forestry projects in Taiwan have focused on ecotourism development at the community level (Chen 2010). Because ecotourism promotes non-destructive use of the environment, it has been promoted by the government and academia as a more convenient way of carrying out community forestry in a context where forest resource use is still hindered by the complicated legal and administrative systems.

2.4.2 Environmental Laws and Co-management

The environmental laws established by the central government of Taiwan, which attempt to adhere to international standards of environmental management and take domestic social and economic situations into account, focus on conserving and utilizing environmental resources for the benefit of the whole of Taiwanese society; however, the environmental laws and policies often reflect values that contradict the worldviews and customary institutions of the Indigenous peoples of Taiwan (Portnoy and Awi Mona 2012).

In Taiwan, environmental laws, such as the Forestry Act (*senlin fa*, 森林法) and the Wildlife Conservation Act (*yesheng dongwu bayou fa*, 野生動物保育法), are sources of tension between Indigenous peoples and the state. Before the reignition of Indigenous peoples' land rights in Taiwan's legal systems, Indigenous people were often labeled as criminals if they engaged in hunting, trapping, and gathering activities within their traditional territories, which largely overlap with state-owned forests. For Indigenous peoples, these environmental laws represent ongoing forms of settler-colonial oppression as they have done more harm than good to Indigenous communities.

After taking over the state-led forest governance system left by the Japanese colonial government, the Taiwanese central government has claimed stewardship responsibilities of most environmental resources within Indigenous peoples' traditional territories. It is only in recent years that Indigenous peoples have been allowed to engage in some hunting and gathering in accordance with their traditional cultures. For example, in 2004, Article 21-1 of the Wildlife Conservation Act was added to give Indigenous people the right to hunt or kill wildlife for traditional and ritual purposes. In the same year, an amendment to Article 15 of the Forestry Act permitted Indigenous peoples to collect forest products for ritual and subsistence.

Since the passing of the Indigenous Peoples Basic Law in 2005, which was a national avatar of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) that passed in 2007, the legal principles of Taiwanese Indigenous peoples' rights were finally laid out (Simon and Awi Mona 2015, 6). The Basic Law (Article 34) specifically stipulates that all related national laws and regulations must be amended and implemented in accordance with the

principles of Indigenous rights by 2008[22]. Although Indigenous peoples' customary use of environmental resources have been gradually decriminalized in Taiwan, the conflicts between environmental laws and Indigenous customary laws regarding human-environment relations still exist. Some regulations have been criticized for not taking into account Indigenous peoples' cultural norms and values regarding resource use. For example, before their community events or rituals, Indigenous hunters must apply to the government for written permission to hunt, including permission for when they will hunt as well as for the quantities and types of animals they will kill. As many Indigenous hunters consider that the success or failure of hunting depends on the blessings of their ancestors, it is inappropriate to state how many and what kinds of animals they will hunt in advance (H.-Y. Lin 2016). To augment their autonomy, Indigenous peoples also place hope on co-management as a means to manage hunting and forest resource use on their own (Simon and Awi Mona 2015).

The "Smangus Beech Tree Incident[23]" (司馬庫斯櫸木事件) in 2005 is a legal case regarding the conflict between Indigenous peoples' resource rights and the government's environmental management laws. This case has prompted Indigenous peoples to demand their rights to co-manage environmental recourses within their traditional territories (Yen and Chen 2011). In 2007, the government created the "Regulation for Co-management of Resources in

[22] Nevertheless, until 2019, some environmental laws and regulations in Taiwan have not been amended to grant resource use rights to Indigenous peoples, including the National Park Act (國家公園法) that still bans hunting within national parks, and the Mining Act (礦業法) that still does not allow Indigenous people to collect rocks from riverbeds within their traditional territories.

[23] It is a legal case related to three members of the Smangus community of the Atayal people in Hsinchu County being charged with theft of national property because they removed the trunk of a beech tree that fell on national forest land during a typhoon in 2005, the same year that Taiwan passed the Indigenous Peoples Basic Law. The national forest land actually overlaps with the traditional territory of the Smangus. The three Smangus community members were convicted by the Hsinchu District Court in 2007 as the court did not take into account the principles in the Indigenous Peoples Basic Law, which stipulates that Indigenous peoples should have the right to use resources within their traditional territories for nonprofit purposes. This incident prompted several local Indigenous groups to forge a campaigning alliance to demand their rights to co-manage the resources within their traditional territories (Yen and Chen 2011). In 2010, the Taiwan High Court finally acquitted the three Smangus people.

Indigenous Areas" (*yuanzhu minzu diqu ziyuan gongtong guanli banfa*, 原住民族地區資源共同管理辦法), which serves as a legal foundation for the joint management of national forests and protected areas between Indigenous peoples and the state in Taiwan. Since then, several co-management advisory committees have been established by the district offices of the Taiwan Forestry Bureau to bring together Indigenous communities and local and state levels of government to discuss various issues of environmental management and address Indigenous communities' needs. These co-management committees serve as a platform of direct communication regarding environmental management between the state and Indigenous communities. However, while Indigenous peoples were granted rights to express their opinions, the government still have the final say in what is called "co-"management (Yen and Chen 2011). In other words, genuine power- and responsibility-sharing regarding environmental governance between Indigenous peoples and the state has not yet been achieved yet.

In 2016, President Tsai Ing-Wen apologized to the Indigenous peoples for "four centuries of pain and mistreatment" and promised to rectify the historical injustice and improve their lives. An official recognition of traditional territories of Indigenous peoples would be a critical step for Indigenous peoples to regain control over their ancestral lands, such as co-managing environmental resources with the state and giving or withholding consent on mega-development projects that would affect their lives.

Although the government declared 4.4 million acres (about half of Taiwan's land area) to be Indigenous peoples' traditional territories in February 2017, the delineation was limited to state-owned land and not including private land. For Indigenous peoples, the demand of returning all traditional territories from the government was not to ask for the exclusive right to use, own, and benefit from their ancestral lands; instead, Indigenous peoples ask for their right to

claim sovereignty over traditional territories--the acknowledgement and respect of the enduring relationship between Indigenous peoples and their traditional territories. As the Indigenous groups argued, the recognition of Indigenous peoples' sovereignty over their traditional territories, including the areas now being privately owned, would not affect existing property rights and only requires the government and developers to consult and obtain consent of Indigenous peoples prior to development on Indigenous peoples' traditional territories (Indigenous Justice Classroom 2017).

To confront the gap between formal recognition and actual implementation of Indigenous peoples' collective rights, Indigenous groups continued to protest in the streets to ask for more official recognition of land as traditional territories. Meanwhile, the Rukai communities in Pingtung employed different strategies to pursue land-based self-determination.

CHAPTER 3: PERFORMING INDIGENOUS IDENTITY AND ASSERTING SOVEREIGNTY IN COMMUNITY-BASED ECOTOURISM

Summary

In this chapter, I explore how and why the Adiri and Labuwan communities collaborated with the Forestry Bureau and NPUST to develop community-based ecotourism. I also examine how the Indigenous tourism workers presented their heritage and performed their Indigenous identity for non-Indigenous ecotourists. I present the tour narratives and stories of the Indigenous guides and examine how the guides articulated their relationships with their land, their ancestors, and one another. I argue that the Rukai people used ecotourism as a strategic platform to demonstrate their continued existence and their stewardship of the land as well as using ecotourism to disrupt the binaries of myth/history, human/nonhuman, and past/present in the settler-colonial narrative.

3.1 Self-Representation and Commodification of Indigenous People in Tourism

The impact of tourism development on the culture of Indigenous peoples and local communities has been one of the major themes covered of anthropology and other fields of social science over the past decades (Nash 1996; Stronza 2001; Burns 2004; Chambers 2010). Many scholars have focused their attention on cultural commodification for tourism and how it has affected the identity and representation of local communities. Commodification of culture can be defined as a process by which culture, identity, and experience of a place "come to be evaluated primarily in terms of their exchange value, in a context of trade, thereby becoming goods (and services)" that can be bought and sold in a market (Cohen 1988, 380). In a tourism

setting, the relationship between hosts and guests is also interpreted by scholars as "commercialized hospitality" in which social relationships are primarily fostered by economic exchange and the profit motive (Dann and Cohen 1991). Moreover, tourists place their expectations and stereotypes on local communities through "the tourist gaze" (Urry 2002). To benefit financially, local people are expected to appear and behave in ways that are "Indigenous" or "ethnic" enough to attract more tourists.

Within the study of cultural commodification and tourism in social sciences, Indigenous cultural tourism is often framed as a form of exploitation and neocolonialism that forces Indigenous people to participate in an industry that capitalizes on cultural differences and overrides local values (Comaroff and Comaroff 2009; Mowforth and Munt 2015; Devine 2016). As Devine and Ojeda (2017) suggest, the hospitable Indigenous cultures and pristine landscapes promoted in dominant tourism imaginaries tend to conceal the dispossession associated with historical and ongoing colonialism in order to make the tourist paradise possible, thereby maintaining and reproducing power imbalances between Indigenous peoples and the dominant society.

Other scholars have instead argued that we should pay attention to how local communities perceive and respond to their own commodification for tourism even in cases where power asymmetries are irrefutable. For example, the study of Kirtsoglou and Theodossopoulos (2004) in Honduras shows that Indigenous community members were actually willing to commodify their ethnicity and satisfy tourists' quest for authenticity and difference; what the locals were more concerned about is whether the cultural commodification would take place on their own terms to serve their interests.

In her research of a Native American-owned cultural tourism business in Alaska, Bunten (2008) examines the strategies employed by Indigenous tourism workers to manage their self-commodification in host-guest encounters. Bunten develops the concept of a "commodified persona" to describe Indigenous tourism workers' presentation of self which is shaped by tourists' expectations and feedback. While Native tour guides are encouraged to present a standardized tour script and a simplified version of the self that conforms to the hegemonic discourses of Indigeneity, they can still exert agency in the process of cultural commodification by compartmentalizing their Native experience into what is and what is not appropriate to share on tour or by providing powerful alternatives to the official account of history (Bunten 2008).

Palomino-Schalscha's (2018) study of Indigenous tourism in Chile also shows how local community members exercised control over the representations of themselves and their relationship with ancestral territories in the tourism narrative. When the local guides interacted with tourists, they did not shy away from talking about their experiences of dispossession and struggles for land caused by neoliberalism. The stories shared by community members not only demonstrated the intertwined relationships between their ancestors and present generations but also acknowledged the agency of the more-than-human world, which is often denied by the construction of reason and nature in the dominant culture. As Palomino-Schalscha (2018) argues, the community members' actions challenged the neoliberal policy and its conceptualization of nature as merely a resource by decolonizing modern divisions of humans and non-humans.

This chapter aims to examine how the Adiri and Labuwan engaged in ecotourism. Drawing on Bunten's (2008) concept of the "commodified persona," I focus on how the community members perceived their own cultural commodification and how they performed their identity in community-based ecotourism. Like other Indigenous communities across the

globe, the Rukai people have also faced the pressure of delivering a competitive tourism product that appeals to the desire of non-Indigenous tourists for "the Other." I will provide ethnographic examples of how the Rukai people managed their self-representation while confronting stereotypes and asserting their own sovereignty claims through tourism.

3.2 Developing the Commodified Persona in Ecotourism

Tougadhu and his non-Indigenous wife Pei-Yu are two of the remaining residents in the Old Adiri region since the community was devastated by Typhoon Morakot in 2009. "Our land has nurtured our community for generations. It is the source of our life," Tougadhu told me. He left the Adiri community on the mountain to study in the city when he was just a teenager. After working in different towns and cities across Taiwan for many years, Tougadhu decided to return to the mountain, where he met his wife Pei-Yu when she visited the Old Adiri lands with her friends. After marrying, the couple chose to stay in the Old Adiri community and tried to make a living by growing aiyu fruits and red plums in the mountainous area. In addition to farming, they also ran a small bed and breakfast in the community.

Working as a small-scale farmer in the steep mountain area was not an easy life. There were only 20-30 people residing in the old community before the community was affected by Typhoon Morakot. To support their families, most community members under fifty years old had left home to find jobs outside the community, such as working in factories in the lowland regions. Tougadhu and Pei-Yu did not want to leave the mountain, so they were willing to try various things to make supplemental income, such as making handicrafts and working as a field assistant for university professors who conducted research or biological surveys on the mountain.

Before Tougadhu engaged in community-based ecotourism, he was assisting in a research project that focused on Rukai hunting strategies and territories. He recalled:

> There were several hunters like me participating in this project. We usually took this road to Lake Dalupalringi to hunt when the sky became dark… Elder hunters patrolled and hunted on the ground closer to the community and younger hunters like me went farther. When we couldn't find any game, we started to think… maybe we could take people to visit these places. It was just a thought. We didn't know anything about ecotourism until professor Chen came to our community. She taught us how to do monitoring, how to guide tourists…Since then we have learned more about ecotourism in a systematic way.

When Tougadhu and Pei-Yu became interested in ecotourism, they reached out to the Pingtung County Government, through which they became acquainted with Dr. Chen Mei-Hui. The Adiri also needed to work with the Taiwan Forestry Bureau because most Adiri's traditional territories overlap with protected areas governed by this government agency. Eventually, the Adiri's ecotourism development was initiated and operated through collaboration among the community, the Community Forestry Laboratory at NPUST, the Pingtung County Government, and the Taiwan Forestry Bureau.

Dr. Chen was a public servant before she joined the faculty of the Department of Forestry at NPUST. She had years of experience working in government agencies that promote conservation and environmental education at the local level. Dr. Chen believed that community development (*shezao,* 社造) was the best approach to conservation promotion. When she was working in the Taiwan Forestry Bureau, she helped design the community forestry program in Taiwan, which aimed to encourage local and Indigenous communities to participate in forest management and conservation. After she started her teaching position at NPUST, she continued to work with local and Indigenous communities in Nantou and Pingtung to help develop community-based ecotourism.

According to Dr. Chen, the first step of community-based ecotourism development is to conduct a comprehensive survey in the community to identify the core resources that could be transformed into tourism products. She called the second step "community empowerment" (*shequ peili*, 社區培力) and defined it as the process by which community members develop the skills and competencies required for their community-based ecotourism enterprises and take on more and more responsibility and more and more power of environmental management devolved from the government agencies (M.-J. Lin 2020, 44).

"Empowerment" and "community participation" became popular terms in development projects during the 1980s and 1990s and have gained wide support from states, international donors, and NGOs around the world in terms of their implications of cost-saving, project efficiency, and community self-help (Mayo and Craig 1995, 2; Cheater 1999). These development projects promised the powerless that they could take a share of the fruits of development and management responsibility and ultimately become agents of their own development. However, the model of community empowerment has been criticized for its limitations. Although it might "empower" some individual community members and allow them to exercise agency within the development framework, it has not given the communities any direct control of resources and decision-making, thus rendering it impossible to change the existing power structure (Mayo and Craig 1995).

Since the early 2000s, community empowerment has also become a buzzword in Taiwan's government programs and policies. Although the concept of empowerment and the state's role in "empowering" Indigenous communities were contested, most government officials and practitioners of community development projects usually regarded the problems in these projects as amenable to technical solutions. As Tania Li (2007b, 4) argues, there is a marked

distinction between critics and programmers of development projects. Programmers, such as community development practitioners, are constantly under pressure to implement the projects according to the plan and are in no position to make programming itself an object of analysis, resulting in a lack of critical evaluation of the impact of the programs being implemented.

Dr. Chen's role was more like a programmer than a critic of community empowerment. In my interviews with Dr. Chen, she expressed that community empowerment, though important, is the most challenging process because it takes a lot of time to build trust between community members and outsiders like her; still, successful community development projects relied on winning the trust and support of local leaders, such as the chiefs and village heads. This strategy has proven to be successful in the Rukai communities. Although traditional chiefs may not have significant political power anymore, they are still accorded great respect in cultural and social settings. The village heads, i.e., the communities' elected administrative leaders, are also able to promote the ecotourism ideas and training activities during community meetings.

In addition to facilitating communication and building trust within the community, Dr. Chen offered a series of ecotourism training workshops to local community members to equip them with the tools, knowledge, and skills needed for ecotourism. The themes of the training workshops included conducting biological and cultural surveys in the community, documenting and monitoring the ecological changes of the surrounding environment, plant and animal classification and identification, tour design and interpretation, as well as advertising and designing a customer survey for feedback. Through these training workshops, local community members were expected to develop a new set of competencies that would help them become a competitive ecotourism product in the market.

For the Rukai community members, participating in ecotourism required learning a new way of interacting with the environment and performing their Indigenous identity. In the process of learning a new way of talking, thinking, and behaving, they gradually developed a commodified persona for ecotourists. For example, they had to be able to determine the specific name of a range of animals and plants in Mandarin. They needed to identify points of interest in their community and surrounding natural areas that might interest the ecotourists. Leading an interpretive walking tour also required the community members to speak more loudly, make direct eye contact[24], and conduct interpretive activities that would be comprehensible and appealing to non-Indigenous tourists.

Dr. Chen and her Community Forestry Laboratory have worked closely with the Adiri to develop community-based ecotourism since 2008. Dr. Chen told the Adiri that what makes their community-based ecotourism appealing and distinct is not just the spectacular flora, fauna, or whatever was surrounding them, but also their Indigenous culture. Community artisans were invited to display their works during the tour. Indigenous guides and their families were mobilized to practice traditional songs and dances to welcome the ecotourists. When the tourism workers interacted with the tourists, they were asked to wear their traditional costumes, which they would not usually have worn on a regular day.

Compared to the Adiri ecotourism, the development of community-based ecotourism in the Labuwan community is recent. When the Labuwan reached out to Dr. Chen for help with post-disaster recovery after Typhoon Morakot, ecotourism development was not a priority because the condition of the road in the Labuwan region was too unstable to transport tourists. After much discussion with Dr. Chen, the Labuwan decided to focus on millet revitalization and

[24] Making direct eye contact is outside the Rukai normal cultural behaviors, especially for the Rukai women.

agroforestry as their primary strategy of post-disaster reconstruction. The Labuwan started to grow herbal crops and raise free-range chickens under forest canopies with financial and technological support from the Taiwan Forestry Bureau and NPUST. As the road conditions improved, the Labuwan started to undertake the ecotourism training offered by NPUST and launched its ecotourism products in 2014.

To make their ecotourism products appealing to non-Indigenous tourists, the Adiri and Labuwan community members sometimes had to exoticize themselves as the Other by highlighting the traditional aspects of the Rukai culture and by contrasting their culture with that of mainstream society. Even though the Indigenous guides needed to construct a commodified persona to meet tourist desire, some of them enacted their commodification on their own terms to resist the objectification of human relations and to transform the power dynamics in the host-guest encounters. For example, a Labuwan guide told me in an interview: "We are not performing for the tourists. We are sharing our culture with them." Instead of displaying themselves for pay to tourists from a dominant society, the Labuwan tourism workers treated their performance of traditional songs and dances as an act of cultural exchange with non-Indigenous visitors. The Adiri Chief said that he preferred to refer to outside visitors as friends instead of tourists or customers. He told the visitors on tours of his traditional house: "We become a family once you come into my house. Please cherish this place as a family member rather than just a passerby." This statement required that visitors to share some responsibility to care for the environment which the Rukai people call home. Most importantly, it strategically dissolved the binaries of hosts/guests and Indigenous/non-Indigenous and resisted the power imbalances embedded in these divisions.

3.3 Indigenous Worldviews and Traditional Ecological Knowledge in Ecotourism

3.3.1 Myth and History

Intimate knowledge of their traditional territories positions the Rukai people as the ideal guides and interpreters for visitors to the area. An example is the eye-catching murals in the Labuwan community (Fig. 8). These murals present some cultural artifacts[25] and symbols of the Rukai culture as well as the Labuwan legends and stories, so the local guides like to stop by these murals to tell these stories to tourists on their interpretive walks.

Several guides in the Labuwan are actually experienced hunters, so they are able to recount almost all the names of places in their traditional territories in their Indigenous language. What challenges them is how to translate these places and their stories into Mandarin, the language used by the non-Indigenous society in Taiwan. The content in the Rukai stories makes manifest the divergence between the Rukai worldview and that of the mainstream culture, so I will share several of the stories along with their importance to the community.

Figure 8. A Labuwan guide stops by the community mural to tell about legends and other stories to tourists. **Photo by the author.**

[25] Such as clay pots, lazurite beads, and bronze knives. Only the nobles in the Rukai society can possess these cultural artifacts

One of the most intriguing stories told by the Labuwan guides is that of a hunting taboo that restricts the exploitation of wildlife; it is the myth of Red Fire Eye (紅火眼), which goes as follows. The real name of the Red Fire Eye was Kahegamen. He was born in the Old Labuwan community. When he was about one or two years old, he often climbed up the roof and sat there, staring directly at the sun. Soon Kahegamen's parents found out another strange thing about their child–whenever he stared at a fly or other small insect, it would be burned to death immediately. As Kahegamen grew up, his power also became stronger. People began to call him "Red Fire Eye." Being afraid that their son's power might cause harm to other villagers, Red Fire Eye's parents discussed with villagers finding a place for their son to live in seclusion. They chose a cave above a waterfall of the Babanabanaban River. When Red Fire Eye lived there, villagers brought him food regularly. When villagers arrived at the cave, they would ring a bell to let him know. Red Fire Eye would blindfold himself so that he would not harm anyone accidentally. As Red Fire Eye became well-known outside of the Labuwan community, offering him food became a duty across villages (Fig. 9).

Figure 9. The story mural of the Red Fire Eye. **Photo by the author.**

Additionally, villagers were also told by Red Fire Eye to avoid hunting when the moon was waning because it was his time to hunt. Hunters were allowed to hunt when the moon was waxing. Failing to obey the rule would bring misfortune upon the hunters. Red Fire Eye was also willing to share his game with villagers. How did Red Fire Eye hunt? He climbed on a big rock and shouted loudly. He used his eyes to burn and kill the animals that were attracted by his calls. Villagers could bring these animals back while the moon was waxing.

Every year the Labuwan invited Red Fire Eye to come back to the village and attend *tangidrakakalane* (the harvest ceremony). As usual, Red Fire Eye was blindfolded and guided by villagers. In the village, people were in awe of him and called him *dumuida* (meaning "our grandfather") rather than his name. One time when he got very drunk on his way back home, he accidentally took off his blindfold at a place called *ganamia*. All the mountains and rivers he saw were immediately on fire. That's why that place has amazing yellow, red, and black rocky landscapes. Even today, the old Labuwan hunters still provide Red Fire Eye offerings when they pass by Red Fire Eye's residence.

After the Labuwan guide finished the story, he told the tourists:

> Although we became less afraid of Red Fire Eye's taboo after we converted to Christianity, I believed that his power still existed. When I was very young, I went fishing in a pond right below his cave. The pond's water was too dark to fish in the shadows of the trees, so I used my new knife to cut off some branches. All of a sudden, my new knife snapped in half. I was so scared that I fled immediately. It was very likely that Red Fire Eye still did not allow people to go near his dwelling.

Different worlds were enacted and woven together in the interpretation narrated by the Labuwan guide. For the Labuwan, this mythological ancestral being did not just live in their imagination. He left his physical representation and marks on the landscape. His spiritual power can still be felt by the Labuwan and evoke their reverence and fear at the present time. His mystical presence still affects the way Labuwan walk and hunt in that area. This taboo is still in place even though

the majority of community members have converted to Christianity and the Western worldview. The Labuwan guide's interpretation suggests that different worldviews can co-exist.

Another story that the Labuwan guides like to share with tourists is the story of the Labuwan hero–Belan. He was a legendary hunter, who had hunted many animals, including wild boar, goats, sambars, and bears. As the Labuwan guide told me, only very brave and skillful hunters were able to hunt fierce and dangerous animals like bears. Legend has it that Belan caught more than thirty bears throughout his lifetime. Interestingly, Belan's descendants were also acclaimed bear hunters. Even current Labuwan community members can still trace their lineage to this legendary figure. These stories told by the local guides are not just hearsay or legends from the past; the stories are intertwined with the histories of their families and community.

3.3.2 Heterogeneity and Dissent around Cultural Heritage

In May 2017, the Labuwan community was hosting a community conservation workshop organized by NPUST and the Taiwan Forestry Bureau. The participants of the workshop included practitioners of community-based conservation projects and government officials from the Taiwan Forestry Bureau. The Adiri community was also invited to host the welcome party and share their experiences of post-disaster recovery and ecotourism development with workshop attendees. Since the road to the Adiri community became treacherous after a rainfall, the Labuwan agreed to let the Adiri hold the party at the Labuwan community assembly hall.

It was probably the first time that the Labuwan lent their community assembly hall to another Rukai community. That night, the Adiri chief, Chief Abaliwsu, made an eloquent presentation, which was alternated with the Adiri elders' singing of Rukai traditional songs and

recitations of poems. Every person at the event seemed to be touched in some way. One of the songs sung by the Adiri elders was “senai ki Balenge” (巴冷戀曲). The Adiri Chief said:

> I believe that most of you have heard of this song of Balenge ka abulru (Princess Banen, 巴冷公主). People told me the musical of Princess Balenge performed at the Taipei International Flora Exposition (in 2010) was playing to a full house. Rukai people have several versions of this story, but there is one common scene among them. When Princess Balenge had to leave her community to marry to the Snake King of Lake Dalupalringi (大鬼湖), she gave some last words to the community: “I will miss my homeland and my people. I will prepare food for my people when you pass by Lake Dalupalringi to hunt or farm. If the food is warm, please feel free to have it…” Her children often transformed from small snakes to eagles, hovering over traditional territories like guardians.

Chief Abaliwsu then connected the story to the present Rukai people:

> I often tell my community members… You may have to leave home for education or jobs. No matter where you are, you must remember where your home is and pray for this place. One day when you are able to return home and contribute to your community, you are just like Princess Balenge, taking care of our people with warmth and generosity.

Chief Abaliwsu’s interpretation linked the story creatively to the Adiri’s ongoing struggle and desire to maintain connection to their ancestral land. The Labuwan community members, however, had a completely different response to the story. From my ethnographic observation and informal interviews, the Labuwan had mixed feelings of pride and anger about the story of Princess of Balenge because they argued that their ancestral community was where the story was originated, while the story has been told incorrectly over and over outside their community.

In a tour guide training workshop offered by NPUST, a non-Indigenous lecturer introduced some basic knowledge about animal identification, especially the animals that are commonly seen in the surrounding environment or culturally meaningful to the community. One of the animals mentioned in the class was the hundred-pacer viper (百步蛇), which has been deemed as the guardian of the Rukai people. The Snake King in the story of Princess Balenge was the incarnation of a hundred-pacer viper. The lecturer said: “When you talk about the

hundred-pacer viper, you can tell the story of Princess Balenge. It is a good opportunity to introduce your culture to the tourists!" Although the suggestion sounded like a good one, there were murmurs of dissent from the Labuwan that the lecturer did not expect. The Labuwan village head explained: "We don't like to hear people calling her Princess Balenge in our community. Her real name was Limuasa and she was not even a princess."

According to the descendants of Limuasa's family, the real story happened in Dadele[26] about 270 years ago. Limuasa, a member of the Dadele, fell in love with a man from another community. It was considered unacceptable and shameful at that time. Before agreeing to the marriage, Limuasa's family posed several challenges to the man in order for him to prove his worth. After he had completed all the challenges, Limuasa's parents had no choice but to grant him permission to marry their daughter. The man married Limuasa as agreed; however, there was not a happy ending. Since Limuasa felt guilty toward her parents, the couple committed suicide a few days later in Lake Dalupalringi. To avoid bringing dishonor to the family, Limuasa's parents told people that their daughter had married the Snake King and lived by Lake Dalupalringi ever after.

From the Labuwan's point of view, the story of Princess Balenge was an example of how their culture is appropriated and misrepresented by other communities and outsiders. Even though cultural borrowing and reinvention among the Indigenous communities is not uncommon, the descendants of Limuasa's family considered the rewriting of the story without consulting them to be disrespectful. As the name of Princess Balenge has been circulated through various types of media, including a video game, television, and musical performances, it has become a representative figure of the Rukai culture in the non-Indigenous society. The Labuwan had little

[26] Dadele was an ancient community whose members were later relocated along with members of Talamakau (青葉部落) to the current location of Labuwan by the Japanese colonial government during the 1940s.

control of how the story was used and perceived. They were afraid that the name of Limuasa would be forgotten, even by their own children.

To protest, the Labuwan's traditional leaders and the descendants of Limuasa's family went to the Legislative Yuan (立法院) in Taipei in September, 2007, to ask the government to help protect their cultural heritage, including their right to tell that story. The Protection Act for "Taiwan Indigenous Traditional Intellectual Creations" (*yuanzhu minzu chuantong zhihui chuangzuo baohu tiaoli*, 原住民族傳統智慧創作保護條例), which aims to protect the cultural and intellectual property rights of Taiwanese Indigenous peoples, was passed in December 2007 but not enacted until March 2015. From 2015 to 2019, there have been 61 cases of traditional creations that have been registered by Indigenous peoples or communities based on this law[27]; however, the Labuwan did not actually attempt to register for the ownership of the story of Limuasa. While this Protection Act has helped protect the cultural and traditional creations of Indigenous people communally from being appropriated by the non-Indigenous society, it would be controversial to apply the law to ascribe rights to certain Indigenous individuals if there are rival claims of ownership or control over the cultural heritage within the Indigenous group. In the case of the story of Limuasa, the Labuwan merely asked for the right of proper recognition of Labuwan's history and consultation with the community instead of exclusive control over this cultural property and its commodification. "All we wanted was to make the story of Limuasa remembered by our future generations of all the Rukai people," the chief of Labuwan said. To resolve the conflicts, the Rukai communities even held a meeting in the Wutai Township in November 2008 to express their divergent points of view regarding the stories of Princess

[27] The information was retrieved from the website of the Council of Indigenous Peoples, Taiwan: https://www.titic.apc.gov.tw, accessed January 20, 2020.

Balenge and Limuasa, but this meeting did not decide definitively which version of the story was correct.

That night, when the Labuwan heard the story of Princess Balenge being reiterated by the chief of the Adiri in front of the visitors, the Labuwan chose to stay silent so as not to ruin the atmosphere of the welcome party and their relationship with the Adiri. Although the debate over Princess Balenge and Limuasa among the Rukai communities has become less heated over the past decade, the Labuwan still want to tell the story of Limuasa accurately. They considered tourism as a great platform to continue this effort.

The dissent around the stories of Princess Balenge and Limuasa manifest heterogeneity in Rukai cultural heritage. As the image of Princess Balenge has been so popular and has been considered a representation of the Rukai culture in Taiwan's mass media, such as television and musicals, ecotourism gives the Labuwan an opportunity to reclaim their community history by telling the story of Limuasa to tourists from the Labuwan's point of view. In a community tour, when a Labuwan guide introduced the community history and culture to visitors, he made a stop in front of a mural of a woman and a snake in the community. The local guide told visitors confidently: "Although people from other Rukai communities can tell the story of Princess Balenge, no one knows where she was actually from. Only the Labuwan know where Limuasa actually lived and how she travelled to Lake Dalupalringi." The mural was located right next to the house of Limuasa's living descendants, which served as a tangible connection between past and present (Fig. 10). By using ecotourism to voice their own history, the Labuwan turned self-commodification into a form of resistance against a homogenized narrative around Rukai cultural heritage.

Figure 10. The story mural of Limuasa, which is located right next to the house of Limuasa's descendants in the Labuwan community. **Photo by the author.**

3.3.3 Land, Ancestors, and Millet

Millet is arguably the most significant crop in the Rukai culture. On important occasions, like childbirth, weddings, and harvest ceremonies, community members prepare millet bundles as well as food and drinks made from millet, such as *abai*[28] and millet wine. In the past, only wealthy families had enough land to grow millet, so millet has been a status symbol in the Rukai culture.

Harvest time for millet in Labuwan is usually between April and May. In addition to millet farming tasks, Lavaosu, the former village head of Labuwan, was also busy planning new activities for the community-based ecotourism. Before the millet harvest season, Chia-Fang, the assistant at NPUST discussed with Lavaosu the possibility of incorporating millet harvesting and

[28] A traditional Rukai leaf-wrapped dumpling made from ground millet and pork wrapped in the leaves of khasya trichodesma (*Trichodesma khasianum* Clarke, 假酸漿; its Rukai name is *alabulru*) and banana leaves.

processing activities into Labuwan's existing ecotourism activities so tourists would have the opportunity to assist with farming tasks during their visits. Before Lavaosu and Chia-Fang decided the dates for ecotourism activities, they would always discuss the schedule of community events first. Lavaosu informed Chia-Fang that she assisted with cultural and language classes for the Labuwan children on Saturday afternoons and that community members went to church on Sundays. They decided, therefore, that the two-day tourism event would be held from Friday morning to Saturday morning even though activities held entirely on weekends might attract more tourists. In an interview with Lavaosu, she told me: "We insist that tourism should fit into our community life rather than forcibly changing the way we are living. Our culture will soon disappear if all we care about is making money." Incorporating ecotourism into community life could be challenging for community members for causing disruptions in daily routines, but Lavaosu's statements demonstrate the Labuwan community's efforts to manage ecotourism on their own terms as they did not let the ecotourism activities take priority over their community life.

The two-day agritourism event was held in Labuwan in mid-May. When the Labuwan community members were preparing lunch for the tourists, a young Indigenous guide led a walking tour and presented community history and the natural surroundings to tourists. It was the guide's first time leading an interpretive tour, so Lavaosu came to listen to her interpretation in order to give her feedback. Before her debut in leading the interpretive tour, the young Indigenous guide had observed other senior guides' interpretations several times and even asked her parents to retell her some stories that she had heard as a child.

After lunch, Lavaosu took all the tourists to a millet field and gave everyone a pair of cotton gloves, a basket, and a small sickle. She explained to the tourists why millet is so

important in the Rukai culture, how to tell if the grains are mature enough, and how to harvest the grains from the stalks. Lavaosu also taught the tourists some Rukai traditional songs that the Labuwan elders usually sang while working, which helped relieve their boredom of tedious farming tasks. At the end of the harvesting activity, a Labuwan elder taught tourists how to tie the millet stalks into bunches, which were later let dry in a location protected from rain.

For the second day of the event, Lavaosu brought the tourists to Labuwan's "Millet Museum (*xiaomi gushi guan*, 小米故事館)," where different types of local millet and cultural artifacts made from millet were displayed. To trace the history of this small museum, Lavaosu told the tourists about Labuwan's post-disaster reconstruction experience after Typhoon Morakot:

> I often told people that the Labuwan were really brave. We had to face many challenges when we decided to come back after being devastated by Typhoon Morakot. We didn't know if the crops would grow again. We were not sure if our culture could be revitalized… if there would be more community members willing to return home. Nevertheless, the community elders told us: "Any decisions about the community must be made on our land. God and our ancestors won't bless a community that runs away." … When other communities were talking about relocation, we were thinking about how to come back here unnoticeably and how to raise funds for reconstruction on our own. The community culture will be eroded if the majority of residents move out… Do you think living in the community is easy? No, it is not. It's easier to switch from a rural life to an urban one than vice versa. Why did I say so? Because I've been there myself.

Lavaosu's statement suggests the intertwined relationship between land, ancestors, and the present generation. When most roads and bridges in the Wutai Township were destroyed by the typhoon, the government hoped that all the Rukai communities could relocate to lowland regions that were deemed much safer than the mountainous areas. Nevertheless, the Labuwan continued to claim ancestral ties with and responsibilities towards their traditional territories. They believed that they had an obligation to protect and care for their ancestral land. Lavaosu's comment on

community life also shatters the stereotype that Indigenous people always live an idyllic life in the mountains and settling back into their home community is an easy and obvious decision.

Like many other Indigenous people in Taiwan, Lavaosu and her husband left their community for other towns and cities to look for educational and employment opportunities when they were just teenagers. Lavaosu's husband was a construction worker and often had to move from construction site to construction site. Before the couple decided to settle back on Labuwan land, they and their three children had moved from one city to another during the previous two decades. In 2009, Lavaosu was elected as the first female village head after the Labuwan community was devastated by Typhoon Morakot. Being a female leader in Rukai's traditionally patriarchal society was not easy, not to mention the difficulty she faced tackling the challenges caused by the unprecedented disaster. Nevertheless, she helped establish the "Labuwan In-Situ Reconstruction Association" (大武就地重建協會) to raise funds, and she developed a recovery plan to help community members get back on their feet.

Revitalization of Labuwan's traditional culture and knowledge was one of the primary goals of the Labuwan In-Situ Reconstruction Association. Since millet has played an important role in the Rukai culture, Lavaosu soon realized that it was important to focus their efforts on millet revitalization in their community. At first, she did not even know how to grow millet. To learn the knowledge related to millet, Lavaosu and her fellow community members conducted interviews with elders to document all the names and stories of local millet varieties. Lavaosu also sought help from the Community Forestry Laboratory at NPUST for more resources and assistance. Lavaosu said:

> My parents told me that our land has been blessed by our ancestors so we can often develop a new type of crop that we've never seen before. I didn't believe it until we returned to our community to farm after Typhoon Morakot. We found this new kind of millet that none of the elders has ever seen!

For Lavaosu and other Labuwan, returning home and revitalizing millet on their own land was to keep the promise they made to their elders and ancestors. They believed that these new varieties of millet embodied a blessing from their ancestors. It reflects the Labuwan's unique perspective on the human-land relationship as a responsibility and reciprocity.

Although the displays in the Millet Museum were very simple, all the millet varieties were nicely decorated, framed, and labeled with their Rukai names written in the Roman alphabet (Fig. 11). Lavaosu showed the displays to the tourists and explained how each type of millet got its name. One of the millet varieties was called *makapupunugu*, which means 'brought in by our daughter-in-law.' Lavaosu said:

> When a woman from another community was going to marry to a man in Labuwan, her parents prepared millet grown in their community as a dowry. That millet represents good luck and prosperity brought by their daughter so she would be respected by her husband's family. Look, this millet is originally from the Oponoho community[29] (萬山部落). Our wise elders recognized and respected their daughter-in-law's contribution rather than claiming it as their own.

For the Labuwan community members, naming the millet served more than the purpose of identification and classification. The name of the millet that recognized the daughter-in-law's contribution also celebrated the virtues of sharing and reciprocity, which were important cultural values in the Rukai society.

[29] The Oponoho community is a Rukai community living in the Maolin District, Kaohsiung in southern Taiwan.

Figure 11. A Labuwan guide shares stories about millet with tourists in the Millet Museum. **Photo by the author.**

After Lavaosu finished her guided interpretation, she did not forget to promote their agricultural products to the tourists. "Our millet and red quinoa[30] are nutritious and certified organic. People are paying attention to healthy eating today… Our soil can produce crops of high quality because we use environmentally friendly farming practices," she said. Through her guided interpretation, Lavaosu cleverly accommodated the language of modern agriculture and dietetics to transform their traditional crops into an appealing commodity for modern consumers. The millet not only represents Labuwan's cultural values, virtues, and ancestral wisdom, but also embodies ecotourists' desire for pristine nature and healthy living outside the city.

The last tourism activity was to teach tourists to craft their own millet souvenirs using the undersized seed heads of millet. The millet in Labuwan grows in several colors, including

[30] The red quinoa mentioned here is a cereal plant native to Taiwan (*Chenopodium formosanum* Koidz, 臺灣藜), which is different from the South American quinoa. *Baae* is the name of the cereal in the Rukai language, but the Rukai people usually call it *hongli* (red quinoa in Mandarin) when speaking to non-Indigenous people.

yellow, black, and red. Lavaosu asked tourists to choose one of the colors to make their millet ornaments and explained that different types of millet carry different meanings and can bring people different kinds of luck: yellow millet symbolizes growth and abundance; black millet symbolizes wealth; and red millet symbolizes romantic love. “This is what the elders told us. I don’t make this stuff up!” Lavaosu stressed. When a tourist told Lavaosu that he was a student and wanted to achieve academic success, Lavaosu immediately suggested that he chose the yellow millet to make his souvenir.

In her guided tour and interactions with the ecotourists, Lavaosu not only demonstrated in-depth knowledge of her Indigenous culture, but also a sophisticated understanding of touristic expectations. She skillfully turned her Indigenous identity and their traditional crop into tourism commodities while not compromising their cultural values.

3.4 Resistance through Commodification and Strategic Accommodation

Participating in community-based ecotourism requires that the Rukai people learn a new way of interacting with the environment and performing their Indigenous identity in front of non-Indigenous tourists. The Indigenous tourism workers had to undertake the training and language of environmental conservation offered by the university and government agencies. They still wanted to take part in ecotourism to be able to stay on their ancestral lands given the limited choices they had for financial resources and autonomy. Some Rukai community members did not feel comfortable commoditizing themselves for tourism at first, whereas other Indigenous guides maintained the dignity of their culture and identity while commoditizing it on their own terms. For example, the Labuwan community members viewed their self-commodification as a cultural exchange, which deserved reciprocal respect from the non-Indigenous tourists. In the Adiri

Chief's statement that transforms visitors into "family members" of his community, he disrupted the boundaries between Indigenous hosts and non-Indigenous guests and resisted the power asymmetries that are embedded in these boundaries.

A Native American scholar LeAnne Howe (1999) developed the concept "tribalography" to describe how Indigenous stories consist of the weaving between autobiography, fiction, and history as well as the connections between past, present, and future. In the intellectual tradition, the written texts of the past have been given privilege over the oral tradition. Tribalography repositions the act of telling Indigenous stories and knowledge at the center instead of as an addition to the settler-colonial narrative (Francis and Munson 2017). By focusing on the totality of Indigenous experience, tribalography disrupts the colonial binaries between history and fiction and between the past and present.

I argue that the Rukai people have used ecotourism as a site to perform and assert their sovereignty. The Rukai guides' interpretation, such as the stories of Red Fire Eye and the legendary hunter Belan, can also be understood as tribalographic stories that connect legends, history, and personal experiences as well as linking the past and present. Moreover, these Indigenous stories and narratives open up a space for multiple worlds rather than a single dominant worldview. Lavaosu's account of the inseparable relations between land, ancestor, and millet shows the Rukai people's ancestral ties and responsibilities toward their environment. The blending of the words of their ancestors and elders/mentors brought out the important knowledge of ethical virtues to both the Indigenous and non-Indigenous societies: the human-land relationship should be understood as a blessing and an obligation. Through their ecotourism interpretation, the Rukai people reaffirm their sovereignty by demonstrating their continued existence and their environmental stewardship of the land as well as challenging the

conventional dichotomies between myth/history, human/nonhuman, and past/present that have been reinforced in the settler-colonial narrative.

The Labuwan community members have also used ecotourism as a platform to author their Indigenous story/history and determine the representations of their past. Their self-representation and commodification in ecotourism could be understood as a form of resistance against the dominant and homogenizing narrative that the mainstream promotes about the Rukai cultural heritage (e.g. the Princess Balenge). Telling their story of Limuasa again and again in ecotourism, the Labuwan guides ensured their version of the Indigenous story/history would be passed down by their future generations and heard by the non-Indigenous society. Ecotourism has also been used as a means to promote the cultural transmission and revitalization of the Rukai people's traditional ecological knowledge (TEK). Younger Indigenous tourism workers were able to learn more knowledge about millet from older community members when they participated in the processes of harvesting and processing of millet as well as preparation of customary foods.

While engagement in community-based ecotourism is one of the limited options available to the Adiri and Labuwan communities to stay on their ancestral lands, it represents the Rukai people's endeavor to further their land-based self-determination by strategically accommodating the conservation discourses and institutions provided by the settler society.

CHAPTER 4: INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AND COLLABORATIVE CONSERVATION

Summary

This chapter focuses on the conflicts between mainstream conservation discourses and the Rukai communities' concept of conservation. I first explore the development of conservation policies and programs in Taiwan and critically interrogate the assumptions about Indigenous peoples that underly the state's conservation objectives. I then examine how the Rukai people articulated their concepts and practices of conservation when they interacted with government officials and conservation scientists. Although the Rukai community members have built a partnership with the government in collaborative conservation projects, they have remained wary and critical of the colonial dimensions and limitations of conservation. Finally, I examine an emerging co-management framework in Taiwan that incorporates the discourses of the Satoyama Initiative, biodiversity conservation, and rural regeneration. I argue that this new collaborative model of conservation and development has a tendency to depoliticize the socio-ecological problems facing the rural Indigenous communities.

4.1 Indigenous Peoples and Conservation Discourses in Taiwan

In Taiwan, there are growing opportunities for Indigenous communities to collaborate with state agencies for the sake of conservation. The relationship between Indigenous peoples and conservation, however, has been riddled with conflicts. The fortress conservation approach over the past decades had disproportionately affected Indigenous peoples and their livelihoods. Changes in conservation policies began in the late 1990s when the Taiwanese government started to amend environmental laws to recognize Indigenous peoples' rights to their land and

resources and started to emphasize the importance of local participation in conservation. At the same time, Indigenous peoples were gradually framed as an important partner in biodiversity conservation and their traditional ecological knowledge was valorized as a necessary component of sustainable environmental management (Lu et al. 2006).

In a television interview[31], Lin Hwa-Ching, the director general of the Taiwan Forestry Bureau, drew on the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) to talk about the Forestry Bureau's position on Indigenous rights:

> The CBD explicitly mentioned that we have to conserve biodiversity, but what is equally important is to make sure its benefits are shared in a fair and equitable manner…Also the CBD talks about protecting Indigenous peoples' cultures because it is relevant for the conservation of biodiversity. Now the key is how to accommodate Indigenous peoples' traditional lifestyles on the land when we implement conservation projects…Our national laws were made in a context where Indigenous peoples' rights were not taken into account and we have to make amends for it…We want to enhance mutual understanding between the state and Indigenous peoples and even co-management…These efforts are all in accordance with the objectives of biodiversity conservation.

The Taiwan Forestry Bureau incorporated Indigenous peoples into the biodiversity conservation scheme based on both ethical and utilitarian reasons —to address historical injustices towards Indigenous peoples and to protect Indigenous knowledge that could be utilized to cope with challenges in the conservation of biodiversity. However, the debate over the specific role of Indigenous peoples and their traditional knowledge in environmental management has been polarized in Taiwan for years.

Some scholars have believed that Indigenous peoples have been "guardians of nature" as their traditional cultures and knowledge enabled them to live harmoniously with the natural world for generations (e.g. Pei 2004; Liu 2004). They romanticize Indigenous peoples as "noble savages" who have not been corrupted by modern civilization and possess an innate wisdom and

[31] Taiwan Indigenous Television, *Indigenous Views* (部落大小聲), May 19, 2018.

connection to nature. However, this perspective is problematic because it overemphasizes the traditional aspects of Indigenous cultures while downplaying the contemporary environmental, social, and economic pressures Indigenous peoples face, which can greatly shape their strategies of resource use. If Indigenous peoples fail to live up to the expectations of the noble savage, they often face harsh criticism from the non-Indigenous public (Nadasdy 2005; Hames 2007; Muehlmann 2009).

On the other hand, some people have challenged the qualifications of Indigenous peoples for safeguarding environmental resources because their traditional knowledge and practices have been lost or are not "traditional" anymore (e.g. Shi 2005; Chu 2017). For example, an animal rights advocate argued against the Forestry Bureau's establishment of a legal hunting area in Danda (丹大) for the Bunun people:

> With the advancement of technology, Indigenous traditional hunting has long been interrupted. Today many Indigenous hunters are using guns, foot snares, and bird nets to hunt…They have caught and killed animals regardless of the species, age, and sex of the animals. Sometimes they have even mistakenly shot dogs. Compared to the simple methods used in traditional hunting, Indigenous peoples' hunting has changed too much…It's an unfair fight with animals. The "new hunting culture" is not only a catastrophe for wildlife but also reflects a sad fact of Indigenous peoples' cultural loss (Shi 2005).

Although the statement did not question the effectiveness of Indigenous peoples' traditional knowledge in environmental management, it assumed that Indigenous peoples have not hunted in a "traditional" manner and have lost the ability to manage the environmental resources in a sustainable way and are, therefore, in no position to reclaim their rights to environmental stewardship and resources. This approach imposes binary oppositions of traditional/modern, backward/advanced, and sustainable/unsustainable, which can be related to an underlying binary in colonial discourse--colonized/colonizer (Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin 2013). From the animal right advocate's perspective, contemporary Indigenous peoples are the "colonizer" and

the animals are the "colonized" in the simplistic binary. While this argument aims to highlight a relation of dominance between human and animals, it is also based on the romanticism of an outdated lifestyle. Like the early anthropological work criticized by Fabian (2014), the animal rights activists view the Indigenous peoples "from a distance" and created a timeless image of Indigenous cultures. It assumes that Indigenous peoples should lead a traditional lifestyle and hunt with spears and stones because their culture is located in the past. When Indigenous peoples no longer live up to this expectation, they become as "guilty" as anyone else and should be governed under the same social obligations as the non-Indigenous society.

In sum, when discussing the relationships between Indigenous peoples and conservation, Indigenous peoples are romanticized as "noble savages" who have a primal and mystical relationship with nature or as "fallen angels" who have been corrupted by the vices of modern technology and capitalist greed. Both ideological frameworks, however, are expectations and standards imposed by non-Indigenous society. They are imbued with stereotypes and ethnocentric assumptions and are used to legitimize further cultural intrusion into Indigenous peoples' lives.

4.2 Rukai People's Perceptions of Conservation

The Rukai people's historical relationship with the state's environmental protection efforts is far from harmonious. In my interviews and interactions with the Rukai community members, when they heard the word "conservation" (*baoyu*, 保育) in Mandarin, in addition to it referring to protection of fauna and flora, many community members connected it to the laws and policies that denied their rights to access and use the environmental resources on their ancestral land.

When I asked the village head of the Labuwan his perceptions of the Taiwan Forestry Bureau, he told me his experience with a frown:

> I don't have a favorable view of the government, especially the Forestry Bureau…When I was just seven years old, my father took me to the mountain behind the Labuwan community, which was our hunting grounds. We got what we needed from the forests, but we were accused of breaking the laws of the Forestry Bureau. The aiyu fruits[32] were wild plants growing naturally on our ancestral land. We just harvested the fruits and even took very good care of the plants and the land. We only sold the fruits and didn't cut down the trees…It should be considered a very reasonable use of the resource. However, we were accused of stealing their property and all the fruits were confiscated. Even today they (the Forestry Bureau) are still treating us as thieves!

The aiyu fruit has always been an important source of income in the Rukai communities. Many elder community members could still recollect finding and harvesting aiyu fruits with their parents. "I even chased an aiyu fruit that dropped from the hill to the riverbed because I relied on it to pay my school fees!" a Labuwan elder told me. The creeping fig plants could climb towering trees, rendering it extremely dangerous to collect the fruits near the treetops. Nevertheless, some young Indigenous people would risk their lives to go higher to harvest aiyu fruits because they needed money to support their families. They were caught by the Taiwan Forestry Bureau because the aiyu fruits they harvested grew on the national forests. It is little wonder that the community members were furious when their aiyu fruits were confiscated by the Taiwan Forestry Bureau as they had taken the risk of severe injury or even death to harvest those fruits. Although aiyu is not a rare plant that needs to be conserved by the national law, the example partly reflects the type of behavior that has formed the Rukai people's hostility toward the Forestry Bureau.

[32] The aiyu fruit is the fruit of the creeping fig plant *Ficus pumila* var. *awkeotsang*, which is native to Taiwan and the southeastern Chinese provinces of Fujian and Zhejiang. The main use of this plant is its fruit seeds, which are harvested to make aiyu jelly, a popular summer snack in Taiwan.

In addition to historical fear of the state's top-down policies, the Rukai people's distrust and resentment towards conservation have also been caused by the fact that their concept of conservation differs greatly from that of the state. The Rukai community members often complained about the problem of monkey overpopulation in their communities, which has posed a serious threat to Indigenous farmers. These monkeys, also known as Formosan rock macaques, are native to Taiwan and since 1989 were categorized as a rare and valuable species in the second grade of a three-grade classification system in the Wildlife Conservation Act. In 2019, the Council of Agriculture (*nong weihui*, 農委會) removed Formosan rock macaques from the protected species list and reclassified them as a species of "ordinary wildlife," ending a nearly 30-year conservation policy. Despite the change in their conservation status, hunting or killing the monkeys is still prohibited by the Wildlife Conservation Act[33].

To deal with human-monkey conflicts, the Taiwan Forestry Bureau has subsidized the use of electric fences, which they learned from Japan, to keep monkeys and other wild animals away from farming lands. However, this method was not popular among Indigenous communities. I had a conversation with an Indigenous student at NPUST, whose family also engaged in farming in the mountain; he told me why electric fences were not used by Indigenous farmers:

> The shape of Indigenous people's lands in mountainous areas is usually irregular, which is very different from the shape of lands in the plain regions. It would be hard for Indigenous people to install the electric fences…Also it requires electricity and maintenance, which would be an economic burden for us. A cheaper alternative is to use firecrackers to scare off the monkeys, but it doesn't work anymore. These monkeys are getting smarter!

[33] Contravening the act carries a fine of NT$60,000 to NT$300,000 (about 2,000 to 10,000 USD). The minimum fine is two months of an average person's salary in Taiwan.

In other words, the solution provided by the Taiwan Forestry Bureau was not practical for many Indigenous communities in the mountainous areas given the environmental and economic constraints. Within the communities, I saw the Rukai people try a variety of methods to repel the monkeys, including using noise makers and smoke. Still, there was no single magic technical solution to effectively protect their crops from wild animals, especially the monkeys.

On an evening in mid-September, 2016, Indigenous tourism workers from the Rukai communities gathered in the Sandimen Township office to attend an ecotourism training workshop[34] held by the Pingtung District office of the Taiwan Forestry Bureau. The topic of the training workshop that day was wildlife conservation. The instructors were two government officials from the Forestry Bureau. In the middle of the class, when the instructors asked community members if they had any questions, a Labuwan community member asked: "Why do we have to conserve the monkeys? These wild monkeys eat almost every kind of crops, and they flee so fast. They even tried to break into my house to steal food!" Another Labuwan community member added: "There are already too many monkeys in the mountains. How should we live if the monkeys eat up all our food? The more you conserve, the more you are hurting Indigenous peoples…" One instructor replied that "We have to conserve the monkeys because they are human's close relatives. The monkey (Formosan rock macaque) is the only primate species in Taiwan except for humans. It is valuable and needs to be protected." The Rukai people were not satisfied with the answer.

In the Rukai people's worldview, animals are sentient beings who live among them in an equal and reciprocal relationship. As a Labuwan community member told me, if the animal has caused great damages to their lives and livelihoods, getting rid of it in a humane way is an

[34] Attending every training session was one of the requirements for Indigenous tourism workers to obtain the ecotour guide certification issued by the Taiwan Forestry Bureau.

appropriate response to its misdeed. However, over the past three decades, Indigenous peoples have been directed not to do any harm to the monkeys and other protected wildlife, despite the out-of-control population growth of these animals. Even though the Taiwan Forestry Bureau has amended Article 21 of the Wildlife Conservation Act in 2007 to allow "using humane methods approved by the authorities" to hunt or kill protected wildlife in case of emergency, many Indigenous people are still not aware of this amendment and are afraid that they could be put in jail for harming the protected species.

For a long time, Indigenous peoples' hunting rights have been seen as incompatible with animal welfare in Taiwan. Indigenous hunting practices have been stigmatized by animal rights groups as a purely violent and irrational act. These activists often took a paternalist attitude towards wildlife, contending that these defenseless animals must be protected from human exploitation and killing. As an animal rights activist Chu Tseng-Hung (2014) stated: "No matter how Indigenous hunting practices are sugar coated as culture, tradition, rights, and ecological wisdom, it is essentially killing from the animals' point of view" (p. 104). Such universalist perceptions of animal rights and values, however, are completely ethnocentric.

Hunting remains a vital means of subsistence and is an integral part of the cultures and identities of many Indigenous communities around the world. For the Rukai people, hunting is also a way to demonstrate a man's courage and generosity. A brave Rukai man who is able to hunt five wild boars[35] and who shares their meat with family and community members will be honored in the community ceremony and be awarded a white Formosa lily (*bariangalay*), the most important symbol of honor (*lrigu*) [36] in the Rukai culture (Fig. 12). The wild boars are

[35] The Adiri community requires six wild boars. Only fully-grown males are counted.
[36] The meaning of *lrigu* signified by the Formosa lily is gender-based in the Rukai culture: it symbolizes hunting prowess and bravery for men and purity and chastity for women (Abaliwsu 2012; Taiban 2014).

dangerous and unpredictable animals, so to hunt the animal, Indigenous hunters not only need courage, but also need to be careful and respectful to the animal's natural lifecycles, habitats, and hunting taboos. In other words, the hunters need to build a relationship with the animal through proper conduct and knowledge. This is similar to the conception of human-animal relationships in other Indigenous cultures--animals are viewed as persons who engage in reciprocal social relationships with humans (Nadasdy 2007).

Figure 12. The stone carving outside of a Rukai hunter's house. **Photo by the author.**

When the animal is hunted, the Rukai hunter kill the wounded animal as quickly as possible to avoid causing more pain and suffering to the animal. Every part of the animal would be shared and used by community members. The Rukai people also show their appreciation to the land, to their ancestors, and to the hunted animals through prayers and celebrations. In essence, the relationship between the Rukai people and animals is about reciprocity—if the hunter gives proper treatment and respect to the animal and to nature, nature will offer the animal's body as a gift to the hunter. As Indigenous hunting practices remain stigmatized and

discouraged by conservation discourses, it is still challenging for the Rukai people to maintain that reciprocal relationships with nature and pursue honor in their cultural way.

4.3 Convincing the Non-Indigenous Public

After President Tsai Ing-Wen's formal apology to the Indigenous peoples of Taiwan in 2016, the Taiwan Forestry Bureau started to make amendments to its environmental regulations[37] and policies that attempted to grant Indigenous peoples more autonomy to use and manage environmental resources on their traditional territories. One of the Forestry Bureau's recent efforts was to promote self-governance of Indigenous hunting (*sholie zizhu guanli*, 狩獵自主管理)[38]. The Forestry Bureau planned to work with several Indigenous communities in different regions of Taiwan to assist with establishing communal regulations on hunting and to collect scientific data about local hunting practices to avoid overhunting.

Among the Rukai communities, the Forestry Bureau's District Office in Pingtung chose to work with the Labuwan community because their hunting culture was relatively thriving. A conservation biologist was commissioned by the Forestry Bureau to communicate with the Labuwan community members to promote interest and participation in the government project. In a meeting held in the Labuwan community in June, 2017, the conservation biologist Dr. Chiang conducted a presentation for the community members reviewing the current conservation laws that regulate Indigenous hunting practices. After the presentation, he explained the purpose

[37] In June 2017, the Indigenous Peoples Council and the Council of Agriculture (農委會) declared an amendment to Article 15 of the Forestry Act to extend Indigenous rights of gathering to traditional territories, which include state-owned forests. As the delineation of Indigenous peoples' traditional territories is still in dispute, in July 2019 the Forestry Bureau established another regulation that allows Indigenous peoples to harvest forest resources on national forests.

[38] Since 2014, the Forestry Bureau's District Office in Chiayi worked with the Tsou people to implement self-governance of hunting at the community level. Since 2018, the Tsou people have established their own hunter association and communal regulations on hunting based on their customary laws.

and practices of self-governance of hunting, which would require Indigenous hunters to write their communal regulations down formally on paper as well as reporting their hunts to the Forestry Bureau. Many Labuwan experienced hunters attended the meeting that day.

When Dr. Chiang asked the Labuwan community members if they wanted to participate in this government project, the community members neither directly responded to Dr. Chiang's questions nor showed apparent interest. Instead, the Labuwan hunters focused their attention on the conservation laws and regulations in Dr. Chiang's presentation, voicing strong criticism of the state's conservation discourses and practices. The Labuwan hunters argued that Indigenous peoples understand and conserve their environment better than the state. "If Indigenous peoples didn't know how to protect the environment, the animals in the wild would have all been extinct in the wild. The disappearance of some animals is not caused by Indigenous peoples' hunting but by negative impacts from outside!" the head of the village said.

The Labuwan community members also contended that the government should not worry that Indigenous peoples would overhunt wild animals and cause the animal population to decrease. Indeed, the Rukai people had their traditional ways of managing hunting. According to a study by Lu et al.'s (2006), the Rukai people's customary hunting practices, including rules that require that they avoid hunting in their sacred sites and including the interpretation of omens from the observed flight of birds, helped them regulate and prevent overhunting within their traditional territories. They also have stories, such as the Red Fire Eye (See Chapter 3), which regulate where and when they were able to hunt on their traditional territory. These taboos kept hunters at bay in some areas and thus protected wildlife in these areas. Although the term "conservation" was never mentioned in these stories, the behavior dictated in the stories helped conserve wildlife populations.

In addition to cultural taboos, the Labuwan hunting practices are also regulated by environmental conditions. Because the roads to the Labuwan hunting grounds have been destroyed by Typhoon Morakot in 2009, local hunters have to walk through the riverbed during the dry season, which means they can only hunt for about three months of the year and they allow wildlife to rest and breed peacefully for the rest of time. Based on their years of experience hunting in the mountains, most hunters also argued that there has been an increase instead of a decrease in wildlife population, especially after Typhoon Morakot in 2009. The relocation of several Rukai communities from the mountainous area to lowlands has allowed a significant increase in wildlife population, such as muntjacs, wild boar, serows, and Sambar deer. As previously discussed, the problem of wildlife overpopulation has caused great damage to the farmlands in Indigenous communities.

In response to community members' resentment toward the state's conservation and hunting regulations, Dr. Chiang wanted to bring their attention back to the project regarding self-governance of hunting:

> I agree with you that hunting won't affect wildlife populations because I come to the mountains very frequently…I also feel that many wild animals reproduce so quickly and in such abundance that they are not likely to go extinct due to hunting. However, many people don't know that. If we need to convince people outside the community that hunting won't affect the animals, what can we do to ease their concerns? Do you think it would be more convincing to use scientific methods to monitor the animals?

The scientific methods mentioned included setting up camera traps to document wildlife presence and population changes as well as collecting data about the number and types of wild animals hunted in a year reported by Indigenous hunters. From the perspective of the Forestry Bureau, to accommodate Indigenous rights in current state-led forest governance, it was important to prove to the public that Indigenous peoples were able to use and manage environmental resources in a sustainable manner, using scientific support. This collaborative

approach could be seen as a concrete step taken by the government to support Indigenous resource rights; nevertheless, it still assumed that Indigenous hunting practices need to be validated and overseen by scientific methods, thus reinforcing the hierarchical relationship between Western science and Indigenous knowledge.

From the Indigenous hunters' point of view, the scientific methods proposed by the government and conservation professionals had their limitations and problems. I spoke to a Labuwan hunter who had helped install camera traps before; he told me: "The mountainous area is very extensive, and the animals are moving around…When they eat up their food here, they will go somewhere else…In winter, animals are usually active near the riverbeds, where they can drink water. If they stay in the mountain, they will get thirsty!" Any hunter with some experience would know that animals move freely between a variety of habitats, and these habitats change over time due to natural or manmade influences. The Indigenous hunters thus argued that it was impractical to monitor wildlife abundance in a dynamic environment by installing a few stationary cameras at given locations. In fact, biologists have also acknowledged the limitations of this relatively new addition to the wildlife survey methodology (Burton et al. 2015; Meek, Ballard, and Fleming 2015).

Some Labuwan hunters also expressed their concerns about reporting the number and types of hunted animals to the Forestry Bureau because they did not want to attract more unwanted government interference with their hunting practices and animal use. This requirement of reporting hunts also implied an unequal power relationship between Indigenous peoples and the state because the state still played a supervising role in the project.

At the end of the meeting in the Labuwan community, although the discussion was not without conflict, the Indigenous hunters eventually agreed to work with the Forestry Bureau and

participate in the project. The Labuwan community members showed interest in the idea of "self-governance," which could imply less intervention by the government and more possibility of self-determination in the future. Although the Labuwan community has worked with the Forestry Bureau to develop community-based ecotourism for several years, this partnership did not imply that the community members' values and relationship with animals would conform to those of non-Indigenous institutions. I argue that the Labuwan have used this collaborative conservation project as an interim strategy to advance their self-determination goals although there were still structural barriers to equity. This ethnographic example demonstrates that the Labuwan community members remained wary and critical of the colonial dimensions of wildlife conservation. I argue that the Labuwan criticisms of the limitations of the conservation projects were an act of defending their Indigenous sovereignty.

4.4 Satoyama, Conservation, and Rural Regeneration

In recent years, there is an emerging co-management framework in Taiwan that attempts to integrate the objectives of landscape conservation and rural regeneration based on the Satoyama Initiative. The Satoyama Initiative (*lishan changyi*, 里山倡議), an ecological initiative originating in Japan which focuses on conservation of biodiversity in agrarian landscapes, has been promoted as a new global conservation approach. Upon its introduction to Taiwan in 2011, "satoyama" became a buzzword for government agencies and was soon integrated into a variety of policies, including community conservation, environmentally friendly agriculture, and rural revitalization. While these new government projects brought more resources into the Rukai communities, they also diverted attention away from the structural causes of environmental degradation and rural depopulation.

4.4.1 Defining Satoyama

Satoyama[39] (*lishan*, 里山) is a Japanese term to describe the landscape of secondary woodlands and grasslands near human settlements in rural areas, where local people have coppiced and collected wood and grass for fuel, fertilizer, and fodder for centuries (Takeuchi 2010). Since the 1960s, more and more landscapes of satoyama have been abandoned and have deteriorated due to the combination of industrialization, urbanization, rural depopulation, and changing lifestyles during the postwar decades (Knight 2010). Japanese ecological scientists turned their attention to satoyama and argued that a long history of human's heterogenous resource use and management has fostered various habitats for plants and animals (Satsuka 2012). They also expanded the original meaning of satoyama to the concept of "satoyama landscape"—an ecosystem consisting of a mosaic of different socio-ecological systems, including secondary forests, agricultural lands, grasslands, irrigation ponds, and human settlements (Duraiappah and Nakamura 2012; Satsuka 2012).

Since the 1990s, there has been an emergence of grassroots satoyama movements in Japan that focus on revitalizing agrarian landscapes in rural communities (Satsuka 2014). In addition to grassroots satoyama movements, the Japanese government also sought to promote the concept of satoyama globally. The term satoyama was featured extensively in Japanese government literature for the 10th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 10) to the Convention on Biological Diversity in October, 2010. Together with the United Nations University for the Advanced Study of Sustainability (UNU-IAS), the Ministry of the Environment of Japan has launched the "The International Satoyama Initiative Partnership,"

[39] Literally, "*sato*" (里) means arable and living areas or rural communities, and "*yama*" (山) means mountains or hills, which are almost equivalent to forests in Japan (Watanabe 2011).

which aims to “realize societies in harmony with nature” through the integration of biodiversity conservation and sustainable resource use in production landscapes outside of protected areas.

Viewing human activities as an integral part of the local ecosystem, the Satoyama Initiative argues that human-influenced natural environments, such as rice paddies, can benefit both biodiversity and local livelihoods if managed in a sustainable manner (IPSI Secretariat 2017). As of October 2017, there have been 220 organizations around the world given membership in the International Partnership for the Satoyama Initiative (IPSI). As a heuristic model, the Satoyama Initiative is appealing because the concept of satoyama nostalgically recalls an idyllic rural lifestyle and represents a contemporary longing for living in harmony with nature in post-industrial societies (Knight 2010). The Satoyama Initiative also gains relevance in current discussions of collaborative environmental governance as it stresses the importance of integrating traditional ecological knowledge and modern science as well as exploring new forms of co-management systems (Fig. 13).

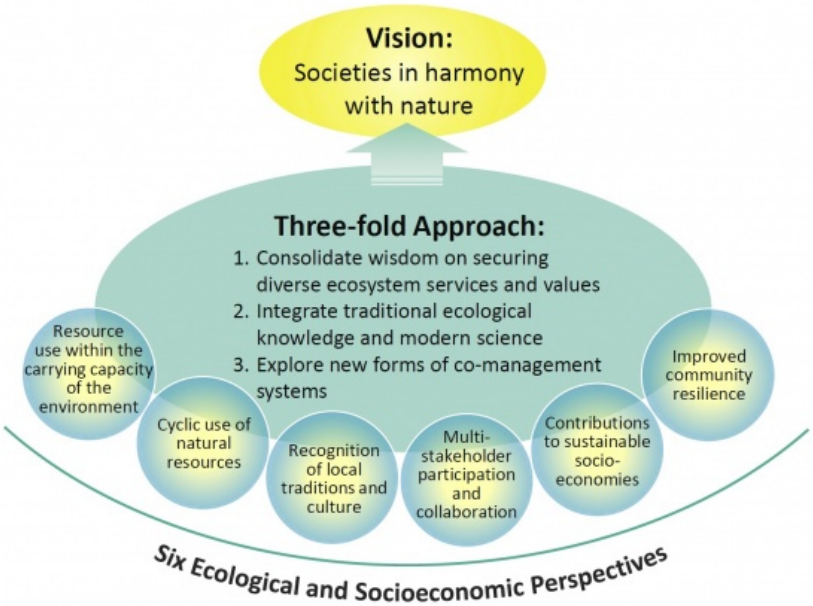

Figure 13. The conceptual framework of the Satoyama Initiative **(IPSI Secretariat 2017)**

4.4.2 Finding Satoyama in Taiwan

The Satoyama Initiative was introduced first in Taiwan's academic literature by environmental management scholars in 2011; the Satoyama Initiative was framed as a new and internationally accredited approach to addressing the ecological and social challenges faced by Taiwan, including environmental degradation, rural depopulation, and drops in farmers' incomes (e.g. Chao 2011; Lee 2011). Since then, the concept of satoyama has been employed by universities, state agencies, and nongovernmental organizations to relate their ongoing conservation efforts to the new approach. Environmental government agencies, such as the Forestry Bureau and the Soil and Water Conservation Bureau (*shuitu baochi ju*, 水土保持局), soon incorporated the Satoyama Initiative into their policies.

The Forestry Bureau paid attention to biodiversity conservation in agricultural ecosystems. For example, the Forestry Bureau held a symposium on the Satoyama Initiative in 2011, at which the discussion focused on restoration of agrarian ecosystems and how the rice-paddies and wetlands could serve as ecological corridors connecting wildlife populations and sustaining biodiversity. The Forestry Bureau also framed the satoyama landscapes as "community-based protected areas"[40] in hopes of geographically extending the state's conservation efforts to rural areas outside the protected areas, while engaging more civil society groups into biodiversity conservation. Additionally, the Forestry Bureau considered the Satoyama Initiative fully compatible with their ongoing collaborative conservation projects in Indigenous communities as the initiative also emphasizes the importance of co-management.

[40] The title of the first symposium on the Satoyama Initiative held by the Forestry Bureau in December, 2011, was "Constructing Community-Based Protected Areas: Symposium on Satoyama Initiative" (建構保護區之外的保護區--里山倡議精神的實踐).

On the other hand, the Satoyama Initiative was employed by the Soil and Water Conservation Bureau (SWCB) as a new guideline for implementing the Rural Regeneration Act (*nongcun zaisheng tiaoli*, 農村再生條例). Over the past decade, the rural regeneration initiatives conducted by the SWCB were criticized for focusing primarily on rebuilding physical infrastructure in rural areas rather than meaningfully addressing the socio-ecological problems faced by rural communities (Liao 2009). The Satoyama Initiative thus served as a pivot point for the SWCB to move away from its infrastructure-oriented approach to one that aimed to unlock new economic and environmental values of rural satoyama. The SWCB's current approach to rural revitalization is characterized by promoting contests among rural communities or local organizations; for example, the SWCB held the first nationwide "Golden Village Competition" to find the rural community that could best integrate the objectives of conservation, cultural revitalization, and local economic development. Central to this approach is the belief that the innovative solutions to the social and environmental problems in rural communities can be developed through competition and incentives.

To fulfill the vision of "sustainable rural societies in harmony with nature" advocated by the Satoyama Initiative, both the Forestry Bureau and the SWCB focused on promoting environmentally friendly agriculture in rural communities, including assisting local framers with eco-labeling and marketing of organic or non-toxic crops. Satoyama was turned into a consumption choice in the marketing narratives. Some well-known satoyama agricultural products are particularly branded using the names of the indicator species[41] in that agricultural ecosystem to appeal to consumers, such as "blue-magpie tea" (藍鵲茶), "jacana water chestnut"

[41] An indicator species is an organism whose presence or abundance reflects the health of an ecosystem.

(水雉菱角), and "tienbie[42] rice" (田鱉米). Consumers were told that buying satoyama produce could benefit both biodiversity and human wellbeing. As problems with tainted food and other food safety concerns have plagued Taiwan in recent years, promoting fresh produce grown in pristine satoyama environments seamlessly joined forces with combating food safety issues.

The visual images of satoyama landscapes presented in media and government published materials are also worth noting. Satoyama is often portrayed as beautiful and idyllic agrarian landscapes taken care of by happy farmers with ancestral wisdom and sustainable techniques in Taiwan. Most of the time, much attention has been paid to picturesque views of the rice paddies, irrigation ponds, and forests. Local residents' communal life and socio-economic challenges are usually absent in the representations of satoyama. Instead, these representations create a romanticized image of rural life and celebrate humans' inherent connection to nature (Fig. 14). As Yuki Masami (2013) argues, this romanticized view of satoyama does not allow a critical perspective of the socio-economic problems in agrarian living environments. There is a lack of effort to address issues such as why the "fascinating" ways of life are not practiced anymore, or why people abandoned satoyama. The partial representation and objectification of satoyama could lead to exploitation and marginalization of local residents who are actually living in the rural environment.

[42] Tienbie is a kind of giant water bug (*Lethocerus indicus*) in Taiwan.

Figure 14. Gonlouping Community (公老坪社區) in Taichung, Taiwan--an example of the satoyama landscape presented on the website of the Soil and Water Conservation Bureau

4.4.3 The Rukai Communities Encounter the Discourse of Satoyama

When the Satoyama Initiative was introduced to Taiwan, Dr. Chen Mei-Hui, the Director of the Community Forestry Laboratory at NPUST, was able to immediately relate the community conservation projects in the Adiri and Labuwan communities to the Satoyama Initiative as she believed that the two communities' agroforestry practices and ecotourism met most of the principles of the Satoyama Initiative. By framing the Adiri and Labuwan communities as the Taiwanese versions of satoyama and by translating the community needs into the objectives of the Satoyama Initiative, Dr. Chen successfully received three-year grants (2015-2017) from the Forestry Bureau to continue her action research in the two communities. The community members of the Adiri and Labuwan were also delighted to learn that Dr. Chen received the grants because it meant their ongoing work of agroforestry and ecotourism development would be able to continue.

The Adiri and Labuwan communities' post-disaster recovery experience and livelihood strategies have become well-known examples of the integration of local economic development

and conservation through Dr. Chen's invited talks and the corresponding media coverage. Since being integrated into the satoyama discourse, the two Rukai communities have attracted even more attention in the media, leading to an increase in the number of ecotourism visitors and an increase in the sales of agricultural products in the two communities. While government funded projects, such as those aimed to link to the Satoyama Initiative, have helped bring economic benefits and resources to Indigenous communities, the Rukai people were critical of how local ecology and culture are defined and valued and who has the legitimate authority to define and value these concepts.

This became apparent one evening in May, 2017, when Dr. Chen's assistant worked with the Rukai community members to discuss the preparatory work for a "Satoyama Community Workshop" held in the Labuwan community; the workshop was sponsored by the Taiwan Forestry Bureau to invite community associations and civil society groups in southern Taiwan to build regional partnerships for the Satoyama Initiative. The first question raised by the Rukai people was "what is satoyama?" Although Dr. Chen's assistant tried her best to explain the definition of satoyama to the community members, most people were still confused. A young community member shared her understanding of the Rukai satoyama with other people: "it is supposed to include our fields of millet, red quinoa, beetle nuts, the chickens, and the alabulru[43] because we need them in our daily life." Another community member nodded and complained that outside experts often create new terms to describe their way of life while making them more confusing for local people.

[43] Alabulru is the Rukai name for the edible plant khasya trichodesma (*Trichodesma khasianum* Clarke, 假酸漿), which is used to make the Rukai festive dishes *abai* and *chinafu* (奇拿富), the leaf-wrapped millet or taro flour dumplings with chunks of pork.

The Adiri community members offered a similar critique of the externally imposed concepts that have placed excessive emphasis on the traditional aspect of their rural life and environment. In our conversation regarding the government projects for protecting Indigenous traditional knowledge and culture, Tougadhu told me:

> I have heard many community members of my age (mid-fifties) mention 'culture' all the time. What they are talking about are the written records of the past even though things have changed a lot. These people rarely work on the farms. They never use sickles and hoes. How can they understand what culture is if they are not actually living it and doing it?

His wife Pei-Yu added that "the scholars have put too much emphasis on 'tradition' as if only things in the past are 'cultural' and valuable enough." Their views echoed the criticism of "cultures" represented in earlier anthropological studies as a stable and static object (Fabian 2014). It has gradually become "common sense" among community organizations that grants from the government or private foundations usually would be awarded to projects that put an emphasis on traditional aspects of culture and knowledge, especially those that have the potential to be turned into commodities or be integrated into conservation practices. To secure funding for community projects, local community members often have no choice but to accept the worldviews and values imposed by outside authorities and experts.

4.4.4 Rendering Rural Regeneration Technical

The Soil and Water Conservation Bureau (SWCB) took the Satoyama Initiative as a new approach to rural regeneration through building discursive alliances between conservation and sustainable livelihoods in rural communities. In the SWCB's new approach, revitalizing rural satoyama was framed as problems that could be solved by the introduction of innovative ideas, practices, and technologies into rural communities. However, this approach failed to see that

rural regeneration is a social process which involves clear and frequent communication by outside groups and building trust with community members. I will provide an ethnographic example regarding a controversy over a mushroom cultivation practice that led to conflicts between the Labuwan community and a group of college students.

Labuwan mushroom cultivation includes a cyclic use of natural resources in that a significant portion of the sawdust used for mushroom growbags[44] has been replaced by local agricultural wastes, such as shredded straw of locally grown red quinoa and millet. It was a product of the two-year collaborative work between the Labuwan community members and researchers at NPUST. Right before this agricultural practice was made public, a group of college students claimed that they invented the same mushroom growbags by using local agricultural waste within the Labuwan community, which could be sold as a tourism souvenir and bring economic benefits to the Labuwan community. Due to this innovative practice, these students won first place in a nationwide competition organized by the SWCB, which aimed to encourage college students to get involved with rural communities to address the communities' needs.

The Labuwan community members and researchers at NPUST were shocked when they learned about the students' claim through a media source. Lavaosu was one of the community members who had devoted much time to this collaborative work. When she saw the news, she responded angrily:

> They stayed in our community for only two months… furthermore, it was during the fallow period. There were no straws of red quinoa or millet during that time. Who did they actually work with and how could they obtain these materials from our community? We spent two years…We brought the mushroom bags back to the community to test the best humidity and temperature. We still haven't formally introduced it. How could these

[44] The most common method for growing mushrooms is to grow them on sawdust in plastic bags, which are locally known as "outer-space bags" (*taikong bao*, 太空包) in Taiwan (TARI 2015).

> students claim that they invented this before we do? They didn't respect our community at all.

The Labuwan community members were angry because they were not properly informed and consulted by the student group during the whole process. No one in the Labuwan community or the NPUST research teams could fathom how the students could develop this idea and technique in such a short time period and whether their results were authentic or not. However, they were sure that these students did know about this ongoing community work and that they also attempted to get more information about this technique from the Labuwan local leaders. The contest organization SWCB did not question the validity of the students' project and believed that the mushroom cultivation practice was indeed invented by these students as the evidence could be found in their project report.

Three months later, the Labuwan community and the researchers at NPUST held a press conference at the Forestry Bureau in Taipei. This press conference aimed to reclaim ownership of the mushroom cultivation on behalf of the Labuwan and the researchers at NPUST. This press conference was an important action to acknowledge the Labuwan community's efforts and to restore the respect they deserved. In the press conference, the Labuwan community's post-disaster recovery experience and the collaborative process with Dr. Chen and other researchers at NPUST were highlighted. No words were mentioned about the controversy of the college students' award.

My point here is not to decide whether these students stole the intellectual property of the Labuwan and NPUST researchers or not. Instead, I focus on how the technical aspects of rural revitalization were separated from and prioritized over its social aspects. In the well-meaning but controversial student contest, rural revitalization was mystified into the tangible techniques and commodities rather than social processes. The social relationships between community members

and outside groups were treated as technical problems, such as how to recruit and interview community members, rather than political and ethical problems. These issues were framed as problems that required purely technical fixes, such as the application of expert knowledge and the provision of government services. However, just like Nadasdy's (2005) critiques of the co-management process, the focus on "technical" issues in co-management takes for granted existing state institutions and management frameworks, thus precluding any meaningful inquiry into the political dimension of co-management.

By framing rural revitalization as a technical problem, the rural regeneration project failed to address the structural causes of the socio-ecological challenges faced by rural Indigenous communities, which are factors that have seriously undermined the sovereignty of Indigenous peoples of Taiwan. Without going beyond idealization and commodification of rural life and environments, it is less likely to enable critical reconsideration of the dominant values that pose challenges to rural sustainability in the first place.

4.5 Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the clash of concepts over conservation between Indigenous peoples and the state. It reveals that the Rukai communities' concept of conservation differs greatly from that of the state. The conservation discourses presented in the state's environmental laws and animal rights movements inherently separate humans from nature and see wild animals as scarce resources that need management and protection. However, Indigenous hunters argue that the relationship between animals and humans are reciprocal and deeply connected. Moreover, the Rukai communities challenged the assumptions latent in the state's conservation policies that local ways of knowing are inferior to conservation science and technologies. I argue

that the Rukai people used the collaborative conservation project as an interim strategy to advance their self-determination goals while defending their sovereignty by remaining critical of the colonial dimensions and limitations of the state's institutions.

On the other hand, the Taiwan's environmental government agencies turned their attention to the revitalization of rural agrarian landscapes by adopting the Satoyama Initiative--the discursive alliance between biodiversity conservation and sustainable rural livelihoods. Although these new government projects brought more resources into rural Indigenous communities, they also diverted attention away from the structural causes of socio-ecological problems in rural areas, which are factors that contributed to the loss of Indigenous sovereignty.

CHAPTER 5: TOURISM MANAGEMENT, MICROPOLITICS, AND SOVEREIGNTY OF THE RUKAI PEOPLE

Summary

This chapter focuses on how the Indigenous communities of the Rukai people attempted to address their concerns about tourist intrusions into their traditional territories by using the tourism and conservation laws. Indigenous communities of the Rukai people have gradually become involved in tourism-based development since tourism activities have been promoted in the Wutai Township in the last two decades. Subsequently, local residents have suffered traffic congestion, tourist intrusions into their residential spaces, theft of personal and community properties, and environmental degradation. Seeking available options to protect their ancestral lands, several Indigenous communities in the Wutai Township decided to employ national tourism law to demarcate their ancestral lands as a special area in order to manage visitor movement and behavior. I pay particular attention to the struggles of community members with regard to tourism management and collective rights over traditional territories that explain the grounds for their decisions. I also explore how the micropolitics in the Indigenous communities played a part in the decision-making process.

5.1 Uninvited Tourists

When I asked Chief Abaliwsu of the Adiri about his view on the demarcation project of NCESA, he said: “There are no laws that we can use to protect our ancestral land. We often saw tourists wandering in our old community as if it was an unpeopled land. If you asked them what they are doing there, they would say ‘I’m just looking around.’ If we can demarcate our ancestral

land as a legally designated special area (the natural, cultural, and ecological scenic area, NCESA, 自然人文生態景觀區), I would have the right to tell these tourists what they can and cannot do. As you know, the dragon juniper trees were stolen, and a stone slab of my house went missing. I asked the chief of police about the status of the two cases… They made no headway."

The dragon juniper trees at the entrance of the Adiri Elementary School, which were over 40 years old, were associated with many community members' childhood memories. In November 2014, community members were heartbroken when they went back to the old Adiri community to make arrangements for the funeral of a community member and found that nine dragon juniper trees had been poached. One year later, Chief Abaliwsu discovered that a stone slab of his *kalatadrane* (a ceremonial and gathering place), which was both a parapet wall and a backrest, was stolen. Chief Abaliwsu posted a long message on his Facebook page that makes clear his anger and sadness:

> This is something we've never seen in our Indigenous community. Stealing and selling the stone slab cannot make much money. If the visitor would like to use it for grilling, it is more convenient to buy it in stores rather than stealing it from a remote mountain community. Acquiring a souvenir is never an acceptable excuse to steal! The Adiri hauled the huge stones from the riverbed to the community and then cut the stone blocks into slabs by hand. They put their blood and sweat into the *kalatadrane*. My deceased father used to sit on the stone bench to allocate hunted prey, hang out with family and friends, and make announcements to community members. The stone slab preserved precious memories of my family and community history! As an ecotourism guide, I have told tourists with such expectations throughout these years, 'As long as you come up into the mountain, you have become our family. Please cherish this place like we do.' Now, however, I am feeling deeply disappointed just because of a stone slab!

In the comments that followed the chief's post, other Adiri community members and the Chief's Indigenous and non-Indigenous friends also expressed their great sorrow and fury about this incident. Although the authority of traditional chiefs in the Rukai societies has been undermined during colonial processes (Taiban 2014), chiefs are still important leaders at ceremonial occasions and other community events. For the Adiri, the house of the chief and its *kalatadrane*

were the heart of their old community, an integral part of their community history and culture. The missing stone slab was not, therefore, about the theft of personal property but the loss of the community's cultural heritage.

In 2009, Typhoon Morakot dumped heavy rain on southern Taiwan, triggering flash floods and landslides. Following Typhoon Morakot, the lower part of the Adiri land was seriously devastated, yet its upper settlement was only slightly damaged. Nevertheless, both the upper and lower settlements of the Adiri were declared to be geohazard-prone areas, which made them off-limits to residents. Most of the Adiri were forced to relocate away from their ancestral lands to permanent houses built by the Tzu Chi Foundation[45] in the Changzhi Township, which is outside their traditional territory and much closer to urban areas. Since the relocation, the Adiri have strived to maintain their links with their ancestral land through ecotourism and government projects. Even though the Adiri formed a voluntary patrol team, it was disbanded as most community members were preoccupied by work at the relocation site. While most community members were no longer living on their ancestral lands, the Adiri faced the grave concern of how to safeguard the land and community property, such as the dragon juniper trees and the chief's stone slab.

Indigenous tourism was first promoted by the Wutai Township government in the 1980s (Taiban 2014), and it has thrived over the last decade. However, encountering uninvited tourists seems to be a common experience for Indigenous communities in the Wutai Township. Particularly the Labuwan community has encountered disturbances in recent years as the geological landscapes and hot springs in their traditional territories have become popular tourist attractions. I met Lavaosu, the former village head of the Labuwan when I was conducting my

[45] Tzu Chi (慈濟) is a Buddhist non-governmental organization in Taiwan.

preliminary research with the Community Forestry Laboratory at NPUST in May 2015. While she was not a village head anymore at that time, Lavaosu was still as concerned with community affairs as she was during her term of office. "We saw a couple of tourists driving through our Hayou River (哈尤溪) with Jeeps. It is the site of our legends and stories, but we were unable to keep them out! Young people who work outside the community are now blaming us for failing to protect our traditional territories," Lavaosu said.

One year later, when I was conducting my one-year fieldwork in Pingtung between July 2016 and June 2017, the Hayou River had become a popular tourist attraction for people from across Taiwan. When a magazine article revealing the beauty of Labuwan's colorful rock formations and natural hot springs was published in October, 2015, it drove more and more people to this "undiscovered" place. Some community members in Labuwan even started their own Jeep tour business during the dry season (from November to April) when it was safe to drive the vehicles over the riverbed. They bought their own Jeeps and drove tourists back and forth between their community and the Haoyou River. There were also many tourists entering the Hayou River on their own, however, either by driving their own Jeeps or parking outside the Labuwan community and then hiking or biking. In other words, the Labuwan were not able to control the tourism carrying capacity, i.e., the maximum number of people that may visit the Hayou River without causing destruction of the social and ecological environment[46]. The influx

[46] According to the World Tourism Organization, carrying capacity can be defined as "the maximum number of tourists that a space can absorb without a lowering of the quality of the visitor's experience and without serious consequences for its ecology and its socio-economic structures" (World Tourism Organization 1981, 5). Approximately 200 people per day visit the Hayou River, which the Labuwan community is able to support. Although a formula exists that can be used to calculate the maximum number of visitors who can fit on the site, the carrying capacity used in the context of the Rukai community-based ecotourism is more related to the extent to which the tourist destination is able to accommodate tourist functions without displacing local activities.

of visitors resulted in problems, ranging from overcrowding to improper disposal of garbage. Unfortunately, that was not the Labuwan's worst nightmare yet.

Weather changes quickly at the end of the dry season in April in the Wutai Township. During that time, rainy days alternate with dry days in the mountains. The Jeep tours arranged by the Labuwan community members had come to an end for the season. When the Labuwan saw tourists visiting the Haoyou River by themselves, they advised them not to go because the water levels rise fast after the rains. Crossing a river is particularly dangerous for people who are unfamiliar with the local environment. On a rainy afternoon in late April, when I was on my way home with Chia-Fang from a workshop held in the old Adiri community, I saw ambulances rushing by. Chia-Fang called a community member in Labuwan immediately, and we heard the stomach-churning truth that an accident did happen–a tourist had disappeared while crossing the river. We felt guilty for feeling relieved when it was made known that these visitors had gone by themselves rather than with the Jeeps owned by Labuwan community members. The Labuwan felt grief for the tragedy which could certainly have been prevented if the visitor had been willing to follow their advice.

5.2 Employing the Tourism Law

The "empty wilderness" where tourists enjoy hiking and camping are actually Indigenous communities' ancestral lands and sacred sites. When community members asked tourists not to enter without permission or to at least take their trash home with them, such conversations often led to confrontations. Insisting that they have rights to enter national forests and scenic areas as Taiwanese citizens, these visitors did not consider themselves trespassers on Indigenous traditional territories. Even though some of the lands are community members' private

properties, tourist intrusions were still prevalent as long as there were no fences and locked doors. Other disturbances, including theft of community property, littering, traffic congestion, and cultural misrepresentations in tour guiding, all made community members feel that they were losing control over their community's future. Community members believed that all these problems would be exacerbated if they chose to do nothing. While in Indigenous communities great hopes are attached to the bills drafted on Indigenous land rights and self-government, such lawmaking processes are still very far away from the communities' day-to-day reality.

When the laws that recognize and protect Indigenous peoples' sovereignty over traditional territories and resources are not effectively implemented, what are the options to ensure a more timely response to these problems? What could the Indigenous communities do to protect their ancestral lands? Dr. Chen, the Director of the Community Forestry Laboratory at NPUST, shared the same concerns as the Adiri and the Labuwan. She has worked with the two communities to promote ecotourism development over the years and has established a good rapport with the community leaders. She also has experience working with seven other local communities in Kengting National Park to help build community capacity for ecotourism development. Dr. Chen told me that unregulated tourist behaviors are a thorn in the side of many local communities that are engaging in community-based ecotourism. She said, "Once the scenic hidden gems within communities became known to tourists, people flooded in. They don't really care about the feelings of community members. These community members have spent much time and effort in patrolling, monitoring, and controlling the number of their guests. Unfortunately, there is no ecotourism legislation in Taiwan yet… There are no laws that can protect these community members' conservation efforts." Dr. Chen also consulted some legal

experts and government officials in the Pingtung County government, and she believed that the demarcation as a natural, cultural, and ecological scenic area (NCESA) may be a solution.

In accordance with Taiwan's Act for the Development of Tourism (*fazhan guanguang tiaoli*, 發展觀光條例), NCESA can be designated within Indigenous reservations, restricted mountain areas, and other protected areas (wildlife sanctuaries and national parks) if one of the following conditions is met: 1) there are special scenic landscapes that cannot be reconstructed; 2) there are critical habitats for flora and fauna; or 3) there are significant prehistoric sites and cultural landscapes. The most appealing aspect of this law is that it only allows tourists to enter designated areas if accompanied by a local guide who has been certified by the government. Only local residents are eligible to attend the tour guide training and certification programs offered by the government. When Chief Abaliwsu of the Adiri heard about the law from Dr. Chen, he was intrigued by the potential of NCESA to control the entry of tourists and create local employment opportunities. However, in Taiwan, little is known about how to demarcate and manage the NCESA, as well as the impacts of such demarcation on local communities. There has been only one NCESA in Xiaoliuqiu[47] (Little Liuqiu, 小琉球), established in March 2015.

In fact, there was an unsuccessful attempt to establish a NCESA on an Indigenous people's ancestral land–the demarcation project of Mukumugi (慕谷慕魚) in Hualien County, a gorge-like valley in the Indigenous traditional territories of the Tongmen community of the Truku people. Shih Huei-Ping's research (2014) well documented the trajectory of this NCESA demarcation project. Mukumugi, a place of exceptional natural beauty, has been a famous tourist attraction in Taiwan for years. Local residents have, however, experienced disturbances caused by its popularity. A local river conservation association composed of some community members

[47] An island off the southwest coast of Taiwan.

first proposed to demarcate Mukumugi as a NCESA in 2005. In response to the request, the Hualien County government and the local township government started the demarcation planning project in the following year. The Hualien County government also commissioned Dong Hwa University to develop the NCESA management plan and held the first public hearing regarding the establishment of Mukumugi NCESA within the Tongmen community for the first time in 2011. Many community members who attended the public hearing strongly opposed to the demarcation project, however. The main reason for their disapproval was that they were not well informed and consulted during the whole process. These community members contended that the government and the university only heard the voices of a few people but did not take account other community members' unaddressed concerns, including unclear allocation of benefits and potential influences of the NCESA on their everyday life, such as hunting and farming. The conflicting interests further exacerbated preexisting factional divisions within the community, leading to angry protests and petitions that finally ended the project in 2012.

In the media discourse, the case of Mukumugi was framed as a contemporary colonial project that excluded Indigenous people from decision-making regarding their traditional lands. Moreover, the term "demarcation" has been used in policies ranging from designating national forests for timber production to natural reserves for conservation through top-down legislation. This term therefore has negative connotations that imply forced displacement, dispossession of Indigenous peoples, and denial of Indigenous sovereignty that have occurred throughout the colonial history of Taiwan. Using the law regarding a NCESA for tourism management might, therefore, not sound like a wise decision for Indigenous communities to pursue autonomy.

Nevertheless, the leaders in the Adiri community were willing to explore the possibility of using a NCESA to protect their ancestral land before more natural and cultural properties in

their old community were stolen by uninvited visitors. The Adiri contacted Dr. Chen to inquire about the objectives and details of NCESA regulations. In the forest co-management committee meeting among Indigenous and government representatives in July 2015, Chief Abaliwsu of the Adiri added the topic of creating a NCESA to the meeting agenda and expressed the willingness of the Adiri to demarcate their ancestral land as a NCESA. In the same committee meeting, the Labuwan representative who had just raised the issue of Haoyou River tourism management found that a NCESA demarcation might also be a solution to the problems of her community. In response, the government representatives from the Tourism Bureau and Pingtung County immediately expressed their support for the demarcation project in Adiri and Labuwan communities.

Different from the case of Mukumugi, the Adiri and Labuwan community members built consensus within their communities before jumping into the demarcation planning processes. The community members of the Adiri and the Labuwan invited the staff of the Community Forestry Laboratory at NPUST to make presentations regarding NCESA in their periodic community meetings. After discussing the costs and benefits, most community members agreed that a NCESA might be a viable option to address their concerns about tourist behavior and simultaneously create economic opportunities for their communities. Although many community members were still not sure about how a NCESA would operate, they still expressed willingness to give it a try. “However, if we found that this demarcation project will ultimately violate our rights and community values, we would revoke the decision by all means,” said Chief Abaliwsu.

When the proposal of a NCESA demarcation was heard of by other Indigenous leaders in the Wutai Township, they expressed an interest in participating in the project because they had also experienced tourism management challenges within their communities. In July 2016, the

governor of the Wutai Township proposed the demarcation project and initiated the planning process on behalf of five Indigenous communities in the township, including the Adiri, Labuwan, Kabalelathane (神山部落), Vudai (霧台部落), and Kucapungane (好茶部落). The Wutai Township government worked with the Association for Sustainable Development of the Republic of China (中華永續發展協會) to conduct land surveying and develop management strategies for the NCESA demarcation plan.

A NCESA can be understood as a type of co-management agreement between the Rukai communities and the government agencies, including the Tourism Bureau, the Pingtung County government, and the Wutai Township government. To effectively manage the NCESA, the Rukai communities would need a significant level of funding support, legal accountability, and law enforcement personnel provided by the governments.

5.3 The Micropolitics of NCESA Demarcation

The whole planning process for the NCESA between January and October of 2017 included a total of fifteen public meetings in communities (three meetings in each community), one meeting among governmental and Indigenous representatives, and two public hearings for all communities involved. The goal of the meetings in each community was to obtain the consent of a majority of community members before the project was initiated, as well as allowing community members to review the project and provide input to the proposed demarcation boundaries and management strategies.

When the meetings were held, community members among the five Indigenous communities had heterogeneous views on the NCESA demarcation project. The differences in attitudes towards the NCESA designation and subsequent management strategies led to conflicts

among the communities. I observed at least three types of conflicts in these meetings, including territorial disputes, debates over the distribution of costs and benefits, and tensions that arose from preexisting factional divisions.

Figure 15. A community meeting held in the Kabalelathane community (神山部落) to discuss the NCESA demarcation project. **Photo by the author.**

5.3.1 Territorial Disputes

When determining proposed the demarcation area, the Adiri and Labuwan communities not only include the most visited places by tourists but also large amounts of their traditional territories. Overlapping of traditional territories among Indigenous communities was not uncommon; however, the competing territorial claims can become sources of friction. Scholars argued that creating exclusionary, fixed boundaries of Indigenous peoples' traditional territories on a map might misrepresent the Indigenous spatial knowledge and social relationships embedded in them. For example, in Kuan and Lin's study (2008) of the Atayal people's community mapping, a community would allow another community (usually composed of their

relatives) to hunt in their traditional territory if the invited community had obtained their permission and was willing to follow their rules and share the wild meat with them. However, fixed boundaries often indicate a certain community's exclusionary ownership of the land and eliminate the sharing and reciprocal relationships between the communities.

I also observed such conflicts regarding territorial disputes during the community meetings. For example, the Labuwan insisted on including an ancient trail, of which the Labuwan share ownership with Karamemedesane (佳暮部落), a Rukai community which was displaced from their ancestral land due to Typhoon Morakot in 2009 but did not participate in the NCESA demarcation project. With the mediation of the Wutai Township government, this dispute was temporarily settled between the local leaders of the two communities outside the meeting. However, this was just one of the numerous disputes. In addition, after the Adiri have relocated to the plains due to Typhoon Morakot, hunters from other communities often secretly intruded into the Adiri's hunting territories neither informing nor apologizing to the Adiri. Such behaviors were a serious offence to the Adiri, while the hunters of other communities were also upset that the Adiri called the police on them. One hunter from Vudai argued in a meeting: "Only communities living in the Wutai have a say in the NCESA demarcation, because we are still here." This statement provoked disagreements among the Rukai people across different communities. Many of them believed that the links between relocated communities and their ancestral lands should be maintained, as should their rights over traditional hunting territories. These examples demonstrate that territorial disputes among communities have existed in the past and continue into the present. While the NCESA demarcation was not the sole trigger for territorial disputes, it could manifest and exacerbate the existing divisions.

The Council of the Rukai People attempted to manage the conflicts by mobilizing a collective Rukai identity. Since the Council of the Rukai People was established in April 2017, one of its objectives is to represent all Indigenous communities of the Rukai people to demand their inherent sovereignty over traditional territories and resources as one of the First Nations in Taiwan. The consolidation of a collective identity is important to demonstrate the strength of their Indigenous sovereignty claim. The pursuit of this objective was especially crucial for Chief Abaliwsu after he was elected as the first chairperson of the Council of the Rukai People. In the meeting between governmental representatives and all Indigenous leaders, Chief Abaliwsu made the following speech as the traditional leader of the Adiri: "The Haoyou River and some lands of the Labuwan overlap with the traditional territories of the Adiri. However, these places are too far for the Adiri to govern and care for. We (the Adiri) are thus really grateful that these areas are demarcated into NCESA by the Labuwan. Once there are people taking care of and making use of the land, these places are truly protected." Instead of disputing the territorial ownerships claimed by the Labuwan, the Chief avoided confrontations by skillfully transforming the potential hostility into thankfulness as he believed that a solidarity-based collective sovereignty claim as a nation greatly outweighs the territorial integrity of individual communities at this moment.

5.3.2 Debates over Distribution of Costs and Benefits

A common question posed about the NCESA demarcation was how its costs and benefits would be distributed across different groups, particularly among community members who are already involved in the local tourism business. Such discussion also led to debates over the ownership of cultural heritage within the Rukai communities.

Voyu is the son-in-law of a local Labuwan tour operator. After he married into the Labuwan community from Vudai community, he also invested money in his father-in-law's local hostel business and will inherit the business someday. In a Labuwan public hearing, Voyu raised his hand and voiced his concerns after the Township government's presentation:

> I understand that this demarcation project is to protect the environment of the Labuwan. As you just said, the number of visitors will be strictly controlled, and all visitors will be coordinated by a point of contact once the NCESA is designated. Is the rule applied to the guests of my hostel as well? Running a hostel in the community is already difficult… I'm not sure how I can keep running the business under such restrictions! Besides, the heritage site of Princess Balenge in Dadele is the most important attraction of our walking tour. This site is located exactly within our private land. If it is designated within the NCESA, should I let all local guides enter our private land to tell the story of Princess Balenge to tourists? It sounds unbelievable to me! How is it possible for me to keep my business running in this way?

Some local tourism workers in the Wutai Township had similar concerns that regulating tourist numbers would affect their tourism business within Indigenous communities, which was already hard to develop and maintain. However, when it comes to the community's cultural heritage, the Rukai people would argue that communal interests definitely outweigh the individual.

After hearing Voyu's concerns, a local leader immediately responded that the heritage site of Princess Balenge[48] was essentially the collective property of the Labuwan before the system of private land ownership was imposed by the government. The local leader went on to comment: "Voyu is from another community and he has worked hard to become a part of the Labuwan. Nevertheless, his heart is truly not here yet. It is still wandering outside. If he has issues with community members taking tourists to his private land, he is not helping our community develop." More debates over land ownership of the cultural heritage were temporarily halted by a Township government official for the sake of time. After the community

[48] According to the community members of Labuwan, the story of Princess Balenge was an appropriation of their community history (See Chapter 3).

hearing, despite facing pressures from other community members, Voyu was still strongly opposed to the designation of a NCESA in Labuwan territory as he viewed the survival of his business as his top priority.

Lavaosu, the former village head of Labuwan, is also a local tourism operator and owns a hostel. When I asked Lavaosu and her husband about their views on the impact of tourism on the community, Lavaosu's husband said:

> Tourism is both good and bad for our community. The bright side of tourism is that it somewhat supplements our income. Living without money is almost impossible now! We need money to pay for car insurance, gas, and electricity...but we don't want our community to be overwhelmed by tourists. There are already too many visitors to the Hayou River! The parking spaces and restrooms in our community cannot accommodate them.

With regard to the NCESA project, Lavaosu told me "I have been a supporter (of NCESA) since I was a village head of the Labuwan. I support this project because I want to protect our traditional lands. They are places where our ancestors were buried."

Lavaosu also argued that many community members in Labuwan have become fully engrossed in tourism development and making more money. Lavoasu and her daughter have spent years on an Indigenous youth educational program in her community, which encourages Native youth living and studying outside the community, especially children in single-parent families, to return to the community and have language and cultural immersion experiences during summer and winter breaks. She stressed that devoting time to youth education in the community is much more important than her tourism business. "No matter how good our tourism business is…no matter how much money we can make from tourism on the Haoyou River, all of these will soon disappear if we don't invest in our youth," said Lavoasu.

Even within the same community, different local tourism workers had their own different priorities and interests, which affected how they positioned themselves vis-à-vis the NCESA demarcation project.

5.3.3 Tensions from Preexisting Factional Divisions

While the NCESA demarcation project was supported by most community members in the Adiri, Labuwan, and Kucapungane communities, residents of the Kabalelathane and Vudai communities were rather critical to the state-based regulations. The Kabalelathane and Vudai community members doubted that the Wutai Township government attempted to transfer the ownership of Indigenous reserve lands to the Tourism Bureau in the name of tourism management. In a public hearing held at the Kabalelathane community center, Viyung, a local police officer and a community member of Kabalelathane, spoke out against the unrevealed restrictions imposed by the NCESA demarcation project and criticized the role of the Wutai Township government in promoting this colonial policy. Another Kabalelathane community member also argued that the informed consent and decision-making processes did not strictly follow the regulations in Taiwan's Indigenous Basic Law. Despite that most staff in the Wutai Township government are Rukai people, these Kabalelathane community members expressed deep distrust of the local and national governments and contended that collaboration with the governments would only undermine the goal of self-government of the Rukai people.

From the local residents' view, these objections were more complicated than a conflict between Indigenous communities and the Taiwanese government. After the community hearing at Kabalelathane, I had conversations with some local community members about the tensions in the hearing. They told me that such conflicts were rooted in local election politics and existing

factional divisions in the communities. In Taiwan, elections have become part of Indigenous life. Micropolitics and factional divisions manifest in the electoral system. The 2014 Pingtung County Council election between Viyung and the husband of the township government's official in charge of this project affected how the conflictive process of the NCESA demarcation played out. Although the electoral system in Taiwan has allowed Indigenous groups and individuals to make deals with state actors, it has also been criticized for being a tool to legitimate the state's authority, thereby not being able to contribute to Indigenous sovereignty and nationalism (Simon 2010).

After the public hearings, Viyung and his friends continued to harshly criticize the adoption of NCESA demarcation law, which will put the Taiwan Tourism Bureau and Pingtung County Government in charge rather than giving local people managing authority. They argued that the Wutai Township government was complicit in a new form of colonialism and dispossession. Disagreeing with these statements, Taiban Sasala, a Rukai scholar and the secretary-general of the Council of the Rukai People spoke for the Wutai Township government and argued that the issue of Indigenous sovereignty is beyond the scope of a Township government's governing power. Taiban contended, "You must have solid evidence before you accuse the Township government of selling lands to the Tourism Bureau; otherwise, you shouldn't slander these public servants. Most of them are our fellow Rukai people of one blood."

Despite Taiban's invocation of consciousness of unity, Viyung and his friends immediately took issue with the representativeness and legitimacy of the Council of the Rukai People. They questioned if the Council of the Rukai People can represent the real voices within the communities since it was composed primarily of traditional chiefs and community elders of the noble class. Although these community representatives were chosen by each community, the

majority of the representatives were still male and nobles of the Rukai's patriarchal society. A pastor from the Rukai Presbyterian Church also contended that there should be representatives of the class of commoners to truly reflect the voices of the Rukai people.

The establishment of the Council of the Rukai People to demand recognition of Indigenous sovereignty as a nation conjured images of social cohesion and shared values. However, advocates often underplayed the role of dissent and disagreement in community life. While the Council of the Rukai People attempted to highlight a collective identity and the sense of unity, the above-described ethnographic accounts show that conflicts are inherent within and across the Indigenous communities.

5.4 Re-examining the National Law and Its Constraints

When I attended community meetings and hearings for the NCESA demarcation plan, some community members had questions and concerns regarding the demarcation project. They worried that the national law would act like a Trojan horse that could actually take control of their lands and ways of life, just like the previous colonial authorities had done to their grandparents and parents. For example, the establishment of national parks and other forms of protected areas within Indigenous people's traditional territories over the past decades had criminalized many Indigenous people who continued to hunt and/or gather fruits on their ancestral land. It is unsurprising that some community members responded with confusion, passivity, and suspicion. In response to community members' concerns, the Wutai Township government reiterated that the NCESA would be used to regulate the behavior of non-Indigenous tourists rather than limiting Indigenous people's right and access to their lands. To calm the dissidents, the Township government also stressed that this demarcation project was first

proposed by local community members rather than a top-down policy imposed by the government.

One of the most debated questions among community members was whether the decision-making process was fair and transparent. As Viyung argued, the public hearings about the NCESA did not conform to regulations for obtaining consent issued by the Council of Indigenous Peoples (CIP), which states that more than half of affected Indigenous communities should convene tribal meetings attended by at least half of tribal households, and more than half of the attendees should give their approval. This question actually led to discussions that revealed the difficult realities faced by many Indigenous communities in Taiwan. In most community meetings, it is very challenging to have tribal meetings attended by at least half of households because many Indigenous people have moved to suburban or urban areas to find jobs and/or to seek better education for their children. Even though these community members still have registered households within the community, many of them, especially those of less than fifty years old, are only available to visit their community once in a while and thus cannot attend community meetings. Yet, decisions on community affairs must still be made by the remaining members, most of whom are elders. The gaps in local political participation between community members living within and outside the community, as well as between younger and older generations, also add to the divisions regarding the NCESA demarcation.

Moreover, as stated in the appendix of the CIP Principle of Consultation and Consent with Indigenous Communities, as long as the CIP determines that the government policies do not affect Indigenous people's existing land and resource rights, such policies can be excluded from the informed consent requirement. In the case of the NCESA demarcation, the Wutai Township government did not deem the law to constitute infringement on Indigenous community members'

land and resource rights since the law is targeting outside tourists instead of local residents. Its decision-making process could thus be exempt from the CIP rule of Indigenous community meetings, which states that community decisions can be made even though there are less than half of tribal households attending the meetings. Although community members' land and resource rights will not be directly affected by the NCESA, their ways of living will certainly be affected by the new law and its accompanying new discourses. All community members are expected to accept the rules and regulations of the NCESA once it is established. For community members who are interested in becoming local guides within the NCESA, they must participate in the training workshops held by the government and accustom themselves to the language of conservation and environmental education.

In July 2017, a public hearing for all affected Rukai communities in the Wutai Township was held in the Kabalelathane community. The chair of the public hearing, Tanubake, was one of the leading advocates for the NCESA in his community. He concluded the public hearing by saying:

> Whether we should promote the NCESA in the Wutai has been discussed among the communities for some time. At first, we had no idea what it is, but now we have gradually come to understand how it may work. We thought it (NCESA) would be feasible, but we also knew that we would encounter many problems. I really appreciate that many of you help reveal all the defects… When we are able to untangle the worst problems, we will have a better tomorrow. I hope we will always be the stewards of our own lands. Although there are still some legal issues and confusion about the NCESA, at least the problem of tourism would stop bothering us.

Taiban Sasala, the secretary-general of the Council of the Rukai People also expressed his views on the NCESA demarcation:

> Many scholars in Taiwan including me don't have high expectations of the NCESA. This law will give little governing authority to local communities… Nevertheless, we still have to face the reality: currently there are still no effective tools that we can use to protect our traditional lands and resources. The NCESA is thus better than nothing. It is not perfect, but we can use it to manage tourists' behavior and prevent their intrusions into our traditional territories. All of the management regulations cannot be implemented if we

> refuse to work with the government. Looking on the bright side, we may also gain some experience in self-government from our discussion regarding the NCESA and participation in its future management.

After much discussion, many Rukai community members expressed their support of the NCESA project in their community meetings and agreed that fulfilling Indigenous sovereignty and self-determination is an incremental process that requires more conversations and consideration for alternative perspectives. For the supporters of the NCESA, this was an opportunity that they needed to seize because they could finally retake some control over tourism development in the Wutai Township. They had high expectations that this law would protect their ancestral lands and ways of living from adverse impacts of tourism. Some community members even thought that it would be a great step towards self-determination.

It is worth noting that many community members who supported the NCESA demarcation project remained cautious about the probable consequences of employing this national law (Act for the Development of Tourism). Even though Chief Abaliwsu had been one of the strong advocates of the NCESA in the Wutai Township, he told me: "I'm still keeping an eye on whether the NCESA would actually affect the rights of Rukai people. If the implementation of the law would indeed impose constraints on our community life, we will definitely call a halt to it immediately." In community meetings, many community members also repeatedly confirmed that they would have the right to revoke their consent and withdraw from the NCESA project before voting yes on it.

The conflicts regarding the NCESA debated in community meetings opened up conversations about how decisions of community affairs should be made, how territorial disputes could be addressed, and even how the goals of self-government should be achieved. Embracing rather than suppressing the conflicts inherent in communities is a step in the right direction that demonstrates the Rukai people's potential for achieving their goals of self-government.

5.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, I provided ethnographic accounts of the socio-ecological problems caused by tourism within Indigenous communities of the Wutai Township that led to their employment of the NCESA demarcation as a strategy for managing tourism and protecting their traditional lands. I also examined the conflicts associated with territorial disputes, distribution of costs and benefits, as well as pre-existing factional divisions that were manifested in the NCESA planning process. The struggles and micropolitics within communities should not be seen as solely obstacles but also as a catalyst for dialogue and empowerment.

This chapter draws on a combination of ethnographic vignettes from fieldwork and interview data to show what influenced community members' positions towards the NCESA and how they perceived and addressed the conflicts that emerged in the process. The Rukai people articulated heterogeneous views on land ownership, community politics, and co-management through debates in community meetings over the national law for tourism management and its constraints. They were aware that their local tourism businesses would be operating within constraints imposed by the Act for the Development of Tourism. Nevertheless, their perspectives demonstrated that they knew how and when to exert their agency within these constraints in order to achieve their broader self-determination goals to the best of their ability in the given circumstances. Although the Rukai people's agency expressed here cannot be translated into sovereignty, the communities' efforts to regain control over their territory have produced sovereign effects.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

In this dissertation, I used an anthropological approach to examine how the Rukai communities' engagement in community-based ecotourism and collaborative conservation relates to their pursuit of recognition of Indigenous sovereignty. I presented a historical overview of the relationship between state-led forest governance and the Indigenous peoples of Taiwan and demonstrated how the Rukai people gradually lost control and sovereignty over their traditional territory. I also used a combination of ethnographic methods to explore how the Rukai community members have addressed dilemmas regarding their own commodification for ecotourism and how they perceived the state's conservation discourses and practices. These methods included participant observations within the Rukai communities and semi-structured and informal interviews with community members.

My analyses of the data were based on the concept of the "third space of sovereignty" (Bruyneel 2007; Diver 2016) to illustrate how and why the Rukai have engaged with the state's collaborative conservation projects and laws and how they responded to the limitations of the state's framework. I further provided ethnographic accounts of the socio-ecological challenges faced by the Adiri and Labuwan communities, which have compelled them to adopt the community-based ecotourism and conservation practices offered by the government and university in order to remain on their ancestral lands. Viewing sovereignty as contingent and performative (Hansen and Stepputat 2006; Lindner 2013; Bottos 2015), I provided examples to illustrate how the Rukai people challenged the dominant worldviews and values imposed by the conservation laws and projects and argued that the process brought Rukai sovereignty into being.

Together, my findings suggest that the Rukai people have collaborated with state-based agencies and strategically accommodated conservation discourses and practices to further their land-based self-determination while remaining wary and critical of the colonial dimensions and constraints of these tools provided by the settler state. The Rukai communities have worked with the government and university to develop community-based ecotourism to meet their livelihood needs and maintain connections with their ancestral lands. They have also employed the state's existing laws on their own terms to address the socio-ecological problems caused by tourism and to protect their traditional territories. I call these choices and actions as the third space of sovereignty—neither outright resistance to nor full compliance with the settler state's political, legal, and cultural systems.

In the third space of sovereignty, Rukai communities and individuals have exerted their agency in the state's existing management frameworks and made strategic choices to achieve their self-determination goals. While these collaborative conservation projects themselves did not change the existing power structures nor overcome the Rukai's distrust of the Taiwan Forestry Bureau, my concern is less with the conservation projects themselves than with the goal that the Rukai communities have strived to achieve using these conservation projects, i.e., to regain self-determination and control over their traditional territory.

Strategies employed by the Rukai people to safeguard their traditional territories have not been easy. Within the Rukai communities, there have been conflicting views and concerns regarding the decisions to enter into collaboration with the settler state. Not every community member was satisfied with some strategic choices made by local leaders on behalf of themselves. Further, some community members worried that these collaborative projects with the state would justify the state's intervention on the Rukai territory. At the same time, the Taiwanese

government's delineation of Indigenous peoples' traditional territory and the government's return of that territory to Indigenous peoples remained deadlocked. The Rukai people indeed recognized that conservation laws and projects designed by the settler state always had externally imposed values and limitations, but they also needed an interim strategy to safeguard their traditional territory. To do so, the Rukai community leaders chose on behalf of the communities when and how to engage in these state laws and projects to achieve maximum incremental gains within those limitations while minimizing the damage of such collaboration on their goals of maintaining their culture and sovereignty.

In 2014 and 2015, my preliminary ethnographic research in Pingtung, Taiwan, focused on the political and cultural dimensions of the multilevel partnership among the Rukai communities, the Taiwan Forestry Bureau, and the Community Forestry Laboratory at NPUST. I was interested in how the partnership was forged and maintained and how the heterogeneous views and values of forest governance were negotiated. I learned early on that the university played an important role in bridging the relationship between the Indigenous communities and the Forestry Bureau, which had a long history of tension and distrust. Over time, however, I found that there was much to be gained by repositioning the Rukai as the center in their own right. This repositioning revealed that the Rukai communities envisioned their collaboration with the government and the university as a strategic platform for efforts to regain land-based self-determination and to assert Indigenous sovereignty over their traditional territories.

In Chapter 3, I explored the process in which the Adiri and Labuwan communities chose to engage in community-based ecotourism in order to remain on their ancestral lands after Typhoon Morakot. I provided examples of how the Rukai community members demonstrated their continued existence and environmental stewardship of their ancestral lands through their

tour narratives and stories. The Labuwan guides' self-representations and commodification manifested the heterogeneity of the Rukai cultural heritage and served as resistance to the dominant narrative of the Rukai history.

In Chapter 4, I examined the conflicts between the state's conservation policies and the Rukai's concept of nature and culture. I illustrated how the Rukai hunters decided to work with the government to provide scientific data about local hunting practices although they had critiques and concerns about the government's conservation discourses and practices. The collaborative conservation projects based on the state's existing management frameworks have the tendency to depoliticize the socio-ecological problems facing Indigenous communities by framing them as issues that require merely technical fixes. However, for the Rukai, collaborative conservation in the forms of ecotourism and hunting management contained the possibility of influencing the future of Taiwan's environmental governance in ways that ensured their own needs and goals would be met.

In Chapter 5, I illustrated the Rukai communities' decision-making process regarding whether or not to employ the existing national tourism law to demarcate their communities and traditional territories as "special areas" in order to manage visitors and minimize the negative impacts of tourism on their homeland. Some community members argued against employing the law created by the settler-colonial government, while others saw value in working pragmatically within the existing legal system. For the Rukai, despite dissent, the process of discussing and discerning what would serve their bests interests as a group can be viewed as an incremental achievement for self-determination. I argue that the Rukai communities' efforts to regain control over their territory have produced sovereign effects as a result.

A key contribution of this dissertation is my articulation of the hybrid approach taken by the Rukai to engage in state-led and market-oriented environmental governance while simultaneously resisting the colonial dimensions of these conservation projects. I argue that Rukai sovereignty has been brought into being through the hybrid approach. The position and actions taken by the Rukai vis-à-vis the state's decentralized environmental governance approaches could not be accommodated in the binary political choices framed by the settler state: either an outright refusal of or being co-opted by the settler's cultural and political systems. Instead, my analyses sought to illustrate the strategies used by the Rukai people, which have created the space for the coexistence of the settler-colonial and Indigenous worldviews, where the Rukai's values refuse be absorbed into the settler-colonial framework. One example was community-based ecotourism, in which the Indigenous community members commodified their culture and ecology for tourist consumption and, at the same time, asserted Indigenous sovereignty through their tour narratives and interpretations. Another example is how the Rukai articulated their connection to traditional lands. On one hand, the Rukai adopted the language to frame human-land relationships based on the concepts of property or resource in order to engage with the settler state's environmental decision-making processes; on the other hand, the Rukai viewed such connections as ancestral ties, blessings, and obligations, which cannot be eradicated from or assimilated into the settler state's narratives.

The findings of this dissertation have limitations. First, there were only a handful of Adiri and Labuwan community members were actively involved in ecotourism and conservation projects. The interview data were thus limited to those key informants who actively participated in ecotourism training workshops and meetings regarding government projects. To remedy this limitation, I spent time observing intercultural interactions that occurred in ecotourism training

workshops, co-management meetings, and public hearings regarding the NCESA demarcation plan. Additionally, the data I collected could not capture the entire process of the government projects that promote the Satoyama Initiative and the implementation of the NCESA, as both were still ongoing projects when I conducted the ethnographic research. Their emerging impact on the Rukai communities remains to be seen in years to come.

All in all, this dissertation provides ethnographic evidence to better understand that the Indigenous communities' engagement in state-led and market-oriented environmental governance could be a strategic choice made by Indigenous individuals and groups to achieve incremental goals toward self-determination pragmatically within an existing and inequitable socio-political system.

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