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The Indigenous Land Rights Movement and Embodied Knowledge in Taiwan

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1. Introduction

On October 8, 2013, I had an illuminating conversation with Nihu in my field site: a Bunun village called Bulbul, in Southeastern Taiwan.[1] Nihu shared with me his dissatisfaction with a guest speech on the Bunun clan system and migration history given by a Bunun scholar, Haisul Palalavi, in the Bunun Cultural Museum located in Haituan. He criticized Haisul's lecture in the following way: "Haisul's knowledge all came from books, especially those written by Japanese scholars. But has he visited those ancestral places he talked about? No! I am different. I've been there. I participated in several root-searching expeditions *(shiungen huodong)* and hiked to Lamatasinsin and Dahun. I followed the paths of our ancestors and went hunting in the ancestral land."

Nihu's criticism of Haisul indicates how the Bunun value embodied experience within ancestral territories as a form of knowledge and a way of reclaiming their ancestral past. The Bunun were the first indigenous group in Taiwan to initiate root-searching expeditions, through which indigenous peoples pay visits to their ancestral settlements (which they were forced to leave under the relocation policy imposed during the Japanese colonial period) and learn about the traditional culture, ethno-histories, and ecology.[2] In the past decade, these root-searching expeditions have overlapped more and more with community mapping practices, and have taken on the potential of representing a means of asserting indigenous land rights claims. This article aims to understand why this overlap has occurred, and to highlight the importance of embodied, place-based knowledge. I will first give a brief introduction to indigenous social movements in Taiwan, and focus particularly on land rights movements and the state's response to these movements. Then I will use the example of one of the Bunun's root-searching expeditions to show the importance of embodied knowledge in the relationships between indigenous people and the land, and to highlight its significance in claiming the ancestral past. Following this, I will discuss how the Bunun attempt to assert land rights claims by combining root-searching expeditions and tribal mapping projects. Finally, I shall conclude with a hopeful note for the future.

2. Indigenous Social Movements

The year 1983 is commonly regarded by scholars and indigenous leaders as the starting point of indigenous movements in Taiwan (Hsieh 1987a; 1987b; Wang 2003). In this year, a few indigenous students at National Taiwan University published a campus magazine *Gau Shan Ching* (High Mountain Green) and distributed it to more than three hundred indigenous students nationwide. The articles in the magazine advocate an awakening of ethnic consciousness and call on indigenous college students to stand up and fight for their survival rights, in view of the serious crisis of extinction that the indigenous peoples are facing (Icyang 1994; 2008). The authoritarian KMT *(Kuomintang)* party was shocked by these messages and ordered its campus organization to confiscate these magazines, write countering articles, and keep indigenous student leaders under surveillance.

Partly because of the reaction of the KMT party, many indigenous students found the opposition group (commonly called *Dangwai*, which became the Democratic Progressive Party [DPP] in 1986) as natural allies, and the *Dangwai* setting up a “Minority Group Committee” within its organization (Hsieh 1987a). In 1984, these indigenous leaders decided to form their own organization and named it the “Alliance of Taiwan Aborigines” (ATA, *Taiwan Yuanzhumin Chiuanli Tsujinhui*). The members of this organization came from almost every indigenous group in Taiwan (with the exception of Saisiyat and Tao [Yami]). While the different indigenous groups each have their own distinctive culture and language, their shared experience of being colonized and dominated by the Han Chinese provided a foundation for the formation of common goals and united actions among them. Some indigenous leaders consider the establishment of the ATA the first time in the history that different indigenous groups viewed their common interests as more important than their differences. A pan-indigenous consciousness gradually developed as a result (Sun 2000).

From 1984 to 1986, the work of the ATA was task-oriented, focusing on solving specific social issues concerning indigenous peoples such as mining disasters, girls forced into prostitution, detained ocean-liner fishermen, and enslaved laborers (Icyang 1994; Wang 2003). The year 1987 marked an important shift in its strategies. On the one hand, the ATA announced the “Declaration of the Rights of Taiwan Aborigines” *(Taiwan Yuanzhumin Chiuanli Shiuanyan)* in 1987. This Declaration comprises seventeen sections and encompasses: entitlements to all human rights; rights to basic livelihood, self-governance, cultural identity; rights to regional autonomy; rights to land, ocean, natural resources; and rights to use indigenous languages and traditional names. The declaration also demanded state recognition of the indigenous culture, custom, and social organization (Lusolamen 1999: 85−88).

On the other hand, with the abolition of Martial Law in 1987 and Taiwan’s newly democratized politics giving increased room for demonstrations, it was also during this year that the ATA began to take to the street for large-scale protests to fight both against Han domination and for various rights. Notable movements from this time include those campaigning for land claims, name correction, and rights to the traditional naming system, and against a nuclear waste storage site in Lanyu (Orchid Island), adolescent prostitution, and the Wu Fong myth.[3] The most relevant here is the indigenous land rights movement, which was made up of three waves, and it is to that which I now turn.

3. Land Rights Movements, Traditional Territory, and Tribal Mapping

In order for the indigenous movement to yield political reforms, it needed to gain wider support in society. Besides the opposition party, its most important alliance was with the Presbyterian Church. Graduates from Yu-Shan Seminary, the Presbyterian Church's Bible College for indigenous students, were key participants and leaders in these movements, with nearly a third of the members of the ATA originating from the Church.[4] They were influenced by liberation theology and saw street protest as a legitimate and effective means of making rights claims. Because the Presbyterian Church had established wide-ranging organizations among indigenous societies, it had the ability to mobilize crowds from KMT-dominated indigenous communities (Wang 2003: 109).

In 1988, the ATA, the Social Service and Development Committee of the Presbyterian Church, and other indigenous organizations got together to form the "Indigenous Land Rights Movement Alliance" and launched the first "Return My Land Movement" *(huan wo tudi yundong)*. It was estimated that about two thousand people took their protest to the street, the biggest crowd drawn by the indigenous movement thus far (Wang 2003: 117). In 1989, the second wave of the indigenous land rights movement took place. It upheld slogans such as "Land Is Life" and "Land Is Mother," explicitly drawing on discourses from the burgeoning development of global indigenism and the international land rights movement (Stainton 1999; Yang 2013).[5] In 1993, the International Year of the World's Indigenous People, Taiwanese indigenous peoples organized the third wave of the Return My Land Movement, and released a 4000-word declaration detailing their land rights claim. The declaration proposed the notion that indigenous peoples have "natural sovereignty" to their traditional territory (Kuan and Lin 2008: 119). The government's response to the two previous waves of land claim movements had been to increase the size of the indigenous reservation area, and treated the negotiations between the state and the indigenous peoples as a minor problem. The indigenous peoples were not satisfied by such responses, and attempted to raise their negotiations with the government to the sovereign level, as a consultation carried out between two nations. Therefore, in the third wave of land rights movement, they brought their demands to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs instead of the Ministry of Administration (Wang 2003: 119).

Indigenous social movements in the 1980s and 1990s had successfully achieved the goals of name correction, the establishment of a cabinet-level "Council of Indigenous Peoples" (1996), constitutional reform (1997), and a change of state policy from assimilation to multiculturalism.[6] However, little progress had been made in regards to the land rights claims. It was only with the coming of the new millennium that indigenous land issues began to be taken seriously. In 1999, during his election campaign, Presidential Candidate Chen Shuei-Bien (of the DPP) proposed a "new partnership" (between the government and the indigenous peoples) policy in an attempt to reconcile the long troubled relationship between the Han and the indigenous people. This policy entailed that the new government would respect the indigenous peoples' natural rights to their traditional homelands, and, possibly, grant the recovery of these traditional homelands to respective indigenous groups. To assure the indigenous people of his commitment, an official ceremony to "reaffirm the new partnership" was held on October 19, 2002, two and a half years into Chen's presidency. With this new set of principles, the government began to draft an indigenous self-government act, and to fund research for indigenous community mapping in order to study the traditional territory of indigenous peoples (Chi 2010).

The government-initiated Indigenous Traditional Territory Survey began in 2002, and it continued for five years. The survey defines the indigenous peoples' traditional territory as those sections of public land traditionally used by the indigenous peoples since the Japanese colonial period, including old settlements, cultivated lands, hunting grounds, government confiscated lands, river banks used by indigenous peoples, and fishing grounds (Council of Indigenous Peoples 2002, I: 2–3, 30). The Council of Indigenous Peoples organized an expert team composed of geographers and other scholars to assist selected indigenous communities in initiating tribal mapping work. The purpose of the survey was to provide ethno-historical foundations for future land returns and the demarcation of indigenous autonomous regions.

Critics of the Indigenous Traditional Territory Survey have pointed out its problems and limitations. First, when it follows a top-down, government initiated approach, tribal mapping becomes a tool of state policy, and loses its original meaning of empowerment for indigenous peoples (Kuan and Lin 2008). When indigenous community mapping emerged in North America in the 1960s, its aim was to counterbalance the authority of government mapping agencies and to bolster the legitimacy of indigenous people's customary claims to lands and resources (Chapin et al. 2005; Fox 2002; Lin and Hsiao 2001). Ironically, this was then was appropriated by the Taiwanese government and became another manifestation of state sovereignty. Second, the Indigenous Traditional Territory Survey presupposes the concept of unitary, exclusive land rights, and places strong emphasis on boundary demarcation, hence neglecting the indigenous peoples' dynamic, fluid, and multilayered relationship to land (Ishigaki 2005; 2014; Kuan and Lin 2008). Third, the use of mapping technologies such as geographic information systems (GIS) and modern spatial information technology (SIT) privileges particular conceptions and forms of knowledge, and consequently marginalizes indigenous forms of knowledge. It also engenders unequal access to information (Fox et al. 2005). Fourth, it was only certain members of the so-called "indigenous elites" who have access to information, modern technology, and government funding who participated in the Indigenous Traditional Territory Survey, not the wider community. It benefits only the members of certain elites and widens class inequality in indigenous communities (Chi and Chin 2012).

Partly because of critical reflections on indigenous social movements of the past two decades and partly because of their dissatisfactions over the government-promoted traditional territory survey, the indigenous peoples began to organize counter-mapping initiatives. Indigenous social movements in the 1980s and 1990s were criticized for displaying urban elitism and a lack of grassroot organization and community work (Hsieh 1992; Icyang 1994: 289–290), and the 1990s saw the emergence of a new form of "tribalism" *(buluo zhuyi)* seeking local, place-based cultural authenticity. A distinctive practice associated with the quest to reclaim the ancestral past and awaken cultural self-consciousness is that of root-searching, by which members of various indigenous communities pay visits to ancestral hamlets or settlements, relating historical narratives and evoking ancestral memories through their embodied engagement with the place and landscape. Frequently on these root-searching journeys, the indigenous groups also draw maps different from those produced by the Indigenous Traditional Territory Survey. Some indigenous communities explicitly use these maps in their fight against the construction of national parks and dams, and other development projects (Chi and Chin 2012; Kuan and Lin 2008; Lo 2010; Sasala 2008).

In the following section, I will use the example of one of the Bunun's root-searching expeditions to show the importance of embodied knowledge in the indigenous people-land relationships and to highlight its significance in claiming the ancestral past.

4. Root-Searching Expeditions and Embodied Knowledge

The Bunun of Bulbul made their first root-searching trip in 1998, when Lamatasinsin, a Bunun headhunter deemed responsible for the Dakuanshan Event and killed by the Japanese, was made into a historical figure and "national hero" by a Han Chinese novelist and the local government. The Dakuanshan Event happened in September 1932, when three Japanese police officers were attacked by the Bunun while checking telephone lines near the border of Taidong County and Kaushiong County. Two of them died on the spot, and the third was shot but survived. After three months of investigation, Lamatasinsin was isolated as the mastermind behind this action, and held responsible for planning not only the attack but also how to mislead the subsequent police investigation. All the men in his family, including a fourteen-year-old boy, were arrested and executed. The Japanese police also

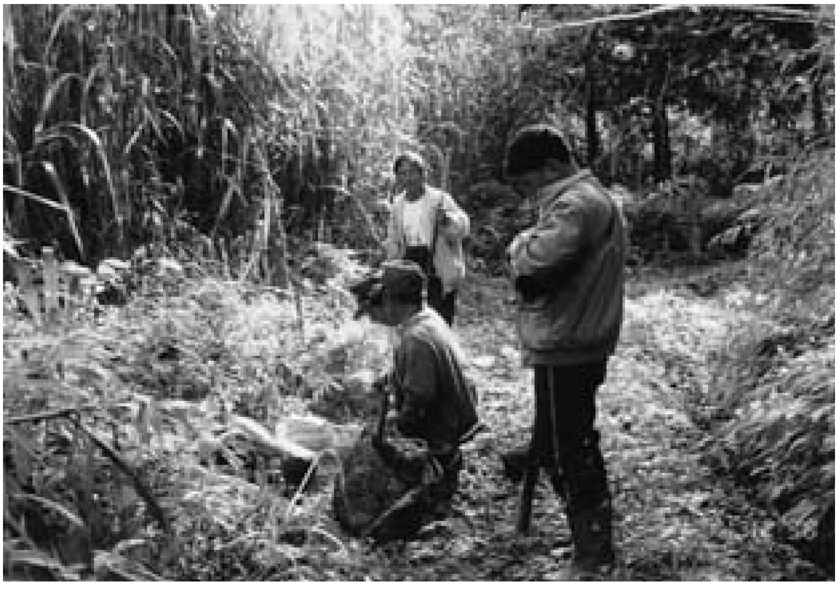

Figure 1 Bunun elders preparing their guns before setting off to Lamatasinsin

burned his house and destroyed his gardens so that no one would live there outside police surveillance again (Asano 1988).7)

For the Japanese, the capture of Lamatasinsin symbolized the ultimate triumph of colonial power. The Bunun finally understood how powerful the Japanese were and felt frightened. As a result, they stopped treating the Japanese police and colonial officials with disrespect and contempt, showing their submission and obedience in every respect. Many members of the "escape settlements" showed their willingness to move to where the police stations were, and the rate of school attendance increased dramatically. Headhunting stopped and many rebels returned the heads and knives of the Japanese police they had killed to the police station (Asano 1988).

The people of Bulbul, however, have different narratives and interpretations of the Dakuanshan Event. Some recognize Lamatasinsin as an anti-Japanese warrior and man of prowess, but most see him as an innocent person framed by the Japanese police because of his refusal to live under police surveillance. Still others depict him as a villain who was disrespectful to his elders (Yang 2003). And yet, although the Bunun's narratives about Lamatasinsin are multiple, contested, and influenced by the narrators' self-positioning in the patrilineal clan system, he has been turned into an objectified symbol of Bunun resistance to the Japanese through the romanticizing writings of a Han Chinese novelist, Jia-Shiang Wang. Wang published his "About Lamatasinsin and Dahuali" in the spring of 1992 in a newspaper. In 1995 it became part of a book with the same title, and won him a literary prize.

In this historical novel, there are two narrators; both are anthropologists. The story begins when a young anthropologist is given an old diary written in Japanese by an old man in Evago, the settlement next to Bulbul, and starts to translate the diary and to solve the mystery of why the old man's father wrote such a book. Gradually, the identity of the writer is uncovered. He is a Japanese anthropologist, Ushinosuke Mori, who was thought to have disappeared in 1926 on a ship sailing from Taiwan to Japan. In fact, he did not get onto the ship but hid in the mountains. This anthropologist was fascinated by the aboriginal people and decided to live in his utopia, to give up his old Japanese identity and to take on a new identity as a Bunun. He settled in Evago, exchanged a rifle for a house and some land, and later married a Bunun woman.

Mori recorded his life among the Bunun and their resistance to the Japanese. He was very sympathetic to the Bunun. In his eyes, the Bunun people were mild, kind, and peaceful. They were forced into resistance through the injustice of the colonial policy of confiscating their guns. The Japanese colonial government did not understand how important hunting was to the Bunun and acted despotically. The Bunun have no literacy, and Mori was therefore concerned to record their version of history and to see justice done for them, for he knew that their heroic resistance would be construed as a crime within the annals of Japanese colonial history.

Wang's novel interweaves Japanese records of several episodes of Bunun resistance with his own historical imagination to present a depiction of how the Bunun culture and their ideal way of life were inevitably and tragically lost under Japanese colonial domination. Lamatasinsin and Dahuali, two important heroic figures who fought against the Japanese, symbolize the Bunun's fight and their struggle to preserve their dignity and the right to live in the way they wanted. There is a strong sense of nostalgia in the novel for a past lost under colonial brutality.

The publication of this novel attracted the attention of many members of the Bunun elite and local government officials, as it came at a time when the indigenous peoples' cultural self-consciousness was growing and they were eager to reclaim their ancestral past. There were many commemorative gestures made in honor of Lamatasinsin, such as naming a street after him, building monuments, and constructing two Lamatasinsin Memorial Parks in Kaushiong and Taidong Counties. Representations of the past have become a political resource fought over by the Bunun in various areas under the intervention of the Han Chinese and the state. The Bunun in Haituan Township considered making a root-searching journey to where Lamatasinsin had lived the most effective and indisputable way of reclaiming him as "theirs."

Four male Bulbul elders were the forerunners for this root-searching trip, and they set off two days earlier to clear the path to Lamatasinsin. They left marks on the trees for the rest of the group, composed of six Bunun elders and two young photographers, to follow.8) The people of Bulbul perceived this root-searching endeavor as an unusual hunting expedition, as Lamatasinsin lies in a very remote, wildlife-rich area that has not been visited for several years. It is considered very difficult and dangerous to get to Lamatasinsin, with the journey marked by rugged terrain and the spirits *(hanitu)* of those who died accidentally in the

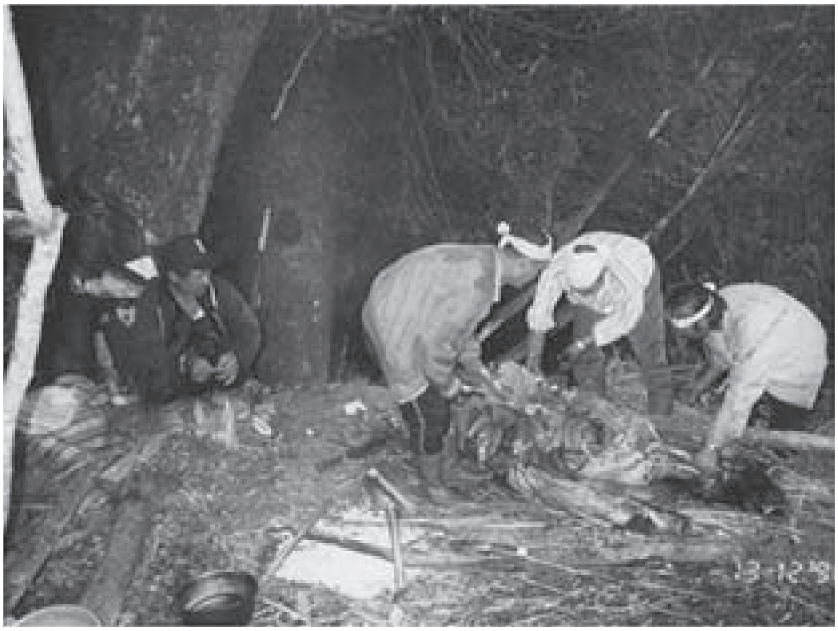

Figure 2 The results of a successful hunt on the way to Lamatasinsin

forest roaming around. I joined the elders of Bulbul on this six-day trip, and was able to observe closely how they evoked historical memories through their embodied practices in the ancestral hunting ground. However, because the elders perceived this root-searching trip as a hunting expedition, the fact of my being a woman caused some concerns and stimulated discussions about whether it should be considered a violation of taboo *(masamu)* to allow me to accompany them, and whether I would bring bad luck to their hunting.9)

Throughout the whole journey, Bunun elders repeatedly placed emphasis on the significance of reenacting the ancestral way of life. We were to live our days in the forest like the ancestors did. We travelled light, brought only a minimal amount of rice, and had to rely on their hunting skills and good fortune to obtain enough food. The elders stayed on high alert for the signs of wild animals and followed traditional hunting taboos. During our breaks, they pointed out many named places and some specific features of the landscape, such as a stream, a tree, the remains of a house, or a piled stone trap for catching wild pigs, and told the migration histories of their patrilineal clan, or recalled intimate stories about their ancestors. At night they stayed up late, drying wild meat on the fire and relating more ancestral stories and their childhood memories while drinking rice wine. The self-imposed lack of sleep induced a mental state similar to that of the annual séance of spirit mediums, i.e. a state more susceptible or sensitive to the existence of spirits (Yang 2006). Frequently the elders expressed a sense of "being followed" or accompanied by the spirits of their ancestors. Their success in hunting was also regarded as a form of ancestral blessing, as it was the ancestors who had brought the wild animals to them. Thus, after every successful hunt, the hunter presented a small piece of liver, some blood, and some rice wine as offerings to his ancestors, expressed his thanks, and asked for further ancestral protection and blessing.

Hunting is not only an activity carried out for economic purposes, but also an important occasion for knowledge transmission, as geographical knowledge and the history of ancestral migrations are inscribed in the topography and landscape. The Bunun notion that corresponds to "history" is *palihabasan*, which literally means "telling what happened in the past *(habas)*." *Palihabasan* is a very broad concept; it includes myths, *samu* (taboos and norms), stories, and the migration processes of patrilineal clans. It also includes *laihaiban* or *linnahaiban*, the places one has been to and the things one has done. In other words, the Bunun concept of history includes narratives, places, and practices. Hunting provides an occasion when these can intertwine, and named places and the landscape serve as mnemonic devices which trigger memory. Therefore, the Bunun conceptualize root-searching as hunting.

To perceive root-searching as hunting is also to emphasize its embodied aspect. In official commemorations of Lamatasinsin, the past is used as a discursive resource in the context of a nationalist rendering of history. However, it is different when we turn away from "history as representations" to "history as an activity" (Rappaport 1988: 736). When the people of Bulbul go hunting, they experience the past in a very different way. It is not narratives, but landscape and the body which play the central role in mediating between present experience and the ancestral past. The importance of the landscape in encapsulating and transmitting memory has been emphasized by a number of scholars (Casey 1999; Kenny 1999; Kuchler 1993; Rosaldo 1980; Santos-Grenero 1998), and I find the notion that kinship is implicated in landscape (Gow 1995; Morphy 1995; Toren 1995) most helpful and relevant

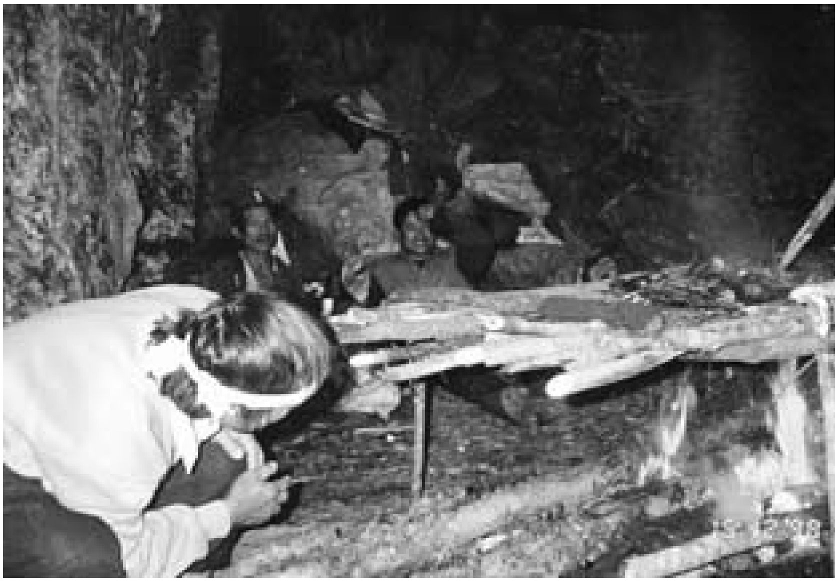

Figure 3 Drying wild meat on the fire while telling ancestral stories

in the Bunun case.

Like the Bugkalot (Ilongot) of Philippines described by Rosaldo (1980), the Bunun are generally uninterested in historical accounts that cannot be verified through personal experience or the experience of trustworthy persons known to them.[10] As a result, genealogical memory is shallow, and the landscape and places where people were settled at given times are of paramount importance to memory. The resettlement forced on them by the Japanese is often cited as the reason why they have forgotten their ancestral history. However, on the hunting expedition to Lamatasinsin, with the topography lying before us, the elders volunteered many more stories about the migration of their patrilineal clan than when I had asked them before, back in the settlement. The evocation and recollection of intimate kinship memories are closely linked to the emphasis repeatedly placed by the elders on re-enacting the ancestral way of life on our journey. Connerton (1989) and Casey (1999) have eloquently argued that re-enactment of the past is sustained by bodily practices, an argument which is clearly borne out in the case of activities such as hunting. By trying to live and act like their *maladaigaz* (elders, ancestors), the Bulbul elders strengthened their spiritual connections with the ancestors and with the land. Through the inter-animation of body and landscape, they experienced a special form of simultaneity with past, a kind of “reliving from within” (Munn 1995: 84).

For the Bunun, this form of embodied, place-based knowledge gives higher authority or authenticity to attempts to reclaim the historical past. After their first root-searching expedition to Lamatasinsin, the Bunun in the Bulbul area made subsequent visits to ancestral settlements. Some of these root-searching trips were carried out simultaneously with community mapping practices. As I highlighted above, the Bunun experience the past and strengthen their connections with the land through the inter-animation of body and landscape, so their ancestral lands claims should not be separated from this intimate form of knowledge. Unfortunately, this form of embodied, place-based knowledge that the Bunun prioritize tends to be neglected or marginalized in the land rights movements led by the urban indigenous elite.

In undertaking their root-searching trips to Lamatasinsin and other ancestral settlements, the Bunun of Bulbul were not intending to make land rights claims. They were more concerned about authenticating their interpretations of history and reaffirming their spiritual connections with the ancestral places. However, in other areas such as Pasikau in Yenping Township, Taidong County, the Bunun have been very active in combining root-searching expeditions and tribal mapping projects as an effective means of making indigenous land rights claims. In the following section, I will explain why they are quick in responding to changes in state policy, and explore how they deftly use different forms of knowledge in asserting their claims to traditional territory.

5. Asserting Land Rights Claims through Root-Searching and Tribal Mapping

Pastor Biung Istanda of Pasikau Presbyterian Church, a graduate of Tainan Theological College and Seminary, established the Bunun Cultural and Educational Foundation (BCEF) in 1995. It was the first non-profit organization registered with the government to be founded by Taiwanese indigenous peoples. The aim of the BCEF is to address the needs of the Bunun, to foster sustainable development, and to elevate cultural awareness of the indigenous community from both traditional and contemporary perspectives. Thanks to Pastor Biung's efforts, the organization has gained support from several Han Chinese NGOs and NPOs, and the BCEF is thus able to raise millions in funding every year from small donations and big enterprise sponsorship that it uses to aid its successful operation. It has also applied for many government projects and received substantial subsidies from these. In addition, the BCEF undertakes various business ventures such as ethnic and ecological tourism, performing arts, and organic agriculture, and is able to provide many job opportunities for the Bunun. Thus, it has been recognized as a classic example of ethnic redevelopment that takes place as part of the decolonization process (Tung 2013: 102).

The issues of cultural identity and indigenous empowerment have always been a central concern for the BCEF. In the end of 2001, its members organized the first root-searching trip to Laipunuk, the area where their ancestors lived before they were forced to move to the foothill and plain areas under the relocation policy of the Japanese. A tribal mapping project was on the agenda from the beginning. Nabu Istanda related that he felt encouraged to return to Laipunuk when he was introduced to the concept of tribal mapping by a Han Chinese scholar at the turn of the century (Martin and Blundell 2014). Apparently, he was impressed by the implication of empowerment for the indigenous peoples that tribal mapping carried with it. With several elders who were familiar with Laipunuk guiding the way, the group of twelve people visited two old hamlets and the remains of two Japanese police stations in the area.

With the financial backing of the BCEF, the people of the Pasikau region embarked on four more root-searching and tribal mapping trips in the space of just a few months. They did not only learn about their ancestors' former daily life in the mountains, surveying the area and drawing maps, but also produced a documentary titled *Open the Window on Taiwanese History: The Return to Laipunuk* to record these expeditions. On April 26, 2002, the BCEF held the first public screening of the documentary and began to collect signings on a petition, demanding the government to return their traditional territory of Laipunuk to them. A tour of Bunun villages in Yenping County was organized, with the aims of showing the documentary and creating an opportunity for signing the ancestral land return petition.

The notion that Laipunuk is the "window on Taiwanese history" came from the anthropologist Ying-Kuei Huang. Huang (2001a; 2001b) analyzed Japanese police reports that documented their investigation of the Laipunuk area, and found that Laipunuk demonstrated some unusual social characteristics as a Bunun society. First, although the Bunun replaced the former owner Rukai as the dominant group in Laipunuk, interactions with different ethnic groups, including Rukai, Paiwan, Puyuma, and Tsou, were frequent. Second, the population of Laipunuk was much larger than average. It formed a powerful regional center and, perhaps due to influences from the Paiwan, showed signs of developing from an egalitarian social system into a hierarchical one.11) Third, there were many Han Chinese in the area, not on the periphery of the society but an integral part of it. They married Bunun women and served as traders, as intermediaries or peacemakers, and as a communication network that transgressed ethnic boundaries.12) Because of the presence of the Han Chinese, trade was very prosperous. Tobacco agriculture, and the trade and manufacture of guns and gunpowder, were significant industries, providing economic revenue in the region. Due to Laipunuk's military prowess, the Japanese colonial government encountered great difficulties in asserting control over the region. Laipunuk formed an internal frontier, and its incorporation into modern state rule occurred very late. It was only after the Dakuanshan Event of 1932 that the Japanese were able to take better control of the area. In Huang's opinion, the specific social, political, and economic features of Laipunuk, and the fact that it was the last area to be annexed into the modern state ruling system, made it a "window on history" which offers a fresh angle with which to view Taiwanese history (Huang 2001b).

For the Bunun of Yenping Township, Huang's appraisal of Laipunuk as an emergent regional center that provides new insights with which to view Taiwanese history offers a much-appreciated academic justification of their fight to regain their traditional territory. They argue that Laipunuk is an important cultural heritage because it has significant values to anthropological, archaeological, and historical studies, and it should be restored and taken care of by the Bunun because their ancestors had established intimate connections to the land. Those who went to Laipunuk for root-searching and tribal mapping brought back some soil from the area, and ailing elders whose ill health had prevented them from returning to Laipunuk on foot showed strong emotions and wept when they saw this soil from the homeland. The BCEF constructed the notion that Laipunuk is these elders' "umbilical cord burial ground," referring to the Bunun traditional practice of burying the placenta *(katuvazan)* under the house (Yang 1992).13) This notion was to testify or argue for the identification between the person and the land, and the BCEF used it to demand the state to help the Bunun elders to be reunited with Laipunuk by providing them with helicopter transportation.

On December 10, 2002, International Human Rights Day, government-sponsored helicopters took fifteen Bunun elders, all over 65 years of age, to Laipunuk. The Director of the Council for Cultural Affairs, Yu-Shio Chen, also went there to show the DPP government's commitment to human rights, multicultural values, and the "new partnership relationship" between the indigenous peoples and the state. On the flag post of a former Japanese elementary school, the Bunun hoisted a flag of "Laipunuk Year One," indicating that this was the first year of their reclamation of their traditional territory.

Having, as it does, sufficient funding and organizational skills, the BCEF is quick in responding to changes in state policy. It is very resourceful in executing tribal mapping projects and in using academic research and mass media to promote their land rights claims. Bunun elders deploy their traditional knowledge to become the tutors of tribal mapping projects and young people apply modern mapping technology such as GIS. So far, more than twenty root-searching and tribal mapping trips to Laipunuk have been made and some accurate and detailed maps have been drawn up. Numerous newspaper reports and television broadcasts on these root-searching and tribal mapping trips have raised the visibility of their land rights claims. A conference on indigenous peoples' natural sovereignty and cultural reconstruction has also been held by the BCEF. However, the return of Laipunuk to the Bunun of Yenping Township as their traditional territory remains still a goal, and not yet a political reality.

Although the BCEF is highly skillful in using various forms of knowledge to assert their claims to traditional territory, its members know that they cannot disregard the embodied knowledge that is so deep-rooted in Bunun culture, and the Bunun people value it as a form of reclaiming the ancestral past. Therefore, the BCEF tries to preserve and share such knowledge through various means. The making and screening of the documentary film *Open the Window on Taiwanese History: The Return to Laipunuk* is one of their attempts to disseminate embodied, place-based knowledge. This sixty-minute documentary emphasizes that Laipunuk is the homeland and a place of memory for the Bunun living in Yenping Township. By recording how the Bunun imagined and recalled their ancestors' former daily lives in the mountains as "memories" while on treks to old hamlets, the documentary intends to give authenticity to its historical narratives.

According to Ishigaki (2014), the root-searching trips engender a process of identification through which the present-day Bunun (re-)confirm or (re-)imagine that "they are the Bunun." He sees them as pilgrimages to sacred places. For the present-day Bunun, caught up in the fervor of the indigenous movement, former hamlets in their traditional territory acquire historical continuity as "fixed places," becoming the moorings of their culture and identity as Bunun. Moreover, he thinks that the screening of *Open the Window on Taiwanese History: The Return to Laipunuk* not only helps to connect contemporary Bunun with their history but also allows the audience to have a "simulated experience" of the former daily life of the Bunun. In other words, those who do not participate in these root-searching trips can also share such memories and reimagine their traditional life.

I have serious doubts that embodied experience and place-based knowledge can be simulated through watching a documentary. However, this is only one of BCEF's attempts to preserve such knowledge. Through extensive interviews with the elders about their experience in the mountains, studies on place names, migration history, ecological knowledge, the distribution of clans, the traditional land use system, resource management, and relationships with other ethnic groups, are accumulating. What I find most fascinating with reference to the aims of this paper is the BCEF's attempts to enliven Laipunuk through reenactment of the ancestral past and the inter-animation of body and place.

After fifteen Bunun elders were taken back to Laipunuk by government-sponsored helicopter, the BCEF started up projects to plant millet (the most important of the traditional Bunun crops with a rich symbolic meaning), build a traditional stone slab house, and perform traditional annual rituals such as *Malahtangia* and *Minpinang* in Laipunuk. Needless to say, hunting and offering wild meat to the ancestors have already been carried out on repeated root-searching trips to Laipunuk. Through bodily practices in the ancestral land, Laipunuk is no longer an objectified, fixed "traditional territory" which the Bunun of Yenping Township pursue for political reasons but a living cultural heritage.

The BCEF has its fair share of critics and internal divisions. However, its attempts to raise indigenous cultural awareness and to assert rights in self-determination and historical interpretation have been very successful. Stainton (1999) argues that indigenous movements in the 1980s and the 1990s have transformed the idea of indigenous self-governance from imported heterodoxy to indigenous doxa—that which is taken for granted in any particular society, or knowledge that is in the realm of the undiscussed (undisputed). We can say that the BCEF's grassroots works among the Bunun have achieved the same thing. Notions of indigenous natural sovereignty over their traditional territory and self-determination have transformed from the elitist self-fashioning of an indigenous political project to what Bourdieu (1977: 164) called "cultural arbitrary," viewed by the Bunun as "common sense" and an inherent right.

6. Conclusion

Since the 1980s, riding on the tide of Taiwan's democratization and the worldwide indigenous movements, the indigenous peoples in Taiwan have waged waves of social movements to fight against Han domination, cultural imperialism, and ethnic inequality. Despite their many impressive achievements, the indigenous social movements have inadvertently widened the class gaps between different sectors of the indigenous communities due to the strong urban elitism that characterizes these movements. Critical reflections on the shortcomings of indigenous social movements led to the rise of a new "tribalism" and an eagerness to pursue a local, place-based cultural authenticity in the 1990s. The proliferation of root-searching expeditions among indigenous peoples is partly a result of this quest for cultural authenticity. Nevertheless, root-searching endeavors gain a new relevance when indigenous communities attempt to make land rights claims over their traditional territory.

As I have detailed above, the Bunun value embodied experience as a form of knowledge and a way of reclaiming the ancestral past. They perceive root-searching expeditions as hunting because they place emphasis on the reenactment of the ancestral past through the inter-animation of body and landscape. In this way, the “traditional territory” is imbued with deep cultural significance. Indigenous land rights movements led by the members of the urban elite tend to draw discourses from global indigenism at the expense of this embodied, place-based knowledge. As a result, they may alienate rather than unite ordinary indigenous people.

The BCEF offers an example of how to combine different forms of knowledge in asserting territorial claims. While the BCEF is skillful in drawing discourses from global indigenism and using academic research to justify their land rights claims, its members do not forget how the Bunun value embodied experience in the ancestral territory. In organizing and embarking on repeated root-searching and tribal mapping expeditions, the BCEF effectively makes demands to the state and reconnects the Bunun with their ancestral lands. With the current political stagnation affecting the return of traditional territories to indigenous groups, the BCEF is putting more effort into enlivening Laipunuk through bodily activities such as hunting, millet planting, house building, and ritual performance. By reenacting the ancestral past through the inter-animation of body and place, Laipunuk has ceased to be an objectified, fixed “traditional territory” which the Bunun of Yenping Township pursue as a main political goal, and become a living cultural heritage. No matter in which direction the issue of indigenous land return develops in the future, the indigenous peoples will surely be able to anchor their cultural identity in ancestral lands through these embodied practices.

Notes

1) The Bunun is one of the sixteen Austronesian-speaking indigenous peoples officially recognized by the state. My field site, Bulbul, belongs to the administrative township of Haituan, in Taidong County.
2) The first root-searching expedition took place in 1991 in Nantou County, the “homeland” or origin place of the Bunun.
3) The story of Wu Fong is a settler myth. He was represented as a benevolent Han Chinese who loved and took care of the Tsou, an indigenous group, but was killed by this savage and ungrateful people.
4) Students and graduates from the Presbyterian Church’s Bible College constituted 32.1 percent of the members of the ATA (Hsieh 1987a).
5) In late 1986, the Presbyterian Church’s indigenous leaders paid a visit to the Philippines, where they met with the Cordillera People’s Alliance (CPA). The CPA shared with them a copy of the Statement of Principles of the World Council of Indigenous Peoples (WCIP) (Stainton 1999: 423). The Declaration of the Rights of Taiwan Aborigines announced by the ATA in 1987 was strongly influenced by the Statement of WCIP.
6) The name correction or name rectification movement *(zhengming yundong)* centers on indigenous peoples’ rights to name themselves and to use their native language to name things. For centuries, Taiwanese indigenous peoples have been referred to by various names under several different colonial regimes. The Qing dynasty called them Shengfan (uncivilized barbarians or savages) or Shoufan (civilized barbarians). The Japanese first called them Ban (savages) and then later Takasagozoku. The Republic of China in Taiwan, ruled by the KMT, called them Shanbao

(mountain compatriots). Except for Takasagozoku, which has positive connotations in Japanese, all other appellations are derogative ones. Therefore, name correction became a key step for the indigenous peoples in disengaging themselves from their stigmatized position and in pursuing self-identity. The ATA raised the demand for name correction in 1984, and it finally prevailed with an official name change from Shanbao to Yuanzhumin (indigenous peoples) in 1994. Following the success of this official name correction, various indigenous groups have been campaigning for renaming their groups or for state recognition as a distinct ethnic group (see also Nobayashi's chapter in this volume).

7) In traditional Bunun culture, it was a taboo to build a new house on the land where a house was burned previously.

8) Iqanovan is the Japanese name for the place where Lamatasinsin used to live. As for the Bunun name for the place, some said it was Ihanupan, some said it was Mavandaz. However, now Lamatasinsin is used to refer to both the person and the place, an indication that person and place are mutually constitutive (Bloch 1995).

9) Fortunately, this turned out to be a very rewarding hunting trip and the elders praised me for being *malai* (one who brings good hunting luck to others).

10) This Austonesian-speaking people call themselves and their language Bugkalot. "Ilongot" is a lowlanders' term for them (Yang 2011).

11) I disagree with his idea that the Bunun in Laipunuk were Paiwanized. Instead of essentializing the Bunun as an egalitarian society, I argue that the egalitarianism displayed by the Bunun is, to a large extent, a consequence of Japanese colonial rule. Before the advance of Japanese colonialism in Taiwan, the Bunun socio-political order oscillated between egalitarianism and hierarchy, and the most important factor triggering this shift was hostility and headhunting warfare between different ethnic groups. The suppression of headhunting and tribal warfare by the Japanese colonial state in effect halted such oscillation (Yang 2005).

12) The descendants of these Han Chinese were incorporated into the Bunun patrilineal clan system as a clan named Maibut, which means they were formerly Han Chinese.

13) The umbilical cord *(pusuh)* was not buried, but rather stored in a safe place in the house after it dried up and dropped off the baby's body. To be exact, the navel was not buried.

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