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Publication Date

2020

Peer reviewed|Thesis/dissertation

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

“Taiwanese Indigenous peoples and all the people who live on our motherland”

Articulating Identity in the Context of Nationalism in the Siraya’s Recognition Campaign in

Taiwan

by

Tabatha Keton

2020

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ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

“Taiwanese Indigenous peoples and all the people who live on our motherland”

Articulating Identity in the Context of Nationalism in the Siraya’s Recognition Campaign in

Taiwan

by

Tabatha Keton

Master of Art in American Indian Studies

University of California, Los Angeles, 2020

Professor Shannon Speed, Chair

The Siraya are an unrecognized Indigenous group in Taiwan who have been petitioning the Taiwanese national government for official recognition for the past two decades. I followed a Siraya family at the forefront of revitalization efforts to analyze nationalism, indigeneity, and the influence of international players as they intersect and shape Siraya identity and their efforts towards official recognition. I argue that Siraya navigate complex interactions between the contested landscape of Taiwanese nationalism and the implications of proclaimed authenticity markers of indigeneity as they pursue Indigenous recognition rights in a settler state. As a result, the Siraya must simultaneously exist in a conundrum of supporting Taiwanese efforts in opposing China while acknowledging Taiwan as a settler state, resulting in a unique, multifaceted recognition campaign in which they articulate Siraya identity and the role it plays in society.

The thesis of Tabatha Keton is approved.

Jessica Cattelino

Erin Debenport

Shannon Speed, Committee Chair

University of California, Los Angeles

2020

DEDICATION

Dr. Don Rodgers

To a person who had such monumental impact but left us much too soon.

Thank you

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To the Siraya: I can't even begin to articulate how to thank you all. Every time I opened this document, I was reminded of my time in Taiwan. This small section could never sum up the influence you have had in my professional and personal life.

To my folks in California: My time at UCLA was extremely formative thanks to my amazing colleagues. From my advisors who constantly supported my work, to my friends as we kept each other sane through late night collaborations. Without funding through the UCLA Taiwan Studies Lectureship, supported by the Taiwan Ministry of Education, Taipei Economic and Cultural Organization in Los Angeles (TECO LA) and the Institute of American Cultures and the American Indian Studies Center, I would not have been able to travel and conduct this research.

To my folks in Oklahoma: Even after my focus changed from the Choctaw Nation to the Siraya in Taiwan, you all still supported me in every way. That includes when I decided to take a job at the Choctaw Nation as I finished writing my thesis (during a pandemic). You "kept me honest."

To my folks in Texas: Mom and Dad, you have never once talked me out of a harebrained scheme, including my plan to move to Los Angeles, California to pursue a master's degree in American Indian Studies. Even when you were slightly confused, and perhaps concerned, with what was going on with me halfway across the country.

These words written in the following pages; they are a conglomeration of all these wonderful people in my life. While my name sits under the title, it is with all of them my words sit.

Lalulug, Yakoke, Thank you

The stories our ancestors tell of the mountains of Jade, Alishan, Dabajian, Kavulungan, Beinan and Dulan, forests, grasslands, valleys, rivers, islands, and oceans of Taiwan testify that Taiwan is — and has always been — the traditional territory of the indigenous peoples on this land.

- Joint Declaration by the Representatives of the Indigenous Peoples of Taiwan serving on the Indigenous Historical Justice and Transitional Justice Committee

Tainan, the second largest city in Taiwan, is home to a powerful economic district built on Indigenous land. The Tainan Science Park resides on the ancestral land of the Siraya, an Indigenous group that historically occupied large swaths of territory situated around Tainan in southeastern Taiwan. Standing alongside Uma Talavan as we observed the small body of water that her ancestors traditionally gathered around, we were physically dwarfed by some of most profitable industrial manufacturing plants in Taiwan, perhaps the world. All that remains to mark this ancestral presence is misappropriated Siraya imagery and a museum built specifically to house artifacts they found as they bulldozed the land.

The Taiwanese government posits that the Siraya have become fully assimilated and therefore are not candidates for recognition as granted to other Indigenous communities on the island. Nation-states throughout the world have long used similar arguments of non-recognition as tools to obtain access to resources and valuable land. Trade liberalization and export-oriented development can increase the pressure placed on Indigenous land and resources, which are profitable economically. As colonial institutions, nation-states can strategically impose pre-conceived ideas of what constitutes Indigeneity. Part of the Siraya's struggle has been articulating why their community warrant recognition under Taiwanese law. Acknowledging that several elements make up the criteria for Indigenous status, discernable cultural traits such as language are necessary to emphasize to convince the national government that the Siraya still

exist. Gaining this status is important for the community as it conferred funding and representation within the governmental office of the Council of Indigenous Peoples. Despite their unrecognized status, the Siraya have maintained the language (including reconstructing the entire language from documents from as late as the 17th century), land, and various museum locations for around two decades. They have also maintained contacts with the United Nations and traveled to Switzerland to advocate on their own behalf.

My interaction with the Siraya began in 2014 when I visited Taiwan with funding through Austin College, my alma mater, which allowed me to develop my research project and work with the Siraya for two months. Subsequently, I briefly visited when observing the 2016 Taiwanese presidential elections that saw the election of their first female head-of-state, President Tsai Ing-wen¹. I returned during the summer of 2019, spending two months observing and interacting with the Siraya in their everyday activities, language lessons, and meetings related to Indigenous activism. My background with the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma played a significant role in guiding the conversations I had with individuals in Taiwan. I do not claim to have extensive knowledge of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma but have worked for and within the government in multiple capacities for many years prior to my last visit with the Siraya. Despite my familiarity with the family I worked with, I still acknowledge the role my position plays in my research. At each of my visits, I was a white, American university student. My background colors how I view reality, even when I try to minimize the impact. The family I interacted with were gracious enough to act as translators for me, as I do not speak Siraya,

¹ She was reelected in 2020.

Chinese, or Taiwanese. This research could not have happened without their patience and guidance.

My hosts are a family of cultural revitalization powerhouses. Uma's efforts have centered around political engagement in addition to her work as a Siraya language teacher. Previously, she worked as the administer for Siraya Cultural Hall, established by the Tainan City Government, to highlight and promote Siraya culture. She has also served as the Chair of the Siraya Culture Association and currently serves as an Indigenous representative for the Indigenous Historical Justice and Transitional Justice Committee. Recently, she ran for a legislative seat in the 2020 elections. Edgar is a language and music virtuoso who has worked closely with Ban Ching-hiong, Uma's father, to revitalize the Siraya language. Alone and together, they have composed the majority of songs for the Onini band and worked with Siraya communities to create their language dictionary. Their children are all heavily involved, serving as language teachers, coordinating political activities, and representing their communities across social media. Their efforts are truly a family affair.

My research analyzes nationalism, indigeneity, and the influence of international players as they intersect and shape Siraya identity and their efforts towards official recognition. I argue that Siraya navigate complex interactions between the contested landscape of Taiwanese nationalism and the implications of proclaimed authenticity markers of Indigeneity as they pursue Indigenous recognition rights in a settler state. As a result, the Siraya must simultaneously exist in a conundrum of supporting Taiwanese efforts in opposing China while acknowledging Taiwan as a settler state, resulting in a unique, multifaceted recognition campaign in which they articulate Siraya identity and the role it plays in society. An important facet of the Siraya's recognition campaign is settler recognition policies in Taiwan and the role

land plays in policy between the Siraya and local and national government. Therefore, I focus on how land has become associated with a historical caricature of the Siraya communities without recognizing their Indigenous ties to the land.

In the first chapter, I analyze multiple intersections of identity that my Sirayan hosts navigate that results in a mixture of Indigenous rights and Taiwanese nationalism. I argue that common preconceived notions of authenticity do not engage with community and self-identity in the context of national identity and international players. I rely heavily on the texts *Is Taiwan Chinese?* and *Becoming Taiwanese* to explore the historical implications of Indigeneity as it relates to how the identity operates in today's social and political world including how current implications developed from historical interactions between Taiwanese, Chinese, Indigenous, and international actors. The ethnographic text *Is Taiwan Chinese?* is important because it demonstrates the profound political and social conflicts that stem from identity that my host's experienced. Specific to this discussion are the Siraya's efforts at official state recognition and the implications of this. The chapter concludes with an exploration of the role of party politics and Indigenous efforts with a specific focus on the recent local and national elections in which my hosts were intimately implicated.

In the second chapter, I analyze how land and identity interweave through political discourse between the Siraya, local, and national government to articulate the complex nature between Indigenous identity, national discourse, and international influence. I argue land contributes to identity formation in the form of articulating belonging for the Siraya while simultaneously representing a national Taiwanese character used to set it apart from China. I focus on the cooptation of land under the Taiwanese government and how the Siraya have mobilized under conditions of non-recognition. As a component of this conversation, I delve into

how physically mapping and naming land and space reflect statements on power and identity. I include commentary on struggles that recognized Indigenous communities face to make the point that recognition does not necessarily ensure land rights, as established through law, are respected by the state of Taiwan.

As a point of clarification, I will utilize the term Indigenous Taiwanese to serve two purposes, first to acknowledge my collaborators as Indigenous to the island now known as Taiwan, and to acknowledge their self-identification as Indigenous and Taiwanese as opposed to Chinese. When discussing Indigenous communities in the United States, I will use the term American Indians, as my background is focused on tribes within the continental United States. Finally, I utilize Indigenous peoples as a catch-all term when necessary.

Situated 81 miles off the coast of China at its most narrow point, Taiwan represents a small island with significant international impact. Taiwan has experienced occupation by numerous colonial powers including the Dutch, Spanish, Japanese, and Chinese as it represents a strategic military and trade outpost. According to the World Trade Organization “World Trade Statistical Review 2018”, Taiwan (considered Chinese Taipei by the report) was the 7th largest exporter and importer among developing economies (2018, 17), 18th largest exporter importer in the world (2018, 124), and 9th largest chemical exporter in 2017 (2018, 45). The United States has also played an influential role in the economic development of Taiwan. According to the political scientist Shelley Riggers, Washington’s support of Taiwanese manufacturing premised on Taiwan’s efforts to move towards a market-oriented economy (2011, 49). In addition, Riggers reports how the Stanford Research Institute successfully directed Taiwan to focus on plastic, and electronic components which continues to structure the economy today (2011, 49).

Such policies set in place to boost capitalist gains have affected the conditions of Indigenous communities in Taiwan. This includes the co-optation, misuse, and degradation of land by the national government and other institutions. Indigenous peoples in Taiwan represent some of the most at-risk workers in industrial areas with a lower average personal income than the national average (Chun-Chieh 2001, 138-9). I focus on Indigenous communities who the state determine are antithetical to development attempts and therefore necessary sacrifices to advancement. Focusing on global systems is important because Taiwan is intimately connected to global trade and conflict stemming from international actors. As sociologists J.V. Fenelon and T.D. Hall point out,

[First] even the most localized forms of resistance cannot be understood without careful attention to larger system or global processes”...Because the relationships of these struggles, throughout time and in contemporary situations, revolve around the larger forces of globalization and expressed forms of neoliberalism, we also need to situate our discourse within explications of indigenous peoples, development, and internal systems of control by states (Fenelon and Hall 2008, 1873).

Like Indigenous communities around the world, globalization advanced through capitalism and trade directly impacts the Siraya.

Siraya communities have been at the forefront of contact throughout the island’s rotation of colonial powers. In 1624, the Siraya were the first in contact with the Dutch East India Trading Company as it set up a small colony on the resource-rich island (Andrade 2006, 430). In 1662, the Qing empire ousted the Dutch from the island and enacted policies that included restricting Han Chinese settlements to certain areas, creating zones that attempted to prevent encroachment on Indigenous land, and upheld land ownership rights of some Indigenous communities (Dawley 2019, 36). With the influx of immigrants throughout Chinese occupation, the Indigenous population become the minority on the island (Adelaar 2012, 10).

At the close of the First Sino-Japanese war, the Treaty of Shimonoseki in 1895 instigated the change in control over the island of Taiwan from the Qing Empire to Japan. Japanese occupation saw intense efforts to incorporate Indigenous community into the state institution (Brown 2004, 53). The Japanese instituted a registration system that forced individuals to register under government coercion (Brown 2004, 54). Within this system, the Japanese administration officially categorized the Indigenous population, including the Siraya, as “barbarians”, a term the Siraya have used to prove their historical classification as a recognized Indigenous group.

International war changed the face of Taiwan’s ruling authority again at the close of World War II when Japan ceded the island to the Republic of China in 1945. In 1949, The Kuomintang (KMT), the Chinese Nationalist Party, were expelled from China to the island of Taiwan where they took control in the name of China (Manthorpe 2005, 202). The disgraced Chinese political party, led by Chiang-Kai-Shek, would herald a massive influx of immigrants, fundamentally changing the face of Taiwan’s population by altering ideas of identity through citizenship, ethnicity, and Indigeneity. As a modern political party, the KMT are still a powerful political party representing a strong pro-China leaning.

Political liberalization occurred with the island’s first democratic elections in 1996. Since then, two major parties have dominated Taiwanese politics, the KMT and the Democratic People’s Party (DPP) with several smaller parties that run the political spectrum. Indigenous communities’ relationships to the political party landscape is a complex affair not encompassed by a single party’s ideology. President Tsai Ing-Wen’s election in 2016 and 2020, has provided additional, while still guarded, hope for my hosts. In addition to issuing a formal apology for Taiwan’s past treatment of the Indigenous population, the administration created the Presidential

Office Indigenous Historical Justice and Transitional Justice Committee in order to address past injustices, review current policies and procedures for their impact on Indigenous communities, and implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Despite the forward momentum, change has been slow to develop as my hosts still fight for official recognition.

My hosts felt their recognition campaign held a dual purpose. Many of the Siraya participate in the politics surrounding Taiwan as a nation-state. They acknowledge that the state continues to misappropriate Indigenous identity “as a symbol of Taiwan’s pre-Chinese roots” (Rigger 2011, 35). For instance, The Chen administration of 2000-2008 used Austronesian identity to distance the island of Taiwan from China, including creating a calendar in which he dressed as a different Austronesian group for every month (Rigger 2011, 35). Indigenous identity was useful only as a political tool to separate Taiwan from China by recalling the past as Indigenous, not Chinese. While they are unhappy with their status as unrecognized, the Siraya are still committed to Taiwan’s independence from China.

I argue that coopting Indigenous identity into a political tool has resulted in Taiwanese nationalism usurping Indigenous identity. While profiting from its inclusion in the national story by combating Chinese influence in political discourse, this process has created divisions across Indigenous communities. Similarly, Shona Jackson analyzes divisions across space and ideology between Creoles and Indigenous peoples in Guyana in *Creole Indigeneity: Between Myth and Nation in the Caribbean*. Her analysis investigates how waves and forms of immigration and the resulting narratives create novel forms of Indigeneity, focusing on how Creoles subverted Indigenous peoples as native to Guyana (2012). A similar process has occurred in Taiwan where

earlier waves of Chinese immigrants, now considered Taiwanese, have subverted Indigenous peoples as native inhabitants of the island in the national conscious.

Even when colonial powers acknowledge Indigenous identity, the pressure to identify as a specific nationality still exists for many people in the community. Referencing the United States, María Josefina Saldaña-Portillo states that “an indigenous person cannot be authentically Indian if they are cut, mixed, intermingled, muddled” (2017, 139). The development of Indigenous recognition is a contentious process in Taiwan where authenticity as defined by the state becomes an important marker for inclusion as an officially documented Indigenous community. Giving several reasons, including authenticity, some individuals in the Siraya community felt that even the recognized Indigenous groups of Taiwan were against their efforts. Glen Coulthard (Yellowknives Dene) in *Red Skin, White Masks* uses Frantz Fanon’s concept of the colonized subject in which produces “specific modes of colonial thought, desire, and behavior that implicitly or explicitly commit the colonized to the types of practices and subject positions that are required for their continued domination” (2014, 16). Coulthard highlights that even though outright violence is no longer the mode of state subjugation, colonial governmentality that determines recognition policies are still a subversive force that undermines Indigenous people’s efforts towards self-determination. Even though Japanese occupiers had acknowledged the Plains Indigenous groups² in government documents, subsequent settler colonial powers have denied their identification under the argument that they have been assimilated into Chinese culture.

² Plains Indigenous groups include the Siraya and all of the unrecognized Indigenous groups on the island. Only two Plains Indigenous community have official recognition, the Kavalan and the Sakizaya. Literature uses Plains and Pingpu interchangeably.

I utilize two texts to explore the complex interaction of identity specific to Taiwan. While employing different research sites and methods, both texts develop an understanding of how identity has changed and what role it plays. In *Is Taiwan Chinese? The Impact of Culture, Power, and Migration on Changing Identities*, Melissa J. Brown presents identity as engagement between groups and people in a social and political interaction with an emphasis on how individuals and groups navigate identity in Taiwan. Her work addresses how identity is neither static nor inherent and analyzes the impact identity, including imposed and internal self-identification, have on specific communities. Utilizing historical analysis across the different colonial powers that have controlled Taiwan, she analyzes how Indigenous identity has been coopted in the creation of a national Taiwanese identity. While this is particularly important to the discussion of national identity, we must simultaneously acknowledge the aspect of Indigenous identity's role as the original inhabitants on the land. While drawing from Brown's work, I emphasize how my hosts coopted Taiwanese identity in addition to their Indigenous identity as a political statement on national and international discourse.

In *Is Taiwan Chinese*, Brown draws from Norwegian anthropologists Fredrik Barth. I utilize Barth's work, *Ethnic Group and Boundaries*, in order to focus on how ethnic boundaries are created and maintained in a cultural system. These boundaries are permeable while simultaneously channeling specific social interactions (Barth 1998). I am specifically interested in Barth's exploration of how individuals emphasize certain cultural aspects to project their identity as a statement on the larger society.

It is important to recognize that although ethnic categories take cultural differences into account, we can assume no simple one-to-one relationship between ethnic units and cultural similarities and differences. The features that are taken into account are not the sum of 'objective' differences, but only those which the actors themselves regard as significant. Not only do ecologic variations

mark and exaggerate differences; some cultural features are used by the actors as signals and emblems of differences, others are ignored, and in some relationships radical differences are played down and denied (1998, 14).

Following this analysis, I use ethnicity to indicate not only identification based on common national origins or cultural communities, but as a method in which communities emphasizing specific elements as political statements. Underlying this analysis is the acknowledgement that as Indigenous peoples retain a connection to the land and the resulting sovereign rights and responsibilities.

Becoming Taiwanese takes a slightly different approach by utilizing historical analyses specific to one location, Jilong (Keelung), a coastal city in northern Taiwan. Evan W. Dawley (2019) analyzes how communities (such as cities) have structured their collective identity throughout the history of Taiwan. While Indigeneity is not the focus of his work, he analyzes how the Indigenous population historically participated and was coopted into the formulation of local identity and the impact this had on the larger society. Dawley's work is interesting because it does not focus on the nation-state as a unit of analysis, but a specific community with participants that navigated the meaning of ethnicity and nationalism in everyday life. Dawley provides a basis of how past interactions between communities and state institutions have shaped identity formation and can lead insight into the Siraya's political efforts on local, national, and international levels.

Additional work that explores intangible boundaries created as a result of identity formation is Benedict Anderson's "Imagined Communities" ([1983] 2016). Anderson utilizes the term "imagined communities" to explore how nation and nationalism operate between individuals and populations. Anderson defines nation as "an imagined political community" noting that "regardless of the actual inequality and exploitation that may prevail in each, the

nation is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship” (Anderson [1983] 2016, 6-7). It is important to note that while the state and nation can be the same entity, they are not necessarily congruent. Walker Connor states that improperly equating nation and state constitutes a “terminological disease” that prevents scholars from understanding the forces of nationalism (1993, 91). This is particularly relevant to the Siraya as we can separate an allegiance to an expression of a specific nationality from the allegiance to the state. Further, Connor urges us to consider how the definition of ethnicity interacts with nationalism as opposed to the allegiance to a state, lamenting that “the student of nationalism and the student of ethnicity seldom cross-fertilize” (1993, 101). Ethnicity and nationalism share common features as constructed modes of categorization of communities. Within this discussion, it is important to note that Indigeneity holds a few more distinctions than encompassed by either “nation” or “ethnicity”. Specifically, this includes a tie to the original occupiers to the land. All of these terms are important to distinguish when discussing the Siraya as an Indigenous ethnic group with an affinity towards Taiwanese nationalism.

While these texts provide important background knowledge, they do not address how and why Indigenous peoples claim certain identities within the Taiwanese national context. The Siraya are engaging in a unique process that challenges conceptual boundaries of ethnicity and nationalism. The spheres of ethnicity, Indigeneity, and nationalism merge and separate depending on the political and social purposes of my hosts. My analysis comes directly from an Indigenous community as they seek official recognition through the national government, while being deeply active and implicated in the international realm of the nation-state. They do not separate their identity as Taiwanese and Indigenous Siraya, but at times, seek to relationally align these identifications into their social and political narrative. I employ ethnographic methods

that follow the efforts of specific individuals within the community as they navigate political discourses related to identifying as Indigenous and Taiwanese as opposed to Chinese. I follow them through language classes, meetings, and hold one-on-one discussions with individuals tied directly to these efforts. In addition, I utilize articles and governmental documents to analyze political discourses surrounding Indigenous communities, recognized and unrecognized, in Taiwan.

I would do a great disservice to the Siraya if I did not mention the amazing resiliency, compassion, and drive they have demonstrated in their efforts for recognition and acknowledgement. Despite historical erasure and lack of official recognition, the Siraya have prevailed, reconstructing their language even as scholars told them it was impossible, mobilizing their community against institutions that sought to tear down their homes, and channeling political discourse by getting right in the thick of it all. I am honored to relay only a small part of their story.

Chapter 1

“On this day 22 years ago, the term "shanbao" (mountain people) in the Additional Articles of our Constitution was replaced with the proper name: "indigenous people". This correction not only did away with a discriminatory term, but also highlighted the status of indigenous peoples as Taiwan's "original owners"

- President Tsai Ing-Wen’s official apology for the past treatment of Taiwan’s Indigenous peoples

Tuesday nights are reserved for community dinner and language class. Everyone gathers at a relative’s house, enjoys a graciously prepared meal followed by language class that typically includes copious amounts of singing. At these gatherings, everyone in attendance reaffirms what it means to be Siraya, to meet as a community, to speak and sing the language, and to discuss political agendas to advocate for their official recognition. A song sung very often, reproduced below, draws the emotional connection to Siraya identity across space and time. It was the first song in the Siraya’s repertoire my hosts used to introduce me the emotional attachment they had to their revitalization efforts.

Taywan tagipurug,
(Taiwan indigene)
Mamumuan yan, Siraya;
(Our descendant, Siraya)
Mikakwa ayalam, hina!
(There, forever they dwell together)
Mama ki atatalingey tu vuluvulum.
(Like the stars in the skies)³

A significant portion of the Siraya’s recognition efforts have focused on revitalizing their language. The Taiwanese government indicates the use and knowledge of a heritage language is an integral component for national recognition. Therefore, these efforts are not only important to

³ Shared with permission

revitalize a staple of community identity, but to offer proof that the Siraya still exist and qualify as a recognized Indigenous community. Despite lack of funding, the Siraya have gained public prominence among the local government, museums, and local schools for their language revitalization efforts. This success resonates in the passion teachers have for the language. Representatives at a regularly held Association meeting reported that ten teachers taught Siraya at 21 different schools with 45 classes a week, an impressive accomplishment for a group that has very little funding to compensate these efforts.

Due to the history of contact between the Siraya and Dutch, the Siraya language utilizes the Latin alphabet. Siraya language teachers must employ unique tactics to teach the language to school children and community members. At local schools, teachers switch between Siraya, Chinese, and English while emphasizing the importance of learning both Siraya and English to encourage global competitiveness. In community language classes, many individuals have not been exposed to the Latin alphabet, and so must learn a script that is much different from Hanzi, the Chinese script. Teaching their language in Taiwan provides an illustrative example of the complex histories and resulting ideas of authenticity and identity the Siraya communities must navigate to bolster their argument for national recognition.

The Tainan Pingpu Siraya Culture Association (the Association) is the driving force behind language and cultural revitalization efforts. In 2002, the Association founded the group Onini, translated to “sounds” in Siraya (Huang, Macapili, and Talavan 2013, 4). Youth from the local communities make up the majority of the group’s members, with ages ranging from four to 20 years old (Huang 2010, 343). Although they may not be fluent, their knowledge of the language is extensive enough to perform Siraya songs and serve as assistants at the annual summer language camp. The Onini performance group was one of the first efforts to teach the

language and since its inception have performed over 40 shows, including at music festivals and political events (Huang 2010, 343).

My hosts had three purposes for language revitalization: to foster youth involvement and pride in the language and culture, to gain national recognition to secure for future funding, and to use that political recognition to influence government policies. They acknowledge that because there are no first language speakers, they were resurrecting the language as it had been interpreted by the Dutch, Chinese, and Japanese. The Siraya's language revitalization efforts are not without political and social conflict. Edgar and the family recount the struggles they have had with professors who have simultaneously used Edgar's work with Siraya language reconstruction while questioning the legitimacy of the revived language.

Numerous definitions attempt to categorize Indigenous existence to serve governments (state, national, Indigenous), organizations, academia, and non-profit institutions. These actors have sought to create a definition relying on the assumption that authenticity can be measured as an important indicator for what it means to lead an Indigenous existence. Nation-states are particularly concerned with these definitions because of protections that are afforded to those who can claim they operate under international policies created to support Indigenous peoples (Corntassel 2003, 76). Jeff Corntassel (Cherokee Nation) presents one definition based on the distinction between Indigenous groups and ethnonationalists on the precondition that Indigenous communities need to have been conquered or dominated by the nation-state (2003, 79). If an Indigenous group were to obtain or pursue their own independent state, and Corntassel provides numerous examples of this, they would cease to be "Indigenous" and lose the ability to pursue certain recourses as 'Minorities at Risk' (Corntassel 2003, 80). Additional definitions that Corntassel includes claim Indigenous nations "do not now control their political destiny" or are

“conquered descendants of earlier inhabitants of a region who live mainly in conformity with traditional social economic, and cultural customs” (2003, 78-9). Once an Indigenous group stops acting out these preconceived notions, their inherent existence is questioned. Other definitions focus on cultural markers that essentialize Indigenous communities. The World Bank, for example, defines Indigenous groups as having “close attachment to ancestral territories”, “customary social and political institutions,” “economic systems primarily oriented to subsistence production”, and a “tribal language” (Corntassel 2003, 86). The first qualification for the International Labour Organization No.169 is that the “social, cultural, and economic conditions distinguish them from other sections of the national community, and who status is regulated wholly or partially by their own customs or traditions” (Corntassel 2003, 88). Definitions like the ones above articulate Indigenous communities as static, situated in what are potentially past practices and beliefs which leave little room for communities to change as a result of best practices or to accommodate settler colonial nation-state impositions in order to survive. There is a disconnect between the Sirayan song that introduces the chapter, and the numerous attempts in which agencies define what it means to have rights as Indigenous peoples. This is complicated even further by internal confusion, disagreement, and political leanings across the Indigenous groups within Taiwan.

Identity in Taiwan has been partially informed through a succession of colonial powers. While Indigenous communities existed on the island far before the arrival of the first foreign power, their relationship to each other and to the land were affected with each transition of colonial control. Each wave of colonial power has affected every Indigenous community on the island but has had deep implications for the Siraya and respective Plains Indigenous communities and their political efforts at recognition. In addition to this history, current global

processes play a unique role in contemporary Taiwanese identity and Indigenous efforts. My Sirayan hosts emphasized their work as a combination of Indigenous effort at recognition and Taiwanese efforts against China.

Taiwan affords recognition rights to 16 Indigenous groups that inhabit the mountainous areas in eastern Taiwan. On the other hand, western Indigenous groups are identified as Plains Indigenous communities and were typically the first point of contact for those that landed on the island. However, these distinctions are not simply geographical markers, but traverse the history of colonial powers that have inhabited the island. In 1623, the Dutch established a trading base on the island of “Formosa” through the East India Trading Company (Blussé and Everts 1999, xi-xiv). This period is important because it represents the first contact with direct colonial intentions by the Dutch whereas previous contact had been limited to Chinese and Japanese smugglers and Spanish traders Company (Blussé and Everts 1999, xiv). Much of the information we have from this period comes from the archival records that had been meticulously archived by the Dutch government and East India Trading Company.

Due to the accessibility of their villages on the island, the Dutch mostly interacted with Siraya and other Plains groups. Religion was an essential element in facilitating Dutch control across the island. To this day, the Siraya communities are comprised of a large percentage of Presbyterian followers. As the Dutch sought to establish rule on the island, they not only translated religious texts into Siraya but also sought to provide special education to individuals in the Siraya communities. This policy resonates today, as my hosts had considered how they can strengthen their relationship with institutions in the modern day Netherlands. The Plains Indigenous communities were closely associated with the Dutch on the island and were in many cases considered allies to Dutch efforts, especially as a military force (Brown 2004, 139). Plains

communities not only acted as bulwark against the Mountain communities, they also were utilized to control the increasing Han population (Brown 2004, 42). In 1661, this role reversed with the invasion and subsequent establishment of the Ming empire on the island.

Considerable changes came with the Ming empire. Instead of allies, the Ming empire viewed Indigenous peoples as either a militaristic threat or a source of labor under a *corvée* system (Brown 2004, 41-2). Brown speculates that there may have been a much stronger association with Indigenous heritage during the Dutch rule, but as a result of the negative treatment at the hands of the Ming empire, those of mixed heritage seemed to have increasingly identified as Han (2004, 138-9). Due to the drastic reversal in attitudes towards Indigenous peoples, and the ambiguous system to distinguish between Indigenous and Han households, self-identification as Indigenous would have been potentially detrimental due to discrimination Indigenous peoples faced (Brown 2004, 140). This period saw a massive influx of Han immigration, estimated to be up to 37,000 individuals from the Chinese mainland. Brown further speculates that this influx, which contained a high number of unmarried young men, would have contributed to the intermarriage rate between Han men and Indigenous women (2004, 137-8). In the subsequent Qing rule, policies aimed at Indigenous peoples were contradictory. While simultaneously attempting to protect Indigenous communities, the Qing empire created school systems in Plains Indigenous lands that encouraged sinization and banned intermarriage (Brown 2004, 49). As a result, historical records during the Ming and Qing periods did not reliably record Indigenous populations because they did not recognize mixed households (Brown 2004, 139).

The period in which Japan took control of the island cemented census and governmental recognition between the Indigenous groups of the island. A household registry was instituted to

monitor and control the population. Race as a specific category existed until 1915, at which point Plains Indigenous peoples were no longer considered Indigenous (Mountain groups still retained their status but faced detrimental violence at the hands of the Japanese) (Brown 2004, 54). This major turning point in official documentation demonstrates the direct influence settler colonial government had in quantifying Indigeneity for future governments. While the system represented an attempt to quantify Indigenous identity according to colonial conditions, the Siraya have utilized the registry as a political tool to gain recognition. My hosts often referenced the household registry of this era as evidence in official proceedings to petition for their official recognition as Indigenous.

Unfortunately, official records of the Siraya and Plains communities are limited after Taiwan was acquired by the Nationalist Party from China in the aftermath of World War II. The transition to the Nationalist Party resulted in a massive influx of an estimated one to two million immigrants (Brown 2004, 60). The last few decades have demonstrated a renewal of Taiwanese identity that interplays between Taiwanese, Chinese, and Indigenous. Identity in Taiwan is a contentious web that spans political opinions, era of immigration, and location. The trek through historical eras illustrates that classification in Taiwan is informed by numerous colonial powers, each with a different attitude toward Indigenous peoples. Taiwan is still undergoing the discussion of a national identity that informs how the Siraya have advocated for their own recognition. Identity construction and articulation does not occur in a vacuum and the national discussion of Taiwanese versus Chinese is a prominent in Siraya's recognition efforts.

I asked my hosts if it was important to discuss Taiwanese identity within the context of Indigenous recognition and they replied without a doubt that it was paramount I keep this struggle at the forefront of my research. The Siraya, operating under settler colonial recognition

policies, exist with these histories and must simultaneously utilize ideas of Indigeneity as informed through these influences while they articulate how they truly feel Siraya should be defined. The term indigenous itself is a contentious term. It could denote the original occupants of the island or those from China that lived there before the Chinese state had a strong governmental influence. While creating a positive atmosphere in which Indigenous communities are not as vilified as they have historically been, problems still occur as a national Taiwanese identity subsumes Indigenous connection as original inhabitants of the land.

In January 2019, responding to statements issued by Chinese president Xi Jinping commenting on the supremacy of Chinese rule over Taiwan, a coalition of Indigenous representatives issued a statement not only defying the Chinese president's statements, but asserting that neither are they "content with the current state of Taiwan" (HackMD, "Indigenous Peoples of Taiwan to President Xi Jinping of China (translated by Taiwanese netizens)"). A particularly powerful section of the declaration eloquently outlines exactly how the Indigenous communities connect with policies of self-determination on their land.

Mr. Xi Jinping, we the Taiwanese indigenous peoples will not be threatened and will make no concessions.

The national future of Taiwan will be decided by self-determination of the Taiwanese indigenous peoples and all the people who live on our motherland.

No government, political party, or organization has the right to negotiate with any foreign power in an attempt to surrender the control of the traditional territory of ours, the indigenous peoples of Taiwan.

We are the determined guardians of our motherland, as we have been for thousands of years, and will continue to be (HackMD).

My host was a signatory as the representative for the Southern Pingpu communities. The letter's invocation of "Taiwanese Indigenous peoples" demonstrates how intertwined national identity and Indigenous efforts are on the island. My Sirayan hosts were not simply fighting for

recognition for their status as Indigenous, they were fighting for recognition as separation for what they viewed as an oppressive government of China. With their efforts, my hosts recognized that even those that fought for separation from China, the Taiwanese government did not necessarily have the concerns of Indigenous struggles on their mind.

I visited the Formosan Aboriginal Cultural Village during one of my trips to Taiwan. What greeted me was a conglomeration of theme park rides, an ecological park, and a living museum showcasing the cultural practices of the recognized Indigenous groups. Amusement rides such as “Maya Adventure”, “UFO”, and “Caribbean Splash” greet visitors at the very beginning of the park, transition into recreations of Indigenous villages of ten of the recognized tribes, and finally ends at an observation deck overlooking one of Taiwan’s beautiful natural areas, Sun Moon Lake and the traditional home of the Thao tribe. Lauded as means to educate the general public about Taiwan’s officially recognized Indigenous communities, I felt acutely uncomfortable emerging from an amusement park that boasted the “Gold Mine Adventure” into the recreation of a Saisiat village. I politely declined the chance to try on clothes at a small area that encouraged visitors to don Indigenous clothing as costumes.

The recreation of the villages, clothing, and cultural practices presented at the Formosan Aboriginal Cultural Village situates Taiwanese Indigenous peoples to the past, regulating them to behaviors that promote an idea of authenticity not necessarily grounded in modern day Indigenous people’s existence. This reflects processes that erase Indigenous existence on the land in order to facilitate the erection of “a new colonial society on the expropriated land base” (Wolfe 2006, 388). Through the succession of powers to its modern interpretation, we can consider Taiwan a settler state. As Indigenous peoples are erased from current existence, Taiwan political efforts continue to utilize Indigenous identity as a method to set the state apart from

China. These complications are furthered as the state creates systems of governance and recognition that divides Indigenous groups between recognized and unrecognized.

In *Red Skin, White Masks*, Glen Coulthard (Yellowknives Dene) utilizes Frantz Fanon's concept of the colonized subject which produces "specific modes of colonial thought, desire, and behavior that implicitly or explicitly commit the colonized to the types of practices and subject positions that are required for their continued domination" (2014, 16). Coulthard argues that despite the shift from assimilation policies to recognition efforts, tribal peoples in Canada must still operate under colonial practices in order to obtain self-determining authority and land reclamation. Coulthard highlights that even though outright violence is no longer the mode of state subjugation, colonial governmentality that determines recognition policies are still a subversive force that undermines tribal people's efforts towards self-determination. Despite this argument, my hosts were very aware of implications behind recognition policies and felt that the pros of funding that came with recognition significantly outweighed the cons of prescribing to the system.

Indigenous existence in Taiwan is governed by the Council of Indigenous Peoples (CIP) through the Executive Yuan. Established in 1996, the CIP includes departments for "Planning, Education and Culture, Health and Welfare, Economic and Public Construction and Land Management" (Council of Indigenous Peoples). Through the CIP, the "Status Act for Indigenous Peoples" defines what entails Indigenous status in Taiwan, and the stipulations related to marriage, birth, and various forms of family structure such as adoption and name changes. Surnames are a particularly important consideration of Indigenous status, as a "child taking the

non- indigenous parent's surname shall likewise forfeit his/her indigenous peoples status".⁴ The Status Act sets up broad definitions pertaining to both Mountain and Plains Indigenous groups, reproduced here:

The term "indigenous people" herein includes native indigenous peoples of the mountain and plain-land regions. Status recognition, unless otherwise herein provided, is as provided in the following:

Mountain indigenous peoples: permanent residents of the mountain administrative zone before the recovery of Taiwan, moreover census registration records show individual or an immediate kin of individual is of indigenous peoples descent.

Plain-land indigenous peoples: permanent residents of the plain-land administrative zone before the recovery of Taiwan, moreover census registration records show individual or an immediate kin of individual is of indigenous peoples descent. Individual is registered as a plain-land indigenous peoples e in the village (town, city, district) administration office.⁵

Despite this official definition, the Siraya and many Plains Indigenous communities have been denied recognized status. Later in Article 11, the Status Act states,

Indigenous peoples status acquisition, forfeiture, alteration, or recovery applications should be filed at the local census office at the applicant's place of domicile. Applications are evaluated to determine consistency with the law, then registration or cancellation of the mountain or plain-land indigenous peoples status and tribe is noted in the census data and census registration book; said registration or cancellation data is then forwarded to the village (town, city, district) administration office at the applicant's place of domicile.⁶

The Siraya and most of the Plains Indigenous groups do not qualify as Indigenous peoples warranting official status as set out in the Status Act. There are efforts to recognize the Siraya as

⁴ Status Act For Indigenous Peoples, Article 7, retrieved through <https://law.moj.gov.tw/ENG/LawClass/LawAll.aspx?pcode=D0130001>

⁵ Status Act For Indigenous Peoples, Article 2, retrieved through <https://law.moj.gov.tw/ENG/LawClass/LawAll.aspx?pcode=D0130001>

⁶ Status Act For Indigenous Peoples, Article 11, retrieved through <https://law.moj.gov.tw/ENG/LawClass/LawAll.aspx?pcode=D0130001>

Indigenous with limited application under this and the Indigenous Peoples Basic Law, discussed below, but since 1990, the Siraya have been fighting for recognition and have been repeatedly denied.

Other legislation dealing with Indigenous peoples in Taiwan is the Indigenous Peoples Basic Law. This document includes a discussion of the groups that are protected under the articles, naming specific groups while also adding “any other tribes who regard themselves as indigenous peoples and obtain the approval of the central indigenous authority upon application”.⁷ The Indigenous Peoples Basic Law provides a framework that outlines support for the economic, social, and cultural protection of recognized Indigenous communities. The law was promulgated in early 2005, almost two years before the United Nations established the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. It is an impressive document that broadly invokes consideration of Indigenous peoples’ wellbeing on the island and sets out structures that include Indigenous peoples in the conversation of policy discussions, though it has been arbitrarily applied (see Chapter 2). My hosts were extremely familiar with law, using it to support their efforts towards official recognition. In addition, my hosts invoked the United Nations Declarations of Indigenous Peoples as justification for their official recognition and have developed close contacts in the United Nations in their political efforts.

Recent legislation has proposed recognizing Siraya as a third Indigenous category in Taiwan. The draft bill that was passed by the Executive Yuan in August 2017 will require an amendment to the current Indigenous Peoples Basic Law to name Pingpu (Plains) as qualifying for only limited rights as Indigenous peoples. Under this addition, Pingpu Indigenous groups

⁷ The Indigenous Peoples Basic Law, Article 2, retrieved through <https://law.moj.gov.tw/ENG/LawClass/LawAll.aspx?pcode=D0130003>

would have additional stipulations and expectations placed on them compared to the groups currently recognized. Because of this, my hosts argued that the application of law would not be legal and needed to be revised to remove discriminatory elements. Despite these concerns, my hosts still felt that the introduction of the addition signaled an open door to fuller recognition down the road. This was one of the most discussed subjects at a regularly held committee dinner that I had been invited to attend. These opinions are not monolithic in the community, as some felt that they could not accept anything less than full recognition. Full recognition would require amending the constitution, specifically Section 4 that offers protection to Indigenous groups named as mountain and lowland groups, therefore excluding Pingpu communities. According to the historical family census conducted during Japanese occupation, the Pingpu population is estimated at 1 million, bringing into clear focus why officials are nervous about the impact that recognition could bring especially considering the impact such a large population could have on the distribution of legislative seats.

Those who advocated advancing this recognition policy argued that, while less than ideal, it would bolster the Siraya's cause given the current political climate. At the time of my visit, the presidential elections were ramping up to occur in November. Those that advocated moving forward felt that if the Kuomintang (KMT) political party, considered a pro-Chinese leaning party, were to win the presidential election, the Siraya would lose the chance at recognition for a significant period. Both the discriminatory nature of the recognition policy and the reliance on political party machinations demonstrates Coulthard's argument that recognition policies are more reflections of colonial governments mentality that limits Indigenous advancement. Uma felt that because the Siraya were not considered Han Chinese and not fully Indigenous, they claimed a space somewhere in the middle without any protections or considerations. Even the

Democratic People's Party (DPP), considered pro-Taiwanese though without necessarily advocating independence from China, who the Siraya community felt had supported their efforts in the beginning, seemed to be less interested in their struggles. Some in the Siraya community even went as far to say they did not strongly support the DPP but felt an obligation to vote for them because the election has been about Taiwan (DPP) vs China (KMT) with little room for other parties. To that effect, I wrote a short editorial piece for the Taipei Times, with extensive guidance from Edgar and Uma, that underlined how some in the communities felt about the upcoming election. Despite this, many Siraya individuals have proven very adept at working with and in the political parties and governing system of Taiwan.

During my trip, Uma and two additional Siraya representatives were invited to meet with the DPP caucus convener Ker Chien-ming to discuss their recognition efforts for the next legislative session. While interested in the Siraya's struggles, Ker Chien-ming could not promise that the proposed bill would make it on to the legislative floor. Uma has also been included as the Pingpu representative for the Indigenous Historical Justice Committee as well. Established in August of 2016, the committee aims to "pursue justice and serve as a platform for consultation between the government and the various indigenous peoples on an equal footing" (Presidential Office Indigenous Historical Justice and Transitional Justice Committee). The committee was formed as a promise issued by the President Tsai's official apology in which she acknowledged the Taiwan's previous treatment of its Indigenous peoples, including specific instances of recent violations. Important for the Siraya, she outlined a plan which included efforts to officially recognize Pingpu groups as Indigenous.

Uma previously worked for the local city government as administrator for Siraya Hall where she was able to work directly with the mayor of the time, Lai Ching-te. Uma had been

specifically chosen to represent and report on issues faced by the Siraya and their efforts. With the perceived stall in concern from the national government, there has been discussion on invoking the Siraya as a political party. Significant focus was placed under how this would be perceived, and under which party it would make sense. My hosts have strong ties within the political system, including official roles in the local city government. A political party that has supported Siraya efforts and reached out to Uma to run as one of their representatives is the Formosa Alliance also known as the Joy Island Party. The Joy Island Party is a strong supporter of a sovereign Taiwan. In particular, the co-chairman is Siraya and previously worked with the Siraya Association. It is interesting to note he holds strong support among the Christian population (closely tied to parts of the Siraya population) as a former Presbyterian minister. These connections draw out an interesting dynamic the Siraya play in local and national politics that intertwine Indigenous rights, religion and the colonial history of Taiwan, party politics, and international relations. Uma did not view her subsequent decision to run lightly. While she saw it as a powerful move for the Siraya, she acknowledged the implications that such a strong political move had on her standing in the community, and how this could affect their relationship with the incoming administration.

My Siraya hosts tied additional efforts to the political environment in Taiwan. Taiwan had recently instituted a trade policy to combat China's growing economic influence and my hosts discussed ways that they could take advantage of these developments. My hosts were interested in creating education and social connections given that China views Indigenous and ethnicity much differently than Taiwan. They felt this would also provide international pull, attracting outside efforts into their recognition struggle within Taiwan.

I introduced this chapter contrasting two elements – the obvious attachment my hosts had to their Indigeneity and the efforts to define and quantify Indigeneity on part of various external organizations and colonial powers. I pay particular attention the history of colonial powers on Taiwan to illustrate how the cumulation of policies and differing ideas of authenticity inform Siraya’s struggle to gain recognition in the modern age. This struggle not only includes language revitalization, political activism, and reversing cultural erasure, but the stress my hosts placed on advocating both for their Indigenous recognition and that of Taiwan as a sovereign power separate from China. I argue that the Siraya must navigate these complex, sometimes contradictory interactions, informing how they advocate and self-identify in their efforts to gain state recognition. They traverse the boundaries that mark Indigenous, state, and global, marking their revitalization efforts as cosmopolitan while staying true to their community’s connection to the past, present, and future as Siraya people. This applies to their struggle for land, detailed in the next chapter.

Chapter 2

The government shall respect indigenous peoples' rights to choose their lifestyle, customs, clothing, modes of social and economic institutions, methods of resource utilization and types of land ownership and management.⁸

Just outside the city of Tainan is a beautiful site of lush greenery and mountains. In these mountains, steeped in local flora, sits a small outdoor restaurant and museum filled with local photography, homemade instruments, and historical artifacts. A large map hangs prominently, outlining the Siraya's ancestral homelands, at the head of the outdoor seating area. Most people in Taiwan see this area as a tourist destination but I was introduced to it as the home of Uma's father, Ban Ching-hiong, the prolific patriarch of the Siraya's recognition efforts. The Siraya lands are lauded by the government as prime tourist attractions. The Nanhua Visitor Center run by the Siraya National Scenic Area Administration is such a site. Siraya in name only, the national government markets the area as a tourist attraction utilizing Siraya as a symbolic representation of the land by including the language and imagery as marketing tactics. Even as the national government has refused to acknowledge the Siraya as a recognized Indigenous group, they have sought language translations from the Siraya communities. Despite the performed link to Indigenous communities, the Siraya have limited control over what happens on these lands.

The national government articulates land rights through the Indigenous Peoples Basic Law. Articles 20, 21, and 22 outlines the government's role involving Indigenous people's land and natural resource rights. Article 20 states clearly that the "government recognizes indigenous peoples' rights to land and natural resources" and establishes roles related to land management

⁸ The Indigenous Peoples Basic Law, Article 23, retrieved through <https://law.moj.gov.tw/ENG/LawClass/LawAll.aspx?pcode=D0130003>

and resource utilization policies.⁹ Article 21 is particularly important as it outlines specific considerations the Taiwanese government and private parties must take when utilizing Indigenous land.

When governments or private parties engage in land development, resource utilization, ecology conservation and academic research in indigenous land, tribe and their adjoin-land which owned by governments, they shall consult and obtain consent by indigenous peoples or tribes, even their participation, and share benefits with indigenous people.

In the event that the governments, laws or regulations impose restrictions on indigenous peoples' utilization of the land in preceding paragraph and natural resources, the government shall consult with indigenous peoples, tribes or indigenous people and obtain their consent; the competent authority shall allocate ample funding in their budget to compensate their damage by restrictions.

A fixed proportion of revenues generated in accordance with the preceding two paragraphs shall be allocated to the indigenous peoples' development fund to serve as returns or compensations.

The central indigenous competent authority shall stipulate the regulations for delimiting the area of indigenous land, tribe and their adjoin-land which owned by governments, procedures to consult, to obtain consent by indigenous peoples or tribes and to participate and compensation to their damage by restrictions in preceding three paragraph.¹⁰

Article 21 sets the precedent of cooperation between the national government, the Council of Indigenous peoples (governing body that liaisons between Indigenous peoples and the Taiwanese government) and affected Indigenous communities. Article 22 follows closely the precedents set by 20 and 21, codifying that common management policies and mechanism must involve a process of consent with regulating authority jointly held between the affected Indigenous communities and

⁹ The Indigenous Peoples Basic Law, Article 20, retrieved through <https://law.moj.gov.tw/ENG/LawClass/LawAll.aspx?pcode=D0130003>

¹⁰ The Indigenous Peoples Basic Law, Article 21, retrieved through <https://law.moj.gov.tw/ENG/LawClass/LawAll.aspx?pcode=D0130003>

the central indigenous affairs authority.¹¹ Unfortunately, the Taiwanese government and land developers have found methods to subvert Indigenous authority as established by the Basic Law, even in cases involving recognized communities.

The Siraya as an unrecognized group are not the only communities fighting potentially negative outcomes of external tourism efforts. The Thao group, a recognized Indigenous group in central Taiwan, unsuccessfully fought the acquisition of their ancestral land to build a hotel in a popular tourist destination. Despite their recognized status, discrepancies in the law enabled the hotel developers to gain conditional approval to begin building (Cole 2015, 99). In reference to land, the Taiwanese governments recognizes Indigenous communities as local administrative units rather than self-governing, sovereign entities. Lands designated as “Public Reserved Lands” are still controlled by the Taiwanese government with laws promoting economic development, preventing Indigenous communities from asserting sovereign land rights (Bekhoven 2017, 17). My hosts acknowledged that even with recognition, the fight to secure sovereign land rights would not be over.

Taiwan’s global position is bound to its treatment of land and the Indigenous communities. Policies and practices guided by the philosophy of neoliberalism follow the idea that “social good will be maximized by maximizing the reach and frequency of market transactions, and it seeks to bring all human action into the domain of the market” (Harvey 2007, 3). Under these policies, economics expansion across national boundaries becomes the status quo. As a result, neoliberalism, combined with globalization, has led to the destruction of Indigenous lands and communities across the world. As Fenelon and Hall state,

¹¹ The Indigenous Peoples Basic Law, Article 22, retrieved through <https://law.moj.gov.tw/ENG/LawClass/LawAll.aspx?pcode=D0130003>

These policies rely on the above described process of political and cultural domination, on controlling any “development,” on maximizing accumulation of goods and capital by a well-entrenched elite, and on privatizing land and property, contributing to the alienation of both by less powerful indigenous peoples. Finally, the dominant, globalizing policies personalize and privatize “labor” as another commodity, which is deeply destructive to the nature of community. All of these contribute to the further alienation of indigenous cultural forms as we have identified them herein, typifying them as “unproductive” and “unprogressive.” Thus, indigenous societies are an obstacle for capitalist globalization to overcome” (2008, 1880-81).

Global, capitalist policies present Indigenous communities as antithetical to development and a roadblock in economically progressive policies. The definitions presented in Chapter 1, characterizing Indigenous communities as functioning outside of national production models (and insinuating they are incompatible with these models) reinforce these attitudes. Indigenous bodies are characterized as wasteful to pose lands as vacant and in need of production and civilization (Saldaña-Portillo 2017, 44). As a result, Indigenous communities become subjected to destructive policies related to land and community and physical wellbeing. As we will see below, Taiwan as a settler colonial power is not immune from these considerations.

The Tourism Bureau of Tainan City Government lauds Tainan Science Park as “one of southern Taiwan's most important high-tech science parks” representing a “coexistence with nature and ecology” with a site “full of greenery and lush with vegetation” including “numerous ecologically rich flood basin, Siraya Square with its unique ethnic style, a host of exciting art installations, plus the ecology conservation area” that “make Tainan Science Park resemble a natural ecological art museum” (Travel Tainan, “Tainan Science Park”). In addition to its idyllic features, the Tainan Science Park hosts companies in integrated circuits, optoelectronics, precision machinery, biotechnology, and green energy (Southern Taiwan Science Park, “Tainan

Science Park”). Among the industrial manufacturing warehouses and office buildings is the Museum of Archaeology as the Tainan Branch of the National Museum of Prehistory. The museum is an impressive structure that houses and displays fossils and artifacts found during the initial excavation for the park. Without the public’s intervention against the companies that own the warehouses in the park, these artifacts would have likely been destroyed. The eras are presented in chronological order, with Han Chinese rounding out the delineated timeline.

The Siraya have a notable presence in the museum including a song produced by the Onini band that plays throughout the museum, an audio clip of a Siraya greeting projected on loop in the main lobby, and the role the Siraya played as invited guests of honor in the grand opening of the museum. This is contrasted to the lack of authentic Siraya involvement in the creation and operation of the Siraya National Scenic Area run by the national government in which the Siraya provided translations but had little other direct influence. These contrasting examples illustrate the complex roles the Siraya must play in their interactions with different institutions. As the Siraya build and translate their efforts towards recognition, they inhabit different spaces of articulating identity. Their campaign must incorporate the attitudes and spaces these institutions are found among.

As we walk along the small body of water, our minds are not on the scenic features, but on the Siraya who may have called this land home in the recent past. The Tainan Science Park has had unintended consequences upon the citizens that surround the massive manufacturing complex. A study conducted in 2012 found that chemicals released in the manufacturing process had created possible cancer risks (Peng et al. 2012, 195). In addition to increased cancer risks, researchers found that while developers had considered the impact of flooding on location, they

did not account for the impact the manufacturing center could have on urban heat island (UHI) and rising temperatures.

“The impact of the UHI can be severe. As a type of micro-climate change, the UHI can affect the patterns of local rainfall, e.g., by increasing thunderstorms, and the extreme rainfall can result in flooding and related disasters. The thermal discomfort may result in higher peak electricity demands in the warm season, i.e., energy demands for cooling, which accelerates emissions of pollutants associated with power production, thereby increasing generation of ozone. The situation might be more severe if coupled with global warming” (Peng et al. 2012, 11).

As dominant narratives posit Indigenous communities against development, global climate change will continue to affect these communities at disproportionate levels when capitalism and globalization pushes the drive for production and consumption.

Even with recognition that affords established rights, Indigenous communities still face discrimination as the law is applied. Article 30 of the Basic Law states that the “government may not store toxic materials in indigenous peoples’ regions in contrary to the will of indigenous peoples”.¹² Despite the inclusion of Article 30, recognized groups such as the Yami (internally known as the Tao) of Orchid Island have fought against the storage of nuclear waste on their land. The site on Orchid Island was chosen after non-Indigenous communities and international allies refused to accept the nuclear waste on their land (Fan 2006, 417). In the 1980’s, it was discovered that several thousands of these waste containers had begun to rust, worrying the local Yami community that their crops and water source would become contaminated, effecting agriculture, fishing, and the connection they held to the land (Fan 2006, 425). Unfortunately, the Taiwanese government calculated that the benefit of nuclear electrical power to the entire island

¹² The Indigenous Peoples Basic Law, Article 30, retrieved through <https://law.moj.gov.tw/ENG/LawClass/LawAll.aspx?pcode=D0130003>

of Taiwan would outweigh the risk of contamination for the Yami and their way of life. The potential risks associated with nuclear waste were seen as a necessary even as the Yami community was “forced to live with disproportionate nuclear burdens and lack[ed] opportunities to participate in the policy-making process” (Fan 2006, 425). Even as the Indigenous Peoples Basic Law stipulated cooperation and consultation, the Taiwanese government could still subvert communities in the name of advancing development.

One of the issues the Siraya community have faced is the cooptation of their land with an attempt to limit access and dislocate families.¹³ In 2010, Zhong Xing University begin the process of prepared for demolitions that would ultimate demolish all or part of over 20 Siraya family homes, some of which have inhabited the area for over 150 years, to build an agricultural park that would also restrict their access and demolish four religious shrines.¹⁴ In addition, the university planned to fence areas of land to create a paid-access tourist attraction. The Siraya mobilized immediately by organizing community meetings, engaging in protests, and conducting press conferences that highlighted the injustices that many would experience if the university was allowed to follow through with their plans.

The Siraya’s efforts were successful in some ways. At the time of the conflict, their efforts resulted in an agreement that gave the Siraya three additional months to secure documentation that their settlements predated the 1920s in order to permanently stop the

¹³ I utilize Madison Messenger’s blog “Saving Siraya” because she was a university student working with the Siraya at the time of the conflict with the university. My hosts still reference her blog as instrumental in their fight against the university

¹⁴ Messenger, Madison. “Saving Siraya.” Saving Siraya. June 8, 2011. Accessed November 24, 2020. <http://savingsiraya.blogspot.com/2011/06/saving-siraya.html?m=0>

demolition.¹⁵ The Tainan county government has been consistent with their support of the Siraya, including backing their efforts against the university (a national institution). After some extensive searching (and page translations), I found a follow-up article from 2015 detailing the agreement made between the Siraya communities and the university, establishing the Siraya Cultural and Ecological Diversity Park (National Chung Hsing University, 2015). Included in the agreement was to renovate the entrance to the Siraya community to reflect this partnership and include imagery of notable fauna and flora as a method of establishing a Siraya cultural library (National Chung Hsing University, 2015). As it was not the focus of my limited visit, I do not have much more information on how the agreement had proceeded. Future research could detail and analyze the interaction and resulting agreement, an impressive accomplishment for an unrecognized Indigenous group.

Renovating the community entrance and altering and branding the landscape has implications beyond direct use of the land. Mapping can create and disrupt connections by formalizing boundaries. While governing entities and national identities are “imagined spaces” by analysis in Benedict Anderson’s *Imagined Communities*, mapping materializes boundaries and space. Drawn boundaries represent how most of these individuals are contained in space, enabling the space to take on certain characteristics. Mapping demonstrates Yael Navaro-Yashin’s theory on how make-believe space and imagination combine with physical space, “conceptualizing the phantasmatic and the tangible in unison by privileging neither one of the other” (2012, 5). This combines Foucaultian imagining of governmentality as relationships

¹⁵ Messinger, Madison. “UPDATE!” Saving Siraya. July 2, 2011. Accessed November 24, 2020. <http://savingsiraya.blogspot.com/2011/07/update.html?m=0>

between people and objects, as well as between sovereignty and territory as it imagines the transition between material spaces such as territory and land, and immaterial relationships.

Similarly, Kevin Bruyneel in *The Third Space of Sovereignty: The Postcolonial Politics of U.S.-Indigenous Relations* focuses his analysis around boundaries surrounding politics and political relationships including spatial encompassing territory and institutions and temporal elements such as economic and cultural development and modernity. This is relevant for the discussion around sovereignty as scholars begin to engage with the concept and locate sovereignty, place, and government powers within their fields. The third space of sovereignty is the intersection between colonial rule of the nation-state and Indigenous political actors that push against these boundaries on the borders of nation-state/Indigenous political influences. Here, sovereignty consists of boundaries that overlap and can be imagined as flexible, physical demarcations of power.

Naming is one of the practices in which we can observe the interaction of subjective and objective representations of space. Naming seeks to imbue physical space with specific meaning and interpretation that has little to do with the actual space. Navaro-Yashin analyzes how the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus renamed villages and sites to reflect the Turkish language over previous Greek versions, including changing signposts at the entrance and exits of villages, signposts along roadways, and maps that demonstrated the new names (2012, 5). While the space remains the same, naming practices changes the relationship people hold to governing power and space they inhabit, even if the newly recognized naming schemes are not uniformly adopted by those that reside within the territory. The Siraya inhabit a liminal space in which they petition for recognition while national institutions utilize the language to name and mark the physical landscape as Siraya. Unfortunately, the national government uses these naming schemes

to historicize the area, not to imbue the land with modern Siraya existence. In their recognition campaign, my hosts were not content with naming schemes alone. Working with elements the colonial power have put in place, i.e. naming schemes, the Siraya mark their presence on the land with their interactions with local institutions and their political engagement at national and international levels.

The Siraya are not the first to utilize naming schemes to mark landscape. Indigenous nations have utilized mapping and place names to make points about their sovereign power. In *Native Space: Geographic Strategies to Unsettle Settler Colonialism*, Natchee Blu Barnd (Anishinaabe) analyzes the different ways tribal communities have utilized official signage to mark language, belonging, and sovereignty. Blu Barnd analyzes how the inclusion of Indigenous signs and place markers in these communities “serve and seek to extend control over tribal life, and to reshape or reclaim geographies away from a violently non-Native worldview” (2017, 25). While these communities exist within colonial territories, signs change the narrative by which citizens interact. As colonial institutions have used mapping to legitimize their place and erase Indigenous presence on the land, communities use naming to reestablish Indigenous geographies. In her book, *Mark My Words: Native Women Mapping Our Nations*, Mishuana Goeman (Tonawanda Band of Seneca) utilizes the term “(re)mapping” to explore how Indigenous women have unsettled and reoriented colonial geographies. Goeman emphasizes (re)mapping as a method using “metaphoric and material capacities of map making, to generate new possibilities.” This is less about the physical application to territory and more about changing the relationship to settler colonial implications of space and existence. Neither is colonial existence simply erased. Navaro-Yasin analysis how objects left behind create the spectral of previous habitants that haunt current inhabitants (2012, 17). Indigenous artists turn

this concept on its head, utilizing Indigenous representations typically on top of colonial maps. Because of the importance of marking space, Blu Barnd analyzes how Indigenous artists have used maps in their art to subvert colonial narratives that place them out of existence.

Maps have long been tools of colonization and mechanisms for the construction of particular kinds of space, both conceptually and materially. More recently, maps have also been redeployed to subvert colonial outcomes. They have served to restore tribal geographies and chart culturally significant relationships to the land, often with limited access granted only to those deemed legitimately entitled (2017, 105).

The Siraya, with land and identity, incorporate colonial presence as a tool to make a statement. Boundaries across time (historical periods and the changing role of nationalism) and space (land) intersect, taking translucent qualities and compounding them to create a new story informed by the past but used to serve present conditions.

A few weeks into my trip, my hosts asked if I was interested in attending a youth hike in Siraya Green Valley lead by a Siraya individual known as “Eagle Chaser” for his intimate knowledge of the flora and fauna of the Green Valley. It was an illuminating if embarrassingly difficult (for me anyways) hike with the purpose to teach youth attendees the ecological knowledge held in significant places in the Green Valley. His presentation focused on ecological balance awareness and introduced species of trees and plants, emphasizing important animals such as the squirrel (used for food) and the snake eating eagle. When the Han Chinese arrived, they renamed most of the area but the Siraya maintain traditional names for specific features and locations. One example is “Eagles Place” reflecting it as one of the most popular nesting sites for eagles in all of Taiwan.

Article 11 of the Basic Law acknowledges the importance of ancestral names. With it, the Taiwanese government establishes a policy to “restore the traditional names of indigenous tribes,

rivers and mountains in indigenous peoples' regions in accordance with the will of indigenous peoples." My hosts mentioned the frequency in which names for the area changed while the Siraya continued to maintain their traditional names for these locations across time. Yet, even as the colonial government continues to demarcate, rename, and inconsistently treat land, the Siraya continue to be exploited in connection to land as a symbolic representation of Taiwan's connection into the past. One notable example is the Nanhua Visitor Center run by the Siraya National Scenic Area Administration. Siraya is in name only, the center is run by the Taiwanese national government and uses Siraya language and imagery as a tourist attraction, even coming to the Siraya for translations while simultaneously arguing that the loss of the Siraya language is one example their acculturation. As mentioned in chapter 1, Siraya has become an identity marker in the process of seeking distinction from China. They postulate that the Siraya, and Indigenous groups of Taiwan in general, represent a connection to the past that translates to current Taiwanese citizens. Boundaries as defined by immaterial space and mapping become coopted and sit on top of one another, where the Siraya simultaneously exist and are erased, where they hold power but still become coopted to the past and national identity.

This is further illustrated at the Tainan City Zoujhen Fossil Park. Of the five linear segments that make up the museum, the first section acknowledges the Siraya who were instrumental in helping scholars identify the featured fossils because they had occupied the land before the Dutch arrived, and since had been farmers in the area with an intimate knowledge of the land. The second section focuses on the Siraya as previous, historical occupants. These features precede sections dedicated to animal fossils found in the area. This initiated a conversation between Edgar and me in which we discussed how the Siraya were presented in relation to the remaining sections. We speculated the underlying message presented by including

the Siraya as instrumental in developing knowledge utilized by the museum while presenting an antiquated view of Siraya existence. I argue that this represents the contradictory role the Siraya must navigate in the local as well as national context. They are presented as historical occupants that simultaneously erases their current existence in their traditional land while coopting their knowledge and identity as building and contributing to modern day Taiwan. The Zoujhen Fossil Park employs several Siraya and does not intentionally encourage this interpretation.

Unfortunately, given the national conversation, it is hard to avoid this interpretation without directly acknowledging the Siraya having an existing connection to Tainan separate from Taiwan and its international situation.

Four months before my visit, The Zoujhen Fossil Park opened its doors as a larger facility. Edgar lamented that the government argued resources were limited, making it difficult to recognize the Siraya and fund the resulting responsibilities yet they had created and funded this 9,000 square meters institution with funding that could have directly supported the Siraya and their efforts to teach the language and serve its community members. While providing limited funding to assist the Siraya in their efforts for recognition, and in some instances actively advocating against it, the national government spends inordinate amounts of money to use the Siraya as a symbolic and empty representation of Taiwan's unique character. In this process, the Taiwanese government has utilized Siraya's efforts, without properly funding or acknowledging their current connection to the land.

In the first chapter, I analyzed how the Siraya employ complex interpretations of identity through the lens of local, national, and international influences to create a cosmopolitan recognition campaign. As a result, they have configured a method of combining personal attachment with political force in defining what it means to be Siraya. Chapter two furthers this

analysis by focusing specifically on land to illustrate the overlapping boundaries that exist in articulating Indigenous existence. Land operates differently across local, national, and international institutions but the Siraya have sought methods in which they work within each of these spaces to reach their desired ends. In that, the Siraya have achieved considerable advances against insurmountable odds, from revitalizing their language, pushing forward for their recognition, making connections across in political roles and international partners, and protecting their land while contributing to local knowledge even as the government intentionally and unintentionally attempts to erase their modern existence.

“The national future of Taiwan will be decided by self-determination of the Taiwanese Indigenous peoples and all the people who live on our motherland.”

- Joint Declaration by the Representatives of the Indigenous Peoples of Taiwan serving on the Indigenous Historical Justice and Transitional Justice Committee

The Siraya’s efforts span two decades of language revitalization, community engagement, and political mobilization. They operate in a colonial state which has seen the flags of five different international powers in a span of approximately four centuries. With each transition of power, different ideas of Indigeneity and the consequences of resulting policies towards Indigenous communities are felt even in the modern age. It is in this context the Siraya articulate their identity as they petition the Taiwanese government for official recognition. The Siraya must navigate the contested landscape of Taiwanese nationalism, the implications of proclaimed authenticity markers of Indigeneity, and the numerous Siraya communities with their own ideas of what it means to be Indigenous. To successfully advocate for recognition, my hosts not only must articulate Siraya as an Indigenous community, they must articulate Siraya as an Indigenous community with all the implications of existing in modern day Taiwan. Land represents the physical embodiment of how these elements coalesce in the political realm. Similar to the forces that shape identity articulation for the Siraya, land operates in the same ambiguous space between local, nation, and international actors. Even as the colonial power of Taiwan attempts to control land for economic exploitation, the Siraya have been able to influence the narrative of their land, imbuing it with Indigenous character through naming, mapping, and simply continuing to live and raise their families on it. I hope this research encourages a deeper analysis in how Indigenous peoples interact with colonial powers as they operate concurrently within imagined boundaries that are fluid and dynamic. Communities and

individuals are in constant renegotiation with these boundaries to the point that rather than smooth lines and circles, the developed edges, cross over themselves, and create bumps that complicates keeping them as completely distinct entities.

My research is the result of working with individuals in the Siraya community while using a strong academic focus in American Indian studies and a background of working in a tribal government located in Oklahoma. I am not advocating a universal mode of analysis, but a method in which we can analyze communities to see how efforts can be strengthened with an eye on responses to capitalism and colonial powers across the globe. My hosts utilized global partners, working with individuals from the Netherlands, United States, and the United Nations to name a few, to advance their efforts for recognition. When I visited, they often asked about my experience working with the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma.

Similar attitudes towards Indigenous peoples exist in Taiwan and the United States. Indigenous communities in each country must navigate histories that have had contradictory approaches to policies involving Indigenous communities. Indigenous communities in both the United States and Taiwan must navigate boundaries between local, national, and international players that sometimes line up, but more often are contrary, ever changing, and fluid. Tribes in the United States have a much more explicitly defined relationship with sovereignty and in many cases can operate on a government to government level with local, state, and the national government. My hosts were interested in how this sovereignty operated, and how tribes in the United States were able to garner this influence and translate it to operating language revitalization and community programs. I am not sure exactly how my work with the Choctaw Nation can translate to the Siraya, but future research opportunities could illuminate these connections.

Additional research could analyze the effect of international actors in the Siraya's struggles, including their work with the United Nations, academics including Alexander Adelaar (who provided extensive assistance with language revitalization), and how foreign powers interacting with Taiwan indirectly impact Indigenous efforts. I briefly mentioned the effect United States economic policies have had on Taiwanese Indigenous peoples. Additional research could analyze these connections in more detail, focusing on actors within the Taiwanese governing body. In addition, I would be interested in delving deeper into Indigenous issues and party politics. Both in Taiwan and the United States, Indigenous concerns do not fit neatly into either of the major party platforms. Indigenous groups operate across, and outside, the political spectrum.

My latest visit came at an uncertain time for the Siraya. Taiwan was on the cusp of its presidential elections and major changes had recently occurred in Indigenous politics. This left the Siraya apprehensive for what the future would hold for their recognition efforts. With the upcoming presidential election and with political tensions rising in China, the Siraya were in the process of reformulating what the process for moving forward looked like. And Uma had just decided to run for political office. Those are some of the conversations that sit with me. They remind me of the strong Indigenous woman who have secured offices here in the United States such as Deb Haaland and Sharice Davids and the countless other Indigenous women across the world. She faces the same issues of representation and social expectations that these women face as well. And like many of these women, she comes from Indigenous efforts guided by women-led initiatives. Throughout my trip, I had spent almost two months following Uma to language classes, dominated by female students. Her daughters follow her footsteps in supporting the community's efforts, holding special positions in language revitalization and policy efforts.

Meetings held by the Siraya Culture Association, while majority men, were led by the women with exponential impact on what was decided. A few months after returning to the United States I was invited to follow Uma's candidate page. Edgar, Uma's supportive husband, continuously commented on how the Siraya's future was in the hands of the women. I am lucky to have been able to observe even a small part of this.

“Indeed, we are not content with the current state of Taiwan, the sovereign state that has been built upon our motherland. The state has just started paying attention to historical and transitional justice for the Indigenous peoples. It has just begun to recognize its own ethnic and cultural diversity, as well as different understandings of history within its diverse peoples.

Nevertheless, Taiwan is also a nation that we are striving to build together with other peoples who recognize the distinct identity of this land. Taiwan is a nation accommodating diverse peoples trying to understand each other's painful pasts, as well as a nation in which we can tell our own stories in our own languages, loudly.

Together we decide what kind of country Taiwan should be, and we work hard to improve its current state. This is dignity.”

- Joint Declaration by the Representatives of the Indigenous Peoples of Taiwan serving on the Indigenous Historical Justice and Transitional Justice Committee

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