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**Title:** Accessing indigenous land rights through claims in Taroko Area, Eastern Taiwan  
**Issue Date:** 2013-04-17
Mapping Taroko Traditional Territories in Diaspora and Hybridity Scenarios

4.1 Zero-or-Sum places: Mapping diaspora and hybridity scenarios

An *in situ* scenario, lends itself to a more empirically based methodology of mapping human-land relationships, since people are living where they are still practicing and structuring land uses and tenures (Basso 1996). An empirical method allows for the checking of the ideas on human-land relationships that emerge among stakeholders. However, in cases where land is not inhabited, but there are still many stakeholders dispersed in many different places, each with different discourses and claims to land rights, it is hard to find suitable mapping methodologies. It is hard to define, quantitatively and qualitatively, or even to find enough representatives or stakeholders for mapping purposes when there are only descendants without strong connections to the traditional territories. There is no doubt that mapping empirically and ethnographically takes time and money and, on the whole, requires governmental efforts and initiative. Thus, we see in the national *Indigenous Traditional Territorial and Land Survey (ITTLS)* project, different townships implement the project either by adopting a way of cooperating with local people or indigenous NGOs who have been undertaking similar mappings, or by carrying out literature reviews and general interviews as a way of searching for surviving elders or representatives with a view to achieving a township scale mapping and finding clues to places and fading memories (Chang et al. 2004). Collaboration with local people has always involved a process of mapping on a micro local scale, rather on a larger, township level. In my role as general secretary to the ITTLS project, I have observed that the implementation of local mapping processes adopted methods that meet the needs of different local contexts or politics. This observation requires further analysis, but at this point, I will examine the Taroko area in order to illustrate how the social movements of mapping traditional territories initiated by central government were interpreted and implemented in local contexts.
4.1.1 A doctrine for traditional territory mapping: witnessing

As part of a national indigenous mapping plan sponsored by the Indigenous Council, the Shoulin Township adopted a method that, despite a limited budget in terms of time and money, aimed for the mapping of territory on a township scale. Even though Shoulin is the largest township in Taiwan, it was only granted the same budget for mapping as other smaller townships. Inevitably, it was difficult to conduct a detailed investigation with so few resources. The person hired to take charge of the mapping was a Truku intellectual, who had devoted a lot of time to exploring ancestral territories with other Truku people, and who had hunted and traveled a great deal within the ancestral areas.

In fact, the leaders of the Shoulin project took the definition and boundary of the Taroko territory to be those defined by the Japanese, who had already mapped and demarcated the Taroko territory prior to their invasion of the area in 1914 (Yang 1996; Zhang, zhi-sheng 1998; Chen 1999; Chang, Dai-Pin 2000). They believed they knew the territory belonging to Taroko people, but that was now under the control of the Forestry Bureau and Taroko National Park headquarters, well. Following recent social movements to promote their ethnic identity as an independent tribe, rather than as a sub-tribe of the Atayal, they invited a group of people who had fought for the independence of the Truku tribe from the Atayal ethnic identity to discuss and participate in the mapping project. It is clear, then, that mapping was scoped at an ethnic level. The project leaders collected Japanese maps that supported the legitimacy of a mapping of Truku territory. However, most of the lands they called traditional territories are no longer inhabited by Taroko people. Indeed, the people were actually disconnected from those areas to a great extent. The investigators on this project had no direct experience with the land they were mapping. In the first few years, the primary methodology used was to find hunters who still accessed the hunting area to provide information and to use tribal place names indicated by elders or marked on Japanese maps. The investigators used these hunters to gain access to the land. This method of ‘witnessing the traditional territories’, resulted in a data bank, indicating traditional territories in units of small tribes with some basic information provided by limited sources of informants. Box 4.1 illustrates an item from the project’s 2008 report regarding tribe No. 176, the Alang Btakan. It gives an example of the information provided for analyses used in their mapping processes.

4.2 Frames of historicity and legitimacy between men and land

4.2.1 Time-embedded landscape in diaspora scenarios

The box relating to the Btakan is a typical illustration of the mapping reports on each tribe visited by the project. It shows a typical style of narration. The reports are always structured in four sections: (1) names of the first comers and the time period they stayed after first arrival; (2) later migrations by the founding families
in different time periods; (3) the conditions around the time before 1895 when the Japanese came and later migrations and conditions of these families after the Japanese had implemented their polices relating to indigenous people; (4) the final section introduces some details relating to the correspondents who provided the information and led the visit to the tribe.

In the report relating to the Alang Btakan, I sense that the map makers were structuring the time frame with a specific model that indicates major events in the history of the Taroko people. The Japanese army actually came to the Taroko area around 1914, whereas the year of 1895 (when the Japanese took over Taiwan) is a temporal land mark used to define the dramatic differences in the relationships between certain families and the territory. The mappers described their territories before the Japanese came as places where gaya was used to manage internal negotiations in terms of which land and natural resources they could occupy and have access to. However, after the Japanese and the Nationalists came, they were forced to leave their homelands, which now belong to the ‘state of the nature’.

In my opinion, the mapping results and processes were stressed in terms of counter mapping, which views colonialism as a major factor of change (Chapin 2001; 2005; Kuan 2008; Lu 2009; Tsai, et al. 2006; Wang 2004). A further device used by the mappers to illustrate the contrast between colonial and pre-colonial rule is the construction of the time period after the first families of each tribe

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**Box 4.1 - Alang Btakan**

1. About 250 years ago, Padu Umaw’s descendents, Apu Uda’s brothers, moved their families out of Skadang, by way of lyax Paru, to the south bank of the Heran River where they established a settlement in Btakan.
2. Later, they found vacant slope lands in the south east, which were good for cultivation, so some family members set up another tribe, the Apu, who were still ruled by the Btakan.
3. Before 1895, the villages on the south bank of Heran River were overpopulated and the threat of invasion by the Smiyawan from the south was getting fierce. In order to prevent the invasion, they built a satellite settlement on higher ground called Ngaran, which means a settlement for protection. When the Japanese came, around 1895, there were more than 30 families. After the war in 1914, the settlements were forced to move down to the plains, but they were still allowed to cultivate the original tribal lands, until 1946, when the Nationalists came, and we were all forced to leave our forest and land.
4. The guide, Wilang Yudaw, aged 62, whose ancestors came from the Skuy tribe on the Liwu River, now lives in Hoping village as a village head. From his youth, he went with elders to hunt all over the Nan-hu Mountain. His ancestors lived along the Da-Chou-Suei River. He participated in many construction projects in this area, including the building of cement factories and power plants. He knows these areas quite well.
arrived on the land in question. I have found three specific time periods used regularly by these mappers to indicate the histories of certain families: as long as 250 years; 200 years; and 150 years. This can be seen in the sentence in Box 1: ‘About 250 years ago, Padu Umaw’s descendants, Apu Uda brothers, moved their families out of Skadang by way of Iyax Paru’. I asked the question, how did the investigators know that the timeframe was 250, 200 or 150 years ago? One informant answered that there are Japanese documents that mention genealogies that list at least ten generations (Utsurikawa 1935). ‘If one can calculate one generation as 25 years, then the ten generations [recorded] suggest that this specific tribe endures at least 250 years’. ‘At least the Japanese did something good for us by recording the genealogies in the book ‘Studies of the Systems of Taiwanese Mountain Peoples (Utsurikawa 1935)’. However, Japanese scholars had not recorded all the genealogies, so ‘we could still have a basis to count the time period in terms of the memories of migrations and external marriages’. One indigenous participant told me that, ‘we don’t need an accurate time, but we need a relatively reasonable timeframe to structure the first comers and later comers, which would be enough to keep the gaya of human-land relationships in histories’. I asked why he could only remember three to five generations back and, more importantly, given this, how it was then possible to connect to the first comers. Could there be a missing link? ‘Of course, there are missing links, but we always remember our first ancestors who came to the place’, he replied. Another informant answered that the reason why it is not important to have an accurate time period is because it is the time before the Japanese came; a time when ancestors lived their lives in a similar way to the founding families, who lived naturally and happily on the land. ‘The past was a much easier and a happier time than now, when we are not able to live on our homelands’. Here, again, is a sense of counter mapping as a device to help explain the timeframe. ‘Thus we don’t care about the missing links between the first comers and the last families who ever lived here before the Japanese came’. I notice that this narration of a time period is a missing link that, though it escapes the actual connections in terms of genealogy, it is actually legitimating the connections between the first comers and the then residents in the Japanese era with certain lands and territories.

Here, I have differentiated various narrations on the use of genealogies in Truku scenarios: one is a reverse genealogy that is used in scenarios such as the PPGIS mapping of the Skadang and Hohos tribes, where they live in situ and are able to recall three to five generations back. This reverse method always begins from the person involved and recounts just enough previous generations to legitimate and demonstrate land tenure structures in combination with the narration of apical genealogy: from the original ancestors and a few later generations (Fox 1998, 2002). I have found that apical genealogy always offers only a few generations, starting from the first generation ancestors and later few generations but missing the generations between the top and the present ones, which result in a third type of genealogy that I call a missing genealogy. This missing genealogy is a vague frame that defines time in periods of 150, 200 or 250 years, as illustrated in the previous example relating to the Btakan people (see Box 1).
Time is a metaphor that replaces the missing links of genealogies between the apical first comers and those generations ruled by the Japanese. People would say things like ‘we just knew our first ancestors who moved here’. ‘We knew because our parents told us.’ ‘We knew the ancestors’ names that are often used in our families’. However, what I have found is that these families only have about fifty commonly used names, and that these names are used for both patrilineal and matrilineal lines. Consequently, it is hard to tell which names belonged to which families. This is the reason why there are social groups or units that could be described as families, which are only traced back a few generations. It is highly possible that in the past, before genealogies were written down, families had only limited knowledge about a limited number of generations. Thus, it is argued that there are no clan systems or lineage systems that can be accurately traced, as accurate lineages are traced from a common ancestor, or from clans whose descendants can put an ancestor’s name into naming systems using surnames or lineage names. The Truku or the Pan-Atayal people do not have systems of surnames or lineage names. Instead, they simply employ the term ‘txhal tama’ (same father) when considering social units and categories. Some informants said that they have different ways of determining their familial connections, for example, by using the myths and stories circulated within families, or by looking to marriage connections. Both of these examples assist in determining accurate genealogical relations. Some Truku people admitted to me that it was possible that someone could claim a connection with an apical ancestor, even though there were no genuine consanguinity connections. This could be because he or his ancestors just joined a group or lived with the local first comers forming a temporary cooperative group that is sustained with gifts and sharing relationships. Genealogies are not absolute evidence for proving legitimate rights to a piece of land. In the mapping scenario, a period of time such as ‘250 years’ is used as a metaphor to demonstrate the way that gaya is conceptualized as ideal, and was a ‘normal’ and ‘ordinary’ part of people’s lives before the Japanese came. Thus, a time period became a space for imagination or a platform where ancestors’ ways of life continued, resulting in the image of time as a ‘time-embedded landscape’. This landscape animates the mappers’ imagination and the notion that within this time and space there were ancestors living a life free of interference from the Japanese and the Nationalist Kuomintang regimes, who did not allow them to hunt or cultivate the land using the slash and burn methods of their ancestors and guided by their traditional morals and gaya. I would define this perspective of time as a ‘time-embedded landscape’ and use it to describe a mapping scenario found usually in a diaspora scenario. Time-embedded landscape becomes a metaphor to connect people and landscape. Time is an embedded concept that is loaded with imaginations of ancestor’s ways of ideal lives and rules of gaya.
4.3 Does the present come from histories of continuity or contingency?

As an example of an *in situ* scenario, it is useful to interpret the mapping results from the surveys of Skadang and Hohos. This allows us to construct a landscape using a mode of narration of everyday life or the history of continuity, where people recall vivid experiences about the events and conditions that lead to the present. The status quo is basically a confirmation of the impact of an event or conditions from the past. This is not to say that people living *in situ* on their land possess all the answers or clues to explain the situation now and then. As demonstrated by the mapping results of Skadang and Hohos – the only two villages with strong connections and continuities with their ‘homelands’ – the origins and circumstances surrounding a number of place names are still unknown. However, compared to a diaspora scenario, people *in situ* are more likely to construct their genealogies based on existing family connections with the land.

In an *in situ* scenario, Truku people tend to think of the past as a history of continuity that traces a path from their ancestors. The Japanese colonial impact on their lives cannot be denied. There are direct and empirical experiences that demonstrate a continuity of history and from which they construct the narratives of change, especially those changes brought by the Japanese and the Chinese.

In a diaspora scenario, histories are made up of contingency insofar as the Truku map makers imagined the time after the first comers and ancestors, defined by their *gaya* ways of living, as being (relatively) better than the situation of change brought about by the Japanese. Certainly, ‘old’ ways are not always ideal, but previous bad periods in the time of the ancestors are not revealed as much. People also constructed a more ideal and idyllic past in the hope of regaining a mode of life according to ancestral *gaya*. A mode of life that mappers, intellectuals and activists considered to be the rules for the much anticipated autonomy and that was even encouraged by the then President Chen. Here we see people are constructing the past according to the will of the future (Persoon 2009: 12). Thus, the past is made up of contingency in which events and conditions are not acknowledged or explained by local people. However, people still try to come up with empirical clues in order to bring a continuity of history that can be traced by well-known events or conditions, in particular those that occurred under Japanese rule.

Thus, the mapping reports reveal that people grab evidence or any clues to prove a connection to the places where one of their ancestors or a member of their ethnic group had lived. Using this methodology, they tried to access almost 168 ancestral sites or tribes that had been named by ancestors. Key to the investigation the team visited the location in question in person. In their reports to the township and the Indigenous Council, they described in great detail the journey and the processes involved in reaching an ancestral site, where they commonly found remnants of stoves or evidence of house construction that nobody could identify or had relations with. The journey also led them to the time-em-
bedded landscape where their ancestors were living. The reports provide many narrations and videos illustrating the dangers and difficulties they faced during the journey. The reports also emphasized the conditions involved, the remoteness of a place and the wilderness their ancestral tribes had inhabited, which they were now encountering once more after many decades of absence. Some of the participants of the mapping team insisted on blaming the Japanese for the major changes to their territories and for the miserable conditions their ancestors endured. They took pictures and video recordings of their ancestral tribe and together with the investigators they were able to provide evidence to show that they had discovered their ancestral people. This doctrine of ‘seeing is believing’ precedes the project of traditional territories mapping. Apparently, since the areas the team visited were Taroko territories, there was less of a priority to provide evidence of direct relations to stakeholders. Years later, when these reports were revealed, there were accusations that the information about land tenure and ownership received too little attention and that the facts about boundaries, owners, and inhabitants’ of the land appeared to have been biased in favor of the Truku point of view.

In the initial years of the mapping project, the township clerk hired academics who had knowledge of historical documents and the skills to type and record interviews with these ancestral tribes. The journey guides who led the investigators to the ancestral lands were not necessarily the people who had ‘legitimate’ relationships with the land. The results of the mapping show indigenous territories with some ‘points on maps’ to indicate the tribes the team visited. No tribal boundaries were indicated. The leader of the project explained that there are two reasons for this. One is because they did not have the resources to find people with direct and legitimate relations to a specific tribe to describe the territory of each tribe with a degree of consensus. The second reason is that those people who do have legitimate relations, as either the descendants or the last inhabitants of the land, were dispersed among many different plains tribes or communities, who had few clear memories about what the boundaries were. In order to overcome this missing element, the mapping project was designed to map at the Truku tribe level, i.e. mapping the territory belonging to the entire Truku ethnic group, rather than mapping at the more detailed, community level. This methodology was criticized by some local participants and Truku people, especially those claiming land rights in the national property area, who said that the mapping results did not express the detailed land tenure or ownership structures of each tribe.

In fact, I found that in a diaspora scenario, people did not care that much about the ‘spatial accuracy’ of mapping their homelands. Indeed, space is not talked about in an accurate context, but rather in terms of a relative relationship between descendants of different families from different communities. The leader of the mapping project was aware of this problem but he believed that adopting a schema to remember the space through the family group ‘txhal tama’ (same father) system was the most efficient. He noted that people do not have many memories of spatial arrangements because of their absence from the lo-
cation and the fact that they were very young when they left. As the leader of the mapping project pointed out, given the constraints of the project, the family group ‘txhal tama’ system is good enough:

Now we are presenting a mapping of the entire Truku territory, rather than at a smaller scale, with details of every tribe. We only have a limited budget and human resources. We need to carry out ethnic tribal scale mapping primarily with a view to our future autonomy. When we achieve autonomy, we may have internal discussions within each tribe to determine authentic stakeholders and to draw maps with a cadastre that will define our homelands and solve the problems of legitimacy that the maps we are currently working with raise (personal contact with elder C.H. Huang July, 24 2006).

4.3.1 Appeals for mapping with legitimacy

Maps compromised by so many limitations inevitably invite criticism from inside the Truku communities. The mapping that was carried out at the Truku ethnicity level is mainly criticized for its top-down approach and there is an accusation that the process was open to manipulation by some intellectuals who did not pay much attention to the local details of each traditional community. Thus,
there was a concerted effort in the follow-up mapping project to employ guides who had closer relations to the land and to take investigators to visit the spots in order to document and trace the land tenure in as much detail as possible.

In addition, a number of local indigenous people who identify themselves as Toda or Tkdaya were critical of the results of the mapping of traditional territories. They complained that the exercise was biased towards a Truku point of view and only based on the views of elites and intellectuals. There was an issue regarding the extent of participation and also the legitimacy of information. In dealing with these issues, I found that, in fact, many alternative mappings – some sponsored by the Township Office, some not – started to emerge during the process. Below, I will focus on those mapping activities practiced by people who have, what I term, hybrid relationships with their traditional territories.

4.4 Hybridity

I define a hybrid scenario as a relationship between human (in this case, mappers) and land where the humans do not have as direct relations with their lands as, say, those involved in an in situ scenario. At the same time, in a hybrid scenario, the human has more direct memories of the land than someone in a diaspora scenario, where almost all direct memories are lost. A hybrid scenario occurs when, for example, the elders of a tribe spent very little time during their childhood or youth in the land where they were born. These elders were moved down to the plains far away from their original lands and, after the migration, which happened at least six or seven decades ago, they had very few opportunities to return. They kept some memories of the land but experienced diaspora traumas that blurred their memories. Where they are able to recall memories of the land, it often comes in the form of dreams or nightmares that are revealed during conversations or chatting in daily life. The majority of them had suffered the process of migration and experienced the difficulties of adjusting to life in a new land where they were mixed with other tribes. Recollections of homeland are fuelled by recent movements for land claims and demands for the return of indigenous lands, and the efforts to map and narrate homelands.

Here, I use hybridity to indicate a mixture of personal and also ‘collective memories’, as well blurred and vivid memories of the land, to describe how this category of indigenous people bring representations (including maps) of their ancestral lands.

During the time the national projects on indigenous mapping were being implemented by the township, I found that many activities centred on ideas such as ‘finding my roots’ or ‘revisiting my homelands’ were still taking place. The case study below illuminates how people in a hybrid scenario create representations of their homelands.
4.4.1 A journey to the homeland: Swasal village

Swasal used to be a community made up of many little settlements. The Japanese authorities moved Swasal’s residents down from the mountains and dispersed them among new mixed settlements in the plains around 1930. On the whole, Swasal people were moved far from their original lands, to a county dominated by another ethnic indigenous group, the Bunun. In fact, the Bunun have traditionally been enemies of the Taroko people, in competition for land and territories. The Swasal people tell many sad stories of suffering in an alien township comprising other ethnic groups. In 2007, Swasal descendants living in this alien area began a project, sponsored by the Bunun Township, to support a journey to their homelands far away in the mountains, in Shoulin Township inside the Taroko National Park. The project staff informed the headquarters of the Taroko National Park about the project and asked for permission to enter the park and for help to visit their homelands.

It took a five hour bus trip, plus another five hours of hiking, to be able to access the area the Swasal people believed to be their homeland. During the journey, an elder told me that the migration down to the plains had taken three days of walking. About ten per cent of the people on the journey were aged 70 or over and many found the hike up to the homeland difficult. The young people in the group, who were making the trip ‘home’ for the first time, were watching over and taking care of these elders who insisted on climbing the path, even with sticks in both hands. The march was slow and it took longer than expected. Along the way, the elders found animal tracks and hoped that this would lead them to paths where traps could be set. Indeed, one elder found a trap that had been set by someone else, but said that it was not a good job. He criticised the structure of the trap and said that ‘this area should only be hunted by Cilu’s family’. In fact, the only representative of the Cilu family on this journey was a young boy. He told this young boy, ‘you know, this area belongs to your ancestor, but someone else, maybe people from other tribes or the Han, are hunting illegally here within the National Park’. ‘Things have changed a lot, but you see, I don’t think he will have a nice catch with this bad trap structure’.

On the journey, the younger hikers were told (and asked to hear) stories from the elders. The stories told were mostly of the journeys that took place when they were moved down to the plains some 60 years ago; the suffering involved in carrying heavy loads or dropping the only possessions they had. They told of the pain of seeing families and friends separated from each other, or they recalled the joy of seeing a father coming back with animals he had hunted.

Some elders were so tired and had pains in their legs that there were real concerns that they might not finish the journey. The party split up into different groups of elders accompanied by young men, different groups of hikers of different speeds and groups of relations and neighbours. In fact, the groups automatically formed along the lines of their original settlement. I joined some of the groups to chat and listen. At one point, an elder fell down the slope giving fellow hikers a scare. They wanted to send him back to the bus, but he refused to go
back, saying, ‘I will finish my journey because this is my last journey. I was forced to move out here.’ ‘This is my longing and my dream and ambition to come back, just don’t bother me.’ Some young men felt so sad that they wept and told the elder, ’Dama, may I carry you on my back and we could go together.’ It was a hard job to carry him on the rough trail. Many young men, including me, took a turn to carry him. This was made harder by the fact that he regularly wanted to stop at certain spots to tell a story, or just to gaze at places. After more than six hours, some pioneers arrived and began to hunt. The elders had asked for a big hunt so that everybody could have a share of the meat from the homeland. In fact, the young leaders and clerks of the team had worried that there would not be enough meat to feed the 80 participants, so they had hired and sent out hunters prior to the journey in preparation. Consequently, the harvest was so huge that it took them quite a few hours to deal with all the prey like wild boars, deer, flying squirrels and wild goats. They set up a fire and cooked the dinner as the night fog fell and engulfed the big leaves of the tree ferns and we heard the crying of wild deer (Formosan Reeve’s muntjac: Muntiacus reevesi). The respected elders and pastors prayed and everybody began to eat. They cut some meat and poured some wine on the ground stating, ‘our great ancestors of this tribe Swalsal, please forgive for visiting you so late.’ Then, each elder in turn said their prayers and invited everybody to eat as much as possible, because ‘there would be no more chance to eat meat from our ancestors’ land’ as one elder said. ‘After the dinner’, one elder said, ‘I will tell you stories I remember, and I will reveal every detail of every piece of land I know here.’ The wild deer were crying so loudly that they seemed to echo the stories being told. Most of the stories began by criticising the policy of the Japanese who had moved them down to a place they did not feel was home. An old and respected pastor, who was among the oldest in the group, recalled how initially the Japanese had sent interpreters to invite the tribal leaders and ancestors to move willingly down the mountain, but that in the end they were forced to leave:

No matter that we were forced to move to the plains in the past, now we think that we can maintain our relationship with the land here. Actually, even if we were not willing to move down by our own free will, we still have the right to claim the land here as our own territory. Or, even if we were willing to go down, we still have right to access the land here, since we were so unused to the land where we are living now. Actually, one of my relatives had come back in secret and died here during the Japanese time. We have rights here, but the National Park is a trouble that stops us from coming here. As you can see, deer and pigs are plenty, don’t you think it is to our ancestors’ happiness at seeing us back that they welcome us back with such a good harvest? (Elder B.C. Yeh Aug. 24 2006).

One young man asked why the Indigenous Council had not invited them to join the traditional territorial mapping:
Part II ■ Mapping as land claims

Is it just because we are living in another alien county, not in the same county in Shoulin? Can you believe the maps they made? And what about us? What about our land here though we were moved to another county? This time we come back with elders to find our lands, and we should tell our descendants to remember this area.

‘My dear elders please tell us more about here,’ asked a young man, ‘and please tell us details of where my grandfather lived and where his land is located.’ One elder answered, ‘Young man, I am sorry, I am not familiar with your place that is two or three hours away from here, and I don’t have many memories about it.’ ‘But I know the place here and I have drawn a little map to indicate every little house where some of your grandparents and parents or relatives lived.’ ‘The map [see photo 4] is drawn according to my memory, but it is limited only to the area of the proper Swalsal tribe.’ ‘And tomorrow in the very early morning, I will guide you to see each piece of their land.’

Everybody was very excited and eager to see the land, now covered by the heavy night fog and echoing with the sound of crying deer. The next morning, most of the visitors followed elder Yeh to the places that his map indicated as belonging to someone’s family. Some happened to find that, here, their families had been neighbours, though they now live in different communities without knowing each other. Some old men wept or stood silently on the spot. Some young participants were laughing to express their astonishment at seeing their ancestors’ houses. Many photos were taken of the whole group – of the descendants and neighbours. New connections were made. After an easy and quick lunch, everybody started on the walk back to the bus. On the journey back, I was thanked for helping them and asked to report to the Indigenous Council that ‘finding roots’ activities such as this were so important.

I felt a responsibility and was determined to take their advice, not least because I was curious about how to discuss such a journey in report for a mapping project that only allows for clinical drawings and images. I had the sketch map drawn by elder Yeh, but the GIS system could do nothing with it since the map contained no coordinates with accurate indicators. Hence, the description of this
journey in this thesis; to show that it is a form of mapping that carries people’s emotions and ideas.

4.4.2 Journey as mapping

The hike provided participants with opportunities to see how the elders gazed on the landscape. Histories and stories were told to connect the hikers with the colonial histories that were vividly expressed on the difficult journey. These elders seemed to suffer again as they recalled their memories, visualized on the spot and on the trail to the homeland. Young people were also invited to join in the experience, to empathize with the sufferings and memories that these elders showed. It was like a ritual. The young people imitated and learned the sufferings of the journey of the forced migration process, which allowed them to understand the time or histories and vivid events that happened so many years ago. Some memories were vividly recalled by those who had direct experiences; other memories were imagined by those who were invited by the elders to go back to the past. Some encountered feelings of déjà vu, which confused. I would describe this journey to the homeland as a pilgrimage, to bring a ‘communitas’ that brought every visitor to a time-embedded landscape where their ancestors were living.

In terms of the standard geo grid maps demanded by the Indigenous Council or the scholars of geography, I am sorry to report that the sketch map the elder Yeh had drawn was not acceptable to any township office. Eventually, however, a ‘spot’ named ‘Tribe Swasal’ was recorded in the GIS databank of indigenous mappings in the report to the Indigenous Council. The sketch map drawn by the elder was not a cadastre that demarcated clear boundaries agreed among stakeholders. Thus it was not incorporated into the land registration system.

But the journey was centred on visiting the area where the sketch map had indicated the home bases of the participants. The visit seemed to reconstruct neighbours’ relations and create a new starting point in terms of the area being a home and a temporary communitas. This sort of communitas does not actually promise anything in terms of grants or recognition of land rights, or ownership, or even rights to access the ‘originally affluent’ natural resources now under the rule of the National Park. Mapping is a strategy used to claim actual rights, but the journey led by a sketch map only serves as a device for building communities or togetherness (Seiber 2000). The experience of eating and sharing the meat ‘provided’ by the homeland ancestors started and reconstructed a new connection between the participants and the land and their common ancestors.

In short, mapping as a process among people in a hybrid scenario can only reconstruct a limited part of the past. This partial past cannot indicate actual land tenures and ownerships or rights to access, because these groups of pilgrimages were only a small portion of all the possible stakeholders. The sketch map was only part of the memories of one elder, and some of the other elders wondered whether it could be biased.
The journey was devised to bring memory back to the relationships with the land, but did not result in an ‘unproblematic map of the homeland, in which each group is associated with a physically demarcated area’ (Barendregt 2005:15), as the Indigenous Council required. It is a community not so much demarcated by physical borders, but rather defined in terms of what Gupta and Ferguson (1992:10) would call ‘imagined homelands’ (see Barendregt 2005:15). These homelands would actually be what Auge (1995) notes as an emergence of non-places; spaces without history or vivid personal experiences. In fact, for the hikers on the journey, these spaces were not without history like ‘modern highways, airports or malls that are areas of transience and anonymity’ (Auge 1995); rather they are places being recognized with histories that would actually be forgotten or erased forever if the elders had not been there. That is the reason why these elders ran the risk of climbing and hiking in the mountains to inscribe and restore the histories and incidents that resulted in such great changes to their lives. These areas were on the edge of being either zero or sum embodiments of histories or memories, or local senses. Thus, I call the areas we visited zero-sum places. Through such journeys people reconstruct spaces as places full of meaningful landscapes. We must accept these journeys as participations, penetrating human-land relations and mapping histories and places. Thus, the reconstructed zero-sum-places stand on the edge of either fading away forever or being reconstructed as renaissances.

Ironically, modern devices such as cadastres, and legal doctrines such as *terra nullius* bring about an erasure of the places where land and humans are imbedded with each other. After so many years, the only mapping option open to indigenous people was a journey to evoke a zero-sum-place, to bridge or compensate the loss of sense of place, to stop living in a world of non-places. The vivid and direct memories of a hybrid scenario facilitate this in a way that a diaspora scenario, with its imagined or constructed memories, cannot.

Swasal is still a space in the regime of the Taroko National Park (Song 1999) and it is used as an environmental education center. But it is also a space for poachers to hunt or for foreign hikers to find leisure and recreation, a space that modernity and hyper-modernity demands for ‘natural conservation,’ ‘environmental preservation’ or World Heritage Promotion projects that are far removed from the journey made by the indigenous participants in search of their original relations with the lands.

More and more Zero-sum-places are emerging as a result of the journeys, camping or hunting trips made by local people and the increasing ‘finding our roots’ activities being undertaken. Indeed, the rescue and recovery of places is booming in the area where I am doing my field work.
4.5 Conclusion

This chapter illustrates three topographies between present day indigenous settlements and traditional territories: *in situ*, hybrid, diaspora. This typology suggests a decline in the closeness with and knowledge of territories being claimed. Claimants seem to divert into objective empiricism and subjective reconstructionism in terms of the ideas and methodologies for mapping traditional territories. In an *in situ* scenario, landscapes are demonstrated face to face through the checks and balances of locals. In a diaspora scenario, when stakeholders and information are lacking and there are few checks and balances on the relationships between people and traditional territories, the politics of representation are more controversial. We found that locals adopted a method of large scale mapping in order to ensure the inclusion of territory that they hope will be ruled again by ancestral *gaya*, once autonomy passes to the Taroko people. Future perspectives are concerned with mapping. In a hybrid scenario, where some direct connections remain, in the form of elders who are able to make a journey to their homelands, a space of zero-or-sum place emerges and awaits rescue. Alternatively, this zero-or-sum space would become an imagined homeland or a lost land, a non-place to the indigenous descendants.
Photo 5.1
A meeting of indigenous scholars and activists after the passing of the Indigenous Basic Law.