

Underlying patterns that shape ecological restoration in the post-colonial  
landscape of the Ainu *Moshir* (land) of Hokkaido, Japan

by

Shinsaku Shiga  
B.A, McGill University, 2007

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of the Requirements for the Degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

in the School of Environmental Studies

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## **Supervisory Committee**

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**Co-Supervisor**

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Dr. Karena Shaw (School of Environmental Studies)  
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## Abstract

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My main objective is to reveal and illustrate the patterns and processes underlying the practice of ecological restoration in post-colonial landscapes. To focus my analysis, I asked what these patterns are, and how they inhibit or enable the *Iwor* (Ainu Traditional Living Space) Restoration Project (IRP). The IRP is a state-funded project aimed at improving the well-being of Ainu in Hokkaido, Japan. I used interviews, participant observation and text analyses to elucidate the dynamics at work in and around the project.

My findings suggest that colonial and technological practices inhibit good ecological restoration practices in IRP by disengaging people, or more subtly preventing them from engaging with it. Colonially, structural and discursive marginalization maintains economic deprivation through denying progressive conversations about community empowerment. This process also reinforces subjective power relationships of Wajin, the ethnic majority, dominance.

Technologically, I observed signs of Borgmann's (1984) "device paradigm" that are both institutionally (e.g. government agencies) and materially (e.g. infrastructure and tools) driving the IRP toward technological restoration and away from focal restoration. This was particularly apparent in such instances where means and ends were inverted, or the government agencies were inaccessible to the Ainu participants.

These patterns in turn make IRP less appealing for Ainu and other local peoples. However, I also found that the room for creativity and attention to human-nature relationships in ecological restoration allow creation of the

new space where Ainu can assert their values more strongly. This is the Kotan Iwor where the space embodies both Iwor and *iwor*, two representations of Wajin and Ainu views of the “Traditional Living Space” respectively.

My findings on Kotan Iwor (the Ainu traditional settlement restoration site) suggest that there is a significant potential in the ecological restoration practices because of the practice’s inherent capacity to bring people and the landscape together in a creative context. With careful attention to colonial, technological, and other dynamics, good ecological restoration practices have the potential to restore and improve the well-being of indigenous and non-indigenous community members alike.

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## Acronyms

ACA: Agency for Cultural Affairs

ACPA: Ainu Cultural Promotion Act

BAA: Biratori Ainu Association

BIRP: Biratori Iwor Restoration Project

CACP: Committee for Ainu Culture Promotion

CAPP: Committee for Ainu Policy Promotion (the newest one)

CCIRP: Consulting Committee for IRP

CMCACP: Committee on Measures Concerning Ainu Cultural Promotion

CPTACIR: Committee for Promotion of Traditional Ainu Culture and Iwor  
Restoration

ECPRU: Ainu Cultural Environment Conservation Policy Research Unit

EPAP: Expert Panel for Ainu People

EPUP: Expert Panel on Utari Policies

ERUP: Expert Panel on Ainu Policy

FRPAC: (Foundation for Research and Promotion of Ainu Culture

HDA: Hokkaido Department Agency

HUA: Hokkaido Utari Association

IRP: Iwor Restoration Project

MLIT: Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transportation

MLITHD: Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transportation Hokkaido  
Department

SAPRL: The Report of the Survey on Ainu People's Real Livelihood

SC: Specialized Committee

SER: Society for Ecological Restoration

## Glossary

### Ainu Words

*cise*: house, building

*iwor*: traditional living space

*kotan-kor-kuru*: (a familial clan leader)

*kotan*: settlement, village

*moshir*: land (e.g. Ainu *moshir* means Ainu land)

*rep-un-iwor*: iwor encompassing marine environment

*yukar*: Ainu oral epic

### Japanese Words

*basho-ukeoi-sei*: sub-contracted trading post

*akinaiba-chigyo-sei*: trade fiefs

*kaisho*: fishing and trading station

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## Introduction

In this thesis I explore the social and ecological dynamics of ecological restoration in a post-colonial<sup>1</sup> landscape. My main objective is to reveal and illustrate the patterns and processes underlining the practice of ecological restoration in colonial landscapes. To focus my analysis, I asked what these patterns are, and how they inhibit or enable the Iwor (Ainu Traditional Living Space) Restoration Project (IRP). My main theoretical tools are *focal restoration* theory (Higgs 2003) and *post-colonial* theories.

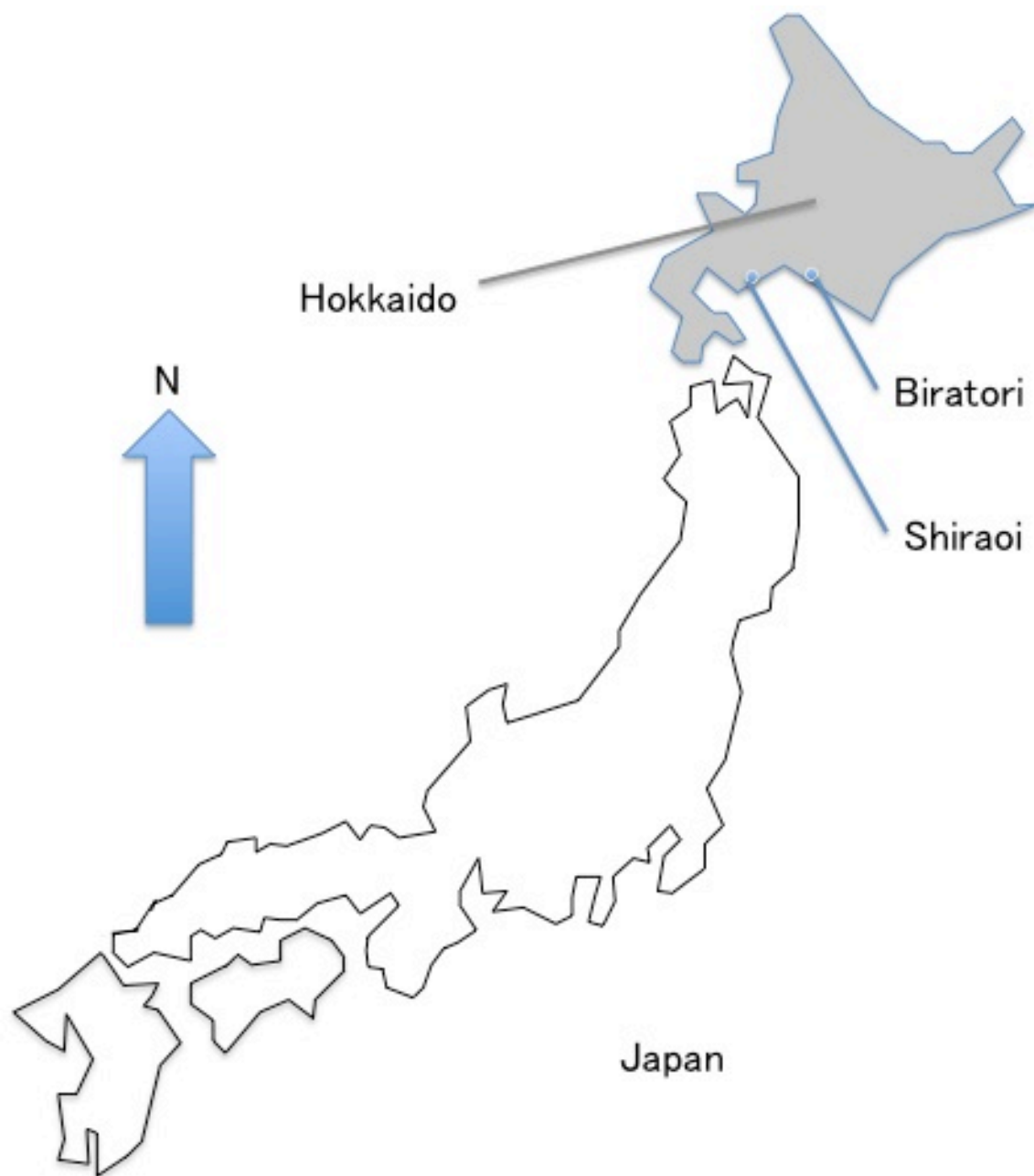
The IRP is a state-led ecological restoration project specifically designed for the Ainu, an indigenous people of Hokkaido, Japan. The program is designed to restore a space in which Ainu people can harvest natural materials necessary to continue and revive their traditional cultural practices. The Basic Plan for Ainu Traditional Living Space Restoration (IRP Basic Plan or the Basic Plan) describes its primary function as a space. In this space: 1) natural materials necessary for transmitting Ainu culture can be obtained freely within certain rules, and 2) activities such as craft workshops that reflect Ainu views of nature and cultural exchanges and experiences that draw on Ainu people's wisdom based on their coexistence with nature, can take place.

The project was first suggested in 1997 by the Expert Panel on Utari Policies (EPUP), and implemented since 2007 in Shiraoi and Biratori, Hokkaido (figure 1). Biratori, my primary research site, is located in the eastern part of Hokkaido, Japan. It is under the jurisdiction of the Prefecture of Hokkaido, and sub-jurisdiction of Hidaka Subprefecture (figure 1). It is a

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<sup>1</sup> I use the term post-colonial similarly to Braun's use in my thesis; it's the period of the aftermath of the formal colonial institution, which in the case of Hokkaido was the Kaitakushi (the Development Commission). From the perspective of Wajin, the formal process of colonization ended when the settlement was "completed", and the Development Commission was dissolved to be replaced by the "normal" prefectural system in 1882. Of course, none of these mean the colonial relations ended; but it does mean that colonial institutions have "worked over" the indigenous social, cultural, and political institutions (Braun 2002). So there are both discontinuity and continuity between the colonial and post-colonial periods in Hokkaido, Japan.

small town with a resident population of 6,173 in an area of 743 km<sup>2</sup>. As in many other parts of Japan, more than 25% of the population is over the age of 65 (e-Stat). Of its 743km<sup>2</sup> only 122 km<sup>2</sup> (approx. 16%) is habitable due to its rugged geography, and 43 km<sup>2</sup> (35%) of it is used for agricultural purposes (NSTAC, n.d.). In 2005, 1,124 people were working in primary industries



**Figure 1** Map of Hokkaido

(agriculture and forestry), 1,536 in tertiary industry (service), and 565 in secondary industries (manufacturing and processing) (*ibid*).

My field study took place between May and October of 2009. During this time I conducted forty-two interviews and participant observations in the IRP. This study may be characterized as a qualitative case study. My main reason for choosing this approach was to allow for deep engagements with the highly historicized and localized circumstances (of IRP) which I hope to understand. I chose the IRP as my case study from both personal and theoretical interest.

My personal interest comes from the fact that I am Japanese, and I am an ethnic Wajin, the majority ethnic group who colonized Ainu people's land over the past three centuries. I felt it was my responsibility to know the ways in which we colonized Ainu land, and the ways in which we attempt to rectify the deeds.

My theoretical interest is mainly based on my reading of Higgs' *Nature By Design* (2003). I was fascinated by the idea that ecological restoration can foster life much beyond the immediate experience of restoration. At the same time, I saw the opportunity to contribute a new non-Western perspective to the field of ecological restoration. With this theoretical interest combined with my personal interest in Ainu culture, when I found out about the IRP I immediately knew that I wanted to work on the project.

During my field study, it quickly became clear that theories in post-colonial studies would be enormously beneficial for understanding the IRP. At the same time, I was becoming increasingly aware that studies of ecological restoration through the perspective of post-colonial theories were very limited. This led me to analyze the IRP through the two distinct theoretical interests: theories of technology (Higgs 2003) and post-colonialism (e.g. Fanon [2008]). This was challenging, but proved, I hope, fruitful in understanding the underlining patterns that shape the trajectory of the IRP.

Overall, I argue that the IRP is underlined by two distinct but interrelated patterns of technology and colonialism. These two patterns, in general, are

inhibiting the IRP from becoming what Higgs calls *focal restoration*, one that fosters and celebrates the communities' engagements with the place. I also argue, however, that there are instances of focal practices in the IRP that are enabled by resistance against these patterns by Ainu people.

My findings about colonial and technological practices in the IRP are consistent with the wider context of the post-colonial and techno-scientific society we find today in Hokkaido and elsewhere. Ecological restoration theories, as I discussed earlier, are largely silent about the legacies of colonialism, including most contemporary accounts of “good” restoration that include cultural, social, economic and technological analyses. My findings reveal additional paradigmatic threats ecological restorationists encounter in post-colonial landscapes. This suggests that ecological restorationists who are working in the post-colonial landscapes need to become aware of various dynamics of powers, devices, and subjectivities at work, not only at a structural level, but also at a discursive level.

I conclude my thesis with the thought that, though challenging, good ecological restoration practices have the potential to restore and improve the well-being of indigenous and non-indigenous community members alike with careful attention to colonial, technological, and other dynamics.

### **Organization of the Thesis and Chapter Summaries**

I briefly outline my thesis by chapters below. Following this Introduction, in chapter one, I provide a detailed archaeological, anthropological, and historical background of Ainu. In describing the archaeology, I present both conventional and new interpretations of Ainu culture to provide the nuances that are debated today about Ainu culture. I follow the history of colonization mainly since 1599 CE to the present, with particular emphasis on the role of modern state governance.

It is unconventional in thesis organization to place the historic background before literature reviews and methodology. I chose this structure bearing in

mind that some readers of this thesis might be unaware of basic factual information about the Ainu or Japanese colonization of the Ainu in its political, geographical, historical, and cultural context. By placing this chapter upfront, I intend to familiarize the readers with my research topic before proceeding with the relevant research methods and findings. Material contained in this chapter adheres to the scholarly methods I used throughout the thesis.

In chapter two, I provide a detailed description of my case study – Iwor Restoration Project. I start from the explanation of its goals and objectives, then move onto the origins and history of the project since the 1997.

In chapter three, I provide surveys of literature from both ecological restoration and post-colonial studies. I define and characterize the practice of ecological restoration. Then I pay closer attention to the works of Higgs (2003) and Borgmann (1984) to provide a theoretical backbone to my thesis. In the post-colonial literature, I first characterize the specific incidence of the colonization of Ainu using Fanon's theory of the dual-structure of oppression (Fanon 2008). I then discuss Braun's (2002) approach to "production of marginality" in understanding the relevance of post-colonial subjectivities to environmental discourse.

In chapter four, I briefly outline my research design. I chose a qualitative case study as my method, and conducted interviews and participant observation in the restoration site.

In chapter five, I present my findings from the field. First I present my observation about the Riverine Iwor restoration (a riverside wetland restoration site), which reveals the prevalence of device paradigm. I then discuss the case of *rep-un-iwor*, an unrealized project that would allow Ainu to fish and hunt in marine ecosystems. This section reveals how the colonial pattern is embedded in the institutions of the IRP. In the third section I discuss how one word, *iwor*, signifies something different to Ainu and Wajin, and its implications for the IRP. I end the chapter with two narrative

accounts that illustrate how the patterns of technology and colonialism are related.

In chapter six, I provide a synthesis discussion of my findings and theories. In particular, I discuss in more detail how technological and colonial patterns inhibit the IRP. I also make the point that technological practice, to some extent, enabled focal practices within the IRP. I conclude my thesis with potential future questions that will help in formulating appropriate responses to the patterns of technology and colonialism in the context of ecological restoration.

## Chapter 1: Origin and Characteristics of Ainu Culture

### 1.1 Archaeology

Ainu are indigenous people in northern Japan and mainly in Hokkaido<sup>2</sup>. They have their own distinct culture and language. It is estimated that the first human inhabitation of Hokkaido occurred during 29,000~21,000 BCE when the sea level was lower and the Japanese archipelago was connected to the Eurasian continent<sup>3</sup>. This first people in this region formed the Jomon culture and are considered the roots of Ainu people. The second wave of migration from the continent, which was then separated by the Sea of Japan, occurred around 2,500 BCE in the southern parts of Japan. These migrants brought metalworking and rice agriculture technologies, and formed Yayoi culture in the temperate southern three quarters of Japan. The Yayoi people are considered the direct ancestors of Wajin people, who today constitute the dominant ethnic majority in Japan. Characteristic Ainu archaeological remains are found from 13~14<sup>th</sup> CE onwards, following the Satsumon culture (8~12<sup>th</sup> CE), which came after the Jomon period.

Ainu culture is typically characterized by hunting, gathering, small-scale agriculture and significant levels of seaway trading with neighbouring cultures, including (modern day) Japan, Russia, China, and Mongolia (Otsuka, 1995). The culture has most commonly been identified by its ceremonial and material distinctiveness from other periods and cultures. *Iomante* (means 'to send someone/thing' in Ainu) is also known as 'bear sending' by Wajin, and it is perhaps one of the most well-known Ainu ceremonies. In this ceremony, a hand-reared brown bear cub is sacrificed in a communal ceremony to celebrate and pray for the success of hunting and gathering. Ainu culture is also often separated from the preceding Satsumon

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<sup>2</sup> Historical facts of Ainu people is based on the Expert Panel for Ainu People Report (EPAP 2009) unless otherwise referenced.

<sup>3</sup> This made what is now the Sea of Japan an inland sea.

culture by the use of more metal wares (as opposed to the clay wares in

**Table 1 Cultural Epochs in Japanese Mainland and Hokkaido**  
(adapted from Segawa (2005; 9))

Century	Main land	Hokkaido	
		Southern Hokkaido	Rest of Hokkaido
4 BCE	Jomon (Neolithic)		
3	Yayoi (Migration of Mongoloid from Euroasia. Cultivation of rice)	Zoku-Jomon (Post-Neolithic)	
2			
1			
CE 1			
2			
3			
4			
5	Kofun (Large tombs were constructed by rulers; concentration of wealth begins)		
6			
7			
8	Asuka (First centralized government)	Satsumon (Trades intensifies with surrounding cultures)	Satsumon/Okhotsk
9	Nara		
10	Heian		
11		Aonae (Hybrid of Satsumon and Wajin)	Satsumon/Okhotsk/Tobini tai
12			
13	Kamakura	Wajinchi (Wajin-controlled area)	Ainu
14	Nanbokucho		
15	Muromachi		
16			
17	Edo (Early-modern)		

Satsumon culture) and characteristic geometrical patterns they used to decorate their weavings and woodcrafts. These patterns are regionally unique, and inherited matrilineally. However, both the academic community and Ainu people are beginning to question these categorizations of cultures (see for example Segawa 2005, and Siddle 1996).

In addition to the traditional archaeological characterization of Ainu culture, differing perspectives are emerging. The most notable work is Segawa's *The Formative History of Ainu Ecosystem* (2005). To him, what distinguished Ainu culture from what preceded and followed was their differences in socio-economic institutions, not the presence or absence of particular archaeological items or forms of ceremonies. He divides the time between the first inhabitation of Hokkaido and late 18<sup>th</sup> century into two

periods: Jomon ecosystem and Ainu ecosystem (43), which itself is a significant move from four cultural epochs that are conventionally identified (see table 1).

For Segawa, these systems have two key components: relations to other cultures, and the organization around natural resources. In Jomon Ecosystem (up until 7<sup>th</sup> CE), he finds that settlements are found in a diversity of habitats including inland, upper river terraces, or along the coast and river mouths. Kinship based groups subsisted on hunted and gathered foods that included wide varieties of animals and plants. People tried to maximize their access to the ecological resources on which they relied. During this period contact with neighbouring cultures (mainland Wajin and Okhotsk) were scarce and few archaeological remains of traded goods (metals or clay pots) have been found from this period. The beginning of the Satsumon epoch (8<sup>th</sup> CE) coincides with the establishment of the first unified government in the mainland Japan (Honshu and Kyushu islands) and associated northward expansion of that government. The Satsumon epoch is marked by the large-scale introduction of ironware into Hokkaido and historically these were produced in northern Japan. The beginning of the Satsumon period can also be identified as the beginning of the large-scale trade relationship between the ancestral Ainu and Wajin.

What distinguishes Segawa from recent historians such as Oi , Nakata or Ueno (Ueno, 1992; Nakata, 1996; Oi, 2004) is that rather than understanding this change as part of a process of expansion of Wajin political systems that set the ground for the conquest of Ainu lands, he instead considers this change as mutual development which Ainu, too, actively chose and benefitted from (Segawa, 2005; 33). He argues that the widespread discoveries of ironware in Hokkaido does not depend solely on economic and social ‘maturity’ of Wajin culture, but the distribution of imported goods within Hokkaido should also mean emergence of expansive trade networks on the island. It also shows the Satsumon people’s economic ability to import such

goods from the mainland in exchange for seals, otters and salmon (27). As such, this is the first criterion of the Ainu Ecosystem: firmly established and mutually beneficial trade networks with Wajin and other northern peoples.

The second criterion is the use of natural resources. For Segawa, changing trade relations, not changing ecology, defined the social-ecological system of Ainu land. To demonstrate this point, he focuses on Satsumon-Ainu people in the Ishikari River region. With significant supporting evidence, he asserts that the single most important difference between Jomon and Ainu Ecosystems is the distribution of settlement patterns that reflects a changed strategy for resource use (235). He suggests that: 1) the Satsumon and Ainu people in the Ishikari River region predominantly lived by the three largest salmon spawning grounds (66); 2) the settlements were found on lower sections of river terraces despite the risk of flood (113); 3) the settlements were found only by navigable water ways (198); 4) often the location of the settlement did not allow easy access to other types of animals or resources (115) and 5) similar patterns are found in other regions (232). He concludes that people in the Satsumon period changed their settlement and subsistent strategy to better exploit the trade opportunities that Wajin and Okhotsk peoples presented, rather than solely exploiting ecological opportunities. This involved a concentration of population near salmon spawning grounds and a dramatic increase in their allocation of efforts towards salmon catching as compared to other resources.

Generally put, various regional groups in this period began to specialize their resource extraction efforts to best exploit the comparative advantage of their regions. So the two criteria of the Ainu Ecosystem resulted in the changed distribution and organization of communities to specialize their effort to harness their most profitable goods in trade. Expanding on these arguments, he analyzes some consequences in other aspects of Ainu culture such as worldviews and political organizations.

## 1.2 Ainu and Wajin: Trade, Diplomacy, and Colonization

### 1.2.1 1599- Matsumae *han* and Edo *bakufu*

After centuries of sea-way commerce with mainland Wajin, their relationships took a turn in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. By this time Wajin had taken control of the southern tip of Hokkaido and all lands south of it. They had established the first unified national government, the Tokugawa Shogunate, in 1599 and were experiencing rapid growth in population and market economy. In 1604, a family of the Matsumae fiefdom was given permission to form a trade monopoly with the Ainu. Coastal Ainu lands were divided up according to Ainu hunting territories (*iwor*) and subordinates of the Matsumae lord were given control over trade within the territories. The vassals would import sake, rice or other luxury items to trade for dried salmon, herring, seal skins and other primarily hunted commodities that they could then sell for profit back in the mainland. Under Matsumae control, other Wajin were not allowed entrance to Ainu land (Ezochi) without permission in order to prevent private traders from illegally making profits. Similarly, Ainu people were not allowed to trade with merchants other than those sent by the Matsumae vassals. This trade system that persisted until the early 18<sup>th</sup> century is called *Akinai-ba Chigyo Sei* (trade fiefs), and served as the beginning of the disintegration of the economic sovereignty of Ainu people (Siddle, 1996; Walker, 2009).

In the 18<sup>th</sup> century the situation took a further troubling turn for Ainu. The operation of the trading territory was gradually outsourced to private merchants, who initially worked to gain profit just from trading as the previous Matsumae vassals did—this new form was called *Basho-Ukeoi Sei* (sub-contracted trading post). However, they soon started running their own fishing stations to increase their profits. These fishing operations targeted primarily herring, abalone, sea cucumber, and konbu kelp. Much of them were brought to the large market in Osaka for further trade with China or used as effective fertilizers to feed the growing Wajin population on Honshu

(Walker 2001). As the demand for these products expanded, the merchants required more labourers to increase the productivity. At first they sought the labourers in local Ainu communities. When they exhausted this source some of them forced young Ainu men in *kotan* (Ainu word for a settlement) further away to work at the fishing stations. This left the *kotan* with almost no workforce and, in combination with polio which was introduced by Wajin, devastated many Ainu communities. Not only did they forcibly bring men, sometimes they relocated the entire *kotan* around the trading and fishing stations. Traditionally, Ainu *kotan* consisted of five to eight households with a *kotan-kor-kuru* (a familial clan leader). When several *kotan* were brought together at the *kaisho* (fishing and trading station) the Wajin merchant imposed their system of social hierarchy to effectively manage the Ainu people. Together, the demise of the *kotan-kor-kuru* system, the emergence of oversized community, Wajin system of control, wage labor and the crippled inland *kotan*, drove Ainu to rapidly lose their social, cultural, and economic integrity. Unfair trade terms against Ainu and abusive working condition became common practices, to which Ainu responded with occasional violent protests. Every time Ainu revolted, the firmer the grip of Wajin became until in 1789 the last Ainu armed revolt was crushed at the eastern reach of Hokkaido, marking complete Wajin military dominance on the island.

### **1.2.2 Modernizing Empire and Cultural Assimilation**

During the late 19<sup>th</sup> century European powers displayed an aggressive presence around Japan. This, together with internal revolutions and the subsequent onset of modernization movements, led to the formation of the Empire of Japan, a sovereign state modeled after European political philosophies (Siddle 1996: 52-55). The newly created Meiji government began forging a single national identity supported by the also newly altered national religion—Shintoism—to mobilize the population. The empire's urge to be one of the modern nation-state was expressed in the *Fukoku Kyohei* (Enrich the country, strengthen the military) policy, which became the

marching slogan for industrialization, land and labour commodification, installation of an elected parliament, military westernization, and colonialism.

In 1869 the former Ezochi was renamed Hokkaido and became subject to Japanese law. At the same time, Ainu people were incorporated into Japanese society as commoners (as opposed to nobles); however they were sometimes referred to as former natives when such legislative distinction was required.

In the same year *Basho-Ukeoi Sei* was abolished. While this freed Ainu people from abusive labour conditions, it also exposed Ainu people in a free and competitive market economy. By this time Ainu was a small minority and few people spoke Japanese to be able to participate in the market at all, leaving them impoverished with few opportunities.

Characteristic cultural practices – e.g. female facial tattoos, male earrings, and incineration of one's house upon death – were banned and violation was severely punished. Ainu language was not banned but was never taught in schools, whereas Japanese speech and writing were recommended and taught in former native schools, which were set separately from ordinary Japanese schools. These education and assimilation policies contributed significantly to the loss of Ainu culture (EPAP 2009).

In 1872, all the land on Hokkaido left over from private and government ownership went on sale by the government. These of course included the *iwor*, traditional hunting and fishing territories of Ainu, without any kind of consent. Assignment of ownership was a necessary step toward modernization; taxation and population registration followed. Again, Ainu were not prohibited from buying the land – they even were entitled to small government loans – but few Ainu had the conception of private ownership of the land, let alone the money to buy land. The 'Former Natives Protection Act' was legislated in 1899 to support impoverished Ainu, but small portions of land given to Ainu were often unsuited for agriculture (land was given only if Ainu were to cultivate the land within a certain period).

Overhunting and fishing decimated deer and salmonoid populations and eventually both were banned. Agriculture was recommended and to give training Ainu were again forcibly relocated at times. Even so, only about half of the households that participated in the program became farmers, while the other half went back to previous lifestyles or sought other employment.

Entering the 20<sup>th</sup> century, colonial practices continued to oppress Ainu sovereignty in multiple fronts. “Ainu Schools” (or Former Native Schools) were formerly established by the Meiji government to integrate Ainu pupils into Japanese society. Not only did they not teach Ainu language in these schools, but subjects such as history, geography, and sciences were also omitted from the curriculum. The enrolment was also two-year shorter than Wajin children, clearly discriminating against Ainu pupils.

In 1916, eighty Ainu households in the Town of Niicap were forcibly relocated to accommodate a royal stable for military horses. This incident marked the deepening influences of the Japanese imperial foreign policies on Ainu people in Hokkaido. The more Japanese (Wajin) desired recognition in world politics, particularly by the West European nations, the more the Ainu became an “internal other” that helped prove Wajin’s “modernity” against Ainu’s “backwardness” (Higashimura, 2006). In other words, it can be argued that the process of colonization of the Ainu is parallel to the formation of the singular Japanese identity (Choi, 2011). Indeed, Yoshino (1997) argues that it was not until around 1895 (about the time of Sino-Japan War [1894-1895]) that people in Japan started embracing the national identity that typifies a modern nation state.

While Japan as a country was subsumed by the nationalistic discourse of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century – which ultimately led to its own demise in 1945 – Ainu also picked up their collective voice. In 1930, the Hokkaido Ainu Association was founded (with the aid of Hokkaido government) to improve the “reputations” and the standard of living of Ainu people. This was their first organized attempt to affirm their political power in the increasingly

monolithic state of Japan. However, as Morris-Suzuki (1998) and Kinase (1998) point out, the Association's primary objective was to accelerate the assimilation process in order to modernize the Ainu, and in a sense to disprove their "innate inferiority", an image imposed by the Wajin. The fact that they asserted their political will as Ainu is significant progress, yet the Ainu remained, from Wajin perspective, as a racialized and eternal "other" that elevated Wajin standing in the global race to modernity. After the interruption during the WWII, the Ainu continued their resistance on various fronts, which I cover in section 1.2.4 of this chapter.

Above is a brief overview of the process and content of modernization and colonization of Ainu between the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. The scale and scope were evidently much greater than what I have depicted, and many other stories have been omitted. However, this I hope is sufficient to understand the context in which my study occurs.

### **1.2.3 Present Time**

The legacy of colonialism persists today. The University of Hokkaido published a report entitled "The Report of the Survey on Ainu People's Real Livelihood (SAPRL)" in 2008 to examine some of the continuing and concrete problems faced by Ainu people today (Kouchi, 2010). The report was one of the first to study contemporary sociological realities of Ainu communities, and possibly the first such study to include Ainu people both within and outside Hokkaido in one study. The survey was conducted under the leadership of the newly founded Hokkaido University Center for Ainu & Indigenous Studies, with close collaboration with the Ainu Association of Hokkaido. The report can be found online on their website<sup>4</sup>.

It is evident from the study that Ainu people have a lower average income, lower educational achievement, and a relatively higher number of living assistance recipients compared to the rest of the population (Kouchi 2010; 26-

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<sup>4</sup> Download link: <http://www.cais.hokudai.ac.jp/archive/pdf/Ainu-Report01.pdf>

57). The author pointed out that the current historically and racially based economic structure is inherently disadvantageous to the Ainu people, and therefore historical studies are necessary to improve the contemporary injustices (*ibid*: 57).

The same survey reported that Ainu had relatively low self-esteem with regard to their ethnicity. It showed that the trend was more pronounced in younger generations. To the question “Do you feel conscious of your (Ainu) ethnicity?” 38% of people over seventy answered “not at all” compared with 66% of people younger than thirty. The trend was reversed when they were asked, “How do you want to live in the future?” where 22% of people over 70 answered “I want to live consciously as an Ainu with pride” compared with only 11% of people under 30. According to the author, this result can imply two things. One is that racially based social, cultural, and economic discrimination persists and is growing. Another is that the younger generations consider themselves more and more as “earth citizens” (metropolitans) as a positive affirmation of their contemporary identities (*ibid*: 23). Some of these respondents’ answers are quoted to illuminate this point:

- “Ethnicity, race, and border are irrelevant. We all share this land as humans, and I want to live as myself”
- “I don’t think about ‘Ainu’ or something like that”
- “We are all the same humans. There is no Japanese or Ainu. We are all Japanese, all world citizens” (*ibid*: 23)

However, I will return later in Chapter 5 (Findings) to argue that the second interpretation may be misleading. Based on my field observations such expressed cosmopolitanism appear more to exhibit a coping strategy by which younger Ainu deal with the persisting racism in an increasingly globalized society. This is also backed by the fact that over 70% of the total sample population in Kouchi’s study responded that they have either refused or would have liked to refuse to be identified as Ainu in various

circumstances at least once, where the primary reason for this was the experience of discrimination (*ibid*; 24).

#### **1.2.4 Recent Development**

Ainu have not just been passive recipients of violence. Even after the military defeat their political resistance continued; the first wave during the Taisho Democracy movement shortly before WWII (as described in the end of section 1.2.2), the second wave occurred after WWII and continues to the present. The Ainu political movement was resumed shortly after the war in 1946 with the re-launching of the Hokkaido Ainu Association. They continued their efforts for improving their standards of living. During the 1970s, the Association started supporting cultural activities (languages, crafts etc) as well as networking with indigenous peoples worldwide (Siddle, 1996; Choi, 2011). A key moment happened in 1992 when Giichi Nomura made an opening address at the Opening Ceremony of the International Year of the World's Indigenous People, which was held at the United Nations Headquarters. International collaboration with other indigenous people and development of democratic consciousness among Ainu built up the momentum for change. This culminated in the Ainu Culture Promotion Act of 1997, followed by the resolution to recognize Ainu people as indigenous people by the National Diet in 2008.

None of these were easy feats. Perhaps the most obvious manifestation of Wajin ignorance and apathy regarding these issues can be seen in the example of public comments made by politicians since 1986. Most recently, the ex-Minister of Science and Education Ibuki Bunmei (MP House of Representatives, Kyoto) said “It is a historical fact that Yamato people have governed this country. It is an extremely homogenous nation...Throughout the long history, Japan was governed by Japanese.” (Tokyo Shinbun, 1/3/2007) Soon after the ex-Minister of Land, Infrastructure and Transportation Nariaki Nakayama (MP House of Representatives, Miyazaki) said “Japanese are rather introverted, mono-ethnic, so to speak. We become

introverted because we don't communicate with foreign countries very much.” (Kyodo Press, 25/9/2008).

This is the sentiment responsible for persisting racism against ethnic minorities in Japan (Siddle, 1996). Among a body of scholars, it is largely agreed that this view of Japan is a construct of the nationalist narrative between the Meiji Restoration in 1868 and the WWII defeat in 1945 (Oguma, 1998; Matsumoto & Egawa, 2001).

Nevertheless, high-level talks have been taking place to address these issues, most current of which is the Committee for Ainu Policy Promotion (CAPP) founded in 2010. This is the third such committee that has played a key role in developing policy regarding the Ainu. The previous committees include EPUP (Expert Panel on Utari Policies) and ERAP (Expert Roundtable on Ainu Policies). The founding of this committee was recommended by the report of a previous Expert Committee on Ainu Policies, published in the same year. CAPP has been subdivided into two working groups; the Working Group for the Space Symbolizing Multi-Ethnic Coexistence and the Working Group for the Survey of Livelihood of Ainu Living Outside Hokkaido. Both these topics were identified as reflecting the inadequacy of the previous two committees (EPUP and ERAP) as well as of the ACPA (Ainu Culture Promotion Act), which was the outcome of the EPUP.

In this chapter, I have provided an overview of the Ainu social-ecological organization and the historical development of the colonization of the Ainu. Drawing from Segawa (2005), I argued that the characterization of Ainu culture needs more emphasis on their ecological relationships to their landscapes. This social-ecological link, as I show in chapter two, is a central motivation for the IRP. I then followed, more descriptively, with the history of Ainu colonialism, with emphasis on the roles of trade and representation practices (up to the 19<sup>th</sup> century), and the roles of the state (19<sup>th</sup> century to the present). In the final segment of this chapter, I focused on Ainu's efforts towards liberation from colonial oppression and the resulting new laws and

agencies that are the direct starting points of the IRP. In the next chapter, I look more closely to my case study of the IRP to conclude the background chapters of my thesis.

## Chapter 2: Case Study

### 2.1 Iwor Restoration Project

#### 2.1.1 Goals and Content of the IRP

The Ainu Traditional Living Space (Iwor) Restoration project (IRP) is a program designed to restore a space in which Ainu people can harvest natural materials necessary to continue and revive their traditional cultural practices. The Basic Plan for Ainu Traditional Living Space Restoration (IRP Basic Plan or the Basic Plan) describes its primary function as a space in which: 1) natural materials necessary for transmitting Ainu culture can be obtained freely within certain rules, and 2) activities such as craft workshops that reflect Ainu views of nature and cultural exchanges and experiences that draw on Ainu people's wisdom based on their coexistence with nature can take place. More specifically, gathering and cultivation of trees and herbs, harvesting of fish and other animals, and cultural activities associated with the above are envisioned in the Basic Plan.

The Basic Plan also directs the space to consist of: 1) forest and areas for cultivation, 2) area near water (riverine, lake/sea shorelines, swamp and lake), and 3) associated areas that will be used as part of *iwor*. The plan also recommends that these areas be acquired based on collaborative land-use agreement with the existing land owners (private and public) rather than transfer of ownership of the land. It also outlines the possibilities for including facilities that can be used for various cultural activities as mentioned above.

As an operative framework the plan considers using the following methods to acquire desired natural materials:

1. For the forest, use existing policies and legislation as well as cultivation by contracting landowners in the assigned areas;
2. For marine, riverine, and lake/swamp areas, renting and acquiring of lands;

3. For fish and land animals, collaboration with the Fisheries Cooperative Association and use of special permits.

The Foundation for Research and Promotion of Ainu Culture (FRPAC)<sup>5</sup> serves as the central organization to manage and execute the project, while the operations of the restored spaces are responsibilities of corresponding municipalities and local and regional Ainu organizations and individuals. The plan calls for close networking and collaboration between the Ministry of Land Infrastructure and Transportation Hokkaido Department (MLITH), Agency for Cultural Affairs, Hokkaido Prefectural Government, FRPAC (Foundation for Research and Promotion of Ainu Culture), HUA (Hokkaido Utari Association) (now HAA (Hokkaido Ainu Association)), municipalities, and concerned Ainu individuals and organizations.

This account of the IRP is based on the official overview of the IRP by the Committee for Measures Concerning Ainu Cultural Promotion (CMCACP), which approved the Basic Plan. In what follows, I will turn to the origins of IRP to better situate the events leading up the approval of the Basic Plan.

### 2.1.2 *Iwor*

*Iwor* (or *iworō*) is an Ainu word and the translation of the word is still unsettled. Below are two of the possible translations available today:

- Deep mountains, hunting ground, land of *kamuy* (Ainu word for a god/divine) (Chiri, 1954)
- Hunting ground, place where games and mountain vegetables are found, where *kamuy* meets *ainu* (humans). It has become common knowledge that an individual or a clan had a certain exclusive area of *iwor*, but primary evidence, both in oral traditions and written records, to support such claims are not found. (Nakagawa, 1995)

Although *iwor* is translated in various ways, these understandings of the word originated from one study published in 1952. The first non-dictionary

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<sup>5</sup> FRPAC is funded 50% by the Japanese national government and 50% by the Hokkaido prefectural government.

account of *iwor* is found in Izumi's *The Iwor and the Territorial Group of the Saru Ainu* (Izumi, 1952). In this research he explores the roles of *iwor* as a social unit in relation to another (smaller) unit, the *kotan*. His research was based in the region along the Saru River, which is also included as one of my research sites. According to the study, which is primarily composed of interviews with five Ainu informants, there are two types of *iwor*: *Ya-un iwor* is a land-based hunting and gathering ground and *rep-un iwor* is a marine fishing ground. Within *rep-un iwor*, there are *kim-un iwor* (mountain hunting and gathering ground) and *pet-iwor* (river fishing ground). Similarly, *rep-un iwor* is divided into four smaller *iwor* (*yanke kaipe*, *repun kaipe*, *yanke-sotki*, and *rep-un sotki*) according their distance from the land. Each (land and marine *iwor*) has socially sanctioned regulatory mechanisms, and these in turn operate with the distribution rules within and between *kotan*.

To summarize Izumi's study, *iwor* is a geographical unit based on socio-cultural institutions of Ainu, and they have following attributes:

- (*Kim-un*) *Iwor* often corresponds to the area of a watershed
- Inhabitants of an *iwor* are a loosely related kin-group
- Inhabitants of an *iwor* have certain exclusive use-rights over resources within the *iwor*
- Resources in an *iwor* are communally managed (common property).

Since Izumi, several more studies dealing with the concept of *iwor* have been published. As Okuda (Okuda, 1998) notes however, all of them directly or indirectly use Izumi's study as the original source. Though further studies into the meanings of *iwor* will benefit more robust understanding about Ainu culture and discussions of the restoration of *iwor*, I will remain faithful to the account Izumi provided sixty years ago in this study.

### **2.1.3 History of IRP**

Like other government initiatives, IRP rests in a complicated network of official documents and various committees. I summarize the structure of IRP below with relevant timelines, and first by dividing the development of IRP

into three periods. The first period is the years between the UN speech by Giichi Nomura in 1992 and the founding of FRPAC in 1997. This period started with the upsurge of an Ainu cultural movement and ended with the installation of the Ainu Cultural Promotion Act (ACPA). The second period is between 1998 and 2003. During this time, IRP stagnated at the national level, but remained vigorous at the regional, Hokkaido level. The third period is 2004 to the present. This is the IRP implementation period.

#### 1992-1997

Following Giichi Nomura's first UN speech by an Ainu in 1992 and the election of Shigeru Kayano as the first Ainu member of the House of Councillors in 1994, the Expert Panel on Utari<sup>6</sup> Policy (EPUP) was created. The purpose of EPUP was to make recommendations for new legislation concerning Ainu related policies. The experts summoned for the panel were Wajin academics and non-academic intellectuals. No Ainu individuals or organizations were represented on the panel. The outcomes of the meetings are best summarized in the ACPA (legislated in 1997) itself, and contain four basic components: recognition of indigeneity, admission of historical oppression, promotion of culture, and four specific actions. These are; 1) promoting comprehensive and practical research about Ainu, 2) promoting Ainu culture including their language, 3) promoting understanding about Ainu culture and people by Wajin and other general Japanese public, and 4) restoration of traditional living space.

The most distinctive aspect of the EPUP report, and one that invited criticisms from many academics (Lewallen 2007), is its focus on and characterization of culture. The emphasis in the suggested new policies is solely with regard to Ainu culture. The reason, according to the report, is because welfare policies and other compensation policies have either already been put in place by the Hokkaido government or are difficult to implement

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<sup>6</sup> *Utari* is an Ainu word that means comrade or compatriot

due to expected procedural complications of identifying and verifying recipients for various forms of welfare and compensation. Compensation in particular was not recommended because, again, Ainu were not a nation. Here, the Japanese government implicitly denied both the indigenous rights of Ainu people, and the responsibility of the Japanese government for the roles and consequences of the colonization of Ainu *moshir* (land of Ainu). Thus the new policies needed to be oriented to factors other than political and economic self-determination. While culture is undeniably an important aspect of self-determination and identity, and remains an area for which Ainu people demand more attention and policies, a problem arises in the report's narrow and potentially disabling characterization of (Ainu traditional) culture.

The ERUP and subsequent ACPA define culture in a narrow range of traditional cultural arts including dances, songs, crafts, sewing and associated activities. Watson (2010) criticizes this definition based on a collection of Ainu peoples' insights, stating it is a "reductive definition of 'Ainu culture'" which "ignores the position of Ainu activists who want the government to regard Ainu culture in more expansive terms as everyday life and, therefore, inclusive of issues such as human and Indigenous rights, welfare compensation, and employment equity" (Watson 2010). Here, Watson notes that not only does it problematically exclude indigenous rights, but also reduces living, dynamic culture to a narrow range of what Wajin conceived as traditional Ainu culture.

### 1998-2003

During my interviews some people called the 10 years between the ERUP report and implementation of IRP in Shiraoi "the ten blank years" or merely "the ten years". In reality, things were happening in the Hokkaido government, but it is still unclear why the implementation took such a long time.

Things started happening between HUA and the Hokkaido government almost immediately after the enactment of CPA. A committee was formed to

discuss how to move the three of the four (1,2, and 4) recommended projects forward. The basic plan resulted from this committee in 1999. Later in the same year, a specialized committee on IRP was formed in a similar arrangement, with the specific mandate to demand that the national government swiftly implement IRP. But it took almost three years from this point to identify the seven municipalities as potential IRP sites. In April of 2002, a similar committee again demanded the national government to swiftly implement IRP. In early 2004, Shiraoi was chosen as the first “advance site” for IRP. At this point no official FRPAC involvement is recorded, other than some cultural practitioners and vegetation surveys.

#### 2004-present

The national government began to take action in 2004. This meant that whatever was decided would be implemented and not merely recommended to higher authorities. CPTACIR (Committee for Promotion of Traditional Ainu Culture and Iwor Restoration) (later replaced by CCIRP (Consulting Committee for the IRP) was formed as a sub-committee of CMCACP (Committee on Measures Concerning Ainu Cultural Promotion), which specialized in development of the Basic Plan and the Implementation Guidelines. In addition, the Implementation Guidelines required FRPAC to submit a project report and implementation plan every fiscal year, for each restoration site (CMCACP, 2007).

It took two more years to finish this process and the project started in 2006, almost simultaneously with the approval of the plans. Concurrently, in the series of meetings in Hokkaido it was decided that one core or central *iwor* and six regional *iwor* would function as a network of independent *iwor*. Shiraoi was voted as the core-*iwor* in 2004, and was to be started first. The other six municipalities were Asahikawa, Biratori, Kushiro, Sapporo, Shizunai, and Tokachi. The decision to make Biratori the second IRP site was made in 2007 in the same series of Hokkaido meetings.

Somewhere during this process, *core-iwor*, which was to be a bigger, more comprehensive project, was changed to *advance-iwor*, which is essentially the same size as the other six regional *iwor*, but begun earlier than the others. This was a scale-down of the project, primarily because of a budget reduction. The branding of regional Iwor came out of an effort to illuminate the contrasts between Shiraoi and Biratori Iwor in the Midterm Vision<sup>7</sup>, which provides more detailed account for what was to be done in the IRP (CMCACP, 2007).

There are a number of other subsequent documents that are more specific to Shiraoi and Biratori IRP sites. In the next section, I will look more closely at the IRP plans and implementations in Biratori, along with the reasons for choosing Biratori as my primary study site.

#### **2.1.4 Biratori IRP**

The town's plan is consistent with the national IRP Basic Plan and holds the following goals and objectives (Biratori Iwor Promotion Board [BIPB] 2008):

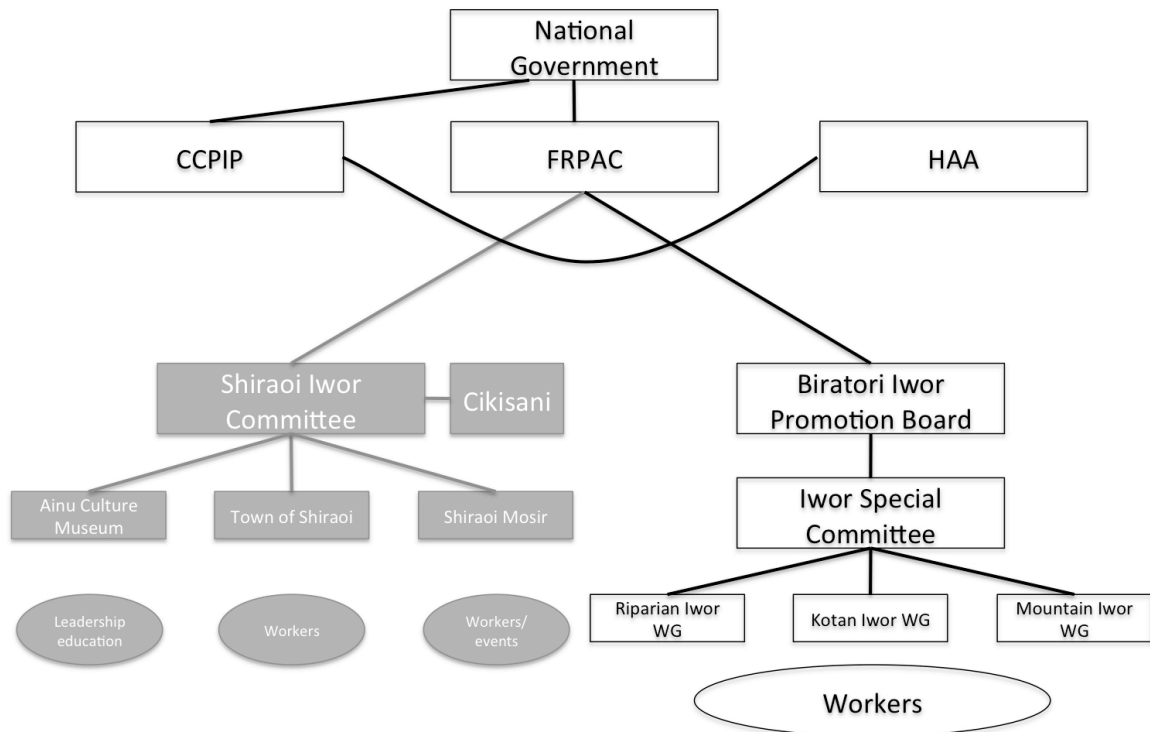
- To create a place for activities around a *kotan* in the image of *Sar-un-kur iwor* (Ainu term for *kotan* along the Saru River)
- To create a place for activities in a rich forest where natural materials grow, while also respecting contemporary life styles
- To recreate the *kotan* where natural materials can be harvested, processed, used, and preserved
- To create a place where natural materials can be harvested sustainably
- To develop *iwor*-like multi-canopy layered forest management skills
- To secure a place in which natural materials can be harvested freely within certain rules

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<sup>7</sup> The Midterm Vision was drafted to supplement the Basic Plan with more specific (5-year scale) and up to date approach to the IRP.

- To build an integrated system in which utilization of natural resources and cultural activities reciprocate
- To develop a policy by which a closed system of resource acquisition, processing, and utilization is enabled
- To develop a system in which cultural traditions are transmitted between generations

To develop and implement these goals, the town set up a group of committees and working groups consisting mainly of Biratori Ainu

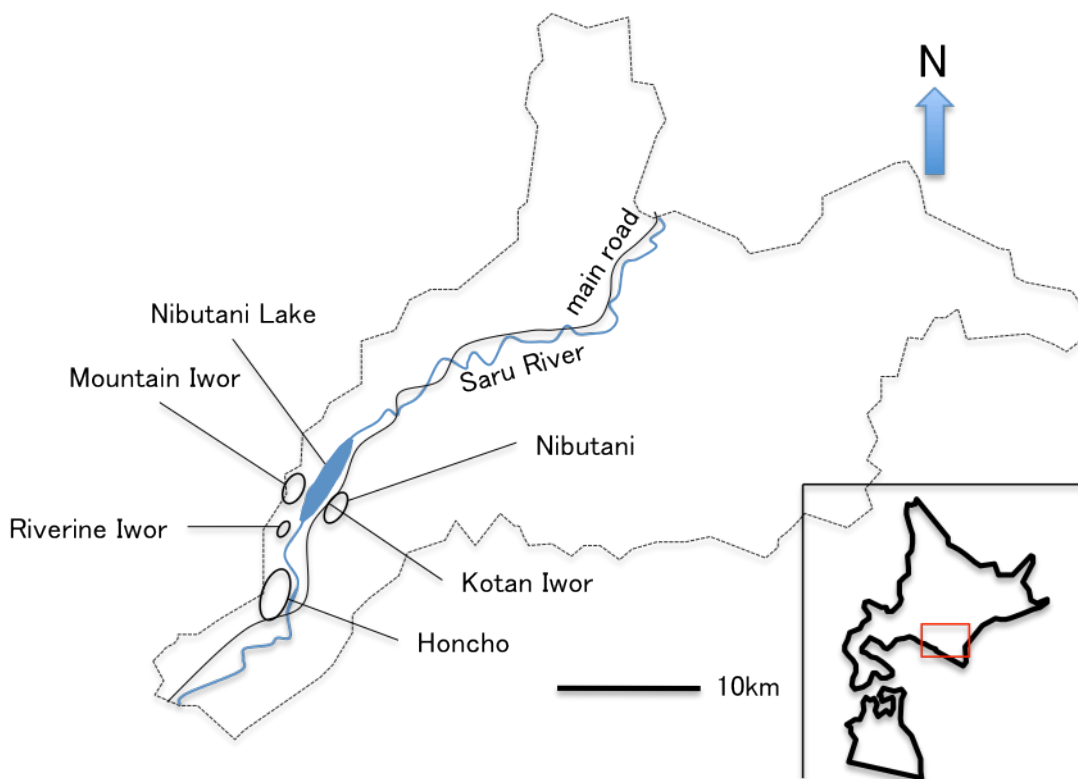


**Figure 2 Decision Making Structure of the IRP**

Association members. The structure is illustrated in figure 2. The Biratori Iwor Promotion Board (BIPB) is the town's highest decision-making council for this project, but it mostly approves the Specialized Committee's (SC) recommendations. The SC in turn is where detailed work plans that come up from Working Groups (WG) are negotiated and finalized for final recommendations. The members in the SC and WG are overlapping and in reality are in constant negotiation. They are mostly composed of Ainu or Wajin who are in regular engagement with Ainu culture and politics. The

BIPB comprises mostly Town Council members and local business representatives who are not necessarily involved in Ainu culture or politics on a regular basis. Plans and financial reports that are approved by the BIPB are then sent to FRPAC to be discussed in CCIRP. If the panel approves, it is sent to CMCACP for final approval.

Formally then, the final approvals are made by the CMCACP after all details – budget breakdowns, negotiations about funding between responsible ministries (MLIT and Culture) and governments (national and prefectural), etc – are prepared. In practice, most decisions are made at the level of SC, which represent the locals, in negotiation with FRPAC, which represent the governments.



**Figure 3 Map of Biratori with the Locations of IRP Sites**

The three *iwor* sites – *kotan*, mountain, and riverine – are to complement each others' roles to enable holistic recreation of *Sar-un-kur iwor* (see figure 3). As stated in the town's vision, the *kotan* is the central piece of the Biratori

IRP and the mountain and riverine *iwor* are the 'harvesting zones' to enable activities in Kotan Iwor.

Five to six *cise* (Ainu traditional houses) are envisioned to be built in the *kotan* zone including *por-cise*, the largest one that is the central and communal *cise* of the six. The area is adjacent to the Nibutani Ainu Cultural Museum and a small, recreated *kotan* that belongs to the museum. The area also is near the concentration of Ainu crafts and souvenir shops. Nibutani is also well-known for relatively strong and well-preserved/practised Ainu culture because the area was not settled by Wajin until later than other areas. In addition to building *cise*, various cultural activities and training take place in the restored *kotan*. For example, different types of *kamuynomi* (ceremonies) such as *cise-nomi* are performed before building new *cise* and memorial services for the deceased have been performed on the site in part to train the young Ainu IRP workers. These workers are also trained for other crafting and construction of various buildings associated with the *cise*. Since 2009, two women have been hired during summer months to tend to the fire in the *por-cise*. The *por-cise* was open to the public while the women were in



**Figure 4** Inside the *Por-cise*. The Patterned Mat against the Wall is the *Toma*

the house. The women also were commissioned to weave *toma*, a traditional mat made from cattail stalks that is traditionally patterned with dyed elm fabrics (see figure 4).

Mountain Iwor is the largest of the three *iwor* in terms of area. It is 210 ha of town-owned forest across the reservoir from the Kotan Iwor site (figure 5, figure 6). Almost all area of the forest is naturally regrown secondary broad-leaf deciduous forest (see section 2.2.1 in this chapter for details). Much of the forest floor is dominated by dwarf bamboo (*Sasa sp.*) but on steep stream-facing slopes and slopes at higher elevation more culturally significant plants are found. Elm species that are of particular importance to Ainu culture are scarce, and invasive species such as goldenrod (*Solidago canadensis*) are also present in disturbed open areas of the forest. Through selective logging of trees and propagation and re-introduction of herbaceous species they aim to re-establish the *iwor*-like multi-canopy layered forest. In addition to the increased proportion of culturally significant species the plan also aims to achieve a certain age-structure of the forest at the same time. For example, the objective includes increasing the proportion of 'large radius trees' (42cm~) from 5% by number to 20%, and from 30% by biomass to 50%.

The Riverine Iwor is a 2 ha riverside acreage assigned to be restored to wetland and traditional farming plots. It is the only site located downstream from the Nibutani Dam, and it is in Honcho district rather than Nibutani district (figure 3). The area before restoration had various native and introduced shrub and herbaceous species. The top 30cm substrate was mostly gravel which had to be removed along with the vegetation.

Due to the controlled river flows the river course has been stabilized and became deeper than historic conditions. Consequently, even though the site is adjacent to the river it is about 2m higher than the normal water surface, lessening the likelihood of regular flooding and therefore limiting the water source for the restored wetland. As a result the town's engineers decided to

draw water from the stream that flows into the river rather than the Saru River itself.

Additionally to restoring the cultural landscape, the BIRP also aims to educate and train young Ainu as transmitters of traditional practices and knowledge. To that end, three young Ainu men were hired full time for the entire duration of IRP. They are to work with at least one Ainu full time instructor and one or two more part-time instructors depending on their tasks. The tasks include such activities as: harvesting, and crafting with elm bark; building *cise*; performing ceremonies; and learning about culturally significant plants. Close to two dozen extra part-time workers are also hired in busy seasons for activities such as harvesting straw and thatching.

Apart from the *iwor* site restoration, Biratori IRP also funds projects to map Ainu place names. Two women are hired to record Ainu place names in the Saru River basin along with literature and folklore that mention the



**Figure 5 Two Ainu Workers Thatching the wall of a *Cise* on the Kotan Restoration Site**

names. This project is part of Biratori IRP because place names are a significant part of Ainu people's connections to the land. Reflecting such views, MLIT and Hokkaido have recently started adding Ainu place names along with Japanese names to geographic signs such as river names.

### **2.1.5 Biratori as Field Research Site**

I chose Biratori over Shiraoi as my case study for two reasons. First, I was able to spend more time in Biratori, and consequently had a broader and deeper understanding of the local practices and processes of IRP. In Shiraoi, by contrast, although people were extremely welcoming and kind, at times access to certain IRP related activities and processes were limited, which in turn limited my ability to grasp the locality of the project.

Second, in Shiraoi, the majority of the IRP took place in the form of the Ainu Traditional Cultural Practitioners Training Program run by the Shiraoi Ainu Museum. While this was a fascinating project, it was not easily characterized as an ecological restoration project. The focus of the Biratori IRP was in the restoration of culturally and sustainably managed '*Iwor* Forest' and the *kotan iwor*. This was much closer to conventional, or SER's (Society for Ecological Restoration) definition of ecological restoration and therefore more appropriate for my study objectives.

Certainly, it would have been better to study both sites to assess the total effectiveness of the IRP. However, temporal and financial limitations compelled me to focus on one site. As such, the following analysis is primarily based on my field study in the town of Biratori.

## **2.2 Site Geography**

### **2.2.1 Town of Biratori and the Forests**

Biratori is located in the eastern part of Hokkaido, Japan. It is under the jurisdiction of the Prefecture of Hokkaido, and sub-jurisdiction of Hidaka Subprefecture (figure 1 & 3). It is a small town with a resident population of 6,173 in an area of 743 km<sup>2</sup>. As in many other parts of Japan, more than 25%

of the population is over the age of 65 (e-Stat). Of its 743km<sup>2</sup> only 122 km<sup>2</sup> (approx. 16%) is habitable due to its rugged geography, and 43 km<sup>2</sup> (35%) of it is used for agricultural purposes (NSTAC, n.d.). In 2005, 1,124 people were working in primary industries (agriculture and forestry), 1,536 in tertiary industry (service), and 565 in secondary industries (manufacturing and processing) (*ibid*).

The primacy of the agricultural and forestry sector has been in place since the wage economy was introduced. Between the 1920s and 1970s rice was the main agricultural crop; now greenhouse tomatoes are the largest industry in the town.

Biratori sits on 142°E and 42°N (similar to Eugene, Oregon or Chicago, Illinois in latitude) and just borders temperate and subarctic Koppen climate zones. Average annual temperature is 7.3 degrees Celsius and the precipitation is 1,003mm at lower elevations. At higher elevations the annual temperature and precipitation average 5.9 degrees Celsius and 1,410mm respectively. This climatic condition typically supports temperate broadleaf-deciduous forest. In Hokkaido this means the canopy is dominated by *Acer mono Maxim*, *Fagus* sp. and *Quercus* sp. (Ministry of Environment of Japan Centre for Biodiversity). The common native conifers in the region are Ezo-matsu (*Picea jezoensis*) and todo-matsu (*Abies sachalinensis*), which are found in higher elevation (*ibid*). On alluvial wet soils *Ulmus davidiana var. japonica* stands form in frequent company with *Fraxinus mandshurica*. Katsura, or *Cercidiphyllum* likes to grow on disturbed sites like post-rock/mud slides areas.

If one were to have visited the area 300 years ago, the forest near downtown Biratori would have appeared somewhat as follows. From a distance the mountains would be blanketed with soft greens of *Fagus* sp. and *Quercus* sp. that provide the rolling contour of the surface. The softer and rounded greens would be punctuated by occasional pointy protrusions of Ezo-matsu and todo-matsu, perhaps about 10% of the coverage. In the fall the

rolling green hill would turn bright red with a carpet of maples and oaks. Once closer to the forest, one would witness diverse undergrowth, differing at every variation in topography and microclimate. If one looked up from within the forest, one would see layers of different ages and species of trees overlapping, before viewing the centuries old Japanese oak towering over the slope, providing nesting and habitats to the Ezo owl (*Strix uralensis japonica*) and countless other creatures of the mature forest.

The forest I was standing in was very different. There were much darker greens of conifers from the distance, perhaps a little shy of 30%. From a closer distance, there were more *Q. crispula* than *Q. serrata* among the softer greens, indicating repeated clearing of the forest (Taniguchi 2009, personal communication). Most of the native conifers are replaced by introduced *Larix* species (*L. kaempferi* and *L. leptolepis*). In fact, many slopes along the river are covered with *Larix* trees that were planted in early-mid twentieth century by forestry companies and the Department of Forestry. It was hard to come across trees that were older than 60 years old, and many trees were of similar age, making a single layer canopy. A number of commonly used (by Ainu) species have either disappeared from the area or retreated to small pockets of inaccessible terrains. Pukusa, ohyo (*U. laciniata*), and ostrich ferns (*Matteuccia struthiopteris*) were some of the species on the list. These changes to the forest, as well as the rivers as I will explain later, are the reason why landscape restoration is a component of the indigenous rights debate in Biratori.

### **2.2.2 The Saru River**

The Saru River, which is 104km in length and has a basin of 1,350km<sup>2</sup>, cuts through the Town of Biratori lengthwise from the northeast to the southwest (Figure 3). It flows from Mt. Kumami in Hidaka Mountain Range and is joined by Nukabira River just upstream of the town center. It flows through the Town of Monbetsu before meeting the Pacific Ocean. The water is typically turbid and DO (dissolved oxygen) level is high. The turbidity is a

result of geology in the area – a sheet of soft sedimentary rocks such as turbidite and tuff covers large areas of the basin and supplies endless sediment to the river – but it is also exacerbated by the land use change in the upstream forests.

There are three species of anadromous fish in the Saru River today. Shishamo (*Spirinchus lanceolatus*, same family as oolichan) is an endemic species to the area (Eastern Hokkaido), and is a popular table fish in Japan. This fish was not commonly eaten in southern Japan prior to the 1950s. However, between the 1950s and 1969 the average annual catch increased to nearly 2,500 tons (up to 3,900 tons). In the early 1970s the stock level crashed when the catch went as low as 400 tons per year (Kushiro City Fisheries Cooperative). Regional fisheries cooperatives put in place voluntary suspension of *shishamo* fisheries, and since then the catch has recovered to around 1,000 tons but has not returned to historic conditions. The populations west of Cape Erimo have been listed on the Hokkaido Red Data Book (HRDB) as at risk of extirpation since 2007. Naylor *et al.* (2000) discuss possible reasons for population decreases since the 70s and in addition to overfishing, indicate habitat destruction in their spawning rivers (Naylor *et al.*, 2000). Based on these concerns, in Saru River, management for *shishamo* spawning ground has been part of the Saru River Drainage Management Plan since 2007 (MLIT Hokkaido Development Agency, 2002).

Masu salmon (*Oncorhynchus masou*) and chum salmon (*O. keta*) are not listed on the HRDB but are facing different risks. The chum salmon population in Hokkaido had dropped in the mid 1800s as a result of intense fishing of returning salmon at the river mouth by Wajin settlers (Iwasaki-Goodman & Nomoto, 2001). Since then the population has recovered but only due to the long and wide effort of hatcheries. It is understood that more than 95% of annual chum salmon that run in Japan originate from hatcheries today (Augerot, 2010). Since salmon populations are almost entirely managed by the network of hatcheries, there are few management policies for the wild

stocks other than outright ban of chum salmon fishing in freshwater environments. Augerot evaluates resilience of five regional salmon stocks in the Pacific Rim and points out that Japanese chum salmon (social ecological) systems, while abundant, has low resilience. This is due to their extremely heavy reliance on economic management on the one hand, and degraded habitat that has not caught attention because of the abundance of the population on the other. He points out further that the aging workforce and weakening chum salmon market in Japan as additional factors threatening the resilience of Japanese chum salmon (Augerot *et al.* 2010). In addition to the increasingly rigid control of the salmon reproductive cycles, the ban has also affected Ainu people and their cultures. The ban on freshwater salmon fishery has been in place since the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century and it was applied to both Wajin and Ainu, commercial and subsistence (Iwasaki-Goodman & Nomoto 2001). Ceremonial fishing is permitted with special permit, and has been used in a few communities (*ibid*). But the upper limit of the catch has been around 100 salmon; significantly lower than what they would want and a fraction of historic catches (*ibid*). Even with the permit, the communities sometimes had the salmon donated from the local Fisheries Cooperative (to which all commercial fishermen are members) to avoid conflict with the commercial fishermen. In such cases, they released a handful of salmon in an enclosed body of water to simulate traditional salmon fishing using harpoons. For Ainu people who call the fish *kamuy chep* (fish of god, or merely *chep*, the fish), these legal and ecological limitations to their (perhaps most) important source of livelihood was detrimental in their cultural and economic autonomy (*ibid*).

Habitat destruction also plays a part in salmon ecology. All rivers in Japan have some sort of dams, check dams, or other barriers. In addition to the direct physical obstacles, habitat modifications along and upstream of the river also affect the lifecycle of the salmonid species, for example: water clarity, size of rubble, water depth and temperature, etc. These modifications

also affect, often times negatively, other wildlife and Ainu cultures. Two of the major changes are the aforementioned forestry-induced vegetation changes in upstream mountains and conversion of flood plains to rice paddies.

Floodplain wetlands and swamps were important sources of food and natural materials for Ainu people. The cattails and sedges that they used for thatching and mat making grow in swamps. These sites are recorded in Izumi's article as one of the important *iwor* where use-rights were strictly enforced because of their importance to their economy (thus culture) (Izumi, 1952). *Sar-un-kur* Ainu also used to grow crops on post-flood fertile deposits. Foxtail millet (*Setaria italica*) and barnyard millet (*Echinochloa esculenta*) were harvested to make *tonoto* (millet wine) for use in rituals and celebrations. Swamps were also rich in freshwater clams and cray fish.

### **2.2.3 Nibutani Dam**

Before closing this chapter, I need to briefly describe the Nibutani dam controversy. The Nibutani dam was a dam constructed by the MLIT between 1990 and 1997. It is located in the Nibutani district of Biratori Town. The Nibutani Ainu Museum – therefore the Kotan Iwor – is adjacent to the Nibutani Dam Lake. The two primary purposes of the dam were to control the flood and provide water to planned Tomatoh Industrial Park. The latter never came through due to an economic down-turn, and therefore flood control is the de-facto sole purpose of the dam. From the beginning, the construction invited criticisms and resistance from local and non-local Ainu, who insisted that the construction of such dam would irreversibly damage the heritage and (natural) foundation of Ainu culture. This led to the landmark court case in the Sapporo Regional District Court (1993-1997). The judge Kazuo Ichimiya delivered that Nibutani Dam was indeed illegal because inadequate considerations for cultural importance were paid prior to the construction. Furthermore, the judge also stated, though not directly relevant to the case itself, that Ainu people were indigenous people in Japan with reference to the United Nations Declarations of Rights for Indigenous Peoples.

This was the first time ever that either judicial or political body in Japan recognized Ainu as indigenous people. Though the judge rejected the removal of the dam – stating the cost incurred to the public by such removal was too large – it gave Ainu the first legal and also public political (the case was highly publicised) legitimacy to their movement.

The presence of this dam in many ways shapes the political, ecological, and social context of Ainu in Biratori today. The opposition to the dam was hardly unanimous in Biratori even in the 1990s, and the political ambivalence to the proposed Biratori dam, another dam due to be build upstream from Nibutani Dam in Nukabira River, is still stirring discussions in the community. Ecological restoration of the Saru River is a dim possibility without addressing the presence of the dam – especially with the dysfunctional fish ladder – and restoration of *iwor* seems oddly juxtaposed again the creation of yet another dam<sup>8</sup> only a short stretch away from the IRP sites. Nevertheless, the IRP continues with enthusiasms from both Ainu and Wajin sides. I argue that this is because the nature of “restoring” has provided a new context of engagement for Ainu in the IRP. This will be discussed in the chapter five and six.

Forests, Saru River, and riverine environments underwent changes as Wajin agricultural and the capitalist economy entered the area. Diverse and rich deciduous forest was turned into monotonous larch plantations on the mountains, causing soil loss and loss of habitat for animals dependent on forest bounty. Modification of rivers such as dykes and dams altered fish habitat and served as physical obstacles for anadromous fish. The upstream changes in the forest changed the water quality in the river and estuary. Conversion of flood plains into rice monoculture erased once abundant sedge and grass species from many areas of Hokkaido. Flood control by the dams reduced a number of floods and so the amount of fertile deposits when the

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<sup>8</sup> Since 2009, with the change with ruling party, all major dam constructions in Japan are under review and the construction of Biratori Dam is currently on hold.

river does flood. These changes reflect changes in the social ecosystem as I addressed in the Ainu archaeology section (chapter one, section one). Just as the Jomon Ecosystem transitioned into Ainu Ecosystem with a changing social economic environment, the Ainu Ecosystem underwent transition to a Wajin Ecosystem during the processes of colonization. IRP in part is the effort to reverse this transition, or to restore certain aspects of historic social ecological conditions.

### Chapter 3: Literature Review

So far I have presented the background materials for the IRP. I have shown how the IRP and Ainu are historically, geographically, socially, and culturally situated in relation to Wajin society. Ainu have been subjected to colonial oppression since at least the early 18<sup>th</sup> century when the military and economic affluence of the Wajin became decisively superior. Through the emergence and modernization of the Japanese state, and the assimilation policies that accompanied it, Ainu political and economic sovereignty have been undermined. This relegation to an inferior status has been legitimized in the name of science, (economic) liberty, and nationhood. The IRP, I have shown, is part of the Ainu effort to liberate themselves – the most recent movement of which was symbolically originated in 1992 with Giichi Nomura's UN speech – from this legacy of colonialism. The particularly interesting quality of the IRP, compared to their other efforts, is its focus on the landscape. The IRP is among the first attempts for Ainu and the Wajin government, together, to reconcile the problems of colonialism through relations to and by engagement with the landscape.

The purpose of this chapter is to set the stage and provide the tools for the ensuing analyses of my case study findings. The chapter is comprised of two main sections. The first section addresses the colonial and post-colonial dimensions of the case study. Here, I first reframe the historical development I have so far provided using post-colonial theory, namely that of Fanon. I argue that colonial oppression embodies two semi-independent forms of oppression: subjective/recognitive oppression and structural/objective oppression (Fanon 2008). Understanding colonial oppression in this manner also implies that the effort to decolonize oneself must at the same time pursue both subjective/recognitive and structural/objective forms of oppression. This analysis is crucial to set up my analysis of the IRP; as I discuss below, if the IRP is to be a successful, effective, and good ecological

restoration, it must also achieve, or make progress towards, the liberation of Ainu from colonial oppression<sup>9</sup>.

In the second analysis of this section I explore how the subjective powers affect and shape environmental discourse, and in turn, shape the landscape and the institutions that govern the landscape. I find Braun's (2002) analysis of "production of marginality" particularly useful in understanding how colonial and colonized subjectivities interact to form, sustain, and transform the possibilities for engagements with nature. In summary, my first analysis of the first section sets up the stage for my analysis (by characterizing the colonial forces at work on Ainu), and the second analysis provides the tools to more closely examine the contemporary dynamics and possibilities in the IRP.

The second section of this chapter situates my case study in the theories and practices of ecological restoration, with particular attention to Higgs' distinction between technological and focal restoration. I start by explaining the threat of technological practices to the current practices of ecological restoration. Higgs' main concern is the prevalence of technological patterns that disengage practitioners from the practices, processes from the products, and more generally foreground from the background (Higgs 2003). I then present the antidote Higgs prescribes which is the theory of focal restoration. Focal practices are the conscious engagements with the things that matter to our lives, and deliberate practices to bring the background – or the context – back into our everyday practices. Higgs argues that ecological restoration is being inundated by the technological pattern, and we need to steer the restoration practices towards focal ones to maximize its potential to enrich our lives in an increasingly technological society.

In my last analysis, I posit that there is an apparent lack of literature in ecological restoration studies regarding post-coloniality. And I argue here that such study is needed especially since many ecological restoration

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<sup>9</sup> The reason why successful, effective, and good ecological restoration needs to strive for liberation from colonial oppression is explained in chapter four, section two.

projects take place in the post-colonial landscapes such as North America and Australia.

### **3.1 Colonialism and Environment**

#### **3.1.1 Theoretical Characterization of the Colonization of Ainu**

Amongst the literature on post-colonial theory, there is a strong emphasis on the importance of considering the particularities of the local context for understanding colonialism (Spivak, 1988; Thomas, 1994). At the same time, there are undeniable similarities between colonial forms of oppression. These similarities, when generalized and theorized, allow us to understand patterns underlying the processes. Understanding these patterns enables us to better engage critically with them. Thus, in my use of theories I am cautious in preserving the local context and not overly tempted by the explanatory power of theories.

Various texts have been written about Ainu both by Ainu and non-Ainu scholars. In reviewing the literature it became apparent that there are at least two interrelated dimensions in which colonization of the Ainu are practised<sup>10</sup>. The first is the economic dimension. In this dimension the processes of colonization are most apparent in the instances of production and consumption. The second is the psychological dimension. It is in this dimension where collective and individual identities of Ainu are oppressed. I borrow these dimensions from Fanon (2008). He argues that colonial practice embodies “not only the interrelations of objective historical conditions but also human attitudes to these conditions” (ibid: 84). In other words, the dual-structure of colonialism is the “interplay between the structural/objective and recognitive/subjective realms of colonialism that ensured its hegemony over time” (Coulthard, 2007). According to this understanding, the interrelation of the two dimensions in which colonial processes operate inhibits the success of

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<sup>10</sup> There could be any number of alternative characterizations but these seem useful for my analysis as becomes clear in chapters six and seven.

a simple solution if it only addresses one of the dimensions. In the case of Ainu, socio-economic statistics report lower than average income (two-thirds of Wajin equivalent) and educational achievement. These statistics reflect a structural/objective hegemony. Here, the form of power is material: the Ainu are deprived of means of production, which are in substantial part owned by Wajin. A key moment of the proletarianization of Ainu was the abolishment of Basho-Ukeoi-Sei in 1869<sup>11</sup>. Cashed within a promise of freedom from coercive and abusive working conditions (although it was not always coercive and/or abusive), this change merely replaced old labour relations with a capitalist system of wage labour. The subsequent commodification of (Ainu) land and industrialization of the economy intensified the effects of this change. Thus in the context of Ainu colonialism, the emergence of class originated not in a historical asymmetric distribution of wealth, but in ethnic or even racial origins.

The origin of an asymmetric distribution of wealth – or power in general – is discussed within recognitive/subjective discourse. In Japan this change can be traced as far back as the first recorded Wajin description of the Ainu (Siddle, 1996; Matsumoto & Egawa, 2001):

Amongst these Eastern savages the Yemishi (Ainu) are the most powerful, their men and women live together promiscuously, there is no distinction of father or child. In winter they dwell in holes, in summer they live in nests. Their clothing consists of furs, and they drink blood...At other times they take the opportunity of the harvest to plunder the people...ever since antiquity they have not been steeped in the kingly civilizing influences. (Nihonshoki translated in Aston 1896; 203)

Already, the alienation and decontextualization of the Ainu portrayed as savages is apparent. Although this did not indicate there was material, objective hegemony of power in the 8<sup>th</sup> century, the images of Ainu as

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<sup>11</sup> See chapter 2.2.2

uncivilized, primitive savages persisted well into contemporary times in the minds of both Wajin Japanese *and* the Ainu (Ogasawara, 2001). Over time the reproduction of these images (particularly since 1599), took place within discourses of savagery (during the Tokugawa Period (1603-1867) and later race (after the Meiji Restoration of 1867). These served as the tools to legitimize violence and assimilation, and soon became ideological (Siddle, 1996). Just as the form of oppression underwent change – from one based on Sino-centrism (Confucian) to capitalism – the rationale for alienation metamorphosed from a basis in Confucian ideals to a basis in science. Through research and classification, racial superiority of Wajin Japanese became a scientific, objective, and universal *truth* (Siddle, 1996).

The process of subjugation has not just materially impoverished the Ainu, it has also caused real psychological harm. Explicit verbal and physical abuses have left emotional scars, but causes of psychological and emotional damage also took more subtle forms. Less obvious was the internalization of the demeaning images of the Ainu from the broader culture, into the individual Ainu's identity or perception of self. The Ainu came to, or were forced to, adopt the images that Wajin projected onto them. It was inescapable, because "identity is partly shaped by [mis]recognition or its absence" by others (Taylor, 1997; 98). Once such images become internalized, "even when some of the objective obstacles to their advancement fall away, they may be incapable of taking advantage of the new opportunities. And beyond this, they are condemned to suffer the pain of low self-esteem" (*ibid*). Thus, in concert with the Wajin's continuing colonial gaze, low self-esteem continues to exist as revealed in Kouchi's (2010) survey.

The systems of oppression operate interdependently, but are mutually reinforcing. A lower economic status seems to confirm Ainu inferiority in a supposedly free and competitive market economy. Low self-esteem may discourage the motivation needed to achieve success according to dominant norms and cultural stereotypes often distort opportunities for employment. At

the same time, these processes are semi-autonomous. A self-employed, middle class Ainu male still hides his identity as Ainu in fear of racial discrimination. Similarly, a proud, self-identified Ainu living in relative economic destitution is also the direct consequence of colonialism (Sato et al., 2009). Thus, in order for the Ainu to be freed from the dual structure of colonialism, both processes of oppression need to be removed. The colonized “must wage war on both levels”, writes Fanon, “since historically they influence each other, any unilateral liberation is incomplete, and the gravest mistake would be to believe in their automatic interdependence” (Coulthard, 2007; Fanon, 2008; 11).

Deprivation of the means of production and the continued demeaning and transforming of Ainu cultural identity have led to the loss of self-determination. This transformation of Ainu cultural identity within the larger Japanese society has led to cases where the Ainu were (and still are) selling *images* of themselves that were imposed *by* Wajin, *to* Wajin, in the Wajin operated economy. A quintessential example of this can be found in the Japanese tourism industry. In 1981 the Japan Travel Bureau posted an advertisement in “Japan Times” (a prominent English newspaper in Japan) that read “...a fascinating visit to a *real* Ainu Village at Shiraoi, to see the ancient customs and culture of the famed hairy Ainu” (Japan Times 22 July 1981, in Keira *et al.* 1998, emphasis added). This advertisement triggered anger and criticism amongst the Ainu for many reasons, the first being the use of the phrase “famed hairy Ainu”. The importance of this protest is not about negative stereotyping but about the more substantial problem around the terms of defining who the Ainu are and what image of them is projected within the larger Japanese society. This advertisement is illustrative of a larger trend of the Wajin holding the power to define what it means to be Ainu. Also controversial, was the use of the phrase “real Ainu”. Here, multiple forces are at work. The term *real* immediately and necessarily creates the counter existence of *fake* Ainu. The real Ainu are the ones who

practice “the ancient customs and culture” and are “hairy”; everyone else is fake and unauthentic. Again, Wajin exercise the power to define Ainu-ness, but through the construction of a dichotomy the advertisement simultaneously elevates its own (Wajin constructed) idealized and static image of Ainu and dismisses those who do not fit into their constructed definition of authenticity. This creates a serious problem for Ainu who do not fit into the Wajin projection or imagination of ‘authentic’, becoming an inauthentic Ainu who still carries all the inferiorities of being Ainu, but without the idealizing adoration from Wajin tourists.

The final frustration of this case was that the Ainu of Shiraoi refused to speak up. Their livelihood was dependent on income from Wajin and foreign tourism. For the Shiraoi-Ainu not only were their physical persons owned and exploited, but also their capacity to define their culture and who they wish to be. This has also meant that any quest for decolonization of Ainu must include the recovery of self-determination and any discussion for the recovery of self-determination must pursue both objective and subjective forms of oppressions.

### **3.1.2 Subjectivity and Power in the Environmental Discourse**

For my analysis of the IRP, I am interested in the roles and rules of the powers (between the colonizer and the colonized) and their implications for restoration of the landscape. To this end, I find Braun’s (2002) approach to analyzing post-colonial subjectivities useful. Specifically, I take up his attention to the production of discursive marginality in locating instances of power struggles.

In his book *Intemperate Rainforest*, Braun (2002) shows how different sites of power – practised discursively, judicially, and spatially – contest and negotiate with each other to produce and legitimate certain images of nature while excluding others. This process of exclusion is what he terms “discursive displacements”, which “enable the ability of some to ‘speak for’ nature in political struggle while disqualifying others” (ibid: 28). He provides examples

where, for instance, the Canadian timber industry portrays Canada's west coast as the "forest". In this forest, natural resources such as timber can be extracted, and the production of the timber must be managed. This claim is legitimized by the authority of science (or rather the image of science; the graphs, the researchers in white coat, the numbers etc) regarding rational utilization of resources and made appealing by the promise of employment. It is the perceived legitimacy of science, rather than the actual accuracy of it that authorizes this (industry's) discourse of nature.

In contrast, Braun argues, environmentalists use a different representation of nature: pristine wilderness. Like the timber industry, the environmentalists use their own methods of representational practices to legitimize their perception of Canada's west coast.

The point of particular relevance to my case study is that both representations of nature marginalize the First Nation's representations of nature (as well as each other's). This is problematic because the logic behind the legitimacy for the industry and the environmentalist are both deeply connected to the logic of colonialism, and indeed, as Braun argues;

Marginality is produced in, and integral to, forms of colonial power; it is that which must be excluded from conceptual frames in order for identities – such as "nature" or "nation" – to appear coherent and complete (Braun, 2002; 63).

On the one hand, there is the discourse of science, which displaces the First Nations people (mainly) epistemologically, and for which there is no shortage of evidence to suggest its contributions to the colonial practices (see for example Siddle (2006) and Smith (1999)). On the other is the erasure of indigenous presences from the landscape, by proclaiming the landscape the pristine *wilderness*, devoid of human spoilage (Braun 2002; 35). Even if indigenous presences are recognized, it often takes the form of romanticized vision of the Ecological Indians (Braun 2002; 32). In Braun's case study of the temperate rainforest, the implications of these representational practices and

discursive marginalization manifested most significantly in the instances of the forest management policy negotiations.

In my case study, I similarly analyze how certain perceptions about the landscape are represented and sustained differently between the colonial and the colonized. Specifically, the landscapes I will be focusing on are the Saru River, Kotan Iwor, and and *rep-un-iwor* (marine *iwor*).

### **3.2 Ecological Restoration**

The Society for Ecological Restoration (SER) defines ecological restoration as “the process of assisting the recovery of an ecosystem that has been degraded, damaged, or destroyed” (Society for Ecological Restoration International Science & Policy Working Group, 2004). In this document the SER adds to this definition that a restored ecosystem should create an ecological community structure appropriate for the site, and one that contains an assemblage of species that occur in a suitable reference ecosystem. It broadens the idea of ecological restoration to include “sustainable cultural practices” (traditional human land uses that maintain biodiversity and productivity) as an integral part of many ecosystems. I argue also that ecological restoration at its core is distinguished from other similar practices (preservation, conservation, etc) by its historicity and cultural dimension, and I will make this case in the following section.

#### **3.2.1 Historicity and Culture in Ecological Restoration**

There are two reasons why the concept of culture is a key and distinct characteristic of ecological restoration. First, “nature”, the concept often used as an opposition to “culture” is itself a cultural construct. Numerous literatures suggest that many cultures around the world do not recognize “nature” separate from “culture” – Ainu is one – and that such separation allowed unprecedented scale of the domination of the “nature” by humans in the Western societies (see for example Haraway, 1988, Cronon, 1996, or Latour, 2004). Recognition that “nature” or the ecosystem, is integral to

culture and vice versa is thus an important step towards a more sustainable relationship between the peoples and the ecosystems. In contrast, Western environmentalists have traditionally advocated for preservation and conservation of the wilderness, a concept that is informed by the dichotomy between nature and culture (Cronon, 1996). Many argue that this approach maintains and exacerbates the nature-culture dichotomy that underlies the current ecological crises (Cronon, 1996).

Second, ecological restoration is a process carried out by people, making the practice inherently cultural. Rather than keeping people off the land (National Parks are a prime example of the preservation-based ideology), it brings people and the ecosystem together under the explicit recognition that one is an integral part of the other (Society for Ecological Restoration International Science & Policy Working Group, 2004). As an inevitable consequence of this, the process and product of our practice of ecological restoration is informed by our cultures (Hall 2005). Hall compares ecological restoration projects across cultures focusing on the way cultural perceptions of nature resurface in physical forms through the acts of restoration (see table 2 for the summary of his findings). In the SER policy on ecological

**Table 2 Different Views of Nature and Corresponding Practice of Ecological Restoration (adapted from Hall (2005))**

	Reason for Degradation	Ideal Landscape	Region
Maintenance gardening	Nature degenerates without human care	Cultured gardens	Italy
Reparative gardening	Humans degrade Nature	'Improved' lands	USA (In G.S. Marsh)
Reparative Naturalizing	Humans degrade Nature	Unspoiled wilderness	USA (In A. Leopold)

restoration there is recognition that ecosystems are at least partially a product of cultural practices, and that where appropriate such cultural practices be included in the restoration practices (Society for Ecological Restoration International Science & Policy Working Group, 2004). Thus, in contrast to many other environmental practices, restoration involves, rather than excludes, people with the ecological processes (with the exception of passive restoration described by Clewell and McDonald (Clewell & McDonald, 2009)). In other words, where preservation and conservation separate people from ecosystems both conceptually and physically, ecological restoration challenges the deeply established dichotomy ideologically and practically.

As with culture, an emphasis on historicity is another distinctive characteristic of ecological restoration. One can also say historicity *comprises* ecological restoration, because without it, restoration may as well be reclamation or mitigation (see Higgs' taxonomy of ecosystem management [Higgs 2003, 98]). Higgs (2003) uses the term historical fidelity to address the element of historicity in ecological restoration. It constitutes one of his four "keystone concepts" of good ecological restoration. Fidelity means "to be true and accurate" and also "to be loyal and trustworthy". In the context of ecological restoration this means we should be faithful to historical ecosystem in terms of structure/composition, functions, and durability (*ibid.*, 128). Being true to history, Higgs maintains, "may or may not involve exact reproduction" because "there are social, economic, cultural, political, aesthetic, and moral goals *from the present to* factor in as well" (127, emphasis in original). Elsewhere, Higgs *et al.* (2006) re-iterate that, especially with the changing abiotic conditions such as global climate change "historical sources can be a guide but not necessarily a determinate prescription for what needs to be done." (Harris *et al.* 2006).

Thus, inclusion of historicity and culture in ecological restoration informs restorationists of the way the social-ecological systems of a restoration site have come to be.

At the core, historicity is important to ecological restorationists because it provides us with the guidance as to how the ecosystems functioned with integrity (Society for Ecological Restoration International Science & Policy Working Group, 2004). However, Higgs argues that there is more to the historicity than its role as an ecological guide. Noticing the integrity of culture *and* ecosystem in the past, he insists that we can learn from the past the kind of elegance and integrity in a slower, more livable time as well (Higgs 2003). He calls this nostalgia: “a bittersweet longing for something lost” (*ibid*, 143). Nostalgia is one of three elements constituting historicity in ecological restoration. The other two are narrative continuity and time depth. To understand Higgs’ account of historicity, we need to review his concept of focal restoration first. This will explain what it is that was ‘sweet’ and ‘bitter’ in the past and what is replacing them instead.

### **3.2.2 Technology and Device Paradigm**

To understand the central concepts of Higgs’ focal restoration theory, a component of which is historicity, I first describe what technological restoration means to Higgs. Technological restoration, as distinguished from *focal* restoration, is an approach to restoration that results in the commodification of nature and practice. Higgs (2003) argues that this form of ecological restoration is increasing. Focal restoration is the antidote to technological restoration, and is roughly constituted as community-based and mindful restoration practice.

Technological restoration is characterized after Borgmann’s (1984) seminal work on the philosophy of technology<sup>12</sup>. Borgman’s primary concern in this book was the influence of technology in modern society. Technology, according to Borgmann, is not a mere object such as a laptop computer or television; he calls these devices. Instead, technology is a dominant pattern of contemporary life, and he claims that these technological patterns are a

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<sup>12</sup> Technology and the Character of Contemporary Life (Borgmann, 1987).

devastating force to our quality of life (3). To begin, he re-examines conventional notions of technology and its roles in society: What does technology do? The dominant view is that technology is a morally neutral instrument that liberates us from work: “Technology...promises to bring the forces of nature and culture under control, to liberate us from misery and toil, and to enrich our lives” (41). He dismisses this claim quickly as not substantive (41). He then makes his own claim about the conception of liberty arguing that the conventional notion of liberty is deeply implicated in the notion of availability: “to liberate is to make available the goods we desire without the toil of labor” (41). Take the example of fireplace, as Borgmann does, to illustrate what consequence this view of technology and liberty has. “[A] stove used to furnish more than mere warmth.” he starts;

It was a *focus*, a hearth, a place that gathered the work and leisure of a family and gave the house a center. Its coldness marked the morning, and the spreading of its warmth the beginning of the day. It assigned to the different family members tasks that defined their place in the household. The mother built the fire, the children kept the firebox filled, and the father cut the firewood. It provided for the entire family a regular and bodily engagement with the rhythm of the seasons that was woven together of the threat of cold and the solace of warmth, the smell of wood smoke, the exertion of sawing and of carrying, the teaching of skills, and the fidelity to daily tasks. (42, emphasis in original)

A technological device, say an oil furnace, replaced the fireplace. Now what happens? The context is lost, along with the focus of engagement. The multiplicity this example carries is revealing. The familial centre, bodily engagement and the skills that it demands of us, and the knowledge about the environment from which the warmth originated, are the qualities embedded in the *means* of acquiring the warmth, the *end*. The oil furnace may provide us with the same amount of heat, but it is no longer continuous with the means of producing it. Instead the furnace is stripped of context and

demands no skills, which we can nurture and be proud of (42). Now imagine this transformation repeats itself, in transportation, in cooking, in farming, in building and all other aspects of our lives. Increasingly, we are concerned only with the *ends* and disconnect ourselves from the means. How well do we know the cup of coffee we drink? Or how often do we even ask such questions? This is what Borgmann calls the technological pattern, or the device paradigm; it is so pervasive and so normalized that we can no longer observe it in everyday contexts. It is the rule of the game; to be or do otherwise is the exception, as is a wood-fired fireplace.

The product (heat) that the device (oil furnace) brings us is a commodity. Technological pattern and the devices make the commodity more available. Not only does it increase the amount of certain goods, it turns other things into commodities:

The constraints of time and place are more and more dissolved. It is an instructive exercise to see how in the implements that surround us daily the machinery becomes less conspicuous, the function more prominent, how radical technical changes in the machinery are but degrees of advancement in the commodity, and how the availability of the commodities increases all the while (43)

But the more available the commodity, the more efficient the devices, the more pervasive the technology, the more liberated we are. So what? Borgmann thinks this form of liberty is deeply unsatisfactory if devastating to the making of a good life. To understand what is at stake, I will now turn to Higgs' interpretation of the technological pattern in the context of ecological restoration.

### **3.2.3 The Threat of Technological Restoration**

Higgs worries that patterns of technology are threatening to inundate the practice of ecological restoration. He warns that corporations and media have

altered the meanings of nature to their commodious<sup>13</sup> end: profit. This commodification of nature Higgs terms a “colonization of imagination” (Higgs 2003: 203), and it is this practice that has laid the groundwork for a practice of ecological restoration based in technology. The theory of the “colonization of the imagination” provides important insight into how the meaning humans ascribe to nature is subsumed by the device paradigm:

Images become the currency of morality, but images lack stability and resonance. Electronic communications and scientific approaches to image management and marketing, fusing advertising and propaganda, have increased the rate of change of cultural images and produced a uniformity of perception. The potency and pervasiveness of such imagery make local, vernacular conditions less attractive, and compel their replacement with sophisticated commodities. (*ibid.*)

Images of nature that are turned into hyperreality create a space where our imagined reality of nature is becoming increasingly detached from our actual experience and bodily engagement with nature. By its sheer pervasiveness and glamour, hyperreal representation of wilderness becomes normalized and accepted. People go to Disney’s Wilderness Lodge, a theme park constructed as the imagined and idealized American wilderness in Florida. On the luxurious resort property visitor finds redwood trees, Northwest Coast Native American artifacts, bison, and other things you would not find in Florida.

A development such as the Lodge builds on ingrained public ideas about wilderness, which is to be expected. In the hands of an organization as powerful as Disney, it has the potential to reshape meaning by imparting its ideological message to the visitor (or viewer) as though it were part of the natural order of things. The Disney version of nature becomes a primary referent for experiences in real nature, not the other way around. (204)

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<sup>13</sup> Borgmann uses the term “commodious” as an adjective: having the quality of being a commodity.

By turning nature into an imagined product (commodity), nature becomes more “adaptable, delimitable, endlessly pliable, and available”, but also decontextualized, standardized, disengaged, and distanced (204). Our experience with nature becomes akin to our experience with the oil furnace or laptop computer; both are objects that deliver a specific service to the consumer, purchased for utility, and disposed of when finished. Our knowledge about and commitment to the device dwindle as the background of the product steps behind the veils of devices, and the social and cultural fabric that once enabled the imagination of pre-technological nature are split into disarray.

Against the backdrop of capitalism, we increasingly risk pushing aside “considerations of ecological integrity and historical fidelity in favour of practicality and desire” (206). Higgs concedes that ecological restorationists are at a critical fork in the path: “What will restorationists of the future restore: things<sup>14</sup> or devices, reality or hyperreality?” (206).

The wave of commodification is already threatening not only the product, but also the practice of ecological restoration itself. A central concern and example for Higgs is the tendency for professionalization amongst ecological restoration practitioners. As the size and scope of ecological restoration projects grow in spatial, temporal, and technical dimensions, the restoration community is experiencing increasing pressure to rely on “experts”. Currently there is a tension within the ecological restoration community as to how best to manage the rapid growth of the practice (Higgs, 2003; 208-209). On the one hand, ecological restoration has been motivated and practiced by numerous community volunteers and their amateur but deeply rooted expertise about their place. This aspect of restoration has been hailed by many writers and practitioners as a central component and, indeed, value of ecological restoration (see for example; Jordan (2003); Mills (1995); and Oehler (1979)).

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<sup>14</sup> “Things” as I will describe below, is the opposite of “devices”.

On the other hand, the rapidly increasing demand for and technical complexity of such (often) larger undertakings call for certain levels of competence. Thus the Society for Ecological Restoration has established certification programs to secure such standardized competency requirements. However, Higgs and the aforementioned others hold steadfast that professionalization of the practice would give way to further entrenchment of the device paradigm in so far largely focal practices (209). As I described earlier, the technological pattern embodies within it the logic of expansion. “Struggling restoration consultancies are suddenly flush with work”, Higgs starts illustrating the scenario of rapid expansion of practice and government funding.

Engineering and landscape architecture firms hire a part- or full-time restoration practitioner. These practitioners have a vested interest in advancing restoration initiatives and do so by lobbying agencies and companies, joining professional organizations, and marketing their services. The moral burden imposed by restorationist takes hold. Where government agencies ... formerly were content with old-style reclamation or rehabilitation, they now demand restoration of sites. Restoration is gaining considerable cultural capital, leading to more growth, and so the cycle continues. (210)

Professionalization of practice really carries with it two risks: the potential commodification of the landscape and the marginalization of community (volunteer) engagement. This feeds back into my first characterization of ecological restoration: culture and historicity. If ecological restoration is distinct by virtue of its attention to culture and historicity, professionalization of the practice will in fact reduce, if not eliminate any value that is derived from its distinctiveness. TEK is a clear example of this case. As Senos *et al.* writes, TEK is a locally maintained place-specific knowledge that is *owned* and *practiced* by the community members. Professionalization and so the standardization of the expertise/knowledge

runs counter to such efforts to maximize the potential to bring culture and nature together to enable a sustainable social-ecosystem.

So far I have characterized what constitutes technological restoration and why and how it is a threat to the practice of ecological restoration. I have argued that as our imagination of, and knowledge about, nature become distanced from bodily experience, we risk setting the goals for ecological restoration that “resemble manufactured images instead of carefully negotiated ones rooted in participation and a faithful articulation of locale.” (205). Further, the practice and practitioners can also become increasingly commodified with similar consequences. In the following, I will discuss what Higgs means by focal restoration, which is his response to the threat of the technological pattern.

### **3.2.4 Focal Restoration**

Higgs considers it necessary to develop a theory of a good practice in order to make substantial opposition against the device paradigm. He contends that historicity and ecological integrity, the dual-core of ecological restoration is not adequate for good ecological restoration. He proposes a four-way principle comprising historical fidelity, ecological integrity, wild design, and focal practice.

Historicity has been discussed at the beginning of this section (4.3.1). Hopefully it is now clear what we hold nostalgia for and what it is that is so bitter and so sweet about the past. Sweetness is the integrity of things, elegance of excellence, and the richness they brought to our lives. Bitterness is the commitment the things demanded, practices we endured (but also enjoyed), and those occasional discomforts we encountered in tightly knit social relationships. There are two other qualities of historicity that are important to consider in relation to ecological restoration: narrative continuity and time depth. The concept of narrative continuity bears a strong resemblance to focal things. Higgs writes “something becomes significant to people in the future through compelling stories” (Higgs 2003; 147). By

retelling these stories we enhance the significance of the things, or in the case of ecological restoration, places (*ibid*). In a sense, including this in ecological restoration implies that the restoration of places requires the recovery of the narrative continuity, including the “capacity to retell the story and to use such an account to enhance the continuity” (*ibid*). Time depth is a concept that explains the special significances we ascribe to places. Higgs argues that something has more value when it is rare (or in the word of economists, scarce). And this rarity in turn depends on its time depth: for how long it has been in place. Thus, he claims that we should maintain the continuity of things and places in order to honour and build such values (155).

The second core of focal restoration is ecological integrity. Evidently, this is *the* core of ecological restoration; after all, it is about restoring the (social) ecosystems, not just culture or social integrity<sup>15</sup>. Parks Canada’s *Principles and Guidelines for Ecological Restoration* has the most relevant and succinct definition of ecological integrity:

[A] condition that is determined to be characteristic of its natural region and likely to persist, including abiotic components and the composition and abundance of native species and biological communities, rates of change and supporting processes. (Canada, 2008)

Wild design is an explicit acknowledgement that ecological restoration is a cultural endeavour, whatever values we ascribe to wilderness. The conceptual tensions created by placing two opposing words together – wild (devoid of human intention) and design (full of human intentions) – Higgs demands the acknowledgement of nature as a cultural construction. However, he does so in the hope that humans will honour natural processes and *wildness* without

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<sup>15</sup> I omitted detailed discussion about ecological integrity because I largely take it for granted that this is the central quality. It is also not an unique characteristic of ecological restoration practice. Lastly, though my case study is an ecological restoration project, my thesis is more about the culture and historicity than ecology *per se*.

further distancing ourselves from them. In doing this he hopes the natural world will flourish with humans, not despite us (277-284).

### **3.2.5 Higgs' Response to Technological Restoration**

To conclude this section and clarify the notion of focal restoration, I provide an example of focal restoration. It begins from the revitalization of camas harvesting in southern Vancouver Island, BC. Camas bulbs were once central to Songhees (a Straits Salish community) people's diet. Their importance went beyond merely nutritional and was also cultural; they were part of Songhees people's identity. Being the central piece that connected people and the land, Garibaldi called it a cultural keystone species (Garibaldi & Turner, 2004). Like so many other colonial landscapes, agricultural settlement and urbanization (and more generally land use changes) contributed to the loss of habitat for camas lily (*Camassia quamash* and *C. leichtlinii*) in the area (Beckwith, 2004). At the same time, cultural and economic changes that beset the community dissolved their close relationship with this species.

Determined to bring back the camas and their relationship to the people, Cheryl Bryce, a member and a historian of the Songhees nation, organized a symbolic camas harvest event on Discovery Island with her people (Higgs 2003). Along with First Nations youth and elders, other community members were also invited including Nancy Turner, Brenda Beckwith, and Eric Higgs. Camas bulbs were harvested and pit-cooked with traditional methods, and for the joy and remembrance to the history of the people and the place (Senos, Lake, Turner, Martinez, & Apostol, 2006). This marked only the beginning of the effort to restore the culture and camas habitat. Now, the "students and faculty of the Restoration of Natural Systems Program and School of Environmental Studies at the University of Victoria have taken an active and ongoing interest in the Songhees community's reconnection to their traditional lands and resources." (*ibid*). More recently, the recognition of the cultural and ecological significance of camas and the associated Garry oak ecosystem has captured wider attention. There are active community

organizations and researchers working in partnerships to restore this historic ecosystem<sup>16</sup>.

Focal restoration argues that good restoration fosters engagements of community to the place. Through engagement and practice the stories about the place are enhanced and continued, like the cultural narratives about camas by Songhees nations. Focal restoration is not so large scale or technical to prevent local people from undertaking a large part of the work. Through communal activities people can build strong self-efficacy and a culture of participation. The experience of restoration furnishes people with a renewed sense of appreciation of the place and the restored place may become a communal focal point for celebration and engagement (with the environment). This may involve seasonal weeding or annual celebration, in the case of camas, an occasional pit-cook feast followed by invasive Scotch broom (*Cytisus scoparius*) removal. The place and ecosystem are no longer desolate or marginal wasteland, but an integral part of social and cultural well-being where both human and non-human lives flourish. Through continued practice people have developed skills that they can communicate to other communities, and a culture of focal things spreads.

Through the act of engagement we become and remain aware of the processes and larger context around it. The centering quality of things (the opposite of devices) brings people together and unifies body and soul. But the commanding presence of a focal thing requires a human presence and engagement in a practice. Our resolution to stay with focal things and to continue to practice and nurture the skills these things demand of us are the only way to oppose the “irony of technology” – the phenomenon where the good life, that devices obtain for us, disappoints our deeper aspirations (Higgs et al., 2000):

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<sup>16</sup>For example Garry Oak Ecosystem Recovery Team:  
[http://www.goert.ca/about\\_GOE\\_importance.php](http://www.goert.ca/about_GOE_importance.php), and Garry Oak Restoration Project:  
<http://www.saanich.ca/gorp/index.html>

We see this problem when wilderness and natural world are destroyed as their resources are needed for increasing levels of consumption, or as nature becomes packaged in a subdivision (32-33).

“Deeper aspirations” suggest a kind of richness in life’s experiences, such as a shared meal or annual black berry picking. Commodities cannot replace or recreate the kinds of richness and excellence in life that result from focal practices. Bodily and mindful engagements with things nourish life in fundamentally different ways than consumption or use of commodities provides. Rather than freeing oneself, Borgmann argues, we need directly to engage in the processes (means) and contexts behind what we consume in order to substantially experience what he terms as “the flourishing of life.”

### **3.2.6 Ecological Restoration and Colonialism**

As I have discussed in the first section of this chapter, colonialism is deeply embedded in environmental management practices in the form of science, representation, geographical marginalization, etc. Despite this fact, little has been written that addresses ecological restoration in the context of colonialism. The existing studies about colonialism in ecological restoration literature reveal a theoretical gap in our understanding about the practices.

There is a gap in the ecological restoration literature with regard to colonialism except in terms of giving credence to traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) and to incorporating nonwestern or 'nonscientific' viewpoints into ecological restoration projects (for example, Martinez, 1996, nd; Anderson, 2003; on local indigenous tribes in the United States; Senos et al, 2006 on Pacific Northwest indigenous peoples; Long et al, 2003, among many others).

A pioneer in this field, Dennis Martinez is a strong advocate for more inclusive and considerate practice of ecological restoration vis-à-vis indigenous peoples and their traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) (Martinez, 1996; n.d.). Being of O`odham, Chicano and Anglo descent,

Martinez raises concerns that the practice of ecological restoration frequently lacks explicit acknowledgement of indigenous peoples and their TEK. He argues that the positive and integral roles indigenous peoples have played in shaping and managing ecosystems merits both recognition and consideration by the field of ecological restoration and are needed to better address unprecedented environmental degradation and change.

He further adds that these *must* be preceded by cultural and institutional change on the Western side to enable a cooperative framework of reconciliation and restoration and that it is the colonizer, rather than the colonized, who should bear ultimate responsibility for making the change.

These literatures, unlike more general studies concerning post-colonialism, carry a stronger sense of optimism and hope in this emerging practice (Norden, 1994, Tucker, 2005). Few of these are without cautions or a caveat, and many of them stemmed from strong critiques of colonial practices. However, the purpose and scope of this literature is to navigate the existing practice of ecological restoration towards a more partnership-based, reconciliatory practice of ecological restoration. A focus of inquiry notably absent from the present literature on ecological restoration is a critical analysis of the practice itself through the lens of post-colonial theories.

### **3.3 Summary**

In this chapter, I provided overviews for the two key contexts of my case study—colonialism and ecological restoration—as well as identifying a potential gap in the intersection of these two fields: that of engagement with local knowledge and practices.

The two purposes of this chapter were to provide theoretical context and tools for the case study. The first context is post-colonialism. The IRP is evidently embedded in the post-colonial condition; in fact, overcoming the effects of colonialism is the central motivation of the IRP. My discussion

therefore in the first section of this chapter mainly characterized the particularity of Ainu post-coloniality in its own geographical and historical context.

In the second section, I discussed the contents and implications of Higgs' theory of technological and focal restorations. His identification of the threat to ecological restorationists, and potential response to the threat, is a crucial part of understanding the processes and products of the IRP. In the final subsection, section, I surveyed available literatures on ecological restoration and colonialism to identify some of the remaining questions to be answered. Namely, I found that there was little literature of critical studies about ecological restoration from the perspective of post-colonialism. This theoretical gap, then, forms the basis of my inquiry. Without devaluing the present and future effort/practice of ecological restoration by and in partnership with indigenous peoples, I will explore critically the dynamics of the state, settler, and indigenous interactions in the practice of ecological restoration. The significance of such critical inquiry stems from the uniqueness of ecological restoration as being distinct from other environmental practices such as preservation and conservation. This difference has significant implications to the ways the colonial and colonized interact and forms new spaces in the process of restoration, and hence, more specific, case-study based inquiry into the practice of ecological restoration is beneficial at this point.

In the next chapter, I will present my research design.

## Chapter 4: Research Design

This study is best characterized as a qualitative case study. My main reason for choosing this approach was to allow for detailed and contextualized engagements with the highly historicized and localized circumstances (IRP) which I hope to understand. My research question is: *what are the (colonial?) patterns underlining the Iwor Restoration Project (IRP), and how do they inhibit or enable the IRP?* In the following, I will first explain the three ways that I chose to acquire data: open-ended interview, participant observation, and written texts. Having multiple kinds of data supplemented a certain deficiency in information as well as provided grounds for validation (see the section on validation). I will then describe the processes I followed to analyze the data. Finally, I will explicate some of the issues of validations and limitations in my research design and my strategies to address those issues.

### 4.1 Methods of Data Formation/Acquisition

#### 4.1.1 Open-ended Interview

I conducted face-to-face interviews with local residents and other relevant personnel from other areas and organizations connected to the IRP. The interviews were recorded by a digital voice recorder. I used two methods to identify the potential interviewees. First, I listed notable individuals in each region from published documents and their roles in Ainu-related or otherwise relevant activities in this project. This included the president and vice presidents of the Ainu Association's regional branches, museum curators and its board of directors, government officials, FRPAC officials, and other renowned activists and practitioners. Second, in each of the communities I had initial contact people from whom I started a snowball approach to find other potential interviewees. In Shiraoi this was a worker (and a curator) at the Shiraoi Iwor Office "Cikisani", Chiori Noto. Cikisani opened in 2008 as Shiraoi Iwor Project's central office, and is open to the public as an

information centre. In Biratori, I had been in touch with the town's official, Masato Kinoshita, since March 2009. He introduced me, with great energy, to various knowledgeable and relevant people in the town to start.

All recorded interviews were preceded by explanation of my research purpose and consent (see Appendix A for the sample consent form). The duration of interviews varied from 40 minutes to 3 hours. For details of interviewee demographics see table 3.

**Table 3 Number of interviewees by Demographic and Geographical Categories**

	<b>Shiraoi</b>	<b>Biratori</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>Total</b>
Pre-identified	3	3	4	10
Snowballed	7	25	0	32
Ethnicity				
Ainu	8	21	0	29
Non-Ainu	2	7	4	13
Occupations				
Ainu Associations ((Vice Presidents))	0	4	0	4
Museum workers	3	2	0	5
Public officials	1	3	2	6
Paid Iwor Project workers	3	16	0	19
Academics	1	0	2	3
Others (local residents)	2	7	0	9
Format				
Recorded	5	22	2	29
Non-recorded	5	6	2	13
Gender				
Male	5	19	3	27
Female	5	9	1	15
Age				
18~40	3	7	0	10
41~60	6	12	2	20
61~90		9	2	11
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>42</b>

Interview questions were based on a template of predetermined questions. Specific questions were adapted from these predetermined ones on site

depending on the character and background of individual interviewees. The broad questions I had in mind when conducting interviews were:

- How does s/he perceive the IRP?
- In what way was s/he involved in the IRP?
- What did s/he think would be needed for an effective ecological restoration?

#### 4.1.2 Participant Observation

**Table 4 Duration Spent for the Field Studies by Category**

	<b>Shiraoi</b>	<b>Biratori</b>	<b>Other</b>
Time (days)	20	45	8
Activities	Cultural experience event (seafood feast): 1 day	Iwor restoration: 30 days	Ancestral worship ceremony: 1 day
	General observation in Cikisani office: 17 days	General observation in Iwor office: 7 days	Cultural event: 1 day
	General observation in souvenir stores: 10 days	Ainu Museum events: 3 days	Private trip with two Ainu and an academic: 1 day
	Committee for Promotion of Traditional Ainu Culture and Iwor Restoration	Committee for Promotion of Traditional Ainu Culture and Iwor Restoration	Committee for Promotion of Traditional Ainu Culture and Iwor Restoration
		Iwor meetings: 5 days	
	Committee for Promotion of Traditional Ainu Culture and Iwor Restoration		

Between June and November of 2009 I lived in the communities of Biratori and Shiraoi alternately.

In Shiraoi I used Cikisani as my base; therefore most of my observations were the interactions and activities that took place in Cikisani. Shiraoi has three pillars that support the Iwor project; planting native species, education of young leaders, and shorter-term cultural experience events. Of the three, the latter two were on-going. However the Ainu Culture Museum which oversees the education program, did not allow me to participate or interview the students (though I have interviewed some of the instructors)<sup>17</sup>. Therefore, my observations were limited to open events (such as a traditional seafood feast and the cultural festival) and general observation in Cikisani and nearby souvenir stores.

In Biratori, I spent the first two and a half weeks working with the restoration crews. This provided a good entry into the community and basic learning of the culture. The work involved, among other things, harvesting tree bark for textile making, and planting mountain vegetables to replenish its depleted population in designated areas. The crew consisted of three full-time workers (young Ainu men) and one or two instructors. In July, roughly a month after my arrival to Biratori, they decided to hire two part-time Ainu women to tend the newly constructed *cise* (traditional house). This *cise* became one of my important bases in Biratori, where I spent a significant portion of my time for observation. In addition to the onsite crews and two women in the *cise*, many (mostly Ainu) men and women were hired as temporary workers to assist with the restoration. I also participated in their work occasionally.

During the participant observations, I kept a field diary to record the details of activities and my reflections on them. To avoid the issues of reflexivity (see section 4.4), I tried not to take notes in front of other people,

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<sup>17</sup> In fact, the Ainu Culture Museum refused most interview requests to the trainees from news papers and other researchers. I was told it was to protect the trainees from being misrepresented in the media and academic works. For instances of misrepresentations of Ainu in various media and academic works, see for example Niessen (1994), Shimizu (1996), Asquith (2000), and Honda and Hazuki (2006).

unless I was taking notes during the interviews or meetings. The diary served as an important source to not only analyze what I observed, but also to track the changes in my own thinking about the project. This was helpful particularly to improve the ways in which I interacted with the community. In other words, I iterated and reiterated my own position as an outsider researcher in the Ainu community by continuously reflecting back on my own thinking in the past. This allowed me to remain aware of my own “otherness” in the community, which in turn kept me alert to the issues of reflexivity.

#### **4.1.3 Written Texts**

IRP is funded nationally, administered by Ainu, and managed municipally. As such, each organization has its vision, basic plan, annual plans, and annual (and midterm) reports, in addition to meeting summaries and transcripts where taken. As a consequence, financial and decision-making flows, basic visions, and basic plans were not the same in the two towns. Most of the reports and basic plans were available online. I read these texts carefully, focusing on how decisions are made, what rules define the conversation, who makes the rules, and what might they mean to different people.

#### **4.2 Analysis**

Before my analysis, my first task was to transcribe the interviews. Upon finishing the full verbatim transcriptions, they were sent back to the original interviewees for correction and confirmation before they were analyzed.

I took three steps to do my analysis. I first read through my interviews, diaries, and texts roughly to situate the different pieces on a small scale conceptual map. For example, I mapped out different committees and members of committees in temporal and spatial axes to identify and clarify relationships between them (figure 2). This helped me to organize my materials, including interviews and observations, before I proceeded to the more robust, detailed reading.

I then started reading my materials. As I read, I noted instances where effective restoration was hindered or perceived to be hindered (as well as enhanced or perceived to be enhanced). For example, this included explicit accounts by my interviewees of their dissatisfaction with the IRP and their reasons for it. This also included more subtle elements such as instances where people did *not* speak (e.g. the case of Shiraoi Ainu Culture Museum), or the words that were *not* mentioned (for example, Wajin tended to explicitly link Ainu culture with nature, whereas Ainu did so more indirectly). I then categorized (coded) similar instances into groups to look for patterns and structures that organized the groups.

In the process, two forces drove the character and shape of the dialogue on restoration. These I identified as post-colonialism and technological restoration. I then returned to my materials to more precisely understand their working. Specifically, I focused on a few instances (e.g. a conversation, a monologue, a landscape etc) to reveal different but similar ways in which these patterns of post-colonialism and technological restoration affected the IRP. In this process, I also overlaid one pattern over another to see what aspects of them converged and what did not converge to further my understanding about these patterns in the IRP.

In reality, this process was anything but linear; rather, it was iterative and recursive. I had to continuously go back and forth between my field materials and conceptual reflections to sort through the tangle of complex, inter-related materials. At the same time, it was the process of radical simplification, where I had to make choices about which voices were to be heard and be (re)presented in my writing. These choices were largely based on my theoretical interest in the theories of post-colonialism and focal restoration and partly on my subjectivities (for which see section 4.4). Where such choices were made – and when I deemed it necessary – I did my best to make explicit what “other” possible interpretations were silenced.

### 4.3 Limitations and Validity

A number of concerns endure both specifically about my research and more generally about qualitative research design. Limitations specific to my research are spatial and temporal restrictions that are defined primarily by budget and the scope of my study (master's thesis). Spatially, I was restricted to interviewing and observing two communities that were directly involved in IRP. This narrowed possibilities of researching wider perceptions about IRP by Ainu residing outside these towns. Temporally, I was unable to follow through with the multi-year project and therefore the data I have gathered represent only a small segment of the IRP processes.

Attempting to draw conclusions about a project before seeing a result may seem rather fruitless. However, in projects involving considerable uncertainties such as IRP, it is vital to continuously provide feedback for ongoing adjustments and planning (Folke et al., 2002; Walters & Holling, 1990). To that end, I did my best to ensure that within the limited scope of time and space I not only tried to be as wide and deep as possible but also as pertinent as possible. I asked questions that could be answered reasonably well within my limitations and that would also be of potential use to the participants in IRP. In the end, my research will not provide, nor should it, specific advice: where to build new houses, what species of plants to grow and so on. My questions will instead help address issues such as whether people feel that they are participating, whether the project is on track vis-à-vis its goals, and how the community may be changing in response to them. In so doing I was able to turn the limitations into rules that enabled my research.

Weaknesses of qualitative research are well discussed in various literatures (See for example John Creswell (1994). Gobo, Gubrium, & Silverman (2004), Gomm & Hammersley (2000), Maxwell (2005), and Stake (2010)). These could be summarized as an issue of validity. The threat to validity that is relevant to my research is subjectivity of the researcher. I embedded in my research two methods to secure validity of my analysis. One is the 'embrace and deal

with it' approach and another is triangulation. Researcher subjectivity is an integral component of qualitative research. You cannot eliminate it (Stake, 2010; 28). Qualitative research carries a distinct kind of problem and it is different from quantitative research, hence there is the need to address it (*ibid*).

My 'embrace and deal with it' approach makes the researcher's bias explicit thereby informing the readers that the writer is indeed aware of the problem. Being aware, while not necessarily a solution to the problem, is a necessary first step towards moderating the problem. In fact, because "interpretation of the findings is shaped by [researcher's] background, such as [the researcher's] gender, culture, history, and socioeconomic origin" (Creswell, 2009; 192) being an 'unbiased' or neutral observer is as impossible as doing objective qualitative research. Being aware of my own bias and social context allowed me to be critically self-reflective both during the fieldwork and while I analyzed the data. And this reflectivity "has been mentioned as a core characteristic of qualitative research" (*ibid*) (see also (Maxwell, 2005; Stake, 2010). In practice, for example I encountered situations where the interviewees asked me what my research was for. What they meant was whether I was going to "analyze them" the way Ainu people have been subjected to the Wajin researchers' colonial gaze (See Siddle (1996) and Lewallen (2007)). This was the perception that my background of being "a researcher" evoked. In response, I made clear that the subjects of my research were in fact the Wajin and their system of colonial governance, and the audience of my research was the ecological restorationists, who face the risks of endorsing such colonial practices. In effect, this allowed me to proceed with the interviews in a more open atmosphere, with less scepticism on each side.

Another common strategy to increase the validity of qualitative research is triangulation. In this method we triangulate "different data sources of information by examining evidence from the sources and using it to build a

coherent justification for themes” (Creswell, 2009; 191). If different data sources provide a consistent result one can feel more confidence in its validity. In my research, I used three data sources to do this: interviews, participant observation (my field diary), and document records.

#### **4.4 Reflectivity and Subjectivity**

As a researcher and as an individual, I carry certain assumptions and biases. These may be due to my gender, ethnicity, social-economic, or educational background, or simply because I did not grow up in the place I studied (Biratori and Shiraoui). These affect my perceptions about the research subjects, their perceptions about me, as well as my interpretation of the data. Being a male, Wajin, middle class and well-educated had real and tangible influences in the process of fieldwork. As you can see in the interview statistics, I interviewed more than twice as many males as females. I also had notable difficulty with meeting Ainu people who were not regularly involved in cultural activities, even though I found it easy to get acquainted with Wajin people in town. It also likely influenced the responses of the interviewees during the interviews because of my background and the status as a researcher of perceived authority.

I did my best to spend as much time as possible with as many people as possible. This to a certain degree resolved initial insider-outsider boundaries. But it can safely be assumed that I remained an outsider to the community to the end. My best proximate response is to embrace the fact and treat the data as a particular expression of the unique interactions that took place between the people I met and myself. In addition to technical considerations I have mentioned, I did my best to be fair and respectful of the people I met and worked with.

## Chapter 5: Findings

Thus far I have contextualized the theoretical and historical background for my analysis of the Iwor Restoration Project (IRP). In this chapter, I will present and discuss my findings from my field observations and interviews. The results of my research are organized around my research questions: “What are some of the patterns underlining the Iwor (Ainu Traditional Living Space) Restoration Project (IRP), and in what ways do they inhibit or enable the IRP?”

This chapter revolves around four sections, each of which illustrates different aspects of the IRP. Each section focuses on a specific theme, instance, and landscape that elucidates certain patterns about the IRP, which reflect the wider context it rests on. Sometimes these are issues of power, specifically colonial-colonized power relations. And sometimes these are issues of technology, punctuated by instances of focal engagements.

I start my chapter with the two sections that explicate the underlining patterns that I observed: these are the technological and colonial patterns respectively. The first section is the case of “Riverine Iwor”, what I see as a somewhat drastic example of technological restoration. I analyze here the photographic and cartographic representations of the Riverine Iwor to tease out the patterns of technology that are masked behind the rhetoric of responsibility and practicality, and the clear way by which the ideologies materialize on the landscape. In the second section “*Rep-un-iwor*”, I discuss the meeting minutes of the CPTACIR and the CCIRP to reveal how the *rep-un-iwor* (marine *iwor*) has *not* been realized to date despite continuing demands for it by the Ainu participants. The revelation is the structurally (institutionally) embedded colonial patterns that signal colonial practices beyond the vicinity of IRP that have been formalized – in the form of laws, policies, and decision making structures – by the state against Ainu people since 1996. In the third section “Iwor/*iwor*”, I explore how, why, and to what

effect one word, *iwor*, had different meanings for the participants in the IRP. *Iwor* represents the (mainly) Wajin state representatives' views of the restored spaces in the IRP, which is most apparent in the official documents of the IRP. *Iwor* is what Ainu and some local Wajin persistently demand from the IRP, and this shows most clearly in my interviews with the local Ainu residents. In between the two discourses, we find the shifting space of Kotan *Iwor*, where speakers of *Iwor/iwor* discourses continuously attempt to assert their meaning of *iwor*. My analyses of *Iwor/iwor* discourses and Kotan *Iwor* uncover the ways subjective powers manifest in the practice of IRP, and how new possibilities for the focal engagements emerge. In the last section “An *ekasi's* Memoir and the Two Ainu”, I present, in a semi-narrative form, how the multiplicity of consciousness and the “colonized mind” interact with landscapes in the IRP. In my view, this analysis is a crucial step to bridge the gap between the collective discursive practices of *Iwor/iwor* and the formation of the new space – Kotan *Iwor*. In other words, by focusing on the individual subjectivities, I highlight more precisely how colonial and indigenous subjectivities influence the restoration practices.

### 5.1 Riverine *Iwor*

As I discussed in chapter two, the Riverine *Iwor* is one of the three restoration sites in the IRP. The specific purpose of this site is to restore the riverine ecosystem that provides some of the crucial materials for Ainu culture, such as cattails for thatching (*Typha latifolia*). One perception about this project that is shared with me by a senior member of the Ainu community is a strong one, but turned out not the only one:

NP2 : ...I suppose it makes the Development Agency (MLITHD Muroran Branch) look better (if they donated land and money for Riverine *Iwor*) now that they can say they did it for the locals... In the Riverine *Iwor*, there was no (ecosystem or cultural) assessment or research (prior to the construction). They just started the construction with the big machinery, like that's all it takes. They

don't care if it didn't work. I mean, was there ever such a perfectly circular pond (laugh)? Well, to the Town (which did the detailed layout) it (the IRP) was also a sudden proposition from the national government, so in the end it's really the national government's fault. At the end of the day, it's really just waste of tax money.

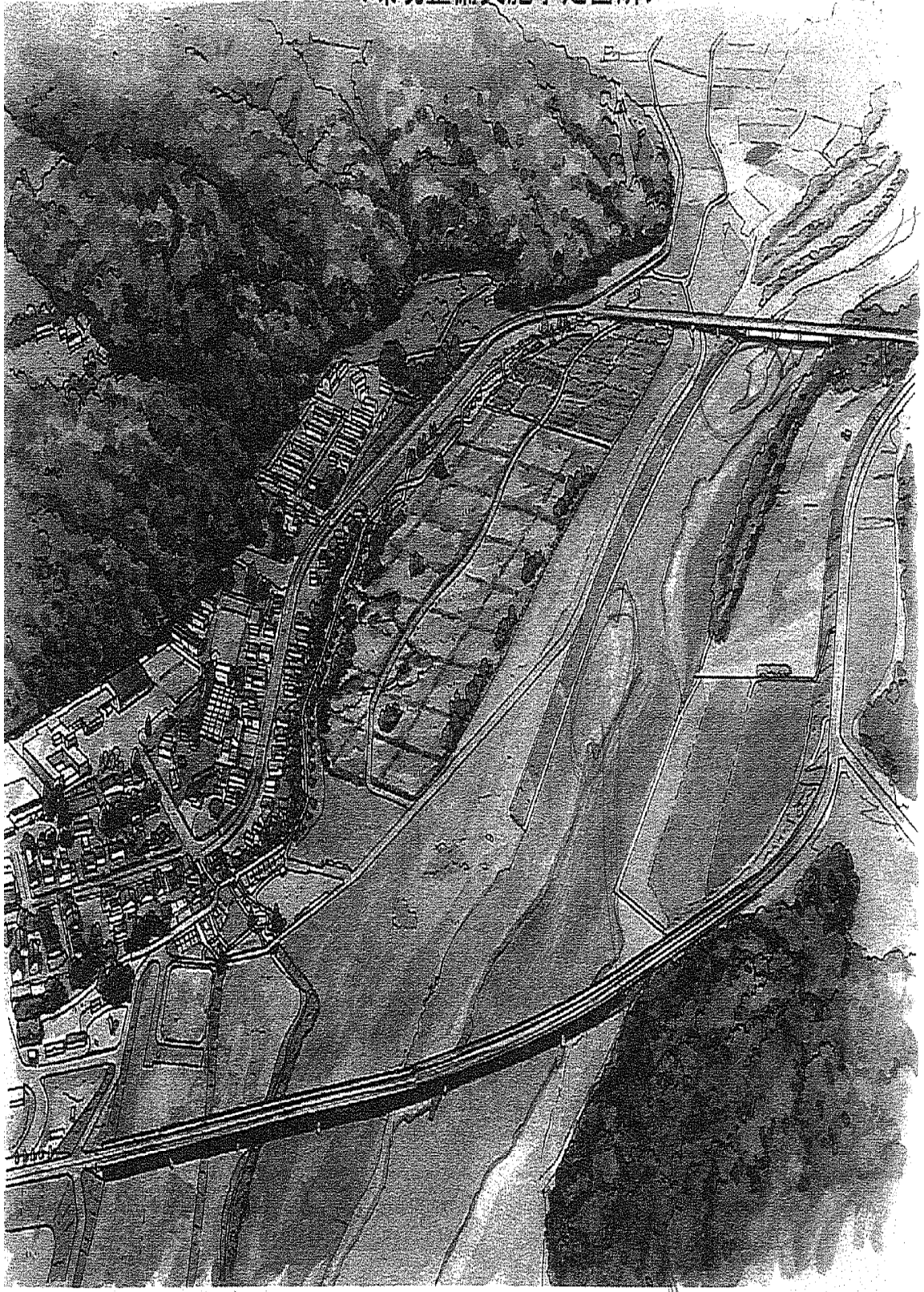
As NP2 argued, the MLITHD contributed the land<sup>18</sup> and undertook the bulk of the initial work for the Riverine Iwor (HAD, 2010). As for the ecosystem assessment, because MLITHD has a management plan for the Saru River watershed, the environmental assessment had already been done albeit indirectly (it was not an assessment specific to the Riverine Iwor). That an assessment was conducted does not imply the Riverine Iwor went through a thorough pre-project assessment to plan the ecological restoration with the ecological and cultural complexity of the local area in mind. From my research I found no evidence of a pre-project assessment.



**Figure 6 Riverine Iwor Restoration Site, after the top 30 cm of Soil and Vegetation was Removed**

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<sup>18</sup> In Japan, most river side flood plain is managed by the state or the prefecture.



**Figure 7 Conceptual Image of the Completed Riverine Iwor Restoration Site (BIPB, 2008)**

An actual picture of the Riverine Iwor site (figure 6) illustrates the critiques described by NP2. The circular pond and the geometrical linearity of the borders that separate the “traditional” from the cookie-cutter riverside park are obvious in figure 6. Most of these drawings (such as figure 7), thus plans, are done by either the Planning Division of Biratori Town, or in the case of the Riverine Iwor, perhaps the similar division in the HDA. It is painfully obvious that the designers followed the same protocols that they would to plan a typical riverside park, with the rulers and compasses on their desk. What this represents is more than their lack of commitment to historical fidelity and ecological integrity, but blatant manifestation of the device paradigm. Look for instance at the conceptual image (figure 7) that depicts the finished Riverine Iwor from above; one cannot tell the gridded rice paddies (upper right hand corner) from the restored wetland. The design of the rice paddies is one that is made to maximize the efficiency of production, perhaps a pinnacle of the modernized Japanese agriculture, which is now transforming even the attempt to restore the historic landscape of Ainu. This site tells more about erasure than restoration. Removing 30cm of top soil along with undesirable vegetation left the “empty” landscape in figure 5, which is now to be stamped on with the trade-mark symmetry of the machinery of government. The processes went unregistered to the community, and historicity and ecological integrity have been pushed far back into the invisible past. What will remain is the circular pond and gridded “wetland” that need continuous irrigation not from the Saru River, but the irrigation canal running on the opposite side. This is a symptom of technological pattern: the context recedes into the background, and eventually becomes invisible and inaccessible. What seems to be the restored wetland, then, becomes an agent of technology that distances itself and people from the local historic, cultural, and ecological context. The Riverine Iwor is disengaging, in a sense that its appeal is based only on the token amount of natural

materials and financial contribution from the HDA, not on the substantial hope for the enrichment of lives.

## 5.2 *Rep-un-iwor*

One of the obvious shortfalls of IRP at present is the absence of plans for fishing and hunting practices. Both salmon fishing and the bear-sending ceremony (*iwomante*) are perhaps the most symbolic images of Ainu culture (both to the Ainu and Wajin). Simply based on their cultural importance one would expect to see them addressed by the IRP. Their complete omission from the IRP raises some important questions. In order to understand why these practices were neglected, it is also necessary to understand the structures and processes that led to their omission from the IRP. In this section I will examine reasons why these cultural practices were ignored by following the development of the IRP, focusing on the restoration of fishing in rivers and seas.

The idea and the demand that a restored *iwor* should include marine and other aquatic environments have been present since the outset of this project. At the formal, national level it was first formally discussed at the inaugural CPTACIR meeting in 2004. At this the HUA director Tadashi Kato spoke up against a perceived bias toward terrestrial ecosystems (or *kim-un-iwor*) in IRP planning;

Kato: “It seems as if focus has been exclusively on mountains. In order to complete clothes, food, and shelter, seas, mountains, and rivers are all important.

...

Sasaki: “... We know that there was marine-based *iwor*, but it is more difficult because of the commercial fishing rights. It would be easier to start from terrestrial *iwor*. Do you know a good starting place for marine *iwor*?”

Kato: “It is not a matter of there is or isn’t (an easy place to start)...There will be nothing left if we excluded things from the beginning just because something is difficult”

The discussion then shifted away from it, but was continued again in the second meeting (Oct 2004). Here we see various ideas suggested as to how exactly to realize marine and river *iwor*:

Otsuka: “Anadromous fish such as salmon and trout are troublesome (to include in IRP), but it is likely possible to lift such regulations temporarily. Say one week a year.

Sasaki: “That would be good.”

Kato: “the fisheries cooperatives are not using all the river resources because of the rising labour cost. If we ask they will let us.”

The brainstorming continued touching subjects as wide as the possibility for traditional whaling revival. At the end of the meeting the chair Sasaki asked the secretariat (the Japanese government) to prepare a draft interpretation of IRP, and asked them to include all of the various aspects that were discussed in the CPTACIR meetings. This draft was presented in the fourth meeting (Feb 2005). It included specific ideas about possible ways for existing fishing regulations to be used or manoeuvred, but not modified or created anew. These regulations include two bylaws regarding special permits to use the riverine environment, and the Nature Restoration Act that allowed modification of degraded ecosystems. The making of the “Basic Plan” was the mandate of CPTACIR, and was built from this draft. In the Basic Plan, the concepts about fisheries and aquatic and riverine resources remained almost unchanged from the draft summary CPTACIR report. Both reports include ideas of the borrowing and/or leasing of riverine land, cooperation with fisheries cooperatives, and acquiring special permits from Hokkaido. The Basic Plan formed the fundamental base of IRP. Based on the

inclusion of fisheries related policy discussions in the Basic Plan, and persistent demand from Ainu people, one would expect the implementation of a *rep-un-iwor* restoration. In actuality, even in 2007 one year after IRP started in Shiraoi the same conversations about fisheries were still taking place in the renewed CCIRP meetings;

Sasaki T.: “There is river and sea in Shiraoi as part of *iwor*. We need to re-examine whether planting vegetation around the Shadai River is enough (to restore Shiraoi *iwor*).

Kato: “*Iwor* include the seas, rivers, and the mountains, so evidently seas and the rivers should be included in addition to the mountains.”

IRP was first implemented in 2006 and discussion about *rep-un-iwor* was still ongoing at the end of 2007 fiscal year. Consequently, it couldn't be taken into account in 2008 plans and budget either. As of 2009, some forms of marine and river-based restoration activities have taken place, but only as continuation of pre-existing salmon harvesting ceremonies (Iwasaki-Goodman and Nomoto, 2001), or as a one-time marine cultural experience event (which was called off due to the poor weather and high waves).

Even though there is a paragraph about this in the Basic Plan and conversations take place regularly in the meetings, it hasn't been realized to anyone's satisfaction. This lack of action has caused widely felt frustration among local stakeholders. One participant expressed his frustration by condemning the CPTACIR meetings as a place in which “nothing gets decided” (S1).

As a matter of fact, in the Basic Plan, the changes proposed *vis-à-vis* marine and river fishing regulations do not constitute changes at all; they are merely suggesting possible uses of the existing systems. Without change negotiations still continue through the CPTACIR, and it seems to some that nothing “gets decided”. Ainu access to University Research Forests is second example of a change that never happened: Since the very beginning of IRP

planning, it was suggested that the access to these forests by Ainu needed to be considered and yet, no formal arrangements have been made to date. The Implementation Plan has recommended the use of existing regulations and voluntary negotiations between the Ainu and the Universities to negotiate access and usage rights and practices. Negotiating access to the natural resources held within University Research Forests is important for meeting one of the main objectives of the IRP: to supply enough natural materials for Ainu people to practice *traditional* cultural practices such as crafts, rituals, and oral traditions.

Theoretically the use of existing legislation and government policy may be sufficient action to alter conditions currently preventing the Ainu from gaining access to these materials. However to restore a kind of culturally and ecologically integral social-ecological system (as envisioned by HUA in their Midterm Report), piecemeal and ad-hoc approaches don't seem adequate. One possible reason for this gap is that the state and Ainu are simply mis-communicating. But this is unlikely since in the minutes for CPTACIR meeting, a representative from MLIT is the most vocal advocate for a dynamic and holistic interpretation of Ainu culture and roles in the IRP;

Ninomiya (MLIT representative): "Regarding who actually restores and uses the restored *iwors*, isn't it questionable that Ainu people who are living modern life styles should do what they did fifty or one hundred years ago? Even taking the Ainu Patterns as an example, they started patterning their clothes because they started trading with other peoples... We need to think carefully about the younger generations and what they will want to do and make. It is absurd to assume that the time should be frozen in place and time... It doesn't seem right that they can only make things that Ainu made fifty or more years ago (in the contemporary *iwor*). ... The (national) government evidently needs to think seriously, but it is also meaningless if this is not something that pleases Ainu people. The government can make the plan,

but if people didn't evaluate it there would be problems." (CPTACIR 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2004)

It doesn't seem as if both parties are unaware of the problem of the mismatching expectations for the IRP, although sometimes this maybe the case. But this frustration over *rep-un-iwor* reveals problems elsewhere.

I found that the factor creating the stalemate in some aspects of IRP, such as the marine/river *iwors* or access to university forests, was embedded within the organizational structure of the IRP. These problems are most clearly manifest in the cases I have outlined above. However, they are just a small part of much larger problems within not only the IRP, but also the Japanese government's approach to Ainu policies as a whole.

To understand the structural problem, I must return to the EPUP report (EPUP 1996). This report is an important event in modern Ainu history. The EPUP report made the commitment and set the guidelines for the Japanese government to tackle some of the issues affecting the Ainu culture. At the same time, it also delimited the extent to which the government would engage with Ainu demands for the indigenous rights. The limitation was placed in specific reference to the article 8 of the Japanese Constitution. In this statement, which hereafter was adopted by the national government, indigenous rights, especially the property rights and natural resources rights are set aside from future policy considerations. The main reasoning offered for this is the Article 8 of the Japanese Constitution ensures equal rights to all citizens. The members of EPUP concluded that indigenous rights are violation of the constitutional rights guaranteed to all Japanese citizens.

In the context of the IRP, this official stance of upholding Article 8 from the constitution, made it extremely difficult to legislate a new law or implement policies that may benefit Ainu people. Such policies would be particularly difficult to create if Wajin could suffer loss or negative impact as a result. Even though EPUP and resulting ACPA were hailed as the first step away from a welfare program based on a mono-ethnic discourse toward an 'ethnic'

program with proper historical recognition, they both still fall short in their abilities to ensure the rights of the Ainu. The constitutional limitations that shaped the ACPA and consequently the IRP restrict the capacity of these programs to become more than *just* cultural or economic welfare programs. Thus, the possibilities on the Japanese governments' side to actively change laws or make policies that enable Ainu to access more than a token amount of natural resources, remain extremely small and limited.

Japanese governmental structures reflect and reinforce this line of policies. Normally, projects that are eligible for ACPA-backed funding need to go through FRPAC. A person who wants to organize or start a project, for example an Ainu language school, can make a proposal and apply to FRPAC for the funding. The IRP follows essentially the same process. However due to its importance and scale extra-layers of consultation and evaluation committees are in place (e.g. the CCPIP and the series of local committees). These committees are part governmental and part FRPAC, which is already part governmental. Essentially there is a complex set of bureaucratic processes that manage and execute the public project known as the IRP. What these meetings are not is a place for substantial political negotiations and making of new laws to ensure stronger rights for Ainu. They are more there to *implement* the laws and political decisions made elsewhere, such as within the EPUP. What happens at these meetings is that Ainu groups bring a proposal or an idea to the committee, they discuss it, but ultimately they (the government representatives) can only ask them to rewrite it to fit within the scope of existing laws and regulations. To put it differently, the outcome of these meetings are to large extent predetermined by the colonial institution that is most strongly manifested in the Japanese state and its technologies of governance. And evidently, these institutions – the agencies, laws, and committees – are legitimated and operated by Wanjin, the dominant ethnic majority in Japan.

The political structures that I have been describing are part of a larger structure of power, institutionalized in the forms of agencies, laws, and committees. These are part of an organization of colonial-colonized power relationships. The state representatives at the meetings were doing what they could do, perhaps even a little beyond what they were allowed to, for the success of the IRP. And yet, what they could do within the existing political institutions and what Ainu people wanted to do were vastly different. For the Ainu, committees such as the CPTACIR and CCIRP offer some of very few opportunities where they can directly negotiate with high-ranking state representatives. No matter what the terms and conditions set by the government, the Ainu would say what they have to say, and they have done so repeatedly within these meetings. The Ainu have been communicating a fairly clear set of messages: they want recognition of their colonial history and culture, they want respect, and they want to restore and preserve their culture. Kato took the very first opportunities, in the CPTACIR and two years later in CCIRP meetings to say exactly this. Then, the chairmen responded immediately to remind him that this was not the place to say it.

Kato: “[I think the Wajin’s] assimilation policy is the origin of [colonialism] today. If there was a good Ainu policy it would not have come to this. Adequate educational, economic, and human rights policies are the foundation of culture, and [the fact that our culture needs restoration today] signals the absence of them.”

...

Sasaki K.: “I agree that the assimilation policies of the Meiji Government is the origin of today’s problems, but it is useless to explain that to the Ministry of Finance. We need to carry on more practically.”

Kato: “I understand it is difficult in many ways, but I want you (Wajin) to understand that the root is there (in the history of assimilation policies). And

that root is still alive, and we cannot pretend it is not there anymore.” (CPTACIR 1<sup>st</sup>, 2004)

Then again in 2006:

Kato: “The roots of (racial) discrimination is in the history since Matsumae and Meiji period. Researchers, too did not say a word about Ainu poverty (even though they witnessed it), and they were rather moving at will of the state. In that sense, too, I think IWOR should be implemented under the state responsibility.

Sasaki T.: “(Yes,) But it is very difficult to include those demand in the Implementation Guideline. Because it is a (official) government document, we can not write that “the state will pay for everything” CCIRP 1<sup>st</sup>, 2006)

Repeatedly, the rules of the game are reiterated through the voice of the Chairmen (Komei Sasaki and Toshikazu Sasaki respectively). Again and again, Ainu remind Wajin what Ainu people demand. Nevertheless, the outcome is, as I wrote earlier, pre-determined. After all, these committees *are* the institution of Wajin government, the political terrain that is authored and authorized by the Wajin majority. Then what significance do we find in this narrative? Does this imply there is no hope; is the institution too powerful and too remote for any meaningful engagements by the colonized?

One possible interpretation may indeed be that, in so far as IRP and its related institutions are concerned, Ainu people’s struggle to bring meaningful change is fruitless. As Frye writes, oppression is “a system of interrelated barriers and forces which reduce, immobilize, and mould people who belong to a certain group, and effect their subordination to another group (individually to individuals of the other group, and as a group, to that group).” (Frye, 1983: 33). And one effect of such oppression is that “the powerful normally determine what is said and sayable” (105). We see clearly that Ainu voices are silenced by the state logic of governance in these meetings.

Furthermore, drawing on, as Frye does, the Hegel's master-slave dialectic, the on-going oppressions we witness in the (non-)making of the *rep-un-iwor* is a process and effort to transform Ainu into object with no self-consciousness (by silencing them). This is to say, according to this analytical framework, Ainu become objects for the Wajin to govern and to improve. In the absence of reciprocal recognitions of self-consciousness, that is, without recognizing that Ainu, too is a subject with their own voices and desires, the very practices of IRP dehumanize the Ainu people and sustain the paternalist relationship of Wajin to Ainu.

The merit of such analysis is its capacity to explain in more precise terms how the oppressions are practiced and maintained within the institutional framework of the IRP. But perhaps the more important implication of it is that out of the desire for the self-consciousness, both subjects struggle – to continue to use Hegel, the “struggle to death” between the two subjects – towards mutual recognition of each other's self-consciousness. Indeed, although Ainu are “effectively” silenced in the IRP institution, more crucially, they *do speak*. The implication of their (Ainu's) speech in this struggle for recognition leads to the second possible interpretation of this *rep-un-iwor* narrative.

Ainu speak; they do so repeatedly, and seemingly to little effect. So what is the significance of the speech of the “objectified” subject in this colonial institution when we can expect no material or institutional achievement from it? There are two significances in this context. The most important is the provocation of the knowledge – to Wajin and others – that they resist, and continue to resist. Now to move onto Foucaudian terminology, the disciplinary practices of Wajin governance, which we witness in the (non-)making of *rep-un-iwor*, is to persistently attempt to normalize Ainu's political practices into their (Wajin's) technology of governance. Rather than presenting Ainu with fear of prosecution – which Wajin did before the modern state governance – their tactic now is to internalize Ainu politics by

constantly reminding Ainu what makes practical, realistic, and good/bad political practices *within* the provided IRP institutions. I am not arguing that Wajin are somehow conspiring to domesticate the Ainu resistance but rather, by practicing their (Wajin's) normal politics in the hegemonic political order that it currently is, Wajin are "disciplining" Ainu political subjects to fit into Wajin's own logic of governance. To return to the Ainu speech then, the persistent effort by Ainu to make such speeches where they are *not supposed to* is a signal that they defy such disciplinary control. Despite the long history of colonialism, Ainu continue to resist – so far my evidence suggests – the institutional oppressions by the Wajin colonists.

In this section, I showed the institutional oppressions at work in the (non-)making of the *rep-un-iwor* in the IRP. In the process, Ainu voices are silenced by the logic of the state governance in the series of committees. Through the silencing practices, Ainu become objectified by the Wajin, and become the subject of governance and improvement, rather than the ones with their own social, political, and economic sovereignty. We also witnessed, however, that the process of oppression did not make Ainu into the object of governance completely. On the contrary, where we saw the most explicit practice of silencing, we also saw the most active forms of resistance. Ainu did so by challenging the code of conduct that are normalized by the Wajin institution, in particular, voicing their demands in the committees where they are not supposed to voice them. In the next section, I elaborate this latter point – the resistance by Ainu against the normalizing forces of Wajin governance. I pay especially close attentions to the differences and engagements between Ainu's understanding of the traditional living space (*iwor*), and Wajin's approach to the IRP (*Iwor*). In so doing, I aim to reveal how might such resistance work, and how they manifest in the landscape of IRP.

### 5.3 Iwor/iwor

During the course of my field study, I realized that when people said “iwor” this word carried multiple meanings. This realization led me to reconsider some of the hurdles the IRP was encountering. With *rep-un-iwor*, its meaning was embedded more deeply and widely than the scope of the IRP. But unlike the structurally entrenched case of *rep-un-iwor*, the dynamics of two iwors – Iwor and *iwor* – is much more dispersed and multifaceted. Here, I will characterize how the two discourses were developed, practised, and the significance of their multiple meanings for the IRP.

Very generally, Iwor is a discourse practiced by Wajin, especially non-local state and prefectural bureaucrats. What they refer to is first and foremost the Iwor Restoration Project and the space it produces. This space serves two purposes: First, as the place where “natural materials necessary for transmitting Ainu culture can be obtained freely, within certain rules” and second, as a place where “activities, such as craft workshops that reflects Ainu views of nature and, cultural exchanges and experiences that draw on the Ainu people’s wisdom, and that is based on their coexistence with nature, can take place” (the Basic Plan). Thus, Iwor is both the space and the processes of creating that space for the Ainu people to practice traditional culture.

This idea that a restored Iwor is strictly ecological and cultural was most clearly expressed at the Sisirmukur Iwor College, Lecture Series in 2003. At this lecture, Sasaki Komei appealed that IRP is “not for town revitalization or tourist attraction, and it ought not to be.... (therefore) it is wildly wrong to think about making money off of it.” (Sasaki, 2003) This discourse of the Iwor is not limited to policy documents. The following conversation with a Wajin state representative reveals that such narrow characterization of culture is genuinely his:

B4: “Did you hear from people what they wanted?”

Shiga: For many people it is hard to keep practising 'traditional culture' when it doesn't pay for itself."

B4: "I have heard that, too. But I don't know what we can do. We don't get paid to go to temples and shrines. We don't get paid to dance folk dance in a festival. Isn't that how traditional culture is practiced everywhere else?"

Cultural lives, in this context, are something outside and mutually exclusive of economic lives. Going to the Shinto shrines for New Year's prayer, enjoying kabuki or noh theatres once in a while are Wajin cultural activities. So, although Iwor is a space in which Ainu culture is practiced by Ainu people, Wajin and state conception of culture has placed its own strong limitations on what the Iwor space can and should be. There is a moral problem (with policy implications) here. It is not a matter of "difference in perspective" that underpins this gap. Shinto priests and kabuki actors of course make living from what they do; symbolically, spiritually, and materially, economics *is* part of Wajin culture. Wajin only fail to recognize this because often times these are "free", when in fact they are supported by the government and other cultural foundations. Wajin culture has its own collective support. This is not the case with Ainu culture especially at the face of increasing dominion of Wajin and Western cultures on the Ainu land. Such failure to recognize its (Wajin's) own privilege is a typical symptom for the "master" in the Hegel's dialectic I analyzed in the earlier section.

Iwor is also defined as ecological. This space is ecological in so far as the Ainu as a culture are viewed as 'ecological'. In this regard, one particular image of the Ainu permeates the whole IPR project. This is the image of 'ecological Ainu'. Below are excerpts from some of the key official documents that define the IRP;

In this space, space for communication and learning based on the wisdom of Ainu people coexisted with nature... (EPUP 1996)

Activities such as craft workshops that reflects Ainu views of nature and, cultural exchanges and experiences that draw on Ainu people's wisdom that is based on their coexistence with nature, can take place. (The Basic Plan)

In order for Ainu people, who coexisted with nature in the territories based on river basins... (The Implementation Plan)

Ainu people have nurtured their characteristic culture based on their subsistence hunting, gathering, and fishing along their traditional riverine territories. Ainu culture is one that has deep relationship with nature, and Ainu people today place this coexisting relationship as a centerpiece of their ethnic identity. (The Basic Vision 2005)

These images were not imagined or created by the writers of the IRP. They have been reproduced in various media throughout Japan, including academic works (Yamada, 1994; Seki *et al.* 1997), newspapers (Hokkaido Shinbun n.d.), and tourism commercials (ANA website).

Another view of the 'ecological Ainu', is one that Komei Sasaki brings up in his lecture. In the same lecture series, he described and explained his vision of Iwor:

Ainu people need to know what natural conditions nurtured their culture... and restore and maintain such nature that can support your traditional practices...[To] restore *iwor* today is to restore the Ainu *moshir*... it is (politically) unrealistic to suggest restoring the whole Hokkaido to Ainu *moshir*, but in order to preserve and restore the tradition of Ainu culture, we can restore smaller Ainu *moshir* today. I believe this is the basis of the IRP today. (Sasaki, 2003)

Being the most influential Wajin figure at that time on Ainu policies, Komei's version of the 'ecological Ainu', consequently was implemented in Mountain Iwor.

From this and the other document, it is apparent that Sasaki's view of the "ecological Ainu" depicts them as living in an abundant and rich natural environment that enabled Ainu culture. He sees the possibility of contemporary renewal of Ainu culture in a microcosm of their restored Iwor.

### 5.3.1 Ecological Ainu

Identifying themselves as "ecological" is a characteristically modern indigenous practice (Krech, 1999). This doesn't mean that they were *not* historically ecological by today's measure, but it is important to note that collectively self-identifying as ecological is a relatively new practice. For the Ainu, scholars trace this practice back to Yukie Chiri, an Ainu woman who worked to translate a traditional Ainu epic into Japanese (1978). This is the preface to her collection of Ainu epics:

Long ago, this vast land of Hokkaido was the free home of our ancestors... But that peaceful sanctuary is now a thing of the past... Before we realized it was happening, Nature... had become faded, and the people, who had once lived so joyfully in the meadows and the mountains, are nowhere to be found. (Chiri 1978; translation courtesy of the Project Uepeker)

This romantic account of traditional Ainu lives has influenced the perception of Ainu amongst both Ainu and Wajin (see especially Shigeru Kayano (Kayano, 2003). Romantic accounts of ecological harmony both in and outside of Ainu culture are often taken up by indigenous peoples for what Spivak called strategic essentialism (Spivak, 1988). In strategic essentialism, people extract certain aspects of their – often stereotyped – image and present it as their uniform, collective identity. These are meant to be short-term, strategic adoptions that form an internally shared identity useful for uniting against Wajin political dominance. Such practices are most commonly observed in the works and documents of Kayano and his predecessors (Kayano, 2003; Kayano n.d). It also became part of a common identity that

connected them with international indigenous movements (Niezen, 2003). Not surprisingly, the period of practices of essentialization coincides with the rising political presence of Ainu in the 1980s and 1990s. This identity also proved to have a compelling appeal in the increasingly polluting and polluted world of post-industrial societies (including Japan). In fact, this is one reason why undertaking the IRP was appealing to the state: not only does IRP answer partly to the Ainu demands, but it also appeals to the environmentally conscious Wajin public. Starting in the late 1990s and into 2000s, it has become increasingly common for Wajin to depict Ainu as “ecological”, citing, among others, Kayano (See for example Otsuka [1995] and EPUP [1997] and other government reports). However, more recent publications by Ainu have taken a much more nuanced approach to the characterization of their own culture (see for example the website of Shiraoi Ainu Culture Museum and FRAPAC). Indeed, in my interviews this representation appeared in the context of ‘Ainu spirituality’ or ‘Ainu spiritual culture’, and not as stand-alone characterization of Ainu culture *per se*.

Shiga: “What is (Ainu) spiritual culture?”

S7: “Respect for gods. I’d like to inherit it, but because it hasn’t been handed down, I don’t know how to take care of it. I think it’s better to say the prayer in Japanese than reading out from paper in Ainu<sup>19</sup>. When I was little I saw elders harvesting millet very carefully without wasting any. In IRP I saw them throwing away smaller ones (to make the process easier). Is that good enough (to restore *iwor*)?”

S10: “(Spiritual culture) needs to be handed down from parents to children, for example by stories... I think the most important thing is the spiritual

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<sup>19</sup> In ceremonies, people often use crib notes for making prayers in Ainu. Here, S7 is implying that it is the content, not the language itself that matters. Therefore she concurs that it can be done in Japanese as long as the spirit (intention) is the same.

culture. It is Ainu spirituality, their spirit toward nature.”

Shiga: “How do you describe Ainu spirituality?”

T5: “... For example we don’t do ceremonies before acquiring trees anymore because we don’t cut living trees anymore. We buy them already cut. The other day we cut some trees because they were going to be in the way of building a new *cise*. I cast salt and stuck the branch on where the cut tree was. That is what elders told me to do when we cut trees. I don’t tell everyone to do *kamuynomi* every time we cut a tree, but at least I do what I can do by myself. I hope everyone starts doing it.”

K3: “I think spiritual culture is more important than material one. The mother of P9 taught me that. ‘If you are drinking a juice in the mountains, share it with the god before you drink it.’ That’s what I’ve been told. That is the Ainu spirituality.”

When I asked about spirituality, people (all of whom are not directly involved in the IRP) emphasized three major themes: reciprocity, respect, and heritage. They emphasize the importance of their relationship to the surrounding environment, and regard it as a central aspect of their ethnic identity.

The accounts found in official documents compared with what people said during the interviews are comparable but not identical. What is interesting is, somewhere in the process of ‘re’presentation and implementation, two seemingly identical meanings of ‘ecological Ainu’ diverged. Ainu adopted the essentialized ecological-ness in their effort to gain political legitimacy during the 1980s, and Wajin followed suit without the knowledge of the historical, colonial context. While Ainu have largely withdrawn from the strategic essentialism that is meant to be short-term, Wajin continue to re-cast this image, now back onto Ainu. Indeed, this is precisely the “slippery” (Braun 2002; 33) side of the strategy; it can easily be exploited by the settlers to define the Ainu-ness and reject whoever behave outside of this boundary. In

other words, while Ainu gained certain political voice – they are heard now – they lost ground in their capacity to define themselves as who they are. Indeed, one of the areas of confrontation we observe in Iwor/*iwor* is Ainu effort to regain their power to define themselves and their culture: accordingly then, all of the quotes above are critical of the IRP at that time. People were not critical of the obvious structural or fiscal failings of the IRP; people's critiques were directed at much more ideological and microscopic aspects of the project, about the differences in the imagined quality of "being ecological".

We can observe this confrontation most clearly in the Mountain Iwor restoration site. From the interviews the Ainu view of "ecological" attest that it is the Ainu as well as Nature that mutually nurture each other's well-being; it is a relationship of reciprocity. For example, the basic principle of the Mountain Iwor restoration plan is to only harvest timber that is equivalent to or lower than the annual growth rate. Other than this guideline for harvest, the restoration plan contained very little forest management planning. The main reason the plan could be so simple is that the Mountain Iwor site is one of few remaining areas of deciduous forest and, in ecological terms, the forest is in good health. Other than basic usage guidelines this area required little management or restoration except for the small-scale propagation of some herbaceous plants.

Frustrations from participants were audible: "I thought we were helping traditional crafts, but now we are making 'a good forest'" (P3) At first, (and still in principle), the forest was supposed to be restored so that Ainu people can use the materials from it. In fact, the Ainu did not even ask for the restoration, they simply wanted *access* to resources that were already there. This is why they want access to resources within the University Research Forests. Instead, these forests are being "restored" based on ecological parameters, while ignoring the potential benefits the restoration of Ainu resource tenure can 'give' to the land. As a result, the Mountain Iwor

restoration efforts ignore the reciprocal relationship and *needs* between the Ainu and the forest resources they are dependent upon. In this way the ecological restoration of these forests fail to engage local Ainu people – particularly the carvers and weavers – and has missed an important opportunity to promote the re-engagement of the Ainu with their traditional forest resources. As a consequence, the ‘restored’ forest has very little to offer for Ainu people and vice versa. Behind this is the struggle to define what constitutes the “best ecological practices”; Wajin approach the Mountain Iwor as a matter of ecosystem degradation and scientific management of the degraded resource-base, whereas Ainu see it as a part of a larger struggle to regain their sovereignty over their identity and what they can do on their land. Curiously, it is not only apparent at once that this is a colonial problem (Wajin-Ainu relationship), but also a technological problem. The Wajin’s scientific management that defies engagements by community members and their TEK resembles strongly the technological pattern that distances the product (natural materials for the cultural practices) from the processes (nurturing and harvesting of natural materials), while Ainu efforts to tie in the wider context of their struggle to the cultural and ecological practices for their sustenance resemble the focal paradigm that Borgmann (1984) and Higgs (2003) advocate for.

### **5.3.2 *iwor***

Before I proceed to look more closely at this intersection of settler-colonized, and technological-focal paradigms and practices in the Kotan Iwor section, I characterize how *iwor* differs from Iwor. *Iwor* is a discourse generally practiced by Ainu and some local Wajin. It is largely a space where people live and make a living, traditionally or otherwise. Within the context of the IRP, people generally meant a space where they conducted traditional cultural activities to generate a living. The starkest difference between Iwor and *iwor* is the absence or presence of economic activities in the definition of the space. This contrast became clearer as I progressed through my interviews. People

tended to describe *iwor* indirectly rather than directly. Instead, I had to infer their conceptions of *iwor* through indirect references made during their evaluations of the IRP. For example, one participant said:

P8: “ACPA has a flaw. Because it doesn’t ensure a full-backup for the promotion of Ainu culture, the Foundation takes it as disapproval for spending on public and community infrastructure. We thought it was inadequate, so with the lead of the Branch we made it to what it is now.”

By “full-backup” he means the absence of economic policies in the ACPA. Because the IRP is moderated by FRPAC, and FRPAC is a product of ACPA, (to the eyes of local participants), FRPAC has always been the first gatekeeper of the law. By “what it is now” he means the inclusion of the Kotan Iwor in the IRP, which for the Foundation and the government appeared to be an infrastructural project that ought not be included in IRP. A senior member of the Branch made a similar statement:

Shiga: “What would you need to restore what has been lost?”

P9: “For people with will to study and practice, and to shape such environment.”

Shiga: “What do you mean by ‘shape such environment?’”

P9: “For example, (an environment where) by researching (Ainu culture), to be direct, one can make a modest living. There are great people who do such things, but not everyone can do it as things are now.

...

The purpose of IRP has emphasis on supplying natural materials and environment. Because of this, infrastructural development and commercial uses of the space have been excluded from the planning. But they will come to be necessary as we harvest

and process the natural materials (from *iwor*). I am hopeful about this.”

As these interviewees say, the *kotan* was initially considered an inappropriate component of a restored *Iwor* because it is not an area where the Ainu obtain natural materials and resources. But for the local Ainu, the inclusion of the *kotan* is an integral, if not the central, piece of an *iwor*. I will closely examine the development of the Kotan *Iwor* in the next section to help illustrate the character of the *iwor*.

### 5.3.3 Kotan *Iwor*

At the official level, Kotan *Iwor*, or the buildings in the *kotan* were meant to be “the minimal facilities required for maintenance and public communication” (the Basic Plan) of the IRP. These buildings were created as spaces for the trainees to practice their crafts and exhibit their products for the general public. They were also to serve as a space in which other aspects



Figure 8 Kotan *Iwor* Restoration Site, top one on the right is the *Por-cise*

of IRP could be communicated to the general public. FRPAC is naturally sensitive to this official designation and tends to enforce it. During my observation in the BIRP SC, I witnessed one particularly controversial moment regarding the regulation of the use of these buildings. As the meeting was wrapping up an organizer of the Biratori Ainu Language School asked whether the school can use the *por-cise* overnight for an upcoming summer camp. Most meeting participants welcomed the idea; it would be a great chance to let local Ainu children stay in a traditional Ainu *cise* and experience the language associated with this traditional structure (there are many nouns and phrases associated with the building, for instance). Only the representative from FRPAC was hesitant and insisted that it was against regulations and should not happen. A main reason the representative gave was the fire hazard. “What if the fire broke out? There is a liability issue that cannot be cleared with the current building code.” (P22). It was a wet-blanket, almost literally. Snickers were heard throughout the meeting, but nothing could be done to oppose the regulation and the instance of the FRPAC representative on its enforcement.

According to the building codes, the buildings in Kotan Iwor are only allowed for exhibition purposes. This means that visitors (including tourists, locals and even visiting researchers like myself) are not allowed to use the buildings. The two fire-tending women in *por-cise* are maintenance personnel, so they are allowed. However in practice, there is a lot of leniency around the implementation of these rules. For example, I observed the buildings open to tourists and the general public, and meals were served to a group of tourists and so on.

Through considering this example of regulation within Kotan Iwor, we see two interacting discourses (Iwor/*iwor*) in motion – how and to what effect they interact. Let us now look at how the Kotan Iwor came about, the space in which the interaction occurs, and its significance to IRP. This will set the stage for my theoretical reflections in chapter six of this thesis.

The Kotan Iwor is a group of traditional buildings in the middle of the Ainu community (figure 7). Restoration of Kotan Iwor was made possible, as P9 said, because Ainu people took a strategic effort to divert the bulk of the resources to it from other, more conventional ecosystem restoration such as the Mountain and Riverine Iwor. They did so because Kotan Iwor has much more potential to make economic contributions to the community.

From the very early stages of IRP planning, Kawanano and Kato, two elders from HAA who attended CPTACIR had appealed for consideration of educating younger Ainu. The Branch argued that the continuity of traditional culture could not be secured without continued practice of cultural traditions. They pointed out that even if Iwor was to be restored, unless there are practitioners in the younger generations the restoration would lose meaning. This is a strong argument about the perpetuation of Ainu cultural traditions that it has merit beyond being an important and strategic statement to enable *kotan* restoration. This appeal for youth engagement and education was readily endorsed by other committee members. Yet the fact remained that, in principle, Kotan Iwor, a key infrastructure to the community revitalization (mainly through increased tourist attraction), was an unnecessary and uncalled-for aspect of IRP:

Shiga: (If the IRP's main objective is to procure natural materials) Would you say the Kotan Iwor is outside the scope of the IRP?

P20 (FRPAC): That would be my opinion. Originally, the purpose of the IRP was to restore the degraded ecosystem so that Ainu people can continue their cultural practices.

The Ainu realized that they had little chance in pursuing the inclusion of economic objectives in official IRP planning. To overcome this, they decided to push forward with the educational aspects in combination with a small clause in the Basic Plan about the minimal facilities required for maintenance and public communication of the IRP.

According to the IRP plans these spaces were meant to be for the trainees to practice their crafts and exhibit their product and other aspects of IRP with the general public. Simultaneously the Ainu insist that the construction of the *cise* and other associated buildings are an essential part of Ainu crafts, not only for their role as the place of practice but also the practice of building the *cise* is itself an essential part of cultural heritage. It is partially the inclusion of the *cise* in the restoration that transformed the IRP from a conventional nature-based restoration to *iwor* restoration, especially for the local Ainu. The importance of this transformation cannot be overstated.

The Kotan Iwor is already serving as, in addition to the formal objectives, a tourist destination and a communal focal space. In the first month that *por-cise*, opened to the public, more than 300 out-of-town visitors (mostly tourists) visited the building. For a town of 5,000 people (only 500 in Nibutani district), this is a significant number of visitors. Visitors consisted of



**Figure 9** Wajin Tourists and Ainu *cise*-keeper spontaneously Interacting

both local (Ainu and non-Ainu) and tourists (figure 8). The two women who were hired to tend the fire and weave *toma* also served as hosts for any drop-in guests, (both local and non-local), and answered questions from the tourists.

Before the IRP *por-cise*, there were no places equivalent to it. There were *cise*, but none of them were regularly open to the public. Prior to the IRP *por-cise* tourists to this area often visited local museums, and/or souvenir stores. Having a space where tourists can drop by to watch Ainu women weave, and interact with them is unique. This space was also the first *cise* that belongs to the Ainu community. The other *cise* are owned and managed by the two museums in town.

Among local people the *por-cise* has also begun to gain importance as a gathering place. Local children use the space as a meeting spot before they visit a nearby stream. They sometimes came inside to talk to the *fuci* (elder woman in Ainu), or just simply play inside. In the evenings, the same *fuci* teaches weaving to younger Ainu women. Other locals come by to ask questions about what they were learning in the Ainu language classes, because one of the *fuci* was a language instructor. Often, these evenings and afternoons of tutorials turned into sessions of chatting and sharing information about the happenings in town. After the construction of one *por-cise*, the space has already begun to serve as a hub for the local community, as well as a space for interactions between the local Ainus and outsiders (primarily tourists).

The Kotan Iwor is a site of chaotic hope. The patterns I have identified – technological and colonial – start blending and the hope for liberation and focal engagement starts to surface. Ainu and Wajin constantly exploit and re-exploit their opportunity for gaining more political power, while the device paradigm creeps in, sneakily from the back of peoples' consciousness. Think for instance how Ainu people are able to take back (part of) their economic sovereignty (as opposed to the essentialized identity that Wajin have

exploited to contain Ainu liberation), not by insisting on the wholeness of their culture but by strategically exploiting the opportunity to extend their essentialized version of “culture as non-economic”. Notice also that the technological pattern is still pervasive both in Iwor and *iwor*: if Wajin’s discourse of Iwor decontextualized Ainu from their historical context, Ainu discourse of *iwor* in the IRP still is sliding away from the relationship of spiritual, cultural, and economic reciprocity that the interviewees in section 2.1 of this chapter recollected. Perhaps, then, like the case of the strategic adoption of “ecological Ainu” identity, placing the emphasis on economic sovereignty to offset the Wajin discourse of Iwor can also be a slippery strategy that allows expansion of the device paradigm, as I will show in the following section. Of course, I also showed that the Kotan Iwor, especially the *por-cise* has served as a site of substantial engagement and focal practice. But the persistent and, perhaps to some, invisible pattern of technology is threatening to undermine the ultimate goal of good life, both of Wajin and Ainu. Thus, it is crucially important to simultaneously nurture the hope of focal engagement we find in the Kotan Iwor and to continue confronting the patterns of colonialism and technology.

#### **5.4 An *ekasi*’s Memoir and the Two Ainu**

In this section, I will share one story and one incident that I came upon during my field study. One is a short life history – the story of a senior Ainu man (*ekasi* in Ainu). The second is about a small disagreement on a *cise* construction site between an *ekasi* and a younger Ainu man. These two incidents made a strong impression on my thinking and understanding about colonialism and technology, in particular their legacy on the individuals’ psyche and the landscapes.

##### **5.4.1 Cross-generational Consciousness, in One**

The *ekasi* invited me for a dinner one night, and he sang an Ainu *yukar* for me. He does this every time he invites young Wajin travelers and researchers.

The *ekasi* is now a respected Ainu elder, and has won multiple awards for his contributions to Ainu culture, including awards for his eloquent singing of *yukar*. At dinner he told me he only started learning the *yukar* ten or fifteen years ago. He is now over seventy years old. He is not unique in that regard, many respected Ainu cultural practitioners today started training with Shigeru Kayano, a trailblazer of today's Ainu cultural renaissance. And like many of them, the *ekasi* is a rice farmer.

He lives downstream from the Nibutani Dam, where many families have rice and tomato farms. All this land, two hundreds years ago, belonged to an Ainu *kotan*, whose leader (*kotan-kor-kur*) was the *ekasi's* grandfather. His grandfather was alive during the period when *akinaiba-chigyo-sei* (trade fiefs) was taking a foothold, and some of the aggressive Wajin merchants were venturing into the area. One day, one of the merchants tried to take the *ekasi's* grandfather away to make him work as the payment for some rigged deal. When that happened, the grandfather chopped his fingers off, to be useless as a labourer, so that he could remain on his land.

By the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, this land had been settled with many Wajin starter farmers. Then the Second World War broke out. By that time, the *ekasi's* father had worked the land hard so that he could adapt to the changing social and economic climate of the region. Many other Ainu had been driven to poverty because they could not or did not choose to become an efficient farmer. With the War, it did not matter if you were Ainu. Everyone was hungry unless they owned land. Many starting Wajin farmers did not have enough land cleared at that time, so they were facing hunger just as much as the local Ainu. Given these circumstances, the *ekashi's* father gave much of his land to the neighbouring Wajin, so they too could produce their own food.

In 1956, 1981 and 2003, heavy rains caused serious floods in this area. The *ekasi* remembers them vividly: "I saw cattle and houses bobbing away from

me.” The flood waters ruined his farm and rice paddies, forcing him to restart everything anew.

In 1997, between the 1981 and 2003 floods, the Nibutani Dam was built, splitting the community into two; those who wished to protect the sacred river versus accepting the benefits of industrial civilization. This debate continues today. During the summer of 2009 when I was dining with the *ekasi* this debate came up again. This time over another proposed dam upstream from the controversial Nibutani Dam – the Biratori Dam. During our dinner I asked the *ekasi*: “What do you think of the Biratori Dam?” To which he replied:

I am now too old to take care of all the farm. I started letting some of the rice field fallow because of that. My son is in Tokyo and he’s a very successful business man now...[B]ut I ask him to come back here to take care of the farm. It pains me to ask because I couldn’t do much for him when he was here (due to his illness), but it pains me just as much to see the farms be ruined... You know, the flood, I remember the water, it was scary. We must protect our land and our farms from the floods... [T]he reason why those floods were so powerful was because of the poor forestry practice upstream. We know we need to restore better forests, to plant more deciduous trees with deeper roots...[B]ut we need the dam.

It pains me, to imagine his pain. To have lost the ancestral land, and to have rebuilt his own connections to the land through farming, and now, in order to protect these connections, he has to face damming the Saru River again. What is remarkable within the testimony of his own experiences are the loyalties to the land, and his articulation of the real choices Ainu people currently face. This is to say that they must give up one to save another; not giving up is not a choice. How might such a situation of the mind affect their engagements with restoration? Such assessment of, for lack of a better term, “realistic” context of an Ainu *ekasi*’s choices reveals what drives the patterns

I have been discussing. The construction of the dams, which represents both colonial and technological patterns, cannot be understood apart from the experiences of individuals. Even if one or several individuals experience(s) liberation and focal engagement on some evenings in the Kotan Iwor, no automatic continuation, let alone expansion of such experiences is guaranteed. The man knows the technological pattern is threatening, if not destroying, his relationship to the place. It is prying free his anchor to the land by silencing the narrative of the place, over and over again. He sings the *yukar* so persistently to remember the story, but there is less and less correspondence between his memory and what he experiences bodily; he can no longer hear the *kamuy chikap*, the blakiston's fish-owl (*Bubo blakistoni*) on his land. The *ekasi*'s experience puts into perspective, so to speak, what it really takes to confront the pattern of colonialism and technology: it takes a colossal amount of change, one that cannot be "realistically" done within the current configuration of politics in Japan. In other words, the hope and possibilities I witnessed in various sites of engagements in the IRP are only hope and possibilities; whether and how they can take hold and grow is largely undetermined.

#### **5.4.2 On Tradition**

"Tradition" or "to be traditional" was a concept almost everyone I met talked about. What is tradition? What does it mean to be a traditional Ainu, and how is it different from simply being Ainu? Can tradition change? How? It was something everyone had to talk about because it was an important element of their individual and collective identities. This discussion was part of forming their own identity through defining what makes a person Ainu and what it means to be Ainu. The brief discussion that occurred between the two Ainu men on the *cise* building site was one instance where this metaphysical question of "being Ainu" surfaced in material forms.

Their discussion focused around a site adjacent to the Kotan Iwor. This new *cise* was funded by a different project, but was to form part of the large

settlement with the Kotan Iwor. The discussion took place just before the construction of the new *cise* had begun. It was a debate over the location of the altar (*nusa*). Traditionally, outside of each *cise* there was a set of *nusa* on the east side by the window (Figure 9). The *nusa* must be placed before the *cise* is built, and taken down with the house when the time comes. One of the men, who was the eldest amongst the group started to place the *nusa* on the east side of the future *cise*. Another man insisted that they be placed elsewhere.

Later in the day the younger man who insisted on moving the *nusa* clarified for me why he wanted to move them. “It’s (the border between “traditional” and “realistic” ways) something we have to keep building on” he started:

(If we put the *nusa* where it used to be) It would definitely have been in the way. If it was the way it was, people are not supposed to walk through there (in front or back of the *nusa*). We put *nusa* where people don’t pass. Had we put it there, people would be walking back and front of it. That is not right. Back then, *cise* in the Kotan were further apart, but we can’t do that today can we? We can’t block the road if we put the *nusa* by the road. That’s why we need to think ‘why we are not supposed to walk behind the *nusa*’. This morning (the other elder) was going to put it on the east side of the *cise*. Because ‘it is the rule’ he said. I want to value that “we don’t pass the front or the back of the *nusa*”, which is a spiritual value, rather than “putting the *nusa* on the east side”, which is a formality. That’s why I suggested to consolidate all the *nusa* of the *cise* (in the kotan) in one place. If we put it in the place like that, people *will* walk by it, and even the construction machineries may hit it and knock it down. That’s much worse (than changing the location).



**Figure 10 Conducting Ceremony in front of the *Nusa* before a *Cise* Deconstruction**

Eventually it was decided that the *nusa* be placed with the other *nusa* on the east side of the *por-cise*. The older man did not insist strongly that it be kept where it historically would be.

To me, while I cannot speak of their identity *per se*, it revealed some important ways in which technology, colonialism, and (collective and individual) minds chaotically but surely transform and characterize the landscapes with which they interact. The logic of the young Ainu man makes sense, and indeed did convince many of his colleague. Incidentally, he also runs a successful business in Nibutani. But it is not at all difficult to imagine his logic slipping into the same pitfall that the discourse of “ecological Ainu” experienced. Is it not more efficient to use the bought-log rather than processing their own? Is it not cheaper if they imported their materials from afar? Is it not more “practical” if they built the *cise* according to the building codes so that they can be used commercially? Is it not possible to maintain the spirituality without the material practices? Here again, the pattern of the

device paradigm is emerging. The landscape and culture are surely transforming, and it is perhaps going towards stronger, more economically robust community. The question is whether the pattern of technology will take over their effort to overcome the pattern of colonialism. In the face of the limited choice, as I portrayed in the previous section, Ainu must take strategic choices to exploit the opportunity to improve their lives both materially and qualitatively. The question is how they can do it without undermining the possibilities for the “good life”.

### **5.5 Summary**

In this chapter I presented some of my key findings from my field study. I placed particular emphasis on how the patterns of colonialism and technology are shaping the possibilities of the IRP. I have argued that the technological pattern has made community engagement difficult in the instance of the Riverine Iwor, and threatens the continuation of focal practices in the Kotan Iwor. The colonial pattern also dominates despite the IRP being (officially) part of an effort towards de-colonization. I have shown that colonial practices are particularly evident in the structure of the IRP (the case of *rep-un-iwor*) that suppress the Ainu effort to assert their sovereignty.

These threatening and oppressing patterns notwithstanding, I have argued that there are possibilities and hope that are emerging from the intersection of technological/focal and colonial/liberatory discourses. In the Kotan Iwor, I witness how and to what effect these forces interacted to produce a space in which hopes, threats, possibilities, and limitations are shaped in new ways. On the one hand, the effort to assert Ainu culture as economic as well as “cultural” brought about the space in which focal practices are conducted by local and non-local people. On the other hand, the effort contained within it the slippery logic technology that can potentially undermine their aspiration for restoring the spirituality and improved quality of life.

In the next chapter, I will attempt to reflect on my findings to clarify the practical and theoretical implications of my findings, especially vis-à-vis my research question. I will conclude my thesis with potential future directions of researches for the practitioners of ecological restoration.

## Chapter 6: Synthesis and Conclusion

In chapter five, I showed that the patterns of technology and colonialism underlined the IRP. This chapter is the synthesis of my findings that are so far scattered in the four different sections: Riverine Iwor, *rep-un-iwor*, Kotan Iwor, and the two narratives. To focus my analysis I return to the second half of my research question: *in what ways do they (technological and colonial patterns) inhibit or enable the IRP?* In doing so I first attempt to clarify the roles and effects of these patterns on the IRP, and second make a suggestion that there is a need for renewed responses to the threats of techno-colonial landscapes that ecological restorationists find themselves in today. I will conclude my thesis with potential future questions researchers may pursue to develop appropriate responses to the threats.

### 6.1 Dual threats of Technology and Colonialism

In assessing the IRP, I will use focal restoration, as discussed in chapter three, as my guide to judge whether the IRP is being inhibited or enabled by the two patterns I identified. To recap, focal restoration, generally, is one that engages a community with their social, political, and environmental context through the act of ecological restoration, thereby creating and/or nurturing a space in which possibilities new and old are fostered and celebrated (see chapter three, section two and Higgs [2003]).

The task of synthesizing and clarifying the tangle of interrelated narratives is daunting. The starting point, that I believe is useful, is the colonial pattern we find in the IRP, because in it we find how the colonial pattern is not only oppressive, but also disengaging: a sign that colonialism is inhibiting the IRP from becoming a focal restoration.

In the discussion of the Iwor/*iwor* discourse, I hinted that Iwor discourse was inhibiting people from engaging with the IRP. The Iwor discourse presents colonial power in a form other than the objective/structural oppression. It is a power rested on subjectivity, and it is colonial in two ways.

First, its meaning – Iwor as a space of cultural and ecological activity, but not economic activities – signals the embedded logic of a modern state governance. Specifically, it is a reductionist view of the world, and part of the compartmentalizing practice of governance. If the exclusion of economics was a reductive logic that reduced the “living space (*iwor*)” to a natural/cultural space, the further compartmentalization of nature and culture was a necessity for the state representatives. The reason is simple—nature and culture are governed by two different agencies: the MLIT and the Agency for Culture. As I presented in chapter one (and in section two of chapter five on the *rep-un-iwor*), this logic that underpins modern state governance is precisely the one which enabled modern practices of colonialism. The structural compartmentalization and reductionism reflect and enforce the Wajin’s subjectivity embedded in the Iwor discourse, and this subjective logic in turn sustains this structure. The discourse of Iwor does not automatically sustain itself. In the implementation of the IRP, it is in constant confrontation with the discourse of *iwor*. To sustain itself is to maintain its legitimacy in the face of *iwor*. As Braun (2002) argued, marginality is produced when the practitioners (individuals and institutions) of the discourse alienate meanings other than those projected by themselves. The colonial power is the force that enables – and is also enabled by – such exclusion. In the case of the Iwor/*iwor* discourses, Iwor sustains its legitimacy by excluding and marginalizing *iwor* from the conceptual and structural framework of the IRP. For example, this happened in the instances of the children’s summer camp, or by not allowing it to be openly used for tourism. Multiple sources of authority come to play as colonial powers. Komei Sasaki and other academic members of the committees (since EPUP to CCIRP) represent academic and sometimes scientific authority. They provide lectures (e.g. SICLS in 2003), consultations (in the committees and as private consultants<sup>20</sup>), and write publications (e.g. Otsuka [1995] influenced the

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<sup>20</sup> For example the Mountain Iwor was planned by one Wajin forestry scientist from a

discourse of Iwor). These are used as objective and legitimate foundations of policy formation. The state has its own authority that is written in the laws, and is backed by the “democratic majority” – the Wajin – and the physical force of the police. The subjectivity itself is also deeply implicated with power. As we saw in the interview with B4 (a state representative), the idea that “culture is not economic” is normalized in Wajin social institutions and practised daily. Because it is normalized and forms a part of Wajin cultural identity, Wajin defend their subjectivity by marginalizing other worldviews (i.e. *iwor*).

Consequently, the colonial practice of marginalizing *iwor* diminishes focal practice by disengaging Ainu people;

I see it as just another government project that’s meant to create *short-term* employment. (It is) the same as building the dams. Perhaps a little better because it doesn’t destroy the river... [I]n the end, it’ll only make us more dependent on them (the government). (NP4, emphasis added)

The more the IRP is defined by Iwor rather than *iwor*, the less people feel an ownership and affinity to it. Focal practice is demanding (Higgs 2003); in order for long-term engagements to take place, the practice needs to have appeals that inspire continued engagement.

Also at smaller scales, meaningful engagements are discouraged and hampered. Volunteers, for example, are explicitly discouraged from participating in the IRP. This is partly a result of the Iwor narrative, where economics are not part of the “cultural landscape”. Komei Sasaki, in the 4<sup>th</sup> CPTACIR meeting (2004) suggested “volunteers are preferably avoided... the state should responsibly hire all the (restoration) workers as long as they are needed” (CPTACIR 4<sup>th</sup> 2004). Here, he is not arguing for economic revitalization of the *iwor*; he is pragmatically asserting that paid-workers are

more reliable and the project will last longer if they were paid. As a result, for many of the restoration workers, the IRP is more of a job than anything else. This is reflected both in their terminology and behaviours. For example, the three full-time restoration workers refer to the IRP as their office “company (or *kaisha*; a private corporation in Japanese)” and work a strictly eight to four o’clock schedule. During my stay in Biratori, I witnessed no volunteer participation or talks about organizing such an event in the future. Very few people outside of Nibutani even knew about the IRP unless they heard about it in the context of a part-time work opportunity (P7, personal communication 2009). At the Biratori town’s information session about the IRP in July 2009, less than ten people showed up and most of them were Wajin. This information session was mostly to inform the town’s residents rather than to involve them in the project.

One can argue that my example of the lack of voluntary participation is not the result of colonizing practice or the colonial structure. In fact the Ainu people can still engage with the IRP voluntarily should they wish to. But this logic ignores the economic context in which the Ainu people are situated, because of historic and current structural/economic oppressions. Many people, even at the age of eighty, would choose to work on weekends to support themselves.

Similarly, the case I made in section two of chapter five, *rep-un-iwor*, also exemplifies how the colonial pattern can disengage people from the IRP by diminishing the potential appeal of it. The repeated assertion by the Ainu to realize the *rep-un-iwor* still remains unfruitful because of the deeply institutionalized colonial logic of governance. Though we witness persistence and resolution of Ainu resistance to the Wajin attempt to objectify and normalize Ainu, these qualities of potential focality owe their origins to the wider context of Ainu struggle, rather than arising from the possibilities within the IRP. Hence, again, we witness here how the colonial pattern drives the IRP away from becoming a focal restoration.

These aspects of colonizing practices also speak for other dimensions of a good ecological restoration. Historical fidelity, for example, is diminished as the Wajin perceptions of “traditional” overpower Ainu narratives of their history. The best illustration of this has been the publication of the “official” history of the Ainu in EPAP report (2009). I myself used its account of Ainu history in the background provided in chapter one. However, this monopolization and simplification of history by the state in relation to the IRP undermines Ainu roles and efforts to maintain their own place-based histories. Higgs chooses the word ‘fidelity’ to highlight the importance of proximity between the local people and the place, and he places it at the heart of a good ecological restoration. However, in the IRP, few local-historic surveys were done in the planning and development of this project (e.g. the Riverine Iwor), allowing the history as constructed by the state to dominate the IRP.

Connected to this diminished fidelity to the history of the place, is the resulting physical representation in the completed Riverine Iwor restoration. The cookie-cutter design – which exemplifies a technological as well as a colonial restoration – of the wetland restoration plan fails not only to evoke historical fidelity but also ecological integrity. Granted, the Riverine Iwor restoration may be functional at some level, but the quality of research and effort going into its planning is hardly indicative of a serious commitment to restore a once abundant wetland and its associated species.

Here, we witness the increasingly obscure boundary between the patterns of technology and colonialism. I started by discussing the subjective power relationships at work in the discourse of *Iwor/iwor*. One of the outcomes was the decreasing appeal of the IRP to the local community, and resulting lack of engagement by the community members. As we see in the Riverine Iwor, however, the pattern of technology and colonialism share a crucial character: they disengage the community. Of course, this is not to say these patterns, especially the colonial pattern *only* disengages people (from the wider context

of their lives); colonial oppression can be and is more aggressive, explicit, and visible at reducing the quality of the lives of Ainu people both materially and spiritually. There is indeed a visible tendency in the IRP that the project might be deepening the colonial oppression. These are instances of *rep-un-iwor*, in which Ainu people are objectified and disciplined according to the Wajin political system; and also the Iwor discourse that forces economic dependency of Ainu communities on the Wajin government. Nonetheless, there are instances of a stark similarity between the two patterns, and this is important in understanding how we might challenge these oppressive and disengaging patterns.

To bring us closer to understanding how the patterns of technology and colonialism relate, I will return to the *ekasi's* narrative in section four of chapter five. I described that the “realistic” choices the *ekasi* faced were determined so strongly by the patterns of technology and colonialism that it made it difficult to conclude the IRP as any kind of a successful, let alone good or focal, restoration. To put it in perspective, as one of my purposes to present the *ekasi's* narrative was, he faced two choices: to dam the Saru River again to protect his farm (that is mostly now fallow), or not to build the second dam and live with fear of the flood as a result of bad forestry practices upstream (which have little hope of changing). The difficult present of course is conditioned by the historical development of colonialism. But it also shows that his experience of colonial oppression resembles closely the transformation of things to devices. Think for instance of the commodification of Ainu labour that the *ekasi's* great grandfather experienced, the commodification of the land that followed, and finally his father's adaptation to mechanized rice monoculture. The history of colonialism, from the perspective of the *ekasi's* experience, is parallel to the invasion of the device paradigm. And along the trajectory of the development (of technological and colonial patterns) is the IRP. In other words, just as how colonial oppression

comprised objective/structural and subjective/recognitive oppressions the IRP is also inhibited from success by colonial and technological patterns.

## 6.2 Hidden Threat of Technology

If the IRP also embodies the dual structural threats of colonialism and technology, how can they be overcome? In my final section of chapter five, “On Tradition,” I described how a new “tradition” was being created on the *cise* construction site as a result of the conflict between the two Ainu men. One insisted the tradition must be respected, and another insisted that they needed to change to adapt to the changing conditions of contemporary life, while keeping the core “spirituality” of Ainu culture. The latter man’s strategy, as I discussed, led to the successful creation and transformation of the Kotan Iwor into a site of (albeit limited) focal practices and economic empowerment. He was efficient, and knew how to exploit the Wajin political system to maximize the potential of the IRP to bring, most of all, economic well-being to the community. And this is where we need the careful attention to the dual-structuring of colonialism and technology, because embedded in the young Ainu man’s strategy to overcome the colonial oppression is the logic of technology that potentially undermines their aspiration for the paradigm of “things”.

To make my case here, I need to be speculative to an extent because I am discussing the “potential” threat of the embedded logic of technology, not a definite one. The young man’s argument for changing the location of the *nusa* is premised on one condition: the world has changed. Specifically, he names the presence of the roads and machineries for reasons why he prefers to move the *nusa*. He claims that this is fine as long as the spirituality is preserved – i.e. as long as they do not lose the respect for the *nusa* and what it represents, formality can be changed. For similar reasons, the ropes and twines that are used for the *cise* are bought rather than made, the buildings are insulated with synthetic materials to cut the construction time (so that it requires less

thatching), non-native larch timbers are used for structure, and “labour” is contributed only when the pay-cheques are available. *Nothing* is wrong with any of these, and in fact because of these compromises some sort of a communal focal place was created (the Kotan Iwor). At the same time, it is hardly unimaginable that these practices repeat and replicate until they start to form a pattern, the technological pattern. Remember the starting point was that “there are *already* roads and machineries”; this condition, a technological condition at that, in substantial sense shaped how and what they built on the landscape. This is what Ihde calls the “act of inversion” (Ihde 2003; 279), where means and ends start to invert, another distinct characteristic of the device paradigm. Even though one of the goals of the *cise* building was to preserve and honour their traditional culture and heritage, the means and the conditions – the presence of devices – in fact (re)determined (though partly) the goal itself. The more you are surrounded by the technology, more your choices and actions are dictated by the technology. And eventually, the Kotan Iwor, too, becomes more akin to the Riverine Iwor, a space stripped away of context and appeal.

Evidently, this is not a necessary scenario. It is entirely possible that the seed of focal practices in the Kotan Iwor will grow and bloom to empower the community economically, politically, and culturally. Nevertheless, it does illustrate what underlining patterns of technology may result in, despite its potential effectiveness at overcoming the colonial pattern.

### **6.3 The IRP and the Future of Ecological Restoration**

The picture is not as daunting as it may appear. After all, Ainu people did restore a community focus despite the strong prevalence of colonial and technological patterns. However my analysis so far does suggest that in the case of IRP, and I speculate that in other similar cases involving colonialism and technology, awareness of and careful engagements with the two threatening patterns are essential to the success of the project. In fact, in my

analysis of the IRP, both colonial and technological patterns can deepen, rather than improve through the project. Despite the need of such awareness and better ways of engaging with this subject, relatively little attention has been paid to the patterns of technology and in particular colonialism (see chapter three of this thesis). Without the critical approach, these patterns are very difficult to detect, especially when one is not a colonized subject, and the scale of the project demands large machineries to conduct it. Ecological restorationists today in most parts of the New World are threatened by what could be called a techno-colonial restoration, an expanded version of Higgs' definition of the technological restoration that includes the pattern of colonialism. And this threat must be taken seriously if we, ecological restorationists, are to aspire to good practices that are rooted in the place, community, and social justice.

What I cannot provide is an appropriate response to the threat of techno-colonial restoration. It may be focal restoration. It may require *more than* focal restoration. I will leave this clarification to future researchers, who take seriously the potential of ecological restoration to restore the integrity of the communities and ecosystems for the flourishing of lives.

#### **6.4 Future Questions**

As a way of contributing to the future research community, I will list some of the potential questions that could be pursued to resolve remaining questions about the techno-colonial restoration.

1. How can we realize democratic potential (Light and Higgs 1993) of ecological restoration on a colonial landscape?
2. How can we mitigate against the practice of ecological restoration reinforcing colonial relationships? Or indeed, how can we mitigate against colonial tendencies within ecological restoration?
3. Can ecological restoration as a practice facilitate processes of decolonization? If so, how? If not, why?

4. Do technological and colonial patterns reinforce each other? Does liberation from one mean liberation from both? Or do we have to resist both of them simultaneously?
5. What are the appropriate responses to techno-colonial restoration? Is focal restoration enough?

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## Appendix

School of Environmental Studies  
University of Victoria, BC

*Iwor Restoration Project Research  
Participant Consent Form*

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### Iwor Restoration Project Research

You are invited to participate in a study entitled “Ainu People’s Traditional Living Landscape (Iwor) Restoration in Japan and Its Potential for Community Empowerment” that is being conducted by Shinsaku Shiga.

Shinsaku Shiga is a graduate student in the department of environmental studies at the University of Victoria and you may contact him if you have further questions by [s.shiga@gmail.com](mailto:s.shiga@gmail.com), or xx-xxxx-xxxx.

As a graduate student, I am required to conduct research as part of the requirements for a degree in master of science. It is being conducted under the supervision of Dr. Eric Higgs. You may contact my supervisor at +1(250)472-4568.

#### **Purpose and Objectives**

The purpose and objectives of this project are;

- To understand whether and how ecological restoration can contribute to community empowerment.
- To evaluate whether and how Iwor Restoration project is affecting the relationship between Ainu people and the Japanese state.
- To test whether principle of Focal Restoration is applicable in culturally different case.

You have been asked to participate in this research because of your involvement in the project and the Ainu community. Your opinions and perspectives are greatly appreciated.

#### **Importance of this Research**

This research is important because;

- This study will address the little understood area about social and cultural complexity of ecological restoration, when ecological restoration is gaining importance in Japan and elsewhere.
- This study will provide a perspective of the Iwor Project that has not been presented by interviewing diverse stakeholders. It will serve to (re)evaluate the current and future course of Iwor Restoration.
- This study will provide evaluation of Iwor Restoration as part of reconciliation of relationship between Ainu people and Japanese state.

It may be used to future planning and course of actions by various stakeholders.

### **What is involved**

If you agree to be a part of this project, your participation may include:

- Discussing your views on the Iwor Restoration Project.
- Participating in an interview focused on the Iwor Restoration Project.
- Allowing Shiga to observe you in your work and activities related to the Iwor Restoration Project.
- Engaging in a 1 hour interview with Shinsaku Shiga on the topic of the Iwor Restoration Project in the mutually agreed upon location.
- Allowing your interview to be digitally recorded.
- Allowing your interview to be transcribed and analyzed for research purposes.
- Allowing Shiga to take a photograph of you for use in presentations and/or publications.

### **Inconvenience**

Participation in this study may cause some inconvenience to you, including:

- Each interview will take approximately one hour of participants' time.
- This one-hour does not include travel and other associated time.
- The participation potentially involves associated costs that cannot be compensated by the researcher such as cost of travel to and from the site, beverage or food if the interview takes place in a commercial café or places alike.

### **Voluntary Participation**

Your participation in this research is *completely voluntary*. If you do decide to participate, you may withdraw at any time without any consequences or any explanation. If you do withdraw from the study your data will only be used with your express permission. If you do withdraw and would prefer your data not to be used, the recording of your interview will be erased and not used in the study. Additionally, if you have consented to being photographed or observed, these photographs and observations will be erased and not used in the study.

After your initial interview, Shiga may request a follow-up interview with you. By signing this form, you are indicating your ongoing consent for use of all interviews or meetings you participate in as a part of this project.

### **Confidentiality**

Please indicate the level of confidentiality you would prefer in this study by initialing next to one of the three options below:

\_\_\_\_\_ **waived confidentiality:** you may be identified by name in thesis.

\_\_\_\_\_ **moderately protected confidentiality:** Data from your interview may be used in the thesis without your name being included, and any identifying information about you will be changed. However, because of the small community in which this study is taking place, your identity may be understood by other participants reading the study, though your name and identifying information not be included.

\_\_\_\_\_ **protected confidentiality in the thesis:** General concepts from your interview will be included, but not your name or direct quotes.

***Please note:** If, at any time, you should desire to change your level of confidentiality, you are free to do so by contacting Shinsaku Shiga. The use of your data will be adjusted accordingly.*

Your level of confidentiality is assured according to your request above. However, there may be some practical limitations to your confidentiality:

- 1) Due to the small community in which this research is based, your identity may be easily discerned by others familiar with this project, even if your name is not included in the data.
- 2) I may have been referred to you for participation in this research through word-of-mouth. If this is the case, I will inform you who suggested I contact you so that you may know of their awareness of your participation in this project.
- 3) During the observation of community events and activities, complete anonymity may be difficult due to its small size and participants' knowledge about other participants. If you want to keep your confidentiality, I will exclude you from photographs during the observation, and will not refer to your actions and/or conversations in the activities.

### **Photographs**

Please initial below if you consent for photographs from you interview to be taken by Shinsaku Shiga and used in presentations and publications in relation to this project. Photographs are a completely optional portion of participation in this project. Even if you do consent to have your interview photographed, you are free to ask that photographs not be taken at any point during the interview. Additionally, you are free to withdraw permission for photographs to be used at any point. If your photographs are included in this study, you may be identifiable, even if you are not named.

\_\_\_\_ I consent to have photographs taken during my interview, and have read and understand the above paragraph.

### **Use of Interviews**

It is anticipated that the results of this study will be shared with others in the following ways. Please initial next to the uses of your recorded interview of which you approve:

\_\_\_\_ Academic purposes of the study, including master's thesis, and future academic publications and presentations.

\_\_\_\_ Directly to participants.

### **Archival of Interviews**

Digital recordings of interviews, transcripts and photographs from this study will be kept as long as I deem necessary. At any give time during and/or after your participation you can request to delete the record.

\_\_\_\_ I agree to have my recorded interviews, photographs, and transcripts archived.

The digital data will be kept password-protected in secure workstation. Paper record will be kept in locked file cabinet in the researcher's office.

### **Contacts**

Shinsaku Shiga is a graduate student in the School of Environmental Studies at the University of Victoria and you may contact her if you have further questions by email at s.shiga@gmail.com, or by telephone at (xxx)xxxx-xxxx.

This research is being conducted under the supervision of Eric Higgs. You may contact him at (250)472-4568. In addition, you may verify the ethical approval of this study, or raise any concerns you might have, by contacting the Human Research Ethics Office at the University of Victoria (250-472-4545 or ethics@uvic.ca).

Your signature below indicates that you understand the above conditions of participation in this study and that you have had the opportunity to have your questions answered by the researchers.

<i>Name of Participant</i>	<i>Signature</i>	<i>Date</i>
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***A copy of this consent will be left with you, and a copy will be taken by the researcher.***

