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## A new Bunun aborigines' Educational Aspect of Cultural Identity Design in Taiwan

Dr. Li-Hsun PENG<sup>a\*</sup>, Huang-Yao LIN<sup>b</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Department of Creative Design, National Yunlin University of Science and Technology, YunTech, Taiwan

<sup>b</sup> Doctoral Program, Graduate School of Design, National Yunlin University of Science and Technology & Department of digital media design and management, Far East University

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### Abstract

The Tongpu community is a minority Bunun aborigine tribe located in Jade Mountain area. Due to its location in the national park, the economic development is vulnerable by the impact of national policy, leading to widening gaps between rich and poor, and population exodus, etc. Although this area is rich for its cultural and natural landscape, the Tongpu is reliant on farming, primarily fruits and vegetables such as tomatoes, plums, sweet pepper, and tea.

Our research team members have first contacted Tongpu community in 2010, for helping the local community to build their new Bunun Aborigines' Tribal characteristics through Cultural Identity Design. Then, again in 2012 we helped Tongpu community to construct their logos systems for the farmers through educational process with the aid of our students.

As the design workers, we hope to inspire new creativity and to introduce various products and exclusive images of the Tongpu community, in addition to activating the local industry thus increasing the income of the residents, and enhancing the visibility of the local culture. We aim at empowering Tongpu's aboriginal history, their geography and cultural connotations, to let their voices be heard, in order to create a formative cultural brand name in the near future.

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\* Dr. Li-Hsun PENG. Tel.: +886-923-150246; fax: +886-5-5312193.  
E-mail address: [lihsun@gmail.com](mailto:lihsun@gmail.com)<sup>a</sup>; [redplasticer@gmail.com](mailto:redplasticer@gmail.com)<sup>b</sup>

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Research Background and Motivation

This research aims to investigate the cultural identity issues of Bunun aborigines. Chris Barker (2000) stresses that cultural identity is a cultural product under certain conditions, which means that people are a social and cultural product. By converting the cultural identity issue into the practical design, we would apply the elements collected in that community into the Tongpu Bunun aborigines Culture Creative Design Project.

It was first in 2010, our research room's team members have first contacted with Tongpu community for helping local community to built their new Bunun Aborigines' Tribal characteristics through Cultural Identity Design. Afterward, we have intensive contacts with them for the cultural events participation. Then, again in 2012 we helped Tongpu community to construct their logos systems for the local farmers through educational process with the aid of our students. These were the attempts in Design to illustrate the local elements with cultural characteristics of the site.



Fig. 1. The nature resources of Tongpu community, photos from the project

The 2012's Tongpu community and Bunun's tribal culture identity design project, was focused on establishing "the logos system for the local's agricultural products". We hope to assist with the cultural and creative products for the development of the local's small farmers. We applied the design concept to inspire with creative thinking through design education, in cooperating with the neighbourhood of Tongpu community to establish the exclusive images for the agricultural products. It is to active the local industries and increases the local residents' income, and thus enhances the visibility of the local culture, but also to promote the partnerships between the National Park of Yushan and the Tongpu community.

The goal for "2012 Tongpu community and Bunun's tribal culture identity design Project", was served as a medium for the neighborhood of Tongpu community, and for the long-range development of the local area. Through executing this design case, we hope to carry out the Bunun's cultural identity elements, such as the local people's beliefs, tastes, attitudes of life style, symbol, which are very unique in this region. It could then develop and become new cultural elements to represent Tongpu community's spirit.

By using the Event Design and Service Design as our research methodologies, we are planning the tribal ecotourism and running the tribal bazaar for attracting the local tourism. It is to hope that the local people will be able to establish their own Tongpu tribal identity by the humanitarian help of external design practitioners. The project includes ecological and industrial features introduced to the visitors; we expect that Tongpu will be an ecological ethics location, with a conservation park of ecological philosophy. The aim is to carry forward the traditions of Bunun culture and increase the tribal economic benefits.

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