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**Singing Beyond Boundaries:
Indigeneity, Hybridity and Voices of Aborigines in Contemporary
Taiwan**

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Taiwan**

by

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Dedication

To my parents, Jun-Long and Feng-Ying, for their support.

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Abstract

Singing Beyond Boundaries: Indigeneity, Hybridity and Voices of Aborigines in Contemporary Taiwan

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While Taiwanese Aboriginal culture has become essential for Taiwanese to construct a new national identity, this report examines the uses, makings, and transmissions of Taiwanese Aboriginal music in contemporary society, illuminating power dynamics of how Aboriginal music has been presented and perceived among different groups. The shifting Taiwanese identity within the contemporary political context opens up the discourses of indigeneity that have interpreted the Aboriginal culture as a site either for forming the new Taiwanese identity or claiming indigenous rights and subjectivity. Through the analysis of these discourses, I deconstruct how Taiwanese Aboriginal music has been exoticized and folklorized as Other by the Han-centric perspective. Further, by examining Aboriginal song-and-dance at intra-village rituals, at a Pan-Aboriginal festival, and at international cultural performances, I seek to argue that Aborigines are neither simply implementing the “otherness” imposed by the Han majority nor are they completely in conflict with it. By using Homi Bhabha’s

concept of the Third space that resists the binary of the dominant ideology and counterhegemonic discourses of a minority, I particularly consider the Aboriginal vocable singing as a site within which Aborigines strategically adopt different identities depending upon the performative context. Through this theoretical perspective, I argue that the multiplicity of identity and the interconnectedness of Aboriginal musical practices across different groups and regions challenge the rhetoric of multiculturalism and diversity of cultures in the sense of neo-liberal ideology.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

The adoption of the United Nations *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (DRIP) in September 2007 indicates a major achievement in articulating issues related to intangible cultural heritage and its preservation in indigenous communities. The conscious protection of indigenous culture in Taiwan, although outside of the UN system, is the result of the efforts originating in an external international network and that have been deepened internally by the rise of Pan-Aboriginal consciousness. When considering the music of indigenous peoples, however, academics seem fixated on the notion of the preservation of traditional music. This is even more evident when such discourses of preservation are associated with nationalistic ideology. The emphasis on “preserving” Aboriginal music intensifies a dichotomy between “pure” tradition and the “hybrid” music that has been “contaminated” by outside influences, as well as the dichotomy between Aborigines and non-Aborigines. As a result, such an emphasis implicitly draws genre boundaries along with fixed group identities and racial lines. So what occurs when these two sides are not necessarily mutually exclusive? Can indigenous people and their music exist on both sides, or elsewhere? How precisely can we really clarify what is the music we aim to preserve?

In this Master’s project, I intend to examine the use of Aboriginal music in contemporary Taiwanese society and, in doing so, illustrate that Aboriginal music in Taiwan is not free from dominant Han Chinese and Western effects, but has fused these together with their own pre-existing music to form as a whole that which is considered Aboriginal music today. By Aboriginal music, I neither intend to draw attention to defining what it is, since the heterogeneities within it are too broad to cover in this report, nor attempt to cover all the musics in different tribes. Instead, I aim to situate Taiwanese Aborigines as a whole group in contrast to Han, focusing on how might those musical

practices that have been marginalized by such an ideology of “pure tradition” can actually reveal music as a site of dialogue between different ethnic groups.

Unsurprisingly, the early studies of Aboriginal music have overemphasized the facet of authenticity and the “pure” essence that defines it. Such an emphasis implicitly intensifies the boundaries of groups—between Aborigines and non-Aborigines, or among different tribes—reinforcing the construction of distinctiveness of each of these groups. Less clear here, however, is the depth of the third space within cultural interactions that resists the binary of the dominant ideology and counterhegemonic discourses of minorities. Is it possible that Aborigines themselves neither fully implement the Han Chinese perspective, nor completely emphasize their indigeneity? To answer this question, my focus here is on different facets of Aboriginal musical practices in contemporary Taiwan as productions of meanings and to consider how they have been utilized for articulating Aboriginal identity and negotiating through the hegemony of the Han ideology. Here the contemporary refers to the period within the specific socio-political context of Taiwan since the 1990s, when the new national discourse intertwined with the rediscovery of Austronesian heritage and the politics of indigeneity and tradition.

In the case of Aborigines, the capability to subtly manipulate their Aboriginal status through musical practices according to different performative contexts and purposes, I argue, becomes the Third space through which Aborigines negotiate between what they consider as non-Aboriginal perspective and Aboriginal identity.¹ To support my argument, I use Homi Bhabha’s concept of Third space—as its intervention properly “challenges our sense of the historical identity of culture as a homogenizing, unifying force, authenticated by the originary Past, kept alive in the national tradition of the

¹ For the sake of brevity, I will use “Han” to refer to the Han ethnic group in general throughout this study. To clarify the differences between Han in China and Taiwan, I will specifically use “Han Chinese” and “Han Taiwanese” to avoid confusion.

People” (1994:54)—arguing that the multiplicity of relations and identities involving inter-group interactions and intra-group hierarchy is irreducible. One can even argue that identity, membership, and representation, which are not fixed categories tied with ethnicity or race, can sometimes overlap or vary considerably over time and place according to different contexts. In order to bring the concept of Third space into this context, I investigate how musical practices become a means of negotiation when Aborigines are confronted with the intra-*buluo* ritual, Han ideology, and international perception as a fundamental framework of analysis. In doing so, I aim to deconstruct how the concept of “Aboriginal music” has been perceived, manipulated, and constructed, and then problematize the current protections for Aboriginal music in Taiwan by focusing specifically on cultural perspectives.

POLITICS OF INDIGENEITY

Considering the ways in which a past might haunt contemporary social conditions is a crucial question. Most of the early ethnomusicological studies of Aboriginal music in post-war Taiwan, however, place stress on musical characteristics, instruments, and religious rituals of each tribe. Relatively, the state’s role in shaping the development of musical culture, and the shift of Aboriginal musical practices in relation to the negotiation of indigeneity, have been neglected in these studies. In order to disentangle the Aboriginal musical practices in the context of postcolonial Taiwan, I believe taking the politics of indigeneity as a vantage point can help us to rethink the associations between musical identity and power relations within cultural production, on the one hand, and to regard the musical culture as a vital component of a shifting indigeneity rather than a fixed and de-historicized past, on the other.

Regarding indigeneity, many anthropologists have sought to overthrow its essentialized meanings and natural definitions, seeking to re-historicize it in relation to

specific socio-cultural contexts. Tuhiwai-Smith argues that the word indigenous takes on new meaning when applied to a settler society where it “has been co-opted politically by the descendants of settlers who claim an indigenous identity based upon long-term occupation of land or by being born in that place” (1999: 7). Similarly, Francesca Merlan distinguishes indigeneity as criterial and relational. By relational, she means definitions that “emphasize grounding in relations between the ‘indigenous’ and their ‘others’ rather than in properties inherent only to those we call ‘indigenous’ themselves” (2009: 304-05). Instead of criterial and relational, Alberto Gomes uses the terms positivist and dialectical in identifying these two sorts of qualities, “where the former derives from observational essences or defining features of Indigeneity and the latter a subject-position emerging or produced from relations between original inhabitants and dominant settler populations” (2013: 8). While these discussions of indigeneity reveal that the meanings of “indigenous” do not arise naturally, but have been politicized according to how individual components interact with one another, they offer insights on how the politics of indigeneity in Taiwan have been constantly renegotiated between Aborigines and Han.

Along with the debate on indigeneity, the previously marginalized Aboriginal musical practices now become the negotiated zone that nationalistic discourses attempt to integrate in the new national framework; as Aboriginal culture is not only conceived of as inherently indigenous, but also conceptualized by the Han government as a Taiwanese heritage in the new discourses of identity that distinguish Taiwan from mainland China. As part of the process, the reclaiming of an Austronesian cultural heritage in Taiwan is seen as essential to the reconstruction of the new Taiwanese identity. Such a concept of indigeneity, in the sense of multiculturalism, in which the complexity of an indigenous identity has been reduced to a simplified discourse, should be distinguished from the one in the vernacular sense. When Aboriginal culture became a vital part of the construction of a national Self in contemporary cultural politics, there emerged a tendency to

emphasize tribal boundaries and the distinctive characteristics of music in each tribe so as to construct its “authentic” tradition.

Such strategic incorporation is very similar to the modern state in that the “form of Euro-modernist liberalism seeks to transmute difference into singularity in various postcolonial climates” (Comaroff and Comaroff, 2004: 192). Thus, I argue that the criterial and relational discourses sometimes overlap each other and can be used strategically by the same group in different contexts. After all, the socially constructed nature of indigeneity is, rather, a “*positioning* which draws upon historically sedimented practices, landscapes and repertoires of meaning, and emerges through particular patterns of engagement and struggle” (Gomes, 2013: 10).

THIRD SPACE, HYBRIDITY, AND POSTCOLONIAL CRITICISM

Many postcolonial criticisms attempt to reinterpret colonial history based on more recent experiences in post-war time as a replacement of forms of colonialism’s discourses to empower the colonized. This is evident in Edward Said’s *Orientalism* (1979), in which he intends to disentangle the hegemony of Western epistemology and the inequitable power relation between dominant ideology and minority. His argument, though providing a theoretical basis for postcolonial criticism to decolonize the colonizer’s construction of otherness, seemingly neglects subtle intergroup or subgroup interactions and, therefore, easily falls into the binary of opposition—as what was criticized by Bhabha. In the case of Taiwan, the relationship between the Han and the Aborigines is similar to what Rees called “domestic orientalism,” where minorities are presented as an exotic alternative to the Han (2000: 24), thus exceeding the dichotomies of colonizer/colonized and indigenous/non-indigenous.

Challenging such dichotomies, Homi Bhabha’s concept of Third space articulates the social interpretations that emerge when distinct meaning systems interact with one

another, creating a space that “opens up a narrative strategy for the emergence and negotiation of those agencies of the marginal, minority, subaltern, or diasporic that incite us to think through—and beyond—theory” (1994: 260). The liminal moment of identification—eluding resemblance—as Bhabha points out, produces a subversive strategy of subaltern agency that “negotiates its own authority through a process of iterative ‘unpicking’ and incommensurable, insurgent relinking” (1994: 262). In this view, the theory believes that the ambivalence within the Third space provides a theoretical ground to challenge what he called Other’s “belatedness of time”—a time-lag difference normally tied to a minority in relation to a majority as universal and normative (1994: 222).

In a similar manner, Klisala Harrison (2012) takes Bhabha’s concept in her discussion of theatrical form in Native Canadian stage plays. Arguing that many uses of musical expressions in Aboriginal Canadian theatre have become third area negotiations in their performance, she shows that the creative process of music making has negotiated intercultural relations between the Natives and non-Natives. These approaches seem to be applicable to musical practices of Taiwanese Aborigines, as the “hybridity” and “ambivalence” within it becomes the site that articulates relations based on intercultural negotiation between Han and Aborigines.

Regarding the interracial conversation between Black and White, Radano (2003) points out that “difference,” as a social construction, plays a crucial role in the comprehension of Black music and its history. He argues that the expressive power of Black music can be said to be “derived not from a qualitative, absolute difference, but from a socially and experientially determined interracialism that contradicted White supremacists ideologies and inspired musical determinations of a realm not-white” (Radano, 2003: 9). Such an interracial paradigm might be applicable to the case of Taiwanese Aborigines, as it is helpful in understanding the interaction and power inequalities between Han and Aborigines. Correspondingly, a number of scholarly works

on Taiwanese Aboriginal music in recent years seek to deconstruct the musical meanings in relation to ethnicity, turning their focus toward inter-group interactions by drawing attention to the existence of musical hybridity. For instance, ethnomusicologist Chen Chun-Bin (2010) examines early Aboriginal cassette culture, focusing on the Aboriginal adoption of musical influences from Han Taiwanese and Japanese sources, and further discusses its cultural meanings. Huang Guo-Chao (2009) explores the production of multi-language “mountain songs” from the 1930s to the 1970s, focusing on the negotiation between colonial ideology and Aboriginal singers, policies on media and culture, and the structure of aesthetic representation.² Moreover, Tan Shzr-Ee (2012) analyzes multi-layered performances with special regard to Amis tribal songs by treating them as an ecosystem in which she examines how components of Amis song activity rely upon both physical and conceptual aspects within performances in maintaining their wholeness.

While these debates in Aboriginal cultural studies are increasingly moving away from the search for “uncontaminated” cultural forms to the realization that heterogeneity and/or hybridity is common, it seems that regarding music performance as a site of cultural negotiation is crucial to better articulate the fractious complexity of hybridity within cross-cultural interactions. An awareness of this tendency is necessary in examining minority culture and its interplay with outside forces.

THE MULTIPLICITY OF IDENTITY AND ITS RELATIONS

Timothy Rice (2003: 157) has proposed a model of subject-centered musical ethnography that emphasizes individual musical experience. He sees experience not as

² According to Huang, “mountain songs” refer to those popular songs that express Aboriginal thought and experiences in general. It can be a hybridized zone that includes appropriations of different languages (Mandarin, Taiwanese dialect, Japanese, and Aboriginal dialect) and Aboriginal folksongs (Huang, 2009:27).

“an inner phenomenon accessible only via introspection to the one having the experience,” but as something that “begins with interaction with a world and with others.” My discussion of Aboriginal performing groups is specifically inspired by his idea, that musical experience is not simply defined by fixed concepts of ethnic identity, but by different subject positions that individuals encounter within their society. For this reason, I intend to track Aboriginal musical activities, ranging from intra-*buluo* song and dance and Pan-Aboriginal cultural festivals, to contemporary performances of Aboriginal troupes, examining different interrelations between their purposes and a variety of facets of individuals or groups’ musical practices.³ In doing so, musical practices may become a site of negotiating the local and the national, reconciling individual *buluo* and Pan-Aboriginal identity.⁴

In her study of Naxi music, Helen Rees disentangles the relationships between the PRC’s Chinese state and ethnic minorities, proposing that the use, transmission, and stylistic differences within the repertoires have helped articulate and differentiate relations based on social class, intergroup interaction, intragroup hierarchy, and egalitarian friendship (2000: 196). To aid in my interpretation, I utilize her theoretical perspective to examine the use and stylistic differences within the performing spectrum of Aboriginal musical practices. The intra-*buluo* song and dance, for instance, specifically affirms the internal solidarity of the community, and the performance emphasizes the sacredness of rituals and the local development when they aim to emphasize the tradition of *buluo*. On the other hand, rather than conforming to performance practices that would simply reflect an ideology of indigeneity imposed by

³ Formosa Aboriginal Singing and Dance Troupe is a performing group that has collaborative projects between members of different Aboriginal tribes and scholars, involving the compilation of indigenous song and dance performances that incorporate field recordings and oral transmission from tribal elders. Members are involving intra-village singing, performances for cultural festival, and national performances.

⁴ *Buluo* is traditionally to be regarded as the smallest social unit in Aboriginal society. The concept is slightly different from the concept of village under the Han administration, so I use the term *buluo* throughout this study.

the state, contemporary Aboriginal performances may aim to show Pan-Aboriginal displays when they intend to emphasize Aborigine-ness, as well as adapting outside influences for different purposes such as tourism. Within such multi-layered representations (from *buluo* to the tribal, to Pan-Aboriginal, even to the national and international scale), the arena within which Aboriginal performers can subtly adapt external forces and manipulate the Aborigine-ness expressed in musical practices for different purposes and intended audiences, is the third space that they themselves negotiate between Han perspective and Aboriginal identity.

CHAPTER OUTLINE

Chapter 2 “Renegotiating Indigenous Identity in Taiwan” will locate Aborigines in historical contexts and contemporary cultural politics, addressing how Aboriginal music in contemporary society plays an essential part in shaping a new Taiwanese identity in relation to the politics of indigeneity. I focus on how an Austronesian cultural heritage in Taiwan is seen as a vital component of the reconstruction of the new Taiwanese identity, and how Aboriginal music, therefore, becomes a national cultural product by which that the state aims to promote and claim the legitimacy of Austronesian heritage.

In Chapter 3, “The Exotcized Other,” I examine how the state’s intervention and Han Chinese ideologies reshape Aboriginal musical practices by analyzing the top-down system of cultural institutions in Taiwan and the early folklorization of Aboriginal music by Han scholars. With the state’s intention to promote local tourism and national initiatives, the government sought to control the construction of indigeneity through cultural policies that aimed at controlling group identity to show the achievement of local development and emphasize multiculturalism. Using the 2013 United Harvest Festival, which is a government-sponsored tourist event that promotes the harvest festival (a

traditional Aboriginal ritual to celebrate the harvest and express gratitude to the ancestors), as an entry point, I will discuss how Aborigines have been exoticized from the Han perspective as a “music-making” ethnic group.⁵ Due to the state’s intervention, the customary traditional rituals have been gradually modified for the new purpose, and ritual songs-and-dance have gradually lost their ritual function and sacredness, transferred to a touristic Pan-Aboriginal performance that aims to show the tribal features and mountain-ness.⁶ In the second half, I will argue that the early folklorization by Han music scholars, in which they sought to establish comprehensive collections and investigations of Aboriginal music, helped not only to reshape the value of Aboriginal musical practices, but also to naturalize the separation between Han Chinese and Aborigines, as well as between each tribe, by strategically blurring the sign of cultural miscegenation between different groups.

While contemporary Aboriginal performing groups are not merely implementing what the state expects—presenting the folklorized and exoticized version of traditional song—nor completely conflicting with it, I examine how Aborigines themselves both challenge and negotiate with the Han perspective and the outside world in Chapter 4. While the essence of Aboriginal music is not pre-determined and standardized, the degrees of hybridity within the music can be varied in different contexts. Instead of trying to generalize all the top-down or bottom-up processes, I intend to argue that Aborigines are active actors that can negotiate with different performative contexts and purposes through their musical practices, in which they always go back and forth between different identities. These multiple facets of their musical practices, therefore, should all be

⁵ Along with the information I collected during my fieldwork in the United Harvest Festival in July 2013.

⁶ Most Aboriginal song-and-dance performances during the 1980s are attached to the touristic model. The *Amis* Cultural Village, for instance, was one of the representative venues for Aboriginal performances. Here I use “mountain-ness” to refer to the feeling that cultural villages aim to create as a whole experience of mountainous tours.

considered as one part of Aboriginal music, and thereby challenge our conventional thought about it.

Along with the discussion of contemporary Aboriginal song-and-dance groups, the final chapter deals with issues related to the limitations of multiculturalism within the context of neo-liberal globalization. I will analyze how the state's multiculturalism and the mechanism based on neo-liberal ideology become hegemonic forces, demonstrating its inadequacy in addressing Aboriginal cultural expressions. Several questions arise when dealing with the protection of Aboriginal music. Regarding the question of what constitutes "us," the characteristics of the cultural hybridity of Aborigines make it hard to distinguish which music belongs to the specific tribes; the cultural boundaries are not clear-cut, nor tied with ethnic boundaries. While the Aboriginal *buluo*/tribe is not a fixed unit, the categorization of music that seeks to clearly define the boundaries is somewhat problematic. Along with these questions, the final conclusion will discuss the possibility of how the multiplicity of identity as stratified by different performative contexts and social groupings problematizes the many forms of cultural boundaries.

Chapter 2: Renegotiating Indigenous Identity in Taiwan

Since the beginning of the immigration of Han Chinese from mainland China, the cross-cultural interaction between “civilized” settlers and Taiwanese Aborigines has influenced the Aboriginal mode of developing knowledge and culture. The influences became predominant from at least the late nineteenth century, when Taiwanese Aborigines first began encountering the impact of the modernization from the Japanese colonization. The 1945 arrival of the Han Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT), which effectively continued the Japanese administrative system for Aborigines, may possibly be the most significant influence on Aboriginal thinking, even intensifying the colonial relationship. How do Aborigines participate in the remapping of ethnic, indigenous, and national identity in contemporary Taiwan?

Since the 1980s, indigenous consciousness has been increasingly influential in various aspects of societies in many countries. Less clear, however, is what constitutes indigeneity, since cases in different regions and contexts seem to refuse to apply a universal definition, but rather suggest that the concept itself is neither taken as given nor static and derived from a set list of features. The term nowadays seems to be defined less by the criterial, referring to indigenous identity as natural, than by the dialectical, produced from relations between original inhabitants and dominant settlers. In Beijing’s official stance, for example, all the ethnic groups in China, including the majority Han, are considered as indigenous (Hathaway, 2010: 320). To disentangle how the meanings of indigeneity have changed over time, one must ask: Who manipulates its meanings? According to what perspective? Under what contexts has it been constructed?

In Taiwan, a major critique of the early Han-centric mechanism of domesticating Aborigines is that it inevitably accelerated their assimilation and homogenization. This sort of critique, coupled with the indigenous movement during the 1980s, led to a shift of intention from incorporating multiethnic national identity to decentralizing Han

domination and empowering Aboriginal reflexive subjectivity in the construction of indigeneity. Since the right for controlling indigenous consciousness and the stability of a united multiethnic state can hardly be made without reference to indigeneity, the state normally claims the term indigeneity in order to legitimize its central role of establishing sovereignty over the nation. On the other hand, for the politically marginalized indigenous population, indigeneity, however constructed or reclaimed it might be, is often the only basis on which they can participate in a multiculturalist sense of ethnic politics. Indigeneity, then, becomes a socially constructed condition of the indigenous identity that reflects the power relations between Aboriginal inhabitants and dominant Han settlers.

ABOUT TAIWANESE ABORIGINES: HISTORICAL MARGINALIZATION

Linda Tuhiwai Smith points out that many of the world's indigenous communities have prior terms by which they have named themselves, and that describe different layers of relationships and meanings within and between groups (1999: 8). Taiwanese Aborigines, descended from Malayo-Polynesian people who spoke Austronesian languages, had not been considered officially as what in English is termed *indigenous people* until the indigenous movements launched by Aboriginal activists during the 1980s. Before that time, the concept of "Other" was evolved through Han-centric official ideology, which often depicted Aborigines as "primitive" or "backward." This linear scale can be traced from the Qing dynasty period, when the Han administrators referred to Aborigines as *sheng fan* (raw or primitive savage) and *shou fan* (cooked or civilized savage). It is easy to imagine that when this island served merely as land for development for the Qing administrators, the historical record and Han's understanding toward Aborigines were relatively limited, and naturally regarded them as the Other who were against the Han. Aboriginal scholar Sun Da-Chuan points out that there was generally no

obvious Taiwanese or Pan-Aboriginal consciousness as a whole before Japanese colonization, so the *buluo* (village) basically became the boundary of Aboriginal groups (2000: 144).

During Japanese colonization (1895-1945), the government implemented policies for regulating Aborigines referred to as *li fan* (literally, savage regulations). Unlike Qing administrators, the Japanese colonial government undertook anthropological investigations and ruled out the taxonomy of Aboriginal tribes, which was when Aborigines first began to evolve Pan-tribal consciousness. But the descriptions of Aborigines remained mainly in studies of kinship, linguistics, religious rituals, and artifacts etc. (Sun, 2000: 86). Aborigines, therefore, could only be the “object” in the colony for academic research and reports of investigations at that time.

After the Second World War, the Han Nationalist government adopted the model from Japanese colonization, referring to Aborigines as *shan bao* (literally, mountain peoples). More recently, after the indigenous movements during the early 1980s, the state changed the term *shan bao* to *shaoshu minzu* (ethnic minority groups). These terms, even though legally considering Aborigines as the citizens of ROC, are not the triumph of Aboriginal subjectivity, but still the guise claimed by the Nationalist government to assert a collective Sino-centric ideology, considering Aborigines merely as a minority that was subordinate to the administrative system. Shortly after that, with the continuous protests from Aboriginal activists, the state officially renamed Aborigines as *yuanzhu min* (literally, indigenous people). The trajectory of these changes in terms, overall, shows the long period of the marginalization of Aborigines and the inequitable relationship between them and the dominant Han majority; the rise of Pan-Aboriginal consciousness is a relatively contemporary formation. Although the state eventually referred to them as indigenous people, these designations still imply the dominant group’s hegemony and remain a powerful tool in social development, since the impression of primitiveness can hardly be removed for most of the Taiwanese population. The major inquiries are how

discourses of indigeneity changed over time in relation to the shift of national formation, and what role Aborigines have played in negotiating indigenous status.

More broadly, within the context of Taiwanese society after the end of World War II, the politics of indigeneity cannot exclude the international and cross-strait political relationship, and the positioning of sovereignty over the nation. While the identification is a hegemonic tool or artifice of governmentality, the complexity of indigenous identities is invariably reduced to a grossly simplified and legible ontological and cartographical classificatory system that makes governing easier and more effective (Gomes 2013: 10), especially in postcolonial societies. Generally before the 1970s, the Nationalist government regarded Taiwan as a temporary base for recovering mainland China in the postcolonial period. The discourses of indigenous consciousness can rarely be found in the official stance at that time, since the government mostly attempted to establish national arts as the symbol of far-reaching Chinese culture in Taiwan in order to enhance its dominance and claim its legitimacy (Guy, 1999).

With the outside pressure from the increasingly stabilized PRC regime in China since the 1970s, coupled with the nativist movement's intention of establishing indigenous identity from inside, Taiwan gradually transformed from a temporary base for recovering China to a place rooted under the KMT government's regime. Such a transformation of the official stance led to a reorientation of Han settlers toward their indigenous identity, as well as the Taiwanese nativist movement turning to indigenous culture for its quest for "genuine" Taiwanese identity (Chiu, 2009: 1073). As part of this resetting process, most cultural discourses intentionally distinguished Taiwanese culture from that of mainland China and, in doing so, reconstructed its indigeneity by seeking the connections to the island and reinterpreting the past. Such "strategic indigeneity" is employed to index the constructed nature of revitalized cultural practices and native spirituality as "reinvented traditions" (Lewallen, 2003), which opens up the possibility to renegotiate the meanings of the past, reclaim traditional music, and use memories and

historical records to construct a new Taiwanese identity that both preserves the essence of indigenous culture and incorporates tradition into contemporary form. Perhaps it was the first time that Aboriginal culture, which has long been marginalized, became a valuable part of the national discourse. As a result, the idea of the Aboriginal performance group and the collecting of field recording have been transformed into sources to promote a new Taiwanese identity.

But those efforts to discover indigenous culture can hardly be detached from the Han prerogative, since Aborigines had long been suppressed within the political sphere, at least until the early 1980s, when a number of Aboriginal rights movements emerged. In 1984, the Alliance of Taiwan Aborigines (ATA), as the first Aboriginal non-governmental organization for indigenous rights, mainly addressed issues of discrimination, appealing for the return of lost indigenous land, naming, and autonomous rights.⁷ This led to not only Aboriginal-activists campaigns that sought to intensify Pan-Aboriginal consciousness, but also to a reflection on historical marginalization, exploitation, and the unequal power structure. In legal discourse, the term “indigenous people” was officially expanded in 1991 to include plain (*pingpuzu*) and mountain Aborigines (*gaoshanzu*). Since then, the ATA and other Aboriginal groups have gained recognition from the United Nations and have participated in the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (Simon, 2009: 57). Within such a context, these social movements and the transformation of power relations have led the state to address issues of indigeneity, bringing about reflection on the subjectivity of Aborigines.

⁷ ATA was established in 1984. The first director was Kimbo (Hu Te-Fu), an Aboriginal singer and activist.

CONTEMPORARY DEMOCRATIZATION AND THE NEW NATIONAL IDENTITY

What are the conditions under which Aborigines emerged as political actors in contemporary society? When the indigenous culture administered by the state intended to claim its legitimacy, it politicized Aboriginal culture on multiple layers. With the lifting of martial law in 1987 and during the thriving economic development during the 1990s, Taiwan shifted from martial governance toward democratization. The rise of contemporary democracy in Taiwan created numerous incentives to claim connections to indigenous culture and the uniqueness of Taiwan for different purposes, which, normally, related to the construction of a new national identity in contrast to that of mainland China. In this process, the re-discovery of Austronesian cultural heritage became essential to the cultural formation of Taiwan as a nation different from the PRC, and indigeneity, therefore, acquired new meanings.

With this being the case, the discussion of indigeneity in Taiwan has often been politicized. Discourses from the DPP (Democratic Progressive Party), one of the major political parties in Taiwan, sought to introduce the modernization brought by the Japanese colonization into the construction of Taiwanese indigenous culture and regarded influences from mainland China as the Other.⁸ Also, the De-Sinicization camp highlights the rich indigenous cultural heritage in the formation of Taiwanese society. For instance, the history of Taiwan, they claimed, begins with Austronesian oceanic culture rather than with Chinese civilization (Chiu, 2009: 1078). By emphasizing experiences of suppression by Chinese mainlanders (referring to those who retreat from mainland China to Taiwan after 1949 with the KMT government), DPP nativists' discourses attempted to intensify the connectedness between local Han Taiwanese and Aborigines, as opposed to Chinese. DPP's view is elaborated by the 2000 presidential inauguration ceremony of Chen Shui-

⁸ The two main political parties in contemporary Taiwan are KMT (the Nationalist Party) and DPP (Democratic Progressive Party).

Bien, where Aboriginal music was included for the first time in such an occasion. An Aboriginal singer from Puyuma tribe, A-Mei (Chang Hui-Mei), was invited to sing the national anthem during the ceremony (Guy, 2002). It was the DPP's intention to signal the multicultural nature of the new Taiwanese identity and to mark the shift of regime from KMT to DPP.⁹

On the other hand, the KMT Party, although more likely to maintain the ambiguous cross-strait relationship, also considers Aboriginal culture as an essential part to construct the new Taiwanese identity. If we situate Taiwan into a broader context—from Dutch and Spanish occupations during the seventeenth century as a base for economic expansion, to the Japanese colonization as a colonial base for “Great East Asia Co-Prosperty Sphere”—it is not hard to find that the island, regardless of its geographic location, has been involved in dynamic aspects that go far beyond itself. KMT's embrace of Aboriginal culture helped the state to shift from the periphery to the central position in the international political situation. A specific case is how rightist intellectuals during the 1990s strategically addressed the Austronesian heritage as “natural” Taiwanese to construct a new identity. For the state's end of political and economic advances to Southeastern Asia, discourses from Han elite intellectuals emphasized the connection between Aborigines and the “black-tide cultural sphere” as a strategy to increase the intimate relationship between Taiwan and countries in Southeastern Asia (Chen, Kuan-Hsing, 2010). Indigeneity, in this sense, seems to incorporate Aboriginal and Han figures into the whole of Taiwanese identity by emphasizing its connection and ignoring the history of Han colonization of Aboriginal population. Such discourses of multiculturalism have been elaborated especially by President Lee Teng-hui's declaration in 1999 “to realize the potential of Great Taiwan, it is crucial that all people of different

⁹ The discourses of multiculturalism in Taiwan normally refer to Hoklo (Minnan), Hakka, mainlanders and Aborigines. Mandarin Chinese is the national language, and Hokkien or Minnanese (‘Taiwanese’) and Hakka are the two other major languages.

historical backgrounds come together, forming a new common background distinct from that of the continent” (Simon, 2009).

In addition, another example can be shown in an official press release of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs more recently:

President Ma paid state visits to six South Pacific diplomatic partners of the ROC.... President Ma’s state visits can be summarized as follows.... Cultural exchange: An exhibition featuring **Taiwan’s indigenous culture** held in Palau during the President’s visit highlights efforts to promote exchanges focusing on the **Austronesian heritage** common to the ROC and its South Pacific neighbors.... (April 1, 2010).¹⁰

Such official deployments of Aboriginal figures in discourses or cultural formations of indigeneity are mostly for political purposes that, inevitably, are associated with the state’s discourses of multiculturalism. But the term multicultural(ism), in a neo-liberalist sense, is limited and constrained as to describe the fractious heterogeneity of postcolonies (Comoraff and Comoraff, 2004:191). As many of the indigenous movements in different countries argue, even while “citizenship” has been formally extended to indigenous populations, it is a hollow extension that does not come with the full gamut of rights that define participation in liberal democracy (Hetherington, 2011: 101). The language of multiculturalism has made its way into the groundwork for the incorporation of ethnic groups, which intended to strategically soften the antagonism between Aborigines and Han.

It is worth pointing out that such a stance of multiculturalism can also be shown in numerous Taiwanese bands and pop songs that feature the new Taiwanese identity since the 1990s, with the rise of indigenous consciousness. The pop music band *New Formosa Band*, for instance, released several albums featuring newly composed songs in Taiwanese, Hakka, and Aboriginal dialects and styles. Its members included: Chen Sheng, a Han pop singer who is well-known for his singing in Taiwanese dialect; Huang

¹⁰ The official website of Ministry of Foreign Affairs, <http://www.roc-taiwan.org/mp.asp?mp=1> (accessed January 24, 2014).

Lian-Yu, a singer from Hakka community who added its elements to the band; and Ah-Von, an Aboriginal singer from the Paiwan tribe who later joined the band to enrich the style. Their different backgrounds and the blend of different styles tended to symbolize ethnic harmony in Taiwan.¹¹ “The Song for Jolly Gathering” (歡聚歌) in their third album, which was released in 1995, can be cited as an example of this message, as demonstrated by the following excerpt from its lyrics:

(H)不管你是福佬外省，原住民，客家人 希望天公保佑這土的老百姓，世代都平安	<i>No matter you are Hoklo, Mainlander, Aborigines, or Hakka, hope the God blesses the people in all generations on this land to keep safe.</i>
(T)不管伊是芋仔番薯，在地還是客人 今晚咱要跳舞，唸歌不分你和我	<i>No matter he/she is Taiwanese, indigenous, or visitors, we are all going to dance and narrate the songs.</i>
(H)就像照顧自家的子女用心來疼惜這個 有山有水四季分明的寶島，噯是一家人	<i>Just like taking care of our sons and daughters to cherish the Formosa, we are a family.</i>
(T)到陣來唸歌哦，歌聲真迷人	<i>Come narrating the songs together! The voice is charming!</i>
(T)咱攏賣攏爭 (A)Na I-Ya Na-Ya-O Hay	<i>Don't argue to each other Na I-Ya Na-Ya-O Hay</i>
(T)和你來做伴 (A)Na I-Ya Na-Ya-O	<i>To be your companions Na I-Ya Na-Ya-O</i>

Figure 2.1: The lyrics of “The Song of Jolly Gathering” (selected).¹²

In addition to the lyric, which intends to express the incorporation of all ethnic groups as the new family in Taiwan (Formosa), the juxtaposition of different languages also intentionally highlights the discourse of ethnic harmony. In terms of its music, the song appropriates the melody of a traditional Puyuma song, “Weed song,” as the main melody in the remix arrangement, but adds Hakka and Taiwanese dialects to the lyrics with Aboriginal dialect. Such a mixture of different music elements and languages

¹¹ According to the official website of Ministry of Culture ROC Taiwan, <http://english.moc.gov.tw/article/index.php?sn=1026> (accessed August 1, 2014).

¹² “H” is Hakka, “T” is Taiwanese dialect, and “A” is Aboriginal vocables. Here the vocables refer to those syllables without lexical meanings. I will specify this part in Chapter 4. The English translation is mine.

becomes a metaphor for the mixture of ethnic groups in national discourse. This song, unsurprisingly, even became the theme song for the KMT presidential candidate Ma Ying-Jou in 2008 to convey the message of ethnic harmony and multiculturalism within the context of contemporary Taiwan.

As such an ideology of multiculturalism attempts to incorporate Aboriginal culture into a singular stance, there is a need to analyze different versions of indigeneity, as Aborigines seek to resist the hegemony brought by discourses of the nation-state. For this reason, it is necessary to distinguish indigeneity as based on multiculturalism from the version based on indigenism.

RETURN TO *BULUO*

Since the lifting of Martial Law in 1987, the rapid growth of indigenous movements and the proliferation of new Aboriginal publications and non-governmental organizations have greatly challenged the dominant Han identity. In Taiwan, a need for a self-conscious assertion of distinctiveness gradually emerged when Aborigines also felt threatened by policies of multicultural difference, which threatened an alternative goal of ethnic harmony and contradicted previous emphases on Republican nation-building (Simon, 2009). With the contemporary democratization, indigenous movements pushed ahead the redistribution of citizenship and changed conventional thoughts about citizenship; namely, Aborigines as legally identified cultural citizens should not receive any differentiated treatment of rights due to the differences of cultural backgrounds, in which the state needs to ensure their rights of participating in political and cultural affairs. Such developments since the 1990s instigated the rise of a Pan-Aboriginal consciousness as Aborigines sought to build their own subjectivity.

As many Aboriginal activists claimed, the way to reconstruct their identity is by “coming back to *buluo*” (return to village), which was a way to connect themselves with

tribal and *buluo* cultures. Such ways that groups *selectively* use cultural elements can become a formulation and an assertion of the distinctiveness in opposition to other. By emphasizing connections to the *buluo* and ancestors, the “indigeneity,” in this sense, is defined by its separation from Han culture or Han-centric multiculturalism.

Sun Da-Chuan, the Aboriginal scholar and the former chairman of CIP (Council of Indigenous People), regards “return to *buluo*” as a significant part of reconstructing Aboriginal knowledge and identity. As he points out, it “enables Aborigines to hold a dialogue with ancestors, mingle the rupture between the past and the present, and disentangle the enigma of antecedents.”¹³ He takes *buluo* as an organic site and the origin of cultural heritage that includes oral history, mythology, rituals, traditional song-and-dance, and the reconstruction of traditional social structure and morals. In doing so, it “reproduces” the culture of *buluo* and builds more networks related to *buluo*’s development.¹⁴ Also, Aboriginal writer Rapongan depicts in his prose essays how he tries “to shake off the stigma of Sinicization” and “to prove himself a T’au man” through the conscious re-immersion in his tribal culture and knowledge (Chui, 2009: 1079). What has been ignored in these discourses is the aspect of Sinicization and Han-Aboriginal interactions.

As *buluo* nowadays may look like a rural community one might find almost anywhere in Taiwan if visiting at non-ritual time,¹⁵ it seems that “*buluo*” nowadays is more than a physical space. It can also be a spiritual concept of homeland that Aborigines employ to empower their own culture. To actively connect themselves to ancestral roots, therefore, is an intentional choice rather than something they inherently received from what they were born. More bluntly, such recognition of “return to *buluo*” is an essential constituent of the Aboriginal Self, which served as the groundwork to construct the

¹³ United Daily News, March 23, 2005. The English translation is mine.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Chen Chun-Bin points out the case of Nanwang *buluo* of Puyuma tribe, which locates in Taitung County (Chen, 2007).

Aboriginal subjectivity and to challenge Han-centric indoctrination in the construction of indigeneity.

From the above examples, it is obvious that the examination of discourses of indigeneity can provide information on the stances of different subject positions, creating different versions of indigeneity for different audiences. These different stances demonstrate that indigeneity is a social construction that can be strategically manipulated by different parties. Perhaps more importantly, the examination of these different stances allows us to contrast how Aboriginal culture has been adopted, incorporated, and manipulated in all these discourses. The role of Aboriginal heritage in the politics of indigeneity helps to underscore the impact of the state's intervention at the local level.

Chapter 3: The Construction of Otherness: The Han Perspective toward Aborigines

The erhu piece “Amis Dancing Music” is composed by Chou Chen-Long, who rearranged Amis folksongs for this piece. Its lyrical melody expresses Amis girls’ gentle and soft, and its forceful rhythm and fast tempo depict the image of joyous dancing, and genuinely express Taiwanese Aborigines’ passionate, frank, and bright characters.

The description of “Amis Dancing music” in the album *String Glamour*¹⁶

What do people refer to when they use the term “Aboriginal music?” Does it refer to all the music Aborigines play, or does it refer to certain musical styles or features that are associated with Aborigines? Does it include quasi-Aboriginal music composed by non-Aborigines? How do people perceive it? Is it defined by positions of enunciation? At what point does this music-making take on meaning as “Aboriginal music?” These questions show that it will be somewhat naïve simply to define what Aboriginal music is since our understanding of “Aboriginal music” involves intricate relationships between the production, perception, and representation of its meanings. Instead of defining its meanings, this chapter intends to analyze how the Otherness of Aborigines has been built by the Han perspective and how such an imagination is intertwined with nationalistic ideology. In so doing I focus on two main aspects: the state’s intervention in local tourism and the early folklorization of Aboriginal culture by Han scholars. The dominant Han perspective has continuously influenced the musical experiences of Aborigines in Taiwan, effectively reshaping the Aborigines’ own musical practices and values. Homi Bhabha points out that the site of cultural difference can become the mere phantom of a dire disciplinary struggle in which it has no space or power, and the strategy of containment where “the Other text is forever the exegetical horizon of difference, never the active agent of articulation” (1994: 46). In this sense, the dominant Han ideology

¹⁶ This description is from Han Chinese erhu virtuoso Yu Hong-Mei’s album *String Glamour* in 1999. The Han Chinese composer Chou Chen-Long rearranged Aboriginal songs for erhu (Chinese two-strings fiddle), which is one of the prevalent instruments in Han culture. The English translation is mine.

seems to continuously influence how the site of cultural difference has been interpreted. The construction of Otherness is not only the stereotype that the Han imposed, but also the Han-Aborigines interaction that reshape Aboriginal cultural practices in Taiwan.

THE STATE'S INTERVENTION

The ROC state's top-down system has long played a significant role in shaping the development of arts, tourism, and local culture. In the early postcolonial Taiwan, the KMT government's intervention dominated all the resources of art activities before the 1970s.¹⁷ Almost all publications, performances, and artworks were expected to feature concepts opposed to the mainland PRC regime by emphasizing patriotism and even the recovery of the mainland from the Communists (Chen, 2008). Due to the Chiang Kai-Shek regime's intention to build its legitimacy on mainland Chinese culture, the Chinese Culture Renaissance Movement launched by the government in 1966 became the primary basis for cultural policy at that time. The Council for Chinese Cultural Renaissance (CCCR) was officially founded in 1967 to hold cultural activities, implement educational reform, and encourage academic research and publications that supported the official ideology. The unified national music, opera, and language, for instance, became the means by which the government propagated the ideology of Chinese culture and suppressed the consciousness of minority and local culture.

The government's policy toward Aborigines in this period was based on such an ideological framework of assimilation, but simultaneously utilized the touristic value of Aboriginal culture. The arrangement of Aboriginal song-and-dance started around the early 1970s, when the government began to establish the "mountain song-and-dance training troupes." In 1976, the government implemented the Scheme of Preserving

¹⁷ Mainlanders mainly speak Mandarin. On the other hand, most of people in Taiwan speak Taiwanese dialect. The Nationalists government therefore formulated Mandarin as national language and suppressed Taiwanese dialect, and formulated Peking opera as the national opera.

Mountain Indigenous Culture (*weihushandi guyowenhua shishejihua*, 維護山地固有文化實施計劃), which included the establishment of Aboriginal cultural parks and villages, and the training of troupes specializing in arrangements and performances of mountain song-and-dance. The primary purpose for setting up such troupes, however, was promoting local tourism, which served as an “accomplishment” of protecting Aboriginal culture.

After the 1970s the desire for “root-seeking” among local intellectuals and artists gradually increased. The establishment of the Council for Cultural Affairs (CCA) in 1978, which is in charge of a number of cultural policies, testified to the principle that cultural activities should be independent from a political agenda. In response to the rise of Taiwanese consciousness, the state’s cultural policy also began to put increasing emphasis on local Taiwanese culture. During the 1980s, CCA implemented Cultural Heritage Preservation Act, which became the legal basis for the state’s intervention in cultural properties, started to develop local cultural centers and tourism and to present and preserve local culture.¹⁸ To this end, CCA has helped with field trips and investigations in local governments, collection of research, passing on of aboriginal culture, and the encouragement of activities like rituals and festivities, so as to help conserve these local cultures (Ho, 2007: 468). Since the 1990s, the state’s intention shifted toward a more multicultural model that aims to sponsor minority to develop programs for preserving local culture and cultivating local performing organizations. In 1996, the CCA founded the Preparatory Office of the National Center for Traditional Arts as one of the organizations to take charge of all matters related to traditional arts.¹⁹ The CCA made efforts to promote and preserve traditional arts during this time, which included sponsoring folk arts festivals and concerts and planning several folk arts

¹⁸ According to the official website of MOC <http://www.moc.gov.tw/about.do?method=list&id=2>. Council for Cultural Affairs has been reorganized into Ministry of Culture (MOC) on May 20, 2013.

¹⁹ CCA dedicated in the retention of traditional arts such as Hokkien and Hakka folksongs, Taiwanese opera (*gezaixi*), and Aboriginal music and dance since the 1990s.

recreational parks in different parts of Taiwan (Wang, 2003). Such transformation of the state's stance toward local culture, from a unitary Chinese-centric to a more multicultural approach, made a significant impact on its policy toward Aboriginal performing arts.

Legal framework: Multiculturalism

As I point out in Chapter 2 multiculturalism constituted an essential part in the formation of new Taiwanese identity. With the emergence of Aboriginal nationalism during the 1980s, Aboriginal activists sought for their spontaneity in preserving their own traditions to be a counter-hegemonic force to the Han-centric legal framework. The Council of Indigenous People (CIP), which was founded in 1996, was the first institution under the central government that was in charge of Aboriginal affairs.²⁰ Its establishment opened up the potential validity of indigenous rights in legal domain, which is a meaningful beginning of the contemporary politics of multiculturalism.

“Cultural pluralism” became the basis for the legal framework of the state's multiculturalism policy since the lifting of Martial Law in 1987. Today, the Taiwanese government extends official recognition to four *zuqun* (ethnic groups, 族群): the Hoklo, Hakka, Mainlander, and Aborigines. After the foundation of CIP, the state's insertion into the discourses of indigenous rights in response to such cultural pluralism is plainly evident in the 1997 revision of ROC Constitution:

Article 10

The State affirms **cultural pluralism** and shall actively preserve and foster the development of aboriginal languages and cultures. The State shall, in accordance with the will of the ethnic groups, safeguard the status and political participation of the aborigines.

Since then, the issue of indigenous rights has been gradually incorporated into the legal domain in Taiwan, recognizing that there is a need to establish a legal framework for Aborigines different from that of other citizens. The most visible legislative action in

²⁰ According to the official website of Council of Indigenous People.

Taiwan in relation to this wave can be seen in the Basic Law on Indigenous Peoples passed in 2005, which is mainly devoted to affirming indigenous rights, land rights and sovereignty. This law not only aims to acknowledge the Aboriginal community's rights in the legal domain and increase the space for the participation of Aborigines in the legal system, but also recognizes Aborigines as a collective group that should be distinguished from other Han ethnic groups (included Hoklo, Hakka, and Mainlander).

With official government policy embracing multiculturalism, the CIP became the central institution that integrated the state's cultural policy and its implementation at the local level. This included the 1998 Education Act for Indigenous Peoples that mandated the inclusion of traditional Aboriginal folksongs and language in the curriculum of educational institutions of local communities, and the 2005 Cultural Heritage Preservation Act that established the teaching, research and development of Aboriginal traditional arts and folk customs at all levels.²¹ Those Aboriginal songs-and-dances are regarded as significant cultural heritage by the government and by cultural institutions, and they also fit with the government's intention to claim the legitimacy of Austronesian heritage. Also, these local initiatives were closely integrated with the state's purpose of promoting local development, especially when they intertwined with the CCA's policy of "Comprehensive community building."²² But such emphasis on the implementation of multiculturalism at the local level normally stressed the development of local economic and industrial structures, with far less attention and in-depth consideration of cultural development. Multiculturalism, in this sense, potentially became a "phantom" that not only was an obstacle to claiming indigenous status and to self-determination in a practical

²¹ <http://law.moj.gov.tw/eng/LawClass/LawAll.aspx?PCode=H0170001> (accessed 25th March, 2014). Article 62, Cultural Heritage Preservation Act.

²² Comprehensive community building refers to a transformation movement that seeks community consensus and encourages residents to participate actively in their communities and develop the special cultural features of their communities. The term first appeared in Taiwan in the policy report of the Executive Yuan Council for Cultural Affairs for 1994. <http://taiwanpedia.culture.tw/en/content?ID=3972> (accessed 26th March, 2014).

context, but also does not come with the in-depth understanding that can appropriately define Aboriginal culture.

Through such a diachronic overview above, it is clear that the state's intervention in Aboriginal culture is deeply intertwined with its purpose to stimulate the development of local cultural industries in relation to the national formation and building new forms of cultural products. In the following part of this chapter I analyze cases of local tourism and early folklorization of Aboriginal culture by Han scholars, seeking to highlight the effects brought by the Han stance toward Aborigines.

LOCAL TOURISM

Hualien County Indigenous Museum, administrated by the County government, will hold the Hualien Aboriginal song-and-dance musical festival tonight..In order to attract more visitors and continue such a touristic effect, the Indigenous Department in the County government actively sought to incorporate with local tourism, building the new touristic impression of Aboriginal song-and-dance...to let visitors feel Aborigines' passion, and promote Aboriginal song, dance, and drama to the international scale...

Sep. 5th, 2009, Liberty Times²³

The state's intention to promote local development since the 1980s is one of the significant factors leading to its interest in cultivating Aboriginal performances. The development of local tourism played a leading role in combing cultural industries, traditional Aboriginal rituals and folklores, as it matched the state's needs for economic expansion and the construction of indigenous identity. While not every Aboriginal tribe is likely to be good at singing and dancing (Hu, 2002), I consider that it is the exoticized otherness of Aborigines from the Han perspective that qualifies a group for government support, as its members "can sing and are good at dancing." This sense of "domestic orientalism" can normally be seen in different countries where minority culture has been

²³ Liberty Times Net, <http://news.ltn.com.tw/news/local/paper/332769> (accessed 25th July, 2014). The English translation is mine.

presented through the lens of a dominant ideology. The case in China, for example, shows that minorities are typically depicted by official media as groups of “singing and dancing” and present stereotypical performances in public, creating a “motif of the music-making minority” that is propped up by an essentialist view of that difference (Rees, 2000: 24).

Aboriginal Cultural Parks²⁴

The establishments of Aboriginal cultural parks, which provide venues for Aboriginal touristic troupes, served the aim of promoting local tourism and encouraging commercial tours of Han visitors. Within these cultural parks, the touristic troupes normally tie themselves to “mountain-ness,” a showcase that cultural parks aim to create as a theme featuring traditional Aboriginal elements such as architecture, folklore, artifacts, and touristic performances. Such kinds of stereotypical mountainous presentation, however, constructs an Oriental imagination of Aborigines as the exoticized Other who live in imaginary mountain areas without influences from outside forces.

The Oriental imagination toward Aborigines can be witnessed in the early “mountain songs” (*shangdi geyao*, 山地歌謠), which emerged around the 1970s and became popular among Aborigines.²⁵ These mountain songs strategically depict Aborigines as the Other and exoticize them as the stereotype of indigenous people. The song *Gaushanqing* (high mountains are green), for instance, was written by Han composer(s) in Mandarin. Its lyrics associate indigenous people with the scene of mountains, featuring a space “full of naturalness mystery, danger, and romance, and depict the aborigines as innocent, beautiful, strong, and easy-going persons” (Chen, 2007). Ironically, this song, which is considered as a representative Aboriginal song by

²⁴ Here Aboriginal cultural parks refer to those that were established by the government to sustain Aboriginal culture and folklore and that normally have song-and-dance performances (e.g., Taiwan Aboriginal Cultural Park in Pingtung County, Amis Folk Center in Hualien County...etc).

²⁵ Here I use the term “mountain songs” to refer to those songs that are newly composed based on Aboriginal songs and popularized among Aboriginal *buluo* during the 1970s. The government officially adopted the term “Aboriginal songs” (*yuanzumin geyao*, 原住民歌謠) to replace it since the 1990s.

most of the Taiwanese population, became part of a repertoire that touristic performing groups usually play and has served as the source for other musical creations.

Thus, such a “cultural park” sense of the touristic model also standardizes Aboriginal performances into what majority Han visitors expect. The Amis Folk Center (Figure 3.1), as a venue for Aboriginal performances on the eastern coast, for instance, was depicted by the official website of the Tourism Bureau as a site for visitors to experience the Aboriginal “passion” and its traditional folklore. My impression of the touristic performance in Amis Folk Center is that the songs and the way they are performed have been standardized into a form that fits with the Han visitors’ interests. For example, the performing group *Amis Kakeng* used the traditional Amis instrument *ngusut tipolo* (nose flute) and percussion instruments to play the song *Malan guniang* (Miss *Malan*), which is known as a representative Aboriginal song by the majority Taiwanese (and also compiled in high school textbooks). However, the song is actually in Mandarin, and was first sung and popularized by the Amis singer Lu Jing-Zi during the 1960s, and then increasingly recognized as a newly composed Aboriginal song.



Figure 3.1: Amis Folk Center, July 22, 2013.²⁶

²⁶ Photos by the author, July 22, 2013.

Another example is the “Joyful Drinking Song,” an Amis traditional song sampled by Enigma, which became a representative touristic repertoire for Aboriginal performing groups after the copyright issue of *Return to Innocence* in the 1996 Olympics.²⁷ It has led to the government’s attention to the protection of Aboriginal music and its value in developing local tourism. This song, as it gained an international reputation after the copyright controversy, has come to be seen not only as an Amis stylized representation, but also as Pan-Aboriginal, and even as a national symbol, factors that eventually led the government to adopt it as an important cultural heritage in Taiwan, as President Chen praised Difang as “not only the accomplishment of Amis tribe, but also the accomplishment of Taiwanese.”²⁸

Other than from the official stance, the Aborigines’ perspective toward the song, on the other hand, has been reshaped by such international success as well. *Amis Kakeng*, in a collaborative performance with the National Chinese Orchestra (NCO) at the National Concert Hall in 2010, presented the song as a meaningful song for Amis people as it “brought the Aboriginal music to the world.” Its reputation caused the song to rise to the level of a symbol of the Amis, even of the whole Aboriginal community. After its popularization, a few Aboriginal troupes even used the Enigma version as the background music for choreography, rather than using the Difang’s original version. It is also interesting to note that different Amis groups even sought to claim ownership over the tune and the singing style of “Joyful Drinking Song” after the copyright controversy (Tan, 2012: 133). This tune, as Tan argues, exists in several versions and can be thought of as a tune family found in southern and central Taitung (ibid). These Amis groups seem to claim their own versions as the authentic one due to the international success of the tune.

²⁷ The version of “Joyful Drinking Song” sampled by Enigma was sung by Difang Duana, an Amis singer from Malan *buluo*.

²⁸ United Daily News, April 15, 2002.

In sum, the popularization of the songs among non-indigenous audiences is an important influence in how Aboriginal performers choose their repertoires and the ways to present them. In other words, when these standardized repertoires become the signifiers of Aborigine-ness in the eyes of Han or foreigners, it makes them sound more like “Aborigines.” Both cases suggest the interconnectedness between the local and global, as well as between indigenous and national contexts.

Cultural Festivals

Regarding North American Indian’s powwow festival as a site involving various aspects of cultural interaction, ethnomusicologist Bruno Nettl sought to disentangle how the musical event symbolized the ways the local American Indians exaggerated traditional musical style as well as adapted Western influences (1985: 35-36). In a similar vein, Aboriginal cultural festivals funded by the state can be another entry point that reflects how Han dominant ideology reshaped Aboriginal performances. The formalized touristic Aboriginal song-and-dance showcase can be shown in one particular national Pan-Aboriginal cultural event: *lianhe fengnianjie* (聯合豐年節, the United Harvest Festival, Figure 3.2). It is a government-sponsored event hosted by the Touristic Bureau and co-sponsored by the County government that combined Aboriginal groups from different *buluo* in the county for the united celebration of harvest festival. Traditionally, it was an Aboriginal song-and-dance-centered ritual called *Kiluma’an*, *Ilisin*, or *Malalikit* to celebrate the harvest and express the gratitude for the ancestor’s blessing.²⁹ Generally, almost every Aboriginal *buluo* in the eastern coast region of Taiwan has its own annual harvest ritual. During the 1980s, due to the consideration of local development and promotion of local tourism, the Hualien County government aimed to incorporate the harvest ritual in different *buluo* into a larger scale of a united celebration as a touristic

²⁹ According to the Aboriginal ethnomusicologist Panay Mulu, *fengnianji* (literally, harvest ritual) was a traditional Amis ritual. It has several variants as *ilisin* (north), *kiloma’an* (central), or *malalikit* (south) in different regions of Hualien County.

Pan-Aboriginal cultural festival. Some scholars even point out that some of the *buluo* intentionally use “festival” to distinguish the event from a traditional ritual, and, therefore, formed the “internal performance” for *buluo* itself and “external performance” for visitors. Many indigenous scholars also point out that the transformation from “ritual” to “festival” symbolized social changes and the state’s intervention.



Figure 3.2: The venue of the 2013 United Harvest Festival, July 20, 2013.³⁰

The “motif of music-making group” can also be shown in these festivals. As Han governors usually praise the Aborigines as a “passionate” ethnic group, the typical “official harvest festival” normally shows the stereotypical presentation of having governors wear Aboriginal costumes and dance *malikuda* in a circle with Aborigines in order to show the government’s achievement of the promotion of Aboriginal culture and tourism.³¹ With this being the case, the traditional singing of *malikuda* has gradually been replaced by amplified music. One of the mountain songs in Mandarin,

³⁰ Photo by the author. Please note that the post on the stage has the words “Ho-ha-yang,” which is a typical non-lexical vocable in Amis singing. It has become a symbol of Pan-Aboriginality for most of Taiwanese population. I will address this part in Chapter three.

³¹ *Maliguda* is a typical assembly song-and-dance of *Amis* tribe during harvest festivals.

“*womendoushi yijiaren*” (We are all a family, Figure 3.3), for instance, is a representative song normally used for the *malikuda* circle song-and-dance in the festivals that symbolizes a harmonious atmosphere prevailing among the whole Aboriginal community. The transformation of *Kiluma’an* from its use in traditional rituals to its incorporation in the new modified Pan-Aboriginal festivals highlights the state’s intervention and the construction of otherness.

我們都是一家人
Womendoushi yijiaren
We are all a family

Composed by Zi-Yang Kao
Transcribed by Chia-Hao Hsu

我 的 家 鄉 在 那 魯 灣 你 的 家 鄉 在 那 魯 灣 從 前 的 時 候 是
My homeland is na-lu-wan Your homeland is na-lu-wan In the past days

一 家 人 現 在 還 是 一 家 人 手 牽 著 手
We are a family right now we are still a family Holding each other's hands

肩 並 著 肩 盡 情 地 唱 著 我 們 的 歌 聲 團 結 起 來
shoulder to shoulder Wholeheartedly singing our voices Let's unite

相 親 相 愛 因 為 我 們 都 是 一 家 人 現 在 還 是 一 家 人
loving each other Because we are all a family Right now we are still a family

Figure 3.3: “We are all a family” (*Womendoushi yijiaren*)

Nowadays, the festival, as it becomes the key component of local tourism, is held annually in the middle of July, the period when most of Aboriginal *buluo* hold its own harvest rituals. Since early 2000, with the government’s purpose of promoting Aboriginal cultural industry, the festival has been transformed into the comprehensive form that includes song-and-dance performances and competitions that enable different performing

groups to participate. The County government sought to enrich ethnic diversity in recent years when the number of visitors and the coverage of media increased recently, expanding the participation to include all the tribes in the County, and the duration of the event to three days. These performances and competitions in the festival are mainly presented in two forms: Contemporary Aboriginal choreography with amplified music and traditional song-and-dance. The performers are generally selected from different high schools and elementary schools with majority Aboriginal students, as well as local performing groups in the County.

Those groups are financially supported by the government's goal of promoting Aboriginal culture and local tourism. When traditional song-and-dance has been transformed into staged performances, one of the changes that can be evident is that the staged performance inevitably is presented in a standardized form—loud and clear singing, unified movements, symmetrical layouts of choreographies, and energetic gestures with Aboriginal costumes—that fit with the Han audience's interests. For instance, during the United Harvest Festival, I stayed at the back of the stage when there was an Aboriginal song-dance group practice before the performances started. I saw that their group leader was shouting, "Sing louder! Raise your hands and feet higher!" The members of the group followed their leader, and seemed intentionally to emphasize their voices and body movement. A question came to my mind, why must they sing loudly and dance vigorously?

As the stereotype that Aboriginal music is energetic and agitated has been deeply rooted in the thinking of most of Taiwanese, the propaganda of the festival, the local government's promotion, and presses from medias all contribute to impressions that either Aborigines "can sing and dance well" or that they are a "passionate ethnic group." It follows that Aboriginal performers began to adapt their song-and-dance to such expectations for the festival. Such a stereotype becomes even more central in developing local tourism when it associates with the imagination of the local landscape, as the

County governor and medias praised Hualien as a place with “beautiful mountains, coast, and passionate Aborigines.”

In addition, these performances have also been reduced to Pan-Aboriginal presentations that homogenize the diversity of tribes and *buluo*. Hualien County, where the majority Aboriginal population lived, includes six official Aboriginal tribes, including the Amis, Atayal, Sakizaya, Bunun, Truku, and Kavalan. *Malikoda* (the assembly circle song-and-dance), for instance, normally refers to Amis song-and-dance in *Kiluma’an*, and it also has variants in different *buluo*. When participation in it in the United Harvest Festival included all Aboriginal groups, it became a Pan-Aboriginal presentation that homogenized the differences of versions between *buluo* and tribes. Also, some items in the performance were neither tribe-specific nor *buluo*-specific, since some performing groups even consist of members from different tribes but present an item together. At the end of the night, the final item featured a grand *malikoda* in which all Aborigines, guests, and audiences participated in the assembly circle dance (Figure 3.4).



Figure 3.4: The grand *malikoda* in United Harvest Festival, July 20, 2013.³²

³² Photo by the author.

It is also worth noting the hierarchy of tribes within the Aboriginal community. While Amis is the main tribe that constitutes a majority of the Aboriginal population in the County and also happens to be the most Sinicized tribe, the adoption of its song-and-dance, as it is relatively known by most of Han audiences, makes the presentation more “Aboriginal” in Han eyes. Although the festival did include items featuring the distinctiveness of different tribes, it is not hard to find that the content of the festival—from the Amis elder as the representative for praying, to *malikuda* that all Aborigines sing and dance together—is Amis-centric. With this being the case, those minority tribes became “minorities of the minority” that have been potentially Amis-ized by such a united Pan-Aboriginal festival.

It is clear, then, that although the state’s intervention successfully disseminated Aboriginal song-and-dance to a wider public, thus helping to sustain their activities, it has had a strong impact on how Aborigines value their musical practices. When such annual festivals become a site in which Aborigines from different regions come together, these presentations that are influenced by the state’s intervention “re-Aboriginalize” Aborigines annually, constantly imposing the stereotype of the Aborigine from the Han perspective and reshaping Aborigines’ self-formations.

EARLY SCHOLARSHIP AND FOLKLORIZATION BY HAN SCHOLARS

Besides the economic purposes for the expansion of local tourism, I consider the political factors within the early folklorization by Han scholars in Taiwan as the other significant site reflects the effect of Han ideology in shaping the concept of Aboriginal music. With the early Han scholars’ ideology to establish comprehensive musical collections and to focus on authenticity and originality, the taxonomy of Aboriginal music is perhaps closely tied to such early folklorization, which precisely categorizes musical features and boundaries between each tribe. It naturalized the establishment that

folklorists, who were dominantly Han, were better equipped than Aborigines themselves to determine the value and importance of folk songs.

Early collecting of Aboriginal music can be traced back to the research of Japanese folklorists and Western-trained musicologists (Hisao Tanabe, Takatomo Kurosawa) around the early twentieth century. Kurosawa's investigation during the time of the World War II (1943), a comprehensive musical investigation that was supported by the Japanese government's South-Advanced Policy, was likely the first significant Taiwanese Aboriginal music study that included the classification of instruments and folksongs according to their use by different tribes.³³ Most early studies of Aboriginal music after World War II mainly followed the model of Kurosawa's research; taxonomy of instruments and tribe from the Japanese colonial period continuously influenced research in the post-war era. In 1966, Hsu Tsang-Houie and Shih Wei-Lang (both are Han) launched the first island-wide collecting of folksongs in Taiwan, in which they collected almost one thousand Aboriginal folksongs from several tribes (Yami, Atayal, Bunun, Amis, Puyuma, Paiwan, Rukai).³⁴ Hsu then published the first comprehensive book about Aboriginal music, *Taiwan Gaoshanzu Minyao* (Folksongs of Taiwan's Mountain People), in 1976, which included transcriptions of melody types, modal relationships and polyphonic constructs of physical sound (Tan, 2013; 27-28).

Regarding the politics of folklorization, Karl Miller has observed the ideology of the American Folklore Society that professionalized the early folklorists' collecting projects and distinguished trained scholars from untrained collectors (2010: 87-88). The equivalents of the early folklorization by Han scholars in Taiwan have been closely related to the professionalization of Aboriginal folklore studies. What is worth noting is

³³ The classification of Aboriginal tribes was mainly based on early Japanese anthropologists' taxonomy according to language and cultures. It included Atayal, Saisiat, Bunun, Tsou, Rukai, Paiwan, Panapanayan (Puyuma), Pangtsah (Amis), and Yami. Kurosawa Takatomo later introduced his research "Taiwan Takasagozoku No Ongaku" (Music of the Mountain Peoples in Taiwan), an extensive fieldwork studies of the nine Aboriginal tribes (Tan, 2013: 24).

³⁴ Hsu Tsang-Houie is a French- and Japanese-trained music Han researcher.

that the collecting of folksongs in Taiwan, different from the context of American Folklore Society in the early twentieth century, was deeply intertwined with the wave of nationalism that emerged in the 1960s, in which folklorists aimed to build a comprehensive musical collection of “our own music.” Within such a context, folksongs became the source for folklorists to construct the authenticity of traditional music as well as to challenge the discourses of cultural backwardness typically seen in the postcolonial society of many Third World countries.

It is worth noting that these clearly defined notions of “Aboriginal music” constructed by Han scholars continuously influenced later Aboriginal music scholarship and educational curriculum. The first English dissertation of Taiwanese Aboriginal music studies, written by Loh I-To (1982), draws heavily on analysis of musical features of *Amis* and *Puyuma* tribes by emphasizing phonic textures, as well as providing information about music they used for traditional rituals and its meanings at that time. Later in 1994, the Wind Record Company released a series of Aboriginal music volumes, featuring the music of nine different tribes (Amis, Puyuma, Atayal, Saisiyat, Rukai, Tsou, Paiwan, Yami, Bunun).³⁵ The songs collected in these volumes are mainly from early folklorists’ field recordings, in which the naming of these songs (in Mandarin) is generally based on uses and functions. The book *Taiwanese Aborigines: Folksongs and dance*, published by Tien Chei-Yi in 2002, provides each chapter in the book to describe the features of song-and-dance of each tribe. The distinctiveness of each tribe, however, was deeply intertwined with the early folklorization of Aboriginal music and the taxonomy of tribes. When incorporated into the scholarship, such Han-centric constructs became authoritative and, therefore, continuously circulated concepts throughout the nation about what “Aboriginal music” was supposed to be.

³⁵ *The Music of the Aborigines on Taiwan Island*, vol. 1-8 (1994), Wind Records.

However, there are some debates about this kind of clear-cut musical boundary between different tribes that aims to “re-discover” features of Aboriginal musical traditions. First, it normally implies the goal of retrieving the original or authentic tradition, especially when that is often based on the dominant group’s perspective. Due to the continuous interactions of the Han with Aborigines, it is impossible to trace the authentic, “uncontaminated” nature of Aboriginal music. It assumes that the musical uniqueness of each tribe is a fixed characteristic that differs from its contemporary form, which more or less reshapes Aboriginal musical practices into a certain direction. The fear of losing such uniqueness or being increasingly Sinicized by Han culture is likely to be the reason why folklorists aim to establish such collections.

Second, it essentializes the nature of Aboriginal music, as it intentionally emphasizes the distinctiveness of each tribe and ignores the interconnectedness. It suggests that each tribe maintained a homogenous musical culture defined by its ignorance of outside influences. What such essentialist descriptions insufficiently explain is the uniqueness of each individual *buluo*. The traditional songs may share some similarities and mutual influences between different tribes and villages due to the geographic association. In other words, there are some variants of folksong in different *buluo* within the same tribe due to its interaction with adjacent regions.

For instance, the tradition of the Taromak *buluo* in Taitung County (Figure 3.5), which is the only *buluo* of the Rukai tribe in the County, differs from other Rukai *buluo* in other regions due to its interaction with adjacent Puyuma and Paiwan *buluo*. These three different tribal communities, even though each has its own language, were all subordinated to the Paiwan tribe according to the Japanese taxonomy due to the cultural similarities and highly frequent interactions (Lin, 2010: 5). Du Yun-Hui, a local Aboriginal cultural promoter and teacher in the Taromak who collected folksongs of the *buluo* recently, invokes his experience:

Compare to the western Rukai, the eastern Rukai has a different singing style in accents, last notes, and uses of syllables. As Du said, the collected song *Oniyo* is what elders want to inculcate the young to hang together...The differences between Takatomo Kurosawa's recording of Rukai songs and other versions in Pingtung county, Du said, become the evidence that both the western and eastern Rukai has its own tradition of folksongs... (*The Liberty Times* 2013, May 6).³⁶

Kurosawa's investigation could only cover Taromak (the former name is Danan) and was not able to investigate other Rukai *buluo* in other regions at that time (Wang, 2008: 115). However, the uniqueness of Taromak is rarely shown in early Aboriginal music studies after Kurosawa. Music scholars such as Hsu Tsang-Houie, Lu bin-Chuan, and Wu Rong-Shun collected Rukai folksongs and divided them mainly into "life songs" and "ritual songs," but most of them focus on *buluo* in either Kaohsiung or Pingtung county, which were locations not included in Kurosawa's recordings. Although studies have indicated three different Rukai groups in Kaohsiung, Pingtung and Taitung County, there is still a lack of discourses addressing the musical differences between these groups.

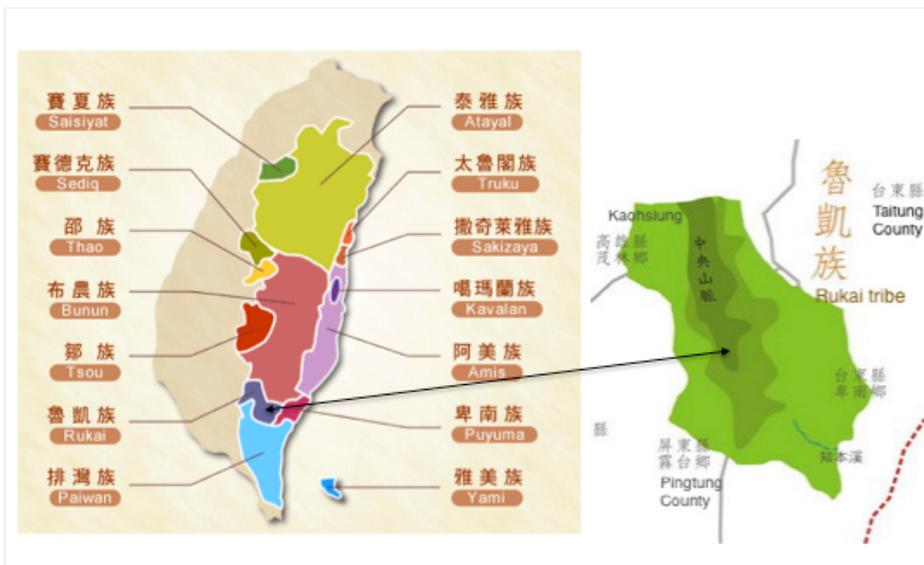


Figure 3.5: The geographic location of Rukai in Taiwan.³⁷

³⁶ Du then published the book *Dong Rukai chuantong geyao* (Folksongs of the Eastern Rukai) in 2013, which includes twenty-two folksongs he collected from elders in Taromak.

³⁷Source: Online data base of Digital Museum of Taiwan Indigenous People. <http://www.dmtip.gov.tw/Aborigines/Article.aspx?CategoryID=1&ClassID=1&TypeID=2&RaceID=7> (accessed, January 29, 2014). The English translation is mine.

Until recently, ethnomusicologist Wang Ying-Fen, in her re-study of Kurosawa's musical investigation, points out the differences between Rukai folksongs we normally hear and those in Kurosawa's recordings (2008: 180).³⁸ She further questions, does this reflect the differences between the western and the eastern Rukai? Or does it just reflect the musical transition? Whether for lack of historical evidence or because of its relatively unrecognizable features, this more or less explains that the musical uniqueness of Taromak should not be reduced into the same form as other Rukai *buluo*, as it exhibits blurred ethnic cultural boundaries and different degrees of heterogeneity within the tribe.

The musical categorization of different tribes within the early folklorization by Han scholars, therefore, helped to naturalize the boundaries and homogenize musical heterogeneity by establishing the distinguishing features of each tribe as the canonical formation of Aboriginal music. The professionalization of early Han folklorists seemingly ignored different degrees of hybridity within Aboriginal music and imposed concepts about what it should be, which to some extent did not reflect those singer/performers' lived musical experiences and practices.

³⁸ Wang points out that the Rukai songs in Kurosawa's recordings, unlike the versions we normally heard that always slow down at the part of pedals, speeds up at the part of pedals (such as the Rukai song *Onio*).

Chapter 4: Voices of Aborigines: Musical Performances as Negotiation

It may be tempting to consider the Aboriginal culture in the making in Taiwan as a process of negotiation that constantly involves shifting interplays between Aboriginal identity and an intervening dynamic. The meanings that the term “Aboriginal music” most frequently refer to in Taiwan today seemingly fall into what Aboriginal music is supposed to be as constructed by Han people; folklorized and exoticized Aboriginal music. As such it neglects Aboriginal musical practices in everyday life and the extent to which it opposes given genre boundaries and the hegemonic official perspective. Conversely, as many Aboriginal activists reject the negotiability of their identity, what they aim to establish is Pan-Aboriginality without assimilation. In order to avoid falling into an oppositional binary that presents performance from one side, I am observing what happens during these encounters between the two and further relate it to a larger picture of negotiation. As a result, I consider all their music practices as a spectrum of Aboriginal music that as Aboriginal performers are enacted according to different encounters and concerns.

The Third space, as Bhabha points out, acknowledges the potential to make the structure of meanings and reference an ambivalent process, destroy the mirror of representation in which cultural knowledge is customarily revealed as an integrated, open, expanding code (1994: 54). Unsurprisingly, the Third space theory has been applicable for analyzing the uses of non-indigenous/traditional elements juxtaposed with culturally mixed music production in urban contexts. This chapter, however, will focus on the musical singing styles that were generally considered “Aboriginal” by the majority in contemporary Taiwan. How can the concept of the Third space apply to these different encounters, which regard the manifestations of Aboriginal music in contemporary society as a symbolic site of negotiation between different dynamic power relations, instead of a binary of two fixed entities of culture?

One of the major concerns about negotiation is the seemingly unarticulated hybridity. The Aborigines themselves have rejected the idea that Aboriginal music is “hybrid,” considering it merely a part of their self-formation through which they express themselves. Musical hybridity, however, reflects more than a “simple borrowing of foreign items, and assimilation does not seem to be an adequate explanation” (Babiracki, 1993: 227). The question, I suggest, is not whether Aboriginal music is hybrid or not, but how it can be seen as a site within which individuals and groups dialogically interact with their imagined pasts and, therefore, reflect different perceptions of Aborigine-ness. I consider the Aboriginal use of non-lexical vocables in singing, an essence that became a representative symbol of Aborigine-ness for most of the Taiwanese population, as an essential part of their music by which Aborigines maintain their identity in contemporary society and negotiate between official, international, and indigenous perceptions of Aborigine-ness and modernity. With this being the case, vocable singing can be simultaneously a commodity, a spiritual ritual, a performing art, and even a transformative political project (Phipps, 2010: 221).

VOCABLES

Regarding non-lexical vocables as an intangible cultural heritage of Aboriginal music transmitted through oral tradition, ethnomusicologist Chen Chun-Bin (2012) points out that vocables such as “na-lu-wan-hai-yan” are generally used in Aboriginal songs, and that this practice allows the creation of new, variant melodies, and different combinations of vocables. These vocables normally allowed Aboriginal participants in group singing to lead or propose songs by starting to sing the melody, as a sort of proposal for all to join in different occasions in their daily live. If the beginning of the melody is familiar to participants, they sing along in a monophonic, call-and-response format. If it is unfamiliar, then the person who initiates the singing will complete it,

accompanied by clapping from the others as rhythmic support (Chen, 2012: 85). Such a characteristic of improvisation is normally seen in many Aboriginal singing activities. Chen Ming-Ren, a singer in the Aboriginal band *North Cat*, points out that singers traditionally own more room to improvise or interpret the songs according to their own feelings without taking care of the lyrics, because traditional Aboriginal songs mostly have non-lexical syllables rather than lexical lyrics.³⁹

The term “vocables” used by scholars mainly refers to non-lexical syllables without lexical meanings, but recent Aboriginal scholars and singers have argued that the ways those vocables are interpreted by Aborigines in their singing are closely related to their lived experiences or the ritual culture. Panay Mulu, an Aboriginal ethnomusicologist, points out that the vocables are specific emotional “codes” that Amis people connect to the spiritual world when we seek to understand them in the ritual contexts (2010: 128). The Aboriginal singer, Kimbo (whose Chinese name is Hu Te-Fu), also points out the role of non-lexical vocables in Aboriginal singing as following:

In *buluo*, we don't have “performing singing.” What we called singing is *gi snai*....We have a lot of **non-lexical vocables** like **na-lu-wan-hai-yan** in our songs. I understand more and more about how such non-lexical culture that beyond texts can be so bright, great, and powerful! We can wholeheartedly sing about a hawk soaring at the top of Dawu mountain and then diving into the ocean, without adding any referential lyrics. We abundantly and fully praise the world and all things on earth. For all time we just have few non-lexical vocables like na-lu-wan-hai-yan then it's already endlessly abundant.⁴⁰

These vocables can be used alongside improvised lyrics, but also appear in songs without any lexically meaningful lyrics; the melodies and meanings with those vocables are not fixed (Chen, 2012: 88). However, those vocables, when being transformed from improvised to fixed form, have been interpreted in different ways and gained a new function. According to Lifok (Huang Kui-Chao), an Amis elder and Aboriginal cultural

³⁹ Lin, 2012: 246. The singer Chen Ming-Ren's father, Chen Shi, is an Aboriginal music educator who dedicates in promoting traditional puyuma folksong singing.

⁴⁰ http://www.taiwan123.com.tw/main_digi.asp?id=103. This quotation is from Kimbo's interview with journalists for a press on June 11, 2005. The English transition is mine.

promoter, most modern Amis folksongs have fixed lyrics for the purpose of solo singing and performance, and this is what the Amis call “commercialized folksongs.” Panay Mulu also argues that the early “o-hai-yan” singing form used by Amis elders, compared to songs with fixed lyrics, has more room for personal creativity for singing and dance. The fixed lyric, she says, restricted the expression of emotions and negated the fluency of the traditional style (Panay, 2010: 107).

According to Bhabha, the Third Space constitutes the discursive conditions of enunciation that “ensure that the meaning and symbols of culture have no primordial unity or fixity; that even the same signs can be appropriated, translated, rehistoricized and read anew” (1994: 55). In a similar vein, ethnomusicologist Steven Feld’s concept of “schizophonic mimesis” calls attention to the possibility of sonic forms being re-appropriated, claiming that the commodity condition of music creates “new possibilities whereby a place and people can be re-contextualized, re-materialized, and thus thoroughly reinvented” (1996: 13). Due to its non-fixed and improvised nature, how might Aboriginal vocables as signs be appropriated and interpreted differently, and further illuminate positions of enunciation and the power relation within it? Those vocables, when being interpreted by Han majority listeners, have the potential to be translated or, more bluntly, exoticized into different meanings. As I illustrated in the previous chapter, the Aboriginal vocables can be a signifier of the exotic Other to be used and appropriated for cultural festivals, the popular music market, and contemporary Aboriginal song-and-dance performances. Those exoticized vocables are always juxtaposed with lexical lyrics to signify primitiveness for the intended, non-indigenous audiences (Chen, 2012). For example, one of the early Aboriginal folk songs, *Chu ge* (The pestle song, Figure 4.1), sung by the Bunun singer Malas Kao (Kao Sheng-Mei), includes the juxtapositioning of vocables and Mandarin lyrics as following:

Chu ge
The pestle song
杵歌

Transcribed by Chia-Hao Hsu

朋友啊 快來快來 啲 皎潔的 月亮已經照上了 椰 樹 來吧 大好
Friends! Come on, come on! The bright moonlight already shines upon the coconut tree! Come on!

夜色 來跳舞唱 歌 *Na-lu-wan-do-i-ya-na-ya- ho- yi-ya hey- na-lu*
Let's sing and dance in such a great moonlight! [Vocables]

wan- do- i- ya - na-ya ho-hay- ya ho-yi- na- lu- wan-do- yi- ya- na- ya- ho
[Vocables]

Figure 4.1: The juxtaposition of Aboriginal vocables and Mandarin lyrics in *Chu ge*⁴¹

In this song, when the vocables are juxtaposed with Mandarin lyrics that describe mountain-ness and the “motif of a music-making group,” it generates new meanings and connotations that were not there originally, but gain this association from the context; when such distinct Aboriginal vocables have been incorporated into the symbolic music world where the majority audiences are Han, they function as signifiers of Otherness in Han’s eyes. Some Aboriginal singers have strategically used those relatively common non-lexical vocables in Mandarin songs to cater to the “impression of Aborigines” in the eyes of Han.

However, to assume all the vocables used in contemporary Aboriginal songs are exotic would be arbitrary. While the understanding of Aboriginal nature appears to be adaptable for Aborigines themselves, their musical practices possess symbolic power

⁴¹This transcription is one part of the song demonstrating the juxtaposition of vocables and Mandarin. The part of italic fonts is vocables. The song exemplifies how the commercialized form of Aboriginal song became the signs for exoticness. Due to the increasing popularity of Aboriginal pop music initiated by A-Mei during the 1990s, Malas Kao recorded the album “*Chu ge*,” released by Shang-Hua Record.

through which group identity and tradition are constructed, maintained, and represented. In addition to the differences that Han imposed upon them, I argue that those influences from outside forces can also be adaptive for Aborigines themselves to redevelop their sense of Self.

In contemporary society, vocable singing permeates into various musical forms that neither fully remained exotic as Han audiences imagined, nor completely remained “uncontaminated” as an essentialized tradition. Instead of emphasizing such a dichotomy, I sought to consider the role of vocables in different contexts in relation to ethnic or inter-group interplays, and the multiplicity of individual or groups’ experiences. Timothy Rice (2003) sees experience not as “an inner phenomenon accessible only via introspection to the one having the experience,” but “begins with interaction with a world and with others.” Along with Rice’s approach, I frame my analysis around how Aboriginal vocable singing has been thought of and presented differently, and how it reveals the multi-layered interactions Aborigines have within different circumstances.

INTRA-BULUO SONG-AND-DANCE

With the government’s growing interest in promoting local development, Aboriginal culture has been vigorously encouraged under the official slogan “*buluo* tourism.” Such tourism featuring *buluo* subjectivity becomes even more exuberant during July and August every year, when most Aboriginal communities hold their harvest rituals/festivals. In response to the state’s recent tourist agenda, Aboriginal traditional rituals in many *buluo* have been divided into two types, one is for the *buluo* itself, and the other one is a government-sponsored united festival that incorporates several communities together. The former one, though not government-sponsored, has been greatly influenced by such a wave of local development in its industrial trend and cultural preservation. In some cases, individual *buluo* are moving beyond passively implementing

local government's regulation, actively engaging instead their own cultural uniqueness to develop such a combination. These *buluo*-specific rituals empower the individual community to construct its subjectivity by drawing on its tradition such as song-and-dance, folklore, or reconstructing the local landscape.

As the Taiwanese Aborigines include fourteen officially recognized tribes today, each tribe has its own traditional dialects, and so too do they have differences in vocables, song melodies, and intonations. As one of the relatively distinct Rukai *buluo* in Taitung County, Taronak, for example, seems to become an integral part of the County government's aim to promote local development. Since 1996, the community received the Council for Cultural Affairs' scheme of Comprehensive community building, which is dedicated to continuing traditional cultures and the development of local uniqueness of industry and tourism. *Kalalisia* (小米收獲祭), an annual traditional Rukai ritual for blessing the millet harvest, has gradually been transformed into a "festival-like" event that includes traditional ritual, song-and-dance, and various folkloric competitions.⁴² Such a transformation from a traditional ritual to a festival-like event opens up participation for visitors, and this, in turn, shaped the ways that individual *buluo* sought to present themselves while reshaping their own tradition.

As Bruno Nettl suggests, music is essential when the minority engages in activities whose role is to strengthen the integration of the group, and minorities sometimes react by maintaining their unique style and exaggerate the difference between it and that of the majority (Nettl 2005: 451). In this way, musical acts can become the vehicle for a statement of *buluo* subjectivity and belief. One of the essential parts of *kalalisia* is *talaisi* (song-and-dance of bamboo swing, Figure 4.2), in which they sing and dance around the swing at the central ground.⁴³ Such song-and-dance of bamboo swing in

⁴² The competitions included archery, wrestle, knitting, and folksong singing, etc. There are all considered as an integral part of folklore by the *buluo*.

⁴³ As the only Rukai *buluo* has *talaisi*, members in Taronak considered it as their tradition. When the bamboo swing at the center is swinging, other members, from elders, women, to youths, sing and dance

Taromak can also be seen in the neighboring Paiwan *buluo*, demonstrating the inter-group cultural exchanges that, in turn, become the uniqueness of Taromak that they can distinguish from other Rukai *buluo*. It then becomes the symbol of Taromak that has been incorporated into one part of the *buluo* tourism. Within this context, the songs for *talaisi*, however, have partly been replaced by the amplified, taped music for the circle song-and-dance. The music used in *kalalisia* includes several eastern Rukai songs that have been collected by local cultural promoters from indigenous elders and have been defined as the *buluo*'s tradition (or the eastern Rukai's tradition).⁴⁴ For instance, *Ira Iro Wa Iro Me Zane*, which is a Rukai folksong for greeting *kalalisia*, was presented in the form of a medley.⁴⁵ During the day, the local Aboriginal members also emphasized that these songs are the eastern Rukai folksongs that belong to Taromak.



Figure 4.2: The *Talaisi* in Taromak during *kalalisia*.⁴⁶

around the swing. It even becomes the symbol of Taromak recently when trying to develop the subjectivity of *buluo*.

⁴⁴ Fieldwork, July 2013.

⁴⁵ The Digital Music Archive Project for Taiwanese Indigenous People, <http://archive.music.ntnu.edu.tw/abmusic/detail.html?id=0504> (accessed 13th March, 2014).

⁴⁶ Photos by the author, July 19, 2013.

With such an emphasis on the distinctiveness of themselves, Taromak also hold some vocables singing of ritual songs in order to maintain the sacredness in addition to those amplified songs for *talaisi*. Before the *kalalisia* started, for instance, they sang the traditional ritual song *ayyaoy* (sacrificing to ancestors, Figure 4.3) acoustically without adding taped music, in which they seemed to intentionally distinguish ritual singings from other non-ritual songs. It is worth noting that *ayyaoy* can also be heard in other Rukai *buluo*, as ethnomusicologist Wu Rong-Shung's field recording of Tsingye (青葉村) and Haotsa villages (好茶村) illustrated (1995). However, what mattered was how vocables contributed to constructing *buluo* subjectivity. The Taromak's variant of *ayyaoy* adds local meanings through the uses of local ornamentation and new added vocables that can be distinguished from other Rukai *buluo* (Figure 4.4). The differences of ornamentation between these two versions can be discerned through comparison. In the version of Taromak (Figure 4.3), new added lyrics (the lyrics in the block) can be translated as "*talaisi* in Taromak has existed since the time immemorial," while other parts stay the same with other versions (non-lexical vocables such as "a-y-ya-o-y"). This new added part, which can be distinguished from Wu's version, illustrates that the lyrics with local specificity intensify the *buluo* identity beyond tribal consciousness.

The construction of Taromak subjectivity can also be associated with the construction of "folksongs." Instead of trying to judge which version is more original or authentic, I want to emphasize how the uses of vocables that associated with a local community can be one part of invented tradition. As local Aboriginal cultural promoters recently collected traditional Taromak folksongs from indigenous elders and compiled the book *The Eastern Rukai Folksongs*, such vocable singing became notated songs that tend to be taught to the younger generation. Gilra Gilrao, who is an Aboriginal nose flute virtuoso and a member in Taromak, however, points out that traditional Taromak singing is a relatively free and improvised form that exists without fixed structures, versions, and length. In other words, when those traditional singing styles have been recorded and

ayyaoy Taromak folksong

The musical score for 'ayyaoy' (Taromak version) consists of four staves of music in a single system. The melody is written in a treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a common time signature (C). The lyrics are written below the notes. The first staff has the lyrics 'a y ya o y ka na o da'. The second staff has 'o na o ko a bo o la o ko a y ya o y'. The third staff has 'a y ya o y' followed by a boxed-in phrase 'ka na i si da lo ma ge'. The fourth staff has 'i na a bo lo wa ne' followed by 'a y ya o y'. The boxed-in phrases are highlighted with a black border.

a y ya o y ka na o da

o na o ko a bo o la o ko a y ya o y

a y ya o y ka na i si da lo ma ge

i na a bo lo wa ne a y ya o y

Figure 4.3: The Rukai folksong *ayyaoy* (the Taromak version).⁴⁷

ayyaoy

The musical score for 'ayyaoy' (Wu Rong-Shun's version) consists of four staves of music in a single system. The melody is written in a treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a common time signature (C). The lyrics are written below the notes. The first staff has the lyrics 'a y ya o y o da ka na ma ba le o'. The second staff has 'wa le si ma lo da mo lo a y ya o y'. The third staff has 'ga le me la a lo la da ge me la vu la vo lo a ne'. The fourth staff has 'lri me lu ne o na lu me a y ya o y'. There are 'v' marks above some notes in the second, third, and fourth staves, indicating a vocal flourish or breath mark.

a y ya o y o da ka na ma ba le o

wa le si ma lo da mo lo a y ya o y

ga le me la a lo la da ge me la vu la vo lo a ne

lri me lu ne o na lu me a y ya o y

Figure 4.4: The Rukai folksong *ayyaoy* (Wu Rong-Shun's version of the western Rukai).⁴⁸

⁴⁷ My transcription of my field recording, July 19, 2013.

⁴⁸ My transcription.

notated, they have become objectified “repertoires” that tend to be viewed as authentic Taromak folksongs.

This brings us to a specific section in *kalalisia* called “folksong singing,” in which the Taromak Youth Group (青年團, *qingniantuan*) presented several traditional Rukai song-and-dance included *Posilivoiro* (Instruct and encourage from ancestors) and *Peleai* (Song-and-dance of warriors), etc. Again, the uses of local ornamentation and new added vocables in the Taromak’s variant can be heard in these songs, as in the example I have offered above. Regarding the Youth Group as a tradition of Taromak, one of the members in the community says:

Youth Group is the internal tradition in Taromak all the time. Our teenagers have participated in Youth Group and entered *alokuwa* to learn traditional folklores. We actually go up to mountains and learn how to hunt! Youth Group is the way that we pass our *buluo*’s tradition and folklores onto younger generation such as hunting and song-and-dance, etc.... As you can see here, this is the traditional song-and-dance of our *buluo*...⁴⁹

While the *buluo*’s tradition emphasizes the differences rather than the sameness with other Rukai *buluo*, Taromak’s versions of Rukai folksongs become the basis in which they claimed as distinctively Taromak. In doing so they implicitly reorient their variants as the sources for constructing the *buluo*-specific tradition as to draw the boundaries of heritage. It brings us back to one of the main themes in this chapter, namely how Aboriginal vocables are signs that have been thought of and presented differently in various occasions. When intending to signify the distinctiveness of the Taromak, the manifestation of those songs, in which vocables are associated to the locality, becomes the signifier showing the representation and group identity based on the individual *buluo* rather than the whole Rukai tribe.

⁴⁹ Interview, 19 July 2013. *Alokuwa* is one of the features of the eastern Rukai. Traditionally, it is a place that *tekunakuraguraru* (fifteen years old youths) receive tasks and take challenges in order to become adults. It gradually transformed from a center of traditional ritual and society into a place for teaching traditional folklore.

INTER-BULUO AND INTER-TRIBAL SINGINGS

In addition to the *kalalisia*, Taromak *buluo* also participated in Makapahay, an Aboriginal tourist festival hosted by the Taitung County government that includes different *buluo* in the County to celebrate together. As a parallel to the United Harvest Festival in Hualien, as mentioned in Chapter three, Makapahay is a government-sponsored festival that mainly features Pan-Aboriginal song-and-dance performances to satisfy the need for tourism while simultaneously highlighting the official stance of multiculturalism and tribal diversity (Figure 4.5). Again, with this being the case, the uniqueness of individual *buluo* has been de-emphasized within such Pan-Aboriginal presentations. However, such a newly organized festival by no means fully replaces or excludes the traditional ritual in *buluo*; rather, they mutually coexist and will continue to reshape each other.



Figure 4.5: Makapahay Festival. The advertisement on the official website, 2013⁵⁰

⁵⁰ <http://www.2013makapahay.com.tw/leading/leading.php> (accessed February 6, 2014). The Makapahay festival has been held by the County government for fourteen years. As the post shows, members from different *buluo* wear different costumes and hold hands together with the County governor to symbolize the multi-tribal culture and Pan-Aboriginal identity.

The 2013 Makapahay Festival, from 27th July to 1st August, featured each of the Aboriginal tribes in Taitung County on different days. The night of 31st July specifically featured the Rukai tribe, as Taromak *buluo* was in charge of the night's program, which included Rukai dialect teaching, traditional Rukai song-and-dance, and *talaisi* song-and-dance that allowed audiences to participate. However, their performance in makapahay, in contrast to what they presented in *kalalisia*, appeared to emphasize their Rukai tribal identity, as they identified themselves as Rukai in the festival and seemingly de-emphasized their differences from other Rukai *buluo*. Since the presentation was a festival-like “performance” rather than ritual, those members in local communities need to practice their song-and-dance for the festival. In other words, the festival becomes another site for them to present in addition to the rituals they have already done in *buluo*, and their rehearsals and performances therefore can be understood as another aspect of their musical practices.

The Youth Group in Taromak, as I mentioned above, also brought the song-and-dance they have presented in *kalalisia* to the festival, such as *peleai* (song-and-dance of warriors). Gilra Gilrao, who was the member in Taromak Youth Group, points out that the *peleai* presented by Youth Group was actually taught by teachers who are outside of Taromak. Their version of *peleai*, he further points out, is therefore highly similar to that in nearby Rukai *buluo*. On the contrary to intra-*buluo* song-and-dance, the similarities in *peleai* they share with other Rukai *buluo* highlight the inter-*buluo* ambivalence that de-emphasizes the distinctiveness of Taromak.

The other song they presented in the festival demonstrating inter-tribal ambivalence is “Dalubaling” (小鬼湖之戀, Siaoguei Lake Romance), which is sung in the Rukai dialect and normally is featured as a representative Rukai song. The story of this song is about the tale of Baling, a Rukai girl who falls in love with a snake at Siaogue lake. Its growing reputation among Taiwanese audiences led to the re-creation of the song in pop music style. A newly composed musical drama also sought to present the story and

combined elements of traditional Rukai singing.⁵¹ When this song was reaching wider audiences, however, there were debates about its origin and story as to whether it is truly a Rukai folksong. Resres Livulivuwan, an Aboriginal singer who is ethnically of the Paiwan tribe, released her album *Resres Return* (芮斯. 歸來) in 2004, which features several Paiwan folksongs. Interestingly, this album also included “Dalubaling” (Figure 4.6). “Allegedly, the song is a folksong from Paiwan Palirayan *buluo*, but sung in Rukai dialect about the beautiful tale of human-snake romance,” as written in the album’s description. Gilra Gilrao, according to his experience, also points out that the song “Dalubaling” is actually composed by Lu Zheng-Jun, who used the melody of a Paiwan folksong but added Rukai dialect to the lyrics. The song later became the representative Rukai song partly because Rukai people intended to create a story or song that could be associated with their distinct tradition.⁵²

In fact, “Dalubaling” has been sung by several Aboriginal singers and choral groups from the Paiwan and Rukai tribes in Kaohsiung and Pintung County, or even by Aboriginal pop singers from other tribes. Such an inter-tribal (Rukai-Paiwan) ambivalence shows that when Rukai vocables are associated with Paiwan folk tunes, Rukai people are able to actively re-create it as a Rukai traditional song. On the other hand, it cannot be completely exempted from a Han audience’s perspective since Rukai people chose to construct it as their own tradition at the time when the song became popular among the majority Taiwanese audiences.

⁵¹ “Dalubaling” has been widely performed and rearranged by Aboriginal pop singers and choral groups such as the Aboriginal band “AM” and Tai-Wu elementary school choral group, and music drama such as “On the Road” (很久沒有敬我了你) performed by National Symphony Orchestra and Aboriginal singers.

⁵² Interview, 8th August 2014.

Dalubaling

Rukai song

Transcribed by Chia-Hao Hsu

a i lha- i - na ma- ka nae le li- ka- tu- wa

se- nga ku lu- ngi- ba- li din- li- din- gi ku- lhe- na- i lni lhi- u

da ne nga ku- ia e

Figure 4.6: The beginning of Dalubaling (the version in Resres' album *Resres Return*)

In addition to these sections featuring the culture of a specific tribe, there were Pan-Aboriginal presentations in makapahay that incorporated all Aboriginal tribes singing and dancing together. Such an assemblage was in a similar vein as the “motif of music-making group” in the United Harvest Festival. What is worth noting, however, is the role of vocables in signifying Pan-Aboriginal identity. As ethnomusicologist Chen Chun-Bin noticed, Aborigines normally use vocables such as “hai-yang” or “ho-i-ya,” which often emerged in Amis and Puyuma singing, in such Pan-Aboriginal song-and-dance. As Amis is the most dominant tribe that includes the majority of the Aboriginal population, the vocables such as “hai-yang” have been frequently used in Amis singing and have been spread widely to different tribes in Taiwan. While they have subsequently been perceived by the Han majority, these vocables were then transformed into the symbol that Aborigines themselves use to represent their collective identity.⁵³

⁵³ Amis population approximately occupies 1/3 of the total Aboriginal population in Taiwan. <http://www.apc.gov.tw/portal/docList.html?CID=940F9579765AC6A0>, accessed February 8, 2014.

As the pronunciation of “hai-yang” is similar to “ocean” in Mandarin, the song has been interpreted more specifically as being associated with the ocean, Aboriginal culture, and coast-ness (Chen, 2012). While the Han perspective has imposed lexical meanings on the non-lexical vocable, it has also had profound effects on Aboriginal vocable singing. For Aboriginal groups this term became increasingly prevailing since the 1990s when Aboriginal music became popular in the pop music market. It was the time when Aboriginal activists sought to construct the Aboriginal culture that this term became a sign to be used to refer to the whole Aboriginal group, both mountainous and coastal tribes, in order to distinguish themselves from Han (ibid). As it particularly objectified the meaning of the non-lexical vocable, the term can also blur the given ethnic boundaries and symbolize the identification with the whole “imagined” Aboriginal group.

In the case of the Taromak in makapahay, adopting relatively well-known Aboriginal songs or vocables as a means to construct the imagined Pan-Aboriginal community seems necessary because the Rukai vocables are relatively unfamiliar to Han audiences and uncommon among Aborigines. The song of “hai-yang” (song of ocean, Figure 4.7), for instance, is an Amis folk tune that has been re-arranged into a medley. It became widely adopted as the theme song for many assembly circle dances in Pan-Aboriginal cultural festivals, as well as re-arranged by numerous Aboriginal troupes for touristic performances. With this being the case, the vocable has been transformed into the signifier of Pan-Aboriginal identity in a way that is different from its original context. Such a formation of group identity can also be explained in the case of American Indian music: when the people are engaged in activities through which they wish to stress their Indian identity, such as powwows or social dances, they use Indian music, though the traditional context of the music may be largely gone (Nettl, 2005: 451). On the other hand, this signifier of Pan-Aboriginal identity strengthens its own value in representing Aborigines when it has been popularized among Han and even foreigners.

NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL PERFORMANCES

In Taiwan, there are several government funded performing organizations such as National Chinese Orchestra (NCO) and National Kuo-Kuang Chinese Opera Company, but there is no official Aboriginal song-and-dance troupe that receives a similar scale of governmental support. In the recent two decades, the Formosa Aboriginal Song and Dance Troupe (*yuanwuzhe*), founded in 1991, has increasingly appeared in performance at events on a national and international scale, as their growing reputation in presenting “authentic Aboriginal folklore” has shown. Presenting themselves as a professional Aboriginal troupe, the troupe has also published CDs and DVDs of their performances, and has appeared in venues such as National Theater Concert Hall as well as at international festivals of indigenous culture. Given its international reputation, the troupe is a likely candidate to be designated as a national “cultural ambassador” who presents Aboriginal song-and-dance during the diplomatic partners’ visits.⁵⁵ In making Aboriginal song-and-dance as one part of the national culture, the manifestations of the troupe involve negotiations between different dynamics.

At its early stage, the troupe mainly consisted of Aborigines in Taipei who sought their own cultural roots based on a social activist movement. As the troupe sought to re-discover Aboriginal traditional culture, the members collaborated with contemporary choreographers, anthropologists, and ethnomusicologists to collect and study traditional Aboriginal song-and-dance with indigenous elders in different *buluo*, and present these performance practices in a modern stage-setting. They seek to present in-depth performances of traditional song-and-dance in concert-hall settings, intentionally striving to distinguish their troupe from those giving touristic performances in cultural parks that showcase exotic stereotypes. Thus, unlike those Pan-Aboriginal presentations in cultural

⁵⁵ As I mentioned in chapter 1, the troupe came along with President Ma to visit diplomatic partners in South Pacific area during the March in 2010 to “foster” the cultural exchange. Those performances were planning by the Governmental Information Office, ROC Taiwan. The troupe also performed in the celebration of presidential inauguration in 2008.

events like united harvest festivals, the troupe normally selects one specific *buluo* or region as the subject for their annually projected fieldworks and performances. For instance, their previous performances included folksongs of Puyuma Nanwang *buluo*, pasta'ay kapatol of Saisiyat, and song-and-dance in *ilisin* of Amis Tafalong *buluo*, etc. They aim to bring traditional song-and-dance with rituals to the stage, as well as combine those elements in the works of a contemporary choreographic troupe.

Even though these projects featured song-and-dance of a certain *buluo* or tribe, the troupe's members included Aborigines from several different communities; such kinds of projects required a large crew of professional dancers and singers with different *buluo* or tribal backgrounds to learn the specific song-and-dance numbers. Their budgets are mainly from governmental funding and revenue from performance, with revenue occupying around eighty-five percent while the governmental funding consists of only fifteen percent.⁵⁶ In other words, since the troupe relies on frequent performances to get funding, its recruitment of members happens frequently in order to conform to the demands of different performing projects. As some older members pointed out, when rehearsing with newer members, they realized there is something different, but the newer members cannot really tell what that is.⁵⁷ Such heterogeneity of member's background within the group to some extent erases the given *buluo*/tribal boundaries and loosens the associations between song-and-dance and certain *buluo*/tribe.

One of the major concerns is that when decontextualizing these song-and-dances from the circumstances of the *buluo*, the way they perform on stages have already been rehearsed and standardized. To some extent, the promotion of Aboriginal song-and-dance to enhance its international reputation implies the intention to refine and make it more sophisticated for performances (Tan, 2013). Their singing, when being presented on stage or in studio settings, seems to emphasize the quality and consistency of sounds, as well as

⁵⁶ According to CIP's proposal of "Setting up a national Aboriginal troupe" in 2012.

⁵⁷ TITV Weekly, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LR4X3kWeo_4&feature=player_embedded.

movements, compared to those in ritual circumstances. Their album *Holding Ina's Hand* (Figure 4.8), which features the songs of *ilisin* in Amis Tafalong *buluo*, for instance, presents loud and clear singing that conforms to the demands of “performance.”⁵⁸ Compared to the singing of *ilisin* in *buluo*, such singing in performances, though the troupe seeks to present it as it is in *buluo*, have relatively refined sounds that not only are closer to equal temperament than local tunes, but also lack the relatively casual responses of participatory spontaneity.⁵⁹ In other words, it is the aesthetic concern that transformed vocable singing into a “performing art” that emphasizes acoustic perception.



Figure 4.8: The album *Holding Ina's Hand*.

The Han anthropologist Hu Tai-Li, the former planning supervisor of the troupe, points out her experience as following:

⁵⁸ In 2006, the album *Holding Ina's Hand* won the Golden Melody Awards for Best Ethnic Music Album and Best Vocal Performance and also garnered a nomination for Best Album Producer.

⁵⁹ The Digital Archive of Taiwan Ethnography, founded by Academia Sinica, provides video recordings of *ilisin* in Amis Iwan *buluo* during the 1986, <http://www.ethno.sinica.edu.tw/dore/listm.php>.

I am always not satisfied when I listen to *yuanwuzhe* to sing Tsou tribe's songs, because the abundant sense of mountain was not there.... I realized that the dancers' steps, if not with the sounds that undergo the lives and circumstances of mountain, would become meaningless.⁶⁰

This statement seems to agree that Aboriginal singing presented in staged performances more or less misses some characteristics of its style as performed in original contexts. However, pursuing such a tradition of "mountainous" Aboriginal singing more or less falls into the concept of "uncontaminated" tradition that associates Aborigines with mountain-ness. The ethnomusicologist Qian Shan-Hua, who was listening to the troupe's singing for the project of Tsou tribe's songs, for example, pointed out that there were Western harmonies added to some of the songs. According to the director of the troupe, Hwaisao Fanusi (Chinese name is Su Qing-Xi), the former songs they learned were mainly from Wu Shan-Sheng, who is an indigenous elder of Tsou Kuba *buluo*.⁶¹ When the troupe revisited Kuba *buluo* to learn the song-and-dance, however, they realized that there were more Western harmonies added to the song, compared to what they had earlier learned from the elder. As Hwaisao points out, this added part seems to be brought by local young Aborigines who have incorporated influences from Western religious music into traditional songs. Eventually, these added harmonies were deleted when the troupe later performed in New York in 1993.

In this case, it was the troupe choosing to exclude the musical hybridity, though it reflects what the local Aborigines' lives are, when considering the vocable singing as an Aboriginal traditional art to elevate its international reputation as well as the legitimacy of Aboriginal heritage. It also turns out that the international perceptions of Aborigines influenced how they thought about their traditions and the ways they present it. When identifying themselves as the Aboriginal song-and-dance troupe to "represent Taiwan," the troupe emphasizes the "tradition" in which they have to satisfy both their collective

⁶⁰ Hu, 2003: 507. The English translation is mine.

⁶¹ Hwaisao Fanusi, an Amis elder, is the Chief Director of Formosa Aboriginal Song and Dance Troupe. Wu Shan-Sheng, an elder of Kuba *buluo* of Tsou tribe, is an Aboriginal cultural promoter and the director of Tsou Aboriginal Cultural Troupe.

memory and international audiences' perception. As Hu Tai-Li further points out, the most difficult part is how to capture the nature that those song-and-dance have been presented within the local cultural context when bringing those traditional Aboriginal song-and-dance to performances.

POSSIBILITY WITHIN THE THIRD SPACE

Considering Aboriginal singing as the Third Space, this chapter analyzes how Aboriginal vocables and dialects within the space have been re-contextualized, translated, re-juxtaposed, and re-appropriated. Due to its intangibility, the various manifestations of vocables singing in contemporary culture reflect the dynamics of power relations between different individuals and groups—from the government, academia, Han audiences, to Aboriginal communities. Regarding intangibility, ethnomusicologist Keith Howard argues that intangible cultural heritage differs from tangible heritage because it requires promotion through performance and creation as a lived experience; to maintain an original form of the intangible would still require imagining permanence where there is none (2012: 139). Along with this argument, while tradition is constructed and can be re-invented, Aboriginal contemporary music acts implicitly to reorient the imagined tradition to develop its contemporary forms, especially when Aboriginal singing is an orally transmitted tradition. These processes, therefore, involve the interplay and negotiation between different subject positions that composed what people think of as “Aboriginal music.”

Timothy Rice's approach to posit a set of nested nodes—the individual, subcultural, local, regional, national, areal, diasporic, global, and virtual, etc.—seem to influence musical experiences, on the one hand, and to themselves be constructed in part by musical practice, on the other (2003: 161). Instead of tracing all the nodes, I find the approach helpful in probing the heterogeneity of musical forms beneath a given or

imagined community and its correlations with different individual and group identities. In that sense, I consider all the different musical practices of Aborigines as one part of their lived experiences and cultural expressions. Either from intra-village rituals, Pan-Aboriginal cultural festivals, to national and international performances, or from on-stage, daily lives, to rituals, these are all the spaces that can be referred to as “on-the-ground realities,” or the “musical experience as constructed mental locales” in which Aboriginal musical actors and audiences imagine themselves experiencing music (ibid). These places, whether real or imagined, are always emerging from the liminal zones that exist between given notions of culture. Therefore, these musical forms are not given as homogenous, but becoming the site that Aborigines negotiate between multiple identities, otherness, and subjectivity.

Such a framework of nodes echoes what Bhabha suggests, “hybridity intervenes in the exercise of authority not merely to indicate the impossibility of its identity but to represent the unpredictability of its presence” (1994: 163). Such unpredictability, as manifested in the case of Taromak, can be explained by the roles of vocable singing in their song-and-dance as it involved not only the construction of *buluo* subjectivity, but also its inter-tribal Paiwan-Rukai ambivalence and interactions with the local government and Han audiences. In addition, the case of the Formosa Aboriginal Song and Dance Troupe reveals heterogeneity within their group identity since its members who learn the *buluo*-specific song-and-dance for the needs of annually projected performances are actually from different indigenous communities.

Similarly, inter-tribal ambivalence can be seen in Li Na’s book *The Song of Drift* (流浪之歌), in which she points out how the early 1960s forest working groups became an inter-tribal site that Aborigines from different tribes worked together. Shi Ya-Shan, an Aboriginal singer in Bunun Cultural Studio, says that Aborigines who were from Paiwan and Puyuma tribe normally worked together in forest working groups at the midland Taiwan, thus sang and brought folk singing from different tribes during working (Li,

2013: 130). Such an interaction led to the inter-tribal ambivalence in singing in which even Aborigines themselves can hardly distinguish which tribe the songs were originally from (ibid). All of these cases seem to suggest that it can hardly find a particular instance to represent the essence of “Aboriginal music,” or the signifier of a certain group identity, since new ambivalences and in-between forms of music keep emerging.

Along with such unpredictability, the given boundaries of genre, place, or identity have been continually erased by new groupings generated by heterogeneity and the complexities that lie beneath bounded cultural identities. Aboriginal musical practitioners, through different kinds of singing and its uses, seem likely to cross back and forth between those groupings according to different contexts and occasions. In this view, new groupings and identities keep forming within the Third space since subject positions are different in all the situations and different things are expected from us from those we interact with. Since individuals or groups have several facets of musical practices in their lives that are not mutually excluded, what is perceived as Aboriginal music is constantly changing. This provides the possibility of re-addressing the musical forms or identity markers that have previously been defined by dominant Han discourses, whether in a touristic setting or within nationalistic construction.

Chapter 5: Conclusion: Problematizing the Multiculturalism in the context of Neo-liberal Globalization

The drive to raise awareness of indigenous rights has grown in intensity in recent decades, not only at the level of local institutions, but also at the global level of communication that seeks to connect indigenous peoples in different countries. With the shifting national identity and the contested nature of indigeneity in contemporary Taiwan, the preservation movement of Aboriginal music has also grown dramatically over the last two decades. The recent national and international reputation of Aboriginal song-and-dance has given way to an increased emphasis on Pan-Aboriginal identity and has become an increasingly useful cultural capital in the political and economic spheres. With this being the case, it is not surprise that the protection of Aboriginal music today overly emphasizes the political (politics of indigeneity) and economic issues (economic exploitation), in which the state seeks for its legitimacy of existence in response to the globalized indigenous consciousness. However, such an overemphasis does not seem to effectively address the cultural-specific essence that Aboriginal music has in traditional society. Instead of trying to generalize about what Aboriginal music is, my aim is to illustrate that Aboriginal musical practices are more fluid than either the definitions provided by Han scholars or the “pure tradition” constructed by indigenist ideology. Instead of discrediting those studies by early scholars, this chapter attempts to challenge the ideology that sees Aboriginal music as an intellectual property associated with certain Aboriginal groups.

WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF NEO-LIBERAL GLOBALIZATION

Ethnomusicologist Steven Feld described the “celebratory” and “anxious” attitudes towards the effects of globalization on music. Regardless of which perspective one takes, the flow of capital at the international level has had a strong impact on

indigenous knowledge, and of course, music. Neo-liberalism would argue that global capitalism, while fostering the interests of corporate and private businesses, also facilitates a networking culture across the globe. This ideology at an international level, however, cannot escape nationalism, as it intersects with discourses of nationhood and citizenship (Boyd 2012: 265). As the contemporary Taiwanese state encourages cultural pluralism, many official discourses of multiculturalism describe the tolerance of cultural diversity as a key to “connect to the global network” or being the “participant” in the global village.⁶² In that sense, the nationalistic discourses that claim “cultural diversity” are closely intertwined with the embrace of globalization.

This brings us back to the issue of multiculturalism from Chapter 3. The official multiculturalist agenda in the context of neo-liberal globalization, when trying to incorporate plurality into a singular nationhood, can be merely a phantom of “citizenship” that puts the minority in an asymmetrical relationship with the dominant. Or even worse, when multiculturalism has been used as a slogan that the state employs to demonstrate its tolerance for cultural diversity, it in fact still essentializes and folklorizes Aborigines as “authentic Austronesian” based on the Han epistemology or international perception. This is perpetuated by the production of official cultural tourism symbolizing diversity, which regards Aboriginal status as a useful capital in the global market to gain the benefits of national and international visibility. This sense of multiculturalism, as it echoes Bhabha’s concept of the exoticism of multiculturalism or the diversity of cultures, is not sufficient in articulating cultural hybridity (1994: 56).

Neo-liberal globalization, to some extent, potentially becomes its own hegemony that nation-states are forced to follow and, therefore, has strong impacts on indigenous communities. It contributes to the generation of two kinds of resistance at the local level. First, it helps to motivate the resistance to domination since globalization to some extent

⁶² The slogan “connect to the global network” (*yushijie jiegue*) normally can be seen in Taiwanese official discourses of multiculturalism.

promotes homogenization. The process of homogenization, as Comaroff suggested, reflects how local “lifeways,” withdrawn from time or history, congeal into object-form, all the better to conceive, communicate, and consume (2009:12). Second, neo-liberal globalization also engenders resistance to cultural appropriation, which the integration initiative symbolizes (Oguamanam, 2004: 166). These forms of resistance jointly initiated the battle to claim indigenous music as a property that should be protected. The ideology of ownership makes the music detachable from its original context and, therefore, objectified as a commodity or product that can be protected.

In response to Aboriginal music being appropriated by national and international interests, the Legislative Yuan in Taiwan passed the Protection Act for the Traditional Intellectual Creations of Indigenous Peoples in 2007.⁶³ One of the basic purposes of this Protection Act is to prevent Aboriginal cultural expressions from being appropriated, ill-shared, and abused by commercial operations. With such emphasis, the Act basically aims to create a legal mechanism that ensures indigenous cultural rights in controlling their intellectual creations and their ownership. However, what the ownership system is unable to implement is to address what might be common to various traditional and indigenous groups without generalizing the identity of those groups themselves (Bowrey, 2006: 74). Such “commonality” does not reflect the complexity of the situation in Aborigines’ daily life and to some extent essentializes Aborigine-ness. On the other hand, when Aborigines are forced to accommodate the system of ownership based on neo-liberal ideology, they inevitably draw the boundaries between different groups and Aboriginal traditional knowledge. The neo-liberal ideology, in other words, is insufficient to address the indivisible nature of Aboriginal cultural expressions based on the holistic view that regards Aboriginal cultural expressions and their spiritual world as a whole, as asserted by many indigenous groups (Merlan, 2011: 121).

⁶³ According to the official website of MOC <http://www.moc.gov.tw/about.do?method=list&id=2>. Council for Cultural Affairs has been reorganized into Ministry of Culture (MOC) on May 20, 2013.

From the local perspective, on the other hand, the discourses of cultural diversity within neo-liberalism to some extent forced each of the indigenous groups to intensify its own legitimacy of existence through their capability in political, economic, and cultural spheres. To gain the support within such a neo-liberal context, local communities are claimed to emphasize their own distinctiveness that can be presented to other countries or communities, on the one hand, and to reshape a tradition that can conjure up the collective consciousness, on the other. In the case of Taiwanese Aborigines, the ongoing dialectic of global and local perspectives might be explained by the effects on Aboriginal musical practices brought by the international reputation of the Amis' "Joyful drinking song," which led to the intensified boundaries of "Aboriginal music." As I suggested in Chapter 4, Aboriginal musical practice involves the intersection between subjectivities of *buluo*, local tourism, and nationalistic discourse and international perceptions, especially when regarding how Aborigines associated themselves with outside forces and perceptions. In many instances, the neo-liberal globalization deepens the ethnic boundaries through alienating differences at the local level, as the knowledge and practices of the indigenous population can be simultaneously a distinctive feature in the global market and a means of self-construction to resist homogenization. The following sections highlight the problems when seeking to draw boundaries of culture and ethnicity.

ABOUT BOUNDARIES

Throughout this project I have constantly referred to "boundaries" to see how otherness and differences have been constructed. Here I further elaborate this idea. In Chapter 4, I discussed how Aborigines go back and forth between *buluo*, inter-tribal, and Pan-Aboriginal identity in different occasions. Their capability to invoke a sense of belonging and communal identity through music led to the groupings that were not confined to the clear-cut boundaries imposed by the government—tribe/*buluo*. Regarding

the recent government's report that lists fourteen official Aboriginal tribes as a basic dimension, can these units effectively explain all Aboriginal musical practices? What constitutes an Aboriginal tribe/*buluo*? In order to bring these into question, here I want to draw attention to the definition in point 4, Article 2 of the Taiwanese Basic Law of Indigenous People defining the concept of tribe in the following way:

Article 2

4. Tribe: refers to a group of indigenous persons who form a community by living together in specific areas of the indigenous peoples' regions and following the traditional norms with the approval of the central indigenous authority.⁶⁴

While this definition is so prevalent that most of the legal discourse related to Aborigines refers to tribes or Aboriginal groups (*buluo*) to basic legitimate units, its ambiguity, as to the definition of "tribe" or "Aboriginal group," leaves potential for a variety of interpretations of these concepts. As this report demonstrated, the inter-group interactions (either between Aborigines and non-Aborigines, or intra-actions within the whole Aboriginal community) mean that tribe or *buluo* are neither a static unit that is constantly located in the same territory, nor an isolated unit that existed independently without any outside influences. Besides, different criteria can generate different classifications of Aborigines, as the taxonomy of tribe nowadays is deeply intertwined with the model employed by Japanese anthropologists during colonization. Within this context, one can argue that the taxonomy of tribe nowadays is socially constructed. So what exactly are the boundaries between Aboriginal groups? Here Bhabha's notion of Third Space is useful. As he suggests, it is this liminal space that keeps challenging the discourses of polarity, generating the in-between-ness, migrating between different binaries or dualities. The Sakizaya tribe, for instance, has been categorized with the Amis tribe since the Japanese colonial period, until 2007 when the state adopted it as the thirteenth official Aboriginal tribe in Taiwan after their Name Rectification Campaign.

⁶⁴ <http://law.moj.gov.tw/Eng/LawClass/LawAll.aspx?PCode=D0130003> (accessed February 27, 2014).

The Sakizaya, as encompassed “within” Amis, are often ambivalent: wanting to emphasize their differences from the Amis to justify their campaign, on the one hand, but not wanting to overemphasize their differences lest they damage their strong relationship with the Amis people, on the other (Huang, 2013: 68). Its newly constructed distinctiveness is seemingly unable to deny its ambivalent relationship with the Amis people due to the long-term Amis-Sakizaya interaction. Since the Sakizaya are likely to go back and forth between Amis and Sakizaya identity on different occasions, it is this static state of categories that makes the definition of tribe so problematic in attributing cultural expressions to a specific ethnic group.

Also, heterogeneity within an Aboriginal tribe or *buluo* is seemingly greater than what the term ethnicity or ethnic group can express. It should also be noted that many Aborigines nowadays contact music in different tribes or *buluo* due to the relatively frequent occurrences of intermarriages and collaborative performances between groups. Often, the Aboriginal performing groups (e.g., Formosa Aboriginal Song and Dance Troupe) become interconnected sites in which members who come from different *buluo* with other members in a variety of ways (e.g., through the new Pan-Aboriginal cultural festivals or doing *buluo*-specific fieldwork for international performances); these song-and-dance pieces gradually lose their *buluo*-specificity.⁶⁵ As it has become clear here, Aboriginal music is unlikely to be the field where ethnicity is taken to be the only representative category of musical practices.

As Timothy Rice observes about his approach of a set of nested nodes indicating multiple musical experiences of individuals, the subject positions that Aborigines act in their musical practices reflect different groupings in relation to different demands or purposes. It marks the transformation of discourses of ethnicity that shift from the emphasis on certain ethno-cultural characteristics of a shared culture toward more

⁶⁵ For the traditions of several *buluo*, there is a major concern that it is not allowed to disclose their own traditional knowledge to unqualified members.

subjective identities that one enacts in different facets of their lives. It also is to be stressed that the concept of Aboriginal culture is neither a fixed concept nor an essence that can be reduced into certain traits within a clear-cut boundary.⁶⁶

Regarding hybridity, Bhabha suggests “to see the cultural not as the source of conflict—different cultures—but as the effect of discriminatory practices—the production of cultural differentiation as signs of authority—changes its value and its rules of recognition” (1994:163). In this sense, simply attributing to hybridity the kinds of qualities that have been associated with the objective musical features seems to be problematic. What constitutes hybridity is a highly subjective matter that depends on relationality rather than certain characteristics or essence; it only emerges within certain dialectical circumstances. As I mentioned in previous chapters, several of the songs that Taromak used for *talaisi* are taped music, which incorporated Mandarin, Aboriginal vocables, and folksongs in medleys. Except those non-Aboriginal elements, the eastern Rukai folksongs still have influences from neighbor Paiwan or Puyuma *buluo*. Should it be considered a musical hybrid? With this being the case, the hybridity within Aboriginal singing might be explained by the fact that its heterogeneity was based on a set of nodes that individuals or groups associate with each other.⁶⁷ Aboriginal song, which serves as a Third space that encourages elements from different tribe/*buluo* and outside influences, becomes a space in which Aborigines negotiate with outside influence and make adjustments. Whether from the perspective of physical location, ethnicity, or cultural identity, those Aboriginal groups or tribes are unlikely as fixed as they have officially been defined.

CONCLUSION: SINGING BEYOND BOUNDARIES

“Why Puyuma people must sing Puyuma songs?”

⁶⁶ Bhabha, 1994: 28.

⁶⁷ This echoes Bhabha’s idea of “productive capacities” of the Third space (1994:56).

Why Aborigines must sing Ho-hai-yan-na-lu-wan?"

- Hao-en⁶⁸

By using the Third space theory to address the aspect of multiplicity in identity and the productive capacity of creations, this study has aimed to explain Aboriginal voices that have been marginalized by the ideology of “pure” tradition. Throughout this report I have constantly observed the correlations between different tribes/*buluo* and between Aborigines and non-Aborigines. The nationalistic version of indigeneity emphasizing ethnic harmony (e.g., between Hoklo, Hakka, Mainlanders, and Aborigines) as the axis meant to suggest that the links between non-Aborigines and Aborigines are an essential redress to the ongoing new Taiwanese identity. In this sense, Aborigines become a necessary Other in neo-liberal multiculturalism, as it emerged not only in the government’s intervention in understanding indigeneity, but also in Han Taiwanese pop singers’ appropriation of Aboriginal voices (e.g., “The Song of Jolly Gathering” in chapter 2). On the other hand, Aboriginal singings remain a key feature for Aborigines who aim to claim their subjectivity and articulate indigeneity with the intention of emphasizing their relationship with their ancestry and the land.

With this ongoing tension between nationalistic and local versions of indigeneity, what emerges is the difference between how Aborigines experience their music and how “Aboriginal music” has been presented—these musical signs, as I have demonstrated, can be appropriated, translated, and rehistoricized, and not all of them must be interpreted in a certain way.⁶⁹ Thus, “Aboriginal music” is likely to be understood as a negotiated zone that is neither simply a unified and monolithic phenomenon, nor a static tradition in the sense that one seeks to reconstruct and re-discover. By addressing it in this approach, this study attempts to avoid the earlier modes of addressing Aboriginal music as a retrievable tradition.

⁶⁸ Tang, 2007. The translation is mine. Hao-en is an Aboriginal pop singer of Puyuma heritage.

⁶⁹ Bhabha, 1994:55.

Because of this negotiable nature, chapter 3 illustrated how Han associated exotic impressions with Aborigines, and how they folklorized the music of indigenous tribes. These dominant representations, which are based on Han-Aborigine interactions, have also reshaped how Aborigines experience their music (e.g., standardized touristic repertoires and the uses of vocables, such as “ho-hai-yang,” which are meant to intensify exoticness). For elaborating Aboriginal music as the Third Space, in chapter 4 I chose to analyze how Aborigines conceptualize and stylize their music differently in different occasions, as demonstrated by the different uses of vocables—included not only in *buluo* singing, but also in inter-tribal, Pan-Aboriginal, and nationally staged performance. The uses of vocables in Aboriginal singing or even in music composed by Han, therefore, become a network and an assemblage that constitute multiple facets of Aboriginal musical practices.⁷⁰

In many cases, each facet is often assembled by inter-group and intra-group interactions; none of them can be isolated from each other. Through tracing the uses of shared tunes or vocables across different groups, one may hear differences between those uses in and in-between. According to my interviews with members in Taromak, they normally consider themselves as *kalalisia*—a Rukai indigenous group in Taitung County, which is close to Paiwan and Puyuma tribes—but simultaneously do not reject their Rukai tribal, Pan-Aboriginal, national subjects, and even more different assemblages.⁷¹ It reflects that Aborigines’ capability to strategically participate in different musical activities become a way to respond to the outside world and encounters with the hegemony of neo-liberal ideology that emphasizes the essentialized difference.

Therefore, if we accept that the inter-group interactions and perceptions among different groups all contribute to the composition of Aboriginal music, it requires the de-

⁷⁰ Inspired by Timothy Rice (2003) and Tan Shzr-Ee’s concept of “songscape” with special regards to Amis songs (2012).

⁷¹ Interview, August 8th, 2014.

centralization of the asymmetrical relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal perspectives, focusing instead on networks that involve interactions across groups and regions. The gradual move to rethink all of the groupings beyond ethnic boundaries—from the “authentic Austronesian Aborigines” constructed by the early Han scholars, “Pan-Aboriginal groups” that cultural festivals emphasized, the distinctive individual *buluo*, and the “imagined Aboriginal community”—can thus be understood as a departure from the ideology that regards Aboriginal music as an essence of a “pure” tradition or a clearly categorized musical culture.

With the renegotiation of new Taiwanese identity, the state redefines the indigeneity and the role of Aborigines within the multiculturalist discourses. This process entails institutionalization, the state’s intervention in preserving Aboriginal culture, and the development of early ethnomusicological studies in Taiwan. While Aborigines are unlikely isolated from the outside world, their musical practices, therefore, serve as a space for them to negotiate the tensions between national and local indigeneities, as well as a means of accommodating the Han-centric perspective or effects brought about by neo-liberalism. This tension can be explained by the fact that the Aborigines whom I have discussed reshape their music-makings as more “passionate” to fulfill Han expectations, on the one hand, and also sought to indigenize their music as to construct their own sense of indigeneity, on the other. Through the discussions of how the meanings of “Aboriginal music” have been produced and represented beyond the “boundaries,” I attempt to avoid generalizing all indigenous communities, and all their internal groups, into one. It seems clear that the lived manifestations of Aboriginal voices become a representation of a process involving an intricate leaping back and forth between rigid boundaries and local specifics, which is where I aimed to address the possibility of music as a dialogical site between different groups in this study.

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