

SOUNDING THE ANCESTORS: SANGPUY KATATEPAN MAVALIYW  
AND THE ANCESTRAL SPIRIT IMAGINARY

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Sangpuy Katatepan Mavaliyw is a Taiwanese Aboriginal pop artist of the Pinuyumayan ethnic group. His albums have been acclaimed by Aboriginal listeners and Han-Taiwanese mainstream music critics for capturing the traditional Aboriginal sound and evoking the presence of the ancestors. In this thesis, I explore why Sangpuy's songs are understood to evoke ancestral spirit imaginary using a semiotic approach. I compare his music to traditional Pinuyumayan music such as *pa'ira'iraw* and shamanic songs to demonstrate how he uses similar musical gestures to evoke the sense of ancestral spirits. Other sonic elements such as the inclusion of the soundscape of a Pinuyumayan village provides a direct link to the lived experiences of the Pinuyumayan. I also position Sangpuy's music in the broader context of nationalism in Taiwan and how Sangpuy uses his music to negotiate Aboriginal issues such as land rights and environmentalism. Through this analysis, I demonstrate how Taiwanese Aborigines are incorporating their Indigenous ideology into popular music to carve out a space for themselves in Taiwanese society and garner more support for Indigenous rights in Taiwan.

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	iii
LIST OF TABLES.....	vi
LIST OF FIGURES.....	vii
CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1    Research Statement and Literature Review:.....	2
1.2    Background on Taiwanese Aborigines.....	4
1.3    Campus Folksong Movement and the Rise of Marginalized Voices.....	8
1.4    A Lineage of Prominent Aboriginal Singers.....	10
1.5    Organization of the Thesis:.....	14
CHAPTER 2. REFERENCING TRADITIONAL PINUYUMAYAN MUSIC: CODING OF SANGPUY’S VOICE AND MUSICAL ELEMENTS.....	15
2.1    Introduction.....	15
2.2    Theory: Semiotics and Meaning in Music.....	16
2.3    “Pai’lai’law”: Referencing Traditional Pinuyumayan Music Form.....	17
2.4    “Dalan”: Vocal Timbre and Use of Poems.....	24
2.5    Coding of the Voice.....	29
CHAPTER 3. ANCESTRAL SPRITIS AS IDENTITY, AS VANGUARDS, AND COMMUNITY.....	39
3.1    Introduction.....	39
3.2    Theory: Music, Community, and Identity.....	39
3.3    “Kianun”: Evocation of Prayers and Ancestors.....	40
3.4    Ancestral Spirits as Identity in the Past.....	41
3.5    Ancestral Spirits as Guardians.....	43
3.6    Ancestral Spirits as Community.....	47
CHAPTER 4. SANGPUY’S MUSIC AND SELF-DETERMINATION IN THE BROADER CONTEXT OF TAIWANESE NATIONALISM.....	52
4.1    The Role of Aborigines in Taiwanese Nationalism.....	52
4.1.1    Aboriginal Narrative in Taiwanese Identity.....	55

4.1.2	Aborigines Making Demands and Increased Representation .....	56
4.2	Theory: Formation of a New and Modern Tradition Based on the Past.....	59
4.3	Music as a Vehicle for Activism.....	61
4.4	Ancestral Spirits and Environmentalism (Geopolitics) and Self-determination...	63
4.4.1	“Yaangad” and Spiritual Connection to the Land.....	63
4.4.2	“Verelruwan”: Indigenous as the First Inhabitants of the Land .....	65
4.4.3	Using Music to Make Demands for Environmentalism and Land Rights (Self-determination).....	67
4.5	Sangpuy’s Actions and Getting the Support of the Taiwanese Public .....	73
4.6	Formation of a Polynesian, Pan-Indigenous Identity.....	79
CHAPTER 5. CONCLUSION.....		81
5.1	Other Prominent Aboriginal Artists.....	81
5.2	Concluding Words and Further Research .....	87
REFERENCES .....		89

## LIST OF TABLES

	Page
Table 1: <i>Pa'ira'iraw</i> multi-part vocal roles and their age-grade, adopted from (Lai 2015, 116).... .....	19
Table 2: Words to the spoken part in Sangpuy's song "Dalan" in Pinuyumayan mother-tongue and in English. ....	25
Table 3: Lyrics of Sangpuy's "Kiyau'las" (Summoning Good Spirits) in the Pinuyumayan language .....	27
Table 4: Lyrics to Sangpuy's "Verelruwan" in Pinuyumayan mother-tongue and in English. ....	66

## LIST OF FIGURES

	Page
Figure 1: My graphic notation transcription of Sangpuy’s “Pai’lai’law.”.....	20
Figure 2: My graphic notation transcriptions of the shamanic songs <i>pakalaqam</i> and <i>pənaspas</i> .... .....	22
Figure 3: Screenshot of the comment section on Sangpuy’s “Dalan” under Uki Baki’s video showing the praise that relate to ancestral spirits and his vocal timbre (my English translation).. .....	24
Figure 4: My Western notation transcription of the spoken portion in “Dalan.” .....	26
Figure 5: Comparison between Biung’s album covers and Sangpuy’s album covers .....	35
Figure 6: Pictures of Sangpuy in Pinuyumayan regalia with his warrior’s knife ( <i>tadraw</i> ) from the liner notes of <i>Dalan</i> . .....	35
Figure 7: Sangpuy showcasing Pinuyumayan children at his performances. Sangpuy singing “Malikasaw” with Pinuyumayan children at Tiehua Village in 2012 (top) and Sangpuy singing “Sadeku Na Senan” with Pinuyumayan young women at Tiehua in 2017 (bottom).....	73
Figure 8: Sangpuy onstage with his mother (on his right) during the Golden Melody Award ceremony for his <i>Dalan</i> .....	75



## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

The moment his voice starts, it's as if electricity went through your body, raising every hair on your body, as it prepares to be baptized by ancient culture.<sup>1</sup>

Judging by Sangpuy's soulful singing, he is suited to represent the voice of a new generation in Taiwan.<sup>2</sup>

These are just some of the many praises for Sangpuy Katatepan Mavaliyw's music by Taiwanese commentators. What is it about Sangpuy's music that makes listeners feel this sense of ancient culture, this spirituality? In this thesis, I describe the ways in which ancestral worship and traditional shamanism are interpreted and invoked in Taiwanese Aboriginal pop music through this case study of Sangpuy's music as well as how these songs inform self-determination for Taiwanese Aborigines. Referring to ancestors has not only been a form of cultural revitalization for Aboriginal singers, but also a way to address contemporary sociopolitical issues facing Indigenous communities. Singers use this religious terminology to assert that Taiwanese Aborigines are the descendants of the first inhabitants of Taiwan and appeal to a moral duty to preserve the environment. I investigate how Sangpuy uses this terminology in his songs as a strategic negotiation of Aborigines' status in Taiwan as well as proposing for authority and recognition as Indigenous people in Taiwan. This case study in Aboriginal popular music relates to important issues in Taiwan today such as of indigeneity, land rights, environmentalism, and sovereignty.

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<sup>1</sup> Praise from Wei De-sheng, a Han-Taiwanese film director, about Sangpuy's album, *Dalan*. 魏德聖 (導演): “當歌聲出現的剎那, 彷彿電流通過身體, 讓人全身毛孔張開, 準備接受古老文化的洗禮。” From: <http://store.windmusic.com.tw/zh/CD/SKM-001>.

<sup>2</sup> Praise written by the online journal, LaVie: “今年二度入圍多項金曲獎, 最後抱回最佳原住民語歌手獎、最佳演唱錄音專輯獎和年度專輯獎, 評審以「桑布伊的靈魂唱腔, 足以代表台灣新一代的聲音。」盛讚這位製作獨立音樂的創作者。” From: <https://www.wowlavie.com/Article/AE1701707>.

## 1.1 Research Statement and Literature Review:

In this thesis, I demonstrate that Sangpuy evokes ancestral spirit cosmology and sonic elements that index ancestral spirits in order to address current-day Aboriginal issues as well as garner support from the Han-Taiwanese. The issue of ancestral spirits being utilized for Taiwanese Aboriginal self-determination has been explored by Michael Rudolph in his book, *Ritual Performances as Authenticating Practices* (2008). In this book, Rudolph lists several important traditional rituals of Taiwanese Aboriginal groups that evoke ancestors and the ways these rituals subvert Han authority. One prominent example is the way in which a Taroko group offered raw liver to Han-Taiwanese school directors at a public performance event. According to Taroko tradition, after slaughtering a prey caught from a hunt, the hunters and their relatives would distribute pieces of the raw liver and eat the pieces (Rudolph 2008, 122). The Taroko would also do this for their ancestor-spirit rituals within their own families (Ibid.). At this specific public performance, the Taroko offered raw liver to these school directors to eat as a gesture of thanks, and when the directors embarrassingly pretended to eat the liver, they were greeted with whispers and giggling from the crowd (Ibid.).

Another example of invoking ancestral spirits would be Aboriginal politician Gao Jin Sumei's protest over the Yasukuni Shrine in Japan. In this protest, she demanded that Japan apologize for their actions towards the Aborigines during the colonization period and provide proper veneration of Aboriginal war victims who were depicted as "the souls of numerous war criminals" at the shrine (Rudolph 2008, 87). In addition, Gao and her fellow Aboriginal protestors critiqued the actions of the chair of the Taiwan Solidarity Union who had visited the Yasukuni Shrine that April to honor Taiwan's twenty-eight thousand war victims (Ibid.). Gao and the Aboriginal protestors not only showed pictures of their ancestors during the protest but

also called their ancestors to punish their oppressors through performing rituals (Rudolph 2008, 88). Rudolph states that by referencing ancestral spirits, the Aborigines are able to “point to an unquestionable religious identification as well as to the century-long history of stigmatization, both sensitive points in the conscience of Taiwan’s Han” (Rudolph 2015, 357). Rudolph’s book depicts several examples of how ancestral spirit cosmology is employed to subvert the authority of former colonial groups such as Han-Taiwanese and Japanese governments. However, this source does not engage with the ancestral spirit practices of the Pinuyumayan Aboriginal ethnic group, nor does it give any concrete examples of how these ancestral spirit ideologies influence contemporary Aboriginal music.

Sources on Taiwanese Aborigines tend to regard ancestral spirit ideology and Aboriginal popular music separately. Josiane Cauquelin’s *The Aborigines of Taiwan: The Puyuma: From Headhunting to the Modern World* (2004) provides a detailed analysis of Pinuyumayan shamanism, shamanic texts, and the lives of former Pinuyumayan shamans. Both Cauquelin and Rudolph’s books focus primarily on ancestral spirit cosmology and not music.

The sources that do talk about ancestral spirit ideology in conjunction with music primarily address traditional ritual music. Loh I-To’s “Tribal Music of Taiwan: With Special Reference to the Ami and Puyuma Styles” (1982) and Lai Ling-En’s “Song Classification of the Puyumas in the Village of Pinaski” (2015) both look at traditional Pinuyumayan rituals that involve music. While Lai (2015) includes a section on *senay*, the Pinuyumayan term for non-ritual music, she only discusses a few prominent Aboriginal artists. Chen Chun-bin’s “Voices of double marginality: Music, body, and mind of Taiwanese aborigines in the post-modern era” (2007) also describes the music of traditional Pinuyumayan rituals such as *mangayaw* and the different music involved such as *pa’ira’iraw*, *temilatilao*. As for more contemporary music Chen

(2007) discusses how prominent Aboriginal pop artists like Samingad and Pau-dull's albums incorporate elements of traditional Pinuyumayan music. Shzr Ee Tan's "Returning to and from "Innocence": Taiwan Aboriginal Recordings" (2008) also discusses contemporary Aboriginal artists and their contributions to Aboriginal identity in Taiwan. I go a step further and investigate how ancestral spirit ideology, in addition to traditional Aboriginal music, are utilized in Sangpuy's music and what he achieves in doing so.

In this thesis, I focus on Sangpuy's evocation of ancestral spirits in his songs and how this contributes to contemporary Aboriginal popular music. It is important to note that due to the scope of this project, I only engage with one artist's beliefs and artistic production in relation to ancestral spirit ideology and is not representative of the Pinuyumayan as a whole nor the views of all Aborigines. With this thesis, I hope to contribute to the literature on the intersection of ancestral spirit cosmology and Aboriginal popular music.

## 1.2 Background on Taiwanese Aborigines

Sangpuy Katatepan Mavaliyw is a member of the Pinuyumayan tribe.<sup>3</sup> The Pinuyumayan is one of the sixteen Aboriginal tribes in Taiwan. The others are the Amis, Atayal, Bunun, Kananavuu, Kavalan, Paiwan, Rukai, Saaroa (also Hla'alua), Saisiyat, Sakizaya, Sediq, Thao, Truku (also spelled Taroko), Tsou, and Yami (also Tao) (Taiwan's Indigenous Peoples Portal n.d.).<sup>4</sup> The Taiwanese Aborigines are of the Malayo-Polynesian cultural system and their

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<sup>3</sup> The term "Pinuyumayan" is the more recent term for the Puyuma tribe. Most recent online articles use this term as do Sangpuy himself on several occasions. Many scholarly sources still use the term "Puyuma," but the term is generally understood to refer to the people of Puyuma (Nanwang) *buluo*. As a result, many Puyuma people from the other seven *buluo*'s tend to prefer the term "Pinuyumayan."

<sup>4</sup> From the website: "Taiwan's Indigenous Peoples Portal" <http://www.tipp.org.tw/tribe.asp>. Accessed November 30, 2018. Formerly, only nine of these sixteen were officially recognized. Several of these groups such as the Thao, Kavalan, Truku, Sakizaya, and Sediq were newly recognized groups between 2000 and 2008 (Ku 2012, 94). These are the sixteen that are officially recognized as of today.

language is of the Austronesian language family (Chang 2014, 19). The Pinuyumayan have eight *buluos* (Aboriginal villages): Katipol, Kasavakan, Rikavong, Tamalakao, Murivurivuk, Alipai, Puyuma (also Nanwang), and Pinasiki.<sup>5</sup> In total, the Pinuyumayan are about 9,567 of Taiwan's approximately 569,000 Aborigines (Ibid., 118).

Taiwan, and thereby the Aborigines, have a long history of colonization. First, the Dutch colonized Taiwan from 1624 to 1661 through the Dutch East India Company. The Dutch exploited ethnic tensions between Han immigrants from China and the Aborigines by using "Aborigine militia to supplement Dutch forces" in order to control the rising Han population (Brown 2004, 37). The Dutch also placed sanctions and exploited Han farmers by placing a poll tax on Han residents, primarily targeting the Han at the time (Ibid., 39). The Dutch were subsequently driven out of Taiwan when Zheng Chenggong took over Taiwan from 1661-1683 (Ibid., 40). Conflicts in China between the Ming and Qing dynasty began to influence Taiwan, leading to the Qing rule of Taiwan from 1683-1895. At first, the Qing also tried to utilize Aborigines as militia, however by 1860s, the Qing no longer saw Aborigines useful in suppressing unrest among the Han (Ibid., 43). Subsequent years led to the depletion of Aboriginal lands as well as reduced income for Aborigines that removed any potential benefits of Aboriginal identity, making them "completely subordinate to the Han socially, economically, and politically" (Ibid., 53).

After the Treaty of Shimonoski ended the Sino-Japanese War of 1894-1895, Taiwan was handed over to the Japanese who ruled from 1895-1945 (Brown 2004, 53). Both the Han-Taiwanese and the Aborigines were forced to learn Japanese and attend newly-established

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<sup>5</sup> From the liner notes of: Wu, Rung-Shun. 1992. *The music of the aborigines on Taiwan Island Vol. 4: The Songs of the Puyuma Tribe*. Taipei, Taiwan: Wind Records. CD.

Japanese schools (Wu, M. 2017, 71). In addition, the Japanese government used modern artillery to force Aborigines to settle in “lower elevations where they could be more easily observed and controlled” as well as removed any remaining land rights claims of the plains Aborigines (Brown 2004, 54). An example of Japan’s use of military force on Aborigines is the “Wushe Incident” in 1930. During this event, Seediq chieftain Mona Ludao led a rebellion against the Japanese officials at an athletic festival hosted in Wushe Elementary School, killing nearly 140 Japanese officers (Hipwell 2009, 295). The Japanese government retaliated by firing cannons, missiles, and even poisonous gas at the hamlet of Mehebu where Mona and his entire tribe lived (Tseng and Chang 2011, 10). Eventually, Mona Ludao committed suicide and his followers either killed themselves, were killed, or were rounded up in internment camps (Hipwell 2009, 295). The Wushe Incident became so well-known that in 1990, Han caricaturist Qiu Ruolong produced the comic *The Wushe Incident* based on the event (Rudolph 2008, 58). In doing so, Qiu tried to recontextualize traditional value systems of the Aborigines (such as head-hunting or tattoos), earning praise from some Aboriginal elites for his “glorifying attitude towards head-hunting” (Ibid.).<sup>6</sup> In 2011, Han-Taiwanese film director Wei De-sheng further commemorated this event with a film adaptation called *Warriors of the Rainbow: Seediq Bale*.

After the end of World War II, the Chinese Nationalist Party (*Kuomintang* or KMT) fled from China to Taiwan and replaced Japan’s rule in 1945. The KMT imposed a period of martial law that lasted until 1987. Along with the martial law, the KMT made teaching Taiwanese and

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<sup>6</sup> Head-hunting is a tradition shared by many Aboriginal groups but was banned by the time Japanese entered Taiwan. Tattoos were a feature for groups like the Atayal, Seediq, Rukai, Truku (also spelled Taroko). Before Qiu’s comic, these were deemed as negative stereotypes of these groups. However, Qiu, and later Wei’s film, attempted to recontextualize and even romanticize these traditions. In terms of tattoos, groups like the Atayal and Taroko have reclaimed this tradition with fake (non-permanent tattoos) to bring back the cultural significance of tattoos (Rudolph 2008, 124). As for head-hunting, the Taroko do have their own theatrical recreation of the ritual using an effigy of a head (Ibid., 113).

indigenous languages illegal in schools as a part of the KMT's policy of "Sinologizing" (*Zhong-guo-hua*) Taiwan, as well as dictating a Sino-centric history curriculum for elementary and secondary schools (Wu, M. 2017, 72). This process, known as *Guoyu Yundong* or "Mandarin Promotion Movement," mandated that students in public schools must only speak in Mandarin. If anyone was caught speaking Hokkien, Hakka, Cantonese, or Aboriginal native languages, they were required to wear a placard on their neck saying "I won't speak mother tongue" until their parents paid a fine.<sup>7</sup> This program led to a general shaming of non-Mandarin languages and dialects in Taiwan and the subsequent rise of a generation who do not know their mother tongue as well as their parents. In addition to censoring languages at school, the KMT also censored TV and radio programs, and while "no prepublication censorship exists for popular music, music still has to be approved by the government information office before it can be broadcast by Taiwanese radio or television stations" (Robinson, Buck, and Cuthbert 1991, 131). As a result, for a long time, only Aboriginal elders retained their native languages. For the Pinuyumayan, as an example, only the elders (people above age 50) speak the Pinuyumayan language sprinkled with Japanese as a remnant of the effects of World War II, while people under the age of 30 do not speak their native language (Cauquelin 2004, 20). The forced Sinicization and the loss of land only added to the problems Aboriginal Taiwanese people already faced, and towards the end of KMT's martial law in 1980, statistics showed that the leading causes of death for Taiwanese Aborigines were alcoholism and suicide, and the rate of death was two to three times that of the Han-Taiwanese (Ibid., 228). However, the emergence of opposition parties (Democratic Progressive Party or DPP) and the rapid economic development of Taiwan led to

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<sup>7</sup> YouTube video: "Taiwan Bar EP8 Why do Taiwanese speak Mandarin?" Uploaded by: Taiwan Bar. Posted [June 2015]. Time stamp: 2:55. Accessed: November 29, 2018. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9t8g9WS0ha0&index=16&list=PLwItru4bLdHx3nnUrFUBFWwMHuo\\_4Yx9P](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9t8g9WS0ha0&index=16&list=PLwItru4bLdHx3nnUrFUBFWwMHuo_4Yx9P)

many positive social changes after the lifting of martial law towards the end of 1980s (Robinson, Buck, and Cuthbert 1991, 130).

### 1.3 Campus Folksong Movement and the Rise of Marginalized Voices

When the Nationalists moved into Taiwan from China in 1949, they brought their songs with them (Robinson, Buck, and Cuthbert 1991, 131). Their music intermingled with the already popular Japanese music styles such as *Enka* that deeply influenced Taiwan's culture due to the fifty years of colonization (Ibid.). Japanese *Enka* had shaped pop treatments of Aboriginal music as well, such as the adoption of *Enka* melodic motifs in the Amis' traditional music, *ladhiw*, which reshaped these songs to "fit the pop industry's four-square phrasings while retaining modal aspects and vocal style" (Tan, S. E. 2012, 180). However, starting from 1950s to the mid-1970s, U.S. popular music began to dominant the Taiwanese youth market and "preference patterns closely resembled those of the United States" (Robinson, Buck, and Cuthbert 1991, 131).

Starting in the late 1970s, college students began to call for their "own song," leading to the "Campus Folksong Movement" and the rise of original Taiwanese music (Robinson, Buck, and Cuthbert 1991, 131). While this movement started with highly original music, it became more commercialized as the movement became more popular. Many artists began to combine "Western and Chinese popular music with sometimes a Japanese touch to it" (Ibid.). From 1983-1984, this movement also saw the rise of politicized music, such as Lo Ta-yo's "Tamsui River" (超級市民) (Ibid.). In this song, Lo used satire to criticize the rampant pollution in Taipei City, especially the trashing of Tamsui River. Along with the Campus Folksong Movement, other movements such as *Min'ge Yundong* (Folksong Movement) as well as the Grassroots Movement also arose and singers started to incorporate their mother tongues into popular music idioms (Lin,



T. 2011, 107). For example, rock singer, Lin Qiang started singing songs in Hoklo dialect, which inspired Hakka singers like Lin Shengxiang to write songs in Hakka (Ibid., 108).<sup>8</sup> While people believed the Campus Folk Movement only temporarily fixed the problem of foreign music domination in Taiwan, the movement has also been praised as Taiwanese musicians “using their own traditions in combination with Western and even Japanese styles of popular music forms” (Robinson, Buck, and Cuthbert 1991, 134). One author from Taiwan’s newspaper, the *United Daily News*, writes:

The rise of the recording industry can be viewed as one form of the chain reactions to the lifting of martial law. There was a sudden outcry of voices that were rarely heard or found acceptable in the past. Not only was the concept of a ‘beautiful voice’ redefined but beauty in the form [i.e., the physical appearance of performers] was gradually rejected. (Robinson 1991, Buck, and Cuthbert 1991, 134)

This movement, coinciding with the democratization of Taiwan, resulted in the opening of politically suppressed voices in Taiwan. Prior to the Campus Folksong Movement, the market for songs in native languages and dialects were very limited. Songs that were in native languages were mostly the *Enka*-influenced songs, often considered to be songs that older generations listened to. After this movement, Han-Taiwanese and Aboriginal artists became more encouraged to sing in their native languages and even addressed political messages in their songs. It also allowed Taiwanese musicians to be more creative with their music through mixing contemporary Western popular genres with Chinese and Japanese music styles at the time.

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<sup>8</sup> In Lin Shengxiang’s own words: “I probably would not call myself an adherent of the Grassroots Movement. [But,] I heard Lin Qiang sing in Hoklo when nobody had done that before, and I was deeply impressed. And then I thought, well, maybe I could also do the same in Hakka. It is my Hakka rock ‘n roll. Then, here came the environmental movement. I just jumped in.” (Lin 2011, 108). Lin Shengxiang is an active singer who used his songs not only to revitalize the Hakka dialect in Taiwan but also to protest the building of Meinong Dam in Hakka neighborhoods in 1993. As for the Hoklo dialect, it is also called Minnan or Hokkien. In Taiwan, it is commonly called Taiwanese due to its own variations.

#### 1.4 A Lineage of Prominent Aboriginal Singers

One prominent artist who emerged during Campus Folksong Movement is a Pinuyumayan singer called Pau-dull (Chen Chien-nien). Pau-dull was inspired by the Modern Folksong Movement of the 1970s, where Taiwanese singers modeled themselves on the American stars of the U.S. Folk Revival Movement such as Joan Baez and Bob Dylan (Chen 2007, 227). By the 1990s, this particular sound of the Modern Folksong Movement carried a lot of nostalgia because it carried childhood memories of many Taiwanese decision-makers in trade and professions who were students during the movement (Ibid.). In 2000, Pau-dull won the Golden Melody Award for the best male vocalist and best songwriter for his album, *O-Hi-Yan Ocean* (Ibid., 224).<sup>9</sup> This award was monumental because he had single-handedly won against many famous Han-Taiwanese celebrities such as David Tao, Lee Hom Wang, and Jacky Cheung that year.<sup>10</sup> Similar to the singers of the Campus Folksong Movement, Pau-dull sang in the Pinuyumayan native language in this album, mixed with songs in Mandarin Chinese.

In addition to singing songs in the Pinuyumayan native language, Pau-dull also incorporated many aspects of Pinuyumayan traditional music into his album. One integral element he includes in the album *O-Hi-Yan Ocean* is the use of vocables. The full vocable, “*naluwan haiyang*,” is often used in many Aboriginal folksongs to describe deep emotions. Since many Aboriginal folksongs have no titles, they are simply addressed as “*naluwan haiyan*” (Chen 2012, 84).<sup>11</sup> Pau-dull’s song, “*Ocean*,” features the vocable “*haiyan*” and a rising melodic

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<sup>9</sup> The Golden Melody Award (GMA) is Taiwan’s version of the Grammy Awards.

<sup>10</sup> 陶喆、王力宏、張學友. These are artists who are still very popular today. For more information on Pau-dull and the award visit the website: <http://www.tpmw.org.tw/index.php/%E9%99%B3%E5%BB%BA%E5%B9%B4>.

<sup>11</sup> Aboriginal singer, Hu Defu (Kimbo) states: “when we heartily want to sing, we want *naluwan haiyan*.” Chen Chun-bin describes “*haiyan*” as a popular Aboriginal way to spell the vocable. This spelling also differentiates the vocable from the English transliteration of the Mandarin Chinese term, “*haiyang*” (ocean), which sets this apart as an Aboriginal concept.

pattern along with the syllables to remind Aboriginal listeners of sing-along songs, something he also tries to do in his concerts (Chen 2007, 226). These sing-alongs are settings in traditional Aboriginal society in which more than two people of the same age-group sing together (Ibid., 136). In addition, Pau-dull's track "Zhanglao de dingling" [The elder's advice] included a sample of the Pinuyumayan ritual song *parairaw*, the ritual song sung in the great hunting ritual (Ibid., 229).<sup>12</sup> While Pau-dull encountered complications for using this sample, Pau-dull's song allowed the Pinuyumayan and by extension, the Han-Taiwanese, to listen to the ritual song in a non-ritual occasion (Ibid.).<sup>13</sup> Even though some critics say Pau-dull's music may not sound very Aboriginal due to Pau-dull's "contemporary and bluesy" sound, he uses "jokes, the sounds of motorbikes, rain, and trees" that evoke "the aboriginal feel" (Tan, S. E. 2008, 232). Pau-dull's use of traditional Pinuyumayan music elements and the native language made his Golden Melody Award in 2000 all the more monumental.

The same year Pau-dull won the Golden Melody Award, his niece, Samingad Puruburubuane (Chi Hsiao-Chun) was awarded the Golden Melody Award for Best New Artists for her album, *Voice of Puyuma* (太陽風草原的聲音) (Wu, Q. 2016). Although her song, "Myth," is the same song as her uncle's "Zouhuo chuantong" (Give Spirit to Tradition), Samingad sings it entirely in Pinuyumayan lyrics in her album (Chen 2007, 229). This song was also praised for Samingad's way of showing pride in her hometown (Nanwang *buluo*) as well as

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<sup>12</sup> While Chen Chun-bin (Chen 2007) writes this ritual song cycle as "*parairaw*" but also as "*pairairaw*" (Chen 2007, 117), other Taiwanese sources such as (Lai 2015) writes it as "*pa'ira'iraw*." I use the "*pa'ira'iraw*" spelling throughout the rest of my thesis.

<sup>13</sup> Chen Chun-bin later explains: "To avoid blaspheming the monument, the Puyuma Aborigines are not allowed to sing or even to talk about the *parairaw* outside the ritual period. They therefore need a quotidian form of music that allows them to connect to their roots without blaspheming the monument, and the non-ritual, vocable-centric song performs this function" (Chen 2007, 138).

her way of pursuing the revitalization of traditional culture (Wu, Q. 2016).<sup>14</sup> In a fashion similar to that of Pau-dull, Samingad also includes traditional Pinuyumayan ritual songs in her album. Her song, “Emaya-a-yam (Traditional version)” is a direct performance of a traditional ‘*emaya-ayam*’ song sung by Pinuyumayan women.<sup>15</sup> Samingad had also been featured numerous times on the Taiwanese talk show, *Kangsi’s Coming*, where she demonstrated singing in the Pinuyumayan language in front of many Taiwanese celebrities.<sup>16</sup>

Finally, in 2006, Kimbo (Hu De-fu) was awarded six categories at the 2006 Golden Melody Award for his first official album called *In a Flash* (Gao 2018). Kimbo was born in 1950 and is of Pinuyumayan and Paiwan heritage (Tribe-Asia n.d.).<sup>17</sup> He was drawn to gospel music at an early age, particularly American Southern spirituals, due to similarities he had found with indigenous music, and his later music exhibit a “unique blend of elements of Taiwanese indigenous music and Western folk and blues” (Ibid.). While Kimbo’s first official album was not recorded until 2005, Kimbo was active as a singer-songwriter and heavily engaged with

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<sup>14</sup> From the 台灣流行音樂維基館 website: “她的歌曲從所表達的情感來分類的話，大致可以分為兩類：第一類表達對民族文化的自豪以及對故鄉的讚美，比如〈神話〉中對民族文化源頭的追溯和對古老文明煥發新生的嚮往。” My translation: “The emotions of Samingad’s music can be divided in to two categories. One is to express her pride and praise for her hometown’s ethnic culture, for example, the way the song “Myth” pursues ethnic culture’s origins and the revitalization of ancient culture.”

<sup>15</sup> For Samingad’s version of *Emaya’ayam*: Chi, Hsiao-Chun. 1999. *The Voices of Puyuma*. Track 9: Emaya-a-yam (Traditional Version) (婦女除草完工祭古調 (傳統祭儀版)). Taipei, Taiwan: Magic Stone. CD. For Samingad, there does not seem to be any complications regarding a commercial recording of *emaya-a-yam* as opposed to Pau-dull’s sampling of *pa’ira’iraw*. The women’s ritual song, *emaya-a-yam*, is also often featured at festivals and cultural demonstrations for tourists such as at the Formosan Aboriginal Culture Village (九族文化村). For a recording of *Emaya’ayam* as performed in a *buluo*: Wu, Rung-Shun. 1992. *The music of the aborigines on Taiwan Island Vol. 4: The Songs of the Puyuma Tribe*. Taipei, Taiwan: Wind Records. CD.

<sup>16</sup> YouTube video: “2004.08.05 康熙來了完整版(第三季第 20 集) 原住民女歌手—紀曉君、高慧君、溫嵐.” Uploaded by: 康熙好經典. Published [Jan 15, 2014]. Time stamp: 2:13. Accessed: November 29, 2018. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8-bbPgTauUE&t=365s>.

<sup>17</sup> In a recent personal interaction with Dr. DJ Hatfield from Berklee College of Music, he informed me that Kimbo no longer identified with his Pinuyumayan lineage, and instead only chose to identify as Paiwan. While the articles from Tribe-Asia and Taiwan Today (Gao 2018) refer to Kimbo as a Pinuyumayan singer, Kimbo himself might not identify as such, however, I would need more information on Kimbo’s own perspectives on this issue.

politics since the 1970s. Kimbo has been dubbed the “godfather of aboriginal folk songs” and is considered a pioneer of the Campus Folksong Movement, during which he often sang about the unfair treatment Taiwanese Aborigines have suffered (Taiwan International Ethnographic Film Festival 2017). In fact, the “sing our own songs” movement during the Campus Folksong Movement was widely considered to have originated with Kimbo’s solo concert in 1974 in which he sang the song “Bulai Naniyam Kalalumayan” (Beautiful Rice Grains) by Pinuyumayan songwriter Baliwakes (Gao 2018).<sup>18</sup> Due to Kimbo’s political messages as well as his works becoming “anthems for the nation’s political reform campaigns,” he was censored for a few years by the KMT authoritarian government at the time (Ibid.). However, in 1984, Kimbo established the Taiwan Indigenous Peoples’ Rights Development Association and advocated for reclaiming land from Han-owned businesses and the Taiwanese government, preserving indigenous names, and the forced prostitution of Indigenous girls (Tribe-Asia n.d.).

Sangpuy rose into prominence after the accomplishments of these Aboriginal singers. By the time Sangpuy’s first album, *Dalan*, was published in 2012, much progress had been made by Taiwanese Aborigines. Early on in Kimbo’s career, Kimbo was censored for his political messages before the democratization of Taiwan. After the democratization of Taiwan, Kimbo was able to be much more vocal about Indigenous issues on top of the association he helped establish to promote Indigenous rights in Taiwan. The Campus Folksong Movement, especially the “sing our own song” movement during the 1970’s, spurred not only previously marginalized Han-Taiwanese voices but also the voices of prominent Aboriginal musicians like Pau-dull and Kimbo. By the 2000s, Aboriginal popular music was acknowledged nationwide, as evidenced by

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<sup>18</sup> Incidentally, Baliwakes (陸森寶) was also Pau-dull’s late grandfather (Gao 2018). Both Pau-dull and Samingad have their own versions of “Bulai Naniyam Kalalumayan” in their albums and are considered to be those who carry on Baliwakes’s legacy. Baliwakes was an advocate of composing in the Pinuyumayan mother tongue even during the days of Japanese colonization, and many of his songs became classic Pinuyumayan songs today.

both Pau-dull and Samingad's Golden Melody Awards within the same year and Samingad's appearance on public television shows. Sangpuy can be considered a successor to Pau-dull and Kimbo with his commitment to creating popular music solely in his Aboriginal language (Gao 2018).

#### 1.5 Organization of the Thesis:

In Chapter 2, I discuss Sangpuy's first album, *Dalan*, and the musical gestures he uses that are indexical of ancestral spirits. I demonstrate how Sangpuy draws from traditional Pinuyumayan music such as *Pa'ira'iraw* and shamanic texts. I also demonstrate how his voice evokes a sense of ancestral spirits for Taiwanese listeners. In Chapter 3, I investigate social implications behind Sangpuy's strong adherence to ancestral spirit imagery and his use of associated sonic elements. Finally, in Chapter 4, I position Sangpuy's songs and his evocation of ancestors in the broader discourse of nationalism in Taiwan. I also describe the ways his songs and his activism help elicit support from the non-Aboriginal community for Indigenous rights in Taiwan.

## CHAPTER 2

### REFERENCING TRADITIONAL PINUYUMAYAN MUSIC: CODING OF SANGPUY'S VOICE AND MUSICAL ELEMENTS

#### 2.1 Introduction

Sangpuy Katatepan Mavaliyw's voice has been praised by both Aboriginal and Han-Taiwanese music critics as evocative of the presence of ancestral spirits. Wind Music, the record label known for producing music by Aboriginal artists like Sangpuy, promotes his first album, *Dalan*, with a promise to transport listeners "across time and space, back to a time before the boundaries of person to person, and tribe to tribe" (Wind Music n.d.).<sup>19</sup> A-mei (Chang Hui-mei 張惠妹), one of the most famous singers in the Mando-pop industry, herself a Pinuyumayan, states that Sangpuy's voice is "just like the Aboriginal warrior knife at his waist, always able to cut through into the listener's heart. Soft but at the same time gently reflecting the night's moonlight, very moving" (Ibid.). Wang Molin, a Han-Taiwanese film worker, writes that Sangpuy's use of Pinuyumayan mother tongue is "a way to penetrate the spirit" and that "although foreign to us, evokes the prehistoric voice, giving us all goosebumps. This sound with hidden power surpasses the totemized music industry, and he confidently announces his existence to the world" (Ibid.). From these quotes, both Aboriginal and Han-Taiwanese people find Sangpuy's songs, especially his voice, evocative of the presence or idea of ancestral spirits.

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<sup>19</sup> From the Wind Music (風潮音樂) official website for Sangpuy's *Dalan*:

<http://store.windmusic.com.tw/zh/CD/SKM-001>. My English translation and synopsis from the original Chinese:

“透過歌聲的穿透力、雙管鼻笛的幽幽浸染、口簧琴的跳動節奏、以及弦樂優雅與磅礴兼備的氣勢，讓人們不自覺地閉上眼睛，跨越語言與時空的藩籬，回到人與人、族與族劃下壁壘分明界線之前的曾經。” For A-mei's comments: “他的聲音就像原住民勇士腰間的那把刀，總能鋒利的鑽進聆聽者的心臟。溫柔時卻又能溫柔的反映夜裡的月光、讓人動容！” For Wang Molin's comments: “母語，與其說是一種身分的辨識，不如說是穿透魂魄的一種召喚。桑布伊的聲音，喚醒了我們對起源的記憶，他歌中的母語，於我們雖為陌生，聽來卻如史前的聲音甦醒，讓皮膚都能振動起來。這種蘊藏著豐盛能量的聲音，來自他超越了當前被圖騰化的原音產業，而充滿自信地向世人宣告著他真實的存在。”

Using a semiotic approach to understand the connection between sonic phenomena and lived experience, I argue that sonic gestures in Sangpuy's music specifically index ancestral spirits. These factors include musical gestures that are similar to traditional Pinuyumayan shamanic songs, traditional ritual song forms like *pa'ira'iraw*, as well as soundscapes of a Pinuyumayan *buluo*. Through analyzing these factors, I demonstrate how Sangpuy presents indigeneity in the broader Taiwanese society.

## 2.2 Theory: Semiotics and Meaning in Music

I use Peircean model of semiotics as described by Thomas Turino to analyze how music embodies specific meanings (1999). There are three basic elements to Peircean semiotics: the sign (something that stands for something else), the object (the entity or concept represented by the sign), and the interpretant (the effect created by bringing the sign and object together in a perceiver's mind) (Ibid., 222). Turino argues that music "involves signs of feeling and experience rather than the types of mediational signs that are about something else" (Ibid., 224). This sign-object experience can be a feeling caused by a sign, a physical reaction to a sign, or a linguistic-based concept (Ibid.). I primarily describe Sangpuy's use of index, which is a "sign that is related to its object through co-occurrence in actual experience" (Ibid., 227). Turino describes how indices are experienced as "'real' because they are rooted, often redundantly, in one's own life experiences and, as memory, become the actual mortar of personal and social identity" (Ibid., 229).

Similarly, Steven Feld describes how music arouses feelings in listeners based on the listeners' experience. Feld writes how as listeners, "we consume as we produce, out of and based upon meaningful pattern and experience" and that one must "differentiate the syntactic features which might be said to arouse a listener, from the range and variety of musical feelings the



listener has in the experience of the piece” (Feld 1984, 6). Feld describes how the experience of listening to music is mental and social, formal and expressive, as well as how “musical object embodies and provokes interpretive tensions” (Ibid., 7).

Secondly, emotions and the interpretation of what a song or music “means” are based on the recognition of certain codes that can be picked up by the listener. Feld writes that the “recognition of certain features of code, genre, stylization, and performance instantly identify boundaries of the musical object that exist in a tension of ideational and material structure, of musical and extramusical features” (Feld 1984, 11). These codes consist of “a range of social and personal backgrounds - shared, complementary - stratified knowledge and experience, and attitudes” and that the codes enter “into a social construction of meaningful listening by interpretive moves, establishing a sense of what the sound object/event is, and what one feels, grasps, or knows about” (Ibid.). Therefore, for music to elicit emotions in a listener, the music must have elements that the listener can recognize as shared knowledge and experience. In this chapter I also use this concept to show how Sangpuy utilizes this coding of shared knowledge and experience in order to evoke a sense of ancestral spirits for people who listens to his songs. This coding is present in both Sangpuy’s use of his voice as well as his use of other sonic elements such as traditional Pinuyumayan music and shamanic songs.

### 2.3 “Pai’lai’law”: Referencing Traditional Pinuyumayan Music Form

In this chapter, I discuss songs from Sangpuy’s first album, *Dalan*. Many of Sangpuy’s songs, especially the songs he composed himself, consist of his voice (occasionally a female backup singer), a simple guitar accompaniment, drums, and studio effects such as reverb. His album also features several Pinuyumayan *gudiaio*, or ancient tunes, such as the tracks “Malikasaw,” “Senay na Temuwamuwan,” and “Yaangad” which contain western musical

accompaniment such as the use of stringed instruments. The tracks “Senay na Vali,” “Kianun,” and “Ina” contain the use of the Pinuyumayan nose flute.

In this first example, I describe how Sangpuy’s popular music indexes ancestral spirits by using musical structures derived from traditional Pinuyumayan music. “Pai’lai’law” (Heroic poem), Track 4 of Sangpuy’s album, *Dalan*, uses the same multi-part vocal structure of the ritual song, *pa’ira’iraw*, after which it is named. *Pa’ira’iraw* is sung by Pinuyumayan men during their annual festival, *mangayaw*. This song cycle typically consists of four songs: *pe nas pas* (New mood in the New Year), *sa nga* (praise for the Puyuma Mountain), *pu li bun* (Revenge), and *ke ma a ya man* (Bird’s Omen) (Chen 2007, 117). There are four parts to the *pa’ira’iraw*: there is *təmga*, an intoner (a selected best singer who should also be the most respected person in the village) who announces the theme of the poem, *tomubaŋ* echo part sung by any males who are able to sing the poem, the chorus that consists of the rest of the men who sing in low and sustained notes, and shouting at the end to conclude the song (Loh 1982, 112). Lai Ling-En, in her analysis of the vocal parts of the *pa’ira’iraw* performed by Pinuyumayan of Pinaski *buluo*, has a different division of the vocal parts.

This traditional song cycle conveys the important cultural values of social unity and social hierarchy in Pinuyumayan society. The *təmga* (typically an older man), is supported by the *tomubaŋ* echo part which consists of other men who can sing the lyrics of the song. These roles are then supported by the men singing the drone part, who do not have the skill to sing the lyrics of the *pa’ira’iraw*. The role of age-based hierarchy is even more clear in Lai’s breakdown of the ages of each role in *pa’ira’iraw* as show in Table 1. The leaders (the intoners) starts the song and are responsible for teaching the lyrics of the *pa’ira’iraw* to the younger generations. They are usually the *ma’izang*, or the elderly, who would have the most knowledge of the Pinuyumayan

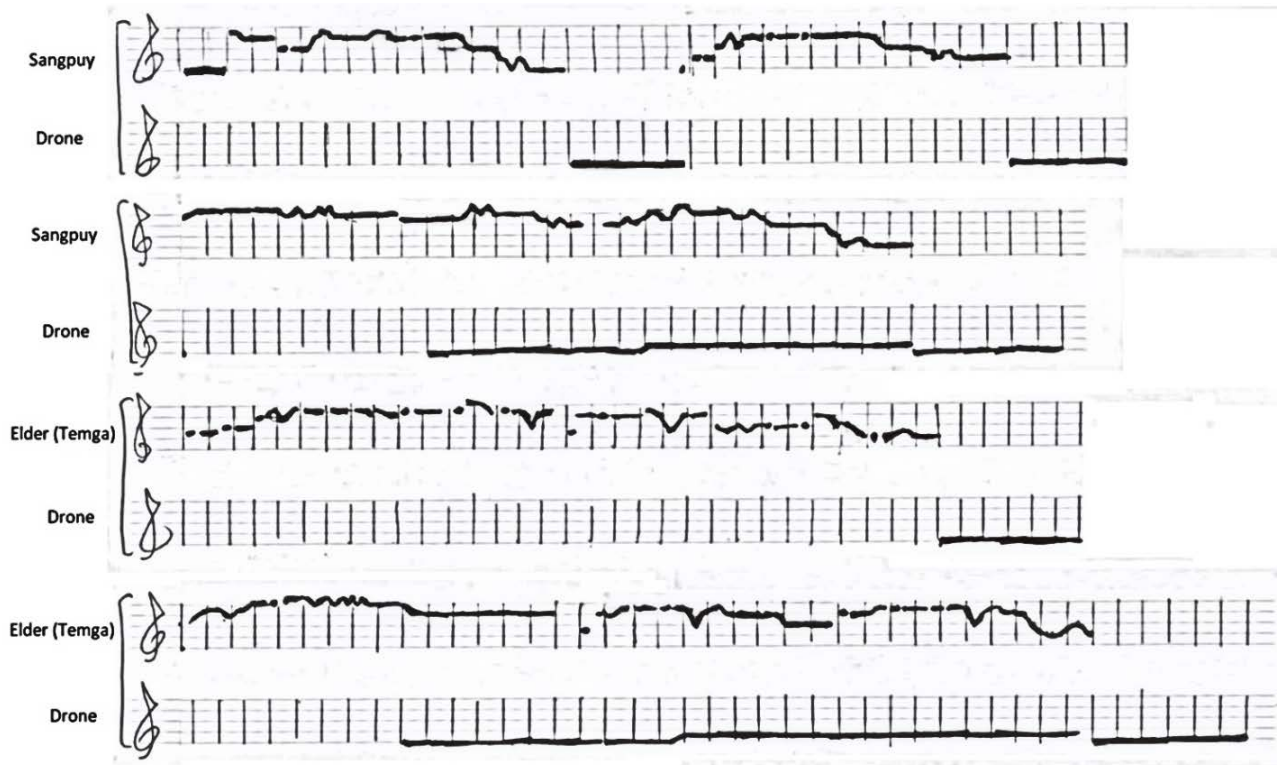
language, the form of a *pa'ira'iraw*, as well as the respectability Loh mentions for the *təmga* intoners. The *maradawan* (boys between 15 and 16 years old) are youth leaders (青年領導) who have more knowledge and skill than the *puretra'* (boys between 14-15 years old) who are youth in training (青年預備) (Lai, L. 2015, 116). Finally, everyone is allowed to join for the *zemirahon* chorus which consists of people with the least knowledge and skills on the lyrics of the *pa'ira'iraw*. This stratification of vocal parts demonstrates the “minor, yet important role in the society — that of supporting their leaders” and the shouting at the conclusion of the song cycle “symbolizes the unity and solidarity of the whole society” (Loh 1982, 112). Therefore, singing the *pa'ira'iraw* reflects the idea of unity in Pinuyumayan society. In addition, singing the *pa'ira'iraw* is also integral to the transition of Pinuyumayan boys into adulthood through each succession of the age-grade system as well as making sure each younger generation can learn the Pinuyumayan language. This multi-part vocal structure is also seen in Sangpuy’s “Pai'lai'law.”

**Table 1: *Pa'ira'iraw* multi-part vocal roles and their age-grade, adopted from (Lai 2015, 116). The name section denotes the Pinuyumayan names for each vocal part, the age-grade is the Pinuyumayan names for each grade involved and their corresponding ages, and the role describes what role the people play in each vocal part. Lai does not specify what age range *ma'izang* consists of, but the role is usually an elder who is teaching the words of the *pa'ira'iraw* poems to the next generation.**

Role	Name	Part	Age-grade	Role
Intoner (引詞)	<i>umuyauya</i>	solo	<i>ma'izang</i> (elders/elderly)	Teachers/Instructors (教導者)
Starters (起調)	<i>tematelaw</i>	solo	<i>puretra'</i> (14-15 years old)	Successors (接位者)
Response (應詞)	<i>tematuvang</i>	solo	<i>maradawan</i> (15-16 years old)	Leaders (領導者)
Chorus (和腔)	<i>zemirahon</i>	chorus	everyone	Learners (學習者)

In the graphic notation of Sangpuy’s “Pai'lai'law.” as shown in Figure 1, the people singing the drone take turns singing with Sangpuy, and eventually singing together in the second system. In the third system, Sangpuy backs off to allow the *təmga* elder singer to be featured, and

he himself becomes a part of the echoing drone, which supports the elder the same way the drone supported Sangpuy earlier. Sangpuy's track song presents a similar structure as that of a traditional *pa'ira'iraw* in its original context at a Pinuyumayan *buluo*.



**Figure 1: My graphic notation transcription of Sangpuy's "Pai'lai'law." The transcription is notated a semitone higher than the recording. The vertical lines denote time passing of approximately 1 second in the recording. I used graphic notation to demonstrate the syllabic and melismatic portions of this song. The top line represents Sangpuy's singing and the bottom line "drone" represents the other singers who sing the drone part. In the third system, Sangpuy's lead singing is replaced by an elder singing the *təmga* part. In his liner notes, Sangpuy writes that this elder is his late mentor, Tien Ching-liu. This track contains a recording of Tien's singing in 2002 before he passed away in 2006.**

Thematically, Sangpuy's "Pai'lai'law" also draws from traditional *pa'ira'iraw*.

Traditional *pa'ira'iraw* songs feature poetic texts that "tell stories of the glorious past of the Puyuma" (Loh 1982, 216). While Sangpuy does not include the Pinuyumayan lyrics nor English translation of the lyrics to this track, he provides a summary in his liner notes: "Men in the Palakuwan, get ready! Let's march to accept this duty passed down from our ancestors. Let's

fight against invaders ... We will prove our courage by solidarity” (Chen, 2012).<sup>20</sup> An explanation below the summary describes how the lyrics contain stories of “the heroic acts of the ancestors, of heroes defeating enemies or their hunting process, etc.” (Ibid.). Sangpuy’s use of traditional *pa’ira’iraw* multi-part vocal structure along with the explanations make this track imbued with both elements of tradition and of ancestral spirits.

In addition, this track uses similar musical gestures as traditional Pinuyumayan shamanic songs. In this song, the elder Pinuyumayan man enters with a very rhythmic and syllabic style as represented in system 3 of Figure 1. This kind of singing is in stark contrast to Sangpuy’s more melismatic singing style at the beginning of the piece. The syllabic, chant-like style of singing can be found in shamanic songs like *pakalaqam*. This shamanic text is spoken by a female shaman and would generally be chanted on the third day of the third month in order to summon helper-spirits (Cauquelin 2008, 63).

As seen in the transcription of *pakalaqam* in Figure 2, the rhythmic, syllabic nature of *pakalaqam* is similar to the rhythmic gesture in system 3 of Sangpuy’s “Pai’lai’law.” Even the melismatic portions sung by Sangpuy at the beginning of this song and the elder in system 4 of Figure 1 resemble musical gestures of shamanic texts. Figure 2 also shows the transcription of the first 21 seconds of the shamanic text, *pənaspas*. This song is one of the first of the four songs to the *pa’ira’iraw* song cycle, and is generally sung by a male shaman, a *təmamataw*, as the men make their way back to the *buluo* after their stay in the mountain (Cauquelin 2008, 131). As seen

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<sup>20</sup> One possible reason for this could be the fact that traditional *Pa’ira’iraw* songs are considered too sacred to be heard outside of ritual context. For information on the sacred nature of *Pa’ira’iraw*, consult the dissertation, “Voices of Double Marginality: Music, Body, and Mind of Taiwanese Aborigines in the Post-Modern Era” (Chen 2017, 138). Another reason might be because of the *təmga* singer is a community elder, Tien Ching-liu, and the lexible lyrics would have come from him while the other men follow along with the drone part. It is unclear from what is given in the liner notes if Sangpuy would have needed permission from this elder for the lyrics. This song is one of the two songs that did not have any lyrics provided, with the other being Track 14: “Palakuwan,” which also contained recordings of community members.

in Figure 2, the melismatic nature of *pənaspas* resembles the melismatic singing of both Sangpuy in system 1 and the elder’s part in system 4 of Figure 1. Even the jump to a higher register in *pənaspas* resembles the jump to a higher register in Sangpuy’s singing from the end of system 1 to beginning of system 2 in Figure 1. Therefore, in Sangpuy’s “Pai’lai’law,” he intentionally uses similar musical gestures to evoke the spiritual aspect of traditional shamanic texts.

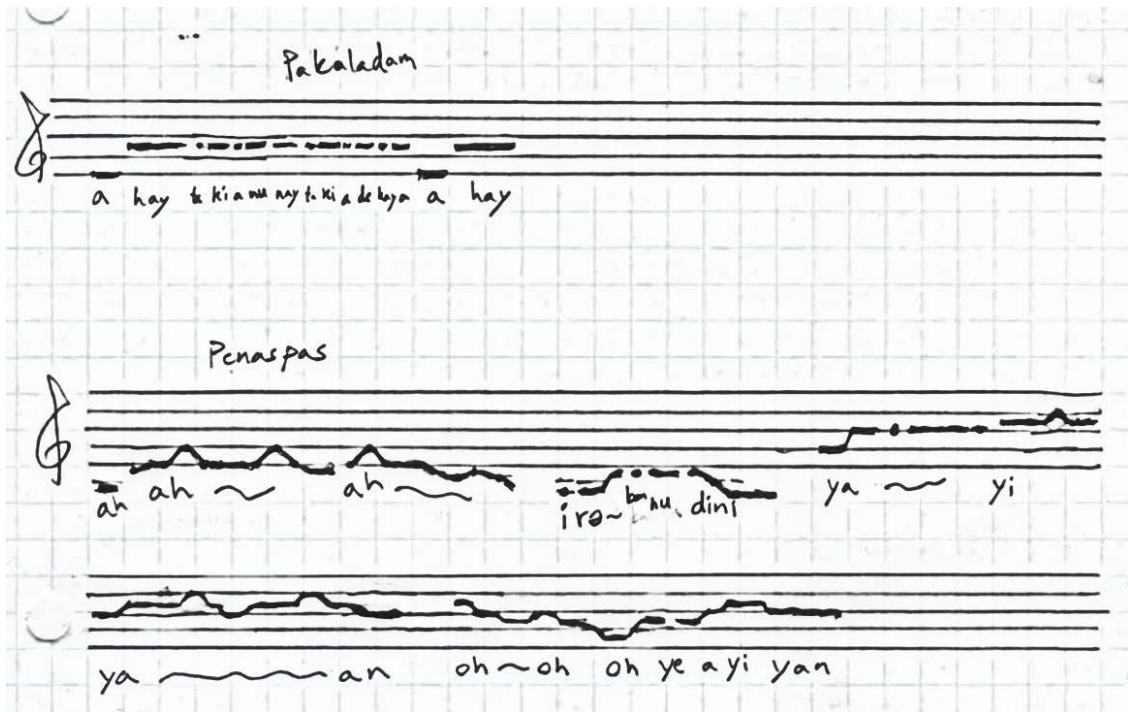


Figure 2: My graphic notation transcriptions of the shamanic songs *pakalaqam* and *pənaspas*. The audio for both songs is from the CD provided in Josiane Cauquelin’s book, *Ritual Texts of the Last Traditional Practitioners of Nanwang Puyuma*. The graphic notation of *pakalaqam* demonstrates the syllabic nature of some Pinuyumayan shamanic songs while *pənaspas* demonstrates the melismatic nature of other shamanic songs. For *pakalaqam*, each vertical line denotes approximately 1 second of the recording. For *pənaspas*, each vertical line denotes approximately 0.6 second of the recording. Both gestures are present in Sangpuy’s “Pai’lai’law.”

It is important to note that “Pai’lai’law” only contains the voices of the men who sang for this recording and does not contain any musical accompaniment nor the use of any Western instruments. The only other song in this album with this treatment is the track “Kiyau’las” (Summon Good Spirit). In his liner notes, Sangpuy describes “Kiyua’las” as a segment of an

ancient chant from Tamalakao *buluo* used to summon benevolent spirits (Chen 2012).<sup>21</sup> Both “Pai’lai’law” and “Kiyau’las” are traditional Pinuyumayan chants that involve evoking ancestral spirits. It is likely that Sangpuy chose not to incorporate accompaniments in order to emulate the original chanting contexts of these songs as well as a respect for the sacrality of their source material.

Interestingly, Sangpuy comes from the Pinuyumayan *buluo*, Katatripul, which was known for how important its shamans (*temararamaw*) were to the community (Loh 1982, 102). Shamans were so prominent in Katatripul that formerly, every Pinuyumayan family had its own shaman (Ibid.).<sup>22</sup> In fact, up until around 1982, “no other tribe in Taiwan has a shamanism so well developed as that of the Puyuma, especially in Katipol” (Ibid.). With the strong emphasis on shamanism in his hometown, it makes sense that Sangpuy would incorporate these elements in his music. Sangpuy’s use of similar shamanic musical gestures is loaded with nostalgia since at the time Josiane Cauquelin published her book *Ritual Texts of the Last Traditional Practitioners of Nanwang Puyuma* in 2006, there were only two shamans left in Nanwang *buluo*, and by 2007, nobody had full command of the rituals (Ferrell 2009, 514).<sup>23</sup> To an Aboriginal listener, this song would be especially meaningful since it recalls not only the heroic tales of the traditional *pa’ira’iraw* but also the nostalgic past when shamans were still active in participating in rituals.

The similar gestures in this song with the gestures in shamanic songs would also explain the

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<sup>21</sup> In the liner notes, Sangpuy writes: “這首清唱的歌曲是擷取自流傳於泰安部落(大巴六九)的古老咒語,是用來召喚世間善靈的古老咒詞裡之其中一段。” “This a cappella song is an ancient chant taken from Tai-An *buluo* (Tamalakaw), it is a segment of an ancient chant used to summon benevolent spirits” (my translation).

<sup>22</sup> Katatripul *buluo* is also spelled Katipol, Katipul, or Katratripulr by other scholars. I will be using the “Katatripul” spelling because that is the one used in the liner notes for *Dalan*.

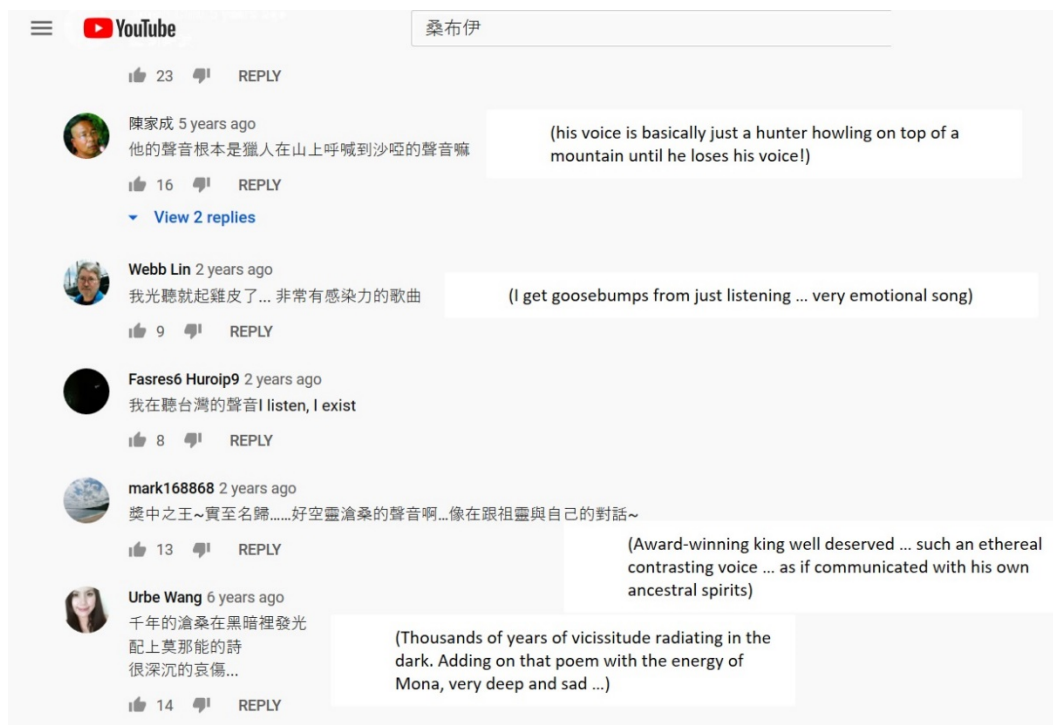
<sup>23</sup> While I do not have the statistics for Katatripul, the *buluo* had a similar fate as Nanwang. In 2017, when asked what cultural elements are no longer in practice, a group of Katatripul boys replied “shamans” among other things like older songs in the Pinuyumayan language that are no longer sung.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?time\\_continue=14&v=NKsJpn2Th6I&feature=emb\\_title](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=14&v=NKsJpn2Th6I&feature=emb_title) (time stamp 9:06).

coding of spirituality and ancestral spirits picked up by listeners such as A-mei and Wang Molin as mentioned earlier.

## 2.4 “Dalan”: Vocal Timbre and Use of Poems

In this second example, I discuss Sangpuy’s music and the ancestral spirit imaginary by focusing on Sangpuy’s vocal timbre and his use of poetic texts. In a personal conversation with Dr. Hatfield, a professor who studies Taiwanese Aboriginal music, I asked him what made Sangpuy’s music so evocative of ancestral spirits. He replied that it is because Sangpuy sings “with the voice of an old man!” (Hatfield, DJ. 2019. Personal communication, November 8). While this might be his own personal observation, it is nonetheless a very common conception of Sangpuy. Many comments on YouTube express similar views for Sangpuy’s song, “Dalan.”<sup>24</sup>



**Figure 3: Screenshot of the comment section on Sangpuy’s “Dalan” under Uki Baki’s video showing the praise that relate to ancestral spirits and his vocal timbre (my English translation).**

<sup>24</sup> I refer to this YouTube video of “Dalan”: Uki Bauki, “SANGPUY 桑布伊 同名專輯 - 【Dalan 路】官方完整版,” YouTube video, 5:42, November 1, 2012, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1yk2l\\_ds\\_w](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1yk2l_ds_w).



One commentator describes Sangpuy’s singing in “Dalan” as “a hunter howling on top of a mountain until he loses his voice” while others describe his voice as “an ethereal, contrasting voice ... as if communicating with his ancestral spirits.”<sup>25</sup> Once again, even Han-Taiwanese people like Molin Wang thinks that Sangpuy’s voice represents a prehistoric “imaginary” of the past (Wind Music n.d.). This vocal timbre, due to its association with the voice of older people, is indexical of past generations and ancestral spirits. People also find the raspy timbre penetrating, with the power to transport them into an imagined space and time in the past.

In addition to Sangpuy’s use of raspy timbre (present in all of his songs), “Dalan” exemplifies his incorporation of poetic texts. During the middle of this song, there is a part where Sangpuy provides a spoken dialogue.<sup>26</sup> The phrase by phrase nature of this spoken segment provides a major contrast to the sung section that came before it. Sangpuy takes deliberate pauses between some words and lines to poetic and prayer-like notion of this passage. Table 2 shows the lyrics of the spoken section in the Pinuyumayan mother-tongue and the English translation.

**Table 2: Words to the spoken part in Sangpuy’s song “Dalan” in Pinuyumayan mother-tongue and in English.**

<i>waitraitras mawahu ta</i> <i>‘awa ta meledeka kana marevulavulay</i> <i>‘azi kapamamezi ka i semangala ta</i> <i>kemakawan harem</i> <i>murepun nata mukasaya ta</i> <i>kayaita karadikesaw kana kina’ilri’ilring</i> <i>kemakawan harem kemakawan harem</i>	Let’s take the road. Let’s head toward the heights. We are going to a beautiful place with no hesitation. Let’s go, straight ahead. We shall unite with one heart. Let’s go. Let’s hold on to each other. Heads up! Let’s walk with pride. Let’s march straight ahead.
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<sup>25</sup> Comments from Uki Bauki’s video of “Dalan”: Uki Bauki, “SANGPUY 桑布伊 同名專輯 - 【Dalan 路】官方完整版,” YouTube video, 5:42, November 1, 2012, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1yk2l\\_ds\\_w](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1yk2l_ds_w).

<sup>26</sup> This spoken part of the song can be heard at of the video: Uki Bauki, “SANGPUY 桑布伊 同名專輯 - 【Dalan 路】官方完整版,” YouTube video, 5:42, November 1, 2012, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1yk2l\\_ds\\_w](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1yk2l_ds_w), timestamp (1:59).

The image shows a musical score for a piece titled "Dalan." The score is written in 3/4 time and consists of several systems of staves. The first system includes a "Spoken Words" staff with rhythmic notation (x's and slashes) and lyrics: "Wa i tra i tras ma wa hu ta". Below it are "Voice (solo)" and "Voice (harmony)" staves with lyrics: "Ka i se me nay na ta wa di yan ka i um a du". A "Classical Guitar" staff follows. The second system starts at measure 5 and includes a "Words" staff with rhythmic notation and lyrics: "'a wa ta me le de ka ka na ma re vu lay vu lay". Below it are "V1" and "V2" staves with lyrics: "o u ma". The third system starts at measure 9 and includes a "Words" staff with rhythmic notation and lyrics: "'a zi ka pa ma mu zi kai se ma ga la ta ke ma ka wan ha rem". Below it are "V1" and "V2" staves with lyrics: "du ka na ka di u ma nen". A "Guit." staff is also present. The score includes various musical notations such as accents (>), slurs, and dynamic markings (f).

**Figure 4: My Western notation transcription of the spoken portion in “Dalan.”** This transcription is an excerpt of the first two lines and a half of the third line from the text in Table 2. The “Spoken Words” line on top contains the approximate rhythm of Sangpuy’s spoken portion. Each “/” denotes an upward inflection with Sangpuy’s voice with a slight raise in pitch. Each “>” denotes an accented emphasis on the syllable. This section comes in at approximately 1:57 timestamp of Uki Bauki’s video of “Dalan.”

Though the text is not a sacred material, I argue that the aspect of enhanced speech such as the upward reflection with the pauses at the end of each phrase as seen in Figure 4 evokes a sense of prayer. Don Ihde, in his book, *Listening and Voice: Phenomenologies of Sound*, writes how poetry can “draw attention to the language, to voiced language” through the “beauty to the words themselves, the cadences and rhythms of the poem” (Ihde 2007, 196). Similarly, the dramaturgical voice can “exceed the dimension of mere expression” and that “*through* the voice of language in the poem, a world or a new perspective on the world is heard” (Ibid.).<sup>27</sup> In a similar way, Sangpuy’s use of poetic text presents a different view of the world through a unique cadence and rhythm of the Pinuyumayan language, which is different from the singing pattern that came before it.

Traditionally, Pinuyumayan ritual poetic text carries meaning through its “perfect rhyme schemes that require rhyming both at the initial and final syllables of each line, and sometimes on inner syllables as well” (Loh 1982, 214). This rhyme structure portrays similar ideas that complement each other (Ibid.). This feature of couplets and parallelism, also called “speaking in pairs,” is often found in the poems for the *pa’ira’iraw* song cycle (Chen 2007, 112). It can also be seen in the lyrics for Sangpuy’s song, “Kiyau’las.”

**Table 3: Lyrics of Sangpuy’s “Kiyau’las” (Summoning Good Spirits) in the Pinuyumayan language. Taken from Sangpuy’s liner notes for *Dalan*. I have underlined the portions of parallelism to show the rhyme scheme. The space in between is to make the couplets more distinct.**

<u>palesele</u> atanay	<u>palelaw</u> talranay
<u>ilremenahi</u>	<u>ilremetayan</u>
maw na <u>muuyauya</u>	maw na <u>mutehateha</u> .
<u>kanna palilawilan</u>	<u>kanna paleseulran</u>
<u>kai senaenayan</u>	<u>kai vangaensaran</u>
<u>ilremenahi</u>	<u>ilremetayan</u> .

<sup>27</sup> For an example of this, Ihde writes out “You! You? You.” in order to demonstrate the different possibilities of the voices of language (Ihde 2007, 196).

While the spoken portion in “Dalan” does not consist of clear couplets like “Kiyau’las,” there are some similar features. There is the repeating structure inside the syllables like “*marevulavulay*” and “*kina’ilri’ilring*” as well as the repeated emphasis of the words “*kemakawan harem*” (let’s go) in the final line. The line, “*murepun nata mukasaya ta*” comes closest to the “speaking in pairs” structure with the syllables “*mu*” and “*ta*” at the beginning and end of both couplets. These similarities to ritual poetic structure help connect “Dalan” to Pinuyumayan ritual texts and add to the sense of sacrality in this spoken passage.

In addition, as the spoken part enters, Sangpuy’s backup vocals continue to sing the verse lyrics but as a background drone: (*ka i semenay nata wadiyan ka i umadu o...*). The guitar part also continues the same two arpeggios (A-E-E and G-D-E) from before. Figure 4 also shows the vocal harmonies Sangpuy uses, which consist mostly of intervals of fifths, thereby providing a very open, resonate accompaniment. The constant guitar arpeggios and the resonant vocal parts provide a monotonous drone in the backdrop as Sangpuy speaks the poetic text, which gives this segment a sacred quality while also being a subtle homage to the use of drones in traditional musical forms like the *pa’ira’iraw*. The simple nature of the accompaniment not only showcases Sangpuy’s spoken dialogue but also provides a meditative ambience.

There are similar instances of this poetic language used in the music of other Indigenous groups. Dan Bendrups, in his book *Singing and Survival*, describes how the Rapanui of Easter Island also use spoken or chanted texts in their music. Bendrups writes that the “Rapanui believed in the power of the spoken, chanted, or sung word to imbue a performance with meaning. The chants and song texts preserved in the late nineteenth century drew their textual content from ... stories concerning Rapanui ancient history (called *a’amu tuai*), references to the supernatural world, references to the natural world, and references to significant contemporary

events or individuals” (Bendrup 2019, 32). In addition, “metaphors and symbolic references were a feature of ancient Rapanui texts, and the use of metaphor helped to convey embedded or restricted messages in Rapanui performances” (Ibid). There are parallels between what Sangpuy is doing in the poetic section in “Dalan” and the Rapanui’s conception of the power of songs and chants. In the English translation of the lyrics, the poetic portion conveys the images of the road, heights, and beautiful places. These metaphors and symbolic references describe adventuring into the unknown as depicted by the song’s title “*Dalan*” (road). For the listeners who do not understand the Pinuyumayan mother-tongue, the phrasing of this poetic passage, the intentional pauses between lines, as well as the concurrent background drone provide the sonic factors that imbue this passage of the song with a sense of sacrality. It is no wonder that a YouTube commenter describes this segment as “thousands of years of vicissitudes radiating in the dark. Adding on that poem with the energy of Mona, very deep sorrow.”<sup>28</sup> Even though this listener immediately compares Sangpuy to Mona Ludao, the Seediq chieftain who rebelled against the Japanese during the Japanese colonization of Taiwan, this response nonetheless shows how the poem section of the song indexes a sense of sacrality and even heroic figures of the past for some audience members.

## 2.5 Coding of the Voice

Both Sangpuy’s vocal timbre and his use of poetic spoken portions in “Dalan” contributes to coding of his voice. As I mentioned earlier, it is the listeners’ recognition of certain features of code, genre, stylization, and performance that elicits emotions and concepts

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<sup>28</sup> My English translation of the comment by Urbe Wang in Uki Bauki’s video of “Dalan”: “千年的滄桑在黑暗裡發光 配上莫那能的詩 很深沉的哀傷...” Uki Bauki, “SANGPUY 桑布伊 同名專輯 - 【Dalan 路】官方完整版,” YouTube video, 5:42, November 1, 2012, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1yk2l\\_ds\\_w](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1yk2l_ds_w).

for the listeners. I argue that Sangpuy's coding of his voice (sounding like an old man) conveys a sense of ancestral spirits for many Aboriginal and Han-Taiwanese listeners.

The voice is often a metonym for identity and agency. Amanda Weidman writes that amongst the Western linguistic traditions, the voice is conceived as “guarantor of truth and self-presence” which leads to ideas of the voice as a “central vehicle for this modern interiorized self” (Weidman 2014, 39). Weidman also talks about how the voice can be treated strategically with the “strategic and politically charged nature of the way voices are constructed in both formal and everyday performances” (Ibid., 42). An example of the strategic and political use of voice and the way voice conveys identity is Shyr Ee Tan's analysis of the Chen Mei-hua, an Aboriginal singer from the Amis tribe. Tan describes how Mei-hua was able to “code-switch at will between different vocal styles” which are trained bel canto style, church-style Amis vocal style, pop aesthetics, and traditional Amis aesthetics (Tan, S. E. 2012, 240). Mei-hua therefore has four different ‘voices’ she employs from an expanding repertoire of styles which she can choose from depending on the situation (Ibid.). Tan writes that Mei-hua is able to conceive “the simultaneous existence of these codes as part of her multi-dimensional capabilities” (Ibid., 241). This aspect of multiple identities conveyed through different coding of the voice is similar to what Weidman states about how the voice can represent identity as well as the strategic nature that the voice can be constructed in everyday performances.

While Sangpuy does not switch between different voices, he clearly embodies a certain traditionality and character in his singing voice that is imbued with meanings of ancestral spirits. As I mentioned earlier, Sangpuy's vocal timbre is often compared to an old man's and his use of poetic texts provides a sense of spirituality to his songs. The idea that Sangpuy's voice sounds like an old man is also evident in Sangpuy's description of how he learned to sing. Sangpuy says

that his “biggest motivation for learning the language of my people is a tape recording of my grandfather singing” (Chiang, P. 2018). Since Sangpuy learned to sing Pinuyumayan mother tongue songs through a recording of his grandfather, his choice of vocal timbre (and sounding like an old man) is intentional. This timbre, through its association with the voice of older people, is indexical of past generations and ancestral spirits. This raspy timbre is what listeners find to be so penetrating, with the power to transport people into an imagined space and time in the past.

However, many Aboriginal pop artists choose not to use this kind of vocal aesthetic in their albums. Szhr Ee Tan describes how Aboriginal songs, especially those that use non-lexical syllables (vocables) have become self-exoticized: “presented as the Other in guise of the stylized and symbolic Self” (Tan, S. E. 2012, 226). Many Aboriginal pop artists find that negotiating between “aboriginal symbolism, tokenism and labelling have proved to be more difficult to negotiate in terms of identity articulations and personal ambition” (Ibid., 227). Biung, an Aboriginal pop artist from the Bunun tribe, started out with Wind Records label in 2000 and was promoted as a Bunun folk singer with a “clean-cut professional image, which entailed playing guitar in traditional dress amidst cornfields” (Tan, S. E. 2008, 232). Despite having national and international press coverage, Biung’s initial two albums remained limited to a niche audience and as a result he decided to tap into the Chinese-speaking market with a rocker image (Ibid.). Biung stated in an interview:

Why is it that people only view me as an aborigine? I prefer to be judged as a singer - on my voice, and songs. Whether you are aboriginal, you still have to jump through the same hoops, deal with the same politics. If I’m going to go through this like everyone else, I don’t want to be pigeon-holed. I can’t escape being aboriginal. But I want people to listen to my music first and think: hey that’s cool. Then, they realize it’s aboriginal. (Tan, S. E. 2012, 228)

With this quote, Biung expresses his view on how many Taiwanese Aboriginal pop

singers are pigeon-holed to a niche audience often because of the presentation from the marketing such as his own former folk singer aesthetic and traditional dress imagery. He adopts a rocker image in order to broaden his audience to the Han-Taiwanese and beyond. Sangpuy's presentation is quite the opposite: rather than adopting a mainstream aesthetic, Sangpuy fully embraces his Aboriginal roots and indigeneity.<sup>29</sup> His choice of singing in a raspy voice that "sounds like an old man" is directly linked to his continuation of his grandfather's singing. As a result of learning from his grandfather's singing, Sangpuy is also adamant about using the Pinuyumayan mother-tongue. In addition, the analysis I did with the example of "Pai'lai'law" also demonstrates Sangpuy's strong adherence to traditional Pinuyumayan elements such as the multi-part texture, the use of drones, as well as similar gestures to shamanic texts.

Sangpuy's strong adherence of Pinuyumayan traditional music also caught the attention of A-mei who invited him to sing for the opening act of her AMeiZing World Tour in 2012. While A-mei is a Pinuyumayan, her worldwide fame as a Mando-pop singer meant that most of her songs are in a mainstream style and that she seldom sings Aboriginal songs nor wears Aboriginal clothing (Chen 2007, 191). This has led to some listeners to criticize A-mei for "not being Aboriginal enough" and for not meeting their standards of "Aboriginality" in popular music (Ibid.). However, A-mei's inclusion of Sangpuy as the opening act can be seen as a way of

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<sup>29</sup> In making this comparison, I am not trying to implicate that one aesthetic is better than the other. In fact, Biung's debut album, *The Hunter*, was awarded the Golden Melody Award, and the song "Ana Tupa Tu" (月光) from the album is still considered a classic Aboriginal pop song today. It is so well known that Wind Music's anthology, *A Musical Journey Around Taiwan* (an anthology of songs and tunes meant to embody Taiwan), contains this song in its fourth disc on Aboriginal songs. In an Aboriginal TV show *Malalicay* with Paiwan singer and hostess, A-Bao (Aljengljeng), Biung states: "Just what is it moves us? In the past two years, I've slowed down my creative process. Because I've already sang six to seven albums. I've said a lot on *buluo* matters, on leaving home, on the struggles of moving to the city, and what's next? As an Aboriginal artist, what kind of message am I going to bring to everyone?" Therefore, Biung, with his music, has made many important contributions to Aborigines and representation on top of addressing many important issues to the Aboriginal community. For the video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NxS5liV3obg> (timestamp 3:48).



reclaiming her traditional roots. When Next Magazine interviewed Sangpuy about being included in A-mei's world tour, Sangpuy states:

She has to, because she's a Pinuyumayan. She's Aboriginal! She's very proud of her music. During her entire Mando-pop concert, so-called mainstream music concert, she wants the audience to know her identity.<sup>30</sup>

When asked what he would sing if he ever performed with A-mei, Sangpuy replied:

Mother-tongue songs, of course! I insist on this. Mother-tongue is our most foundational element. Without a culture of mother-tongue, all these Aboriginal artists would not last this long. Because your blood, your environment gives you a lot of creativity.<sup>31</sup>

In this situation, Sangpuy himself becomes a symbol that indexes traditional Pinuyumayan culture and music. Sangpuy, through his voice and use of traditional Pinuyumayan musical elements, has become such a potent symbol of Pinuyumayan tradition that A-mei would choose to feature him at her world tour in order to showcase her Pinuyumayan cultural roots.

Sangpuy also states that his album *Dalan* “expresses my desire to spur young people’s interest in discovering our tribal songs,” and that “comprehending our language is crucial to understanding the essence of the profound Pinuyumayan culture” (Chiang, P. 2018). Sangpuy’s use of the Pinuymayan language as well as his vocal timbre is a point of pride for him as an Aborigine and also a way for him to revitalize Aboriginal culture amongst the youth. Turino states that the voice is “directly parallel to ‘body language’ and ‘tone of voice’ in everyday interactions” and that “we often interpret sonic signs of vocal and instrumental quality as actually

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<sup>30</sup> From the YouTube video: 台灣壹週刊 NexTW, “【台灣壹週刊】阿妹前面的勇士—桑布伊,” YouTube video, 2:36, Oct 29, 2013, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jylc5W074nQ>. Time stamp: 0:35 – 0:50. My translation from the original Chinese: “她需要吧? 因為她是卑南族. 她原住民呀! 她非常驕傲她的音樂. 在她整個流行音樂演唱會當中, 所謂的主流音樂演唱會當中, 她希望讓觀眾知道她的身份.”

<sup>31</sup> From the YouTube video: 台灣壹週刊 NexTW, “【台灣壹週刊】阿妹前面的勇士—桑布伊,” YouTube video, 2:36, Oct 29, 2013, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jylc5W074nQ>. Time stamp: 0:50 – 1:17. My translation from the original Chinese: “當然族語呀! 這是我的堅持. 這是我們最根本的母語. 沒有今天的母語文化, 你今天所有原住民音樂人很難走到現在. 因為你的血液裡面給你很多的音樂養分, 很多創造的養分.”

being affected by the actual attitude of the performer (object) and thus understand them as ‘true’” (Turino 1999, 238). The way voice contributes to a listener’s perception of the performer is clear in the YouTube comments mentioned earlier in this chapter.

Sangpuy’s adherence to traditional elements is also evident in his choice of clothing. As seen in Figure 5, Sangpuy featured himself in traditional Pinuyumayan regalia entirely in black Pinuyumayan warrior’s face paint for the cover of *Dalan*. Traditionally, Pinuyumayan warriors would apply a mixture of charcoal ash and water on their faces to feel a sense of unity with the ancestral spirits and with nature (Lai, P. 2012). According to Sangpuy, the mud represents the nourishment of all organisms, the charcoal represents being tempered by fire, and the water represents a necessity for all life (Ibid.).<sup>32</sup> Sangpuy’s liner notes also contain pictures presenting this idea of the traditional Pinuyumayan warrior. Sangpuy included a picture of himself dancing in traditional regalia with the warrior’s knife at his waist and another one of him sitting with a somber, meditative expression as seen in Figure 6.



<sup>32</sup> Sangpuy’s original words in Chinese: “泥土能滋養萬物、木炭經過火的重重粹煉、而水，是萬物最不可或缺，這表示我們與萬物在一起。” “Mud can nourish all organism, charcoal has been through fire’s heavy tempering, and water is something all organisms cannot go without.” (Lai, P. 2012).



Figure 5: Comparison between Biung's album covers and Sangpuy's album covers. Biung's first album *The Hunter* published under Wind Music in 2000 (top left) versus Biung's rocker image in his later album *戰舞* in 2006 under the record company Feeling Good Music (好有感覺音樂) (top right). On the bottom, the first picture is Sangpuy's album cover for his first album *Dalan* (2012) in traditional Pinuyumayan warrior's paint (bottom left) versus his album cover for his second album *Yaangad* (2016) (bottom right).



Figure 6: Pictures of Sangpuy in Pinuyumayan regalia with his warrior's knife (*tadraw*) from the liner notes of *Dalan*.

As the visual representations of the album, these pictures along with Sangpuy's album cover for *Dalan* saturate the album with a strong sense of traditionality and an homage to the historical notion of the Pinuyumayan warrior. His serious expression in all of these photos also

evokes a sense of spirituality and reverence present in this album. These photos provide some context to the praises mentioned earlier in this chapter, especially A-mei's praise for Sangpuy's voice being like the knife at his waist and the commentator on YouTube who likened Sangpuy to Mona Ludao. Four years later with the album cover for *Yaangad*, Sangpuy remained consistent in his portrayal of himself: complete with traditional regalia and even having silhouettes of trees in his hair representing unity with nature.

In some ways, this traditionalist presentation might be seen as stereotypical: after all, listeners (as evidenced by these YouTube comments) form a large umbrella for their conception of Aboriginality and even link Sangpuy to Mona Ludao, who is from a different time period and tribe. Sangpuy's traditional warrior imagery is similar to that of the late Pinuyumayan singer, Bangsalang (Wang Chung-yi). Bangsalang was prominent in the 1970s and chose to use the Pinuyumayan term "*bangsalang*" (also spelled *vangsalan*) to emphasize his Aboriginal identity (Chen 2007, 163). The term refers to young Pinuyumayan men past the age of 20 who have finished their physical training at the *palakuwan* (men's house) and are considered as qualified warriors (Ibid.). Many of Bangsalang's songs are sung in Chinese and are "purified songs," or romantic ballads that connect love with mountains, rivers, fire, and stars, but not to human bodies. This set of musical repertoire as well as the album covers with Bangsalang in traditional Pinuyumayan regalia and a boar-teeth necklace convey the message of a "strong Aboriginal boy who embodies the moral and aesthetic values the KMT sought to promote in the 1970s" (Ibid., 167). Similarly, A-mei, despite her involvement in the Mando-pop industry, was marketed as a "Puyuma princess" by her record company in the 1990s even though there are no princesses in Pinuyumayan society (Ibid., 170). Chen Chun-bin argues that this kind of portrayal of Aboriginal images is a way for the cultural industry to "satisfy an audience's curiosity about the

Aborigines,” where the images are “modified and embellished in order to attract that audience’s attention” (Ibid., 193).

Sangpuy’s warrior presentation, especially his *Dalan* album cover, functions in a similar way to satisfy the Han-Taiwanese audience’s curiosity about Aboriginal culture. With his face and hands covered in black Pinuyumayan warrior’s paint, this image provides the shock factor which is fitting of Wei De-sheng’s description of Sangpuy’s voice being like electricity. Sangpuy’s music and his use of traditional Pinuyumayan musical elements also serve this purpose. For non-Aboriginal listeners who may have criticized A-mei about her “not being Aboriginal enough,” there is no question of Sangpuy’s “Aboriginality” under the same metric. Consumers who were drawn to Sangpuy’s album because of the exotic warrior imagery would be equally satisfied with the music, giving them a sense of an “authentic” Aboriginal sonic experience. For Biung, he wanted to avoid being recognized only for his Aboriginality and this appeal of “Other-ness,” which led him to change to a rocker’s image to cater to a wider market. However, Sangpuy chose to embrace this traditionalist idea of indigeneity as a sense of pride and a way to strongly convey these elements of traditional Pinuyumayan culture to his listeners. I argue that in doing so, Sangpuy hopes to encourage Aboriginal youth to embrace Aboriginal traditions (such as his hopes for revitalizing Pinuyumayan mother tongue amongst Pinuyumayan youth) and not feel pressured into assimilating to appeal to a wider audience.

In this chapter, I have demonstrated how Sangpuy’s songs in his album *Dalan* came to be so evocative of this idea of ancestral spirits and spirituality. In “Pai’lai’law,” Sangpuy utilizes similar multi-part vocal texture, and drone accompaniment of traditional *pa’ira’iraw* as well as similar musical gestures to shamanic texts. These attributes are not only indexical of a traditional Pinuyumayan ritual, but also evoke ancestral spirits thematically. Therefore, Sangpuy evokes this

ancestral spirit imaginary through the musical form and the musical gestures themselves. In addition, the song “Dalan” shows just how Sangpuy’s own voice is imbued with coding that invoke ancestral spirits. With Sangpuy’s voice sounding like an old man or a hunter as well as the poetic texts he includes, many listeners can feel a sense of ancestral spirits and spirituality. Through this coding that Sangpuy puts in his songs, he fully embraces Pinuyumayan tradition in his album and conveys this potent Aboriginal identity to the Taiwanese public.

## CHAPTER 3

### ANCESTRAL SPRITIS AS IDENTITY, AS VANGUARDS, AND COMMUNITY

#### 3.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, I outlined how Sangpuy's voice is evocative of ancestral spirits for his listeners as well as the different ways he intentionally places themes of ancestral spirits in his songs. Having established that, I argue in this chapter that Sangpuy's adamant use of ancestral spirit themes or related sonic gestures is a way for him to reify and revitalize traditional Aboriginal cosmology. First, I describe the ways Sangpuy uses direct prayers to ancestral spirits in his songs to affirm this aspect of Aboriginal cosmology and tradition. Second, I describe the ways Sangpuy uses this notion of ancestral spirits and community soundscapes to affirm ancestral spirits by declaring them as a form of a real, tangible community.

#### 3.2 Theory: Music, Community, and Identity

In order to talk about how Sangpuy uses sonic factors in his music to engage with both a physical and a spiritual community, I use Lila Gray's concept of how music can "unleash multiple and diverse historiographies, stories of origin and fantasies of past and future, all of which shape the landscape of feeling" in a community (Gray 2007, 125). I also utilize David Samuels' semiotic approach in which he describes how "you do not need to *add* anything to your vehicle in order to 'Indianize' [indigenize] it. What you need is an engagement with the object that embodies your personal and community historical relationships to it" (Samuels 2004, 133). While Native Americans may choose to use ornaments to index an "Indian" identity, it is not these ornaments that create the identity but rather the relationships they have to the community (Ibid.). I use this framework to look at Sangpuy's songs that directly evoke ancestral spirits and prayers. By engaging with the ancestral spirits in the same way as he would with living

community members, Sangpuy validates ancestral spirits not only as a source of inspiration or a spiritual vanguard, but also as a living cosmology that is vital to the Pinuyumayan community.

### 3.3 “Kianun”: Evocation of Prayers and Ancestors

Sangpuy reinforces traditional Pinuymayan cosmology by evoking a literal prayer in his song, “Kianun” (Prayer). This prayer, as the lyrics suggest, is given to the ancestors. In the

English translation, the lyrics are as follow:

My ancestors in heaven, thou makest the earth wonderful, thou safeguard us. Please give me strength, assist me and guide me, so I can chant, describe and express what we left in the world, what roves around here and there. (Chen, 2012)

With these lyrics, Sangpuy directly evokes the ancestral spirits and asks them for their blessing. Again, as with the song “Dalan,” the spoken nature of the words in this track provides a sense of sacrality on top of the nature of this prayer to the ancestral spirits. In addition to the prayer, Sangpuy also provides an accompaniment with the Aboriginal nose flute in this track.

About the nose flute, Sangpuy had said:

I’m very proud of the knowledge passed down by our ancestors. It [the nose flute] is made out of Taiwan’s materials. Its sound is very very ancient. You will rarely see this nose flute outside of Taiwan. It is the oldest, the proudest sound in all of Taiwan. It is the possession left behind by the ancestors of this land.<sup>33</sup>

Wind Music also provided a similar portrayal of the nose flute by describing it as a “warm wooden fragrance” that enables Sangpuy to guide “spirits to their way home” (Wind Music n.d.). By labeling the nose flute as the very instrument that the Aboriginal ancestors had played, Sangpuy is able to “simultaneously index multiple histories, senses of the past or place in

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<sup>33</sup> For the clip, see the video: TEDxTaipei, “桑布伊 (Sanpuy Katatepan Mavaliyw) at TEDxTaipei 2013,” YouTube video, 18:50, Jan 6, 2014, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ESqHDNT7Zwg>, timestamp 8:57 - 9:23. My translation of Sangpuy’s words: “我都非常非常的驕傲祖先的智慧流傳下來. 它是用台灣的建築所製作的. 它的聲音非常非常的古老. 除了台灣很少看到這個雙鼻笛. 它是台灣最古老的聲音, 最驕傲的聲音. 這是台灣這塊土地祖先所留下來給我們的財產.”



the ways in which they are heard and felt” (Gray 2007, 109).

Another song in this album that directly evokes ancestral spirits is the song “Senay na Temuwamuwan” (Song for the Ancestors). Although this song does not feature a prayer or a nose flute like “Kianun,” Sangpuy’s liner notes describe this song as one that Pinuyumayan women would sing as they strike a metal bell (Chen, 2012). This act of striking the bell has been described as a way for women to “drive away restless *birua*” or spirits (Cauquelin 2004, 213). While this song is not as overtly evocative of ancestral spirits as the use of prayers in “Kianun” and requires background knowledge of Pinuyumayan rituals, the title of this song (Song for the Ancestors) is a direct dedication to the ancestral spirits. “Senay na Temuwamuwan” elicited similar reactions from many YouTube viewers as “Dalan.” One commentator writes: “I lament that I don’t understand the Aboriginal language ... but I’m very glad I can hear the spirits.”<sup>34</sup> While listeners might not understand the language or the spiritual context of this song, Sangpuy’s voice and title dedication help bring this notion of ancestral spirits across to his listeners.

### 3.4 Ancestral Spirits as Identity in the Past

Why is Sangpuy so adamant about evoking ancestral spirits? First, I argue that evoking ancestors and reinforcing this traditional cosmology helps give the Aborigines an established identity rooted in the past. David Samuels states that through using traditional aspects in their songs (such as ancestral spirits in Sangpuy’s case), artists are not simply promoting a “nostalgic yearning for the past” but rather the “rediscovery of something that one thought had been lost

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<sup>34</sup> From the YouTube video of “Senay na Temuwamuwan”: Uki Bauki, “SANGPUY 桑布伊 同名專輯 Dalan 【祖先的歌 senay na temuwamuwan】 HD 官方完整版,” YouTube video, 4:58, January 24, 2013, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1yk2l\\_ds\\_w](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1yk2l_ds_w). My translation of the comment made by Lavino Tan: “很感慨不懂原住民語言...但卻很慶幸可以聽到靈魂.” Accessed 7/4/2020.

forever, the recoverability of the past” (Samuels 2004, 138). By imbuing his music with notions of ancestral spirits, Sangpuy’s music “triggers the imagination through the evocation of mood” and creates “the feelingful layering of indexicality and iconicity [that] brings listeners to the sense that they share that feeling with the past” (Ibid., 139). As I mentioned in the previous chapter, by 2007 there were no longer any practitioners of Pinuyumayan shamanic texts in Nanwang *buluo* (Ferrell 2009, 514). Despite shamans being a thing of the past, the ideology of acknowledging and venerating ancestors still persists. Sangpuy brings this cosmology to the forefront in his music in order to keep this tradition alive in the modern day.

To recontextualize Molin Wang’s comment about Sangpuy exhibiting a “prehistoric voice,” I argue that Sangpuy’s use of ancestral spirit ideology is not just a way of recreating the past but rather a way to bring forth the recoverability of the past. This link to the past helps to establish Taiwanese Aborigines once again as the first inhabitants of Taiwan and the arbiters of the land that both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Taiwanese people can sense through the layering of indexicality Sangpuy has created through the evocation of ancestral spirits. Sangpuy demonstrates this identity rooted in ancestral spirits in an interview. When he was asked about three specific houses with family names on them, Sangpuy answered:

These are our *buluo*’s ancestral spirit house. ... These three houses are very important. If the *buluo* did not have any ancestral spirits, then it would not be considered a complete *buluo*. (41:40)<sup>35</sup>

Sangpuy proceeds to describe a form of Pinuyumayan burial tradition practiced in the past:

After we’ve lived, after we passed away, we would bury the dead in our own homes. We buried the dead indoors. When the Japanese came, they said that burying ancestors in one’s own home is not sanitary, so they had us remove them and place them in what we

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<sup>35</sup> From the YouTube video: 大愛電視 Tzu Chi DaAiVideo, “【樂事美聲錄】20140216 - 臺東卡大地布部落,” YouTube video, 48:00, Feb 17, 2014, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H52R6ZMc1\\_Y](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H52R6ZMc1_Y). The time marks in parenthetical citation marks the timestamp of when these statements were said. My English translation of Sangpuy’s words: “這三間房子是我們部落的祖靈屋 … 這個三個祖靈屋非常的重要. 如果部落這個裡面沒有祖靈就不算一個完整的一個部落.”

now have as the designated sixth public tomb. However, the ancestors' spirits remain together with us. They will not leave this plot of land. Our connection to this plot of land is very intimate. If you removed the remains of our ancestors, then they might just leave this land. ... Yes, it's a form of respect, mutual respect. (42:43)<sup>36</sup>

Sangpuy connects Pinuyumayan identity to traditional practices such as the burial of ancestors within the *buluo*. Sangpuy argues that the *buluo* is complete with the ancestral spirits' presence, and the members of the *buluo* can say that the ancestors are physically there with them. This tradition was forcibly removed by the Japanese due to what they deemed as an unsanitary practice, but in so doing also removed an integral part of the Pinuyumayan's connection to the *buluo* and their identity. While relocating the dead to the sixth public tomb meant placing the dead outside of their own homes, the Pinuyumayan nonetheless erected these three houses for their deceased ancestors so that their spirits may continue to live on within the *buluo*. Sangpuy, through his active incorporation of ancestral spirits (such as the prayers in "Kianun" and the dedication to spirits in "Senay na Temuwamuwan"), is doing a similar gesture of reclamation. By such direct invocation of the ancestral spirits, Sangpuy is bringing back these notions of the past, both reaffirming a core Pinuyumayan cosmology as well as their sense of identity in the ancestral spirits.

### 3.5 Ancestral Spirits as Guardians

A second implication of Sangpuy's songs is reinforcing the notion of ancestral spirits as guardians. Again, I refer to Dan Bendrups' work on the Rapanui for a comparison. Bendrups describes how chants, particularly lineage chants (called *manu tupuna*) contain a list of names of

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<sup>36</sup> My translation from the original Chinese: "以前為什麼有祖靈屋? 因為我們生活下來的時候, 我們過世的時候, 我們就埋在自己家裡面。然後我們是室內葬。然後日本人來了, 說我們把祖先的遺體埋在自己的家裡面是一個很不衛生所以就是要我們遷出來, 然後遷到現在的那個第六公墓的地方。不過祖先的, 他的靈魂會跟我們一直在一起。對, 祂不可能會離開祂這塊土地。我們跟這塊土地是非常息息相關的。如果把祖先的遺骸移走了, 然後祂就可能離開這塊土地... 對, 最主要還是尊重。"

ancestors from the Tupa Hotu clan, with each verse featuring a different family (Bendrup 2019, 34). Kiko Pate, a respected Rapanui elder, describes this lineage chant as a delineation of the “association between these clan groups” as well as a calling for the “ancestors as a kind of spiritual vanguard, supporting the singer” (Ibid.). The lyrics of the *manu tupuna* provided by Pate states:

Come here, guard / To my front / Behind me / And to both sides / This is assuredly great /  
This *manu* / Very great. (Bendrup 2019, 34)

These lyrics show how these ancestors are being evoked in this chant as a vanguard to watch over the singer. The idea of ancestral spirits as vanguards can also be found in the Shona of Zimbabwe. After a person dies, their spirits are said to wander around until it is given permission to come back and protect its children” and it is only then that they become *midzimu*, or ancestors (Maraire 1990, 118). The *midzimu* ancestor spirits are said to possess a host (a descendent) to give advice on family matters and even spray water on people in order to prevent impeding diseases (Matiure 2011, 44).

This element of ancestral spirits as vanguards for the singer is evident in Sangpuy’s songs, especially in his song “Kianun.” As I mentioned earlier, Sangpuy speaks a prayer in Pinuyumayan mother tongue during this song. The English translation states:

My ancestors in heaven, thou makest the earth wonderful, thou safeguard us. Please give me strength, assist me and guide me, so I can chant, describe and express what we left in the world, what roves around here and there. (Chen, 2012)

Even though this prayer does not list the names or family lineage of the ancestral spirits, the lyrics also call for protection, similar to the *manu tupuna*. Sangpuy declares the power the ancestral spirits have over the land and the living and calls for the spirits to protect him and give him strength. Both Sangpuy and the Rapanui who recite the *manu tupuna* are calling upon their ancestral spirits to be their vanguard and to guide them.

This belief of ancestral spirits being able to safeguard and provide for the Pinuyumayan is deeply rooted in their traditional cosmology. Josiane Cauquelin, in her book, *The Aborigines of Taiwan: The Puyuma: From Headhunting to the Modern World*, describes religion as a key element of Pinuyumayan identity, specifically that of the Pinuyumayan's belief and respect for the *birua*, or spiritual beings (Cauquelin 2004, 49). If people died from a natural cause such as dying in their homes, they become good *birua*. But if they died tragic deaths, or deaths by accidents, they become bad *birua*, the most feared being the restless *birua* called *mararabak*, who are people who died in childbirth (Ibid., 51). *Birua* who are specifically ancestors are called *temuamuan* (ancestors) and are traditionally considered to be shamans' "auxiliary-spirits" (Ibid.).<sup>37</sup> Ancestral spirits can provide protection to their descendants from catastrophes but can also punish them with illness or misfortune (Chen 2007, 104). While the Pinuyumayan *birua* and *temuamuan* do not possess their hosts like the *midzimu* (instead Pinuyumayan shamans go on a "voyage to the *aulas*" in order to communicate with the spirits), the *temuamuan*, like the *midzimu*, function as guardians that can provide good fortune for their living descendants.<sup>38</sup>

Sangpuy's prayers to the *temuamuan* in "Kianun" along with his direct dedication to them in his song "Senay na Temuwamuwan" demonstrate how he is reinforcing this traditional Pinuyumayan idea of ancestral spirits being a vanguard for the singer and for individuals. Even his use of the nose flute in "Kianun" serves to venerate and pay tribute to the ancestral spirits by continuing the instrument that the ancestors played in the past. With Sangpuy's mission to

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<sup>37</sup> While Sangpuy spells ancestral spirits as "*temuwamuwan*" in his album, Cauquelin spells it as "*temuamuan*" in her book. I will use the spelling "*temuamuan*" to refer to ancestral spirits and the spelling "*temuwamuwan*" for Sangpuy's song "Senay na Temuwamuwan."

<sup>38</sup> During a Pinuyumayan shaman's "visit to the *aulas*", they speak as *birua*. It is no longer a monologue, but a dialogue during which, alternately, the shaman speaks in her own name and as a *birua*, answering an interlocutor's questions." (Cauquelin 2004, 173). Most shamans describe going on a voyage to communicate to ancestral spirits, implying that they go to the ancestors, but some shamans describe it as "*meredek na temuamuwan*" (the ancestors are coming), implying that the ancestors come down to them (Cauquelin 2004, 185).

popularize Pinuyumayan mother tongue to Aboriginal youth, it also follows that he is popularizing this traditional Pinuyumayan cosmology through his music. About the use of staged prayers in Amis songs, Shzr Ee Tan describes how the use of staged prayers has “been historically sustained in its parallel existence as a Christian hymn, ritually and deliberately divorced from the context of shamanism but still retaining associations to local memory, village identity, the ‘past’ and ideals about traditional ways of Amis life” (Tan, S. E. 2012, 10). Similarly, Sangpuy’s presentation of ancestral spirits is somewhat distanced from its original context. Afterall, Sangpuy is not a Pinuyumayan shaman reaching out to inform the *temuamuan* for diagnosing or curing people, or thanking and dismissing the spirits (Cauquelin 2004, 168).<sup>39</sup> In addition, after WWII, traditional Aboriginal notions of ancestor worship and rituals have been reinterpreted and thus became syncretized with Christian doctrines due to the establishment of Protestant and Catholic churches in Pinuyumayan *buluo*’s (Chen 2007, 106). As a result, as of 2015, approximately eighty percent of Taiwanese Aborigines are Christian (Rudolph 2015, 343). Similar to the Amis’s use of stage prayers, Sangpuy’s prayers and evocation of *temuamuan* in this album have also been divorced somewhat from the original shamanistic context.

The syncretization of Christian and shamanistic elements can be seen in the lyrics of Sangpuy’s song “Milihuwan.” In the liner notes, the English translation of the lyrics state:

Thou createst the Universe. / We respect and worship thee. / Thou art perfect. / We sing the praises of thee. / Creator, our ancestors, all originates from thee (Chen 2012).

While traditional Pinuyumayan myths describe how the Pinuyumayan originated from bamboo

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<sup>39</sup> These actions of diagnosing or curing people along with thanking or dismissing spirits are taken from (Cauquelin 2004, 168). A shaman (especially a *benabulu* shaman) would “call to the spirits during which the shaman ‘informs’ them of the ritual she is about to perform, diagnosis and cure or thanks, dismissal of the spirits” through invocations called *pakalaqam*. This is just one of the many rituals and cures Pinuyumayan shamans would do. It could be argued that Sangpuy’s song, “Pai’lai’law” does indeed function as Sangpuy communicating to the ancestral spirits in a ritual context, however, since traditional *Pa’ira’iraw* is typically not heard outside of ritual context, his incorporation of this as a commercial recording is outside its original shamanistic context.

or rocks, Sangpuy instead describes how the ancestors originated from the creator god of the universe.<sup>40</sup> Sangpuy therefore combines the Christian concept of the Creator God, in charge of all creations, with the traditional Pinuyumayan notions of ancestral spirits. Both ancestral spirits and the Christian God are venerated through this song. Despite the occasional incorporation of Christian elements and the fact that Sangpuy's music is a commercial recording, it is clear from his statements that the traditional aspect of venerating ancestors as well as invoking them for guidance is still very prominent in his music. Sangpuy's prayer in "Kianun," his own words about the nose flute, and his explanation of the way ancestral spirits define a *buluo* all show how this traditional cosmology, despite having evolved and changed through time, is still an essential element to his notion of Pinuyumayan identity. Similar to what Tan writes about the Amis, Sangpuy's use of prayers still demonstrates the retained associations to village identity, notions of the 'past,' and ideals about traditional Pinuyumayan life.

### 3.6 Ancestral Spirits as Community

Finally, Sangpuy affirms traditional Pinuyumayan cosmology by presenting the coexistence of the physical and spiritual Pinuyumayan community. First, I discuss how Sangpuy engages the physical Pinuyumayan community with his music. Sangpuy's track, "Palakuwan," evokes the sounds of the Katatripul *buluo* by incorporating and evoking the very soundscape of their activities. This use of soundscapes to evoke the identity and ideals of a group's lived experiences is similar to what Tina Ramnarine writes about the album *Bird Symphony* by Nils Aslak Valkeapää. Valkeapää was a Sámi composer, writer, and activist who was active in the

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<sup>40</sup> For the origin myths of the Pinuyumayan, I refer to (Loh 1982, 79): "Ruvoahan: This is the place where the legendary origin in stone of their ancestors is said to have taken place. It is situated in the coastal area of the present Mei-ho (美和) village, with Katipol (知本) as the center" and "Panapanayan: The name also refers to a place within Mei-ho village near the Chih-pen coast, where the legendary ancestors are said to have been born out of bamboo."

World Council of Indigenous Peoples and instrumental in the Sámi indigenous movement from 1970s onwards (Ramnarine 2009, 192). Valkeapää played a vital role in the joik revival movement post 1960s and he helped popularize this indigenous Sámi singing tradition into popular music (Ibid.). With his album, *Bird Symphony*, Valkeapää sought to popularize joiking through his use of recordings and soundscapes. Valkeapää incorporated sounds of the wind, birds, and human in *Bird Symphony* as a way of portraying the “human relationships with the environment” as well as placing the human subject “as a part of that environment, rather than in relation to it” (Ramnarine 2009, 205). This evocation of human and non-human sounds shows how “the joiker, the joiked, and the joik are one and the same, and how human musical expression is an aspect of a sonic ecosystem” (Ibid.). *Bird Symphony* also presented a more traditional portrayal of joiking. Valkeapää’s use of reindeer sounds and bells depict both how his personal joik is related to a reindeer herder as well as evoke the traditional Arctic shamanistic belief that shamans can turn into flying reindeers (Ramnarine 2009, 202, 206).

There are many parallels between the sonic elements used in Sangpuy’s “Palakuwan” and in Valkeapää’s *Bird Symphony*. As the title of this track “Palakuwan” (men’s house) implies, Sangpuy uses the cries of Pinuyumayan men going through rigorous training at the *palakuwan*, on top of his singing. Traditionally, the *palakuwan* represents the intensive training, the passing on of survival skills, culture, ritual knowledge, as well as the community bond formed at the men’s house (Ho 2013). However, this tradition was banned for a long period of time by both the Japanese and the Nationalist Party (KMT) in Taiwan and was not restored until around 1993 by villagers from Katatripul, thus adding to the importance of the *palakuwan* to Pinuyumayan identity and life after it was revived (Ibid.). The sounds Sangpuy incorporates into this track reflect these traditions of the *palakuwan*. At the beginning of this track, Sangpuy incorporates the



sound of an elder speaking a prayer (0:05), sounds of men shouting (0:42), the voice of an old man singing (1:42), a spoken prayer to the *temuwamuwan* (ancestral spirits) (2:07), the sound of bells ringing (likely from bell rattles strapped on to their legs or held in their hands) (3:23), and a shouting at the end (“*Hey ya! Ho!*”) which is how the *pa’ira’iraw* typically ends (Sangpuy 2012).<sup>41</sup> While most of Sangpuy’s singing in this track consists of vocables, he sings the word, “*vangsalan*” (young men) towards the beginning of this track (0:55), showing how this piece is meant to evoke the image of young men and their training in a Pinuyumayan *buluo*. By incorporating these sounds, Sangpuy presents the very sounds one would hear in a Pinuyumayan *buluo* and directly transports the listener to this sonic environment. Similar to Valkeapää, Sangpuy presents the traditional setting of a *palakuwan* by situating the listener in the sonic environment of Pinuyumayan men shouting, elders singing, and bells ringing. The bells, especially, refer to bells held by Pinuyumayan men as they sing *pa’ira’iraw* during a ritual amongst themselves in the *palakuwan*. In addition, the sounds of the old man singing as well as the prayer to the *temuwamuwan* are similar to Valkeapää’s use of reindeer sounds to evoke indigenous cosmology.

Through this soundscape in “Palakuwan” Sangpuy engages with his community and saturates his songs with meaning and traditional beliefs. On Apache popular music, David Samuels writes that “The ‘Apache’ element” comes from the fact that “the songs are performed by people who have social relationships with others in the community, who in turn find the songs saturated with their experienced histories of circulation in the community” (Samuels 2004, 135). In the making of this track, Sangpuy directly gets the Pinuyumayan community involved in order to depict the sounds of the environment and the community. He was able to imbue this track with

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<sup>41</sup> Time stamps in parenthesis are based on the track “Palakuwan” in Sangpuy’s *Dalan*.

feelings of “Pinuyumayan-ness.” The song was also able to capture social relationships within the Pinuyumayan community. From the sounds of the elder singing, a prayer to the ancestors, and the “*vangsalang*” call to the younger men, this song encapsulates the age-based hierarchy of traditional Pinuyumayan society. Pinuyumayan listeners would easily find their lived experience, or at least a sense of shared history, present in this song. However, it is what Sangpuy said about this album that also presents his inclusion of the ancestors as community in this album. For his inspiration, he said that he loves “hanging out with tribal elders, singing ancient tunes with them and listening to the tales they tell that happened over a century ago” and that “music is an ability given to me by our ancestors. I am here to share it with others” (Ho 2013).<sup>42</sup> In addition, in the process of making *Dalan*, Sangpuy went back to the same spot in the mountain where he and his late mentor Tien Ching-liu had visited ten years prior to sing and chant to the deceased ancestors (Ibid.). Through Sangpuy’s words and his actions, not only was he engaged with the elders in the creation of this album, he was also engaged spiritually with the *temuamuwan*. By placing prayers to the *temuamuwan* with sounds of the community as well as directly attributing his inspiration for writing this album to the *temuamuwan*, Sangpuy reaffirms the traditional cosmology of ancestral spirits as community.

In this chapter, I have shown how Sangpuy’s voice and his mentioning of ancestral spirits serve to affirm traditional Pinuyumayan cosmology. In addition, I have also presented different functions for his adherence to this ancestral spirit aesthetic. First, Sangpuy’s “Kianun” and “Senay na Temuwamuwan” address the ancestral spirits directly through the use of prayers and dedication. Second, this use of prayers reinforces the traditional notion of ancestral spirits as

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<sup>42</sup> Ho writes in this article that the Palakuwan was revitalized about 20 years prior to the time of this article, which would be around 1993.

guardians for the Pinuyumayan. Even though Sangpuy's presentation of ancestral spirits are somewhat distanced from the original shamanistic context, his songs nonetheless show just how important this traditional cosmology of ancestral spirits is to himself and his community. Finally, Sangpuy's music conveys ancestral spirits as a tangible community. Through his song "Palakuwan" as well as his direct acknowledgement of the ancestral spirits as his guide, he portrays both the physical and spiritual community as present and coexisting. Sangpuy's use of sonic elements that index ancestral spirits and his direct acknowledgement of them serve to reaffirm these traditional notions of ancestral spirits.

## CHAPTER 4

### SANGPUY'S MUSIC AND SELF-DETERMINATION IN THE BROADER CONTEXT OF TAIWANESE NATIONALISM

In this chapter, I investigate how Sangpuy's music contributes to the larger narrative of nationalism and Indigenous rights in Taiwan. First, I briefly discuss how Taiwanese Aborigines became a part of the nationalism movement and the formation of a Taiwan-centric identity. I then discuss how Sangpuy's music becomes a part of a growing revitalization of tradition and identity formation through modern innovation. As a part of the growing attention to Aboriginal issues in Taiwan, I discuss how Sangpuy's music utilizes the notion of ancestral spirits to address current-day issues of self-determination and environmentalism.

#### 4.1 The Role of Aborigines in Taiwanese Nationalism

In Chapter 1, I discussed the history of colonization that resulted in oppression of Taiwanese Aborigines. Recent advancements have led to increased public support for Taiwanese Aborigines. Towards the end of the Nationalist Government's (KMT) martial rule, the Alliance of Taiwan Aborigines (ATA) was established in 1984 by the Taiwan Aboriginal People's Movement that consisted of Aboriginal political activists and the progressive Presbyterian Church in Taiwan (Ku 2005, 91).<sup>43</sup> After KMT's martial law was finally lifted in 1987, the

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<sup>43</sup> The Presbyterian Church in Taiwan (PCT, 臺灣基督長老教會) contributed to the initial sponsoring of the ATA through an international network of oversea churches. In addition, many Aborigines (such as Kimbo) are Christian. Some Aborigines have even become pastors such as Presbyterian pastor Pasuya Yadawuyungana mentioned later in this chapter. As of 2015, approximately eighty percent of Taiwanese Aborigines are Christian (Rudolph 2015, 343). Some Christian denominations dismiss traditional indigenous beliefs as "superstition" and actively ban them while others, especially Catholic groups, are much more open towards traditional ideology and even provide their venues to support cultural revitalization (Rudolph 2015, 347; Lai 2015, 121). For the Pinuyumayan in Nanwang *buluo*, the Catholic church was integral to maintaining traditional rituals, though the church to some extent re-interpreted the meanings of the rituals in accordance with Christian doctrines (Chen 2007, 106). Amongst Christian denominations, the Catholic Church is the most tolerant of customs related to the Aborigines' ancestor worship whereas the True Jesus Church is the most intolerant, going as far as banning songs, dances, and rituals related to ancestor worship entirely for the Amis community in Lipic *buluo* (Ibid.).

formerly suppressed voices of Han-Taiwanese and Aborigines became more prominent. After 1987, many Hoklo (Minanyu or Taiwanese) speaking people in Taiwan began identifying with the Aborigines' history of being oppressed (insofar as being controlled by foreign rulers such as the Japanese and the KMT) and began promoting the use of native languages (Ibid.). This affiliation between the Han-Taiwanese and the Taiwanese Aborigines marked the beginnings of not only a local (Taiwan-centric) identity but also the revitalization of mother tongues (both Taiwanese and Aboriginal languages).<sup>44</sup>

The Alliance of Taiwan Aborigines (ATA) consisted of Indigenous students associated with Kau Shan Ching (Green High Mountain 高山青) (a student club at National Taiwan University with its own publication under the same name (1983–1988)), Indigenous students from three major Presbyterian seminaries (Taiwan, Yushan, and Tainan), and some members (both Indigenous and Han people) from the former Minority Committee of the Outside Party Editor's Association (*Tangwai bian lien hwei* 黨外編聯會)" (Ku 2005, 98). Kimbo (Hu De-fu), mentioned earlier in Chapter 1, was the first chair of the ATA and a member of the Presbyterian Church, which was a major financial supporter of the ATA at the time (Ku 2005, 100; Chen 2007, 90). The goals of the ATA consisted of "providing services to urban indigenous peoples encountering difficulties, which constituted a majority of the low income labor work force at this stage," participating in governmental elections "to raise awareness of its agenda and to cultivate a sense of shared interests among different indigenous groups," and organizing peaceful protests on Aboriginal issues (Ku 2005, 101). While some goals such as participating in governmental

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<sup>44</sup> Another term that is often used is *bentu* 本土 or *benshen* 本省. These terms (especially *bentu*) imply being from the land and are used as a contrast to *waishengren* 外省人 (outsiders), which is used to refer to KMT or Chinese immigrants post WWII. It generally refers to ancestry on Taiwanese soil that predates the Japanese colonization of Taiwan.

elections were not achieved in the mid-1980s, the ATA was successful in changing the public perception of Taiwanese Aborigines. The ATA decided upon the use of the term “Indigenous” (*yuanzhumin* 原住民) because of the “implication of being the descendants from the aboriginal first inhabitants of the island, and also the accompanying symbolic capital of being able to claim to have been original masters of the island” (Ibid., 99). Choosing to identify as “Indigenous” was initially a reaction against the term “mountain compatriot” (*shanbao* 山胞) used by the KMT government, which was viewed as assimilationist, and against the derogatory term, “*hoan*” (番 savage), which was used by the Han-Taiwanese (Ibid., 100). Even though the term “Indigenous” still contains some assimilationist connotations (not acknowledging the differences between the sixteen Aboriginal ethnic groups or those living on Orchid Island), the act of choosing this terminology demonstrated the growing self-awareness and self-determination of the Aboriginal community. Through this act, Aboriginal elites not only challenged the racist and derogatory views the Han had of Aborigines, enculturated subconsciously through terms like *shanbao* and *hoan*, but also demanded the autonomy to name themselves according to their own perspectives and terminology. In addition, the ATA led to the “Name Rectification Movement” in 1984 which sought to challenge the imposition of Mandarin Chinese names for Indigenous people on official documents such as birth certificates, identification cards, property files, etc. (Ibid., 114). Not only did this movement mark the start of revitalizing native names (and thereby native Aboriginal languages), it also demonstrated the growing Indigenous identity and consciousness to push back against oppressive mechanisms imposed by the Nationalist government. Following the Name Rectification Movement, the ATA also formed the Council of Aboriginal Affairs (CAA) in the central government in 1996, which could be seen as a statement on issues of Taiwanese independence that “Taiwan is not only a sovereign state, but a state acknowledging

the historical role of the indigenous peoples on the island” (Ibid.).<sup>45</sup> The CAA provided Taiwanese Aborigines greater influence on the central government. Today, they are visible on the national stage for the support of Indigenous populations.

#### 4.1.1 Aboriginal Narrative in Taiwanese Identity

As Taiwan modernized, the government increasingly sought to promote Aboriginal culture to showcase Taiwan’s diversity. In fact, many Han-Taiwanese elites point towards Taiwanese Aborigines as evidence of Taiwan’s “non-Chinese origins” (Rudolph 2015, 345). After the formation of the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), both the KMT and the DPP parties in Taiwan utilized Indigenous politics for their own agendas. The DPP, advocates of an independent Taiwan, claimed that Taiwanese Aborigines are the most eligible to declare independence, and due to the Aborigines’ history as the first inhabitants of Taiwan, “there is no so-called problem of China unification for them” (Ku 2005, 104). On the other hand, pro-unification advocates from the KMT party use theories of northern origins of Aborigines to prove their Chinese ancestry and the agenda of the KMT (Ibid.). Pro-independence politicians use the southern theory of Aboriginal origins against the KMT. The southern theory speculates Taiwanese Aborigines as the “homeland of the Austronesian family of languages” through recent biological studies that analyzed the DNA of local Taiwanese people (Ibid., 105). The high rate of intermarriage between Han settlers and Taiwanese Aborigines since the 1600s is also often used as evidence for Taiwanese people’s difference from China (Ibid.). As both the southern theory

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<sup>45</sup> The Council of Aboriginal Affairs (CAA) was also formed at the request of ATA to replace the MTAC (Mongolian and Tibetan Affairs Commission set up by KMT) that proposed China as having Mongolia and Tibet. This was something the Nationalist (and thereby the Republic of China) upheld before fleeing to Taiwan (Ku 2005, 109). Aboriginal leaders of the ATA opposed this notion because of the “greater China complex” and the territorial claim (having Mongolia and Tibet) involved, stating that “To abolish the MTAC also represents the will to cut the tie with mainland China” (Ku 2005, 113). This move also demonstrated a rejection of this Sino-centric notion of nationhood.

and the recent DNA studies gain popularity in Taiwan, these notions show how Taiwanese nationalism is shifting towards “an emphasis on blood affinity” which “highlights the centrality of indigenous genealogy in the construction of a new Taiwan-centered history and Taiwan identity” (Ibid.). Thus, modern Taiwanese nationalism, especially amongst pro-independent populations, implicates Taiwanese Aborigines and the politics surrounding indigenous genealogy. Due to this dependency, Taiwanese Aborigines have become major players in the issue of Taiwanese sovereignty as both political parties seek to utilize Aboriginal issues in their favor.

#### 4.1.2 Aborigines Making Demands and Increased Representation

While both the KMT and the DPP sought to utilize Aboriginal identity and politics for their own agendas, Aboriginal politicians have utilized this pandering for their own benefit. For example, in 1996, the KMT was losing support in the Legislative Yuan.<sup>46</sup> In order to gain votes from Indigenous legislators, the KMT acceded to Aborigines’ demands for an institution of the Indigenous peoples, the CAA, to be under the jurisdiction of the Executive Yuan, thereby increasing the political status for Indigenous people (Ku 2005, 119). In another case, in 1997 both the KMT and DPP were amending the constitution to include the Aboriginal Act. Both parties decided to avoid the wording “self-governing” in the new constitution due to the symbolic gesture of repudiating the status of Taiwan as a province, which the New Party and some KMT representatives opposed (Ibid., 120). However, Aboriginal politicians demanded for

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<sup>46</sup> Legislative Yuan (立法院), is one of the five branches of government in Taiwan along with Executive Yuan (行政院) and Judicial Yuan (司法院). The Legislative Yuan consists of legislators who are elected to read and sign bills. The Executive Yuan consists of a Premier elected by the President and twelve cabinet members and they evaluate bills before submitting them to the Legislative Yuan. The Judicial Yuan, similar to the American Judiciary Branch, interprets the constitution and review civil and criminal cases.



the inclusion of the wording, “according to the will of ethnic groups,” which not only secured the protection of lands and rights for Indigenous people in Taiwan (Ibid.). In order to pass this amendment, both parties catered to this demand and the protection of Indigenous rights.

With Aboriginal politicians’ demands increasingly met by the Taiwanese government, there are increasingly more Aboriginal representation in Taiwanese society. In 1998, the ATA led a “Return Our Land Movement” in which Aborigines demanded “the return of their lands to the original inhabitants” and sent the first Aboriginal representative to the United Nations Working Group on Indigenous Populations (Wu, M. 2017, 72). The Aboriginal Education Act in 1998 contributed considerable progress regarding the educational rights of Indigenous students and the inclusion of Aboriginal culture in school curricula (Ibid., 73). Starting from 2000, public school textbooks for primary and secondary school featured articles that provided a more nuanced view of Aboriginal stories and culture. These articles include topics of traditional Aboriginal perspectives on a “balance between the environmental economy and human civilization” as well as essays by Indigenous authors on how Aborigines suffered from the “conflicts between modern civilization and their ancient tribal traditions,” leading to a complicated self-identity (Ibid., 74). Not only are Han-Taiwanese children becoming more aware of the Aboriginal plight and Aboriginal culture through these advancements, Taiwan is also becoming more internationally recognized for being “not simply from a totalizing Chinese/Taiwanese-dominant perspective but rather as a highly complex, multicultural, multi-ethnic community” (Ibid., 73).

In addition to the progress in the educational system, there has also been more public acknowledgement of Taiwanese Aborigines. In 2000, when DPP president Chen Shui-bian was elected, his celebration featured Pinuyumayan pop singer A-mei singing the Taiwan’s national

anthem. This overtly public recognition of Aborigines is a clear marker of the “change in national identity when power shifted from the KMT to the DPP, a change that combines various discourses on blood affinity to legitimise the separation of Chinese and Taiwanese identity” (Ku 2005, 121).<sup>47</sup> The public inclusion of Taiwanese Aborigines on a national stage shows Taiwan’s growing efforts to create a unique identity from China through the inclusion of the Aborigines. In addition, in August 2016, Taiwan saw the election of DPP president Tsai Ing-wen whose paternal grandmother was a member of the Paiwan tribe (Wu, M. 2017, 75). President Tsai also issued a formal apology to the Taiwanese Aboriginal community on behalf of the Taiwanese government for the centuries of subjugation from the Han (Ibid.). Though President Tsai’s Aboriginal ancestry is rather distant, both her election and her formal apology statement could be seen as the major progress and national support for Taiwanese Aborigines in the current day.<sup>48</sup> The Taiwanese government has also been increasingly supporting Aboriginal festival activities to increase tourism in Taiwan. Whereas in the past, most Aboriginal festivals were only limited to their own tribe members, there are many festivals now opened to the general public, and participating in these festivals is now a major part of the Aboriginal tourism experience (Lee and Chang 2017, 458). Not only is the government now supporting Aboriginal culture and arts, this support also provides more financial support for Aboriginal communities.

Sangpuy’s *Dalan*, released in 2012, came out of this backdrop of increased support for

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<sup>47</sup> While very popularly received in Taiwan, A-mei’s public performance of the Taiwanese national anthem angered the Chinese government, temporarily banning A-mei from performing in China and removed advertisements containing her from Chinese broadcasts. This ban not only angered the Taiwanese government but also A-mei’s Chinese fans, and eventually in June 2000, due to angry letters from Chinese fans, A-mei was allowed to release music and appear on Chinese television again (Jeffries 2003, 9).

<sup>48</sup> An article by Island Folklore even describes the election of Tsai Ing-wen, Taiwan’s first female president, as a reflection of the “matriarchs of old,” exemplifying how traditional notions of Amis and Pinuyumayan matriarchs have resulted in greater pushes towards gender equality in Taiwan (Island Folklore 2017) <https://islandfolklore.com/matriarch/>.

Taiwanese Aboriginal rights and culture. In the rest of this chapter, I talk about how Sangpuy uses his songs and the evocation of ancestral spirits to negotiate identity and present the demands of the Aboriginal issues.

#### 4.2 Theory: Formation of a New and Modern Tradition Based on the Past

To discuss how Sangpuy's use of ancestral spirit cosmology creates a new modernized identity that is rooted in traditions of the past, I utilize Christopher Waterman's notion of the construction of Pan-Yoruba identity as well as Michael Rudolph's concept of "retraditionalizing rituals." Christopher Waterman describes how the Yoruba of southwestern Nigeria utilizes traditional elements in their popular music to consolidate Yoruba identity. Waterman first describes how in the years following World War II, due to competition amongst the Yoruba, Igbo, and Hausa, the need to coopt traditional symbols such as chieftaincy titles and the *dùdún* talking drum became a "crucial resource for politicians seeking to mobilize the newly enfranchised masses" (Waterman 1990, 371). In the efforts to create a pan-Yoruba identity, these politicians began utilizing these traditional symbols.

Many of these traditional symbols are reflected in Yoruba popular music. For example, many professional *jùjú* bands exhibit traditional notions of hierarchy and relationships. They consist of a lead or solo player supported by tenor and bass guitars, a senior talking drummer who improvises on a rhythmic base, and a praise singer beside a chorus of supporters (Waterman 1990, 374). These bands exemplify the fundamental relationship between the *elè* (the lead vocal part) and the *ègbè* (the chorus and the responsorial patterns it sings) which combine to produce an idealized social order sonically (Ibid.). Many Yoruba instrumental music also focuses on the notion that the whole is dependent on the interaction of the different parts, reflecting the

traditional Yoruba concept of power (*ágbàrà*), where “a person becomes powerful only if he or she can maintain a broad network of willing supporters” (Ibid., 375).

While the Yoruba utilizes traditional elements to consolidate a pan-Yoruba identity in their popular music, Waterman emphasizes that the “notional of a unified Yoruba tradition is a modern development” and that popular music styles such *jùjú* and *fújì* “embody in sound, proxemics, and behavior the image of a deeply-grounded yet modern society, a kind of cosmopolitan electronic kingdom” (Waterman 1990, 376). Waterman describes how Yoruba popular music “portrays an imagined community of some 30 million people - a sodality that no individual could know in entirety through first-hand experience - and embodies the ideal affective texture of social life and the melding of new and old, exotic and indigenous within a unifying syncretic framework” (Ibid.).<sup>49</sup> Therefore, while Yoruba people will not be able to meet every single individual in this community, their popular music is nevertheless something that can represent them through the use of new and old, exotic and indigenous materials.

Michael Rudolph’s concept of “retraditionalizing rituals” contributes to this discussion of the mixing of new and old materials. Rudolph coins the term “retraditionalizing rituals” to describe rituals that are often reconstructions and reinventions that seem very much detached from present-day aboriginal society with Sinicized and Christianized undertones (Rudolph 2015, 351). These rituals “should not be considered to be mere theatrical representations of the past” but rather as cultural and cosmological symbols that are useful for dealing with contemporary social issues (Ibid.). This notion of “retraditionalizing rituals” is similar to what Waterman states about Yoruba popular music. Even though they are distanced from original Yoruba ritual music

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<sup>49</sup> By “imagined community,” Waterman is using Benedict Anderson’s concept of “imagined community” where “the members of even the smallest nations will never know most of their fellow members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in minds of each lives the image of their communion” (Waterman 1990, 376).

(as evidenced by the mix of new and indigenous elements), they are still useful for engaging with current day issues such as the formation of a pan-Yoruba identity and keeping traditional social hierarchy alive. In this chapter, I demonstrate how Sangpuy's use of ancestral spirit cosmology and sonic elements that index ancestral spirits is not simply a theatrical representation of the past, but rather, like Yoruba popular music, a way to consolidate identity in modern times as well as a way to address current-day issues.

#### 4.3 Music as a Vehicle for Activism

Before talking about Sangpuy, I discuss a few different ways in which popular music is used for activism. First, popular music is often used to address issues of identity politics. Juliet Hess, in her article, "Singing Our Own Song: Navigating Identity Politics through Activism in Music," describes making music as a way for people to "embrace, trouble, and explore the intersections of identity" as well as composing being a way for people to "explore and assert identity" (Hess 2019, 62). The musicians Hess interviewed such as tvu, a Vietnamese-American hip-hop artist, describe music as a medium through which "listeners may be more receptive to activist messages received through music" and as a powerful tool for activist-musicians to educate listeners on these issues (Ibid.). The activist-musicians Hess interviewed in her research also describe that music that focuses on identity politics "creates a platform to explore identity and build community" and "can point to structures of oppression and marginalization" (Ibid., 66).

In tandem with popular music negotiating identity politics, it also becomes an agent for language revitalization. David Samuels, in his article "Music's Role in Language Revitalization—Some Questions from Recent Literature," describes how "as languages are pushed to extinction by administrative, media, technological, and educational forces, so too

musics suffer the onslaught of the global marketplace and the draconian sorting it imposes, the efficacy of a poetic or artistic expression being reframed to reflect its potential capitalization by international media corporations” (Samuels 2015, 348). It is due to this commercialization that in movements aimed at revitalizing and preserving languages, “musics falling outside the bell curve of mainstream traditions or commercial viability are increasingly conceptualized with analogies to ecosystems and biodiversity” (Ibid.). In other words, the more a song or genre is outside of the mainstream (especially if using a non-mainstream language), the more it is considered profitable to preserve. Samuels expands on this notion with the quote: “the cuter the animal, it seems, the more likely it is to be earmarked for ‘rescuing,’” thereby “giving it a significant advantage in the endangerment stakes” (Ibid., 351). In terms of transmission, Samuels describes the “master-apprentice” model proposed by Catherine Grant, that especially for songs in languages that are in dire circumstances, this model is the “primary method of intergenerational transmission” (Ibid., 350). This master-apprentice model is essential for passing these near-extinct languages from one generation to the next.

Sangpuy’s songs demonstrate these elements of music as activism. First, Sangpuy uses his music to engage with identity politics as discussed in Chapter 3. Sangpuy’s evocation of ancestral spirits including his quote about the Pinuyumayan’s connection to the land through the ancestral spirits demonstrates the sense of identity. The fact that removing the remains of ancestors would be equivalent to removing the identity of the *buluo* shows how central ancestral spirits are to the Pinuyumayan. Secondly, Sangpuy also describes his strong impetus of language revitalization, which also goes in conjunction with identity. As described in Chapter 2, Sangpuy states that the album *Dalan* was meant to “spur young people’s interest in discovering our tribal songs,” and that “comprehending our language is crucial to understanding the essence of the

profound Pinuyumayan culture” (Chiang, P. 2018). He was also adamant about performing songs in Pinuyumayan mother tongue, stating that the use of mother tongue is “our most foundational element.”<sup>50</sup> Similar to Samuels’ ecosystem and biodiversity analogy, since Sangpuy sees Pinuyumayan mother tongue as something in decline, it becomes more apparent to promote and revitalize it. The use of Pinuyumayan language is also integral to identity politics since Sangpuy describes it as foundational to the Pinuyumayan community, especially for artists. There is even the master-apprentice model present in Sangpuy’s use of Pinuyumayan language in his songs. Sangpuy learned to sing songs in the Pinuyumayan language through listening to recordings of his late grandfather. In return, he hopes to revitalize the language, especially amongst the Aboriginal youth. The language will thus be transmitted from one generation to another. In addition, Sangpuy said that Pinuyumayan *buluo*’s have “no writing system, music is for passing on history, culture’s medium” and that “just as people need oxygen, fish needs water, and birds need the sky, so does life need music” (Lin, X. 2016).<sup>51</sup> The passing of the Pinuyumayan language from one generation to another preserves not only the language but also Pinuyumayan culture, thereby providing the essential nutrients to their community.

#### 4.4 Ancestral Spirits and Environmentalism (Geopolitics) and Self-determination

##### 4.4.1 “Yaangad” and Spiritual Connection to the Land

One of the biggest issues Sangpuy engages with is environmentalism. Although

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<sup>50</sup> From the YouTube video: 台灣壹週刊 NexTW, “【台灣壹週刊】阿妹前面的勇士—桑布伊,” YouTube video, 2:36, Oct 29, 2013, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jylc5W074nQ>. Time stamp: 0:50 – 1:17.

<sup>51</sup> My translation from the original Chinese: 「部落沒有文字，音樂是傳承歷史、文化的媒介。」老祖先告訴桑布伊，音樂在部落裡是一種療癒、抒發心情最好的方式，「就像人需要空氣、魚需要水、鳥需要天空，生活就是需要有音樂。」桑布伊說道。“‘*Buluo* has no writing system, music is for passing on history, culture’s medium.’ The ancestors told Sangpuy that music is *buluo*’s nutrients, a way to evoke good feelings, ‘just as people need oxygen, fish needs water, and birds need the sky, so does life need music’ Sangpuy said.” From <https://castnet.nctu.edu.tw/castnet/article/9471?issueID=613>, written by Lin Xiangyun (林湘芸).

statements on environmentalism are much more explicit in Sangpuy's second album, *Yaangad*, the song "Yaangad" in his first album, *Dalan*, also touches on this subject. While this song is entirely in vocables and does not explicitly mention environmentalism, Sangpuy's liner notes state:

Our ancestors once said that the earth we step on is transformed from their remains. 'Nothing dies, yet changes,' they told us.

Bodies of human beings will return back to the earth, nourishing the plants. The plants provide human beings with fresh air.

We, the Indigenous Peoples, possess the wisdom of how to go along with the Mother Earth, making use of her without harming her. We coexist with the Mother Earth in harmony. We are all living things, and all living things are we. (Chen 2012)

In the first two paragraphs, Sangpuy describes the strong affinity Aborigines have to the land. He evokes the traditional concept of ancestral spirits as the basis for this connection. It is the ancestors that informed Aborigines of the nature of both humans and the environment, and how humans become the nutrients for the land, animals, plants, and the air. According to Sangpuy, since Aborigines have this connection to the essence of people in all living things and vice versa, they are more connected to the land. This is a more animistic view of the world that is also a spiritual concept connected to the belief in ancestral spirits. This interpretation is not exclusively available to listeners who have the album liner notes; Sangpuy also explains it to audiences during live performances. In the same interview where Sangpuy describes traditional burial practices of the Pinuyumayan, the interviewer asked Sangpuy about the song, "Yaangad." Sangpuy replied by saying:

'Yaangad' is a *gudiao* that's been passed for a very very long time in the *buluo*. This song's summary is about what is life? What is life in the past? To us, life is something that will not permanently stop. It will just change. People die and then their bodies enter the earth. The earth gives nutrients to plants, and then the plants give fresh oxygen to us humans. It's always only changing. (43:22)<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> My translation of Sangpuy's words from Chinese to English. The parenthetical citation marks the timestamp where Sangpuy states this quote. From the YouTube video: 大愛電視 Tzu Chi DaAiVideo, "【樂事美聲錄】20140216 - 臺東卡大地布部落," YouTube video, 48:00, Feb17, 2014,



Although the song itself does not explicitly state this environmental message in its lyrics, Sangpuy uses the song as an opportunity to share these views with his audience. Sangpuy also specifies that this song is a *gudiao* that has been passed down for generations in his *buluo*. This statement adds to the cultural significance of this song and how deeply rooted this animistic view of the environment is to the Pinuyumayan community from Sangpuy's perspective.

In the third paragraph, Sangpuy describes how this close connection to the land allows Aborigines to coexist with nature in harmony and protect the environment. In addition, Sangpuy specifically states that “we, the Indigenous Peoples, possess the wisdom of how to go along with the Mother Earth.” By singling out Aborigines with this statement, (as opposed to the Han-Taiwanese, the dominant ethnic group in the context of Taiwan), Sangpuy proposes that Aborigines, in addition to being fully equipped to address environmental issues due to modern advancements, are even more capable than the Han-Taiwanese due to their animistic view and connection to the land.

#### 4.4.2 “Verelruwan”: Indigenous as the First Inhabitants of the Land

The second example of Sangpuy's songs that directly engages with the issue of environmentalism is “Verelruwan” (Precious Nature). This song is from Sangpuy's second album, *Yaangad*, released in 2016. *Yaangad*, compared to *Dalan*, has a more focused message on environmentalism. In his song, “Kumuda” (What Happened), the lyrics consists of a series of questions asking what the Earth will look like if the ecosystem was destroyed. About this song, Sangpuy states that “if Mother Nature is destroyed, other issues we fight for and the things we

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[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H52R6ZMc1\\_Y](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H52R6ZMc1_Y). “生命之歌它是部落已經流傳很久很久的一首古謠. 然後它裡面它這首歌的大意就在講說生命是什麼? 以前的生命是什麼? 對我們來說生命它不會永遠的...就是停止. 只是轉換而已. 人死了然後肉的遺體到土地裡面. 然後土地給植物養分. 然後植物供給我們人類養分. 就是一一直在轉變而已.”

cherish will no longer exist” (Chiang, P. 2018). His other song, “Verelruwan” (Precious Nature) also addresses environmentalism and land rights in the lyrics, as shown in Table 4.<sup>53</sup>

**Table 4: Lyrics to Sangpuy’s “Verelruwan” in Pinuyumayan mother-tongue and in English.**

<p>Verse 1:  <i>meredek iniyam i ka'idangan.          lemavat lremayat kana zinanuman.</i></p> <p><i>atu pinizuwa zatu ivavelay.          kana pinidare'an kana kalawayan.</i></p> <p>Verse 3:  <i>meredek iniyam i kani trikipan.          lemavat lremayatr kanazu inlrangan.          a tu pinizuwa nazu iyavaaw.          kana temuwamuwan na 'awatranan.</i></p>	<p>Verse 1:          We arrived at the land of the water.          Crossing the water, following the direction of the streams.          It is the treasure that it gave us.          Is this large vast land.</p> <p>Verse 3:          We arrived at the land of the plains.          It is through their footsteps we are derived.          It's their lives' treasure.          Left by the ancient ancestors.</p>
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In verse 1 depicted in Table 4, Sangpuy describes the Taiwanese Aborigines as the first inhabitants of Taiwan as they fared across the ocean and into the vast land. In verse 3 of the song, he describes the Aborigines as following in the footsteps of the ancestors and that the land is “their lives’ treasure / left by the ancient ancestors.”<sup>54</sup> Not only do Aborigines have the rights to Taiwan’s land because of their link to these ancestors, but also everyone, both Aboriginal and Han-Taiwanese, have the responsibility to protect this land because it is the ancestor’s prized possession that they left behind for the descendants. Therefore, with this song, Sangpuy not only advocates for issues of Aboriginal land rights but also for protecting the environment. Sangpuy also utilizes ancestral spirits to support environmentalism and Aboriginal demands. By these lines, Sangpuy states that the direct lineage to the Aboriginal ancestors is validation for Aborigines to be the vanguards of environmental care and policy.

<sup>53</sup> Full lyrics with Mandarin Chinese translation from this website: [https://streetvoice.com/Sangpuy\\_SKM/songs/374118/](https://streetvoice.com/Sangpuy_SKM/songs/374118/). My translation into English.

<sup>54</sup> Full lyrics with Mandarin Chinese translation from this website: [https://streetvoice.com/Sangpuy\\_SKM/songs/374118/](https://streetvoice.com/Sangpuy_SKM/songs/374118/). My translation into English.

#### 4.4.3 Using Music to Make Demands for Environmentalism and Land Rights (Self-determination)

Sangpuy's use of music to engage with environmentalism and land rights is similar to what other Indigenous groups are proposing with their music. Chris Gibson writes how Australian Aboriginal bands "also take on ambassadorial roles for the people of their homelands, communicating the views, identities, and cultural attachments to place of local communities when touring other areas of Australia" (Gibson 1998, 171). These Indigenous groups are therefore able to promote self-determination, or the process by which Indigenous groups "regain control over their own destinies, after imperial histories of oppression and dispossession" (Ibid., 163). Similarly, the Sámi people in Norway have been promoting self-determination by using their music to call attention to "processes of asserting land rights, histories, and the validity of indigenous philosophies, as well as rejecting external (colonial) representations" (Ramnarine 2009, 208). The Sámi were able to use traditional joik singing to protest the building of the Alta dam. This dam was planned to be constructed squarely within Sámi territory and would flood thousands of hectares of reindeer grazing pastures, resulting in the displacement of at least one Sámi community (Jones-Bamman 2001, 199). The Sámi community responded by setting up a *lavyo* (a conical tent) directly across the street from the Norwegian Parliament building in Oslo and joiking at people who passed by the building (Ibid., 200). This act of protest not only symbolically transformed the space into a symbolic Saamiland (with the use of the *lavyo*), it also garnered sympathy from people outside of the Sámi community, leading to nation-wide dialogue about Indigenous rights in Norway (Ibid.). This protest also led Sámi people to "declare openly their own Saami heritage, something that many had not done before out of fear or shame," and

become more confident in their cultural identity (Ibid.).<sup>55</sup>

As for Taiwan, other Aboriginal groups have also used ancestral spirit cosmology to support Indigenous rights and environmentalism before Sangpuy. In 1995, local community members from the Tsuo tribe in Saviki (Shan Mei in Chinese) renovated the Tanayiku Creek and turned it into a national park. In 1970, the Tanayiku Creek was heavily exploited by thousands of Han-Taiwanese looking for economic and leisure opportunities, leading to overfishing as people from outside the community used fishing rods, nets, and even car batteries and poisons to fish (Hipwell 2009. 297). The local Tsuo joined the fishing in a frenzied effort, leading to the creek being depleted of fish (Ibid.). This was particularly devastating to the Tsuo because of the cultural implications of the creek. To the Tsuo of Saviki, the creek was a place for the guardian spirit of nature where hunting, fishing, and killing of living things were prohibited (Ibid.). The creek was meant to be a place for weak (especially pregnant) animals to find shelter or to reproduce. The local Tsuo of Saviki, under the leadership of Presbyterian pastor Pasuya Yadawuyungana (Gao Zheng-sheng), decided to form the Tanayiku Development Committee in 1985 to restore the Tanayiku Creek.

One of the most integral part of the restoration effort was the Tsuo's revitalization of Indigenous ideology and beliefs. In particular, they revived and popularized the notion of "*ayutyutsyu*" (responsibility to the natural world), the worship of Hamou (a prominent nature deity), and religious customs such as *do beo bitt* (thanking the spirit of an animal taken by hunting) (Hipwell 2009, 297). First, the centuries of Sinicization and later, Christianization, led to the decline of these Indigenous ideologies. Second, these traditional ideas not only renewed a focus on conservation through the adherence to tradition, they also helped

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<sup>55</sup> Unfortunately, despite these protests, the Alta dam was still constructed and opened in 1987.

reinforce a collective sense of identity for the youth, thereby encouraging them to volunteer as conservation officers (Ibid.). Eventually the Tsuo of Saviki officially opened Tanayiku to visitors in 1995. By 2004, approximately 450,000 people visit the park annually and the park became a place to showcase Tsuo cultural songs and dance (Ibid., 298).

There are many parallels with these two case studies and Sangpuy's use of ancestral spirits. Sangpuy's music, being so easily attributed to the sound of the ancestors, is also used to promote land rights and environmentalism. First, Sangpuy utilizes traditional ideology of ancestral spirits to advocate for environmentalism. The song "Yaangad" utilizes the notion of ancestors to show the different notions Aborigines have on nature and how they value nature as much as human life. In so doing, "Yaangad" describes the Aborigines' affinity to the land and thereby their proficiency in addressing environmental issues. In the song "Verelruwan," Sangpuy states how the Aborigines inherited the land of Taiwan from their ancestors, and as such, are entitled to protecting Taiwan's nature. Sangpuy's engagement with land rights and environmentalism in his music shows how he is using popular music as a way "to inscribe spaces of empowerment" and a "site of geopolitical tension between Aboriginal people and non-Aboriginal authorities" (Gibson 1998, 173).

Second, just as both the Sámi and Tsuo inspired younger generations, Sangpuy also wants his music to influence Aboriginal youth. As Sangpuy mentions, he explicitly uses the Pinuyumayan language in his songs in order to re-popularize the language amongst younger audiences. Many of Sangpuy's performances involve Aboriginal youth singing with him. For both *Dalan* and *Yaangad* albums, Sangpuy performed his songs at Tiehua Village in Taitung with Pinuyumayan youth. This venue is a bar that hosts up-and-coming as well as indie singers, many of which are Aboriginal pop singers such as Sangpuy himself. In 2012, Sangpuy was at

Tiehua Music Village singing his “Malikasaw.” Behind him accompanying his performance were many young Pinuyumayan boys and girls of different ages along with a few adults acting as helpers.<sup>56</sup> The Pinuyumayan children were able to sing both the vocable and lexical verses of this song along with Sangpuy. Again in 2017, Sangpuy was on stage at Tiehua Music Village, this time featuring the song “Sadeku Na Senan” from his album *Yaangad*. For this performance, his accompaniment consisted of ten Pinuyumayan young women (*vulavulayan*) who sang along with Sangpuy in the Pinuyumayan language towards the end of the song.<sup>57</sup> In both performances, Sangpuy featured Pinuyumayan youth along with himself. These two performances feature two things. First, within the Pinuyumayan community, language and music are being actively preserved and passed on to younger generation. Second, Sangpuy’s wish of popularizing Pinuyumayan mother tongue amongst the youth has come true. Through singing Sangpuy’s songs from his albums, Pinuyumayan youth are able to learn and perpetuate the Pinuyumayan language by performing at venues such as Tiehua Music Village.

But it is not just young people who are learning the Pinuyumayan language through Sangpuy’s music. In one YouTube video, Sangpuy led a group of older men and women in singing his song, “Zemawa.”<sup>58</sup> On a PowerPoint slide, Sangpuy used Mandarin Chinese

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<sup>56</sup> From the YouTube video: Taiwan Indie Music, “桑布伊／b7 快樂搖擺+凱旋歌 (鐵花村 2012.12.15.),” YouTube video, 11:57, Dec 16, 2012, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3gA-RZREoqs>. The children in this video consist of a wide range from what appears to be teenagers to young elementary children. This video demonstrates not only the age-based Pinuyumayan society (older children leading the younger) but also how Sangpuy’s songs are used to train Pinuyumayan children in their language even at a young age.

<sup>57</sup> From the YouTube video: u64011, “Sangpuy 桑布伊~Sadeku Na Senan(溫暖的光), 鐵花村, 台東. 2017.04.07(Pinuyumayan),” YouTube video, 5:45, Apr 9, 2017, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JGE7q\\_GBeo4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JGE7q_GBeo4). The young women look to be about teenaged. They join in with Sangpuy about 3:10 into the video with the Pinuyumayan lyrics “*muwaduk ta lra mukasa ta lra ...*” The young women sing this refrain along with Sangpuy until the end of the song.

<sup>58</sup> From the YouTube video: 陳傑瑞, “2012-01-15 練唱卑南族語歌-分享,” YouTube video, 7:48, Jan 20, 2012, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=20zqL-G27EU>. The video only focuses on Sangpuy and the PowerPoint slide, so I cannot state the exact age of the audience. The description on the video says: “為了在寶桑聯合年祭有好的表現，大家齊聚一堂練習之前教過的歌- 分享 Zemawa。” “In order to perform well at the Annual ritual gathering at Babulu, everybody gathered for a class to learn the song they previously learned – ‘Zemawa’” - my translation.

characters and Taiwan’s spelling system, Bopomofo, to spell out the Pinuyumayan lyrics phonetically. The description on the video states: “In order to perform well at the Annual ritual gathering at Babulu, everybody gathered for a class to learn the song they previously learned – ‘Zemawa.’” Again, Sangpuy’s songs from his album are being used to teach Pinuyumayan members their mother tongue, this time to a group of adults getting ready to sing at their annual ritual gathering. Through this “master-apprentice” model, Sangpuy’s songs have become their own form of “new tradition” through which new generations of Pinuyumayan children can learn their own cultural roots and native language.

Sangpuy’s songs are also similar to the Yoruba popular music Waterman mentions as well as Rudolph’s notion of “retraditionalizing rituals.” Sangpuy also utilizes traditional sonic elements to construct a modern identity. For example, my analysis of “Pai’lai’law” in Chapter 2 demonstrated how Sangpuy incorporated traditional multi-part vocal texture in his song, which reflects not only the vocal texture of traditional *pa’ira’iraw* but also the aspect of social hierarchy represented by the drone and lead singer parts. In Chapter 3, I demonstrated how in the song “Kianun,” Sangpuy utilizes prayers and the nose flute to evoke ancestral spirits. In the case of the nose flute, he describes it as the very instruments the ancestors used, thereby directly evoking the past through his music. Such use of traditional or tradition-indexing elements is a way to reconstruct “a sense of staged authenticity for attendees in a festival experience” through the “quality of facilities, program content, unique rituals, and ambient conditions” (Lee and Chang 2017, 464). Sangpuy’s comments on the nose flute demonstrates how he is attempting to shape the ambience and the sonic environment in order to give the listener a sense of authentic

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Babulu is one of the eight Pinuyumayan *buluo*’s. Based on this description and listening to the voices of those singing in the background, I deduce that the people singing and practicing this song are Pinuyumayan adults.

experience. In addition, Sangpuy uses these elements of the past to construct Pinuyumayan identity, especially in how he describes ancestral spirits as integral to the identity of their *buluo*'s.

I would also like to add that Sangpuy's extensive use of the guitar is also a part of using music for activism. The acoustic guitar has a long-standing tradition of being a global "protest song" symbol. As I stated in the beginning of the chapter, many of the Campus Folksong Movement and Taiwanese grassroots movement singers were inspired by key figures in the U.S. Folk Revival Movement and relied on the guitar for their music. Lo Ta-yo is a prime example of this with his marriage of political satire and his use of guitar for his songs. Hakka folk singers like Lin Shengxiang and Chen Yongtao are also known for integrating the guitar with Hakka mountain songs in their protest against the building of Meinong Dam which affected many Hakka people in Taiwan (Lin, T. 2011).<sup>59</sup> Pau-dull, though less political, was also heavily inspired by figures like Joan Baez and Bob Dylan. Pau-dull's use of simple guitar melodies, a bluesy folk sound, and his messages of cultural revival feeds into this long-standing tradition of guitar and protest. Most of Sangpuy's songs, as I stated in Chapter 2, consist of simple guitar accompaniments. Many of Sangpuy's public performances, as seen in Figure 7, consist of just him and his guitar. Sangpuy's use of simple guitar accompaniment and his messages of environmentalism, land rights, and ancestral spirits correspond to the ethos of protest music in fashion similar to Pau-dull and the singers from the Campus Folksong Movement.

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<sup>59</sup> While Environmental Justice Atlas states that the Meinong Dam has been stopped and that the conflict ended in 2000, Lin Tse-Hsiung states that this is still an on-going issue (Lin, T. 2011, 111). For the information on Environmental Justice Atlas, visit the website: <https://ejatlas.org/conflict/meinungdam-yellow-butterfly-valley-stopped-taiwan>.





**Figure 7: Sangpuy showcasing Pinuyumayan children at his performances. Sangpuy singing “Malikasaw” with Pinuyumayan children at Tiehua Village in 2012 (top) and Sangpuy singing “Sadeku Na Senan” with Pinuyumayan young women at Tiehua in 2017 (bottom). Images from the YouTube videos <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3gA-RZREoqs> and [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JGE7q\\_GBeo4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JGE7q_GBeo4) respectively.**

#### 4.5 Sangpuy’s Actions and Getting the Support of the Taiwanese Public

This message of environmentalism is not only evident in his songs but also in his political activism. When Sangpuy was awarded the Golden Melody Award for Best Aboriginal Singer for his *Dalan*, he held a yellow cloth with the words “*Hanwei zhuling, Jujie qianzang*” (Defend the ancestor spirits, Refuse to relocate tombs) at the ceremony (Lin, X. 2016).<sup>60</sup> Since the Golden Melody Award is an extravagant public event similar to the Grammys Award, it was a big statement to be on stage with a political slogan unfurled. In addition, instead of conventionally being onstage to receive his award, he got on one knee and received a flower wreath from his

<sup>60</sup> In Chinese, 「捍衛祖靈 拒絕遷葬」.

mother, which reflects the Pinuyumayan tradition of honoring men from their hunt. About this tradition, Chen Chun-bin writes that during the Pinuyumayan's annual *mangayau* (Great Hunting Ritual), the men would leave the *buluo* and hunt in the mountains for a period of time (Chen 2007, 115). On December 31, before the New Year, the Pinuyumayan men would return to the *buluo*, and the women would prepare a bamboo-surrounded place called "*laluanan*," or the place for welcoming the men from hunting (Ibid., 118). Once the men returned to the *buluo*, the women would reward the men on their successful hunt with wreaths of flowers on the men's heads and circles of grass for those who are bereaving lost relatives during this period (Ibid., 119). In accordance with this Pinuyumayan tradition, Sangpuy's gesture of receiving a flower wreath from his mother could be seen in a similar fashion. Sangpuy mother rewarded him with a flower wreath for his Golden Melody Award, a symbolic hunt that Sangpuy went out from the *buluo* to accomplish. Sangpuy himself had said that "leaving the *buluo* is like going on a hunt," thereby comparing his experience of performing his music abroad to the experience of hunting (Lin, X. 2016).

Finally, during his time to acknowledge and thank his sponsors, Sangpuy said:

Aborigines' music is shared, so I especially invite my fellow Aborigines onstage. Over the past few years, my *buluo*, Taitung, Katatripul *buluo*, due to the local government wanting to take our ancestor's lands, we are very dismayed. We protested many times. It's okay. Katatripul people are the most courageous, Katatripul people are the most united. We will use our actions to show our persistence. Good work to my Katatripul fellows! Thank you and thank you to my ancestral spirits! ... There are many issues concerning land in Taitung. Should we get rid of Meiliwan? Nuclear wastes, please get rid of nuclear wastes from Lanyu. Elders tell me that Aborigines' values are saved up in this land, so our life's goal is to defend the land, the ocean, the mountains, and the air. Aborigines, go! <sup>61</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> From the YouTube video: Jyokotoma, "第 24 屆最佳原住民語歌手桑布伊 感人片段," YouTube video, 5:31, Jul 8, 2013, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QtSIVu4-JPw>. My translation of Sangpuy's words: "原住民的音樂是分享的,所以我特別邀請各位入圍的原住民一起上台可以嗎?" ... "在這幾年我的部落,台東知本 Katatripul 部落,因為地方的政府要掠奪我祖靈之地.非常的難過.我們抗爭了很多次.沒有關係. Katatripul 的人是最勇敢的, Katatripul 的人是最團結的.我們會用最堅定的,我們會用我們的行為來證明我們的堅定.辛苦了我的 Katatripul 所有的族人.謝謝你們.謝謝我的祖靈" ... "在台東遇到了非常多土地的議題.遇到了美麗灣的土地"



**Figure 8: Sangpuy onstage with his mother (on his right) during the Golden Melody Award ceremony for his *Dalan*. Beside him are the other Aboriginal artists who also participated along with their slogans. Image from the YouTube video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QtSIVu4-JPw>.**

While onstage, the other Aboriginal artists consist of Rui Si (Miling'an), Suming Rupi, Ado Kaliting Pacidal, with the slogans, “*Fan he fan he feiliao*” (Refuse nuclear waste), “*Jujui bu dang Kaifa*” (Refuse does not mean Develop), “*Shouhu Dong hai an*” (Protect the East Coast), and “*Zhe Meiliwan*” (Stop Meiliwan) (Lin, X. 2016).<sup>62</sup> This action is twofold. First, Sangpuy intentionally chose an unconventional acceptance speech for this award ceremony. He chose to hold up his own slogan with an environmental message and invited the other Aboriginal participants onstage. Sangpuy’s invitation of the other participants (instead of letting this be his time to get all the spotlight) is not only a subversion of these ceremony conventions but also a way of emphasizing unity instead of competition, and that if he gets accolades for his album, so should all the other Aborigines who participated in this contest. By having the other artists join him onstage with their political slogans, Sangpuy

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議題。美麗灣是不是要拆？核廢料，麻煩請遷出蘭嶼。老人告訴我，原住民存在的價值就是跟這個萬物，這個大地存在，所以我們存在的價值現在就是要捍衛土地，捍衛海洋，捍衛水資源，捍衛山地，捍衛空氣。原住民加油！”

<sup>62</sup> In Chinese, the slogans are: 「反核反核廢料」、「拒絕不當開發」、「守護東海岸」、「拆美麗灣」。Meiliwan is a tourist resort that was situated in Pinuyumayan land, specifically Beinan Township (卑南鄉). Despite the protests, the building was still built. However, in 2019, the local government in Taitung dictated that the building be dedicated to marine education or social welfare, while environmental groups appealed for its demolition and return to the natural coast. The building still stands today. This information can be found on *Liberty Times Net*’s report on this issue: <https://news.ltn.com.tw/news/local/paper/1297745>.

subverted the audience's expectations and emphasized the demands of the Aboriginal community by using this spotlight. Sangpuy later stated in an interview that:

Golden Melody Awards are live broadcasted, so we take advantage of this time to speak. They don't have time to edit it out. Through this opportunity onstage, are we able to directly convey these issues. (Lin, X. 2016)<sup>63</sup>

Sangpuy stated this in reference to the time when he noticed that some of his words opposing nuclear waste dump were edited out in a radio broadcast, leaving only his words about his album (Ibid.). Not only was his acceptance speech a way to spotlight issues of the Aboriginal community but also a way to evade potential censorship of these environmental issues that are still very sensitive topics for such public platforms. Sangpuy's words and actions during his Golden Melody Award ceremony demonstrated his use of ancestral spirits to make demands. Through the evocation of ancestral spirits, Sangpuy makes Aboriginal issues such as land rights and conservation (especially those of Aboriginal communities such as his own Katatripul *buluo* in Taitung) not just simply political issues but also religious issues by pointing towards an "unquestionable religious identification" (Rudolph 2015, 357).

Similar to the Sámi and Tsuo cases, Sangpuy was able to gain the support of the Taiwanese public through his overt references to ancestral spirits and his political activism. What makes Sangpuy stand apart is how he conveys this notion of ancestral spirits audibly. My analysis in Chapter 2 demonstrated how Sangpuy uses sonic elements such as similar musical gestures to shamanic texts and traditional vocal textures to evoke ancestral spirits. Commentators like A-mei, as well as Han-Taiwanese film-worker, Wang Molin, talk about how Sangpuy's songs evoke the essence of an Aboriginal warrior's knife and a sense of prehistoric voice

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<sup>63</sup> My translation from the Chinese: "金曲獎是直播，所以趁這個時候講，它來不及剪掉。找到上舞台的機會，我們才能很直接表達這些事情。" (Lin 2016) <https://castnet.nctu.edu.tw/castnet/article/9471?issueID=613>.

respectively. Adding on to Sangpuy's messages of protecting the environment and the obligation to do so because of the ancestral spirits, Sangpuy makes a strong impression of both ancestral spirits and environmentalism for his listeners. One YouTube comment on Sangpuy's "Dalan" states that "Taiwan should incorporate Aboriginal language, history, culture, etiquette, hunting, poems, music, and dance into the twelve years of grade school education as their own courses. So that it can be worthy of the ancestors of Taiwan's first inhabitants, so that it can bring glory to Taiwan's civilization and culture."<sup>64</sup> This quote shows how Sangpuy's songs are indeed eliciting sympathy for Aboriginal issues amongst some non-Aboriginal listeners through the evocation of ancestral spirits imagery.

In addition, Sangpuy not only won 2017 Global Music Award's World Music (Aboriginal) award for his album *Yaangad*, he also performed his song "Verelruwan" at the 2017 Summer Universiade international sports event (Chiang, Z. 2018).<sup>65</sup> At the torch-lighting ceremony of this nation-wide event, there was a performance by Golden Melody Award winner, Yun Lisi from the Atayal tribe as well as a series of Aboriginal dance events from other Aboriginal performance groups.<sup>66</sup> As described by the Taipei mayor, Ke Wen-je, this Summer Universiade event lets "Taiwan, through sports, make friends with the world, lets Taiwan

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<sup>64</sup> Comment by Zondercommando in Uki Bauki's video: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1yk2l\\_ds\\_w](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1yk2l_ds_w). My translation from the original Chinese: "台灣應該將古老台灣的原住民語言, 歷史, 文化, 禮儀, 狩獵, 詩篇, 音樂, 舞蹈, 在十二年國教體系, 自成一門必修, 獨立的課程. 才不愧台灣的先民組先, 才能真正榮耀台灣的文明與文化."

<sup>65</sup> The 2017 Global Music Awards consists of many categories. The one that Sangpuy won was under the World Music category for Aborigines which many sources write as (World Music – Aboriginal). The 2017 Summer Universiade was an international sports event hosted in Taipei, Taiwan from August 19-30, 2017.

<sup>66</sup> In June 2017 the torch-lighting ceremony was hosted in Turin, Italy, where the Atayal singer Yun Lisi (雲力思) and the other dance groups performed. Sangpuy accompanied Yun Lisi on the Aboriginal mouth harp. For a video of this event see this link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PwnIVdnWjW8>. Although Sangpuy didn't get to sing at this event, he did sing on the night of the opening ceremony where both his "Verelruwan" and "Malikasaw" were featured. For a video of Sangpuy's songs in the opening event on August 19, 2017, see this video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LKhybyTNrsQ>, Timestamps (5:33) and (10:19) respectively.

become more integrated into the world stage, lets the world see Taiwan” (Cheng 2017).<sup>67</sup> In Sangpuy’s own words, this 2017 Summer Universiade lets the world see that “in this land called Taiwan, the oldest ethnic group is us Aborigines. We have a wonderful culture, each tribe with a different language, different clothing, different totem markings. Taiwan has a very rich humanity and music.”<sup>68</sup> The fact that Sangpuy was included amongst a host of other Aboriginal events at this nation-wide event shows that Taiwan is not only making reparations to the Aboriginal community but is also increasingly giving Aborigines the chance to represent Taiwan internationally. It also shows the continuation of Taiwan’s government including Aborigines in the narrative of Taiwanese nationalism and delineating the difference from China. For Sangpuy, this event was also an opportunity to talk about indigeneity and to let the world know about how Taiwanese Aborigines are the first and the oldest ethnic group in Taiwan, which reflects the messages Sangpuy had been embedding in his music, both in the lyrics and his use of musical coding that evoke ancestral spirits. Sangpuy therefore continues to use his platform to promote self-determination for Taiwanese Aborigines and continues to engage in challenging colonial narratives as well as geopolitical tensions between Taiwanese Aborigines and the Han-Taiwanese government in order to garner the support of the Taiwanese public. While the audience, both Han-Taiwanese and from outside of Taiwan, might not be able to understand the lyrics of Sangpuy’s songs, the statement is clear. Taiwanese Aborigines are not only having

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<sup>67</sup> My translation from the original Chinese in the article: “台北市長柯文哲在閉幕致詞時提及’這場運動盛會，讓台灣用運動和世界交朋友，讓台灣更緊密的融入國際社會，讓世界看見台灣。” “Taipei mayor Ke Wen-je during the opening ceremony said that ‘This sports event lets Taiwan, through sports, make friends with the world, lets Taiwan become more integrated into the world stage, lets the world see Taiwan.’”

<sup>68</sup> From the YouTube video: IPCF-TITV 原文會 原視, “世大運門票開賣 記者會邀桑布伊開場 2017-06-14 TITV 原視新聞,” YouTube video, 1:46, Jun 14, 2017, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=221HfAduGI4>, Timestamp (0:35). My translation of Sangpuy’s words: “可以讓國際可以讓世界看到台灣這塊土地最古老的民族就是我們原住民族. 然後我們有很棒的文化. 各個族群不一樣的語言, 不一樣的服飾, 然後有不一樣的圖騰. 然後台灣這塊土地有非常豐富的人文, 音樂.”

greater representation within Taiwan but are also becoming more prominent as the first inhabitants of Taiwan.

#### 4.6 Formation of a Polynesian, Pan-Indigenous Identity

Finally, Sangpuy's adamant statements about Aborigines being the first ethnic group in Taiwan and his use of traditional Aboriginal elements also contribute to the growing movement of Aborigines forming a wider Polynesian identity. About the Rapanui, Dan Bendrups writes that their South Pacific Commission's (SPC) Festival of Pacific Arts is a festival aimed at "fostering Pacific Islanders' cultural identity and mutual awareness" (Bendrups 2019, 128). This festival is responsible for the rise of a young cohort of "Rapanui who have not only a better understanding of how other Pacific Islanders live but also an emergent sensibility of contemporary Pacific Islander attitudes toward the environment and its role in sustaining Pacific cultures" (Ibid., 130). Bendrups adds that by asserting this collective Polynesian identity, "the Rapanui are able to sustain a level of cultural difference within Chile that would otherwise be very difficult for a singular indigenous community of just a few thousand people" (Ibid., 132). For the Taiwanese Aborigines, there have been similar pan-Indigenous movements aimed at creating a collective Polynesian identity with Indigenous groups from New Zealand. There is the Hawaiki Project, which is a social initiative aimed at "connecting indigenous tribes along the Polynesian migration pathway from Taiwan to Aotearoa" (Tan, L. 2018). It is responsible for many cultural exchanges between the Māori and the Taiwanese Aborigines, and promotes the genetic studies linking modern-day Polynesians (such as the Māori) to Taiwanese Aborigines. The project director Mararela Hamilton describes how there is a "long-held belief that Māori and indigenous Taiwanese are cousins, and that Taiwan was where 'it all began'" (Ibid.). Many Māori youth who were selected for this program got to experience firsthand the similarities between the songs

and languages of both Indigenous groups (Ibid.). There has also been an exchange of Indigenous politicians between New Zealand and Taiwan. In 2019, Hualien mayor Wei Chia-sian invited a group of Māori representatives from New Zealand to Hualien County (SETN 2019).<sup>69</sup> During this exchange both the Māori and the Amis performed for each other, and mayor Wei describes how he finds many similarities between Amis and Māori culture (Ibid.). While Sangpuy does not state this pan-Indigenous idea directly, he still emphasizes his use of Pinuyumayan language, ancestral spirit cosmology, and the notion of Aborigines as first inhabitants of Taiwan. Like the Rapanui, this emphasis on indigeneity not only allows the Taiwanese Aborigines to see their broader relationship to other Indigenous groups throughout the Polynesian migration path, but also allows them to emphasize cultural difference from the Han in Taiwan. Like the Rapanui, the Taiwanese Aborigines are minorities compared to the numerically dominant Han-Taiwanese. Sangpuy's music and statements serve as a way of sustaining this level of cultural difference from the dominant ethnic group in Taiwan while also engaging in the current issues for Taiwanese Aborigines in the modern day.

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<sup>69</sup> Wei Chia-sian (魏嘉賢), my transliteration of the name. The one Māori representative the article named is a chief named Craig. Unfortunately, the article does not mention his last name. Another article that talked about the same event is this: <https://www.ettoday.net/news/20190720/1494660.htm>. This one gives more details about the dance events such as the Māori performing Haka for the Amis people present at the event.



## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSION

#### 5.1 Other Prominent Aboriginal Artists

My focus in this thesis has been on Sangpuy and his music. With Sangpuy, I am interested in if and how elements of ancestral spirit ideology are incorporated into Aboriginal popular music. What role do ancestral spirits provide and how does this ideology contribute to Aboriginal popular music? However, Sangpuy's choice of musical aesthetics and indexing ancestral spirits is just one of the many ways Taiwanese Aboriginal artists are using to promote self-determination. Anu Kaliting Sadipongan is an Aboriginal artist from the Amis tribe who also mentions ancestral spirits in his songs. His album, *Cepo'*, contains songs like "Arayen ko toas" (Thank the Ancestor Spirits), "Patikoen ko sota'no toas noniya" (Return my Ancestors' Land), and "Tadamaanay a sera" (The Majestic Land), and his songs address similar themes of ancestral spirits, land rights, and environmentalism.<sup>70</sup> In one public performance of his song, "Tadamaanay a sera," Anu even got the crowd to chant "*huan wo tu di!*" (Return my land!) along with him.<sup>71</sup> In an episode of *Buluo Feng* (部落風), Bunun singer, Biung, asked Anu what his song "Arayen ko toas" meant, to which he replied:

For us Amis, our ancestors are Nakaw and Sera. Many young people today do not know of this history. This song is saying, we need to commemorate these two ancestors. We can't forget the ancestors.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> Anu's album contain song titles in the Amis language and in Chinese, but no English titles. These are my English translations. There is no capitalization for these song titles and this is how they appear on the track names: patikoen ko sota'no toas noniyam 還我祖先的土地, arayen ko toas 感謝祖靈, and tadamaanay a sera 偉大土地.

<sup>71</sup> In the YouTube video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nia8Iya45xY>. This is a video of a concert featuring the Amis film, *Pakeriran*. As the soundtrack composer, Anu also performed his songs from his album, "Weida de di" (Great Land), where he got the audience to chant "Huan wo tu di!" (Return my land!).

<sup>72</sup> My translation from the original Chinese: "我們阿美族的祖先叫做 Nakaw 跟 Sera. 那現在很多年輕人都不知道這個歷史. 裡面大概意思就是在寫說我們要懷念這兩位祖先. 不能忘記祖先這樣子." From the YouTube video: 三台, "部落風 ep0019\_11 大港口部落 歌曲," YouTube video, 2:06, Nov 26, 2012, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-l8zxG5wtM0>. Timestamp: (1:48).

In both his message and political engagement, Anu is similar to Sangpuy even though Anu does not utilize a raspy voice.

For each of the artists (and many more I do not list here), there is a different approach to the notion of balancing assimilation and traditional Aboriginal culture. Many of these artists are trying to popularize their mother tongues in their own way with their own musical idioms. For example, Amis singer Ilid Kaolo uses jazz and bossa nova in her songs, singing in both the Amis native language and in Chinese. Her many songs in Chinese as well as her use of jazz and bossa nova gives her music an urban tone that appeals to Han-Taiwanese audiences. The Aboriginal band, Matzka specializes in reggae and reggaeton with the lead singer singing in the Paiwan language. Matzka, due to the lead singer's many reggae songs in Chinese, has a wide popularity among Han-Taiwanese audiences. Amis singer, Suming Rupi, also uses bossa nova in his songs as well as reggae, rock and even electronic dance music into his songs. Most notably, Suming is known for establishing his own Amis Music Festival since 2013 and has been active every year since then. His song, "Aka Pisawad" was awarded the Golden Melody Award prize in 2016 and was the main theme for the film *Wawa no Cidal* (太陽的孩子), a film about an Amis mother and co-directed by an Amis film maker. Amis singer, Ado Kaliting Pacidal is also known for incorporating modern elements such as EDM into her music in order to popularize native language amongst Amis youth (Simons 2016).<sup>73</sup> Ado, also a TV hostess and actress, played the lead female role in *Wawa no Cidal* as an Amis mother who revitalized a plot of land into a millet field. Both Ado and Suming were artists who were present onstage with Sangpuy during his

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<sup>73</sup> In this interview, Ado states that "I am very determined to promote my music in my original language. When you think of ethnic music you think of traditional instruments, but in my last album, which was released three years ago, I made the entire album using EDM." While Ado is also adamant about using her native language, she also wants to include modern music genres to avoid being stereotyped, similar to Biung's goal with his music.

Golden Melody Award ceremony with their slogans concerning Aboriginal issues. Paiwan singer A-Bao (Aljengljeng) is known for singing songs in the Paiwan language using genres such as R&B, pop, and soul (Vitkovski 2020). Her latest album, *Kinakaian* (Mother Tongue) was awarded the Golden Melody Award for Best Aboriginal Singer in 2020, featuring elements of gospel, EDM, and even her own mother's voice. Aljengljeng's use of gospel in this album also widened her audience to listeners in the United States.<sup>74</sup> As a hostess of the Aboriginal TV shows *Malalicay* and *Ui! 輕鬆講* (Ui! Speak Easily), Aljengljeng is often seen speaking to and showcasing other Aboriginal artists and Aboriginal youth. Another Paiwan singer, Tai Siao-chun (Sauljaljui), was awarded the Golden Melody Award for Best Album in an Aboriginal Language in 2017 and later in 2020. Sauljaljui sings a mixture of songs in Chinese and the Paiwan language, but she is also active in the Hengchun Folk scene. Her use of *yueqin* and her former involvement with a local Hengchun Folksong group not only allowed her to join in many Han-Taiwanese folk festivals but also for her Aboriginal pop songs to be featured at these venues.

Suming, Ado, Aljengljeng all use modern music genres in order to popularize their languages amongst Aboriginal youth and non-Aboriginal listeners of mainstream genres. As Aljengljeng stated in an interview:

Just listen to the music and don't be afraid if you can't understand the language. I hope that the combination of ancient language and modern style can help more listeners get in touch with Paiwanese, especially the new generation of indigenous youths. We lose a lot of our culture because of the changing nature of our lifestyles. In the context of use of our mother tongue, writing lyrics is a good way to maintain the use of the language. (Vitkovski 2020)

As for Suming, his many performances in Taipei, his appearances on TV shows related to GMA awards, and his role in the film *52 Hz I Love You* by Wei De-sheng have made him a very

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<sup>74</sup> For videos of American YouTubers reviewing Aljengljeng's song "Thank You," look at these videos: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=seVnyUMKA9k>, and <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E9iBMUW-skY>.

recognizable and popular figure among Han-Taiwanese audiences. Suming is also very influential among Aboriginal youth as one YouTuber duo *Bulaike Xuexue* (布萊克薛薛) called him “the prince of Amis” and the “light of the Amis.”<sup>75</sup> Suming describes his difficult balancing act in an interview:

Sometimes I am conflicted, that the financial ability and societal accomplishment I now have, is all because I stayed in Taipei, and not back in Dulan. I’m also worried that if I returned to the *buluo*, I’ll miss out on many opportunities to express my voice. I’m considering returning to my *buluo* one day, to contribute silently just like the others, but I’m worried about losing the influential power of the performance stage. (Chiang, Z. 2018)<sup>76</sup>

Just as Suming tries to find a balance between the popularity of the performance opportunities in Taipei and going back to his home, many of these Aboriginal artists are also balancing assimilating (using mainstream genres) and traditionality (using their native languages and musical traditions).

Sangpuy and Anu, in contrast, portray a more traditionalist presentation of Aboriginal pop music. Both published albums entirely in their native languages as well as included modern renditions of Aboriginal *gudiao*. They want to popularize not only their native languages among the youth but also traditional notions of ancestral spirits and cultural roots. Their implementation of lyrics that refer to ancestral spirits and their strong adherence to this ideology demonstrate a less assimilating approach that is less focused on using mainstream musical genres. While Sangpuy and Anu might not be as widely popular as Suming or Matzka among Han-Taiwanese

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<sup>75</sup> From the YouTube video: 布萊克薛薛, “你跳我猜！這些經典舞步你會幾個？！ft.舒米恩 | #阿嘯主義 | 布萊克薛薛,” YouTube video, 11:34, Aug 23, 2020, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S1fmaePEX0g>. The duo consists of Xue Xue (薛薛) who is of Amis and Paiwan ancestry and Arase (阿拉斯). Both are YouTube celebrities and Xue Xue is also the co-host with Aljengljeng on the Aboriginal TV show *Ui! 輕鬆講*.

<sup>76</sup> My translation from the original Chinese: “可是，我有時候也很矛盾，覺得現在有點經濟能力和社會成就，都是因為待在台北，而不是回都蘭，也會擔心如果選擇在部落，會不會少了這樣的發聲管道。我常在思考有一天回部落，像其他人一樣默默地付出，但又會擔心可能失去舞台和發聲的影響力。”

audiences, they are nonetheless given the acknowledgement through GMA awards. Sangpuy's musical influence on his local community is also not to be underestimated. In an article by *Fountain of Creativity*, the author Chiang Zhaolun describes the influence of both Sangpuy and Suming:

Through their ethnic language and music, have become representative figures for passing on their *buluo*'s culture. Both men emphasize that openness, inclusivity, respectful attitude, and language recovery are not just the views of the Aborigines, they also highlight Taiwan society's multicultural worldview (Chiang, Z. 2018).<sup>77</sup>

Chiang even proposed a question as the title of the article to emphasize the two artists influence and popularity: "One Day Will There Be 'Aboriginal Language' Internet Celebrities?"

Perhaps as Taiwan continues to construct a Taiwan-centric identity that is distinct from China, there is a national push for more "traditionalist" depictions of Aborigines. This push also explains the success of these artists I mentioned with their GMA awards. In the days of Bangsalang and even A-mei from 1970s to 1990s, there was not as much of a large spotlight on Aboriginal culture or songs in mother tongues. Both artists dedicated themselves to singing in a mainstream musical style and in Chinese in order to reach their popular status. Even in the early 2000s, Biung decided to adopt a rocker's image to avoid being relegated to a niche audience and avoid being stereotyped. However, it is important to note that a majority of the artists I mentioned above were awarded the GMA awards in the Aboriginal category, a distinct category from the category for songs in Mandarin Chinese. This classification came about in 2003 when the organizers decided to split the Best Dialect Singer category into separate categories for Hakka, Taiwanese, and Aboriginal language best singers to encourage the use of native

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<sup>77</sup> My translation from the original Chinese: "來自不同部落的兩人，卻藉由族語與音樂創作，成了致力於傳承部落文化的代表性人物。兩人都提出重點是開放、包容、尊重的態度，以及復振族語不只是原住民的事的看法，也彰顯台灣社會多元文化世界觀。"

languages.<sup>78</sup> In a way, these separate categories for native languages apart from the mainstream Chinese category proved Biung's notion of being stereotyped or pigeon-holed to a niche audience. By being awarded with the GMA award in the Aboriginal category, these artists are acknowledged more for their Aboriginality than for their music itself. With Aljengljeng's latest GMA award for her *Kinakaian*, there are renewed conversations about reconsidering these categories. On the Taiwan Aboriginal news station, *Taiwan Indigenous Television*, music critic Ma Shi-fang states that mother tongue category applications did not increase as a result of these categories, therefore there is a need to review the current award categories. Biung agrees, stating that music should not be limited by the language it is sung in, but cautiously adds:

If today, we no longer make distinctions by language, how are you to judge between Hakka and Aboriginal languages? Which language had the better performance? Because they have very different aesthetic experiences.<sup>79</sup>

While this is still an on-going issue, the plethora of genres and presentations from the artists I have mentioned not only showcase the diverse musical representations but also physical representations of Aboriginality. Aboriginal artists are able to show that they can get involved not only on the national scale but also on the world stage, whether it is through world-wide genres such as reggae, EDM, and gospel, or through a more traditional approach like Sangpu'y's. In writing this thesis, I am not trying to limit Aboriginal music to a binary view of traditionalist versus modern. Rather, I would like to promote the ecosystem view of Aboriginal music

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<sup>78</sup> From “最佳方言男演唱人” and “最佳方言女演唱人” to “最佳台語男演唱人,” “最佳台語女演唱,” “最佳客語男演唱人,” and “最佳原住民語演唱人.”

<sup>79</sup> From the YouTube video: IPCF-TITV 原文會 原視, “阿爆金曲奪 3 大獎 引是否要打破語言分類討論 2020-10-07 IPCF-TITV 原文會 原視新聞,” YouTube video, 4:01, Oct 7, 2020, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gb0FYj9Y\\_uI](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gb0FYj9Y_uI). My translation from the Chinese: “樂評人馬世芳認為運作至今, 母語類別報名件數並無明顯成長, 狐疑應該從新檢討獎項分類, 而歌手王宏恩也認同. 音樂不應被語言歸類但擔憂在實際的評比上有其困難” (1:55) and for Biung's quote: “那如果今天不分語言類別的時候, 你怎麼去評斷客語跟原住民語? 那一個語言類別表現得好? 因為(音樂)美感經驗就不一樣” (2:21).

described by Shzr Ee Tan:

Amis ecosystem of song I write about might perhaps be said to consist of several intersecting referential chains: each separate mode of activity described above cannot historically or logistically take place without the parallel or prior existence of the other, and all modes of activity interact with and critically affect, while also structurally supporting one another. (Tan, S. E. 2012, 234)

Whether it is the *Enka*-inspired Amis songs, Bangsalang's and A-mei's albums in Chinese, the music of Pau-dull, Kimbo, and Samingad, the recent innovations with modern music genres, or Sangpuy's use of traditional Pinuyumayan music, they all come together to form a large ecosystem. Every artist and their use of different musical genres could not have happened without the existence of those who went before. They support, inspire, and provide nourishment for each other.

In addition, as more and more Aborigines become prominent singers, TV hosts, actors, and even film directors, Aboriginal youth today are more encouraged to dig into their cultural roots and their native languages especially with increased representation and seeing prominent Aboriginal singers sing in their native languages. As Chiang Zhaolun's quote states, this openness, inclusiveness, and respect is not just an issue for Aborigines but also for Han-Taiwanese people as the nation continues to strive towards an inclusive, multicultural worldview. We are living in an exciting time in Taiwan's history where inclusion and cooperation are essential to the national ethos.

## 5.2 Concluding Words and Further Research

As time passes, many Aboriginal artists are still concerned with how to make their music and language appeal to the Aboriginal youth. I look forward to seeing further research on how younger musicians choose to incorporate elements of Indigenous history, tradition, and culture into their music, and if any younger musicians will take up the mantle of Sangpuy's vocal

timbre. In addition, many artists before Sangpuy such as Pau-dull, Kimbo, and Samingad are still actively performing today. It would be interesting to see their next steps as well as Sangpuy's next steps as they continue their musical contributions for their communities.

Due to the global Corona Virus pandemic, my thesis had to be limited in scope. In the future, I would like to see how Aboriginal youth, especially Pinuyumayan youth, think about Sangpuy's music. I would also like to see how Sangpuy's own views and goals might change as time progresses. Finally, I have only discussed ancestral spirit ideology as described by one specific Pinuyumayan artist. While many Aboriginal tribes do have an ancestral spirit ideology, the view covered in this thesis is by no means representative of all Pinuyumayan people nor Aborigines as a whole. There are many different ways ancestral spirit cosmology differs from group to group, even from *buluo* to *buluo*, as well as how it can be influenced by Christianity. I would like to see how notions of ancestral spirits continue to evolve and provide not only an inspiration for contemporary Aboriginal artists but also a way for them to negotiate Aboriginal issues in the current day.



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