Music, Dance and the Archive

Edited by Amanda Harris,
Linda Barwick and Jakelin Troy

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INDIGENOUS MUSIC, LANGUAGE AND PERFORMING ARTS

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We acknowledge the traditional owners of the lands on which Sydney University Press is located, the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation, and we pay our respects to the knowledge embedded forever within the Aboriginal Custodianship of Country.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander readers are advised this publication contains names and images of people who have died.

Contents

List of figures

List of tables

Editors' preface and acknowledgements

This book is an output of a four-year project on which the editors (and several chapter authors) have collaborated since 2018. Our project *Reclaiming Performance Under Assimilation in Southeastern Australia, 1935–75* was funded by the Australian Research Council's Discovery Project Scheme from 2018 to 2022 (DP180100943). It arose from conversations between Amanda Harris, Linda Barwick, Rachel Fensham, Tiriki Onus, Jakelin Troy, Jacqueline Shea Murphy, Matt Poll, Lyndon Ormond-Parker and Sally Treloyn about histories of the resilience of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and their practices of performing music and dance that deserve to be more widely known. We devised a project around detailed archival research, collaborative sharing and workshopping of materials, and creative methods of recuperation and reconnection. This book brings together some of the creative and scholarly work that has resulted.

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A note on language and style

Throughout this book we capitalise terms Indigenous, Aboriginal, Native, Country, Elders, Dreaming, and render words in Indigenous languages in roman font (not-italicised), except where they are rendered as glosses on the main text.

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List of abbreviations

ABC	Australian Broadcasting Corporation
AFL	Australian Football League
AGNSW	Art Gallery of New South Wales
AIAS	Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies
AIATSIS	Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies
AuSIL	Australian Society for Indigenous Languages
CAAMA	Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association
FASDT	Formosan Aboriginal Song and Dance Troupe
IFMC	International Folk Music Council
KMT	Kuomintang
LD&C	Language Documentation & Conservation
MAI	Montréal Arts Interculturals
MS	Melodic Sequence
NAA	National Archives of Australia
NFSA	National Film and Sound Archive of Australia
NGA	National Gallery of Australia
NLA	National Library of Australia
PARADISEC	Pacific and Regional Archive for Digital Sources in Endangered Cultures
PBS	Public Broadcasting Service
SLNSW	State Library of New South Wales

8

Bodies of representation and resistance: Archiving and performing culture through contemporary Indigenous theatre in Taiwan

Chi-Fang Chao

Introduction

> Put some more clothes on dancers' bodies? Not now! In the last scene, after the dancers roll into the scene, that's when I will put their traditional costumes back on their bodies before they step out of the curtains. It will then show their most beautiful form.
>
> Bulareyaung Pagarlarva

In front of me sat Taiwanese Indigenous choreographer Bulareyaung Pargalarva, imagining the bodies on the stage. Our conversation was triggered by the concern of a group of cultural specialists and scholars, myself included, who were behind the scenes and worried by the idea and presence of the near-naked bodies of Indigenous dancers on the stage of the National Theatre located in the capital city of Taipei. The choreographer insisted on concretising oppression by using the women's half-naked bodies to symbolise the bitter stigmatisation of young Indigenous sex workers. In his modernistic vision, there seemed to be no better medium to express this issue, other than to reveal the strength of the dancers' bodies in this form.

Later when the scene was shown, the audience was overwhelmed by the presence and sensation of seeing the half-naked bodies, mingling with the feelings of innocence, humiliation and resistance that were all projected on the stage and directed to the oppressed Indigenes. Towards the end, I was finally relieved. Sitting among the audience with applause flooding in, I watched the vivid Indigenous bodies wearing the traditional costumes dancing energetically and holding hands as the curtain fell.

This was a scene from the Indigenous theatrical production Pu'ing*: Searching for the Atayal Route* (2013). It is a contemporary work merging post-colonial voices

of resistance with "the repertoire [that] enacts embodied memory",[1] which embraces traditional songs, dances, narratives and costumes.

In the last three decades, theatre has become a vital space for Indigenous peoples in Taiwan to counteract mainstream representations of their histories, social existence and cultural identity. Many of these representations have been stored in official and academic archives, and then reproduced and interpreted to shed light on the political relationship between the producers and objects of knowledge. The archive encapsulates political tones that need to be unravelled, and Indigenous performances either represent or resist these. Situated in the Taiwanese context, this chapter explores the relationship between the lived body and historical objects, and how embodied re-enactment of history, imbued with different knowledge and techniques, can deconstruct and problematise archival realism on the stage.

Archive and performance: Ways of presenting Indigenous culture through bodies

> The archival, from the beginning, sustains power. Archival memory works across distance, over time and space; investigators can go back to re-examine an ancient manuscript, letters find their addresses through time and place, and computer discs at times cough up lost files with the right software.[2]

Arguing for the enduring nature of the archive with the examples of Latin America, Diana Taylor composes an extensive etymological exegesis of the word "archive". She also argues that the archive is "expansionist" and "immunized against alterity". Comments made by scholars such as de Certeau point out the fact that "archival memory succeeds in separating the source of 'knowledge' from the knower [and the known] – in time and/or space". In sum, "[w]hat changes over time is the value, relevance, or meaning of the archive, how the items it contains get interpreted, even embodied".[3]

Indigenous people's social realities have been archived through various embodied, oral and written forms. As Taylor argues, even "in the most literate of societies", cultural practices need both "an archival and an embodied dimension".[4] However, the balance between written and embodied dimensions is skewed by power imbalances between Indigenous subjects and those in control of archiving institutions and practices. Taylor illustrates that writing, which had already existed among Indigenous cultures as an embodied practice to transmit culture, was legitimised over "other epistemic and mnemonic systems".[5] In other words, writing

1 Diana Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire: Performing Cultural Memory in America* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003), 20.
2 Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire*, 19.
3 de Certeau cited in Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire*, 19.
4 Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire*, 21.
5 Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire*, 18.

does not in itself equal archiving, but has been an essential prerequisite of the latter. Writing is also "easier to control than the embodied culture",[6] because it renders tangible and permanent records. From a technical point of view, writing, along with other ways of inscribing, comprises the majority of archival records – with colonisers being the main producers of archives.

In a recent study, Dee Das suggests important social and political meanings of dancing can be revealed through reading colonial archives. She explores "the embodied archive" on a group of dancers and singers from the Kingdom of Dahomey in Africa, who first performed in Dahomey Village at the World's Fair: Columbian Exposition in 1893. The embodied archive on dance performance can only be deciphered from authors' discourse as in the records about the fair and its follow-ups. Dee Das argues that Dahomey's dancing is "a force of resistance" to the perpetuated discourse, racism and primitivism[7]. Dee Das investigates how to evaluate the expressive freedom in, and the expectation of, performance which is "thought to provide a sense of hope and the possibility for the powerless to speak back, … ,[or] to act out" in response to the coloniser.[8]

Compared to the archive, the notion of performance has enjoyed a rather "democratic" or even decolonised view among scholars. Performances have been seen as "an embodied praxis and episteme", or "a system of learning, sorting and transmitting knowledge".[9] It is especially obvious in terms of Indigenous peoples' actions from a decolonising or post-colonising perspective. Cree theorist and director Floyd Favel argues that, although presentations of songs and dances occurred as a result of the subjugation of North American Native peoples by the settlers' society, still they are "the few places that native peoples could openly practice their cultures".[10] He observes that the Native performances that travel abroad have dual roles for viewers and performers, confirming images of the Native for the former, while at the same time allowing free expression for the latter. By juxtaposing the North American Native performances alongside the Russian folk ones, he concludes:

> [t]he contemporary stage was one of the few places that Native peoples could once again live in freedom and this led to a tradition of performing among many Native peoples, and the stage became the vehicle and the refuge where ancient songs and dance could be kept alive and shared with the world.[11]

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6 Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire*, 17.
7 Ebron cited in Joanna Dee Das, "Dancing Dahomey at the World's Fair: Revising the Archive of African Dance", in *Futures of Dance Studies*, eds Susan Manning, Janice Ross, Rebecca Schneider (Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2020), 57.
8 Ebron cited in Dee Das, "Dancing Dahomey at the World's Fair", 57.
9 Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire*, 16–17.
10 Floyd Favel, "Theatre: Younger Brother of Tradition", in *Indigenous North American Drama*, ed. Birgit Däwes (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2013), 115.
11 Favel, "Theatre: Younger Brother of Tradition", 116–17.

Favel names theatre, the contemporary stage for Indigenous performances, "the younger brother of tradition". Favel's notion of "tradition" is concretised as "ways of 'doing' … songs, dances, narrative structures taking place within the sacred ritual space", while "theatre" is "a set of performative skills" of the above practices "presented in the idealized space for the public at large".[12] Although it is absolutely relevant to contrast contemporary theatre against the notion of tradition for Indigenous peoples, his proposition favours contextualism, in which tradition and theatre are firmly set apart from each other in terms of context, purpose and participants.[13] There is another level of actors' creative and continuous deployment of embodied cultural memory through performance – archival memory:

> Performance genealogies draw on the idea of expressive movements as mnemonic reserves, including patterned movements made and remembered by bodies, residual movements retained implicitly in images or words (or in the silences between them), and imaginary movements dreamed in minds not prior to language but constitutive of it.[14]

As suggested by Joseph Roach, embodiment probes archival memories in our bodies. For Indigenous cultures, the relationship between the archive and performance raises other critical issues on authorship and Indigenous epistemology. The archive and performance are therefore systems of knowledge that are intrinsic to modern societies. For instance, modern institutions, including archives, informed by both ethnic and nationalistic ideologies, usually frame cultural collections in terms of "the past". By comparison, stage performances or the theatre enact the vital practice and process through which cultural memory and Indigenous epistemology are enlivened.[15]

While Indigenous performance gains significance as decolonised action and in building repertoires of Indigenous epistemology, the representation of the past and culture in the archive cannot be overlooked. Archives are not all static, although they are often resistant to change. The rediscovery of archives, whether through remapped geopolitical applications[16] or reidentified key figures,[17] can

12 Favel, "Theatre: Younger Brother of Tradition", 118–19.
13 Favel, "Theatre: Younger Brother of Tradition", 119.
14 Joseph Roach, *Cities of the Dead: Circum-Atlantic Performance* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), 26. See also Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire*, 5.
15 Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire*, 16–17.
16 Yuan Shu, "Introduction: Oceanic Archives, Indigenous Epistemologies, and Transpacific American Studies", in *Oceanic Archives, Indigenous Epistemologies, and Transpacific American Studies*, eds Yuan Shu, Otto Heim and Kendall Johnson (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2019), 1–21.
17 Anna Haebich, "Aboriginal Families, Knowledge and Archives: A Case Study", in *Colonising the Landscape: Indigenous Cultures in Australia*, eds Beate Neumiere and Kay Schaffer (Amsterdam and NY: Rodopi, 2013), 37–56; Shino Konishi, Maria Nugent and Tiffany Shellam, *Indigenous Intermediaries: New Perspectives on Exploration Archives* (Canberra: Australian National University Press, 2015), http://www.jstor.com/stable/j.ctt19705zg.6.

redefine the scope of history. That is, archives wait to be reinterpreted or rediscovered. Performance enlivens the archive as they sustain each other in relation to their textuality and temporality: the ever-present and the ephemeral.

Taiwanese Indigenous bodies in archives

Globally, the necessity and vitality of Indigenous theatres have been widely discussed,[18] but what is the unique complication or value of understanding their relationship to the archive? Unlike Taylor's case study in Latin America, where writing did exist as a different sort of embodied culture among Indigenous peoples before colonisation, the Taiwanese Indigenous peoples had never developed written languages. Subsequently as written documentation became systematic in Taiwan, Indigenous peoples could only be represented by others.

Representations of Taiwanese Indigenous groups have embedded themselves in the long regional history of East Asia, colonisation and modernisation. In this chapter I mainly discuss four genres of embodied archives representing Indigenous peoples in Taiwan: Chinese historical writings and illustrations; Japanese visual recordings; modern ethnographies and post-colonial reconstructed performances. The different media and techniques of representing the Taiwanese Indigenous groups largely reflect the materiality and institutional priorities of those hegemonic powers, mainly of China and Japan. Each genre also reflects a profound premise of humanity: the "romanticized primitivism" in the Chinese historical documents and the scientific modernism in Japanese colonialism, as far as Indigenous peoples were concerned.

Chinese historical literature

The earliest Chinese account of Indigenous peoples can be dated back to the seventh century. "Record of Liu Chiu" (流求) in *The Book of Sui* (隋書), which is believed to be the earliest writing on Taiwan, depicts a scene of singing and dancing as follows:

18 Per Brask and William Morgan eds, *Aboriginal Voices: Amerindian, Inuit and Sami Theatre* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992); Maryrose Casey, *Creating Frames: Contemporary Indigenous Theatre – 1967–1990* (St Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 2004); Otto Heim, "Recalling Oceanic Communities. The Transnational Theater of John Kneubhul and Victoria Nalani Kneubhul", in *Oceanic Archives, Indigenous Epistemologies, and Transpacific American Studies*, eds Yuan Shu, Otto Heim and Kendall Johnson (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2019), 239–60; Marc Maufort, "Voices of Cultural Memory Enacting History in Recent Native Canadian Drama", in *Indigenous North American Drama: A Multivocal History*, ed. Birgit Däwes (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2013), 159–76.

> Whenever there was a banquet, people who held the liquor waited for [someone's] name to be called then drank. Those who toasted the King also called his name. They held the same cup and drank it together, as did the Turks. They sang while stamping their feet. One man sang and the other responded. It sounded grievous. [They] held women's arms, shook hands and danced.[19]

Although historians have debated the identities of the people in the "Record of Liu Chiu", this picturesque depiction is strikingly reminiscent of the current scene of singing and dancing in annual rituals among some Taiwanese Indigenous peoples. Hence, contemporary practices testify to the historical archive.

Although bearing the nature of authenticated history, the tradition of Chinese historical writing on "the Others" has a peculiar blending of exoticism and romanticism. Descriptions of customs sometimes reinforce both, as in the above paragraph on singing and dancing. Another example is shown in Chen Di's "Records on the Eastern Barbarians" (東番記), which is a reliable account of Taiwan written in the early seventeenth century. Chen was amazed that Taiwanese Indigenous peoples had no written languages: "They, however, fed themselves and played around happily, enjoyed themselves in satisfaction". Chen even worried that after contact with the Chinese, their simplicity might progressively disappear, including the ritual of "dancing upon singing and making music during the banquet when all drank [liquor] with bamboo cups".

Over the eighteenth century, Chinese officials became increasingly aware of the threat of European "invaders" and so they travelled across the strait in greater numbers to investigate. Historical writings about Taiwan also increased over this time, written mainly by Chinese officers. Their romantic and poetic narratives produced an image of happy, naïve, exotic and uncivilised peoples. For example, a work depicting singing and dancing is called *Sai Shi* (賽戲) (*Game and Play*), which conveys perfectly the tone of joy. Later, the written texts were gradually accompanied with illustrations (Figure 8.1), which further show an idealised life from the Chinese perspective, rather than that of the Indigenous peoples. Both works have been treated as precious historical archives today while their representational undertone has gone largely uninterrogated.

Textual realism in the Japanese archives of Taiwanese Indigenous peoples

If realism was not the main concern in the Chinese historical writings, the Japanese modern technical representation is hard to ignore. The Japanese colonised Taiwan

19 Di Chen, "Record of Liu Chiu", in *Book of Sui*, from Chung-Kuo Cher-Hsueh-Shu Tien-Chi-Hua Chi-Hua (Project on Digitalisation of Chinese Philosophy), https://ctext.org/wiki.pl?if=gb&chapter=584840#%E6%B5%81%E6%B1%82%E5%9C%8B. The English translations of Chinese historical accounts are all provided by the author.

Figure 8.1 *Sai Shi* (*Game and Play*) in *Taiwan Fan She Tu* (*Pictures of the Savage Villages in Taiwan*, 1820). [AH001585-004]. National Taiwan Museum, used with permission.

in 1895, a result of Japan's Westernised self-transformation into a modern nation-state. Influenced by British anthropology, Japanese scholars who were hired by the government to study Indigenous peoples not only classified and identified individual ethnic groups using linguistic divides, but also imposed modern knowledge and devices of ethnological collection, such as cameras, and sound and film recorders. It was the first time that bodily images and sounds of Indigenous peoples in Taiwan had ever been recorded, researched and archived. Photography of Taiwanese Indigenous peoples became one of the best media to illustrate "the Other" for the Japanese (Figure 8.2). Famous collectors include Torii Ryūzō (1870–1953),[20] Mori Ushinosuke (1877–1926)[21] and Asa'i Erin (1895–1969).[22] The textual realism then inspired later academic research, resulting in the establishment of the first modern anthropological program in Taiwan in 1928. Taiwanese Indigenous peoples as the ethnic "Other" became the perfect object for academics. Later disciplines such as ethnomusicology collected songs and dances of Taiwanese Indigenous peoples. Renowned Japanese ethnomusicologists such as Kurosawa Takatomo produced findings on Indigenous music and accumulated archives with advanced modern facilities and technology. For instance, Kurosawa sent the recording of the Bunun people's famous ritual song *Pasiputput* to the International Folk Music Council (IFMC) in 1952, based on which he then published his well-known hypothesis exemplifying the origin of music in 1978. He also produced a book that textualised the materials into abstract motifs and notes from the songs and dances of the Indigenous peoples, whom he referred to using the Japanese label of "Takasagozoku".[23] In addition to photos, readers can find scores as well as drawings of movement patterns interpreted from singing and dancing, such as in the section about the Atayal people. The scientific reductionism and academic realism made his account another resource for the contemporary archive.

The missing dancing bodies of Taiwanese Indigenous peoples in post-1945 academic research

Taiwanese anthropology and ethnomusicology in the post-1945 era was primarily influenced by the Japanese legacy and continuous Western influences, mediated with Chinese knowledge systems. While ethnographic investigations among

20 Sung Wen-Hsun et al, *Kua Yueh Shih Chi De Ying Hsiang: Niao Chu Lung Tsang Yen Chung De Taiwan Yuan Chu Ming* (*Images Crossing the Centuries: Indigenous Peoples Viewed by Torii Ryūzō*) (Taipei: Shung Ye Museum of Formosan Aborigines, 1994).

21 Mori Ushinosuke, *Taiwan Fan Tsu Tu Pu* (*Photographs of the Taiwan Indigene*s) Vols 1 & 2 (Taipei: Lin Shih Taiwan Chiu Kuan Tiao Cha Hui, 1915–18).

22 Kurihara Seichi ed., *Taiwan Yuan Chu Min Ying Hsiang Chih: Chien Ching Hui Lun Chiao Shou She Ying Chi* (*Images of Taiwanese Indigenes: Photographs Anthology of Professor Asa'i Erin*), trans. Yang Nan-Chun (Taipei: Nan Tien, 1995).

23 Kurosawa Takatomo, *Music of Taiwanese Takasagozoku* (Tokyo: Yuzankaku, 1973).

Figure 8.2 A postcard illustrating Taiwanese Indigenous peoples (possibly the Rukai) dancing. Photo taken anonymously sometime in the Japanese colonising period, around the 1920s. [AH006858-003] National Taiwan Museum, used with permission.

Indigenous peoples continued to grow, the political relationship between the majority Han and the Indigenous peoples remained extremely imbalanced. Although the two disciplines flourished and were institutionalised further, there was a lack of attention to the dancing bodies of Indigenous peoples. Photos which can only represent still bodies could no longer satisfy the need to capture the moving bodies of Indigenous peoples. This was corrected only when a few dance specialists travelled deep into the mountains and visited the villages to document their dances. The lack of academic attention to Indigenous peoples' dances was a result of the overall difficulty in textualising the moving body. The utilisation of the Westernised tool of reductionist Labanotation to record Indigenous ritualistic dances since the 1990s is a noteworthy exception.[24]

24 Madeline Kwok, a University of Hawai'i masters graduate, was one of the earliest to use Labanotation to transcribe the dance of Indigenous peoples (Paiwan) in the 1980s. Taiwanese dance educator Heng Ping then applied its usage to other ethnic groups. Madeline Kwok, "Dance of the Paiwan Aboriginal people of Pingtung County, Taiwan: With Implications of Dance for Tribal Classification" (Master's thesis, University of Hawai'i, 1977). Heng Ping, "Yi-Wan Chu Lo Chih Wu Dao" (*Dances of the Saniwan Village*) in *Taiwan Tu-Chu Chi I Shih Ke Wu Min Su Huo Dong Chih Yen Chiu* (*The Study on Rituals, Songs, Dances, and Folk Activities of Taiwanese Indigenes*), eds Liu Pin Hsiung and Hu Tai Li (Nantou: Taiwan Sheng Min Cheng Ting 1987), 75–99.

Reconceptualising Indigenous dancing bodies as archives

Archives are mostly understood as static objects. In terms of dance, which by its nature moves through time and space, archival records, whether in written or audiovisual forms, can only be a distorted textualisation or partial revelation. Indigenous theatre has then become "the embodied archive" for music and dance.[25] In the following section, I focus on the Formosa Aboriginal Song and Dance Troupe (FASDT), which has become the emblem of reconstruction and revitalisation of Indigenous dance and music in Taiwan since its establishment in 1991. The founding of the troupe, of which the members are exclusively Indigenous peoples, coincides with the Indigenous revitalisation movements of the 1990s. It was formed at a time when threats to the autonomy of Indigenous society and culture were at their peak. The continuous exodus of the population for survival shook the social structure of communities. The standardisation of national languages created a void in communication of cultural memories to younger generations. As Taiwan was introduced to new religions, capitalism and tourism, traditional craft, music and dance were forgotten.

Archiving through performance was embedded in the founding aspirations of FASDT, which intends to preserve gradually disappearing Indigenous music and dance, as well as traditional rituals in which they are largely contained. This would not be possible without the support and actions of a versatile group of professionals, including anthropologists, journalists, dance scholars and theatre managers. The troupe employs a quasi-ethnographic approach for its productions: focusing on single tribes as the cultural unit for productions; troupe members are required to do fieldwork and learn the languages, singing and movement from village Elders; and performances are as loyal to the original forms as possible and for this reason often do not employ musical accompaniment. However, all songs are translated and the presentation, including time scale, is adjusted to today's theatrical conventions.

Between 1991 and 2016, FASDT produced more than 10 productions. Among the 16 officially recognised ethnic groups, FASDT's works have covered Amis, Atayal, Bunun, Paiwan, Rukai, Saaroa, Saisiat, Tsou, Truku and Tao. It has also set a standard for subsequent Indigenous theatrical works of artistic or educational purpose.[26] For instance, since FASDT's first production, performers will sing as well as dance rather than use non-traditional musical accompaniment (instruments), as a nod to theatrical realism.

From an anthropological perspective, Hu argues that the notion of "reality" in performance is more complicated than just transforming music and dance from

25 Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire*; Dee Das, "Dancing Dahomey at the World's Fair".

26 Many short-term members of FASDT learned and later duplicated the reconstructionist approach of performance when they went back to their colleges or villages. They reproduced and helped spread the FASDT style. FASDT's legacy is still visible in the annual national song and dance competition of Indigenous college students.

tribes onto stage.[27] For instance, the Paiwanese people view singing and dancing for theatre as performance, while the Saisiat believe the reconstructed performance carries ritualistic efficacy. Among the Saisiat people, this has even inspired the younger generations to learn the archaic and abstruse ritual songs that were almost forgotten. In this sense, reconstructed Indigenous performances, while reflecting post-colonial social complications and modernistic technologies, have established themselves as the embodied archive to preserve cultural memories.

Counteracting archiving: Post-colonial Indigenous theatre

Before 2000, FASDT contributed to the revitalisation of language, costumes, music and dance by showcasing traditional Indigenous songs and dances to the Han majority. These efforts, however, have become more and more ambiguous and challenged. Over the past decade, troupe members have recognised the need to produce works beyond an archival purpose. They need to act out their post-colonial conditions rather than merely reciting and repeating "tradition". Several works had been deliberately produced to redefine and reinterpret controversial incidents at the individual, tribal, colonial, national and even global level. These works highlight the tension between the dominators and the dominated, and question the neutrality and distance embedded within the archives of Taiwanese Indigenous peoples.

These works counteract the more traditional archives produced by colonisers. FASDT's new production has invited professionally trained Indigenous artists to direct and choreograph. The professional artistic team also includes composers, a light designer, set designer, costume designer and visual designer. Sophisticated multimedia narratives merge voices of resistance with aesthetic sensibility. In the following sections, I discuss how stage performances invite participants to experience sensations and feelings of struggle and resistance, instead of re-presenting a "naturalistic" archive.

Grotesque scars, patriotic virginity and nudity of oppression: Archives and performances on the Atayal's Indigenous bodies

The work Pu'ing*: Searching for the Atayal Route* premiered in 2013. It was inspired by one of the most controversial figures in Taiwanese modern Indigenous history, an Atayal girl named Sayun Hayun. The Atayal people were known in their traditional culture as hunters and weavers. They were among the fiercest fighters against Japanese rule in the early stages of colonisation in the late nineteenth

27 Tai-Li Hu, "Wen Hua Chen Shih Yu Chan Yen: Saisiat Paiwan Ching Yen (*Cultural Reality and Performance: The Experiences with Saisiat and Paiwan*)", in *Wen Hua Chan Yen Yu Taiwan Yuan Chu Min* (*Cultural Performance and the Taiwanese Indigenes*) (Taipei: Lien Ching, 2003), 423–58.

century. One tension between Atayal people and the Japanese was the notion of "civilisation" and its implications. Until the early twentieth century, the Atayal people practised traditional tattooing. Male hunters and female weavers tattooed their faces in recognition of their merits. An Indigenous cultural specialist once told a group of international scholars, myself included, while pointing to a photo of a senior Atayal woman, that she had been forced to remove the tattoo on her forehead when she was a young girl. Her parents were warned by a Japanese policeman that if they didn't send their daughter to hospital for tattoo removal, she would not receive an education nor other civil rights. The girl was sent to the hospital in Taipei where her tattoo was removed without anaesthesia. She was left with a deep scar. Instead of the patterned tattoo carrying cultural import and dignity, she had to bear the grotesque scar on her forehead, which she was unable to remove for the rest of her life.[28] In "civilising" the Atayal girl, the colonisers left an inscription of humiliation on her body.

The extreme hegemonic forces on the bodies of the Atayal was the key theme in the work *Pu'ing: Searching for the Atayal*. *Pu'ing* is an Atayal lexicon, which means "root" or "tracing the root". This cultural message was chosen during group discussions between the Indigenous director, the Atayal, other Indigenous intellectuals, and anthropologists. The work tells the story of 17-year-old Sayun Hayun. She was born in the village of Liyohen belonging to the Kelisan region deep in the mountains of north-eastern Taiwan. To send off her Japanese teacher who was joining the army, she and her parents carried his luggage all the way from their village in the mountains down to the nearest town. On the night of 27 September 1938, a tropical storm hit the area. As she crossed a bridge, Sayun fell down and was swept away by the furious tide.

While this is a story of an Atayal girl, the Japanese appropriated it for their own narrative. Sayun's death was first reported by the Japanese *Daily News* in Taiwan, and was then deliberately transformed into a propaganda series by the Japanese government to inspire patriotism. Journal reports started to boast of Sayun's "sacrifice". Female patriotic groups spread the spirit of the patriotic virgin Sayun. In 1941, a song entitled "Sayon no Kane", ("The Bell of Sayon") was composed and recited at a memorial held in the famous Taipei Public Hall. Impressed with the recital of Sayun's patriotic sacrifice, months later, the then Japanese Governor General, Hasegawa Kiyoshi, commissioned a heavy bronze bell to be cast and sent to Sayun's village. It was transported all the way to the remote village as a monument to Sayun's "sacrifice" for the nation. Many articles and productions appropriated the image of Sayun, such as journal reports, a paper puppet show and a movie,[29] in which Sayun was portrayed by the famous but controversial Japanese actress Yamaguchi Yoshiko (1920–2014). Famous artist

28 Personal communication with Turku cultural specialist Tian Hsiu-shi. December, 2003.

29 The movie can be accessed through the following link, in which Sayun Hayun was depicted as falling in love with the Japanese teacher which accordingly gave her the motivation to see him

Shiotsuki Tōho (1886–1954) painted Sayun holding the bell. Sayun had become probably the best known female icon in both Taiwan and Japan at that time.[30] These Japanese textual productions illustrate how archives can be manipulated and controlled. The Japanese production and reproduction of Sayun-centred narratives reveals the political absurdity of archival accuracy.

Sayun's story spread under Japanese colonisation, and then was silenced once the Chinese Nationalist (KMT) Government took over Taiwan after World War II. As one of the main agnostic powers against Japan during the war, the KMT tried to erase the island's Japanese legacy since 1895. Sayun's narrative, along with the bell, was wiped from public view, although her tribal folk continued to sing the Japanese song "Sayon no Kane". It wasn't until the early twenty-first century that Sayun Hayun's story was rediscovered and recognised as significant to Indigenous lore. Many explorers found people still attracted by her stories as well as the buried trails into what used to be the heart of Kelisan.[31]

FASDT set out to produce *Pu'ing: Searching for the Atayal* by gathering the fragmented and conflicting archives about Sayun, while seeking to reflect cultural and historical nativism. The question is: can the performance deliver a different historiography[32] and cultural memory, or enliven the archive differently? After reviewing Sayun's life and visiting her village and descendants, the production team decided to stage a crisscross narrative to merge the present with the past.

The performance was divided into five scenes:

Prelude

A young Atayal man, Watan, struggles to find his Indigenous identity after living for a long time in the modern urbanised world. He decides to go back to his father's home country in the mountains, but the environment looks very strange to him. He searches for his village with great effort but in vain. When he falls asleep due to tiredness, he dreams and hears faint singing in a peculiar but familiar tone. A group of people approach him in dim light.

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off. https://youtu.be/eH-soDxfNY4 from 27:50 to 30:00 depicts a scene of Atayal people dancing and singing their traditional songs around the fire.

30 When I did my fieldwork in Okinawa in the late 2000s, I met a senior woman in her eighties. She had lived in Taiwan for her entire adult life before returning to Okinawa in 1945. Upon learning that I was from Taiwan, she immediately sang two songs to me. One was a famous Taiwanese folk song, *Night Flower in the Rain* and the other was the Japanese song *Sayon no Kane*.

31 Lin Ke-Hsiao, *Chao Lu: Yueh Kuang, Sayun, Kelesan (Searching for the Route: Moonlight, Sayun, Kelesan)* (Taipei: Yuan Liu, 2009).

32 Maufort, "Voices of Cultural Memory Enacting History in Recent Native Canadian Drama".

Trials in green

The scene is structured by three traditional Atayal songs featuring the singing style of overlapping polyphony. The repetitive pattern of melody also reinforces the feeling of endlessness. It provides a perfect sound structure for climbing up and moving ahead – the journey that the Atayal ancestors had once taken to found their settlements. The performance visualises how Atayal ancestors migrated and dispersed into three branches, settling in the mountainous areas in north, central and north-eastern Taiwan.

After a number of generations, young tribesmen became curious about where their families had originated. The Elders passed down the story of migration through *lmuhuw*, a genre of epic and narrative songs. The opening scene blends traditional songs and legends of migration with an embodiment of travelling and then settling, using the locomotion of changing floor levels on the stage.

The flaming sun

This scene depicts how the Atayal suffered under bitter political oppression by the Japanese regime during the Japanese colonisation between 1895 and 1945, symbolised by the rising sun. The Atayal men try to riot but fail. Resistance seems in vain. The Japanese eventually send young Indigenous people to the battlefield, condemning them to death. Grieving mothers of Indigenous soldiers dream of bringing the souls of their dead sons home. The Atayal lullaby is sung to comfort their souls, while a special visual effect transforms the flaming sun to a red square pattern, which was typical of Atayal craft. In this scene, Bulareyaung cleverly transplants modern physical military training, which most Taiwanese males undertake, onto the stage to highlight the male body subjected to dominance. The heightened oppression on their bodies finally reaches the climax, provoking fierce but futile resistance through jumping.

While all this is happening, Watan stands off stage and witnesses the battle. Before intermission the dim sound of singing comes from the mother-like woman, which lures Watan, until he becomes lost in the meandering trails.

River in purple

Purple is the colour of dark night, as well as the preferred colour of Liyohen textiles. The scene starts with a group of seated Atayal women scattered and weaving while singing traditional weaving songs. It is the 1930s. Sayun Hayun, the happy teenager from Liyohen, is learning to weave. She and her female friends dance, sing and playfully quarrel. After their group dance, there is an insertion of romantic scenarios accompanied by Atayal love songs, followed by playing of the mouth harp to indicate courting and hunting, cultural meanings related to this unique instrument. Group dances of both genders are reminiscent of scenes from the movie Sayon no Kane. After the climax of the hunters' physical competition,

Figure 8.3 The scene of an Atayal mother holding her son, who fought against the Japanese colonising force, from "The Flaming Sun" in *Pu'ing: Searching for the Atayal Route.* Photo by FASDT, used with permission.

suddenly the pace of the mouth harp speeds up like rapid heartbeats and the stage falls into darkness, conveying a mood of uneasiness. The river that swallowed Sayun is then revealed. There is not just one girl in the river crying for help, but many. The river then turns into the river of time. It not only buried Sayun, who died in 1938, but also the young prostitutes[33] who were ravaged, 50 years later, by the contemporary monetary system. They are drowning, shouting for help and rescue

33 Taiwanese sex brokers often lied to parents and told them that their daughters would be working in factories.

to no avail. "The river turned purple, because it was full of dead people who fought with each other,"[34] is the final message of the purple river.

The final tension focuses on the unsettling and uncomfortable encounter between nearly nude bodies, male and female alike. It is an accusation against the males who have collectively oppressed the female body, with Sayun in the centre symbolising purity and innocence. Then the Japanese song *Sayon no Kane* is sung amid a pacified atmosphere. The original archival memory of colonisation is now overturned as a performance of reconciliation.

The rainbow bridge

According to the Atayal myth, every genuine Atayal person has to obey the norm of *gaga* and fulfil their obligation in order to cross the rainbow bridge and reunite with their ancestors in the afterworld. The stage designer transforms the mountainous trails into a symbolic rainbow. The dancers walk up the rainbow one by one, as the final *lmuhuw* is chanted to guide them into a new world where they can meet their roots and all Atayal, dressed in the most flamboyant costumes, dance together and become one.

Finally, Watan joins the dance with his tribesmen, realising that the rainbow has embraced the colours of cultural trails, the flaming memory and the fluid history of oppression, which contribute to the unique Atayal route that has led him to both his origin and future.

The above description can only loosely depict the narrative centred on the search for history and cultural identity, which blurs the past with the present. It treads through the mythic past, Japanese colonisation, the deceit and social stigmatisation of young Indigenous sex workers, and finally the futuristic reunion with their roots and traditions. The performance is powerfully emotional thanks to the Atayal songs, orchestral music, rhythmic movement, traditional forms of dance and uplifting choreography. The merging of archival memories from different times, genres and cultures is enabled by the bodies, which sang, moved and were narrated as one.

Two scenes are particularly prominent to me. The first is when the Atayal mother washes the body of her son who had died in the battle against the Japanese, while singing the traditional lullaby as a lament. After a series of fierce and high jumps that symbolise the vain resistance of his coup against the Japanese, the male performer (the son) is not always able to hold back his tears, and cries heartily on stage. It is not unusual for audience members to be overheard sobbing throughout. The second prominent scene is when the group of females, whose bodies are barely covered in fitted skin-coloured costumes, jump strenuously only to fall down repeatedly, expressing their struggle for survival against the tide of the river. They do not just replicate the image of Sayun. They are the betrayed innocent. The

34 Lin, *Chao Lu*.

women's increasingly heavy breaths provoke uneasiness in the audience, as if we are the oppressors watching them struggle against their destiny.

What the audience does not realise, however, is the real pain and struggle that individual dancers have gone through during the intensive rehearsals over weeks and months. Despite being experienced and talented professionals affiliated with FASDT, most of the performers of *Pu'ing* found it unimaginably tough. They were trained in a way that challenged them far more than the usual constructionist approach; that is, only representing or re-enacting the archive. They needed to embody the oppressed, represented by intense jumping, symbolising resistance to gravity. Embodiment of resistance, which is never visible in the colonial archives, is portrayed by dancing bodies, experienced first by the dancers, then the audience.

I was almost begging Bulareyaung to consider projecting translations of the texts into Chinese on either side of the stage. "No. I want the audience to focus on the dancers, on their bodies, but not extract their attention to read those words." I then surprisingly discovered that the dancers who did not understand Japanese in the beginning strove to memorise the lyrics of *Sayon no Kane*. Towards the end, they were able to sing and move with feeling and imagination as if it were their own language and their own expression. Their dancing bodies relived the archives.

Conclusion

This paper is an enquiry into the archive and performance of Indigenous peoples in Taiwan, whose "pasts" have been mediated by colonial and nationalistic forces. The conversation between the choreographer and me in the opening paragraph reveals the tension between two distinctive foci: performative creativity and established knowledge. This tension can also find its parallel in the dynamic between performance and archive as representation. In the Taiwanese context, the traditions of Indigenous peoples are mostly realised via cultural expression through storytelling, craft, and singing and dancing; however, the archive for them has been mainly produced by colonising rulers and accomplished through the colonial modernisation including photographs, recordings, notation and scholarly writings. These two categories are inherently contrasting but mutually referential; their relationship not only reveals a complicated and hierarchical rationality and power of technologies, but also throws much light on cultural sensibilities for creative forms.

Archives of Indigenous dance and music construct themselves into a complex totality from which the discourse of indigeneity has been rooted and stored. Chinese exoticism and romanticism are visualised through poetic depiction and illustrations. The Japanese exploited realistic yet colonised representations of Indigenous voices and bodies through modern technologies. Western systems of abstraction such as notation, and holistic representation via ethnographic writings,

objectify Indigenous peoples' dances and cultures. All have contributed to selecting and shaping the cultural interpretations of Indigenous theatre.

Larger movements of revitalisation are reflected in performance of Indigenous music and dance. The evolution of approaches to theatrical productions parallels post-colonial forces at play in both Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities between the 1990s and 2010s in Taiwan. The theatrical work Pu'ing*: Searching for the Atayal Route* manifests culture and identity, in which multi-layers of narratives and forces are embodied in singing and dancing. With collective professional talents, the performance resists and counters representations sedimented in most archives on Indigenous peoples, on and off the stage.

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