ABSTRACT

STORYTELLING OF TAIWANESE ABORIGINAL PLAYS
BALENG AND SNAKE, FLYING FISH FISHERS, AND HAWK SISTERS

By SHU-CHIN HUANG

This creative thesis focuses on my three adapted Taiwanese aboriginal plays, which staged in Ernst theatre in Miami University. Chapter One includes the historical origins of Taiwanese aborigines told by different countries through different perspective. Chapter Two is a review on the playwriting process how I applied storytelling and theatrical form in these three aboriginal stories. In Chapter Three, I discuss production process as well as the process translators working with translators. The whole creating process of these three plays focuses on the pursuit of nature theme and uses theatre as a new way of storytelling to English-speaking people. Chapter Four are the scripts, which were staged in Ernst nature theatre in Miami University in middle August, 2005.
STORYTELLING OF TAIWANESE ABORIGINAL PLAYS
BALENG AND SNAKE, FLYING FISH FISHERS, AND HAWK SISTERS

A Thesis

Submitted to the
Faculty of Miami University
in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts
Department of Theatre
by
Shu-chin Huang
Miami University
Oxford, Ohio
2006

Advisor ____________________________
Dr. Howard A. Blanning

Reader ____________________________
Dr. Roger Bechtel

Reader ____________________________
Dr. William A. Wortman
TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements ...........................................................................................................iii
Introduction .......................................................................................................................1
Chapter One .....................................................................................................................5
Chapter Two ..................................................................................................................18
Chapter Three ..............................................................................................................26
Chapter Four ................................................................................................................31
Work Cited..................................................................................................................... 57
Pictures of Productions.................................................................................................60
Acknowledgements

I would like to express my special gratitude to Dr. Howard Blanning for being an understanding, inspiring, and supporting adviser, who always has insightful conversations with my plays.

I thank the great teaching of Dr. Sally Harrison-Pepper and Dr. Ann Elizabeth for their thought-provoking and challenging courses, which enable me to build scholarly thinking.

I also thank the readers, Dr. Roger Bechtel and Dr. William A. Wortman, for their thoughtful suggestions of my thesis.

I appreciate all of the casts and crews of all the productions for their energetic and wonderful performance.

My gratitude goes to my host family, Ernest and Carolyn, for their compassion toward international students; and to my fellow theatre grads for their support, especially Jene, for her vegan “cookies,” to Hong and Lin, for their sisterhood.

Lastly, my greatest gratitude goes to Michael, my beloved husband, for tolerating the loneliness in Taiwan for supporting my dream. Thank you for being the love of my life.
Introduction

Many people have related Taiwanese culture with Chinese culture, taking for granted a common Sinology base; however, in doing so they ignore the unique and precious cultural status that Taiwan aborigines have created on this island. These aborigines, whom we usually refer to as “native Taiwanese, had settled in Taiwan far earlier than any of the waves of invaders, immigrants, and colonizers from other countries and continents. And their cultural traditions have survived amazingly well: as Ho, Ting Rui mentioned in his dissertation, “The aboriginal Formosans... are pagan groups which retain much of their old life and customs...the culture of the Formosan aborigines preserve relatively high proportion of archaic characteristics as compared with those of other Southeast Asians. This tendency is revealed in the folk narratives” (Ho 172).

Shortly after I came to Miami University—also named after a native tribe, although few can be seen on the campus,—I was asked to write some scripts for a performance series entitled Da Jia Hao, whose purpose was to provide multicultural and many cultural presentations of stories, legends, traditional and original works in a format suitable for both adults and children. The peaceful beauty of the Miami campus and the native origins of its name inspired me, and make me think of aboriginal plays. Therefore, when I thought about writing a play about Taiwan, I decided to adapt these Taiwanese aborigines’ stories.

Another reason why I adapted Taiwanese aboriginal play is that, because art allows equality, we need to see the beauty of minority cultures through the eyes of art. In many ways, these aborigines are definitely minorities: neither have they had characters to

---

1 Formosan means Taiwanese. Earliest among the Europeans, on the voyages up and down the China coast and to Japan, the Portuguese sailors first dubbed the island Formosa (Ilha Hermosa, ”beautiful island”) in the 16th century. See Meskill, Johanna Menzel’s A Chinese Pioneer Family, p20.
introduce their own history, nor have they had—until recently—authority to do so. Their histories were told by different groups based on different intentions and perspectives, sometimes kind, sometimes unkind, but rarely autochthonous. Happily, these circumstances are improving rapidly, and the resilient traditions and history are reblossoming from the tongues of their children as well as their admirers.

In the first chapter of this thesis I will outline the several different Taiwanese aboriginal histories told by several different storytellers due to Taiwan’s special geographical location and historical status, as Taiwanese aborigines were colonized by different countries in different times. Each invading or colonizing country—such as ancient China, Spain, the Netherlands, Japan, the Han-Chinese and later the Han-Taiwanese,—all had scientific or anthropologic evidences of Taiwanese aborigines’ origins to support. Compared to these evidences (although sometimes contradictory), the native myths would seem to have little influence on the truth; the truth is, however, that a great thing remains in my mind: A Dou, an Amis friend of mine, drunkenly dancing along the seashore of Taitung, and telling me the origins of his tribe from the sea. What I learned from this is what I want to emphasize: those literal documents that may hold fact and information are important, but it has been storytelling and its cooperative arts—singing and dancing—that have been the way these aborigines tell their own histories. It is a way that people are still living with and, most of all, a way that is full of aesthetics.

How to illuminate and serve these aboriginal aesthetics in a theatrical form is my main concern in Chapter Two, which relates to aspects of my writing process. I am only casually familiar with the dancing and singing of Taiwanese aboriginal tribes; however, as I did researches on the stories, I was fully attracted by the nature themes found in
virtually all of them. They have many myths related to the universe, plants, animals, fire, water, and other nature phenomena, which allowed me the connection of the performing space—the Ernst theatre. Since I was given an outdoor theatre as my target space, I had more freedom and luck and opportunity to relate these stories with the nature. Unlike the traditional storyteller in tribes, who told stories during rituals or ceremonies, my storytellers also had to function as bridges: from the story to the stage, and from the stage to the audience. Employing the storyteller in my plays is my experiment in theatre to tell Taiwanese aboriginal stories to English speaking audience. The storyteller, who may be the animal or human beings of some family, gives credit to form and plot to bridge the relationship of east and west, performers and the audiences, reality and imagination, human beings and nature.

There are to my knowledge no published play scripts that reflect and demonstrate native Taiwanese histories, traditions, and aesthetics; however, because of new policy and a new government it is easy to find published aboriginal stories. In addition to the stories I heard direct from storytellers, the two main series of my references are *Classical Series of Taiwanese Aboriginal Myth* written by Tien Zhe-yi, and *Myths and Legends of Taiwanese Aboriginal Tribes*, in a bilingual version edited by Sinan-Panatayan and translated by Robin J. Winkler. My hope is that, with increasingly active interchanges between native Taiwanese and nonnative playwrights and dramaturges, more such scripts will appear and be available for use.

Chapter Three will deal with the rehearsal and performance process, particularly the developmental opportunities I had with a natural space and a multicultural cast. It is a pity that neither in Taiwan’s theater nor in Western theater, a native story has not found the main stream, let alone an intercultural production. The Ernst theatre production was a
rare production dealing with these two issues. Since the outdoor theatre allows
performers and audience to be in the nature, the theme of nature and beauty in these three
plays can be approached more easily. Moreover, it is more like an aboriginal storytelling
space. From languages to customs, it was a process of different layers of translating.

Working with “translators of translations of the translation” in this production was
another issue I confronted—happily—according to the different backgrounds of the
traditional storytellers (Taiwanese aborigines), the text translator (myself), the director
(American), and the performers and production crew (multiple-countries), who were
multicountried, multicultured, and multitraditioned. I began the process by receiving the
stories translated from their aboriginal languages into Chinese. Then, I translated and
adapted the play into English for English-speaking actors and audiences. Then an
American director called for actors from different cultures and perspectives, such as Sri
Lankan (The snake King), Indian-American (The Badan Fisher) and other American
actors, each of whom translated the play according to their own cultural backgrounds. By
performance time the mise en scene of actors, costumes, properties and music was rather
global in a way of translation. As Benjamin Walter said, “Translation is a mode. To
comprehend it as a mode one must go back to the original, for that contains the law
governing the translation: its translatability (Benjamin 17).” The translatability I refer to
is not based on a lingual level, but, rather, on an approach to human’s relationship with
nature. The results of my translation efforts—”Baleng and Snake” “Flying Fish
Fishers,” and “Hawk Sisters”—are found in Chapter Four.
Chapter One

Origins of Taiwanese Aboriginal People

There are around nineteen aboriginal tribes in Taiwan. Based on language and culture, they belong to Austronesian or Malayo-polynesian, with kinship related to the races of islands on Pacific oceans. According to their living area, they can be divided into Pin-pu Zu (Plain people) and Gao-shan Zu (Mountain people) (Pu 135). Plain people include Ketagalan, Kavalan, Taokas, Pazeh, Paapora, Thao, Babuza, Hoanya, Siraya, and Makatao: these ten tribes. Mountain people include Atayal, Saislyat, Bunun, Tsou, Rukai, Paiwan, Puyuma, Amis, and Yami: these nine tribes. These aborigines, we call the “native Taiwanese,” lived in Taiwan earlier than Han immigrants from China, the Netherlands, the Spanish and Japanese colonizers. The plain people mostly were Han-ized, so most of them lost their own traditions and even languages. In this thesis, the aboriginal people refer to the Mountain people, whose population is three hundred and forty thousand. They live in different areas in Taiwan, and due to different colonizers, they were asked to move from their homeland. Each of them owns their own languages; however, none of them own written characters. Thus, to tell story generation by generation becomes an important tool both for education and communication. Therefore, storytelling from generation to generation becomes the way aborigines acknowledge their culture and history. The forms of telling the stories differ from tribes to tribes and occasions to occasions. Usually, they are told with dance or songs in various rituals. The content of the stories closely related to their living environment, their histories, their traditions, taboos, or nature phenomena.

The first time I became acquainted with aboriginal Taiwanese history was five years ago, on the shore of the east coast of the Pacific Ocean. A- Dou, an Amis man, told me their tribe’s origin, how their ancestors came from the east, while we danced in a
midnight picnic. He didn’t tell me the stories in the Amis language but in Madrian, but I think it was the same story told by his parents, by his grandparents, and by generations ago. The original stories were told neither in Mandarin nor Taiwanese, let alone English, but were told by different storytellers to different listeners. Imagine that the same story is told by different storytellers in different languages, in different places, with different expressions. Each telling would help construct the listeners’ acknowledgement of their land, their relationships with the past and with others from different points of view of each teller and telling place.

Now, without singing on a picnic at the seashore and drinking millet wine, I write stories about A-Dou’s tribe and other aboriginal Taiwanese for English-speaking people, in theatrical form, from the perspective of a Han-Taiwanese who received Western theatrical training. What makes the stories different this time is both the storyteller and those to whom the storyteller is telling the story. There are many stories and storytellers telling about the origins of Taiwanese aborigines, and many ways by which they tell their stories. In this chapter I would like to offer different stories of origins of Taiwan aborigines told by different people from different lands, ranging from scientific, to anthropologic, to mythic.

**In the Past**

Several theories on the origins of aboriginal Taiwanese have been put forth by different scholars from different countries, a reflection of Taiwan’s complicated history of colonization by ancient China, Spain, the Netherlands, Japan, the Han-Chinese and later
the Han-Taiwanese. I would like to give an overall review of all the assumptions of Taiwanese aborigines’ origins.

There are currently two major theories concerning the origin of the Taiwanese aborigines. While the first theory applies that the aborigines originated in some other area, the second asserts that Taiwan is the ancestral homeland of the Austronesian peoples from linguistic, archeological, historical, and mythological evidence. Some scholars have even listed a chronology for the arrival of the aboriginal tribes in Taiwan; for example, the Saisiat and Taiya tribes are thought to have arrived in Taiwan during the early ceramic period around 3,000 B.C., and at the same time the Paiwan and Beinan tribes likely arrived during the prime of the Megalithic culture of Southeast Asia.  

The first major theory is called Southern Origin, in which the anthropologists indicate that Taiwan was wholly occupied by people culturally related to the Malays and Indonesians before the arrival of the Chinese, Japanese, Dutch or Spanish, based on what linguistic evidence indicates that Malayo-Polynesian speaking peoples dominated much of Southeast Asia in the second millennium B.C. (Lou 8). It’s until the seventeenth century that aboriginal groups with consanguinity to both Malayo-Polynesian and Chinese mainland origins comprised most of Taiwan’s population. “Records indicate as many as 7000 aborigines living in dispersed villages on the West coastal Plain of the early years of Dutch occupation” (Knapp 9).

The Southern Origin suggests that Taiwanese aboriginal people were originally Malayo-Polynesian. A second theory suggests that Taiwanese aborigines were from mainland China. The Han Chinese scholars found the similar adze with Shen-zi with

---

2 The information is from official website of Taiwan Aboriginal Culture Park: http://www.tacp.gov.tw
Taiwanese aborigines’ remains. Yet a third theory, the theory that Taiwan was the cradle of the Austronesian languages, is relatively new and has found support from many linguists. It argues that from DNA’s point of view, Aboriginal Taiwanese may be the ancestors of Polynesians. However, from aboriginal Taiwanese’s viewpoint, their legends say where they are from: they are from the nature, from the ocean, from the myth. I would like to display different stories told by different political society about the origins of aboriginal Taiwanese.

**Story told by Han-Chinese**

In an exhibit of “Fukien and Taiwan Prehistoric Cultural Links” in the Tuangshan Museum in 1996, there was an article said that anthropological data proved the ancestors of the Kao-shan–tzu (high mountain people) in early times used dugout canoes as their maritime means of transport, coming from the continent (ta-liu) to Taiwan. The Amis people of eastern Taiwan still preserve the ancient dugout canoe from the south of the continent. Serious Chinese scholarship, despite the Amis legend of their coming from the south or Lan-yu, insisted these aborigines floated from the southeast, toward China and their Chinese origin. However, in 1929, Lin Hui-hsiang who is an anthropologist from Amoy University wrote *The Primitive Aborigines of Formosa* for Academia Sinica, he agreed with the Japanese view of aborigines’ primitive nature and southern origin and said, “Taiwan’s savage tribes (fan-tzu) migrated to the island in the stone age from the south seas(Nan-yang) (1930: Introduction)” and “… their time of arrival must have been very early, because the whole island has stone age sites, both on the plains and in the mountains….Among the stone tools there is one kind of stone adze very similar to those

---

3 People’s Daily overseas ed., April 19, 1996, p.5
4 It means barbarian in Mandarin.
discovered in Shensi, which might prove that the savage tribes who did not enter Taiwan have some relationship with the Han people of the continent” (1930:1,4).

**Story told by Japanese, Dutch, Spanish, the foreigners.**

The island was populated by non-Han aboriginal groups as well as some degree of numbers of Han-Chinese migrants from the mainland until the early years of the seventeenth century. Records indicate around 70,000 aborigines living in small single villages on the Western Coastal Plain in the early years during the Dutch occupation, but new Han-Chinese migrants from mainland quite quickly came to outnumber the native settlers because of Dutch colonial policies. By the seventeenth century, the Dutch controlled the council of the native elders which would carry out the orders of Dutch East India Company. They also reduced some aboriginal dialects to Roman writing while the Spanish converted the aborigines to Christianity. From the early seventeenth century to the Japanese occupation in 1895 and then again after 1945, Taiwan's population in general became dominated by Han Chinese as a result of significant in-migration from several locations across the Taiwan Strait (Knapp 9).

In 1889, the “Southern Origin” proposed by the Dutch Indologist, Hendrik Kern, in his theory of the Austronesian languages, indicated that the bearers of this language family came from peninsular Southeast Asia and moved eastward through the Indonesian and Philippines archipelagos, northward to Taiwan, and eastward into the Pacific(Murray 29). Another Canadian missionary, George Lesile Mackay, who lived in Taiwan from

---

5 It is a summary from *A Comparative Study of Myths and Legends of Formosan Aborigines*, By Ho Ting-jui, p5.
1872 to 1901, had a strong interest in aboriginal inhabitants and stated that “the aboriginal tribes…are all descendants of settlers from around the Malay Archipelago” (Mackay 94). He also assumed that “numerous adventurers, fishermen, and traders from the islands south and east of China sea, and others from the north and east of Formosa, with perhaps a few from the mainland, entered the island at intervals and formed what is now called the aboriginal race, and that race is Malayan” (Mackay 98). Also, the anthropologist Janet Montgomery McGovern, whose book is still in reprint form and circulation, applied Amis legend and rituals to “the landing of ancestors in boats from the south” (McGovern 132).

In a landmark piece of Western scholarship on Taiwan, Johanna Menzel Meskill’s *A Chinese Pioneer Family*, she describes Taiwan from China’s perspective in the Ming dynasty, saying, “It was this underworld of free wheeling, lawless trader pirates that first found a use for Taiwan. Since the island was a no-man’s land--- except for the aborigines (Meskill 18). He also mentioned the “yuan-chu-min⁶, the aborigine people who were the first settlers of the island, when he described the settlement of the Han Chinese immigrants from Fukien.

The Japanese took over Taiwan in 1895 and imposed intense control over the contact between Han-Taiwanese and aborigine-Taiwanese; moreover, they did more suppress the mountain people. Many aborigines’ revolt was brutally put down and they were moved over to reservations. Mabuchi Toichi, a Japanese anthropologist, continued the southern origin tradition and argued that peoples transmigrated from the Southeast Asia and the “aboriginal Formosa seems to represent an earlier, if not the earliest, phase of Malaysian cultures” (Mabuchi 66). He also indicated that an Amis origin myth says their ancestors

---

⁶ Yuan-chu-min means native people in Taiwanese.
came from Lan-yu, an eastern island of Taiwan. Another Japanese anthropologist, Miyamoto Nobuto, even conjectured that “it seems likely that the ancestors of Taiwan’s aboriginal people immigrated to Taiwan in the Stone Age (Mabuchi 40). Miyamoto Nobuto recounts the origins of Yami from the Batanes islands north of Luzon and expediency of the chain if islands from Luzon to Taiwan for ancient voyagers. Michael Stainton concludes the points of these Westerners and Japanese as the politics of the southern origin theory: from the aborigines as ancient remnants and aboriginal people as non-Chinese needing help from non-Chinese against the Chinese invaders (Stainton 31).

However, the importance of myth was ignored by historians and anthologists. For example, in the Wushe Rebellion in 1930, the Japanese attacked six Taroko Villages with airplanes, cannons, machine guns and chemical weapons and massacred virtually all the men, women and children of the Villages. The Sedek\textsuperscript{7} family suicide on the tree was regarded as a controversial event, as Japanese regarded these aborigines as loyal Japan citizens who died for Japan while Han-Chinese regarded them as heroes fighting against Japan. The suicide was according to their myth, that the Sedek tribe is originated from the tree. This myth may not be applied by scientists: however it lives in aborigines' lives.

**Story told by Han-Taiwanese**

It is said that Polynesians, who were called history's greatest seafarers and settled islands across a vast area of ocean from Madagascar to Easter Island, had their origins in Taiwan's Aborigines, according to a new genetic study published in the journal *Public Library of Science Biology* by Jean Trejaut and Marie Lin of Mackay Memorial Hospital in Taipei. They found that Taiwanese aboriginal populations have likely been genetically

---

\textsuperscript{7} Sedek is a branch of Atayal tribe.
isolated from mainland Chinese for between 10,000 and 20,000 years. It claims:

The study looked at mitochondrial DNA, which is passed along virtually unaffected from mothers to their children, to determine that clear similarity exist between nine indigenous Taiwan groups and ethnic Polynesians. Differ from most Taiwanese today who are descended from mainland Chinese in the past four centuries, Trejaut et al. found that the Taiwanese aborigines, Melanesian, and Polynesian populations share three particular mutations in their mtDNA that do not occur in mainland east Asian populations. What's more, they showed that there are enough different mtDNA mutations between the mainland Chinese population and the aboriginal Taiwanese to support archeological findings suggesting a long period of habitation. These results point out that “Taiwanese aboriginal populations have been genetically isolated from mainland Chinese for 10,000 to 20,000 years, and that Polynesian voyage probably originated from people identical to the aboriginal Taiwanese. (“Traces of Archaic Mitochondrial Lineages Persist in Austronesian-Speaking Formosan.”)

Hence the supposition that Hawaiki, which Maori legend has as from where the Polynesians originated (where it was located is a mystery), might be Taiwan. (“Taiwan, twinned with Hawaii.”) This evidence provided Han-Taiwanese the strong proof of being independent from China for Han-Taiwanese. And Taiwanese aborigines therefore, became so-called the native Taiwanese.

Story told by aboriginal people

Why Taiwan is called “Taiwan” has many sayings. Undoubtedly the pronunciation of Taiwan is identical with “Tayuan”, which was an aboriginal name from the Pin-Pu tribe in the An-Pin area in Tainan County, which area was regarded as the whole of Taiwan during China’s Ming dynasty (Zhongmo 13). The varied ethnic composition of Taiwan's population must be acknowledged for many reasons; it has long been
recognized and debated among scholars which are important "mainland/Taiwanese"

dichotomies (Siu 1993; Cohen 1994; Murray and Hong 1994). However, for aborigines in
Taiwan, who disagreed that ROC nationalist “history” claims that they were “a branch of
the Chinese nation,” it’s been a continuous issue to establish boundaries between
themselves and Han-Chinese in the period up to the early 1990s. An Amis historian and
Presbyterian minister, Wu Ming-yi, published an article mentioning the southern origin
theory as fact (1988:30) in Tai-yuan-jen. He showed an Amis legend of origin about a
couple blown to Taiwan from the South by a great flood and who the ancestors of the
Taiwanese became. He concludes that the direct ancestor of his Amis people were in
Taiwan at least forty-five hundred years ago.

Present Taiwanese Aborigines

According to official information on the website of the Taiwan Council of
Indigenous People in Executive Yuan, it said that those tribes who are Austronesian
speakers belong to the Austronesian language family. The area which is inhabited by
Austronesian peoples extends from Madagascar in the west to Easter Island in the east;
and from Taiwan in the north to New Zealand in the south. Those who are in Taiwan can
be roughly divided into the "aboriginal" tribes and the "Pingpu" tribes. Those tribes have
own official names, which are: Amis, Atayal, Bunun, Kavalan, Paiwan, Puyuma, Rukai,
Thao, Tsou, Saisiyat, and Yami, all of which speak their own languages and have their
own myths, also share different parts of Taiwan, and can be geographically distinguished.

A quote from the official website of Taiwan Indigenous People Alliance indicates

8 See Tai-yuan-jen (Taiwan Indigenous People Alliance). No.3, 1998. Published by Wu Ming-yi, a Amis
historian.
that “although the aboriginal tribes still preserve their languages, customs, and village social structure, they are now facing the impact of rapid modernization. The great majority of the Pingpu tribes have already lost their languages and customs.”

In terms of name, aboriginal peoples have their own neglected naming conventions. In the past, they were required to adopt Japanese names of Japan’s occupation from 1895 to 1947. Then, they were asked to abandon their adopted Japanese names and adopt Han-Chinese names after World War II. Compared to the majority of Han-Taiwanese who have ancestry from mainland China arrived in multiple batches, whose names may reflect their ethnic backgrounds, aboriginal people could only imitate these names without any historical resources. This name adoption can be traced back to the Qing dynasty in China. In 1723, the “Ping-pu” tribe started to adapt last names as was the custom among Han people (Meskill 35). In 1939, Japanese government asked Aboriginal Taiwanese to use Japan’s last name and in 1944, all Aboriginal Taiwanese had Japanese last names. A quote from the website of the Alliance of Taiwan Aborigines (ATA) says, “In order to assimilate the Indigenous Peoples, the Japanese government encouraged the Indigenous Peoples to use Japanese names, and forced children to speak Japanese under their compulsory elementary school program”. After Han-Chinese governed Taiwan, the Indigenous Peoples were not only unable to reclaim their ancestral names, but under the “assimilationist policy of the Taiwan government, they were denied even the right to register their citizen identification with their traditional names” (ATA). The common names they were called during the time were “fan-jen,” “Shang-ti jen,” or “Tu-ju” which

---

9 Alliance of Taiwan Aborigines (ATA). ATA was organized and established on December 29, 1984 by a group of Taiwan Aborigines, missionaries and Han people who have the qualification of humanitarianism. It is a social movement that strives for economic benefits, political rights and social position. Report of the Alliance of Taiwan Aborigines in the World Conference. This quote is from the Report of the Alliance of Taiwan Aborigines in the World Conference on Human Rights, Vienna, 14-25 June, 1993.
mean uncivilized people or people who live in the mountains. In the 1980's an aboriginal folk song singer, Hu-de, helped to found the Alliance of Taiwan Aborigines to voice loud the improvement of Taiwan Aborigines’ rights. The founders of this movement saw that Taiwan Aborigines had suffered for a long time unequal treatment from economic exploitation, social discrimination, political oppression, and negligence of culture. This Alliance is a social movement that strives for economic benefits, political rights and social position. From 1984, there have been a series of campaigns raised by the Alliance of Taiwan Aborigines on the Name Correction Movement, from December 1984 to May 1992, to request to be called Aborigines in the official documents and in general usage, instead of the discriminative slang like mountain people and mountain fellows. Finally, on August 1, 1994, a Constitutional law finally gave the rights to Indigenous people be able to reclaim their ancestral names. On March 12, 1996, the newly elected Taipei city mayor Chen Shuibian announced that the street in front of the president’s palace in Taipei – "Long live Chiang Kai-shek Road" – had been renamed to "Ketagalan Avenue". The Ketagalan were one of the Pingpu Aboriginal groups in Taiwan.  

The awareness among the Taiwan Aborigines on their land right, their cultures and their humanity arose after the 1980's. Several social problems mentioned by the ATA such as the young aboriginal women in prostitution (young Indigenous women were sold to the city as prostitutes by the illegal bargainers), and the nuclear waste problem in Lan-yu, which is also called orchid Island, have been hot potatoes of the governments; moreover, the movement of the Anti-Wu Feng Myth (August 1985 and September -


11 It is the island where the story “Flying Fish Fishers” is told.
December 1987) would be a sign how their myth is mistreated by Han-people. Wu Feng, a mythical hero on textbook invented by the Han People, was killed by headhunter because he wanted to sacrifice himself to stop aboriginal people’s head hunting tradition; however, this myth distorts the humanity of the Indigenous People. In order to eliminate the discrimination and the racism, aboriginal people requested the Dept. of Education delete the Wu Feng Myth from the elementary school textbooks.

From linguistic, archeological, historical, and mythological evidence, we traced the origins and present situation of Taiwan aborigines. As Ho Ting-jui said in his article, Taiwanese aborigines’ “geographical isolation” kept them away from alien influences and thus allowed them “a better opportunity to preserve Asiatic themes within their culture” (Ho 174). While the indigenous people still live with their myths and legends, such as that of the Amis people, who still believe that their ancestors came from Lan-yu from origin myth; or another Amis legend of origin about a couple of ancestors blown to Taiwan from the South by a great flood; or even those of the Taiyal people who hung themselves on the tree due to the myth of tree origin: these myths show the emotional connections behind the data, numbers, and most of all, political changes. When they corrected a wrong myth, like the myth of Wu Feng, they got their connections of their past and respect again. I cannot count and judge which origin is right for Taiwan aborigines; however, I, a Han-Taiwanese, would like to try to touch these connections which have tied these indigenous people to their cultures and their island.

12 See “The Quest for Difference vs. the Wish to Assimilate: Taiwan's Aborigines and their Struggle for Cultural Survival in Times of Multiculturalism” by Michael Rudolph, Heidelberg University. It’s said, Most severely criticized was the representation of Aborigines as ‘raw, wild and morally rotten’, as was suggested in the ‘legend’ through its emphasis on their indulging in headhunting and the mean murder of the noble-minded Confucian Wu Feng. As protests didn't cease, in 1988 the story was taken out of the schoolbooks; the same year, the Wu Feng memorial statue in Jiayi was torn down and smashed by a group of Aboriginal activists.
Chapter Two
Writing Process

There is an Aborigine fever in Taiwan, where you can see series of collections of aborigines’ myths published in Chinese or even bilingual editions as English readings in bookstores, even on Aborigine television programs. Two main series of my references are Classical Series of Taiwanese Aboriginal Myth written by Tien Zhe-yi, and Myths and Legends of Taiwanese Aboriginal Tribes in a bilingual version, edited by Sinan-Panatayan and translated by Robin J. Winkler. The main concern I had in deciding what to adapt was not based on the specific tribe; rather, it was a unique quality that mattered, which the harmony between humans and nature is. I was fully attracted by the nature theme in these stories. They have lots of myths related to the universe, plants, animals, fire, water, and other nature phenomena, which allowed me to embrace the connection of the performing space---the Ernst theatre.

To me, this production’s main goal was how to tell an aboriginal story to English-speaking audiences from eight years-olds to eighty years-old. In a preface to a collection of stories by the brothers Grimm there is a reference to the tradition of telling the stories in intimate togetherness in the “place by the store, the hearth in the Kitchen, etc.”(Cay 59) Because the theatre is not such an intimate place, the storyteller here can also be a bridge to such intimate togetherness between the story and audience. The storytelling tradition is very important in Taiwanese aborigine culture. Aboriginal researcher Pu Chung-chen even put forth, “It’s hard to imagine that how much the tribes or races without characters pay attention to keeping their history and knowledge by oral communication (Pu 22). Usually the elders of the tribes have the responsibility to tell the
traditions and histories of their tribe in rituals. The stories which used to big events among the tribe or between the tribes would be told in the bigger ritual. For example, during the pre-war ritual, “one elder would recite the story, the young people follow when the elder recites the story of what area they conquered or battle achievement, and repeat him louder and louder” (Pu 23). By storytelling, the tribes keep their history of glory and people in the tribes and learn how to respect their past and their living space. Employing the storyteller in my plays as well as applying them as a function of structure is my experiment in theatre for telling Taiwanese aboriginal stories to English-speaking audiences. The storytellers, who would be from among the animals or family members, give credits to bridge the relationship of east and west, performers and the audiences, reality and imagination, human beings and nature.

**Translatability and performability**

To translate and adapt a Taiwanese story into a play which can be understood by English-speaking audience is not an easy job because I need to translate a story into a play simultaneously as I move the story from a source culture to a target culture. Being authentic is not m main concern; to me it’s more important keep balance between source culture and a target culture with the language of the stage. Balance here to me refers to translatability and performabilty. Walter Benjamin mentioned that “Translatability is an essential quality of certain works, which is to say that it is essential that they be translated; it means rather that a specific significance inherent in the original manifests itself in its translatability (Benjamin 17). Patrice Pavis, a theater semiotician, explained the theory of theater translation into the notions of performability (or playability) since the mid-1980s. Pavis’ claimed that real translation takes place on the level of the mise en scene
(performability) as a whole. He said, “Theater translation is never where one expects it to be: not in words, but in gesture, not in the letter, but in the spirit of a culture, ineffable but omnipresent” (Pavis 1989, 42). I know I am only the part of translation: production will allow the completion.

When I started “Baleng and Snake”, it came with a snake storyteller, which refreshed my notion of who is the key character in the other two plays, which are animals. On Miami’s campus it is not a surprise that you see animals such as rabbits, deer, birds, even raccoons, let alone the Oxford citizens—the squirrels. Also, a field trip to the farm to feed the dogs, horses, donkeys and goats whom you can smell and touch directly, was really a culture shock for me, an urban person who comes from the city of North Taiwan, who hardly has a relationship with nature, and only see animals in zoos. I’ve not only started with the motif in my play dealing with nature: also the Miami experience put me closer to nature itself. I believe I was slowly able to "get" what and why Aborigines wanted to say about their relationship with nature. As Ho Tinh-jui mentioned in his research of Taiwanese aboriginal myth, “The natural environment appearing in the narratives of the Taiwanese aborigines is very representative of the Southeast Asian area…..Moreover, the animals and plants mentioned in the myths and legends still exist today and are familiar to the present inhabitants”(Ho 165).

I would like to discuss my writing process play by play:

**Baleng and the Snake**

The Hundred Pace snake has been the totem that the Rukai tribe worships. You can see the patterns on their houses, their clothing, and even their weapons. Living in mountains, Rukai people have to deal with nature not only in a realistic way, but also in
an aesthetical way, as totem, “whose basic intension fits in with generation symbols, ancestors, and characteristics of guardian angels,” (Wang 4). Wang indicated that the Hundred-Pace snake stories are divided into two parts: the birth of tribe, and the connecting by marriage of human beings and snakes. These totem stories established the reasonable foundation of taboo and convention (Wang 4). “Baleng and Snake” is a story which shows us how Rukai people deal with nature, the lake and the snake. The lake is called Gui Lake in Han and Da-lu-ba-lin Lake in Rukai (Holy Spirit Lake) and is located in Da-wu Mountain, middle Taiwan. It is regarded as a holy lake; the path dead people must pass to paradise. The king of the lake is a Hundred-pace snake, who in Rukai’s myth hatched the eggs of the Sun and gave birth to the Rukai people. The love between Baleng and the snake is so touching that it becomes the most famous Rukai story. For example, the story has been adapted to an RPG video game that a lot of Taiwanese teenagers are now playing. I’ve seen the production of Baleng and the Snake at the Bunun Culture Foundation, in which it was more like a ceremony than a theatrical production.

The love between human and snake is a common motif of stories in East Asia: in China, for example, there is a legend called “White Snake,” which depicts a monk who fights a female snake who loves a human being by whom she has a baby. Unlike the Chinese myth, the love between Baleng and the snake is simpler and purer: there is no dramatic love-hatred relationship. The focus when I wrote the play was on how to depict the love between human and snake and how the story would be told. I chose a snake to be the storyteller who doesn’t show its "snake nature" so obviously, but slowly and comfortably reveals it. The original story seldom mentions the “personality” of the snake, but I decided to give him a personality---a shy but sincere king, whose character is never connected with the snake, the scary creature. Baleng here is a girl with a strong
personality who pursuits her love, which nobody had done before. The contrast between Baleng and the snake king makes the love scene more vivid, and also enables the snake storyteller to add comic elements.

**Flying Fish Fisher**

The Dawu and the Yamis people live on Orchid Island, which is an isolated island located on the eastern part of Taiwan in the Pacific Ocean. Without any industry and commercial development, it has remained a most pure and unpolluted land; however, young people leave for Taiwan for money–making, and in the past the KMT government even dumped nuclear waste there. However, with the recovery of tribal consciousness, dumping was banned in 2002 by the new government, which decided to make it a tourist island. The Flying Fish Festival used to be a major traditional event, though simultaneously neglected by young local inhabitants; now it has become a big event on Orchid Island and attracts huge numbers of tourists. March to June is the period of time of finest weather during the year. Dawu build houses and fishing boats and hold their Flying Fish ritual during that time. Men wear silver armlets and T-shorts with a short knife. Unfortunately, years ago, when both the residents and government wanted to recover this festival, they found no flying fishes at all. The main reasons were and remain illegal trawling, poisoning the fishes, and overfishing without protecting the fry. This circumstance never occurred to the Dawu people, who got along with flying fishes peacefully for thousands of years. They have serious ways of dividing and eating the fishes, and can only go big fishing in the peak of the fishing season. Their stories tell the taboos and laws of eating and fishing which allow them to enjoy the company of nature.

Strong images of canoes and flying fish on the stage popped out of my mind when I
had a summer course in the Czech Republic, where coincidently a Taiwan exhibition was held in their national museum. I thought of colors on stage. When I read original story of Flying Fishing Fishers, I was deeply touched by the courage of the old father and the peaceful brotherhood of the Badan fisher. It is a great story dealing with relationships of nature, family and—most of all—“other” races. The original story didn’t give us the hint of how old the father is and how poor his family is, but details give the reader or listener a sense of when and where the wind is. I utilized how old the man was and what the relationship was between the Red Head Tribe and Badan Islanders as emphasis towards how difficult this fishing trip is.

I choose the son to tell the story to his son about the (first) son’s father and his father in order to illustrate the relationship of the learning system of story---storytelling, listening, experiencing, and retelling the story. In this sense, the storyteller was not a storyteller for he/she heard the story was retelling them; meanwhile, the listener would not only be the listener, for he/she would be the future teller and would be also the learner.

**Hawk Sisters**

Taiwan aborigines not only tell the stories to explain nature phenomena: they embrace huge concerns of humanity in their stories. When I was in Czech Republic having my summer courses, we were lucky enough to travel to the Bohemian Paradise, the largest national park of the Czech Republic. And I saw two hawks hanging over our car, which connected me with the Amis stories I was reading, the *Hawk Sisters*.

The Amis tribe boasts the largest population amongst all the indigenous peoples of Taiwan, and they exhibit strict division of labor between the sexes and rigid generational
organization. In the story of “Hawk Sisters,” what attracted me is these aborigines’ concern about minorities and their imaginations of transformation of human beings into animals, which is also a characteristic of Taiwanese Aboriginal myth. As Ho Ting-jui mentioned, “The belief that all things, animate and inanimate, are endowed with personal in-dwelling souls suggests that these people are animistic. Thus, for them the soul substance of animals, plants, and objects is similar to that of man. This concept is very important and probably underlies the descriptions of the transformation of men into animals (mammals, birds…), plants, and other objects (stars, clouds…), and transformations of such things into men” (Ho 162).

Originally, *Hawk Sisters* is a story of how the miserable and disabled sisters transform themselves into hawks to be free and still take care of their family. Instead of writing a story only of transformation, I wished to write a story of hope and love in a family who has disabled children. I choose the mother to be the storyteller to tell such a story to her daughters who have the same fate as the story characters do; but ambiguously the story becomes true, and the story happens to the storyteller herself. The intersection of the story and reality makes the play interesting, and also brings out the mother’s inner voice at the same time. I added the scene where the other hawks help the disabled sisters and guide them in the woods. Storytelling structure here helped me to frame the structure which distinguishes the reality and story.

To me, writing these three plays was a process for me experiencing listening stories as well as storytelling, and translating as well as being translated. There is no formal stage for aboriginal people, neither do they get used to Western stage. However, the storytellers serve as the medium from culture to culture (aborigines to Taiwanese and from Taiwanese to English speaking people); from nature to stage (the nature
environment and nature motif in the play allows more translability and performability) to fit the unique quality that the harmony between humans and nature Taiwanese aborigines cherish.

I am not a tribe leader or elder in the tribe, theatre is the place I can retell storytelling tradition which remains a treasure in Taiwanese aborigine culture. With additions of different storytellers in the plays, who would be animals or human beings, these storytelling by different translators, which even includes nature itself, bridges the relationship of east and west, performers and the audiences, reality and imagination, human beings and nature of Taiwanese aborigines’ valuable myth.

Let us keep in mind: the animals, plants, tattoos, and nature mentioned in the myths and legends still exist today and are familiar to the present Taiwanese aboriginal inhabitants.
Chapter Three
Production Process

Taiwan aborigines told their stories when they had rituals or family gatherings, with the mountains or the seas as a backdrop. The first time I heard a modern aboriginal story told on a stage was at the Bunun Culture and Education Foundation, where the Bunn administrator told the Han-Taiwanese audience in Mandarin how aborigines strive for life. Utilizing group dances and songs of different tribes in semi-circle shape on the proscenium stage with a priest telling the stories of tribes behind, this experience felt like a combination of western performance techniques and aboriginal storytelling tradition, which enables people from outside get close to the aboriginal culture, to me no only a performance for tourists but also a modern way to show their culture. Certainly, being in the circle of dance of storytelling is a more authentic and inviting way.

Of all the performance locations available on Miami University’s campus, Ernst Nature Theatre comes closest to the semi-circular outdoor environment that I would imagine aboriginal stories might be told.

[It allows for nearness between the actors and audience when needed
[It has space to expand for dance, ritual, and spectacle
[It has beautiful and peaceful surroundings of the hills and their forests
[It allows me imagine easier the space when writing the play
[It evokes me some feeling for the aboriginal tribe after which the university was named.

Picturing nature was understandably a significant part of the adaptation and writing process of these plays, as can be seen in “Baleng and Snake” first written for performance in Miami’s Art Museum. However, when I was offered Ernst as a venue for “Baleng and
Snake” and two additional plays, nature became much more approachable and even palpable as a scenic and structural element. In my writing process the space gave me some imaginations as to where the boats of “Flying Fish Fishers” would be, and how their battle would occur, and where the hawks of “Hawk Sisters” would fly. It was “natural,” therefore, to encourage the themes of nature in these three plays, and in production encouraging a theme of natural unity alongside the aboriginal themes of relating life to nature gave the advantage of two themes for the audience to follow: the unity of the aborigines with nature and natural unity itself.

All three stories deal with the relationship of the tribe to nature, including animals, mountains, seas, and other human beings: with how they get along and why they get along. Ernst Nature Theatre, where the grass and brushes on the stage provide an immediate and physical connection to natural colors and textures, helps actors to feel what the plays are asking for when they become the snakes, birds, or fishes. Ernst was, like nature, very supporting towards creating a harmony of mood and purpose in the process of adapting the stories to plays; and its atmosphere was also supporting of the production.

This atmosphere was very important in designing the costumes. This was not an easy task, since the costume designer had never seen Taiwanese aborigines before, and the three stories were from three distinct tribes. Additionally, there was the need for costuming hawks, flying fishes, and snakes. I knew that authenticity was not a realistic production goal when the play is performed by other culture; but I could still use the same performance tools as the storytellers in Taiwan used if I thought of, instead of their specific qualities, their essential nature. I felt that for all three plays authenticity was not as important as color, beauty, and a sense of natural unity. The goal for all costumes, then
were that they would be pretty to look at as worn by the actors among other actors in the natural setting of Ernst.

Colorful design in this production made the play feel rich; for example, there were orange, blue, and pink hawks on the stage, which are not authentic but pretty. Natural unity as well as prettiness was an equal concern, and since we could not make authentic tribal costumes I wanted simple lines and shapes that would harmonize with both the setting and the stories, and allow beauty of movement by the actors. I think we were able to find a sense of natural unity in almost every aspect of the production, including movement and music. The simple instruments in this production, such as flute or drums, playing no complicated melody but only simple notes and rhythms, contributed to the unity of the performance. The actors, in addition to their needed blocking and choreography, were asked to enjoy the smell of the trees, the grass, or even the dirt upon which they would walk.

Without the ability to be authentic the necessity of beauty became critical to do this production, and cannot be overemphasized. I would like to discuss it play by play. In “Hawk Sisters” the hawks’ body movement and costumes were the focus of making beauty. To fly and act like the hawk gracefully is important, which helps the sisters as well as the audience to imagine another more graceful, more beautiful new world. This graceful action was found by having the hawks fly and dance at the same time. I particularly liked the director’s arrangement to separate the spaces between the sisters’ house and the hawks’ woods, so that the hawks could fly gorgeously when the mother is telling the story for the audience and the sisters are imagining the beauty she is describing. And it indicates the different world that the sisters are dreaming of as well. In “Flying Fish Fishers,” the boats and flying fishes are absolutely beauty concerns. This time, the
production crew used their imagination to make colorful flying fishes on the sticks, which are like the flags in Chinese opera, and this allowed actors to dance and move many fishes at the same time. The boats seemed abstract, just the outline of a boat shape tied and covered with aboriginal patterns, which brought another natural simplicity to the play and convenience to the actors who could carry them effortlessly. In “Baleng and Snake” the invention of the long colorful silk snakes/banners (used in Chinese opera as waves or winds) had already proven themselves a success in the Art Museum production, and they were even more effective when actors waved them in a big theatre like Ernst. All this I have mentioned above demonstrates the necessity of beauty that the play asks for.

Working with “translations of the translation” in this production is another issue I would like to discuss according to the different backgrounds of the traditional storytellers, the text translator (myself), the director, the performers, and the production crew. Taiwanese aborigines told the stories in their own languages and some translated them into Chinese: this is how I first received them. Then, I, a Taiwanese playwright, translated and adapted the play into English for English-speaking actors and audiences. Then an American director called for actors from different cultures and perspectives, such as Sri Lankan (The snake King), and Indian-American (The Badan Fisher) and other American actors, each of whom translated the play according to their own cultural backgrounds. As Director Ara Beal mentioned in her theses: “Transcultural productions are theater from one (source) culture performed for another (target) culture. Usually, a lot of thought is given to adjusting content for the target audience. The performance might be translated into the target language or include subtitles (opera)...” non-Western performance becomes slightly Westernized, if for no other reason than to allow the audience a means
of access” (Beal 1, 15). In Ernst Theatre production, by performance time the mise en scene of actors, costumes, properties and music was rather global than Westernized; in “The HAWK SISTERS” the actors wore a mixture of Indian pants, Thai tops, hawk masks from Czech Republic, aboriginal vests, and various blouses or shirts. They played mixture of instruments included Asian flutes and Native American recorders, and Chinese strings accompanied the storyteller while she was telling the story scene of actors, costumes, properties and music was rather multiple-culture in a way of translation.

Some properties were made to match the director’s decisions on how best to present the story to the Ernst audience. In “Flying Fish Fishers,” for example, the boat in the original story was a long sea canoe, the sort that many people would row together; in this production, with a small cast, the director had each fisher row their own boat, which helped to give the impression of great activity. And the way the fishers held their rituals, spread their nets, or paddled their boat was mostly according to their own interpretations. For example, when the two boats encounter, it was interesting that the director asked for some Chinese background music, according to her translation/retelling of the scene; as for me, however, no Chinese elements at all were indicated in the play. The director found a good way for making the flying fish fly in the air by putting them on flags. To everyone’s puzzlement how to make the fishing hooks took quite a lot of trial and error, and we finally found some abstract substitute for hooks that were quite acceptable. The crew also made the baby’s cradle like a small boat, which symbolized the heritage his/her fathers gave to the child; no such tradition exists within the tribe, but it was nevertheless very effective structurally and scenically. In “Baleng and Snake” the party dance was imagined as European dance at first, for very few of the company had seen real aboriginal dances. After I showed my “imagined” aboriginal dance, the crew invented their unique
Euro-Taiwan-American aboriginal dance which ended up quite nice.

These new elements, through translations of translations and retellings of tellings, could sometimes be very experimental; however, they poured new spirits into the play without ruining the main theme, which is nature itself. Happily, the multiple translations/retellings still made it possible for the audience to understand why a Taiwanese aboriginal girl would fall in love with a snake, or how daughters became the birds that guarded over their family; they were even able to arouse anxiety when the audience watched the two tribes encounter each other in their boats on the ocean.

What I may encourage in the next production would be the additions of dances, music, and movements in these three plays. For example, Amis people play the special instrument called a nose flute which can be easily played and used in the pieces. And before fishers go fishing, it would be appropriate for them to sing some traditional songs and carry the boats together to the sea. Drums and steps are usually emphasized in aboriginal dances, which may be seen in body movements in the plays; in the same token, the director can make a more dramatic effect for fishers by using the steps and sounds of drums when they go fishing. And some Atayal music might be played as the background music when there is a party scene or farewell scene in “Baleng and Snake.”
Chapter Four

Scripts

BALENG AND SNAKE

FLYING FISH FISHER

HAWK SISTERS
BALENG AND SNAKE

Adapted from Story of Rukai tribe

Characters

Story Teller – ST

Baleng – B

King of the snake – S

Father

Mother

Man 1st – M1

Man 2nd – M2

Man 3rd – M3

Witch – W

Friends

ST: (sing) Everybody come here. I am going to tell you a story. It's the harvest time and also a love season. Men and women should embrace hand in hand and join us no matter whom you are or where you come from. Let's sing for love!

ST: Long long ago, there was a young woman who fell in love with a snake. Snake? How come people adore snake? There is no human being would love the scary creeping

---

13 The Rukai tribe occupies a belt spanning Taitung, Pingtung and Kaohsiung counties. The social organization of its 8,000 members is based on a system of noble class heredity. Intricately beautiful woodcarvings and ornate pearl-studded clothing are ostensible signs of tribe members' social status.

14 Tribal rituals are primarily held in accordance with the growing seasons of millet and other crops, as well as the important rites of passage for clan members, which is reflected in the songs and dances associated with these events.
creature with cunning and slippery scales. If you kiss him, you will get a kiss of death. But actually the snake is shy, trust me. Look, he is hiding in the corner and watching people singing. It’s the evening with the full moon covered the sky, “the day to be satisfied.” The beauty, Baleng’s house was full of boys bringing millet wines and millet cakes, and singing love songs to please her, hope she becomes their wife. There was a young man standing up.

M1: Baleng, look at my hunting gun. The fire is not ceased for you. And the boar is weeping for you. Be mine.

M2: Oh, dear Baleng, please drink my millet wine. I sang for you every dew of wine.

M3: My prettiest, I own the biggest land from my father and I will give it to you. You will be not only the most beautiful but also the richest woman. Look at my rice. I can fill your entire house.

ST: Baleng was dressed up in her most festive clothes and felt honored. Every girl envied her and wishes to be her. However, she just couldn’t be touched by any of them. No one noticed that. Boys and girls went on singing and dancing. And that time, a witch came in and took a look around the house.

W: Pleasure your last evening, my dear. Once moon settled down in the west would the tender love songs began. You will no more enjoy the same moon with ours. You will eat no more food as us. You will be the noblest Queen of the world when you find true love. Give me drink, darling, don’t wake up when you fall in love.

ST: Baleng’s parent took it as a blessing and invited her drink. They enjoyed the gifts of the suitors. They were so happy their daughter is going to be married. Baleng felt bored and wanted to leave the spot. She heard a sound of flute.

B: Did you hear the flute?
Friend: No, that must be the breeze. Oh, darling, dance! It’s our day!

B: That’s beautiful. Didn’t you notice that? I wonder who played the music.

ST: The music of the flute continued. But no one there had idea of what’s going on.

Baling enchanted the music which seemed like to lead her to another world she has never been before. Once the music stop, there he comes with a bamboo flute in his hand,

S (stammered): Sorry….did I ….scare you?

B: No, certainly no.

ST: At the same time, the guests and her parents found a large and colorful snake slithering up in front of Baleng. Her parents fainted and the rest all fled away. Indeed he is a handsome snake and also the king of snake kingdom (ST take a bow to the snake).

B: Did you play the flute?

S: Yes, do…. you like it?

ST: Oh, he is too shy. So he adores her many years and never tells her. Be brave, my lord.

B: It’s not bad. Actually, it’s wonderful! I like it. But I’ve never heard it before. Is it the song of our tribe?

S: No, in fact, I made it… for you. I am glad you like it. I…. practiced…… it many times.

B: Woo, that’s my song? You are sweet. I’ve never seen you before. Do you live here?

S: Yes, nearby. I… live in the…lake.

B: In the lake? Yes, that’s funny.

S: And you ….

ST: Say it, you are the most gracious, beautiful, sexy girl we’ve seen.
S: You… like to live in the lake?
B: Oh, no. I think I won’t breathe there.
S: I…can… help you.
B: Ok, anyway, thanks a lot.
ST: Come on, say it. You are…
S: You are…
ST: the most precious
S: the most precious
ST: and beautiful
S: and beautiful
ST (at the same time): female (cough like a snake) I’ve met
S (at the same time): female… SNAKE I’ve met
B: Snake, oh, I haven’t never been described as that before.
S: Oh, I am sorry. You are so…. brilliant that I cannot …..say the right word.
B: It’s OK. I like it.
S: Really, you like me.
B: Oh….ok….yes. This time you made me stammered.
S: Wonderful, wonderful, I will marry you. Belang, be my bride. Wait for me.
ST: He is so happy that he even doesn’t notice that he stop stammering.
B: I will tell my parents. (Look at her parents on the ground) Sorry, they slept.
ST: Next morning when her parents woke up, they come to see if their daughter is alive.

Baleng didn’t sleep and she seems to enjoy the music still.

Mother: My daughter, did you hurt?
B: No, why do you say so? I am fine. I am terribly fine. Actually I’ve never experienced
this kind of ecstasy. Mom, I think I fall in love.

Father: Fall in love? With whom? The snake?

B: No, he is not a snake. He is the most handsome and humorous guy I’ve met.

Mother: Oh, Baleng. Stop talking like that! You must be frightened. Come and sleep, my baby. You need a rest.

B: Mom and Dad, I want to marry him.

Mother: So the dream last night is not fake.

Father: I dreamed it.

Mother: Oh, my poor baby. How miserable you are. Why? Is that a curse?

Father: I won’t let him do that.

B: Please, daddy and mommy, I really love him. He is a modest and faithful man.

Father: He is a snake, even though he is the king of snake.

B: To me, he is not. Please accept him since you love me. I will wait for him.

ST: The event of Baleng’s love with the snake soon spread throughout the villages near and far. No suitors would like to come to visit her again. One day, the sound of thunder shook the heaven. Strangely, although the wind was blowing wildly, the trees don’t move at all. And the rustling sound came closer and closer, (Sa Sa sounds) and it became louder and louder. All of a sudden, the members of the snake tribe clustered around the King of the snake to marry Baleng. The snakes brought various kinds of gifts for Baleng’s dowry including ceramic pots and amber beads, colorful clothes, necklaces, flowery hats, bracelets, and earring for her to wear. The male snakes carried wines and food to dedicate to Baleng’s family. She’s already to marry him.

Snakes: See, there’s a beautiful snake. I think that’s our queen.
B: I am so happy to see you come!

ST: Baleng’s parents were scared and hide in some corner. And the king of snake sat in the seat of honor in front of the stone pillar

S: Dear father and mother in law. I bring the treasures and foods. Hope you enjoy it.

Come, my fellowships, pay respect to my parents in law.

(Snakes took a bow)

ST: All the snakes rolled up. It’s a spectaculars scene when you see big, small, fat, thin, strong or crippled snakes crawled up on the trees rolling themselves up.

When Baleng saw the gifts, all the elaborate arrangements that have made for their daughter and the care from the king, they finally accepted it.

Father: Lord, please be nice to my daughter. You have my blessings.

ST: Tonight, there is a farewell party, all her villagers came to her house dance and sing because once Baleng was married, she would go away and never return. Everyone wanted to make the most of the celebration. No one wants to leave.

Friend A: Take care, dear Baleng, if it’s what you want, I will pray for you.

Baleng: Sister, I love him so much that I will go everywhere with him. Could you take care of my parents?

ST: When the first dew of the morning comes,

S: Baleng, it’s time to go. I will bring you to our home in lake.

ST: The king led the way to the lake and snakes all followed. Baleng’s parents and friends came with them to see them off.

Baleng: Farewell, my dear mom and dad, thank you for bringing me up. Now I have my own family, don’t worry about me and take care of yourself.

M (sobs): What if I miss you, my baby, will you return to see me?
Baleng: I will, and you will know that. I will miss you. Dear everyone, you must remember to pass by the lake when you go hunting, I will prepare you warm food by the lake for you. Don’t eat the cold food; it’s not made by me.

S: Darling, it’s the time.

Baleng (with tears): When I disappeared from your sight into the thicket of the banyan tree, you will know I’ve arrived at my new home and farewell. Take care of yourselves!

ST: Baleng’s shadow gradually went out of the sight as she disappeared in the lake with all the snakes.

ST: Several passed. One day Baleng’s parents were returning from the field. They discovered two little tiny snakes sleeping in a special bed next to the window. They know it’s brought by their daughter, Baleng. They had a great dinner with their grandsons. Then the second day, the two were gone. All of Baleng’s children and their children visited her relatives this way. Now, it’s the end. Do you like the story of love? I hope so. Good night!

(Sound of flute rises, and the story teller vanishes in the lake)
Characters

Story teller
Wife
Old man
Oldest Son
Baby in the cradle
Badan fisher
Dawu fishers

(Storyteller and Oldest son must be played by different actors)

Time and Place

Summer in Orchid Island, Baba-dao Flying Fish Season

ST: Are they pretty? These are the gifts for you from your grandfather, my father. He

---

15 Dawu tribe, also called Tao tribe or Yami tribe on Orchid Island, is Taiwan's only maritime aboriginal group. The society of its 4,000 members is based on patrilineal clans and fishing groups. The Yami are noted for their special boats, woodcarvings and pottery figurines. The activities connected with the "Flying Fish Ritual" for ensuring a bountiful catch are an unparalleled expression of cultural uniqueness, with the male members of the Yami tribe singing while the women dance.
joined the team of our ancient spirits. And now I become the father. May holy ancient spirits bless my dear son. (*Audience can see the old man watching his son and grandson.*)

(*The baby gradually stop crying when he tells the story, actors do as what he says.*)

ST: When the sun goes and moon comes, it becomes the Pipilapila flying season. Everyone in the tribe is busy preparing the devices for flying fish hunting. Just before sunset, men of our tribe will keep silence and have natural calls in order not to ruin the holiness of flying fish hunting. They will hold fire sticks and fishing hooks in special fishing costumes. They will sing fishing songs following the leader to the boat. Then, they tie the fire sticks together in the middle of the boat to make lights. Their destination, *Chi Fa Si Ta*, is the west fishing area. When they arrive the fishing area, the main fisher will burn the dry leaves and the others will sit on the board to catch the fishes flying over. Sometimes the hook does not work very well. (*Actors who play Dawu fishes fail to catch fishes sometimes.*) When I was at your age, my father was said too old to join the fishing team. However, we had our own team.

Wife: Husband. Give me the potatoes and help me with the sticks. Children are coming home. We need more sticks to cook dinner.

Old man: I have a lot of potatoes today. Look! (He is looking for his bag.) Do you know where my carrying bag is? I remember I put it under the table…or that stone.

Wife: No, I didn’t see you carrying it back.

Old man: Are you sure? I remember…..

Wife: When you remember it means you forget once…or twice.

*The Oldest son ran in with the carrying bag.*
Old man: Son, why did you carry my bag?

Oldest son: Father, you asked me to bring it back for you when we catch the shrimps in the river. (Wife makes face to old man.) Mother, we have five shrimps today.

Old man: Ha-ha….I remember I have a good son.

Wife: You do. And he is growing even taller than you. Now give me the potatoes and sticks.

Old man: And where are other children?

Wife: Son (to the oldest son), go and ask your brothers back to dinner. See how many potatoes you brought back. We need more food to raise our three kids. We have potatoes and five shrimps. And we have leftover flying fishes from my brother. I can make a good meal.

ST: Actually in this season, Dawu people eat flying fishes. But we can only get leftover from other relatives. Even mother never complains about it because she knows her husband is too old to go fishing in the sea anymore, father felt sad.

Old man goes to the door seeing others preparing for fishing.

Wife: Pass me the sticks.

Old man doesn’t listen to her.

Wife: Pass me the sticks. Is there anything wrong?

Old man: Oh, no…nothing.

Wife: Or did you forget something again?

Old man: Nonsense. I am fine.

Wife: You cut more woods today. There you are again! I know what you are thinking.

You stood by the door watching them preparing fishing every evening.

Old man: I…
Wife: The answer is no. Even though I miss the taste of flying fish, I don’t want you to risk your life for them.

Old man: Dear wife, tell me the truth. Am I that old in your eyes?

Wife: Dear husband, in my eyes, the answer is no. But as for the ocean, it is yes.

Old man: I miss these pretty flying fishes fly over my boat under the moonlight. I really want to see them with my eyes again.

Wife: You were a good fisher.

Old man: Yes, I was.

ST: Well, when my sad father was sad, it made my mother felt sad. He used to be a good fisher, but now he could only sit there and watch.

Wife: To tell the truth, I don’t care about the fishes. Yes, I miss some taste. But we have shrimps today. Life is beautiful. Isn’t it?

Silence

Wife: OK, this time. One more time to remember -don’t forget to bring yourself back.

Did you hear me? And I want you to take our oldest son with you. He is smart enough to help you.

Old man: Our son? But he is too young.

Wife: And you are too old. Now you are telling me about age. That’s an acceptable balance for me. And you need balance to keep the boat sailing.

Old man: He is only fourteen. He needs two more years training to join the fishing team. I don’t want him to risk his life with me.

Wife: Now you know what I feel. If you really want to go, take him with you and bring him back. Don’t forget this time.

Old man: No…I am not following the fishing team of our tribe.
Wife: Then, don’t ask me this question anymore.

Pause

Old man: We two will be a good team. *(Exciting)* Yes, I can teach him how to make 魚餌.

That’s easy to do. I know a very good fishing area. My father showed me once, but no body believes him. But it’s so risky.

Wife: Then, don’t go. I feel contented to eat flying fishes from others. Think about your four children.

Old man: Brave woman, I know you can take care of them. I will succeed for our babies.

Give me your blessings.

Wife: You have mine.

ST: During the flying fish season, it’s a tradition that relatives and friends cannot go to visit each other. So nobody knows what is going on in our family. Since then, father took me, his oldest son to get the fire bundles everyday. One day Father feels the direction of wind change, he says,

Old man: Go to the river to get some shrimps.


Old man: Son. We are going to celebrate your adulthood. But you need to keep it as a secret. Don’t tell your friends. Remember to come home to sleep tonight to keep our good luck.

Oldest son: I am looking forward to it, Father.

ST: I didn’t know that tonight I would become a real Dawu fisher. Father looks at the ocean and recalls these old days he went fishing with his father. The sunset is as beautiful as usual, but it seems that the south-east wind brings him his father’s
message. He is not a little boy anymore. Besides excitement, his feelings are more complicated. When I comes home to sleep, he wakes me up,

Old man: Wake up, son. It’s time.

Oldest son: Father, I just want to sleep. Now?

Old man: Yes. Remember we are talking about adulthood? You are the oldest brother.

And it’s time to go flying fish hunting for your family.

Oldest son: Flying fishes. I can sail the boat? Of course, I’d like to.

Oldest son runs out and stopped by his mother:

Wife: Son, I want you to watch your father’s steps wherever you go tonight. Or you two won’t be safe. Remember to bring him back as you brought his carrying bag back.

Remember, you are a team.

Old man: Don’t worry. Now go and put on your fishing clothes.

Oldest son: My fishing clothes?

Wife: Here you are. I made it for you. Try it on. You are a big boy now. Please take care of yourself. (To Old man) Husband, this time remember your family and don’t forget to bring you two back.

Old man: I will. May ancient spirits bless us to follow Dawu fisher’s wisdom. Son, push the boat to the sea shore. Let’s go!

ST: Off they go slowly behind all others boats of the Dawu fishers. His wife worries much about them because they are going to a place no one knows. When other boats stop in the fishing spot, they keep going further and even further. When they sail the boat far ahead other boat for several miles, there is no boat around but theirs alone.

The boy starts to worry about their situation.

Oldest son: The other fishers went fishing way back there. But now where are we going?
Old man: Sometimes, people choose the easiest way to go. They forget the wisdom our father gave us. It's a place in which your grandfather told me about his fishing story. Feel the wind which your grandfather brought, it’s from the south-east and is perfect for far sea fishing.

ST: Now even their homeland vanishes form their sight. All is silence. And there is no fishes at all.

Oldest son: Father, are you sure we are sailing to the right direction?

Old man: Follow me. I may be forgetful sometimes. But this time I remember to bring the memory and wisdom of my father and our ancient spirits with me.

ST: They keep going and sail for several miles. The old man stops his son only when they arrive at the no-one known fishing area. At this moment they see the most astonishing sight- thousands of thousands of flying fishes flying in the air.

Old man: Now prepare the hooks.

ST: No sooner than they put he hooks and net, these flying fishes flew to their boat, to their hat and even to their meal box. The boy wailed loudly and happily without seeing his father’s alert for the area. Because their fishing area was exactly between Orchid Island and Badan tribe, which used to be their enemy, they might be attacked by Badan people. There is a boat around them. *(The baby in the cradles cries and audience can see Badan fisher’s boat sail in distantly.)*

Old man: Stop now, son. That’s enough for this year.

Oldest son: But there are so many fishes, I still want to go there for more.

*(They two sails to the different directions, and it makes their boat either stuck or spin.)*

Old man: We only get what we need. We are not allowed to have leftover in one year. I am already grateful. Besides, ocean is unpredictable. Look, there is another boat
there.

Oldest son: Why, father, we can have more. And why do we care about that boat?

Old man: It’s nothing about fishes. This is not an easy fishing place and people usually
cannot come here alone. He must have overwhelming wisdom and strength. Let’s
sail that way.

*(Badan’s boat is approaching them.)*

Oldest son: Father, I am scared.

Old man: Keep your speed and if something happens, just speed up to that direction.

ST: At this time, Badan fisher sails his boat approaching. It seems that they will confront
with one more wave distance. I hold my stick trembling, but I remember my
mother’s word to bring my father back. Father looks normal, which calms me down.

Badan fisher looks at our team which consisted of old man and young boy with
surprise,

Badan: I am from Badan. Where are you from?

Old man: We are from far……

*Old man is interrupted by his son*

Oldest son: Dawu tribe on Orchid Island.

Badan: Dawu tribe on Orchid Island? We’ve long time not seeing any fisher from Orchid
Island, not since our last battle.

Oldest son: Battle?

ST: I realized why father don’t straight say we are from Orchid Island. And I made a big
mistake.

Old man: Listen, young man. We don’t come to…

Badan: Sir, Nice meeting you two. I admire you two’s courage.
Old man: So do I yours. No one can sail here with only one man’s strength.

Badan: No one comes here in such a good team. How many children do you have?

Old man: I have four.

Badan: I have four, too. May I ask you a question?

Old man: Sure.

Badan: Will these children cry when they eat one fish and cannot have the fair part.

Old man: Yes, they used to complain about the different size they can eat.

Badan: But how you solve the problem?

Old man: We do as follows: cut the fish into half and one side two parts for my wife and myself, the other sides, we cut four parts. Then they feel satisfied.

Badan: Thank you for sharing me this. I noticed your hook which is different from ours.

They are not good to use and will make flying fish’s eyes bloody. Would you like to try mine? It helps you to prevent that problem.

ST: So the father takes the hook and he asks his son to share their meal box with the Badan fisher. Under the moonlight with fishes flying around, these three fishers enjoy their friendship and adventures. Father didn’t forget to bring his carrying bag in which become filled with Badan’s hooks and friendship. Mother was so happy that we brought each other back safely. After we went back to tribe, everyone came to our house see the most beautiful fishes they’ve seen and Father showed others how to use the hook Badan fisher gave us. Here are the original ones your grandfather gave me, and one day we will have our team. After our flying fish hunting, Dawu tribe changed the ways of eating and hunting fishes. Now, I can feel the south-east wind again, it seems that my father brings his message to me. And Father, now I have my own team, please bless us follow ancient spirits’ wisdom.
Two sisters pick sticks in the path of the mountains. One of them is crippled and the other one is blind. Several birds happily fly over the sky, and two sisters stopped to watch them.

ST: Once upon a time, there were two sisters who lived a poor life and had a miserable fate: the elder one was crippled, and the younger one was blind. Even though their mother and father worked so hard hunting and farming, they hardly had enough food for their land was too poor and they lived too far away from the river to get fishes. 

Story teller now becomes the mother cooking the potatoes. Her husband comes back with

---

16 The Amis tribe is found along Taiwan's eastern coast. With a population of about 130,000, it is the largest of Taiwan's aboriginal tribes. The traditional social organization of the Ami is based primarily on matrilineal clans. Upon marriage, a newlywed couple typically resides in the bride's home. The personal relation and financial matters of the family are managed by the matriarch, although public matters such as tribal administration, warfare or religious affairs are governed by an age-based group of male tribal members. The most important traditional tribal observance is the "Harvest Ritual."
an empty bag.

Father: I must go further to catch some rabbits or birds. We have nothing but only potatoes.

Mother: We can have some carrots today. (*She picks up a really small one.*)

Father: We live too far away from the river to get fishes and I am not strong enough to hunt animals in order to give our two daughters better foods. They are too skinny.

Mother: We need to get them new clothes, too. They are growing up and the clothes they are wearing are worn-out. We can do fairly nothing for them, but they are so considerate for us. Even though they cannot walk or see very well; they still help us with house works.

Father: Yes, they are truly adorable. Where are my two lovely girls now?

Mother: They went out to the woods.

Father: They went to the woods again. I hope they won’t get lost in the woods. It’s so dangerous. What if they meet bears or snakes?

Mother: I know. I told them many times, but they insisted on picking sticks for the fire to help us. They promised me they will not be too far and will come home before sunset.

*As Father exits.* Sisters pick sticks in the woods in upper stage and some birds fly over nearby.

1st Sis: Follow me closely. Don’t get lost. We must be hurry; the sun is going further to the sea. We need to go home before sunset or mother will worry about us.

2nd Sis: Yes, sister. I can hear you hurry your steps.

1st Sis: I wish I were a bird so I could fly home.

2nd Sis: What is bird?
1st Sis: A bird sings nicely.

2nd Sis: Yes, I heard them singing.

1st Sis: And it sees everything when it flies in the sky.

2nd Sis: I wish I were a bird, too.

(1st Sis picks up a feather on the ground)

1st Sis: Take it, it’s their feather.

2nd Sis: It’s so soft. What does it look like?

Birds start to listen to them.

1st Sis: They have wings instead of hands. They sing instead of speaking. They fly instead of walking. They live on the trees instead of a house.

1st Sister is so involved in the description that she forgets her sisters. Her sister walks to where the birds stay. And the birds protect 2nd sister not to fell down.

2nd Sister: They must be pretty. (Birds feel contented and take a bow to her.) I wish I could see them. (One bird holds her hand to where her sister is.)

1st Sis: You can hear them. (Birds sing.)

2nd Sis: Yes, I hear that. Like angels.

1st Sis: Come here. We have to go home soon. Hold my hand.

2nd Sis: Sister, your hand becomes smaller and softer.

1st Sis: That’s because I held some sticks before.

2nd Sis: Sister, I am hungry now.

1st Sis: Me too. Ley’s fly home together.

(Sisters pretend they are flying and the birds make faces and follow them)

Home

Mother: My girls, you two finally come home. I worry about you.
1st Sis: Mother, sorry for being late. But we have more sticks today.

2nd Sis: Mother, I didn’t smell the fire. So do we have dinner later?

Mother: Uh...probably. We need to wait for your father. He didn’t find anything in the woods today. Are you hungry?

1st Sis: No, we are fine.

2nd Sis: … Yes.

Mother: I have three potatoes today. We can have them first. Or do you want to listen to a story?

2nd Sis: I’d love to. Mother, give us a story. Can we have a story about bird?

Birds clap.

Mother: Bird, what kind of bird? *(Birds point at themselves.)*

1st Sis: Any kind of birds. *(Birds shake heads and point at themselves.)*

Mother: Do you know hawk? They hang over in the sky like kings and queens. *(Birds nod.)*

2nd Sis: I want a story of hawks.

Mother: Once upon a time. *(The two birds take off wings and acts as two sisters as follows.)* There were two sisters who live a poor life with their parents and had a miserable fate: the elder one was crippled and the younger one was blind. Even though their parents worked so hard hunting and farming, they can hardly have enough food for their land was too poor and they live too far away from the river to get fishes.

1st Sis: That’s us.

2nd Sis: Yes, that’s us.

*(Bird become puzzled and point at themselves.)*
Mother: It’s a story. Listen! (Bird actors return to the story to play two sisters and the two sisters become birds but they don’t wear wings.) One day, they wondered in the woods and suddenly the crippled one saw the birds fly smoothly in the air and the blind one heard their delightful voices. They picked the feather home and asked their mother what birds they are. They realized the creatures they saw are hawks which can fly freely to get food and even to the richest town where people have plenty of food and good clothes.

1st Sis: Rich people wear red skirts and shiny ribbons. (She takes out skirt and ribbons and pretend to be rich people in town.)

2nd Sis: They also have fishes and foods. (She pretends carrots as fishes. And they two dance in a circle.)

Mother: They were fascinated at these birds flying high and low to wherever they wanted. So they decide to become these birds. For seven days, they sit in the woods trying to figure out how to be birds. The first day, they tried to make wings.

1st Sis: They can pick sticks as their bones. 1st bird does as she says.

Mother: But how can she fly without feathers? She will fall down.

Both bird fails as she says.

2nd Sis: Feather is soft. (She takes out the feather she has) Like my hairs.

Mother: They collect a lot of leaves. They find the brushes, long leaves, short leaves, hard leaves and soft leaves. Then they make leaf wings. Then they learn flying. Whenever they feel hungry, they imagine how to fly like a bird in the sky. (Two Birds do as mother says and two sisters follow them.)

Mother: They tie these materials on their arms and learn how to fly step by step. They try
to fly from the stool, and then big stone, and then from the trees. Because the blind sister cannot see the directions, so the crippled sister will sing the song to lead her sister. And because the crippled sister cannot fly fast, blind sister will slow down to wait for her. They two practice hard every day, rain or sun, day or night. Finally, they can fly.

*(Two Birds do as mother says and they lead the two sisters fly.)*

1st Sis and 2nd Sis: Yeah…..fly!!!

ST: Their mother feels so touching and tears in her eyes when she hears her daughters laugh so happily and loudly. It seems that they become no more crippled and blind. The crippled one doesn’t have to worry about her walking and fly very fast. And the blind one enjoys flying when she feels that the higher she fly, the more she can see like a bird. They fly to the woods to catch rabbits and chickens. They fly to the river to catch shrimps and fishes. Whenever they fly away, they get full food home.

*(At this time, Father returns home without food sadly. Then he sees a lot of dishes on table. He feels so surprised and excited.)*

Father: Where are these foods from?

Mother: Our daughter brought them home. They learned how to fly and catch food.

Father: My brave daughters.

*(Now the Birds follow two Sisters.)*

2 Sisters: We can have wonderful meal now. Father, see, I can walk well *(The crippled says)*, and I can see well *(The blind one says).*

*Birds and Sisters fly out and Father follows them.*

ST: They cook the food and give half of them to their parents and half of them to those who are poor or disabled in their tribe. Their parents are so happy and feel so
(Two Birds lead two sisters to do as ST says)

ST: However, with the time change day by day, year by year, their body shape changed and they start to grow real feathers, wings, sharp legs and long mouth. They are real birds now. (Two sisters clap their hands happily when Two Birds wear them with bird masks, but ST now becomes sad) They don’t want to frighten their parents so they stay in the woods without going home. (Father searches for them sadly.) However, they miss their parents so much. They send food home when their parents goes out. And their parents feel sad because they cannot see their girls.

Father: Where are you? My lovely girls.

Mother: Are you lost in the woods? Come home, my girls. You promised me to go home before sunset.

Sisters and Birds sadly watch parents calling them. They sing sad songs and hang over around the sky.

ST: Because they became real birds, their parents cannot recognize them even when they send food home or fly over their home. One day they saw their mother crying in the house alone. They learn that their father has been out for four days not coming home. They sing songs to comfort their mother, then, they fly to find their father.

On the cliff, their father sits there with a empty bag crying.

ST: They fly over fields and rivers, villages and woods. Finally, they find their father sitting on the cliff crying. Other birds tell them their father was robbed by the neighbor tribe. So they fly to take his father’s hunting back and give them to their father. But they cannot say “Father” now. What they can do is singing. His father is so surprised and happy that two birds rescue his hunting. But he feels puzzled. The
two birds realized that they could no longer speak as human beings do so their father
cannot recognize them. The elder sister remembers a ribbon her father gave her and
drops it down. Their father recognizes them right away.

Father: Come home, my girls. I miss you two so much. Come home. Don’t wonder in the
woods anymore. And I will never hunt hawks hereafter and so as my tribe fellows.

ST: The two sisters fly toward home and still now they hang over the sky to look after
their parents.
Work cited


Miyamoto, Nobuto. Taiwan Ti Yuan-chu-min(Taiwan’s Aborigines). Taipei: Morning


URL: http://www.economist.com/science/displayStory.cfm?story_id=4149484

“Traces of Archaic Mitochondrial Lineages Persist in Austronesian-Speaking Formosan.”


URL:http://biology.plosjournals.org/perlserv/?request=get-document&doi=10.1371/journal.pbio.0030247


National Taitung University, The Graduate Institute of Children’s Literature. Taiwan, 2003.


Websites:

Alliance of Taiwan Aborigines, August 1993.

http://www.taiwandocuments.org/ata.htm
Pictures of Ernst Production

Hawk Sisters

Flying Fish Fishers
Baleng and Snake