Na Suklit:
Benicio Sokkong and the Bamboo Musical Instruments of the Kalinga

By

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A thesis submitted for the Victoria University of Wellington in fulfilment of the requirements for
the degree of Master of Musicology

2011

New Zealand School of Music

Wellington

New Zealand
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Abstract

This ethnomusicology study explores the contexts of the bamboo musical instruments of the Kalinga people of the Philippines in two distinct contemporary locations: the urban setting of Lucnab, Baguio City, and the rural setting of Sukiap, Kalinga. Through the study of the instruments, the music, and the individuals who participate in the music, I will examine the fluid and reflexive contextualisation of the music of the bamboo instruments, and how traditional musics undergo redefinition, reformation and a re-investing with new cultural significance. At the centre of this thesis lies an individual, Benicio Sokkong, a teacher, researcher, instrument maker and performer, who is key to the revival of the bamboo musical instruments not only in Kalinga but also internationally. The two communities focused on in this thesis have direct connections to Beni: the community of Lucnab, Baguio City, is his current home, and Sukiap village in Kalinga which is the birth place of his parents and his ancestral home. This study investigates the contexts of the bamboo instruments in these locations, and the effect of an individual reviving, recreating, and maintaining musical traditions.

I have employed a contemporary and eclectic approach in presenting the research in this dissertation, drawing on concepts of ethnic and self-identity (Rice 2007, Stokes 1994, Giddens 1991), revival (Livingston 1999), and the individual (Rice 1994, Stock 1996, Vander 1988). I argue that although the contexts of music shift from ritual and ceremony to secular gatherings, and also move geographically throughout local and national locations, the music remains an expression of community and communal identity. I also posit that the shape and form of the contexts are created by individuals who participate in the process of revival and maintenance.
Acknowledgments

I would not have conceived, carried out or completed this study without the help of many individuals from both the Philippines and New Zealand to whom I am extremely grateful. Above all, I would like to thank Benicio Sokkong for not only providing me the opportunity to experience his music but also providing guidance in the research and sharing his knowledge. Without Beni’s extraordinary passion for the music and culture of Kalinga and the Cordillera, the incredible sounds of the bamboo instruments would no longer be heard, and this thesis would have no subject.

I am extremely grateful to all the people of Sukiap, especially the family of Ermenio Donga-as (Gallming), my host, and Lorenzo Damagon (Bagtang) for his all his assistance. In Baguio, I would like thank the members of Simit, Ariel, Jayson, Rowell, Edward, Dexter and Shane, who were always ready to share their music, thoughts and good times with me.

Also, I would like to thank the members of Pasiking and the CMTRC whose musical expertise, translations, and enthusiasm for the subject contributed greatly to this thesis: Fidel Tayawa, Benedict Damagon, Delfin Sallidao, Manny Gayao and Arvin Villalon.

Thanks to Rosalinda Jacinto and family in Manila, and Humby, Jhoone, Xena, Yaira and BJ in Baguio; you always make me feel at home and part of the family when I am in the Philippines. In New Zealand, thanks to Constancia and Imelda Sokkong for your correspondence and friendship.

This thesis would not have been conceived if it were not for the inspiration and encouragement of Dr. Allan Thomas, whose enthusiasm and curiosity for all things musical was contagious, hugely inspiring, and life changing. I am also extremely grateful to Brian Diettrich for his
support and guidance, helping to make sense an overwhelming collection of experiences from
the field to create this thesis.

I would like to thank The Freemasons of New Zealand and Asia New Zealand Foundation who
contributed financially to the research in the Philippines.

Lastly, I thank Emma for everything else: editing, counselling, support, patience, and ensuring I
finished.
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