

## 2016 SOAS Symposium

### “Taiwan imagined under the global gaze:

### The interplay of ‘inside’ and ‘outside’ perspectives in the formation of the idea of Taiwan”

**Adina Zemanek**

**Assistant Professor**

**Institute of Middle and Far Eastern Studies**

**Jagiellonian University in Krakow, Poland**

#### TRAVEL, THE GAZE AND NARRATIVES ABOUT TAIWAN IN POSTCARDS AND GRAPHIC NOVELS

### Introduction

The present paper is part of a larger project on Taiwanese-ness as depicted in texts of contemporary popular culture. It takes into account material that I have not previously analyzed, in order to develop a significant topic repeatedly encountered during my work to date, but so far insufficiently discussed – that of Taiwan’s global and regional connections in constructing and articulating the national project. In its present form, this paper is a draft that summarizes empirical findings to be further refined and placed within a more comprehensive theoretical framework for future publication.

The primary method employed in my project is discourse analysis (Phillips and Hardy, 2002), which assumes that discourses construct social reality and give meaning to social interaction. The outcome of this constructive process is to be captured through systematic investigation of texts, considered as discursive units. The latter may take various forms and make meaning in several semiotic modes (visual and linguistic, in the case of this study – see Kress, 2010 and 2013). Discursive units (texts) are interconnected, and a discourse is “a coherent pattern of statements across a range of archives and sites” (Green, 1990: 3). Its intertextual nature and the presence of coherent discourse formations (Foucault, 1972) in many diverse materials justifies the choice of different kinds of texts for analysis (postcards and graphic novels).

### Collectible postcards – historical maps, Taiwanese subjectivity and individual involvement

Most of the items chosen for this study were issued between 2012 and 2014 by the 小草工作室, which has been publishing postcards since 1998. Its products are available at many bookstores and tourist sites in Taipei. In 2014, when I purchased my research materials, these postcards were more widely circulated through the Eslite network. My follow-up fieldwork in 2016 revealed that their Taipei distribution has been restricted to smaller venues - bookstores, museum shops, or coffee shops that promote Taiwanese culture, such as the Formosa Vintage Cafe. 小草 postcards depict various aspects of Taiwan’s past and popular culture from the Japanese colonial period to the 1980s – reproductions of old periodicals, advertisements, merchandise packaging, consumer goods, photographs of popular singers, baseball players, political figures etc. Pictures on the face side are accompanied by inscriptions on the back side, which provide information concerning the maps and further reflections inspired by images, often in a poetic style.

I approach these postcards as multimodal texts with both a visual and a linguistic aspect. All texts are in Chinese only, and the highly contextualized character of images make them little transparent

for foreigners; therefore, 小草 postcards seem to be designed as collectibles addressed mainly to a Taiwanese audience<sup>1</sup>. As collectible items grouped into thematic series, not only single postcards, but entire series as well can be approached as texts that together make and convey certain meanings. For the purpose of this study, I chose postcards from a series displaying old maps of Taiwan, dating from the 18<sup>th</sup> century to the 1960s. These postcards can be perceived as part of the “map fever” that emerged during the 1990s and early 2000s in the context of the general trend towards Taiwanization and restoring lost fragments in the island’s history (Chang, 2015: 69-70, 92-93).

The only exception in my research material is a postcard depicting Taiwan’s position on the globe, issued in 1996 by a publisher that is no longer active and purchased at the 台灣e店 bookstore in Taipei, the only place where I found these items to be available. It is noteworthy that both the 小草工作室 and the 台灣e店 refer to the history of the student movement since the early 1990s. The former is the outcome of a student group founded in 1994 at the Faculty of Fine Arts of the Chinese Culture University in Yangmingshan, in order to protest against quality decrease and fossilization of the academic establishment at their alma mater.<sup>2</sup> 小草 postcards bear the inscription 小草藝術學院 accompanied by a logo depicting a hand holding a lily; the Facebook profile of the 台灣e店 also uses a lily drawing.<sup>3</sup> Both institutions undertake the task of defining and promoting Taiwan’s history and culture; thus they position themselves as involved in political activism and express commitment to the national project.

These texts will be approached in terms of “Taiwanese subjectivity”, a concept related to history-writing which emerged and rose to prominence with the intensification of the trend towards “Taiwanization” during the 1980s and 1990s, as well as of the need to resist both the imaginary incorporation into a Chinese national project by the authoritarian KMT regime and actual Chinese economic expansion since the 1980s (Lynch, 2004: 516). As Lynch points out, discussions of this concept emphasized Taiwan’s peripheralization throughout history, the belated and (hitherto) partial formation of subjectivity itself, and two tasks related to both directions of a temporal axis: that of re-writing history from a Taiwanese standpoint and of autonomously determining the island’s future. In his summary of views expressed by Taiwanese intellectuals as to how subjectivity should be manifested, Lynch mentions their postulates that culture should be recasted and new cultural products be created (2004: 522). As the postcards I chose for analysis conspicuously attempt to define and induce identification with Taiwan, and the topics they bring to the foreground reflect discussions on Taiwanese “subjectivity in history”, they seem to be the very new cultural products referred to in the normative discourse of the scholars that Lynch quotes. Although they reproduce historical maps, these postcards constitute new texts as they formulate and convey new meanings by their choice of maps to be reproduced, by juxtaposing these maps with other kinds of historical materials displayed on the reverse side, and by adding explanatory texts to the illustrations. The following part of this section will focus first on the reproduced historical materials (with their visual and textual aspects), and then on the contemporary linguistic utterances which sum up the message that each postcard attempts to convey.

The face side of postcards hammers home the fact that maps do not present value-neutral scientific knowledge, but represent specific ideologies. As large-scale topographic surveying and mapping activities are supervised by the state, maps are used to shape national imagination, assert political domination and territorial sovereignty, including colonial rule (Chang, 2015: 68-69, 99).

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1 Shop assistants I interviewed mentioned that reproductions of KMT anti-Communist propaganda were popular with PRC tourists as well.

2 More information is provided on the National Culture and Arts Foundation website: [http://www.ncafroc.org.tw/abc/industries-content.asp?Ser\\_no=13](http://www.ncafroc.org.tw/abc/industries-content.asp?Ser_no=13) (accessed August 15, 2016).

3 <https://www.facebook.com/taiouan.e.tiam/> (as of August 15, 2016).

The maps reproduced on 小草 postcards from before World War II were issued by Western powers or by the Japanese. Western maps reflect a preoccupation with accuracy, standardization and quantification in space representations, characteristic of modern science. They depict Taiwan within a larger regional context, as a pawn in international power games. The earliest one is a late 18<sup>th</sup> century hydro-geographic map of the East Indies issued in Paris; it presents a sketchy map of China's southeastern coast and Taiwan and more detailed partial maps of Vietnam, Laos, Thailand and the Philippines. The presence of the coordinate system and the accuracy of representation according to topographic features testify of the usage of modern cartographic methods.

Navigational information such as the **compass rose, indications of current and wind directions**, as well as the name used to designate the region ("East Indies") reflect the history of exploration by Western powers, motivated by trade and colonial interests. Names such as "Cochinchine" for Southern Vietnam and "Tonkin" for the northern part narrow colonial claims, military power and presence in the region to France. An English-language map which dates from the Opium War period (1856) represents the region at the centre of Anglo-Chinese military disputes: Southeastern China with the already established treaty ports of Canton, Xiamen, Fuzhou, Ningbo and Shanghai, ending with Hong Kong in the south, which had already become a crown colony. Taiwan, the target of British and American expeditions searching for shipwreck survivors and geological surveys at that time, is also present in the lower right corner. The outcome of those surveys is reflected in another map, focused mainly on Taiwan with only a small part of the Chinese coast in the upper left corner, which was appended to Commodore Matthew Perry's 1856 report to the US state secretary, written after his return from the expeditions to Japan. The report included the favourable results of surveys on the coal deposits nearby Keelung, emphasized the importance of Taiwan for American trade in the Far East and advised occupation of the island (Manthorpe, 2005: 130-131). Taiwan's strategic significance for Japan's expansion in Southeast Asia, as well as for British and American trade with China, is highlighted in another English-language map reproduced on the reverse of the 1856 postcard<sup>4</sup>. My sample also includes an American map issued by the Army Information Branch in 1945, in the context of General MacArthur's occupation of Japan after the end of World War II. Its main part depicts a topographic view of Taiwan and the surrounding islets in shaded relief, and is accompanied by a smaller map that places Taiwan within a larger regional context and a text which provides a short history of the island as Japanese colony and sums up its strategic importance for Japan. The same idea is present on the reverse of this postcard, which reproduces the cover of a Japanese magazine with a Kyudo practitioner superimposed over the map of Taiwan, aiming at China with his stretched bow (a traditional Japanese longbow) and arrow.

Japanese maps included in my sample assert colonial domination over the island and place Taiwan within the framework of modernity. One of them, dating from 1895, links Taiwan to the colonial center, reflects its strategic importance for Japan and the latter's future imperial aspirations – a smaller map in the lower left corner uses the same pink colour for Taiwan and Japan and marks **navigation tracks from Japan to China's southeastern coast and to Korea via Taiwan**. A colourful map from the 1940s (probably an edition intended for the general public) displays local products specific to various locations (camphor, sugar, rattan, rice, bananas etc.), thus pointing out the benefits that the island can bring to the colonial centre; colonial rule is also emphasized by a large image of the Sōtokufu in red that singles out Taipei, and drawings of a Japanese plane and ship surveying Taiwan. **(check – military?)** Modernization as part of the Japanese colonial project is also conspicuously present. The 1895 map reflects the extensive survey activities aimed at a thorough assessment of the island's situation conducted right after Japan took over Taiwan (the map was issued in October, soon after ratification of the Treaty of Shimonoseki in April). Unlike most of the

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4 No information is given as to this map's source and date of publication; judging by its theme and graphic features, it is probably the reproduction of a newspaper political cartoon from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Western maps, which only give Taiwan's contours and the names of a few localities on the island, this map is quite exhaustive, which proves the thoroughness and success of this undertaking. Another map that presents a detailed assessment of Taiwan at the end of Qing rule (a fact expressed in the map's title), issued even earlier (May 10, 1895) is equally accurate, with its surface divided into equal squares and a compass rose on the left side. Chang (2005: 100) quotes Japanese historian Takekoshi, who in 1907 delighted in "the vastness of the undertaking, and the scientific way in which it was being carried through". Such pursuit of knowledge obtained through rigorous measuring according to standardized procedures is both modern and Western, and both Takekoshi and the map analyzed here express their adherence to such modernity. Another postcard, showing a map of Taiwan drawn by a Taiwanese primary school student in the 1930s-1940s with corrections in red by the teacher, not only expresses colonial domination (the Japanese teacher acts as an authority on Taiwanese geography), but also embodies an educational project aimed at popularizing such modern geographical knowledge in Japanese elementary schools (Chang, *ibid.*).

Modernization under Japanese rule is also shown by other means, such as advertisements of the 1935 exposition on the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Japanese colonial rule displayed on the reverse side of some postcards, which showcase the development of railways and modern industry, as well as on the cover of a magazine issued in 1938, reproduced on the face side of another item. Postcards featuring maps published after the end of World War II point out that the KMT government took over the modernization project initiated by the Japanese – my sample includes a map from 1948 intended as a guide to various travel destinations linked by the Japanese-built network of roads and railways; on the reverse side of that postcard there is a badge commemorating a hundred years of railways in Taiwan (1887-1987; the latter year also marks the end of the martial law).

The historical maps reproduced on postcards "translate" Taiwan in various ways. All Western maps refer to Taiwan as "Formosa", a name associated with the history of Western economic and territorial (colonial) expansion. Commodore Perry's mid-19<sup>th</sup> century map uses transliterated Aboriginal names for many locations, but also English names (Black Reek Bay, Mt. Morrison etc.). The 1945 American map displays an instance of double translation: all names of locations in Taiwan are given in Latin transliterations of Japanese. The map measures Taiwan's length according to a unit of measure originating in England (the statute mile), and the original text attached to the map compares Taiwan's size and population to those of American states.

While the historical visual materials depict Taiwan as seen through foreign eyes and speak of it with foreign voices, the comments attached to them convey a markedly Taiwan-centered, contemporary viewpoint. They also express awareness of two kinds of gazes directed towards Taiwan – one from outside, the other from the inside, and the need to construct an appropriate self-image. Statements such as 讓所有人重新驚豔並正視，原來全世界竟把一顆璀璨閃耀的美麗珍珠長期錯失 和 驕傲的祖先正視著，正視著我們的腳步 imply local positioning in history through the reference to ancestors, as well as a sense of responsibility to make Taiwan visible and assert its value (as a "beautiful, dazzling pearl") in a larger, global context ("for all to see", "the whole world"). The reiterated word 正視 ("face squarely", "look squarely at") stresses the need for a gaze that would perceive Taiwan without mediation (the "translation" discussed earlier), and thus for Taiwan to assume the role of subject in history. These texts also highlight a lack of familiar names for the island, which would confirm its status of home (為何在地圖上都無法尋到一方熟識島嶼的名字). Through the metaphor of a ship captain, they call for claiming agency and rewriting history from a Taiwanese standpoint: 老船長說丟掉羅盤，把地圖翻到空白的背面。

However, all these categorical statements regarding Taiwan's subjectivity in history seem to be purely normative. The presence of these texts on the postcards' reverse side constitutes the very

activity these texts call for – namely, the turning over of maps in order to write new narratives on the blank side. But there are no actual new stories or maps to be found, and no specific indications regarding the contents of such new texts. One may even wonder what the “familiar name” for the island might be – this issue is left open in the contemporary comments. Nevertheless, the message that these postcards convey is more complex than the apparent contradiction between the two sides of the postcards (maps that assert domination and texts that advocate, but do not exercise agency).

It is significant that the contemporary texts do not exploit the idea of Taiwan’s victimhood, do not require compensation for historical injustices and past disempowerment, and do not advocate retaliatory violence as a means for national salvation (a strategy discussed by Tsu for mainland China, 2005: 1-31). They acknowledge “mistakes” in the past, but are not too negative about them; instead of a more critical assessment of past subjugation, they seem to prefer to let sleeping dogs lie. They advocate establishing a more appropriate and comprehensive version of collective memory (while also self-reflexively embracing a constructivist approach of history-writing as endless discursive process reflecting power relations), but as a pleasurable activity, and assume that the past has ended and is done with (it is “out of print”): 「你喜歡收集各個時期的絕版地圖」; 「享受著比較新與舊不停衝突的顛覆旅途, 樂於訂正過往繪製或標註的小小錯誤」. They require cultural recognition (the restoration of a beauty hitherto lost to the world), but do not place Taiwan within hierarchies of power that need to be reversed. What they demand is simply space for Taiwan within the global world, seen on a horizontal, not a vertical axis – establishing Taiwan’s position (絕對要找回這塊母島應有的座標位置) and satellite coordinates (衛星定位).

No mention is made of reinstating an essentialized century-old local tradition in ontological terms, either. The contemporary inscription on the 1856 postcard depicting Taiwan in the context of China speaks of “coexistence and interdependence” between the large mainland and tiny Taiwan, and of unification versus independence: 有座小小島與片大大陸共處相依, 卻始終似即若離. As in order to differentiate itself from the so-defined “other” Taiwan cannot lay claims to a Chinese ethnic or cultural national essence, Taiwanese subjectivity in history is asserted through other means. One of them is the paradoxical solution of embracing lack of subjectivity: instead of being rejected, the periods of foreign rule are appropriated as Taiwanese history and reappraised in a positive light. It is worth remarking that the analyzed postcard series does not include any Qing-era maps, in spite of the availability of such archival materials. In other words, Taiwanese subjectivity is expressed through placing the island within the appropriate context of domination (the Western and Japanese modernization projects, as indicated above) while excluding the other (China). This is the very idea conveyed by the only postcard in my sample that is not part of the 小草 series and is not supplemented with textual comments, a two-dimensional representation of the globe. Western domination is acknowledged through graphic style and linguistic choice: the postcard resembles Spanish and Dutch 16<sup>th</sup> century maps (for comparison see Keating, 2011: 22-29), place names are given in English or French transcriptions, ocean names are in Latin, and “Formosa” is used to designate Taiwan (an appropriated name with locally added pro-independence connotations). The map maintains actual proportions, but is re-centered: Taiwan is still represented as a small island, but it is placed at the very center as *sui generis* “Middle Kingdom”.

Most of the maps discussed above depict Taiwan as inadvertent (and passive) part of large-scale regional strategies devised by state-level, stronger political centers external to the island. On the other hand, however, except for asserting and maintaining state-level political domination, “maps can frame and construct a person’s worldview, and also contribute to creating a sense of place and identity. [...] maps are central to our perception of the environment and are powerful in influencing our sense of identity and belonging” (Chang, 2015: 69). Considered as a series and at an individual level (that of the viewer), these maps also serve to construct and induce a sense of territoriality

through the reiteration of the island's geographical shape. Although the larger geographical context changes according to the various configurations of regional political power and strategic interests, it is always Taiwan's map that is central to these representations. Taiwan may be seen through non-Taiwanese eyes, but the whole series embodies a local perspective and constructs a local identity and sense of belonging. Though not necessarily defined by actual political self-determination, what makes the Taiwanese experience Taiwanese is its geographic location. National projects centered elsewhere are thus used for the purpose of interpellating a Taiwan-based national identity.

A definite geographical territory that serves as basis for national imagination is central not only to theoretical definitions of nationhood, but also to Taiwanese writings on local identity from the Japanese colonial era to present times – whether in debates on Taiwanese culture and 鄉土 literature during the 1930s and after World War II (Hsiau, 2000: 39, 62) or in recent (often ideologically-marked) history writing (Lynch, 2004: 514; Hwang, 2014: 66). The idea of 鄉土 is still frequently and saliently present in contemporary texts, including those of popular culture. The textual comments placed on the postcards' reverse side unambiguously express this locally-centered identity and emotional attachment to local soil. Instead of nostalgia for a home located in mainland China through the construction of collective memory linked to that territory before the late 1980s, accompanied by “a sense of placelessness and an attitude of spatial indifference” related to Taiwan (Chang, 2015: 175, 192), these linguistic utterances conspicuously promote Taiwan as home space. The island is repeatedly referred to as 母島, a word that connotes giving birth (the beginning of one's personal history) and nurturing; these connotations are made explicit in the fragment 我們搖籃的美麗島是母親溫和的擁抱. An intimate, affective relationship with “the mother island” is established by the use of the verb “to kiss” in 雙足踏吻著土; the idea of an organic relationship between people's lives and the island's geography is present in the fragment 幅幅都是生命獨一無二的母島與圖.

Apart from establishing a macro-level historical narrative that includes foreign domination but excludes China, and a focus on local soil, there is a third, micro-level expression of Taiwanese subjectivity. The contemporary comments not only assume a personal relationship with Taiwan as motherland, but also individual involvement in asserting Taiwan's subjectivity in history, perceived as a process to be completed through bodily practice. Statements that directly address the viewer as “you” and identify him/her with Taiwan, 只有以無懼靈魂當座標

Texts:

- personal experience and involvement; 台灣主體性
- obsession with establishing one's own coordinates in a global context (satellite positioning), walking one's own road, taking one's own footsteps, using one's own standards and measures. Not a new project (which would imply past subordination, subject to hegemony) but recovering, reasserting (找回) Taiwan's right and proper position
- significant: position not in a hierarchy but in geographical terms (words 座標位置; 座標 geometry, cartography) – presence and shape in space rather than superiority
- but also – collecting vestiges of the past (old maps) and comparing with own experience; enjoying the discovery of differences and contradictions
- sending postcards from unknown locations as way of establishing satellite coordinates – postcards locally produced, local tokens (keepsake, token – 信物 also used) authenticity and lack of „translation”/mediation; local elements sent to other locations (within the world)

Significant – also what is left out of this series – maps from the Qing period. Maps not characterized by modern, scientific accuracy.

The ideas of Taiwan as part of the world accompanied by a salient consciousness of geographical locality, personal involvement, self-reflexivity and rewriting history, are also to be found in comic books, discussed in the following part of this paper.

## **Comic travelogues**

### **Filmmaker's notes**

Wu Ruiren – peripheral nationalism

#### The Netherlands

From stereotypes to intercultural dialogue, on a very individual, personal basis. Human beings behind cultural differences. Getting close to and far from each other. 祝福地球另外一端的朋友們

Long history behind castle-like building, so the Taiwanese felt lower in cultural hierarchy (which may be understandable if Xiao Zhuang thinks himself as Taiwanese, and does not identify with China's 5000 years of uninterrupted civilization). On the other hand – Chinese identity taken over at the end: 中西合作, 中國餐廳 so after all TW=CN? Also – final banquet compared to a UN meeting. But – in the 1990s China in the UN and not TW. Is Xiao Zhuang placing himself on Chinese side in the name of the 中華民國?

#### Spain

一群土包子

Scenes of watching and filming/photographing: sexy women from behind, lovers in bushes, lovers kissing on the subway; staring with eyes wide open

Taiwanese as economically empowered: giving money to beggars, consumers - lists of presents handed by friends, restaurants, shopping (Spain a cheap country). This in spite of calling themselves 亞太窮人料; but the term 亞太 includes not only rather poor Southeast Asian countries, but also Japan, Korea, and Australia (and even the US). Regional consciousness

Lessons for travelling light – also implies material means and consumer possibilities in one's own country: you have to have waist bags, backpacks and suitcases in various sizes, hard and soft, available on the market; you also have to have experience as a tourist (know what to prepare, how to organize one's luggage when travelling by plane etc.). Kinds of travels – plane travelling, mountain hiking etc.

Comparing: history, customs, street width, 生活節奏; assessing and making judgments. Comparing memories and knowledge with reality (Dali museum - end)

Trip to Spain – not individual, but collective: with colleagues from work. However – not organized travel (unlike China). Not interacting with locals, but group sightseeing, eating etc. Contact with local Taiwanese community – students who give information as to how to find good restaurants. Restaurant hunting – a Taiwanese activity; also Taiwanese – hunting for seafood. Also opportunities for being alone – shopping on one's own, sitting in cafes and enjoying the view, walking alone,

comparing mental images and actual places. These mental images, originating in knowledge about Western culture (Salvador Dali, Gaudi) acquired at home – one’s own, not collective.

The narrator talks of his own experiences, interests; he acts as guide for the reader (his persona present and pointing at the scenes he’s talking about). Inside the diegesis and stepping out of it (Woody Allen; very nice illustration Dali museum – watching museum, having reader watch museum by borrowing narrator’s point of view, directly watching the viewer watching the narrator and the museum); **breaking the fourth wall** (“Not a soul in sight!”: Beckett’s Fourth Wall Nathaniel Davis *Journal of Modern Literature* Vol. 38, No. 2 (Winter 2015), pp. 86-102 Jstor So the Taiwanese narrator – also well-versed in theatrical techniques, conscious of the nature of the medium. Emphasizing the fact that reality is framed and reproduced in comics; explaining what he will leave out and what he will show the readers (now I’ll show you what I like best – his own, individual preferences), sometimes using barely modified pictures and sometimes his own drawings, shy about not being able to reproduce Dali’s works appropriately.

Also showing his persona and travelling buddies watching Gaudi’s works together (view from the back, emphasizing their reactions)

Self-reflexive character of Taiwanese national project, borrowing from existing theory. Conscious of watching others and of the possibility of manipulating the readers’ watching experience. Recording as well – travel experiences, pieces of history, memories. Prevalence of extradiegetic text over in-story dialogues – memories retold from a present-time point of view. Interactive character of exhibits in the Dali museum – relativity of reality, possibility of manipulating reality and transgressing the rules of the real (causing unnatural phenomena, such as making rain fall inside a car by inserting a coin – the unreal on demand; you can break the rules by which reality functions by means of paying enough)

Acquainted with European culture – trains seen in movies; acquainted with Dali’s works in secondary school (very young years; formative period for young people; China – Marxist worldview at the same age and same educational level); internationalized character of Taiwanese education; 跟同學迷戀的大師畫作 (shared knowledge, not individual exception). Gaudi’s work – seen in travel magazines (internationalized Taiwanese media, encouraging a global worldview)

Frequent traveler – Paris a year or so earlier; different perspectives upon the city. The flaneur, familiar with the place: sitting on benches in parks, in cafes at the Quartier Latin, subway stations, looking for Moebius comic books in second-hand bookstores

Last picture from Spain nostalgia (black and white, retro look), globalization (traditional balconies with shop signs for contact lenses and McDonald’s, scenes from ordinary everyday life now used by Xiao Zhuang to define Taiwan as well

### Cinema Paradiso

Although elsewhere Xiao Zhuang denies elite status (放牛班 – flyer at the end of the book), here he uses an Italian movie to mark his belonging to the 五年級 generation and the 文青 group. Also – connection to the past, personal memories and (collective) family values. The Proustian madeleine that connects him to his past, pretext for a more complete than usual picture of the globalized everyday Taiwan during the 1980s



Mass entertainment – 與全球同步; the movie was released in 1988 and he's speaking of his military conscription. So – global art cinema widely available to people in Taiwan at the time of release.

Gazing – two images of gazing at the past and his own past persona with both present and former eyes – emphasis on identity (Ricoeur – being the same in spite of changes), personal experience and personal past.

Cinema as palimpsest, connectedness with Hongkong as well – 樂舞台戲院 formerly showing Hong Kong martial arts movies, afterwards 二輪 cinema productions.

Elite and non-elite: 樂舞台戲院 the kind of cinema you can enter wearing slippers (taike). Humidity inside the cinema – local climate; description appealing to the senses: visual image (both that of the drawings and evocation of out-of-focus projectors), humidity (touch and feel), bad smell of old aircon, sound (bad 戲院的喇叭). Emphasis on formative role of such cinemas on personal history, which is also that of a whole generation and Taiwan itself – small, local place, deep anchoring within this place, which is also a place for maintaining family bonds (father – anchoring in the local) and a window to the world.

## **Graphic exchanges between Taiwan and other regions**

### The last day at the National Palace Museum

The present moment and memories. The past – transformed under the influence of the present (“something old from my history became new because of you”). A common present (Sean and Rae at the museum), two pasts: Rae's personal past as ceramicist, China and Taiwan's common past (displayed at the museum).

Gazing – beginning Sean asks Rae what she wants to see; Sean acts as guide to his own Chinese past. However, the matter of choice – name of the pillow shape 如意 Chinese name and Chinese past, but seen and interpreted in new ways. Sean as guide – does not speak about China and Chinese history at all; instead – makes fun of it, estranging it. The Chinese past seems to be more important for Rae than for Sean. In fact, she is her own guide and records her own „Chinese” memories: she takes notes, produces memories – periods when exhibits produced, production techniques etc.; knowledge about Chinese past – seen through her own eyes (images of exhibits with explanations, seen from the perspective of museum visitor. Sean – as if refusing this past, does not refer to it at all, prefers to see exhibits without the historical heritage, with a totally fresh glance: butt vase – as if seen for the first time, without any heritage in mind; makes fun of the Chinese past. Individual look and individual associations. Xiao Zhuang uses contemporary technology (mobile phone) – shows his being modern (Taiwanese economic miracle, technological advancement) and being a global citizen – shows photograph of a very similar pig seen in Paris. For him – no personal involvement, but Chinese past object of visual consumption and the tourist gaze; association – personal and Taiwanese (wild pig – Taiwanese wild pig; although Han 明器 domestic animals). Not only Taiwan has Chinese connections but France as well (other pig photographed in Paris).

Motifs particular to Rae:

- intertwining, binding, ties between persons, mutual influences; organic ties grooves she carves over the ceramic object she produces look like blood vessels, tying people (Rae and

Sean, but other visitors that happen to be there at the same time as well), past and present (Chinese past, museum visit, personal past), countries (associations with fossils at Auckland museum) which although geographically far away from each other – close together through cultural commonalities (resemblances between objects) and personal contacts between people

- memories and imagination tied to a process of creation – creating a ceramic object that links together all these elements, using memories, present and imagination
- the idea of personal choice – not only here but also in her gift to 61Chi

### Separation/anxiety

The personal and the national; being an individual and being an island; creativity and life as a process; embeddedness within a larger context, which determines and limits the possibilities of evolution (history of the Kiwi in text; limitations – surround the islands ); also embeddedness within one's own geographic location (New Zealand real map – kiwi specific ecosystem). Weight of history, canons (artistic), distrust towards politicians.

Awareness of being an island, but not isolated – projects such as these creating bonds; throughout this book – many instances of bonds, cultural exchanges. Small entities, marginal (New Zealand, Taiwan) but idea of community as well.

### Chi for Rae – The hair

The idea of gazing at others, many kinds of gazes (human, bird's); diversity of perspectives but also common points (brown hair band that proves identity, changelessness through time – small head and big head within it; brown iris in the bird's eye). Only the bird has eyes, Rae with eyes only at the very end, and bird on the shoulder too. Brown circle – pointing that these are Rae's eyes; bird – human freedom, mobility, difference in perspective upon the world.

The idea of interpersonal exchange – insertion of 61Chi herself; participation in creating the world, subjective framing – emphasis on visuality (binoculars through which Rae is seen, forming a circle around her), glasses that also draw attention to the eyes and gaze, the idea of distance (binoculars – used for glancing at something far away) but bonds as well (smile shared both by Rae and Chi)

Other people becoming part of one's own story – insertion of 61Chi herself into Rae's story; Rae's "Natural Desire" for Ahn two characters whose traits are interchanged: a woman and a man, just like Rae and Ahn, but the man with blonde hair and the woman with dark hair. Shared life stories – fatherhood Sean and Ant; Ant – ethnic Chinese drawing in markedly American style; uses Sean's face to tell a Chinese-style martial arts story about the eternal struggle of being a father and transmitting one's life experience and heritage to one's son.

Bonds – coiled rope in Rae's story; being islands in the sea; countries sharing same fate - threats faced by such entities (global accumulation of trash: plastic cast adrift in the seas, present in Taipei, washed up on shore as far as Canada); reaching out to each other across the sea Robert Sullivan's ancestors made it across the sea from Taiwan to New Zealand, woman's hand reaching out and opening door on man's back

Mobility, globalization (media bringing news of what happens in Taipei – plane crash into Keelung River).

## Anh's black and white photographs

Small details of contemporary Taipei: very national, instantly recognizable (Tim Edensor) but also a reflection on the history of the medium through the form. Not realistic but stylized as old photographs. Emphasis on gazing, framing the world (photography), French roots of the technique (French inscriptions below). Daguerreotype – first publicly announced, initially most commonly used way of photographing. Depending on the angle of viewing – either positive or negative images; same here, in Anh's photos. So – stating both his Taiwanese-ness and perceiving himself as an artist from a global perspective, placing himself in world art history

## Sean for Rae – The Picture

Bonds not only transnational, across space and cultures – also personal; family bonds. Family history – determines what someone is. Linked to space (the Taizhong family home, Jiayi old home, balconies), displayed through personal choices (shaving head to solidarize with elder brother, emphasizing equality by means of clothes), family continuity and inheritance (affinity for drawing – innate, or taught by parents)

Awareness of differences but not of civilizational hierarchy (Xiaocao, Filmmaker's notes Sean Chuang on wine)

Common projects – openness to others' gaze, willingness to gaze at the other

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