BOOKS FROM TAIWAN

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文化部 MINISTRY OF CULTURE REPUBLIC OF CHINA (TAIWAN)

TAIWAN CONTENT PLAN 臺流文化黑潮計畫

CONTENTS

ABOUT MINISTRY OF CULTURE

The Ministry of Culture of Taiwan (Republic of China) was established on May 20, 2012.

As a member of the Executive Yuan, the Ministry oversees and cultivates Taiwan's soft power in the areas of arts and humanities, community development, crafts industry, cultural exchanges, international cultural participation, heritage, literature and publishing, living aesthetics, TV, cinema, and pop music.

The logo of the Ministry is an indigo-dyed morning glory. The indigenous flower symbolizes a trumpet heralding the coming of a new renaissance, in which cultural resources and aesthetics permeate all corners of the nation. The morning glory also represents the grassroots tenacity of Taiwan's diverse culture, a yearning for the positivity, simplicity, and warmth of earlier days, and a return to collective roots and values.

ABOUT BOOKS FROM TAIWAN

Books from Taiwan is an initiative funded by Ministry of Culture to introduce a select list of Taiwan publishing titles, ranging from fiction, non-fiction, children's books, and comic books, to foreign publishers and readers alike.

You can find information about authors and books, along with who to contact in order to license translation rights, and the related resources about the Grant for the Publication of Taiwanese Works in Translation (GPT), sponsored by the Ministry of Culture of Taiwan.

EDITOR'S PREFACE

Dear Readers,

Welcome to Books from Taiwan 2.0!

Under the auspices of Ministry of Culture's Taiwan Content Plan, Books from Taiwan has expanded dramatically, extending the depth of our catalog and the range of our publishing activities. To accommodate all the new titles, we will publish two expanded issues annually, each composed of two independent volumes, all in service of our mission to promote the best books from Taiwan to overseas publishers.

Taking the subject of expansion as our theme, I'd like to walk our readers through Issue 18 of Books from Taiwan, and point out broad wide range of genres our increased page count now allows. In the realm of fiction we have our bases covered, with fantasy, horror, crime, thriller, historical, literary, and women's fiction all represented. Our non-fiction offerings, if anything, are even more diverse, including everything from travel, memoir, food, and reportage, to science, politics, self-help, and design.

One highlight from our fiction catalog is *No. 1, Siwei Street*, the latest novel from Yang Shuang-Zi, whose *Taiwan Travelogue* was recently shortlisted for the 2024 National Book Award for Translated Literature. This heartwarming novel tracks the subtle give and take of friendships formed over shared meals in a historical boarding house for female graduate students (see vol. 1).

Another genre fiction highlight is *Sunset Over Dadaocheng*, a gritty crime thriller with an alternative history setting. Within the pages of Tommy Tan's novel, the historical Taipei neighborhood of Dadaocheng is recast as the epicenter of clashing political factions in an alternate Taiwan under communist rule. A down-on-his-luck detective must navigate this treacherous landscape of competing interests to crack a murder case, and save himself, and everything he holds dear (vol. 2).

Our fiction catalog also contains the recent reissue of *The Silent Thrush* by Chuang Shu-Chen. Originally released in 1990, this novel contains Taiwan's first

literary depiction of a lesbian relationship, helping pave the way for LGBTQ literature that followed in subsequent decades (vol. 2).

Moving on to the non-fiction side of the catalog, *Oo-Pèh-Tshiat: Taiwanese Pork Delicacy for the Common Folk*, by Ema Fu, offers an in-depth study of local food culture. This unique culinary guidebook is a fond tribute to a deceptively humble dish that can be found at markets and street stalls across Taiwan. Fu guides readers through all of the local variations of *oo-pèh-tshiat* and every aspect of its preparation in exquisite detail, with special praise reserved for the chefs who have kept this culinary tradition alive (vol. 1).

If your heart happens to be grumbling more than your stomach, have a look at *Fear of Intimacy: Why Is It So Difficult to Love and Be Loved*, by bestselling self-help author and counselor Chou Mu-Tzu (vol. 1).

For a non-fiction read that is sure to please everyone, look no further than *Searching for Animal Utopia*, because who doesn't love animals? Author and policy researcher Lung Yuan-Chih has traveled the world to observe conservancy in action, and interview the ecologists who dedicate their lives to protecting animal rights (vol. 2).

The diverse range of topics covered by our non-fiction books extends even further to include interviews with former sex workers in *Teahouse Ladies: Stories from Taipei's Red Light District* (vol. 1), a historical account of a South Seas botanical expedition in *Archived Shadows: Hosokawa Takahide's Seven Adventures in South Seas Mandate and the Story of Botanists in the age of Taihoku Imperial University* (vol. 2), and the memoir of a medical anthropologist and her mother who received simultaneous diagnoses of severe illnesses (see *Healing Redefined: An Anthropologist's Reflections on a Mother-Daughter Journey Through Illness*, vol. 1).

Now that we are working in the expanded format of Books from Taiwan 2.0, it is no longer an idle claim to say we "have something for everyone". So, without further ado, I invite you to slowly browse our book selections, and find that something which is just right for you and your readers.

Joshua Dyer

Editor-in-Chief
Books from Taiwan 2.0

GRANT FOR THE PUBLICATION OF TAIWANESE WORKS IN TRANSLATION (GPT)

MINISTRY OF CULTURE, REPUBLIC OF CHINA (TAIWAN)

GPT is set up by The Ministry of Culture to encourage the publication of Taiwanese works in translation overseas, to raise the international visibility of Taiwanese cultural content, and to help Taiwan's publishing industry expand into non-Chinese international markets.

- Applicant Eligibility: Foreign publishing house (legal entity) legally registered or incorporated in accordance with the laws and regulations of their respective countries.
- Conditions:
  1. The so-called Taiwanese works must meet the following requirements:
     A. Use traditional characters;
     B. Written by a natural person holding an R.O.C. identity card;
     C. Has been assigned an ISBN in Taiwan.
     i.e., the author is a native of Taiwan, and the first 6 digits of the book's ISBN are 978-957-XXX-XXX-X, 978-986-XXX-XXX-X, or 978-626-XXX-XXX-X.
  2. Applications must include documents certifying that the copyright holder of the Taiwanese works consents to its translation and foreign publication (no restriction on its format).
  3. A translation sample of the Taiwanese work is required (no restriction on its format and length).
  4. If applications use the fully translated English version of the book selected into "Books from Taiwan" to be published directly or translated into other languages, or uses its excerpt translated English version to translate the entire text into English or other languages for publication, please state it in applications, and apply for authorization from the Ministry of Culture. It is still necessary to provide documents certifying that the

copyright holder of the Taiwanese work consents to its translation and foreign publication.

5. The translated work must be published within two years, after the first day of the relevant application period.

- Grant Items:
  1. The maximum grant available for each project is NT$600,000, which covers:
     A. Licensing fees (going to the copyright holder of the Taiwanese works);
     B. Translation fees;
     C. Marketing and promotion fees (applicants for this funding must propose a specific marketing promotion plan and complete the implementation before submitting the grant project results; those whose plans include talks or book launching events attended by authors in person will be given priority for grants);
     D. Book production-oriented fees;
     E. Tax (20% of the total award amount);
     F. Remittance-related handling fees.
  2. Priority consideration is given to books that have received the Golden Tripod Award, the Golden Comic Award, the Taiwan Literature Award, books on Taiwan's culture and history, or series of books.
  3. Grant recipients who use the fully or excerpt translated English version of the book selected into "Books from Taiwan" will be authorized to use it for free. For those who use the fully translated English version for publication, the grant does not cover translation fees; for those who use the excerpt translated English version, the translation fee is limited to the length of the book that has not yet been translated, and its grant amount will be adjusted based on the length of the entire text.
- Application Period: Twice every year, from April 1 to April 30, and from October 1 to October 31. The MOC reserves the right to change the application periods, and will announce said changes separately.
- Announcement of successful applications: Winners will be announced within three months of the end of the application period.
- Application Method: Please visit the Ministry's official website (https://grants.moc.gov.tw/Web_ENG/), and use the online application system.

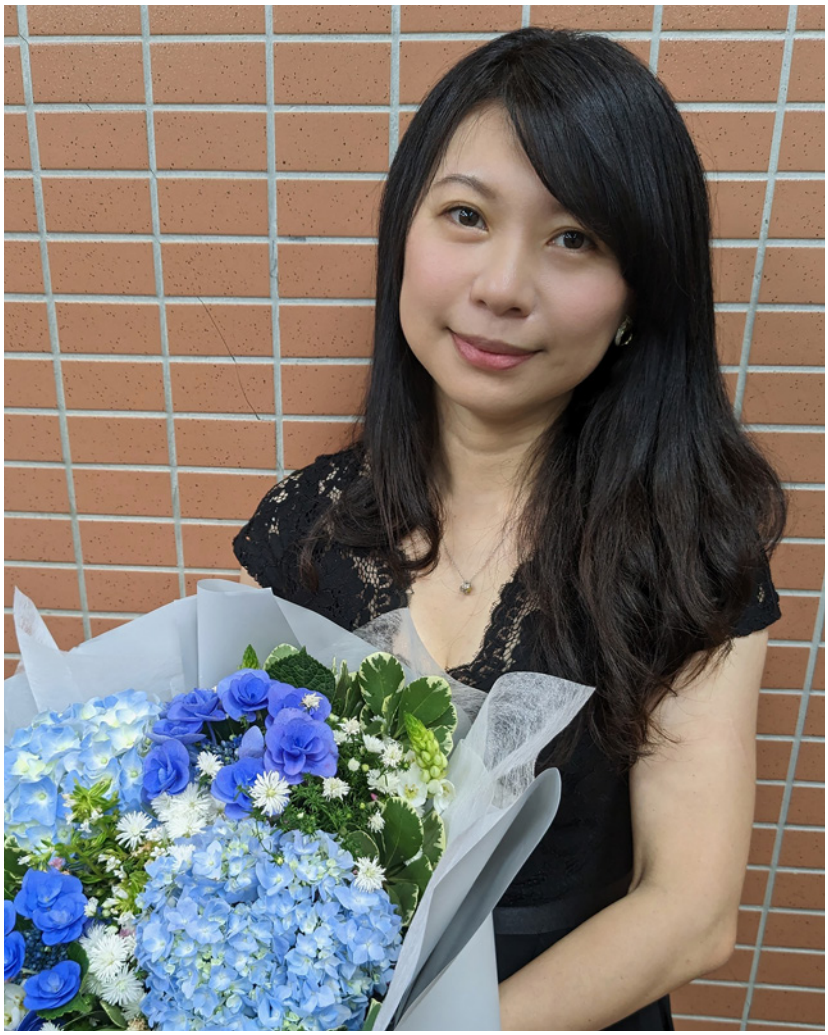
For full details, please visit: https://grants.moc.gov.tw/Web_ENG/
Or contact: books@moc.gov.tw

BOOKS FROM TAIWAN

FICTION

中年少女的祈禱

A MIDDLE-AGED MAIDEN'S PRAYER



Chou Li-Chun
海德薇

- **Category:** Woman's Fiction
- **Publisher:** Taiwan Interminds
- **Date:** 10/2023
- **Rights contact:** bft.fiction.nonfiction@moc.gov.tw
- **Pages:** 286
- **Length:** 99,884 characters (approx. 64,900 words in English)

Chou Li-Chun is an accomplished author, scriptwriter, and hornist (French horn). Her literary works span multiple genres, including adult fiction, children's literature, manga, illustrated children's books, and film scripts. *A Middle-Aged Maiden's Prayer* is her most recently published novel.

Having lost everything in an agonizing divorce, Chin-Fen takes work as a public sanitation worker in hopes of winning back custody of her son. However, while backbreaking work is enough to clear the city's garbage away each day, she finds sweeping away emotional debris a much trickier proposition.

After eight years of marriage and life as a fulltime housewife, Chiang Chin-Fen moves into her late mother's old room in the family home. Once settled, her hopes turn to securing a stable job and then custody again over her son. She eventually applies for a sanitation job with the county government. Yes it will mean working in filth and less-than-comfortable conditions…but the pay is better than most service jobs, and she'll have at least some of the protections and benefits of civil service employment. She takes the admissions test and, soon after, secures the job offer.

Work on a garbage truck making its hectic and noisy neighborhood rounds was so much harder and more exhausting than she'd imagined. Chin-Fen and her teammates made easy and regular targets for neighborhood nigglers who, after dumping their trash to the tinny strains of Badarzewska's "Maiden's Prayer" blaring as always from the loudspeakers, would invariably complain..."It's too loud (or not loud enough)." "You're blocking the road." "You guys stink." "Can't you be more disrespectful?"…The team was also always at risk of injury because of people not sorting their trash properly. But for Chin-Fen, this was all part of the "price" of a return to normalcy. With a stable job, she knew she had a chance at another custody hearing. It was at this point that she got the call that changed her life.

The author takes a light and lively approach to this narrative that follows the emotional rollercoaster of everyday life. Readers see the sacrifices and hardships imposed upon those doing jobs essential to making modern society tick and, through the protagonist's lived experience, see that sanitation workers seek respect not in vacuous praise but rather in small, simple and genuine signs of appreciation.

A MIDDLE-AGED MAIDEN'S PRAYER

By Chou Li-Chun
Translated by Jacqueline Leung

> "This fictional story reads like a first-person screenplay penned in lithe and cheery tones. Once you begin, the narrative seems intent on keeping you in its grip, with nary a lull in the excitement and drama. The protagonist, an adept woman driven to turn her life around after a divorce by securing a stable job and income, takes a position with a problem-riddled cleaning squad. Although dogged by external pressures, the team's attitude is fatalistic. "We'd love to find someone to blame, but who?"
>
> The social issues raised in this story are a front to what is really a classic fairy tale that spotlights, not unlike the derision faced by the cleaning squad, the everyday challenges that women face living in a "man's world". Fairy tales like this persist because of the difficulties and unfairness of real life. They give hope to those bent on changing reality and offer an escape, however ephemeral, into romantic fantasy."
>
> — **Lu Yu-Chia (Reviewer) / Translated by Jeff Miller**

1. The Funeral That Shouldn't Have Happened

This funeral shouldn't have happened. Good people don't deserve short lives, tragedies shouldn't occur, and people loyal to their posts should never leave it.

The funeral came all of a sudden, but everything is still meticulously arranged. Pale, elegant white orchids. Sutra recitations. Swirling incense. A decorous funeral portrait, framed by silk curtains. An air of somber dignity fills the memorial hall.

I go up to fix the spacing between the memorial couplets and flower baskets, smooth out the wrinkles of the drapery, and adjust the plates of fruit offerings. Once everything looks perfectly in place, I return to my seat in the front row to mourn. I hate goodbyes, so why do I have to keep sending people off my whole life?

"Hey." A person breaches the perimeter of my sorrow. I shift, pat the chair next to me, and invite the approaching girl to sit.

Like me, she's dressed entirely in black. Her waist-long hair accentuates her slender flame and porcelain cheeks. I'd already noticed her once at work, not because she's pretty, but because of her dramatic persona.

"The news…I'm furious every time I watch it," she sobs. "It just doesn't make any sense. How did that garbage truck explode?"

We sit side by side, the girl crying softly, with tears and snot running down her face. I put my arm around her shoulder and press a packet of tissues into her palm.

The news plays over and over in my head.

"A garbage truck burst into flames! According to a report the fire department received last night, a garbage truck suffered a sudden gas explosion while compressing trash. Trash and food waste were projected everywhere; even the hopper blew apart.

Two male members of the sanitation team had suffered ruptured eardrums and multiple lacerations from broken glass. They were both rushed to the hospital in critical condition…"

"Initial investigations from the fire department suggest a physical reaction may have been behind the explosion. A toy gun primer is suspected of being in the residential waste dumped into the hopper. Compaction friction created sparks that ignited the methane in the truck…"

"The investigation results of last week's garbage truck explosion are out. The accident was caused by a gas cylinder in the residential waste. A spokesperson from the Department of Environmental Protection said that organic solvents, chemical liquids, and lithium batteries must never be discarded as regular trash…"

Every day, I scour through all of the media coverage about the incident like a maniac. I find and read everything, but grasping more details only adds fuel to my rage.

"This is too sad. We must find the culprit who killed him," the girl says.

"If only I hadn't taken leave…No, if only I hadn't passed the assessment…" I say.

"No, it's not your fault," she says. But whose fault is it if not mine?

We want so badly to find someone to blame, but who? The person who threw away the gas cylinder? The agency that mismanages waste collection? The financial pressures and misfortunes that pushed us into sanitation work? Could it be that we weren't careful enough?

To learn about life through death is too great a price to pay.

I always feel like I'm responsible, like there must be something I can do. Things can't just end this way. Looking at the portrait, my mind goes back to a year ago…

2. 12.9 Seconds

It is an early morning in the spring of March. The air is crisp, the birds are singing, the flowers fragrant. By the time the skyline shimmers with a small sliver of light, I've already run four laps around the sports field.

It was still a bit chilly when I left home at 5 a.m., but after all that running, I'm hot all over. Sweat soaks through my underwear, making it cling uncomfortably to my skin like damp herbal plasters.

The only gratifying thing about this is that, for the first time after giving birth to my son, I can feel my abs again. They'd been annoyingly tucked under a layer of fat, what I call "the little blanket my son forgot to take away," but now they're re-emerging, with a dull soreness, as I step into my thirties.

"Keep moving!" I spy my older brother relaxing in the shade of a banyan tree. His job is easy. All he needs to do is to yell at me from time to time. "I didn't wake up so damn early to see you slacking!"

I gasp for air and keep running, taking off my jacket and tying it around my waist. My knees are shaking and my heart is pounding, but I manage to keep my pace. After all, I was the one to beg my brother to help me do some special training. I can't give him an excuse to go home now.

Each lap around the elementary school sports field is two hundred meters long. I ran for a kilometer and finished my half-liter bottle of water a long time ago. I'm so exhausted, I could die. But, to fight for Yang-Yang's custody, I have to make it into the government's public sanitation team. I know how fierce the competition is, and the date of the assessment is fast approaching.

"Lin Chia-Hsiang can go to hell, I'll have Yang-Yang live with me, I can't let Chiang Wei-Tung look down on me…" I put a hand over my stomach, which is about ready to cramp, adjust my faltering steps, and stagger past the banyan tree with my brother resting underneath.

Yang-Yang is my son. He's in the second grade of elementary school and is my pride and joy.

*

Eight years ago, when I was twenty-two, I was working as a manager trainee at a convenience store. I'd been a staff there since high school and eventually worked my way up to a full-time position. The store manager took great care of the employees. Of course, my performance was also up to standard. I really enjoyed working there. I relished the air conditioning, the

organized shelves, and the neat, tidy environment. Even though we were so busy at times that I didn't have time even to go to the bathroom, on the whole, that convenience store was a great place to work.

Still, having a small, happy family was my lifelong dream. I want to make delicious meals every day that fill the entire table and enjoy dinner with the people I love. So, as soon as I found out about Yang-Yang, Chia-Hsiang and I registered our marriage and I quit my job. When Yang-Yang arrived, I became a full-time mom, devoting all my time to my husband and son. Turns out good things never last long.

Looking back on those days, I don't have any regrets about how I treated my family. I was told breast milk is highly nutritious, so I breastfed Yang-Yang until he was two, and, for those two years, I never slept all the way to dawn. Once we started adding solid food to his diet, I went to the market daily so that I could make fresh vegetable puree, congee with minced meat, and juice for him. I was never lazy…not like those other parents who'd make food for their kids in large batches to freeze for later use.

I even cooked breakfast and dinner for Chia-Hsiang. His meals were always nutritionally balanced, with vegetables and eggs and meat. I'd make him a fresh power smoothie every morning even when I wasn't feeling well or was down with the occasional cold. So truly, I don't understand what I did wrong to end up divorced and thrown out the door like a bag of trash.

Chia-Hsiang is always ready to list a hundred of my misdeeds: I'd stuffed the fridge too full, left the living room messy with Yang-Yang's toys, gone over our grocery shopping budget, didn't know how to dress up when going out…We were married for eight years, slept in separate rooms for six, and, by the end, I'd also had enough of his ridicule and insults.

But after I'd finished all the formalities of our divorce, I immediately regretted it the moment I signed my name on the agreement. I didn't care about leaving the household with no money to my name, but I'd agreed to let Chia-Hsiang be the custodial parent to our son. I'd retained only visitation rights. I was worried I wouldn't be able to afford Yang-Yang's tuition and the additional daycare and extracurricular fees, and feared he'd lead a poor life with me. It was a decision made in pain. The question is, could I really give him up?

Once, Yang-Yang got into trouble at school. He'd lost his classmate's new mechanical pencil, and the teacher made note of the incident with a red pen in his communication book to inform us, his parents. Worried I'd be furious, Yang-Yang hid the book and never brought it home. Two days later, seeing that Yang-Yang hadn't handed it in and we'd given no response, the teacher dug the book out from the depths of his drawers, and only then was the offense made known to us.

This is the kind of kid Yang-Yang is, so reticent and maddening and adorable at the same time. Uttering just a few scolding words is enough to make his eyes swell pitifully with tears.

After signing the agreement, I lost those heartwarming nights of reading to Yang-Yang and tucking him into bed forever. I miss him so terribly! The void left from separating with your flesh and blood is something only a mother, who'd undergone ten whole months of pregnancy and braved the gates of hell on the delivery table, could understand.

As I sat by the entrance of the Household Registration Office wiping my tears, a short-haired woman in a white shirt and crisp suit jacket stopped in front of me and handed me a business card stamped in gold foil.

Lawyer Yu is extremely kind. Despite her strong, prominent features, she is friendly and down-to-earth. Before she contacted me, I never imagined I'd ever need legal assistance, much less speak with professionals like lawyers. I was terrified, but still I grit my teeth and dialed her number on my cell phone, my fingers weak like jelly.

Fortunately, she was willing to give me pro bono consultations. She told me my first priority was to find a job to prove I would be able to raise Yang-Yang. It would give me a shot at convincing the judge and the social worker who would do a home inspection when I file my lawsuit. To be an independent divorced woman,

you must first have an income and a place to live.

I'm thirty and have accomplished nothing. I've been out of the workforce for eight years, and my only job was at that convenience store. My university classmates have long since built up impressive resumes, like the one working in an accounting firm and the other one who's a junior manager in an electronics company. They've all made a name for themselves. I must have submitted no fewer than fifty applications on employment sites, but most vacancies require at least one to two years of work experience, and most of the job postings without this requirement are for assistants – but I'm too old to be an assistant. How could I compete with all the fresh graduates out there?

So far, I've received only three calls for interviews.

The first was for a sales assistant position. The other candidates waiting in the meeting room were all women younger and prettier than me. The interviewer asked me straight away if I'd be willing to accompany my supervisors to socialize with clients after work. I hesitated for a few seconds before nodding, reluctance written all over my face. Naturally, there was no follow-up.

The second was for a receptionist position. The human resources manager who came to meet me gave me a once-over and kindly suggested that if I were to take this job, I should at least wear a skirt and some light make-up. I spoke candidly about my past, and, since the manager didn't react too unkindly to it, I thought I had a chance this time around. But I ended up failing the English test for taking phone calls.

The world moves fast and waits for no one. I've stayed stagnant for too long and fallen behind my peers. As I keep running into one wall after another, I'm terrified I might have already been eliminated by the job market.

Unable to find an office job, I soften on the idea of manual labor. At least it would be a proper way to make ends meet.

Calming down, I consider my options. With no expertise, money, or connections, what can I do?

I think long and hard. My only advantage is that I'm familiar with the Department of Environmental Protection's public sanitation teams. Both my parents were sanitation team members, one driving a garbage truck on the night shift and the other sweeping streets on the morning shift.

There are no particular academic requirements for working on a sanitation team. Anyone can take the entrance assessment as long as they graduated elementary school. It's stable employment, and you never need to worry about losing it. Benefits are comparable to other government jobs. With the base salary and bonus, you can earn close to forty thousand a month. A job like that will take you well into retirement. Plus, my older brother also joined the sanitation team after graduating high school. If I get in, we can support each other, and I'll be one step closer to regaining custody of my child.

Luckily, I still have my family to return to.

*

"I'll have Yang-Yang live with me, I can't let Chiang Wei-Tung look down on me…" I wheeze, turning my growing resentment into energy to keep moving. "Oh!" I stumble, then steady myself.

There's nothing to be afraid of if I fall. I'll get back up. I must become an extraordinary woman, with a better life than Chia-Hsiang. That way, I'll get Yang-Yang to live with me again.

"Still got energy to talk?" My brother lights a cigarette and waves at me. "Chiang Chin-Fen, come over here."

Finally time for a break. Stinky with sweat, I jog slowly back to the banyan tree, dragging my heavy, leaden feet. Then I see that Yu-Fu, my brother's colleague and friend, is also here.

"You're up so early! Here for a show?" I ask, my appearance disheveled.

"You've w-worked hard," Yu-Fu says, handing me a bottle of mineral water and greeting me with his usual stutter.

失聲畫眉
THE SILENT THRUSH

Chuang Shu-Chen
凌煙

- **Category:** LGBTQIA+, Literary Fiction
- **Publisher:** Taiwan Interminds
- **Date:** 12/2022
- **Rights contact:** bft.fiction.nonfiction@moc.gov.tw
- **Pages:** 320 (Vol.1), 376 (Vol.2)
- **Length:**

  Vol.1: 104,104 characters (approx. 67,600 words in English)

  Vol.2: 148,535 characters (approx. 96,500 words in English)

Chuang Shu-Chen ran away from home at twenty to join a Taiwanese opera troupe. However, she left after just half a year to pursue a new interest in writing fiction. Her long-form novel *The Silent Thrush*, inspired by her lived opera troupe experience, won the 1990 *Independence Evening Post* Million Dollar Award for Literature. More recently, in addition to new works of realist literature, Chuang Shu-Chen has published essays on food and foodie culture.

Against her parents' wishes, she had left home to pursue her dream of joining a Taiwanese opera troupe. Traveling the length and breadth of the island with her troupe, she came face to face with a torrent of articulated passions and sexual conventions far from the mainstream.

Traditional Taiwanese opera first emerged around the turn of the 20th century in Yilan, on Taiwan's northeast coast. Framed around popular songs sung during temple festivals, stylistic elements from other artforms were gradually absorbed, resulting in the lively and colorful performances still enjoyed today. Taiwanese opera programming on television, introduced in the 1970s, cemented this genre in the popular imagination. *The Silent Thrush* is set during the height of Taiwanese opera's televised popularity, when live stage performances were in palpable decline.

As a young girl, Mu-Yun loved watching Taiwanese opera performances in front of their local temple. Despite her parents' protestations, she joins an opera troupe after high school graduation, making her debut in bit parts. However, regularly televised Taiwanese opera programming, with their lavish sets and lineup of famous actors, and newfangled "spicy girl" live shows were chilling public enthusiasm for live Taiwanese opera. To rekindle sponsor and audience interest, troupes turn to staging lively, often risqué dance shows immediately after performances. Although Mu-Yun takes to singing pop songs in a tight-fitting cheongsam, she wonders whether she has betrayed her dreams.

In this mostly female troupe, subplots abound involving a betrayed mistress of the troupe's boss, young actresses caught in love triangles, an older actress who chooses to help her younger boyfriend settle his gambling debts, and the cruel bullying of an unmarried male actor by his mates. The author brings to life the tangled web of emotions and passions coloring this oft-vilified corner of society. The portrayal in this work of emotional entanglements and sexual desire, especially among women, made it a pioneer in the lesbian literature genre after its first release in 1990. It was also the first Taiwanese work in this genre to earn a major literary award.

Becoming the Thrush, published by Chuang in 2008, continues the troupe's story through the 1990s, catching readers up on its never-ending feuds, loves, and scandals. This work was a finalist in the 2008 Taiwan Literature Awards.

THE SILENT THRUSH

By Chuang Shu-Chen
Translated by Mary King Bradley

> Silent thrush is used in this work to describe metaphorically both the decline of Taiwan's once flourishing Taiwanese opera from the 1980s onward and the women responsible for keeping opera troupes up and running. These women, facing the demands of the stage and uncouth audiences, are by necessity masters of compromise and a stalwart presence in the opera scene.
>
> Despite contemporary taboos regarding homosexuality, women in this traveling opera troupe give one another the love and support needed to endure their nomadic existence. As members of an all-female clique, these women, proudly self-sufficient, handle life on their own terms, with drama and emotions on stage regularly bleeding into life off stage. Different from the upper-crust, urban settings of most gay literature, this novel stands out for its rural setting and focus on homosexuality in a traditionally marginalized working-class community.
>
> — **Chang Chih-Wei (Owner, Lang-Huan Bookstore) / Translated by Jeff Miller**

1

The place was the grand temple in Kouhu Township, dedicated to the Holy Heavenly Mother, the goddess Mazu. The Heavenly Mother's birthday celebration would soon take place, a time when the whole village prayed to Mazu for good weather, peace, and prosperity.

The temple fair had three stages for opera performances. The Tzu-Yen Opera Troupe performed on the main stage, a two-story concrete structure at the center of the temple square. To the left was the Kuang Ming Maidens Opera Troupe, which used a stage constructed from canvas over an iron frame, and to their right was the Chen I Jan Hand Puppet Theater on the back of a small truck.

Because the festival would not begin until the next day, the village still had the appearance of utter tranquility, without any trace of festive atmosphere. Chin asked the way to the vegetable market, and then placed an order for gas to be delivered before waking Big Boy to take her to the market on his scooter. It was a temporary marketplace for all the vendors who had arrived for the big religious festival, and business was booming. A wide range of fruits, seafood, meats, and deep-fried foods were all on offer – everything and anything one could need. Even flowers were in no short supply. At festival time, this temporary market more than measured up to the town's regular one.

As she squeezed into the bustling crowd, Chin caught some of the festive spirit all around her. She thought to herself that she should prepare an offering of fresh meat and fruit for tomorrow, to pay homage to the Heavenly Mother on the first day of the festival. When they were here to perform last year, she had heard that the goddess was good natured and responsive to prayers. Perhaps she would bless Chin with a boy.

Chin was a member of the Kuang Ming Maidens Troupe, and the boss's second wife. In her younger years, she had been a leading actress in another troupe, playing the sorrowful female roles known as *khóo-tuànn*. She had used up most of her youth traveling all over with that other troupe. And then, encouraged by Tso Sauce, she had jumped ship to the Kuang Ming Maidens, where she had ended up married to the owner, a second wife with secondary status.

She hadn't been trying to avoid marriage, but the blind dates her family had arranged for her were always unsuccessful. Either she didn't like the other person, or he didn't like that she was an actress. Perhaps she had been born with a karmic debt to her new boss, for when he expressed his love for her, she not only didn't reject him, but also gave him her body in a confused daze. Although she later felt some regret, it occurred to her that she was already thirty years old and had spent over twenty of those years working as an opera performer. It was unlikely that she would be able to leave the troupe and change her life, and as her age ticked ever higher, her market value would steadily decline. What would she do for a living when she could no longer act? Wouldn't it be better to settle down like this? For good or ill, she would be regarded as the boss's second wife, and she was, after all, the daughter of a poor family, so why should she bother about status?

She remembered that when she first joined the troupe, Chin-Te, who lived across from the troupe's headquarters, had wanted a second wife. His first wife had tried to kill herself by taking sleeping pills. Fortunately, the woman hadn't died, but Chun-Hua was constantly saying scornful things about that neighbor's wife behind her back.

"Chin-Te's wife is a fool. What's wrong with another wife if it means more money? If it were me, I wouldn't care how many wives he married as long as I was in charge of the cash. Doesn't dying just mean you're handing someone else the keys to the kingdom?"

Later, though, when Chun-Hua herself was asked to accept this same marriage arrangement, she cried and made a huge fuss. Fortunately, Chin was always on the road performing with the troupe, too far away for Chun-Hua's tantrums to reach her. It was all Tien-Fu's headache to sort out. Chin's belly was growing bigger each day, but her inner confidence was growing, too. She knew a solution to the situation would present itself eventually, and Tien-Fu would never treat her badly. Moreover, Chun-Hua's five children, four girls and a boy, were all grown up. For three generations, the Chen family had produced only a single male heir, and so had long hoped for more children. If Chin were to give birth to a son, the matter would be more easily resolved.

When Chin was six months pregnant, a creditor was pressing Chun-Hua to pay a substantial gambling debt. Unable to do so, she had no choice but to agree when Tien-Fu took advantage of the situation and offered terms of exchange.

There was no official marriage, just a banquet attended by the three of them and their parents, which served as Chin's official entry into the family.

Chin did not feel wronged: having achieved the result she desired was satisfaction enough. Her mother, however, wiped away tears as she spoke to Chun-Hua.

"Our Chin is such an ill-fated girl, to only now marry and have children this way. It's our hope that you will be generous to her. We will be most grateful."

Chun-Hua's reply was clear and to the point. "As long as she shows the proper respect, I'm not a heartless person, and I will naturally cherish her."

Chin for her part took her role very seriously. Despite her swollen belly, she continued to manage the troupe's performances everywhere they went. She also bought the food and cooked it all herself. Tso Sauce scolded her.

"You really are a silly cow! While you're out here, working like a beast of burden, Chun-Hua is enjoying herself at home. When it's your turn to enjoy your husband, you're never there! So, maybe Tien-Fu will have the leisure to look around for a third wife, and then you'll want to cry but find you haven't got any tears."

Chin forced a smile and said, "What can I do? If this is the life fate hands me, what is there to complain about? A second wife is in no position to argue. Even if she were, would it be worth the argument?"

Luckily, Tien-Fu doted on her, and didn't like seeing her awkward struggles to stand and sit with her

big belly.

"You don't actually have to work so hard. Tso Sauce can handle anything related to the troupe. Cooking the meals is just a matter of asking someone to do it. You can take it easy at home for the time being, and see if you can't give me another son. Seems to me you'll upset the baby if you keep running around like this without any rest."

She looked at him with a half-smile as she said, "Is such fortune to be mine? Chun-Hua is there, and you know what she's like. She scolds at the drop of a hat whenever she doesn't like something. If we have a quarrel, whose side are you going to take?"

"Put your mind at ease. Chun-Hua loves to gamble, so she's out all day. Sometimes she even disappears for two or three days at a time. There won't be any conflicts between the two of you. As long as there's a game to bet on, she's fine. She would be willing to give up her life, never mind her husband, for a good round of betting." His tone conveyed deep dissatisfaction.

Chin thought of how Tso Sauce had scolded her, and replied to her husband in jest, "It all works out, then! Chun-Hua cares only about gambling and never has a thought to spare for you, and I'm busy with the troupe and never there to pay attention to you. That gives you plenty of time to find a third wife, after which you'll be flying high again."

"What are you talking about?" sputtered Tien-Fu. He then remained awkwardly silent, neither swearing loyalty, nor offering her any guarantees. His lack of assurances tied Chin's heart in a knot.

"Hey now, don't go running around with other women, or marrying you will have all been for nothing," she said lightly.

"Don't worry! I'm already an old man and don't have the strength." He gave her a cheeky look and kissed her neck.

The kiss tickled. She laughed and ducked away from him, forgetting her hurt of a few moments before.

Her wish for a son was not granted. She gave birth to a daughter, whom she named Chen Mei-Chuan. Because the child was too young to be taken on the road, Chin left one-month-old Chuan at home in Chun-Hua's care and returned to her role of managing the troupe.

At first, Chin wasn't so sure about this arrangement, fearful that Chun-Hua's love of gambling would make her a negligent caretaker at best. If Tien-Fu had not insisted that Chun-Hua should have something to do aside from placing bets and Chun-Hua had not shown such enthusiasm for the plan, to be parted from her infant daughter after just one month would have been unthinkable for Chin.

Chun-Hua took surprisingly good care of Chuan, however, and every time Chin returned, Chuan was even chubbier and more adorable than when she last saw her. Chin was truly happy. As for Ngo, always by her side, Chin came to love her as if she were her own.

Ngo was Chun-Hua's youngest daughter, just ten years old. Chun-Hua had given birth to her after a seven-or-eight-year gap, hoping for a boy but ending up with another girl. Because Ngo didn't like studying and couldn't retain anything she was taught, she had taken a break from school and joined the troupe as an actor. She was always by Chin's side and called her "Ma". Those who didn't know better often thought they really were mother and daughter.

Now four, Chuan was much closer with Chun-Hua than Chin. Sometimes, when there were no performances booked, the entire troupe would return to headquarters for a rest and see for themselves how Chuan avoided her mother. The little girl even slept with Chun-Hua. The rest of the troupe often teased Chin, telling her, "Chin, giving birth to this daughter was truly a waste! She cares more for her rice bowl than her own mother, and thinks of Chun-Hua as her ma, not you. You get no credit at all for carrying her nine months."

Smiling, Chin would reply, "Does it really matter which of us she calls ma?"

But even as the words left her mouth, her heart ached a bit. Fortunately, Ngo expressed more affection for her than for Chun-Hua, which made her feel a bit better.

Chin bought greens and then went to the grocery store to buy a package of sanitary pads. The night before, Ngo had told her there were bloodstains in

her trousers, and Chin thought to herself that Ngo was definitely growing up. She was fourteen, the age a girl should be getting her first period.

Everyone in the Kuang Ming Maidens Opera Troupe slept in the downstairs area of the temple's two-story theater. Unlike their own troupe, the Tzu-Yen Opera Troupe didn't lip sync, but instead did all their own voicework and singing. They performed on the stage upstairs, and because they didn't use cots, they could sleep backstage, leaving the downstairs available for the Kuang Ming Troupe.

When Chin returned, people were already getting up. The curtains on some of the cots were being raised one by one, while others continued to hang undisturbed. Tso Sauce, Wu-Hsiung, and Sexy Auntie had gathered at Chia-Feng's cot to play Rat Card.

"Such commitment! If it weren't for gambling, when would you ever be up this early?" Chin said to the gamblers. Then she went over to her own cot to wake up Ngo. "Ngo, time to get up! The sun is shining on your backside."

Ngo sat up obediently and sleepily rubbed her eyes with the back of her hand. Chin raised the bed curtains and hooked them back on both sides as she gave Ngo instructions: "Tidy the cot, then go brush your teeth and wash your face."

In their troupe, most of the actors slept on folding iron camp cots, two to a bed. A fabric canopy supported on a frame roughly the height of a person surrounded the cot to create a small, private world inside. Personal belongings were packed in trunks placed alongside. The male actors, too lazy to set these up, simply lined up the big metal trunks and slept on top of them.

Ngo piled the pillows and covers neatly on their cot, pulled out the toiletries from the space underneath, and carried the washbasin to the public bathroom outside to wash.

This wasn't the largest temple in the province, but it had well-equipped facilities. In addition to guest rooms for temple visitors, there were rows of toilets and bathrooms, which were very convenient for anyone there to perform, like them.

When Ngo returned after washing her face, she put the toiletries away and then went to help Chin sort the greens. Ngo was a well-behaved, quiet girl, thin and slim, just starting to develop into a young woman. Last year, she had still looked like a child, but even though she had already grown a great deal this year, she was unable to gain weight. If Fen, Ngo's elder sister, hadn't also been in the troupe, Chun-Hua might well have gotten the wrong idea and thought Chin wasn't taking care of her youngest daughter.

As Chin picked over the greens, she spoke to Ngo. "I bought you a pack of sanitary pads. When you go to the toilet later, take one and put it inside your trousers so that they don't get stained with blood."

"But there was only a little bit." Ngo always spoke slowly, dragging out the sounds, which made her sound a bit dull-witted.

"There may suddenly be a whole lot, so you have to take precautions."

Memories of herself at eight years old popped into Chin's head. Out of financial necessity, her parents had sent her, their eldest child, to an opera troupe as an indentured apprentice – ten years of her freedom in exchange for a meager sum to support her four younger siblings. She was by no means complaining. It was simply her fate, like marrying Tien-Fu and becoming a second wife. To be at peace with her lot in life, to resign herself to being unlucky and never daring to fight for anything more, was a mindset she preserved at all times. She feared that if she were ever to be greedy, she would go too far. Then, Heaven would take back what it had granted her, and all would end up being for nothing.

Since childhood, being satisfied with things as they were had been Chin's principle for adapting to life. Having been taken away from her parents at age eight to earn her living alone in the opera troupe, the feeling of having no one to rely on remained fixed with utter clarity in her head. She recalled that whenever she thought of home back then, she would tell herself that even though life in the opera troupe was hard, it was better than being at home with an empty belly and no warm clothes.

大稻埕落日
SUNSET OVER DADAOCHENG

© Luke Huang

Tommy Tan
譚端

- **Category:** Thriller
- **Publisher:** Ecus
- **Date:** 9/2023
- **Rights contact:** bft.fiction.nonfiction@moc.gov.tw
- **Pages:** 416
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Tommy Tan is a man who wears many hats: reporter, historical researcher, documentary filmmaker, translator, and bookseller. He is the author of *The Rocking Sky*, which, drawing on extensive interviews, narrates the firsthand experiences and stories of the ROC Air Force's first generation of officers. He has also translated works of crime fiction and fantasy, and previously ran Murder Ink, Taiwan's first genre-based fiction bookstore, in Taipei City. *Sunset Over Dadaocheng* is Tan's first long-form novel.

Had Mao and the CCP executed a "strategic retreat" to the island of Taiwan rather than the KMT, not only the wheels of justice but also everyday life would change in noxiously dangerous ways. As Li Zhenyuan well knows, even cunning investigators aren't safe from cruel fate when history is upended.

Elements of history, crime, and espionage unfold in this novel against the backdrop of an Axis victory in the Second World War and the dissolution of China. After losing out to factious political infighting, CCP Chairman Mao Zedong flees with loyalists to Taiwan where they launch a deleterious campaign of class struggle and political cleansing, and plan a Great Leap Forward to transform their island redoubt into a formidable industrial power.

The story opens in 1963 in Taipei City's Dadaocheng District, which, although two decades ago a prosperous center of business and trade, is now home to a largely broken and half-starved population where only Party members and government officials live somewhat better off. A mutilated corpse with missing organs discovered in the district along the banks of the old Tamsui River raises curiosity and suspicion when it is found not only to be the remains of someone rather well-fed in life but also to have an unrelinquished gold tooth!

While his fellow officers hypothesized it was likely a Mainland spy, Case Officer Li Zhenyuan found evidence in the gold tooth that the person had been a long-term resident of Taiwan. After reviewing missing person reports, the body is identified as Railway Department Section Chief and model worker Wu Fuguo. Adding to the mystery, soon after Li uncovers Wu's sizable nest egg, Wu's wife and his mistress turn up dead as well.

Just as Li pursues his investigation, Party Chairman Mao announces a new campaign to eliminate Party schismatics and independence agitators to harden the island's readiness to "Retake the Mainland". Li, the son of a once-prominent Dadaocheng family who had studied in Japan, can't avoid being caught in this new witch hunt and sent, along with his colleagues, to prison. Staying alive and keeping his wife and daughter safe suddenly becomes his singular hope and mission.

SUNSET OVER DADAOCHENG

By Tommy Tan
Translated by Jack Hargreaves and Jun Liu

> In his first detective novel, Tommy Tan successfully delivers a compelling, hard-boiled detective story written within the framework of alternate reality fiction.
>
> Set in 1963, the story opens in a Taiwan controlled by a communist party exiled to the island after losing the Chinese Civil War to the Nationalist (KMT)-led government. Occupied and entangled in an ostensibly foreign political struggle, the Taiwan of this timeline too is under the heel of a White Terror regime. The harsh volatility of Communist rule in the book brings readily to mind China's own Cultural Revolution. Tan, one of just a handful of relatively young writers able to fully grasp the linguistic and contextual textures of the real Cultural Revolution, seamlessly projects this cruel tragedy of history on Taiwan and successfully immerses readers in that dystopic world.
>
> As the true nature and intentions of the story's various main characters come gradually to light, suspicions intensify, making the truth even more difficult to discern. What is ostensibly a detective story thus takes on shades of a spy novel.
>
> — **Liao Chih-Feng (Publisher, Asian Culture Publishing Co.) / Translated by Jeff Miller**

Prologue

The good have disappeared,
The bad come out in crowds!
– Gottfried Keller

A fly's filmy wings vibrate at a frequency so intense as to penetrate the fortress of consciousness right to its core. An irritating *buzz-buzzing* that rocks the brain's center, coming first in ripples then swelling, quickly, into surging waves.

Wang Chuanxian swatted at the air. The persistent insect whirred around his eyes and ears, its drone boring through his skull. Usually the old peasant would not have been perturbed, his being long inured to bothersome bugs and despicable mosquitoes. Their bites, on most days, barely registered. But today, the fly had caught him in a foul mood. His grandson had run into a snafu in the army, a piece of news that did not sit well with Chuanxian. Gazing out over the river and open banks had offered a momentary respite, only for the fly to show up looking for trouble.

It was April, seven a.m.. The sun was threatening unruliness. An egret, pumping its wings as it took off, glided low over the river. With no breeze, the air was stifling. The blue sky, the mountains visible in the distance, and the river and that bird's shadow tripping across its smooth surface, all showed early signs of the interminable Taibei summer ahead.

The Danshui flowed lazily on, through viscous time, with little prospect, it seemed, of ever reaching better days. The womanly form that reclined on the horizon beyond it was Mount Marx-Lenin officially, though between comrades she was called "Lenin's Lover".

Pre-People's Republic, she had been known as Mount Guanyin, for the bodhisattva of mercy. Those were times before religion had been outlawed as a spiritual opium.

Women never fail to strike a welcome profile. Viewed side-on, a flat nose might appear tall, and a broad forehead or prominent chest dignified or perhaps sacred. Such lovely curves have a tendency to break even the most impetuous and the most reserved of men.

In the vegetable plot above the dike, on this side of the river, the neat beds resembled bars of dark chocolate from which moss could be seen sprouting, stippling the slabs of dark brown. Next to the plot, a makeshift shed, built slipshod out of discarded wooden boards, miscellaneous detritus, containers, lids and so forth protected shovels, hoes, sickles and other tools from the elements. The shed had no lock, and the tools all bore, sprayed in white paint, the identification number of the production team from which Chuanxian had "borrowed" them. That was how he saw it, borrowing, although there was no return date. He had devoted so much to the State, he didn't consider "borrowing" the odd item here and there a cause for concern. Not to mention that his grandson was a company commander in the People's Liberation Army. This alone guaranteed that he was let be.

A straw hat on his head, and callouses on his big soles from working the fields barefoot, Chuanxian could be made out by the strip of faded red cloth tied above his hat's brim, a marker that he was a production cadre. Common folk would see this and steer clear. Chuanxian knew very well the line between the public and the private, and also how best to turn his scant privilege to his advantage.

A hand on his waist and a lit cigarette between his lips, he surveyed the fruits of his labor, where new seeds wriggled awake under the soil readying to break the surface and stretch skyward. Another two months and he would be bringing in the rice he sowed at the start of spring – that is, unless Yilan were the next to fall. Already, to the south, Jiayi, Tainan, Gaoxiong and Pingdong had been devastated by locusts, with the fields there left almost bare. He hoped the swarm would not make it north. There were reports the Party was releasing sparrows in Taibei to control the numbers, at which Chuanxian scoffed that sparrows also eat crops. But who was he to speak up?

A queer stench wafted off the river. Dead fish and shrimp and even dogs, the white of their stomachs bobbing on the surface, could often be seen being carried out to sea by the turbid waters. Chuanxian let out a sign. After the war, factories had mushroomed along the banks in response to a national call for the resumption of production, to "overtake Germany and Japan". But Chuanxian had never set foot in either country and he could immediately tell the rate of productivity, as it stood, from the shoddiness of the towels, toothbrushes and soaps currently coming out of local factories. Never mind their Western counterparts, the output right then was a shadow of what the Japs had managed shortly after colonizing the island. The only advantage of producing these goods at home was the cost.

At this thought, Chuanxian stiffened, his chest tightening. Suddenly unnerved at where he had allowed his mind to go, he broke out into a sweat and scanned the area for potential witnesses to his momentary indiscretion. A matter of years had passed since the national roll-out of the "Crackdown on Thought Crime", which ruled a person must turn themselves in at even the briefest instance of "reactionary" thinking, to confess to the Party, to confide in the Party, so they could volunteer themselves for Correction Therapy, regardless of whether or not the wrongful thought passed their lips or they ever intended to act on it. He had pointed an accusatory, invisible finger at the Party and the State, so how fortunate was he that no one was around… Not that he would ever hand himself over to the Public Security Bureau. He was in the family of a PLA company commander. He must not bring shame on his grandson.

He checked his surroundings again. The coast was clear. He wiped his forehead, and his hand came away damp with cold sweat.

He looked out to the riverbank to where the silvergrass stood as high as his head, its silky feathers unmoving in the thick air. He contemplated it, then climbed down and cleaned himself off in the cover of

the grass.

A sudden flurry of birds overhead winged by noisily.

From this side of the river, he had an uninterrupted view across the water all the way to Sanchong and, on the horizon, Linkou Plateau which was still shrouded in mist.

The *buzz–buzzing* fly would not let up.

Seven twenty-five. The sunlight was now sharper; Chuanxian found himself squinting. Time to go home.

With one last, lingering look at Lenin's Lover, he took another draw of his cigarette and caught out of the corner of his eye a flash of white on the murky water. At first he thought it nothing, and didn't turn that way until it had drifted closer. Talk about public spirit, he mused, some people will dump their garbage anywhere. There had been preposterous things in the river recently. What was it this time?

He strained his eyes and what he thought he saw made him recoil, a cry escaping despite himself. Was that a person? Were they moving?

There, half-submerged, was a human form. Chuanxian panicked. He started pacing, two steps and a turn, two steps and a turn, his hands suddenly shaking uncontrollably. His mind raced, as birds spooked by his movement darted out of the reeds nearby, a mass of black that quickly scattered. Chuanxian wanted to cry for help, but no sound came. He looked at the sky, at the ground, back at the figure. Were they struggling? Were they dead? Were his eyes deceiving him? The old man rubbed at them and looked again, still no idea what to do.

He inched forward to the water's edge. Another step and he would fall in. They must already be dead, was his thought, but were they not moving? No, no, they weren't. But if they were alive, there was still time. He turned downstream and ran the few hundred meters the figure had already drifted, gathering his courage until, alongside the floating mass, he waded in.

The past few days of rain had fattened the river and the current was strong. With every step he had to struggle through the waist-deep water and sludge, with the person being carried further and further out of reach. Lurching forward once, twice more, he made up his mind to pitch himself into the putrid water and swim. Long gone were the days when fish and shrimp could be caught here, so doing this took grit.

When he could finally strain to touch it, a chill ran through him. This was a dead body, rigid, unresponsive. Skin colder than the river water. Before he could reason with himself, he clenched the upper arm and towed the body towards the bank.

He dragged it up onto land, into the sunlight. Panting, he collapsed on the ground, water pouring off him, his hands and feet black with mud, which when he rubbed at his face he smeared across his cheeks. He caught sight of the wrist watch gifted him by the Party Committee: seven forty-five. Water had got inside. What a waste. He had asked for it, diving in like that to save a person who was already dead. His arms slumped down: moving was the last thing he wanted to do now, not that the exhaustion would have let him. Staring up at the white sun and blue washed backdrop, he felt like he was teetering on the edge of the sky, about to fall in. He may have rescued the body, but he now stank all over. And the buzzing in his ear was back. Was it the same fly? He didn't know. He shut his eyes while the insect had its fun.

A cadaver, a spent man, and a vexing fly, together on a riverbank.

The sunlight, shining pink through his eyelids, was too bright for the thin skin to keep out. Still, he laid there awhile steeling himself before he sat up to take in the body. The mouth, lolling open; the waxen skin, oxygen starved. The shocking sight that paralyzed him all over again was of the deep gashes in the wrists and ankles where the tendons had been cut in what could only have been an act of revenge. In local tradition, a revenge vow was a promise to relieve the offending party of their extremities.

Chuanxian knew he had to go to the Public Security Bureau immediately. He picked himself up off the ground and took two steps, only for his legs to give out. Struggling to his feet again, he stumbled about until he found his shoes, then hastened to the shed. He clambered onto the Wushun-brand bicycle

leaning outside, which his grandson recently gave him, and made for the station. The working parts gleamed with lubricant as they whirred into life. This was the first brand of bicycle manufactured in the People's Republic after all businesses became public-private cooperatives, and it was Chuanxian's first brush with luxury, a gift to mark his seventieth year. His only other possession of similar merit was the Taiwan-made watch presented to him by the Party to commemorate his recognition as a National Model Worker.

Chuanxian was fortunate in this moment that he had lived a life of labor, hauling cargo and making farm tools. He was built stronger than most others his age. He gripped the handlebars tightly, so much so that the bicycle wobbled, off-balance. But soon it was tearing along like a stallion unbridled. He picked up such speed he gave even himself a fright.

The sight of a septuagenarian streaking past on a bicycle at breakneck speed certainly turned heads. One blacksmith, working bare-chested out the front of a streetside ironworks, stopped stock still with his hammer raised over his head, squinting through the smoke that wafted from the cigarette between his lips. Startled pedestrians froze awkwardly in the middle of the street. A red canvas strung between two utility posts, the slogan on it in white, "Agriculture Grounds, Industry Leads", started flapping in the bike's wake. Sparrows perched on a power line fled in fear of the careering contraption.

Chuanxian turned down a shortcut. The backways of Dadaocheng tended to be slick with sludge, and this one also had a drunkard lying in a pool of his own vomit. Frightened mice scurried to safety through a crack in a gate. His wheels spraying the walls with grime, Chuanxian rode headfirst through laundry hanging on a line across the alley. The bike hummed along without a squeak. He had looked after it well and it now rewarded him by flying like a bullet. Down North Yan'an Road, onto Bao'an Street, across North Ruijin Road, a whistlestop tour of revolutionary base namesakes which he finished with a sprint along Jinzhou Street for the Public Security Bureau on the crossroad.

An elderly woman in a green army outfit had to jump out of his way before the corner of Ningxia Road. She yelped, yelling in a distinctive mainland accent, "Watch it! Is that how you ride a bike?" Scowling after him, she dropped the basket in her arms, which fell with a crunch, splattering the ground and her cloth shoes with egg. Chuanxian didn't slow to look back over his shoulder.

Short for breath, he skillfully dismounted, rolling to a stop outside an imposing building, and flicked out the kickstand. He left the bike unlocked and made straight for the entrance, catching himself pausing to glance up at the gilt inscription, "Dadaocheng Public Security Bureau".

Smoothing his clothes flat and brushing off any dirt, he gathered his nerves and entered.

The officer stationed inside the entrance in white peaked cap and well-pressed uniform, with a brown leather belt and red collar tabs that each bore a golden five-pointed star, cut a smart figure. He stayed seated when he saw the scruffy-looking peasant, "What's your business?" Then the smell reached his nose and his hand shot to his face, only half covering his grimace.

Chuanxian thought the officer seemed familiar. Then it came to him. He was the eldest son of the "*Liâng-hún King*", who used to peddle sweet potato jelly on North Yan'an Road, when it was still known as Taiheichō Street, under Japanese rule. Even as a boy, that officer had never been very friendly, his pilfering eyes always darting about instead of greeting other townsfolk. Although his father was now the director of the Sub-District Office and had gained himself some modest authority, this did not mean Chuanxian was going to toady to someone so junior. "I found…in the…" he was still panting as he tried to organize his thoughts in his best *putonghua*. "I found a dead body in the Danshui. I…I was tending to the vegetables when I saw it." He recounted how he had jumped in and recovered the body, his description faltering where the language failed him.

倒風內海
TALE OF THE INLAND SEA

Wang Chia-Hsiang 王家祥

- **Category:** Historical Fiction
- **Publisher:** Taiwan Interminds
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- **Rights contact:** bft.fiction.nonfiction@moc.gov.tw
- **Pages:** 352
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Born in 1966 in Kaohsiung and now a resident of Taitung, Wang Chia-Hsiang is the recipient of numerous national literary awards. A keen observer of and advocate for ecosystems and the natural environment, Wang sees in historical fiction an ideal outlet for his related observations and writings on nature. *Tale of the Inland Sea*, *Mystery of the Little People*, *Ghostly Sea Images – The Gill People*, and *The Monsters* rank among his most critically acclaimed works.

Soon to be adapted into an animated film,* Tale of the Inland Sea *takes readers back to the year 1624, when a Siraya shaman sees a dire prediction in a villager's dream – the life they have known for centuries will soon be forever changed by the star-crossed arrival of strangers from the sea.

Known as the "windward" inland sea, this large lagoon and its complex of sandbars, streams and rivers along Taiwan's southwestern coast are regularly buffeted by strong monsoon winds. This story, set between 1624 and 1662, centers on Saran, a young man from a Siraya village in the lagoon's northern section. Because of a prophetic warning from their village's shaman, Saran's mother has long forbidden her son from going anywhere near the sea. However, everything changes when he and a friend decide to throw worry to the wind and paddle to the lagoon's outlet on the sea. This is where they first set eyes upon ships with white canvas sails plying steadily toward shore.

These boats carry red-haired men in search of deer pelts along with their Chinese workers. In addition to colorful textiles and shiny glass beads, these "Red-Hairs" bring the bricks they will use to build spacious houses along the coast at a place they call "Tayouan". Saran, now his village's best hunter, finds the red-hairs offering increasingly less for his pelts. Serendipity then makes Saran a pelt trade intermediary, which brings him face to face with the actual avaricious aims of these interlopers. As he watches his homeland being slowly and dolefully transformed, he wonders – is this the disaster foreseen by the shaman so many years ago?

Published in 1995, this is the first work of Taiwan historical fiction to feature ethnic Siraya as main characters as well as to extensively incorporate Siraya-language words into the narrative. The author takes a realistic approach to weaving this compelling tale set four centuries ago and to conveying the pressures put upon the native Siraya by Dutch rule and Chinese settlement.

TALE OF THE INLAND SEA

By Wang Chia-Hsiang
Translated by Sahana Narayan

> "This book engages readers on two levels. On one, the novel, set in Austronesian Taiwan, plumbs the geopolitical complexities of the Age of Exploration, narrating the experience from the perspective of those "discovered" by European adventurers.
>
> The work, presented through the eyes of the Siraya people living in what is now Tainan City, is written from their perspective, with finely detailed descriptions of Siraya ways, their worship of nature, lifestyle and attitudes toward life juxtaposed against the covetousness of the foreign invaders.
>
> Although set in Taiwan, this historical novel weaves a tale familiar to native peoples worldwide. More than decrying the powerful, the author shows his clear respect and honor to the oppressed. The theme and core messages here, while set in the past, seem equally resonant to our shared present and future."
>
> — **Weng Chi-An (Associate Professor, Department of History, National Chi Nan University) / Translated by Jeff Miller**

The Great Sail

1624, early summer. The inland sea of south Taiwan.

Saran and Takada's canoe glides over the water, over the flying mists of dawn. The night has left its footprints over the inland sea. The sandbanks float like large fish over the water, mists hovering overhead. As the dawn arrives, the mists plop their light bodies astride the plants, settling into dew.

Water during the day flows straight and narrow, clear as a cure. But during the night at the call of the spirits, it begins to float, and becomes mist. The mists are the water's brother, loving to fly, scouring the seas until the sun chases them away; often as the night comes to an end, heeding the call of the spirits, the mists spring from the forest streams, spring from the grasses of the plains, gather from the sea where the fish and the oysters live, and coalesce into *salama*.

Salama is huge mist, wicked water. When too much water becomes mist and coalesces into salama, it is no longer clear. Salama blocks the eyes of men, blocks the beautiful moon and the stars on their path through the sky. Salama fears most the wind and the sun, as the sun sends the wind to do its bidding, sending salama to whence it came.

Fortunately, there is little salama today. Saran and Takada are able to navigate the mazelike channels without losing their way. Nevertheless, salama can be seen far away, past the sandbanks of the large fish, towards the treacherous sea, sure to snap up any canoe.

"Here comes the sun, to chase away the mists," said Saran. Takada works the oars, at Saran's back.

The mists lift from the dawn, opening to silvery waters. Trees jutting out like islands, and sandbanks, scattered like schools of fish, reflected on the still-

water's surface, the real fish hidden beneath. The tree islands and sandbanks separate the vast inland sea into swampy pools and channels. In pools coated by reeds and mud, they find themselves slowed. Takada strikes the bottom of the pool hard with his paddle, getting them back on their way.

Strong winds from the southwest comb the messy hair of the coastal rat-tail grass. The waterbirds and sandpipers rise and fall, busily filling their bellies in preparation to migrate north. This is especially true for the large heron, a master of catching fish.

Takada steers the canoe. Saran listens for the sounds of the birds, and hears geese. The sound is faint, battered by the winds, almost there and not quite, as if hidden among the mists. The geese belong to the sea, and know the ways of the fish. Where the geese are, they find prime fish in bounty. Takada works the boat quickly towards a nearby sandbank, taking cover amongst the reeds; as the mists dissipate, they'll lose their cover, scaring the geese and fish away.

As the inland sea turns to summer, prosperous winds from the southwest anoint every point of shimmering water, every submerged sandbank, every waterweed-filled pool, bringing warmth and growth; they whisk through the verdant grasslands and sparse woods and stir wave after wave of green grass, causing the doe-eyed *manglang* to perk their heads and shake their tails.

It becomes warm and humid. The wind, coming from the south, is smooth and soft, often calm and tranquil; it does not howl. It brings cool rains, fertile plains and fields, nurtures the deer and grows Sirayan millet. In contrast are the northern winds, fierce and powerful, never weary; through the harsh winters they conquer the inland sea, preventing all fishing boats from entering.

Last year, the grasses withered and crinkled under the dry autumn heat, and thunder rumbled over the grasslands, throwing bolts of lightning, starting fires which swallowed the fields, making the pigs and manglang alike flee for their lives. The fire spread for more than ten days, stopping only at the edge of streams and the sea. In the end, the yellowed wilds were burnt crisp black, remaining so until the southern winds of spring summoned back the cool rains. These waters of life call to the spirits within the earth, who awaken from their slumber and beckon to the root mother of the grasses: "Drink! Sprout!" From that frozen mud and blackened ash sprang forth new life. A new year begins.

And so the *Inibs* prepared the finest sacrificial offerings to the ancestors – pigs, rice, betel nut, wine, horned manglang heads, and more. Only the ancestor's could keep wandering spirits in their bottle, away from the outside where they'd wreak havoc over the fields and wildlife.

In the wide space before the *kuwa*, the ceremony begins. Bonfires are stacked on both sides, the wine flows, adults cry out "*Pit'it'a! Pit'it'a!*" They link hands into bodies, weaving a large circle, dancing as one throughout the night. They call the wandering spirits away from spring, back to the kuwa, into the ancestor's bottle, where they'll sleep soundly until the grass begins to yellow once more.

In the early morning, after the songs are done and the spirits are safe once again in the ancestors' bottle, Saran and Takada finally find the courage to sneak out under the noses of their fathers and uncles. They take their bows and arrows, dash to the water's edge, jump into Takada's father's canoe and set off into the towering mists.

Saran and Takada started visiting the men's quarters when they were eleven or twelve, leaving their mothers and aunts to learn from their uncles and hone their skills: how to run swiftly, how to aim a bow with deadly accuracy, how to play the *latuk* to charm a lover. Saran and Takada are not allowed to hunt by themselves; and Saran's mother won't even let Saran go to the sea because of a dream she had. She told the Inibs, who prophesied that disaster from the sea would come to take her children. She is afraid the sea will steal Saran away.

Saran wants to hunt sea geese. Their feathers are prized as decoration, their meat is fresh and vital. His hunt will be an offering to the women, who will cook it well. However, sea geese aren't as easy to catch as manglang or wild boar, their wings carrying them in an instant off towards the ocean. They are gathered here, of varying size. Some are catching fish in the water. Others are nibbling at waterweeds near the sandbank,

not far away; Saran tugs his bowstring back, aiming for them. Takada maneuvers the canoe silently. Saran knows that he needs to shoot as soon as they emerge from the reeds, otherwise the geese will scatter.

Saran and Takada are good friends, both of the Mattau tribe. Saran has witnessed the coral tree bloom seventeen times. He is now a *mata*, has been permitted to grow out his hair, and can pursue a lover. And yet, his father still has never taken him out on the open sea. He'd waited as an *alala*, catching fish in the shallow periphery, never daring to cross the calm, silvery waters to the deep tumult at the center. His father believes in his mother's dream, believes the Inibs' prophecy; he does not let Saran go.

Takada is only an alala, two blooms from becoming a mata, from growing out his hair and pursuing his lover. However, he has fished with his father in every corner of the open sea – though he has never been to the ocean. Takada tells Saran "The inland sea is like a woman, mostly calm, but regularly battered from the outside by her ferocious husband." Takada's father too has not allowed his son to venture beyond the woman, not permitted him to face that ferocious husband of hers. They stay within the protection of the sandbanks, speeding through the space between sea and ocean, never stopping to look.

Takada says, "I wish I could stand on the soft sand there. I would watch the waves coming from the endless ocean. I'd see where the legendary giant whale bursts from the surface."

"Don't the elders say that our ancestors' ship was brought here by a large wave?" says Saran.

"Really? Where did they come from?" Takada asks.

Saran shrugs his bare shoulders. "Not even the grandmothers know."

"But every year, at the gathering after the autumn harvest, the Inibs takes the elders to the fields to thank the mice with gifts of millet. We call it 'mouse rent'. Do you know why?"

"Why?" asks Takada, curious.

"The Inibs told me, our ancestors were once proud seafarers. But on their way here, they got lost. Without a place to land and, facing starvation, they ate all their rations and grain, with nothing to spare."

"What does that have to do with mice?" asks Takada.

"After, when they'd made it onto land, they realized that mice had spirited some millet away in the boat. This became the seeds of our ancestors' first harvest. To this day, in order to thank the mice for their help, we give them some of our harvest as a gift," says Saran.

"The elders have said that we've forgotten how to make large ships. The earth has been good to us, and we've been here for generations," says Saran. Unlike Takada, Saran had already proven himself worthy of attending the tribal meetings of adult men and of bearing witness to the oral histories told by the elders.

Takada responds, "My mother once said the inland sea is like a nurturing mother. It protects against the great ocean, the fierce winds, and massive waves. We get all the food we need right here. We aren't like the Tayouan tribe, braving the vast ocean with their canoes, likely to be swallowed whole by the fish who reside there."

"Fishermen of other tribes have long tried to wrest us Mattau of our hunting grounds here, which has led to war. My mother says that we control the southeastern part of the inland sea and so can fish there in peace. We speed through the Soulang-controlled northwest, never stopping, never casting our nets. This is why I've never had a chance to see the ocean." continues Takada.

"No wonder. My father isn't even willing to go towards the west. I've never been there." said Saran.

He continues, "Did you know? The elders say that the ancestors of us Mattau, the Tayouan, and the Chakam used to be brothers, one great Siraya. But then they fought over something and split apart. It is because of this that we've forgotten how to make large ships. Supposedly, the Tayouan lands were where our ancestors first landed."

"And the Tayouan have good relations with the Chinese. They get beautiful cloth and glass beads, even guns that can kill massive bulls with just one blow," Saran continues.

Takada chimes in: "I wish I could know the strange

treasures of the ocean."

"With those large-sailed ships, unfathomably huge, filled to the brim with Chinese people and cows," says Saran.

Takada loses himself in thought, his short hair resting on his face. He relaxes too much, and steers the canoe out of the reeds, Saran's arrow going wide, the geese fleeing towards the ocean.

"Oh well. Let's try for some fish!" Saran smiles.

Takada sheepishly rows the canoe forward. Saran stands at the prow, his bow at the ready, arrows tied to string for easy retrieval. He still keeps an ear out for herons and geese. A group of birds sweep overhead, flying past the sandbanks and the trees towards the other side of the inland sea.

"Shall we try our luck with the northwest side?" Takada suggests.

"Let's just try and collect some fish here, then head back." says Saran.

"So you don't want to see the ocean? Which can fit countless numbers of those huge ships?" Takada is almost yelling with excitement.

"That's Soulang territory. If we get caught, they'll have our heads!" says Saran.

"So? Who knows, we might even cut off a head or two. We'll be heroes when we get back!" says Takada. "We've already gone this far. We're in big trouble anyways, might as well explore a bit," Takada continues. His face glows with excitement, his voice high and energetic.

"My mother told me that disaster would come from the ocean, and take me away," Saran said, calmly.

"Really?" Takada's voice loses its excitement. He goes quiet. They sit in silence for a moment, the waters calm beneath their canoe.

Suddenly Takada asks, "…are you always going to live in fear of the ocean?"

Saran is seventeen years old. Past the last growths of puberty, his muscles ripple with stout, broad-shouldered manhood. And yet, some part of his boyhood remains. He is both naive and mature, a warrior without experience. But as a warrior, how can he let his mother's nightmares keep him at bay? As a warrior of the inland sea, whose ancestors hunted on the ocean, how can he dare to be afraid? Fearing the ocean is like fearing his own fields, or rice stores. If he is not willing to leave his home and brave the wilds, how can he be a proper warrior?

His face twists, unwilling to face the short-haired youth behind him. All of a sudden, he spots a ripple in the water in front of him. Taking aim, he shoots his arrow into a large fish beneath the water's surface. The fish thrashes to and fro.

"What a big fish!" cries Takada.

Saran carefully pulls the fish towards him. He can see the water deep beneath him.

"The deeper the sea, the bigger the fish." said Saran, with sudden realization.

"The northwest side is even deeper! It's close to the ocean; the fish there must be enormous!" encourages Takada.

"Okay. Let's go." Saran clubs the fish, putting it out of its misery. He sucks the blood from where the arrow has pierced the fish's skin. His gaze turns towards the northwest.

"Drink! For the fish's might to enter our bodies, for our canoe to fly swift and easy! If the Soulang warriors come for our heads, don't blame me." Saran passes the fish to Takada, turns to take the other oar, and begins rowing furiously. Takada quickly draws in a mouthful of the hot, salty blood. He drops the fish and picks up an oar. They row together with vigor.

The sun sets below the eastern sky, breaking the high mists of the salama, reflecting calm silver light over the water's surface, its angry light like a million arrows, pointing…northwest! Their canoe is an echo of the sun, rocketing towards the west like an arrow gliding off the water, shooting through the center of the inland sea. "If we catch even a glimpse of a Soulang ship, we turn back at once" Saran yells, the spray soaking his wet hair.

"No worries! Our canoe is the fastest out here" Takada calls back.

銀波之舟
A BOAT ON SILVERY WAVES

© Luke Huang

Roan Ching-Yueh
阮慶岳

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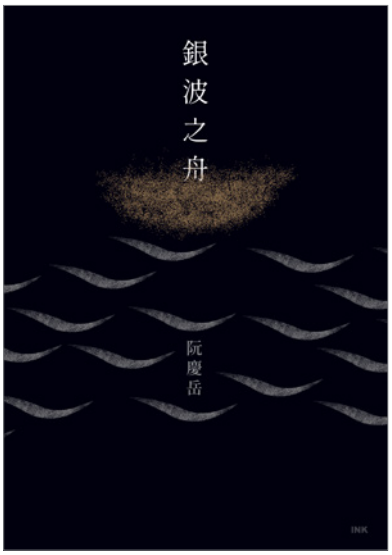
Roan Ching-Yueh is a master of many trades. An acclaimed architect as well as a writer, Roan was the curator of the Taiwanese pavilion at the Venice Biennale in 2006. He's written many books, including novels, essay collections, and monographs on architecture. His novel *Victory Song* won the 2004 Taipei Literary Award, and *Lin Xiuzi and Her Family* was long-listed for the 2009 Man Asian Literary Prize.



*** 2023 Openbook Award**

Author Roan Ching-Yueh imbues a lifetime's worth of experiences into this short story compilation. The narrative shuttles back and forth between Roan's childhood and present reality in an imagined boat that pays metaphorical homage to celebrated Taiwan author Chi Ten-Shung.

A Boat on Silvery Waves compiles six short stories by Roan Ching-Yueh that collectively muse upon family history and the author's remembered experiences with family, lovers, and friends. The title pays homage to author Chi Ten-Shung's short story *Wings Aloft on Silvery Waves*, with "silvery waves" a metaphor for surging swells of memories and fanciful dreams. The final story in this collection follows an imagined dialogue between Roan and one of his most beloved authors that takes its cue from passages excerpted from Chi's work.

These stories shared by the author from a first-person perspective meander between the plausible and the absurd. Despite quiet, demure Grandmother's parsimony with words, her tiny feet and lackluster housekeeping skills hint at a privileged upbringing that only makes her decision to marry Grandfather even more perplexing. While Mother loves to regale Father and the family about her own family's "glory days" and cares for her children and brothers with devotion, she shuns all pretenses of femininity. Father, outgoing and generous, has a sensitive and passionate heart; but his relations with some of his many female "friends" make family life somewhat more "interesting" than it might otherwise be. Younger Uncle, dashingly charming, molders away in an insane asylum while his intended victim, Mother's sister-in-law, is transformed into the inspiration for this short story. "I" plumb lived emotional relationships and experiences in search of things gained and things lost.

The author unravels unsettled mysteries through the self-dissection he performs through his stories in which he examines closely the frayed edges of his memories and the self-doubt in his narrative recountings. He disgorges his memories and, in doing so, lets understanding and hope ease the burden of life's wounds.

A BOAT ON SILVERY WAVES

By Roan Ching-Yueh
Translated by Fion Tse

> Since the 1990s, a distinctive literary style that blends the real and imagined in intricately intertwined settings earned for Roan Ching-Yueh his reputation as one of Taiwan's most outstanding contemporary writers and novelists. *A Boat on Silvery Waves*, with its artful amalgamation of distinct genres and writing styles, is a stand-out work in Roan's catalogue.
>
> The temporal flow in this work is reminiscent of Proust's *In Search of Lost Time*, and the text unfurls in the rambling fashion of dreams during sleep. Roan transcends the emptiness and randomness of time to take readers back to an imagined childhood, carrying his and other writers' memories with him as he fords time's silver stream.
>
> This book also pays heartfelt homage to the author's most cherished people. Reaching the other bank of that stream, Roan summons departed loved ones and once more pays homage to Chi Ten-Shung, his most beloved author. So many lives lost but not forgotten are resurrected in these pages, which blend together what once was and the imagined into something akin to a photo painting.
>
> — **Chiang Ya-Ni (Author) / Translated by Jeff Miller**

Po: A Wicked Life

My father came to Taiwan with Po and her tiny, bound feet. I often imagined how the two of them must have looked: Po, swaying unsteadily as she shuffled slowly up the narrow steps to board the ship; my father, hefting the suitcases that contained all of their worldly possessions while anxiously guarding Po from the bumping, crashing crowds as she wobbled to and fro. Mother and son, deformed and deficient, embarking on unsteady waters to flee to this unfamiliar island.

Po was illiterate and spoke only Fuchounese. Her bound feet restricted her mobility, and so when they eventually settled in a small village in the south of Taiwan it was as though she was trapped in a vacuum-sealed bubble. She became a strange creature, ignored and isolated from the rest of the world – and yet Po was entirely content. The first thing she did upon rising from bed was to ceremoniously prepare herself for the day. She would always focus on her reflection in the small, round mirror on the wooden windowsill, meticulously brushing her hair over and over. Once satisfied, she would rub in jasmine oil and bring it into a bun atop the back of her head. Graceful and unhurried, she was oblivious to my wide-eyed, wondering gaze from the corner of the room.

Everything Po did, from her speech to her movements, was slow and drawn-out. I have never met another person who could sit for long stretches as she could, quiet and elegant before her vanity or facing a window, as though she were a stone-carved buddha watching the rushing currents of a passing river – beyond the reaches of time, impervious to excesses of emotion.

Indeed, to my young self, Po's meandering pace seemed part of some mysterious religion or ritual, hinting at a universe I could never know nor understand. She was an otherworldly being who could perch on her tatami bed or on a wooden bench, bathed in the slats of afternoon sunlight pouring in through the long, rectangular windows for hours without saying a word. This had nothing to do with her bound feet and restricted mobility. I wholeheartedly believed that she had always lived life this way: with a scholarly elegance, calm and collected in a solitary corner like an unnamed plant growing quietly in a pot, or a silent yet awe-inspiring slab of stone in the pool of a manicured garden, undisturbing and undisturbed. Inhaling; exhaling; existing; surviving.

I'd known Po's name – Ke Pao-Ying – since I was young and saw it on her household certificate, but no one ever called her that. Everyone called her Po in Fuchounese, which sounded more like "uncle" in Mandarin, except we would stretch out the final vowel long and high: Bo– Bo–. And when Po called my name, she would soften the "Ching" to a barely audible exhalation, and articulate the final character "Yueh" into a bright and exaggerated "yoo", as though she were calling toward a deer in the depths of a forest or summoning some invisible spirit.

Po always referred to my mother formally, as Miss Chao. This had started when my parents were still dating, but even after they got married and my mother became Po's daughter-in-law, Po continued to call her Miss Chao. My mother and Po generally coexisted politely yet distantly. Whenever Po needed something, she would inform my father directly and discreetly so he could make the necessary arrangements, while my mother remained indifferent, neither helping nor interfering. Po didn't need very much, though. All her belongings were neatly folded and put away into a sturdy leather suitcase, likely the same one she had brought with her the day she left Fuchou. It had remained the same size all along, a reflection of how Po's life over all these years had neither needed to expand nor contracted in any significant way.

Po's one obsession was sweet foods. She had a particular liking for sticky peanut candy, and, as a result, her teeth gradually grew sparse. In an attempt to curb her unhealthy habit, my father intentionally limited her supply of sweets and snacks – so Po decided to buy them herself and brought me along, too. When she was ready to leave, she would place a hand on my shoulder and another on the wall to steady herself, and we would make our way, step by step, down the stairs of our accommodation before going through the main entrance to the shops that lined the street level of our building. I was a quiet, reticent child, and Po could only communicate in her unintelligible Fuchounese; and yet, somehow, she was always able to get a hold of the snacks she craved and sneak them into the corner of her suitcase under a pile of clothing, as though nothing had happened at all. She would reward me with some candy or spending money, and together we kept her secret between the two of us.

Po kept a friendly distance from her six grandchildren and never offered to take over childcare or support, with the sole exception of when my mother was angry or when we couldn't sleep at night. Only then would Po carry the sobbing child onto the tatami bed where she usually slept alone and curl around them like a protective harbor. Po's solutions to a crying child were far from varied. She would sing a Fuchounese nursery rhyme over and over, one that we all knew by heart. It was but a few short lines about a child who had only learned to speak at the age of three but had begun to sing of his own accord without his parents' guidance. In other words, it was a song praising the wit and intelligence of small children.

We always requested Po tuck us in with bedtime stories, too, although we were all aware the only story she knew was nothing more than the Auntie Tigress folktale in Fuchounese. But we would always insist Po tell it again, and, when she did, we would beg for her to stop even as we listened, enraptured, and burrowed into her skinny embrace, seeking the safety and protection of her tiny frame.

The village that I spent my early years in – except for the Mandarin that we spoke at school and during a limited number of formal events – was cocooned in Minnan perforated with an occasional word or two in Hakka. As a result, I grew up between three distinct languages with vastly different intonations: the Minnan that I spoke with neighbors and friends, the Mandarin

in which everyday conversation at home took place, and the Fuchounese that I overheard between my parents and Po. It never felt jarring or out of place, as though the world was always meant to be cross-stitched together like this.

Really, when I think about it now, even though Po's interactions with us were scarcer and less intimate than those with our parents and even less close than the relationships others had with their grandmothers, she always made me feel safe and secure. That is, I knew Po would always love me the same beyond any reasoning or judgment, like a constant source of comfort and acceptance. It was different from the traces of resentment I held towards my parents when I suspected they loved me less and so felt wronged, or when I cried while questioning if I was truly their biological child. On the other hand, I never once doubted Po loved me.

Po's love was eternal and unchanging, weakly lit yet never flickering out of existence, always waiting to envelop me upon my return. She rarely grew angry or judged other people's rights and wrongs. If I ever got frustrated or upset, she would simply fold me into her embrace and gently hum that one nursery rhyme she knew, soothing me into a magnanimous tranquility. And she was always that eternal flame, waiting, bright and warm, for me to come home.

Po never spoke of her family or upbringing. Not of her husband, the grandfather we had never met, nor of her childhood and background. It was as though her whole life was blank and nonexistent, eroded and erased by time. Po never told stories or recounted her memories. She lived only in the present moment, tranquil and content to exist within the boundaries of the house. She held no resentment towards the past and didn't seem to demand anything of the future either.

For example, she was neither religious nor superstitious. She never burnt incense or recited mantras. Po didn't seem to have any close family members or friends she kept in touch with either, relying solely on my father. The two of them were like beings from some lonely spaceship who had all of a sudden materialized into this world. Having neither ties nor roots in the reality of this universe and the people who inhabited it, their lives were unknowable and unfathomable.

Of course, our antics would irritate Po from time to time, but she was simply too slow on her feet to chase after and stop us. Helpless and enraged, she would yell at us with the one phrase she always used – those four words in that impossible-to-understand Fuchounese, "Not even a devil" – meaning, more accurately, that you were such an unpleasant child, not even a devil would want to kidnap you. This was the ultimate expression of Po's anger: she would yell in her thin voice, "Not even a devil, not even a devil would want you, child!"

Father was sociable and enjoyed making new friends, and before long he had forged bonds with all sorts of people in the village. Not only that, he learned Minnan at an astoundingly rapid pace. I remember watching him onstage at the local town hall, giving an impromptu speech in animated Minnan. His demeanor, relaxed and confident, is to this day imprinted on my memory. Yet, at home he spoke only Fuchounese to my mother and Po, and used the school-mandated Mandarin to communicate with all six of his children.

He was subtle in the ways he loved his mother. The two of them rarely spoke to each other, but the strength of their bond was palpable to even a casual onlooker. It was just like my father to express himself this way, as he was naturally a fairly reserved person. But sometimes he would decide to loudly and publicly express his feelings, these sudden bursts of passionate emotion masking his implicit shyness. For instance, when Father's income and reputation were both at an all-time high, he decided to throw an extravagant eightieth birthday celebration for Po. He hired famous caterers and chefs from all over, and rented out the auditorium, laden with history and tradition, of a local elementary school. Ever the filial son, Father arranged dozens of crimson-clothed banquet tables and sent invitations far and wide, but proudly turned down all offers of gift money.

That night, filled with both unease and excitement, all of us changed into our best outfits. Po remained

wordless as always in the dark *kua-pao* dress she often wore, as though she were attending a feast being held for some other person. Mother, dressed in a black brocade qipao she had prepared for the occasion, projected both elegance and affluence. A string of purple hand-embroidered flowers in shades of faint lavender and deep wine tumbled generously down her chest, while round pearls encircled her neck. She played the part of the hostess perfectly, welcoming guests as she slipped effortlessly through the sea of people.

Father was the happiest person there that night, naturally. Such an ostentatious display exceeded his means as a civil servant, but it was all to express his profoundly sincere filial gratitude. All evening, Father patrolled the auditorium, greeting guests and making small talk, and by the end of the night his face was red and puffy from alcohol. When the banquet finally died down, he had the whole family line up onstage for a photo. The wall behind us was lined with red celebratory banners sent by guests; commemorative plaques with all manner of well wishes and congratulatory phrases were scattered across a long table; the floor was still littered with the flurry of confetti that had exploded from the firecrackers at the start of the feast.

That was, without a doubt, the pinnacle of our family's opulence. It was as if Father foresaw that our lives would soon become bitterly frugal and decided to pull out all the stops to craft an unforgettably beautiful night for Po. And, still, Po remained wordlessly unmoved by this display of filial piety. Even as throngs of people approached with well wishes, Po only responded with an expression of humility verging on subservience, nodding her thanks with a slight, serene smile as though she were no more than an outsider.

Mother didn't know much about Po's background beyond the occasional vague snippets my father would share about his side of the family after a drink or two. All she could do was fill in the missing pieces with reasoning and imagination, leaving us with a slightly foggy narrative. Po, it seemed, came from poverty and, when she married into the Roan family, it was as a second wife to a man several decades older than her. At the time, the Roan family business was in steep decline, and when my grandfather passed away from old age, Po and my father, then just a child, were kicked out by the first wife and left with only each other to cling to.

Fortunately, my father had taken lessons with Grandfather's private tutor from a young age and had built up a relatively solid foundation in the classics. Studying independently, he passed the entrance exams for a publicly funded normal school for elementary and middle school education, and ended up teaching at an elementary school in a mountainous part of the Minxi region. After a few years, he applied for a transfer and was assigned a civil service position in Taiwan, where he and Po settled into their lives as widow and son.

My mother, Chao Yu-Pin, claimed to be a descendant of Chao Ting-Mei, the fourth brother of Chao Kuang-Yin, who ruled as Emperor Taizu during the Song Dynasty. As a child, I would listen to her retell the tale of her supposed ancestry and confusedly wonder if this Chao Kuang-Yin, whose name was constantly on her lips, was some older friend or relative my mother had known as a child – after all, they shared the same surname. And of course Mother would always bring up her father – my grandfather – and how he worked in Wenrufang, a literary area in Fuchou's historic Sanfang Qixiang district. He operated what sounded to be a small but well-organized embroidery workshop that had customers as far as Taiwan and Southeast Asia. And she claimed, loud and proud to anyone who would listen, that her neighbors immediately across the street were descendants of Lin Zexu, that well-known official who had played such a crucial role in the First Opium War. She had even been classmates with one of the family's daughters in elementary school.


BOOKS FROM TAIWAN

NON-FICTION

雄合味：橫跨百年，包山藏海，高雄
KAOHSIUNG'S SAVORY SOUL

Roger Kuo
郭銘哲

- **Category:** Travel
- **Publisher:** Ecus
- **Date:** 7/2023
- **Rights contact:** bft.fiction.nonfiction@moc.gov.tw
- **Pages:** 324
- **Length:** 150,000 characters (approx. 97,500 words in English)

Born in 1982, Kaohsiung native Roger Kuo is a nationally recognized and respected writer on local culinary culture. His gastronomic curiosity and engagingly detailed approach to writing have brought to his readers a delightful stream of stories on the lives and careers of true food professionals. When not writing, Roger regularly works as a culinary tour guide, taking locals and visitors alike on tasteful explorations of the food and beauty on offer down his city's side streets and alleyways.

120家以人情和手藝慢燉的食飲私味

"Perfectly seasoned" gourmand Roger Kuo regales readers with stories and insights from some of his hometown's top food professionals in his latest work* Kaohsiung's Savory Soul. *His words and images distill a decade of exploring and experiencing and of listening to stories that effervesce with southern Taiwanese flavor and heritage.

Roger Kuo's first insider's guide to the traditional food scene in Kaohsiung City, *Kaohsiung Good Eats*, propelled the author to national foodie stardom after its 2013 publication. While his first work took 6 years to research, compile and write, his follow up effort, *Kaohsiung's Savory Soul*, took another full decade to do the same. Moreover, as the title implies, this 2023 title spotlights not only Roger's latest culinary discoveries but also digs deeper into the soulful essence of these restaurants, diners, and food stands and of the owners and chefs who make them sing.

This salute to the food professionals behind Kaohsiung's best authentic cuisine uses threads of human warmth, history, and culinary culture to weave a cohesive and compelling narrative. Experience through the author's eyes, ardor, and detailed writing style many of the unique stories and personalities that make this city such an alluring gastronomic adventure. Each of the 120 distinctive food establishments visited in the city, including breakfast shops, restaurants, snack shops, and food gift retailers, is dotingly covered in terms of location, signature dishes, business philosophy, owner's story, and ties to Kaohsiung heritage and history. The result is an up-to-date, one-of-a-kind foodie treasure map of Kaohsiung City.

From deep-fried breakfast wraps to reservation-only gourmet dinners on hilltops overlooking the city, experience in honest pictures and words the stories behind Kaohsiung's most irresistible, most delectable culinary offerings. Each celebrates the culinary professionalism, commitment to customer, and passion for authentic flavors of these establishments. Open to page one and begin your exploration of Kaohsiung City's centuries-old food heritage.

KAOHSIUNG'S SAVORY SOUL

By Roger Kuo
Translated by Alexander Benninger

> A decade's worth of culinary exploration spanning multiple ethnic influences and eras is packed into this book spotlighting the culinary stories of 120 restaurants, eateries, and vendors in Kaohsiung City. Text and photographs brilliantly show how the book's central theme of "diverse flavors" connects everyday life with local identity and community spirit. Diverse flavors is more than a lifestyle, it acknowledges the importance of finding and enjoying food pleasing to each individual palate. Use the QR code at the end of the book to unlock this book's practical function as a travel guide.
>
> — ***Openbook*** **/ Translated by Jeff Miller**

Foreword

Three Flavors in One: From *Kaohsiung Good Eats* to *Kaohsiung's Savory Soul* Locality, Fraternity, Hospitality

Everyone who lives in Tainan, whether for a short stay or long term, quickly learns to the importance of learning and using key Taiwanese words and phrases when going out on the town. It's a tool, but even more a medium that helps me more quickly dedicate myself to this city, and grounds me, truly grounds me at the center of my life. This is especially true if you listen closely at any snack stall. You'll almost never hear a Kaohsiunger say, *hó-tsiah* "good food". More than half of Tainan locals describe a good meal in just two words: *hah-bī*, "good taste". I've noticed over the years that hah-bī has evolved beyond describing something the diner thinks tastes good to now conveying a meaning something like, "I don't care what anyone else thinks tastes good. This is the life I want, and the most important thing is that everything is done according to my tastes." That includes both satisfying my hunger and nourishing my soul.

Some people may never know the sort of individual thoughts, feelings, trials or tribulations that are reflected in our food. I eat, therefore, I am. In that moment, everyone is eating to preserve their quiet existence in search of their own creature comforts built up amidst daily routines. It doesn't matter at all what different culinary aesthetics deem an exceptional flavor; but rather the subtle aspects of these dishes that come to be understood as the tacit emotions we share with shopkeepers when we're operating on the same frequency. I mean, honestly, it's a local identity that's taken shape from the collective memory created together over so many years; a confidence born from local freshness, the spice of life, and the sweetness of people. There will always be a meal, but the point isn't to wonder whether visitors will like it. It's more important to be yourself; and being yourself doesn't mean catering to the crowd. You're always welcome at my table, but you'll eat what we're having.

The cook should feel very much the same way, and focus on the course they've set for themselves. As the seasons change and generations pass, we find those

with similar tastes who continue to tweak our recipes until some become celebrated "house specials". Once the family's secret ingredient steps out of the kitchen, the confidence of regular customers helps everything take root in local cuisine. Years ago, when I first decided on *Kaohsiung Good Eats* as the title of this book, I'd already started to formulate a clear definition of the word "good". "It doesn't necessarily mean the 'best' because subjective feelings differ widely from one person to the next. It's more of an invitation, 'Kaohsiung welcomes you!'" Ten years later, I named my book *Kaohsiung's Savory Soul* because most of us can agree it is the flavor that wins you over. Whenever a first timer takes up an invitation to visit my city, it is my sincerest hope that they cultivate a more complex relationship with Kaohsiung. A relationship with greater understanding and more meaningful interactions. No matter where you're from or when you got here; the many different ethnic groups that arrived in Kaohsiung at various points in time are waiting to share the personal histories and origin stories infused into their culinary techniques.

Kaohsiung's Savory Soul can be considered an evolution of my previous work, *Kaohsiung Good Eats*. The former weaves the culinary stories of 120 all-new restaurants into the complex tapestry of life in Kaohsiung. Reading both books will paint a much clearer picture of the cityscape. *Kaohsiung Good Eats* came out in 2013 when my focus was more on spotlighting and explaining the culinary trajectories various that have left their mark on this city over the past one hundred years. That six-year field study (2007-2013) was a lengthy screening and recording process, the goal of which was to show visitors the best of Kaohsiung and to show locals the best of themselves. *Kaohsiung's Savory Soul* took even longer, requiring almost ten years from my initial investigation to its final publication (2013-2023). This period included the three challenging years of the coronavirus pandemic that gripped the entire world. Things got a little rocky for me as well as for several of these restaurants. The good thing is that we've all come out the other side. Looking back, we're much like the spirit of *Kaohsiung's Savory Soul*, infused with the resolute persistence and robust strength of the city.

The scope of this new investigation expanded beyond the busy Kaohsiung neighborhoods readers will remember from my last book. I crossed old county lines into the townships that existed before the city's incorporation as a municipality to explore different ethnic groups and time periods across mountains, vast seas, and ocean straits. My goal in publishing *Kaohsiung's Savory Soul* is to bring everyone closer to the tastes of local life to experience a deeper, wider, and more diverse Kaohsiung. My last book mostly focused on bustling neighborhoods and didn't really shine a spotlight beyond classic restaurants. This time, I've written a broader exposé on the exquisite tastes to be found in Kaohsiung's outlying townships. If I had to sum up the process of writing both of these books from investigation to publication, it would be that in the blink of an eye, I've gone from a curious young man to your friendly neighborhood uncle. At least my passion has never wavered. I have to thank the palates and culinary techniques of these professionals hidden in every corner of my city for always helping me recapture the flavors of my youth.

We're living in an age of fast food that's largely

being caught on camera. I've definitely used several snapshot techniques to capture certain elements of my story, but it's hard to fully express the joy and sorrow behind these stories left behind in the sands of time. I very often still need to put everything into words before the book is good enough for my tastes. *Kaohsiung's Savory Soul* isn't just a dependable local food guide. Each chapter is also a brief attempt to discover the complex interplay among eras, landscapes, neighborhoods, techniques, and personalities. Once published, if readers mistake this text for my detective notes or a secret menu of local restaurants, I won't mind at all. Actually, this book is meant to be an extension of our shared tastes. Take a look around the world and you'll see that this is essentially true of many immigrant cities where folks rely on, embrace, and even repel each other on a journey that we never seem prepared to finish. I don't mean to brag, but here in Kaohsiung, the city is much like its people. It doesn't matter if you're short, tall, fat, or thin; we can all discover what makes us look our best. It's been ten years. Believe me, Kaohsiung can proudly say, "It's okay, you can come closer…don't be shy."

Tang Bo

Pork Liver Rolls

Offering up rich, nostalgia-sating snacks in a lonely Gangshan market.

Gangshan District fell right between my journey south from Tainan to Kaohsiung. From the start, the township seemed to have a life of its own. Ping An Market, the first public market in Kaohsiung, was built beside the Provincial Highway during the Japanese colonial era in what many still call the "old city" of Gangshan. The

market once boasted over 100 stalls with a sizzling hot atmosphere to help locals find exactly what they're looking for and was one of the best places in town to eat and drink. Despite the fact that many of the stalls have moved on over the years, the market can still be found between the hustle and bustle of Weiren Road and Wunsian Market, which opened in 1951. Thankfully, the entire vacant lot is safeguarded by a smattering of dedicated shopkeepers, of which Tang Bo Pork Liver Rolls is a clear standout. Tang Bo is a third-generation stall hidden deep in Ping An that remains committed to frying up beautiful, fragrant morsels representing the best of Taiwanese fried food. They shine amidst the nostalgic atmosphere of this abandoned market.

Wu Man-Tang, known as Uncle Tang, mans the stall and feeds the hungry crowds. He was just fourteen when he started making a living selling *oo-pèh tshiat*, dishes made to order with whatever was on hand, and other snacks before setting himself up at Ping An Market. Like most people of his generation, Uncle Tang worked hard to make a name for himself by making whatever would sell. It wasn't until the 1970s that Uncle Tang landed on his signature dish. His daughters-in-law were eventually more than happy to take over the family business to help see the happy bustle continue along that old market street. Every morning, customers young and old stop by for breakfast. They come, again and again, to sit down in what feels like their own *tsàu-kha* – home kitchen. A bird's eye view of the red sign and yellow characters looks almost like an advertisement for Tien Fu Na Shou cakes. From a distance, you'll note the many hungry customers waiting and taking selfies, but move in and all you'll see are the ladies firmly in charge of this well-oiled multigenerational operation. The shop has been around since the 70s, 80s, 90s, early 2000s and beyond. Before you know it, we'll be celebrating their hundredth anniversary.

開動了！老台中：歷史小說家的街頭
A FOODIE'S GUIDE TO OLD TAICHUNG

© Chen Pei-Yun

Yang Shuang-Zi
楊双子

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- **Publisher:** Taiwan Interminds
- **Date:** 12/2021
- **Rights contact:** bft.fiction.nonfiction@moc.gov.tw
- **Pages:** 192
- **Length:** 56,712 characters (approx. 36,800 words in English)
- **Rights Sold:** Japanese

Born in Taichung in 1984, Yang Shuang-Zi is a novelist and researcher of genre fiction and youth subcultures. The pen name Shuang-Zi is taken from the Japanese kanji for "twins". Originally sharing this pen name with her twin sister, she has continued using it since her sister's passing in 2015. Her novels focus on female relationships and often incorporate elements of Taichung's history under Japanese colonial rule. Her best-known work, *Taiwan Travelogue: A Novel*, was published in English translation in 2024.

飲食踏查

Join historical fiction novelist Yang Shuang-Zi on an in-depth exploration of Taichung Old Town – birthplace of the global bubble tea phenomenon. This work leads readers on a journey that tempts the palate while unlocking the stories and history behind some of Taichung's most-beloved multigenerational snack food vendors.

In the early 1900s, the growing colonial city of Taichung (then known as Taichū) centered on the bustling commercial district surrounding the city's new train station, where a plethora of food vendors and restaurants could be found. Taichung's modern food culture has been shaped and reshaped by the flow of economic migrants to and through this city. Yang Shuang-Zi weaves into this engaging work an intimate familiarity with modern Taichung's "old town" and her discerning palate, spotlighting twenty vendors that capture the unique snack food culture of her city. Readers not only receive a grand tour of the many made-to-order treats on offer but also learn the stories of these vendors and their place in the fabric of Taichung history.

The featured vendors were selected for the emotive quality of both their stories and flavors. These are the local foodie "experiences" that visitors to the city are sure to remember long after they return home. Delve into Taichung-exclusives like savory-sour Taichung thick noodles as well as Taiwan street-food standards such as braised pork rice, crisp-fried chicken, castella cake, and shaved ice. Learn the stories of how each vendor won over the hearts and taste buds of their customers.

Yang Shuang-Zi also explores in this work questions that pique her historical novelist curiosities. What would a hungry high school girl in colonial-era Taichung have eaten on her way home from school? When did the now-iconic street-food standard papaya milk first appear on the streets of Taichung? What fueled the almost overnight success of bubble tea shops in the city? The answers to these and other questions are deftly woven into the narrative, leaving the reader with a much better taste for Taichung's snack foods and culinary proclivities.

A FOODIE'S GUIDE TO OLD TAICHUNG

By Yang Shuang-Zi
Translated by Timothy Smith

> "Taiwan's culinary ethnographers are familiar with older cities and districts such as Wanhua and Dadaocheng in Taipei as well as Tainan City, with its sweet sauces and fresh seafood. Taichung City, situated in central Taiwan and neither particularly old nor remarkably new, presents more of a culinary enigma. What flavors and foods does this city have to offer?
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> Folk culture enthusiast Yang Shuang-Zi begins this work by imagining the everyday culinary cravings of schoolgirls during the prewar Japanese colonial period before veering off into her own foodie adventures and memories spanning Taichung's diverse neighborhoods. Eschewing appeals to age, reputation or authenticity, the narrative is inspired instead by the author's own memories and experiences, imbuing this book with engaging stories and memorable insights."
>
> — ***Openbook* / Translated by Jeff Miller**

Preface

An Invitation for Foodies: Old Taichung

Please feel free to carry this book with you as you walk along Taichung's streets, snacking away.

This book is a slow-paced, meandering journey through the eats and drinks sold along the streets of Taichung Old Town. Just before ordering one of these snacks or treats, it's only natural for the thought "I'm ready to dig in!" to exert its grip over the imagination. Just like back then, "dig in" has two layers of meaning. The "Old Town" area of the city today is the part of town that "took off" the very moment trains and locomotives arrived on the scene. That was on April 20th, 1908, when the island's main railway line finally connected the port city of Keelung in Taiwan's north with the port city of Kaohsiung in its south. Taichung hosted the Taiwan Trunk Railway Full Line Opening Ceremony on October 24th of the same year. Later, Taichung itself would center on and expand out from its train station, with the city undergoing three major renovations in the 1900s, during the Meiji, Taishō, and Shōwa eras, respectively. Today, the area within the boundaries of Taichung at that time is what we now call Taichung's Old Town district.

"Study up on food and drink; eat your history" was my personal motto when I first began thinking about writing this book. I read as I went along, taking bites here and there as I went. In this book, I comb through the history of twenty street snacks, sometimes walking unknown roads and trying as best I can to jot down the routes I took. Most of the time, I am just munching and sipping, stepping into different spaces in search of answers, all while being taken aback in complete surprise. "Oh, wow! I had no idea this is where 'thick-cut *ta-mien-keng* noodles' started." "I thought iced taro was from *there*, not *here*." "So, that's the key element separating regular boba tea and old-fashioned black tea!" "Huh, so *sha-kua* noodles are like…the ultimate

food for those with street smarts." … Even for me, the journey made for this book was filled with thrills and surprises. I wrote down all I could from my explorations of food and drink sold on the streets and corners around Old Town, and I think I was able to recapture a fairly vivid impression of this city's century-old visage.

The framework for my exploration across the streets of this old city followed routes I had taken a long time ago. The scope of the area centers on the train station at the center of Taichung. This part of the city extends as far east as the Han River and as far west as Mayuantou Creek. It's as wide as the city's extent from north to south. When it comes to snack sets, I focused on writing about variations on this culinary category that people don't often hear about or that reflect authentically "Taichung" characteristics. With regard to the stores and shops visited in this book, none are chains and most are well-established, multigenerational operations, meaning that a number of them preserve the historic site character of the Old Town.

However, the scopes and writing angles I originally set for myself gradually faded from importance during the writing process, and I just couldn't maintain them throughout the course of the whole book. For example, when it came to choosing the area I wanted to focus in on, Taichung's Old Town is truly a district that developed around the main entrance to the Taichung train station. Only one of my twenty chapters covers a call on a place south of the station area. Taichung sits smack dab in the middle of Taiwan's western coast. It's a city with a swelling and fluid population, which has led to an extremely high rate of cultural exchange. When it comes to snacks and desserts, the "Taichung-ness" of the dishes may not be entirely apparent. As for independent retail shops, they take up seventeen chapters in this book, with the remaining three covering non-franchised stores.

The explorations allowed within the limited confines of this book's twenty chapters have told me the population of Taichung's Old Town is made up of several groups that originally emigrated into the city from central and southern Taiwan. This invested the city with its unique blend of northern and southern Taiwanese cuisine. The elements that have molded the face of the district cluster into several facets: (1) From a geographic perspective, many Taichung residents have roots in small towns or rural areas north of Tainan. This highlights Taichung's magnetism as an important, modernized city in central Taiwan. (2) From cultural and ethnic perspectives, Taichung has welcomed an influx of Han Hoklo from Quanzhou and Zhangzhou in China's Fujian province during China's last imperial dynasty, internal migrants as well as Japanese during the Japanese colonial era, mainlander immigrants from various Chinese provinces during and soon after the end of the Chinese Civil War, more recent internal migrants from central-southern Taiwan, and American military personnel stationed in the area during a unique period in the mid-twentieth th century. (3) From a class perspective, blue-collar classes make up the majority of the city's population. All of these different groups and strata and what they contributed to kitchen larders in the city helped Taichung's Old Town adapt and refine its taste buds through new ties and new blood. Since the old and new have been blended pretty well, nowadays we get to see, taste, smell and enjoy the wonderful curbside snacks and drinks that are indeed the fruit of these cultural exchanges.

Although Taichung's Old Town is known today as the "old town district", considering the span of Taiwan's history, the town is relatively new. In the Japanese colonial era, city areas were carved up and delineated into districts, each dominated by a distinct regional or ethnic group of Taiwanese recruited from other parts of the island to work in the city. And so, the city became a sea fed by rivers arising elsewhere and flowing into it and filled with people seeking novelty and change. Comparatively, the city itself had relatively little continuity and even less of the trappings that marked Taiwan's older cities like Tainan, Lukang, and Wanhua and underlined their political, cultural and economic prominence. The array of flavors and textures regularly found in the old part of the city gradually grew with its burgeoning population of "outsiders". A century of culinary collection and gathering has led to the build-up of Taichung's gourmet universe. The taste buds of Old Town residents also evolved with the times, adjusting and multiplying through the introduction of a myriad of different tastes. Today, this includes the culinary culture introduced through the shops inside

ASEAN Square. The beautiful flowers of Southeast Asian countries such as Vietnam, Thailand and Indonesia bloomed and then floated to the ground, spreading seeds that would take root and further blossom. Fifty years on, foods and beverages derived from these once-exotic cuisines have become indelible threads in the tapestry of sights, tastes, and smells that defines the streets of the Old Town.

The starting point for this book came from my bi-weekly food column for the *Tai Sounds* news website. From May 2020 until January 2021, I wrote approximately sixteen articles of around 1,600 characters each. When I anthologized my articles into this book, I took the first drafts of my columns and embellished and fleshed them out more. I went further and wrote about four additional dishes. So, how was I certain that each chapter was representative of old Taichung? I made "snack sets" my top priority. After I was certain of which dishes I wanted to write about, I sifted through all my thoughts about potentially suitable shops. As I wrote my draft, I would switch out shops and adjust rankings based on my evolving thoughts. I ultimately ended up with several unrecognized champions.

I wanted to write about snack dishes like *muâ-ínn* soup (a slightly starchy soup made from jute leaves), but I dropped it because this homestyle summer staple wasn't something I ever ran across on my excursions. Even though Match Café is filled to the brim with innovative spirit as they attempt to revolutionize food with drinks like with muâ-ínn milk tea, its location was unfortunately outside the area I wanted to write about. Another issue was the plethora of dessert shop lists already published. Shops and stands I ultimately decided to cut from my wish included Xingzhong Street Soy Milk Tea, Yuanzi Street A-Ming's Black Tea, Twin Rivers Tea House, Dr. Jam's Smoothies, Ichihuku, Chung-hua Mochi, and MaLuLian Taiwan Herb Jelly with Milk Cream, and Namakashi Japanese Sweets across from the Taiwan Cooperative Bank, among others. Some places, like the stone hot pot and shabu-shabu joints, were already stretching the limits of what could be considered a snack set. Also, in some cases, the food on offer seemed only barely to qualify as snacks or snack sets at all. This was the basis for me eliminating a large number of potential candidates by the end of my research. Among these were Kao Lin Teppanyaki, Barbecue and Salads, Chin-Ta-Yuan Bento, Siaoyu'er Wine-Cooked Chicken Soup, Taiwan Chen Hot Pot, Huang-Chi Goose, and Lao-Mei's Steaks. My decisions regarding close ties still sometimes vex me. Those not making the shortlist for this reason include otherwise fine candidates like Yang-ching-hua Lumpia, Jin-Ri Mimahua's House, Shanghai Dim Sum on Ziyou Road, Hualien-Ruisui Stinky Tofu also on Ziyou Road, Linchia BBQ at the Duxing Road intersection, the food stall selling stinky tofu and oyster omelets on the Chunghua Night Market intersection, the Pork Eggs Toast shop on Jianxing Road, and the Eight Taels Fried Chicken on Yizhong Street....The choices were so great that I could've easily turned this book into a two-volume set.

This book doesn't consider future trends and is meant to be just a starting point for its readers' own culinary explorations. Honestly, I'm less than the least knowledgeable researcher when it comes to understanding Taichung history, and I'm certainly not the most capable epicurean with a perfect sense of taste or anything. However, I *am* certain that where history and food meet is where a foodie like me from Old Town, who loves history, walking, and exploring, holds a distinct advantage. Simply said, I am an Old Town foodie. This book wasn't written just to serve as a food-street guidebook for Taichung newbies. I also wanted this book to be for people from this area wanting to renew their fascination with the historical tastes of their city.

So, to sum things up, I hope you bring this book with you as your walk around Taichung's streets, snacking and slurping away the whole time.

I need to give a shoutout to new foodie friends reading my book. Please enjoy it! The same thing goes for my friends and family. Of course, I extend my gratitude to the following individuals for their friendship, input and insights: Wang Yun-Chen, Wang Hsiu-Chen, Wang Yang Yueh-Ying, Tai Sounds, Taiwan

Interminds Publishing, Chu Chen, Chu Yu-hsun, Lin Fanyu, Shu Wen-chuang, Paperbooks, Guo Ru-Mei, Kuo Yu-tung, Mo Yu-ching, Chen Yu-hui, Chen Yen-han, Chen Kuo-wei, Tsai Cheng-yun, Lai Ting-ho, Lai Su-ching, Kingyo Hsieh, and Xiao Xiang Shen.

The Best Nagasaki Castella Cakes in All of Taiwan: Banshin's Specialty Nagasaki Castella

Whenever coming across discussions of Nagasaki castella cakes on social network sites, I add my two cents and cut to the heart of the conversation by leaving the comment: "The best Nagasaki castella in all of Taiwan is Banshin's Specialty across from the Taichung Second Market!" Someone studying Japanese once posted the reply: "Do you mean the 'Banshin's' with the 'ban' character (阪) used to write the name 'Osaka' (大阪)?" I replied: "No, it's the one written with an earth radical, '坂'." Occasionally, Old Taichungers chime in with comments like: "The one in front of the Taichung Second Market is the main store, the one out on Suiyuan Road is their branch!" I invariably try to set the record straight, writing "Suiyuan Road says it's a branch, but the Banshin's across from the Second Market has a clear trademark on their boxes that includes the statement 'This is the only Banshin's in Taiwan. We operate no branch outlets!'" Whenever someone posts something along the lines of "Tasty is as tasty does, but you can only keep it out for three days. Can you ever finish it in time?" I immediately post a reply, saying "That's nonsense. I can easily eat an entire cake in one sitting."

Lifting the cover off the dazzling, long golden box, you find the cake is still just a tad bit on the warm side having been freshly pulled out of the oven and set out to rest and cool off. After taking a bite while still warm, the browned top layer of the cake has a bit of a caramel hint that rushes forth. As I sink my teeth again into the golden-yellow body of the cake, immediately, a mélange of rich and fragrant honey flavor, maltose and egg fills my mouth. As I chew, each soft morsel brings with it a subtle springy texture. Once the cake is fully cooled on a countertop, it's put in the fridge to chill. Nagasaki castella condenses just a little bit and the sugars become concentrated and sharper. After it's been taken out from the fridge after chilling, a tiny bit of the flavor is lost, yet the chewability factor seems to undergo an upgrade.

When I posted on social media that I put my cake in my fridge, I got a lot of responses from foodie friends living in the Old Town telling me that doing so makes the surface of the cake too moist, and causes it to lose flavor. If you take the cake out of the box and let it cool, they said, and keep it away from moisture to keep the ants at bay, it will keep for about three days and two nights. I couldn't agree more. After all, most of the time, I store this cake at room temperature. If you're worried it might spoil from the heat, you could finish it off by the next night…Well, in any case, for those who are massive fans of this cake, do you really think any pieces would be left uneaten after two days?

Nagasaki castella cakes can be found all over, but Banshin's Specialty is a champion, particularly in terms of texture. Attempting to describe it, I would say it's like taking the softness of sponge cake and mixing it with the chewy, bouncy texture of a steamed brown-sugar cake. The more you chew, the greater the ebb and flow of yolkiness and the sweet aromas of sugar and honey that come together in the space between your tongue and lips; your entire mouth fills with a robustly sweet fragrance and flavor with nary a hint of any oiliness or that dried-out feeling from being set out for too long. Just eat one bite, and your nostrils and tastebuds on the tip of your tongue will revel in that delectable aftertaste for a long, long while. It's such a tempting snack, it's no wonder people go for a second slice.

書店本事：在地圖上閃耀的閱讀星空

BEYOND BOOKSTORES: WHERE THE

Dreamland Image 夢田影像

The Creative Team Behind *Beyond Bookstores* 《書店本事》製作團隊

- **Category:** Lifestyle
- **Publisher:** Yuan-Liou
- **Date:** 9/2014
- **Rights contact:** bft.fiction.nonfiction@moc.gov.tw
- **Pages:** 296
- **Length:** 133,826 characters (approx. 86,900 words in English)
- **Rights sold:** Japanese (Thousands of Books)

Taipei-based Dreamland Image Co. created *Beyond Bookstores* as a literary repository for the insights, anecdotes, and other interesting bits uncovered but not fully used by their team during research for their original dramatic TV series *Lovestore at the Corner* and series of short films *Poetries from the Bookstore*. This literary project came to fruition under the guidance of widely respected author Yang Zhao, with interviews and writing by freelance writer Kuo I-ching and delicately executed illustrations of each bookshop hand-drawn by Miss Cyndi.

SOULS OF BOOKLOVERS MEET

Beyond Bookstores ***explores the books, spaces, stories, and raisons d'etre behind some of Taiwan's most interesting booksellers.***

Beyond Bookstores immerses readers in the compelling stories behind exceptional bookshops across Taiwan as shared by shop staff and owners. Interwoven with genuine warmth and appeal, these stories, while centered on these shops, embrace life's full palette of experiences, with each "bookshop" serving as a stage on which human kindness entwines with threads in the local cultural fabric.

Featured bookshops include venerable standbys, newbie upstarts and everything in between. Alongside indie venues are beloved familiars like perennial student favorite Tonsan in Taipei City, King Books Secondhand in Tainan, and vanguard of Taiwan's feminist movement, Fembooks. Readers also drop by Taiwan's "cheapest bookseller" Shuijhun Bookstore in Taipei and cozy community-focused booksellers such as Small Small Bookshop and the indigenous culture-infused Fan Yi Art Books House.

Apart from shop stories, listen in on conversations with shop owners that spotlight their tenacity and passions as well as those unique traits that led them to create such distinctive spaces for bibliophiles. Whether planning a visit or enjoying vicariously from afar, the text and beautiful illustrations within its pages form the ideal guide to Taiwan's unique booksellers. With book readership on the decline, *Beyond Bookstores* certainly whets the appetite for a return to the tactile pleasures and relaxed airs of reading.

BEYOND BOOKSTORES: WHERE THE SOULS OF BOOKLOVERS MEET

By the Creative Team led by Dreamland Image Co.
Translated by Beverly Liu

> "In Taiwan, "indie bookstore" is generally used as a catch-all term for non-chain-affiliated booksellers that focus primarily on book sales. The name "indie" emerged in the domestic publishing industry around fifteen years ago. While some ended up being the proverbial "flash in the pan", others found their business footing and have stood the test of time. Their individual airs, experiences, and proclivities give each a unique story to tell and values to share.
>
> Published in 2014, *Beyond Bookstores* includes original essays on forty-three indie bookstores around Taiwan. Although far from comprehensive, the stores covered are largely representative of the industry overall. Although ten years now separate today from these writings, there remains significant value in the time, effort, and insights invested in this work. The COVID-19 pandemic in fact led to nearly one in five of the shops covered either going out of business or changing their business model. For those with a curiosity and/or passion for indie bookstores, this work is an invaluable window onto the development and recent history of these bookstores in Taiwan."
>
> — **Wu Chia-Heng (Host, *The Future-Focused Bookstore* podcast) / Translated by Jeff Miller**

Foreword:
The Blooming Spirit of Bookstores in Taiwan

Text by Su Li-Mei, CEO of Dreamland Image Co.

A bookstore's essence is defined by the books it holds and the customers it attracts. You can catch a glimpse of the owner's worldview and the fascinating tales of its patrons. Each has its own unique and captivating story. It's as though the words from the books jump off the pages, unfolding extraordinary encounters with the readers. I invite you to join us on this remarkable journey and embrace the profound connections between these extraordinary bookstores and the people who bring them to life.

Hoanya Books: A Platform for Social Movements

Owner: Yu Kuo-Hsin
Year Founded: 1999

The mid-March afternoon sun gently filters through the clouds, casting a serene glow on a tranquil alleyway in Chiayi City. At the end of this peaceful stretch, a seemingly idyllic bookstore awaits, its charm enhanced by the sight of a tabby cat, the sole patron, perched on the window ledge. The spring couplets adorning the store's facade, however, hint at the unique character within, proclaiming, "This store does not conform to current trends; our bookshelves brim with visionary foresight."

Upon arriving at the bookstore, we found the owner

tied up answering a constant stream of calls from friends and patrons eager to show their support for students protesting against the unjust passing of the Cross-Strait Trade Agreement at the Legislative Yuan.

"It's because of our Wednesday weekly events at the store that I had to rush back late last night from Taipei; otherwise, I would still be at the Legislative Yuan right now. Hoanya Books is probably the bookstore in Taiwan with the strongest connections to the nation's myriad social movements. We've explored, discussed, participated, and even initiated all different scales and types of social movements," the lanky-statured Yu Kuo-Hsin proudly proclaims.

As soon as visitors step into the bookstore, their attention is drawn to the "Hoanya Station" sign at the far end of the oblong interior. This sign was crafted by Yu during an old house restoration event. Operating for fifteen years, the bookstore is not just a place to purchase books; it serves as a vital hub for local social movements. Ahead of significant social events, the store buzzes with crowds. At times, as many as a hundred people would cram into the modest 360-square-foot space. Born in 1978, Yu has been deeply entrenched in social movements since his school days. He views it as fate that he launched the bookstore the year following his graduation from college.

Let's step back to the end of the last century, a time of intense political change, when Yu Kuo-Hsin was still a student and the concept of "Taiwanization" was gaining mainstream momentum. In those politically charged times, Yu began to gather energy and knowledge, immersing himself in social movements. This journey can be traced back to his enlightening introduction to *Tâi-uân Tôo-su-sik*[01]. Yu's move from rural Yunlin to the urban hub of Chiayi City for high school was a significant transition for him. It was here that he stumbled upon that iconic basement public library – a sanctuary dedicated to books about Taiwan's history, geography, and political culture.

"That was such an unusual library, and it blew my mind at the time. I think that's why, ever since my first visit to Tâi-uân Tôo-su-sik, there was no turning back. I was on the path of no return to becoming a social movement advocate." Yu recalls this was when he first realized the potential of a bookstore to be the perfect space for positive change, better than a public library, better than any civil organization. After graduation, Yu initially focused on finding a job. It wasn't until the earth-shattering and life-altering 921 Earthquake forever changed the course of his life. This event motivated Yu to pursue his dream. With unwavering determination, he swiftly planned and executed the grand opening of Hoanya Books in just a few months.

Embracing the Concept of a Social Movement

When Yu established Hoanya Books, he was just twenty-one years old with zero relevant business experience. Hence, he encountered many setbacks and quite a few predicaments. He took side jobs just to make ends meet, hanging up a makeshift sign "The owner is out to lunch" as a makeshift excuse for his absence during business hours. In addition to the support of loyal customers, the legendary San Francisco independent bookstore City Lights Books kept him going when times were tough. Founded in 1953, City Lights Books is a modern-day cultural and literary landmark and a testimony to freedom and progressiveness.

It was also by chance that Yu learned about Mexico's Zapatista Army of National Liberation in Wu Yin-Ning's book titled *Masked Jungle*. The group's decision to abandon their weapons and pick up pens instead, using poems, novels, postcards, and short-term "experience" camps to convey the injustice experienced by the country's indigenous people, was truly inspiring. Yu pointed out, "This is the perfect reference to what it would be like to utilize the functions of independent bookstores, empowering them to make a stand and fight back."

The discussion with Yu invariably leads back to his active involvement in social movements. He smiles and recounts how his neighbors often dismiss the bookstore as a sham with the true purpose of the store as a platform for social movements. When questioned about whether his commitment to Taiwan's social causes has impacted the bookstore's profitability, Yu, speaking primarily in Taiwanese with an occasional smattering

01 Translator's note: Founded by Dr. Chang Hung-Jung, Tâi-uân Tôo-su-sik was the first Taiwan-themed public library in Taiwan. The name of the library literally translates as "Taiwan Library", but rather than using an English translation of the name of the library, the name is spelled out using the official romanization system for Taiwanese Hokkien.

of Taiwanese-accented Mandarin, responds, "My extensive involvement in various social movements and the intermittent closure of the store significantly affects its operation. That's why I had to return before Wednesday to avoid missing out on hosting the weekly events and on sales. Otherwise, we might end up with zero sales this month."

Since opening, Yu has hosted over seven hundred events at his store. Though most of the events are free of charge, the store always sees spikes in sales during book launches.

On the day of my visit, a young woman was diligently watching the store counter up front. Yu pointed to the scheduling chart on the column and told me, "Hoanya Books doesn't have any employees. Everyone who comes out to help is an unpaid volunteer. We are closed on Saturdays since we don't have enough volunteer staff; otherwise, the store would get a lot of customer traffic on Saturdays."

Chen I-Jou, a recent university graduate, has worked as a store clerk volunteer at Hoanya Books for three months. Chen is originally from Changhua City, and she tells us she really likes the shop. She shares that this is in part because of the store's inviting and comfortable atmosphere and also because of the access she has to the shop's unique selection of books, which includes many great non-mainstream books.

Show Care and Concern for Mother Nature from an Agricultural Perspective

Simply put, Yu explains, Hoanya Books operates as a scaled-down version of Tâi-uân Tôo-su-sik with a specific focus on Taiwanese literature, history, and natural characteristics and with smaller sections on nature and the ecology, travel, railway heritage, and wildlife.

"I want to explore Taiwanese culture in a way that goes beyond the usual topics and takes an interdisciplinary approach using different ideas as the medium," Yu reached down and randomly picked out Taiwanese author Wu Yin-Ning's book titled *Where is the Jianghu – An Observation of Taiwanese Agriculture*. "I would select these types of books to carry in my store because I value things somewhat differently than most people. I would rather approach the topic of agriculture from a cultural perspective, which is often overlooked by the public. If we care about social movements, we must address issues related to resources such as food, agriculture, and land. Caring for the land and agriculture is essential before we can truly love and protect everything here on this island."

Agriculture is a prominent topic of concern for Yu. He explained, "I am passionate about promoting organic farming, despite my parents' continued use of pesticides in their farmland." To further promote sustainable farming methods, Yu has taken up rice farming himself under the principle that practical experience solidifies authentic understanding of a subject. With his new-gained knowledge and conviction, Yu seems to have swayed his parent's perspective as his mom has asked him to try the organic farming method this year on their farmland.

Browsing Hoanya's bookshelves one begins to wonder…If Yu can take a cultural perspective on agriculture, what angle would he take on a section dedicated to cats? "I am a cat owner myself! These days, everyone is all about what rights cats and dogs have or about speaking on behalf of stray animals." Yu smiled and explained he wasn't always a cat person. But about a year ago, a local vet found a stray cat and asked Yu if he would be willing to adopt it. It was super affectionate, loved being around humans, and would always strut around wagging his tail in hopes of receiving love and affection. It didn't take long before Yu caved in and said "yes".

"I named him 'Ba-Bai' because when I first adopted him, I paid NT$800[02] for his medical bill to the veterinarian. But I've since come around to calling him 'Bai-Bai' for short." In contrast to his usually stern and manly demeanor, Yu shows he has a softer side when he showers his beloved cat with affection.

02 Translator's note: Ba-Bai is the phonetic sound for "Eight Hundred" in Mandarin.

You Are What You Read

Books prominently showcased in an independent bookstore offer a mirror into the unique style and preferences of the store owner. When Yu established Hoanya Books, his initial book categories were simple compared to the diverse range of topics and subcategories built up over the subsequent years. However, his category covering Taiwan's Pingpu people (aka Plains Indigenous people) has been around since the store's inception. With the numerous indigenous tribes in Taiwan, it's worth noting why the Pingpu hold a particular fascination for Yu as the name of this tribe also holds a special meaning for his bookstore. During the Japanese rule in Taiwan, anthropologist Utsurikawa Nenozō grouped the Pingpu people of the Yunlin, Chiayi, and Yanshuei regions together as a single tribe – the "Hoanya". Born in Yunlin and later a resident of Chiayi, Yu sees the name Hoanya as a link between himself and the indigenous and other ethnic communities in the area. Yu envisions his profound store name inspiring innovation, idealism, and passion.

Yu stated, "If there is truth behind the aphorism 'you are what you read', then I sincerely wish everyone entering Hoanya Books becomes the rebel our store aspires to be – someone who is passionate about social movements and contributes to the society."

All social movement rebels and advocates are called upon to assemble at Hoanya Books to work as one for the achievement of social ideals.

About Yu Kuo-Hsin

Yu Kuo-Hsin's experiences at Tâi-uân Tôo-su-sik while at university lit in him an inextinguishable passion for social activism. Yu founded Hoanya Books to help social movements gain greater traction among the general public. His commitment to participating in social movements and organizing seminars has made Hoanya Books a symbol of social activism. His more-recent interest in and promotion of eco-friendly farming showcases the evolution of his activism.

Fan Yi Art Books House: Beacon to the Tribes, Cultivating Seeds of Hope

Owner: Kapi Kalidoay
Year Founded: 2013

In a conversation over the phone, Fan Yi Art Books House owner Kapi Kalidoay proudly tells me: "We are a bookstore with a garden. If you don't spend the night, how can you expect to fully appreciate the scent of the soil here?"

Eager to experience that scent myself, I planned a trip down south. The end of my long journey brought me to that selfsame bookstore in sunny Majia Township, Pingtung County. Much to my surprise, the first thing that greeted me wasn't the expected smell of spring soil but the distinctive, locally familiar scent of betel nut flower spikes.

Fan Yi Art Books House's bright-orange sign is juxtaposed against rows of betel nut trees standing firm and tall, flanking both sides of the freeway. A faint sense of sorrow seems to waft in the fresh outdoor air as the dark emerald-green leaves rustle in the breeze. Kapi Kalidoay carefully chose the bookstore's equivocal name. While "Fan Yi" may be taken as a homophonic pun on the Mandarin word for "translate", the actual character used for "fan" means "aborigine" and that used for "yi" means "arts". Despite "aborigine" being an outdated and largely unacceptable term nowadays, Kapi purposely chose this version of "fan" because of his belief in the importance of embracing all aspects of indigenous Taiwanese heritage to affirm and transcend cultural identity. He also plans to translate indigenous literature to preserve and pass on tribal culture and history.

煎一壺時代補帖：高雄30家中藥房
TONIC FOR THE AGES

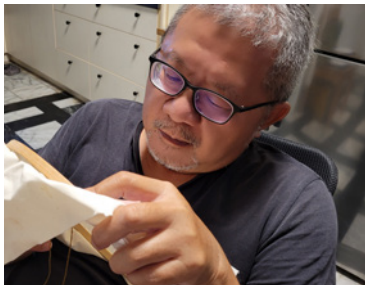
- **Category:** Lifestyle
- **Publisher:** Make Paths
- **Date:** 1/2024
- **Pages:** 208
- **Rights contact:** bft.fiction.nonfiction@moc.gov.tw
- **Length:** 76,000 characters (approx. 49,400 words in English)

This work is the culmination of the efforts of 12 Kaohsiung-based authors, including Su Fu-Nan, Lim Chi-Ki, Chu Pōe-Chin, Chu Yue-Ling, Jamie Jiang, Hsieh Hsin-Chia, Lin Pei-Ying, Tseng Yu-Fen, Ruth Yang, Lo Sha, Hsieh Pei-Ying, and Tao Yi-Wen. Their individual experiences as journalist and professional writers bring depth and storied interest to this work.

Survey and Writing Team of *Tonic for the Ages*
《煎一壺時代補帖》採訪撰文團隊

Photography Team of *Tonic for the Ages*
《煎一壺時代補帖》攝影團隊

The four Kaohsiung-based photographers contributing to this work include former photo-journalist Aming Lee, community development photographer Yu Chia-Jung, longtime documentary filmmaker Lu Yu-Jui, and slashie photographer / artist Chung Shun-Wun.



Illustrator of *Tonic for the Ages*
《煎一壺時代補帖》插畫師

Lin Chien-Chih is a full-time artist living and working in Tainan with an extensive resume of book and map illustrations to his credit. He created the adorably rendered "Divine Farmer" illustrations found throughout this work.

裡的故事祕方

Explore the emotive history and latest innovations of Kaohsiung City's iconic traditional herbal apothecary shops. Discover the unique charms of Taiwan's traditional Chinese-medicine culture and its modern legacy. Learn how this traditional, centuries-old industry is innovating to sustain its relevance and value in the 21st century.

Despite herbal apothecaries in Taiwan having once outnumbered big-name convenience store outlets, social trends are no longer in their favor. With younger generations rarely patronizing these traditional healers, the fate of Taiwan's traditional Chinese medicine dispensaries is in jeopardy. In *Tonic for the Ages*, experienced writers, photographers, and illustrators join forces to curate the history, stories, and closely held secrets of 30 multigenerational herbal apothecaries in Kaohsiung City.

Herbal apothecaries, as part of the social and cultural fabric of Greater Kaohsiung, help safeguard the traditional medical wisdom and folk ways of southern Taiwan. In addition to showcasing the personal stories of owners, this work spotlights how shops are adapting to the times. Learn about Hui Chun Herbal Tea's rebirth as a youth-oriented herbal teahouse, Cheng Hsin Tang's new focus on herbal-based medicinal bath products for pets, and Yong Xing Traditional Chinese Medicine's launch of healthful ready-to-eat herbal entrées, snacks and soups for busy office workers and families. Each innovative step forward, drawing on the natural medical knowledge, effort, and wisdom of generations, upholds traditional Chinese medical heritage while making it relevant and relatable to new and future generations.

Tonic for the Ages is a book sure to be appreciated by readers interested in traditional Chinese medicine culture as well as those curious about the unique history and stories of southern Taiwan.

TONIC FOR THE AGES

Text by Su Fu-Nan, Lim Chi-Ki, Chu Pōe-Chin, Chu Yue-Ling, Jamie Jiang, Hsin Chia Hsieh, Lin Pei-Ying, Tseng Yu-Fen, Lo Sha, Hsieh Pei-Ying, Ruth Yang, Tao Yi-Wen
Photographed by Aming Lee, Yu Chia-Jung, Lu Yu-Jui, Chung Shun-Wen
Illustrated by Lin Chien-Chih
Translated by William Ceurvels

"Traditional Chinese medicine (TCM), whether eaten, topically applied, or inhaled, is meant to provide the body with nourishment, relieve sickness, and resolve the symptoms of illness. Its holistic healing methods are intimately tied to the surrounding social and environmental fabric, with TCM traditionally viewed as a bridge linking humans to the divine. In fact, before the advent of modern medicine, TCM prescriptions were regularly given at temples and then filled at apothecaries, underscoring the deep ties between herbal remedies and religious faith in Chinese culture. TCM is meant to not only heal the physical but the spiritual as well.

Drawing from the well of history, the narrative can't help but pique reader interest in Taiwan's TCM apothecaries. One story relates how a young Austronesian returns to his home village and builds a successful herbal therapy brand leveraging local healing-herb culture and multi-generational herbal medical wisdom. Another tells how a second-generation TCM shop owner, by adding a home-delivery service to the family business, builds a platform for sharing TCM knowledge to a wider audience and enlarging their customer base.

Herbal apothecaries are tied intimately to the surrounding land and soil. The thirty stories in *Tonic for the Ages* are the fruit of countless interviews and recordings conducted across the Kaohsiung area. Each is one piece of a puzzle that, when finished, tells an enticing story of the ever-changing natural and human landscapes in this corner of southern Taiwan."

— **Chen Mo-An (Author) / Translated by Jeff Miller**

Kaohsiung's Mountain Region, Coastal Region, and North-South Corridor. Master Chinese Herbal Pharmacy Map.

With ports and harbors, a bustling metropolis, and forested foothills and mountains, Kaohsiung boasts a vast and variegated landscape. The Chinese herbal apothecaries that serve the inhabitants here through every phase of their lives have each developed a unique character as they've evolved in response to the environs in which they're located. Although one might assume Kaohsiung's mountains to be relatively limited in terms of resources, this area is actually a treasure trove from which most of the city's fresh herbs are sourced. Out west, in the coastal port region of "Takao"[01], which became wealthy through fishing and mercantilism, well-heeled residents frequent herbal apothecaries to purchase medicinal foods used in lavish nourishing stews. Also, in the towns and villages that line the narrow highway corridor connecting Tainan in the north

01 The old, indigenous name for Kaohsiung city which is still used in the Taiwanese language.

to Pingtung in the south, apothecaries still serve traveling merchants and businessmen as they have for generations.

Toiling in their shops and rummaging ceaselessly through their medicine chests, pharmacists apply the ancient wisdom of the Divine Farmer[02], accumulated knowledge of formula prescription and a special human touch to serve and care for residents in their respective communities throughout Kaohsiung.

Seasonal Health Cultivation Guide

Spring Growth, Summer Flourishing, Autumn Collecting, Winter Storage

The Chinese herbal medicine concept of seasonal health cultivation is primarily governed by the principle of "Spring Growth, Summer Flourishing, Autumn Collecting, and Winter Storage". In each of the four seasons, emphasis is placed on nourishment and protection of a particular organ. Spring corresponds to the liver, summer to the heart, autumn to the lung, and winter to the kidneys, while the last eighteen days of each season correspond to the spleen. The presence of the spleen in each season reflects the fact that digestive health should be a focus of health cultivation regardless of time of year. Following the rhythm of nature in the selection of the foods we eat cultivates both body and mind.

Spring Growth: Nourish the Liver

In Spring, the body's *qi* begins moving outward from the interior to the exterior of the body. Because the liver is thought to be the main organ guiding qi upwards (and outwards) in the body, it is recommended to eat foods in spring that nourish the liver such as garlic chives and jujube as well as herbs that regulate the spleen and stomach such as Chinese yam, atractylodes root and poria. Stewed chicken and spare ribs, pork belly and chitterlings with a four immortals decoction[03], and brewed jujube tea with ginger slices help promote and maintain bodily health as outdoor temperatures slowly rise.

Summer Flourishing: Nourish the Heart

With summer comes the arrival of intense heat, triggering the outward effusion of qi and the opening of the pores. As such, herbs that effuse heat and promote sweating are highly recommended during summer months. Herbs with these actions are mostly acrid in flavor and have fragrant aromas. Common examples include mint, perilla and Chinese mosla. Popular cooling herbal drinks consumed by Taiwanese during the summer often include herbs from this category. When humidity levels turn particularly high, herbs that promote clearing dampness like wrinkled giant hyssop and pink frost joe pye-weed may be added to a spare rib and winter melon stew or a seafood stew with ginger slices. For a sweet soup, consider combining mung bean and job's tears seed. Mung bean clears heat, especially summer heat, while job's tears fortify the spleen and remove dampness.[04] These salty and sweet soups are all highly suited to summer's torrid heat.

Autumn Collecting: Nourish the Lungs

In autumn, the weather becomes dry, *yang qi* recedes and *yin qi* gradually intensifies, while people are more vulnerable to coughs, sore throats and other respiratory-related issues. Similar to the surrounding environment, the lungs are susceptible to dryness and weakened yang qi during this season. As such, nourishing the lungs in autumn with yin-enriching and moisturizing foods is particularly important. Foods associated with these actions are often white in color. For instance, the white-colored lily root not only enriches yin and moisturizes the

02 A Chinese mythological ruler and deity who was believed to have taught humans about various aspects of agriculture and medicine.

03 A common digestion-promoting formula composed of poria, atractylodes, Euryale seed and lotus seed.

04 In Chinese medicine, the spleen is thought to govern water metabolism and digestion.

lungs, it also clears heart heat and calms the spirit. Combining Adenophora root, fragrant landpick, lily root and lotus seed in a chicken stew makes for the perfect dryness-combatting soup for the autumn season.

Winter Storage: Nourish the Kidneys

With the arrival of winter, and the shift of seasonal energy shifts toward storage, conditions become ripe for the body to store and nourish the essence and qi of the five organs. What is commonly called "winter season dietary tonification" refers to the process of consuming nourishing foods in winter to supplement deficiencies in the five organs as the body draws essence and qi inward. In "Port City"[05], the strong, cold winds in the depth of winter can feel like they penetrate to the bone, so residents place special emphasis on the consumption of foods and medicinal herbs that strengthen the sinews and bones. We recommend preparing several months in advance the Perfect Major Supplementation Decoction cooked with additional herbs like Eucommia bark, ox knee root, teasel root and Chinese yam or steep Tortoise Shell and Deerhorn Two Immortals Glue in alcohol to have it ready for consumption in winter. Lastly, medicinal alcohols made by steeping strong tonics like deer horn, desert broomrape, tortoise shell and soft-shelled turtle shell make the perfect drink to stay warm while traveling the high seas!

Mountain Region Guide

By Lim Chi-Ki

The towns and villages of the Kaohsiung foothills are populated by diverse ethnic communities, with each couched in pristine natural environments and backed by mountains, streams, and lakes. These unique characteristics contribute to a Chinese herbal culture marked by abundant variety and distinct apothecary applications. This region not only plays host to a fourth-generation pharmacy currently training their fifth-generation pharmacist but also is home to businesses that both farm and forage Chinese medical herbs. These herbs are not only for human consumption; neither are they only consumed as food or decoctions. There are also farmers in this region that use medical herbs as feed for chickens and new product lines featuring extractions of native plants in aromatherapy oils.

Tai Ho Herbal Pharmacy, originally located in Miaoli County, is a multigenerational apothecary that has operated in Liouguei for two generations. Because the fourth-generation descendant of the pharmacy's founder chose a career in public office, the pharmacy's multi-generational knowledge and skills have passed into the capable hands of his wife, Chang Mei-yueh. Although not working in the pharmacy, Chang's husband designed the shop's heart-themed herbal packages hoping to raise clients' spirits.

Huang Kuo-shu, Neimen-based Yong An Pharmacy's current head pharmacist, comes from a long line of pharmacists originally based in the Dajia district at the Taichung Yung An Tang Peng Chi Herbal Pharmacy. As Huang's father and grandfather felt high foot-traffic areas near temples to be the ideal location for pharmacies, when they moved from Dajia's famous Jenn Lann Temple, they established their new pharmacy next to Neimen's Zi Zhu Temple. Yong An Pharmacy provides specially selected herbs and spices for famous Neimen chefs and has developed several different spice mixes for use in banquet meals.

The walls of the Cishan-based Chien Yuan Herbal Pharmacy are adorned with painting and calligraphy that invest the store with a vibrant literary and artistic atmosphere. Be it their expertly mixed nourishing teas or wide selection of medicinal herbs, pharmacy owners Hsiao Chen-chung and his wife have made quality and taste their top priority.

The Meinong-based Ding Ku Tang Chinese Herbal Pharmacy features a bonesetting and traumatology clinic that once operated year-round for villagers in this remote region where medical services are relatively limited. Pharmacy owner Liu Hai-tsang has realized his

05 A common moniker for Kaohsiung.

long-held dream of keeping his own medicinal herb garden, which he calls "Emperor Tsang's Park".

Tucked in a lush river valley that slices deep into the heart of Taiwan's central mountain chain, Liouguei is a rare bastion of indigenous medical knowledge. The mountain region's Divine Farmer Temple, for instance, possesses a large number of herbal formulas said to have been revealed in times past by Daoist gods. Descendants of the indigenous Tevorangh people living in Liouguei also have a deep knowledge of local medicinal plants. This community meets many of their medical needs in this otherwise underserved region using plants that they forage from the mountains or grow in their gardens.

Huang Chi-hsiang and his son own and operate "Wild Mountain Chicken" in Shanlin District. The regular chicken feed used at this poultry farm is enhanced with a blend of medicinal herbs including bitter leaf, Taiwanese ox knee root, chameleon plant, green chiretta and Mexican sunflower. This special herbal mixture not only serves as a tonic and a preventative medicine for the chickens but also increases the feed conversion rate.

Lin Chih of the Maolin-based agricultural cooperative Margi Mumu[06], developed a line of herbal essential oils made from indigenous plants suitable for use in aromatherapy. Her business venture was inspired by the Aztec marigold garlands worn at weddings in her tribe. She has also developed a Southern Foothills herbal bath bomb that may be used for massage as well as for foot-soaks and baths. Some ingredients used in these bath bombs are sourced from local Chinese herbal apothecaries.

Over the course of our visits to these seven areas in Kaohsiung's mountain region, we gained a strong sense of the tightly interwoven relationship between herbal medical knowledge and the mastery of both etiquette and social sensibility in the herbal culture of southern Taiwan. Chinese herbal experts are also masters of observation and will offer relevant health recommendations, inquire into daily habits and share personal remedies based on the slightest of cues, be it a slightly pallid lip color, the appearance of facial acne, a hand placed on the waist, or grasping at pain in the shoulder. We also learned that the right spice mix can introduce endless culinary possibilities to even the most novice of cooks. We invite our readers to find time to take a trip to the Kaohsiung mountain region and, using this book as your guide, embark on a journey that will nourish both body and soul.

06 Margi mumu means "hello everyone" in the Maolin Rukai dialect.

移工怎麼都在直播

WHY ARE MIGRANT WORKERS ALWAYS

Jiang Wan-Ci
江婉琦

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Jiang Wan-Ci, born in Tainan in 1997, holds a bachelor's degree in ethnology from National Cheng-Chi University. She has experience working both for a major Southeast Asia-focused bookstore and the Taiwan Literature Award for Migrants program and currently works as a freelance writer. *Why are Migrant Workers Always Live-streaming?* is the author's first literary effort.

LIVE-STREAMING?

*** 2022 Openbook Award**
*** 2023 Golden Tripod Award**

Jiang Wan-Ci's observations on the everyday experience of Taiwan's migrant workers remind us their hackneyed portrayal in the media has failed spectacularly to capture either their uniquely compelling stories or the complexities of living as an economic migrant from Southeast Asia in modern-day Taiwan.

Despite its important role and prominent profile in 21st-century Taiwan society, Taiwan's migrant worker population from Southeast Asia is regularly portrayed unfavorably in the media and thus negatively regarded by mainstream public opinion. While studying for her undergraduate degree in ethnology, Jiang Wan-Ci took to frequenting the hangouts of migrant workers, making friends, exchanging language tips, and listening to stories. She soon recognized media tropes about migrant workers, such as their love of live-streaming, as mere surface reflections of cultural and social patterns deserving of more empathetic exploration.

Migrant stories around the world share similar themes of homesickness and of a desire for familiar things and friendship. In Taiwan, migrant workers' need for rest, relaxation, and fellowship outside the workplace has transformed public train stations throughout the country into regular venues for off-the-clock socializing. An active observer as well as participant in Southeast Asian migrant workers' down-time experiences at Taipei Station, the author parses out the importance of these leisurely "sit-ins" in the station's cavernous main hall, once a target of social derision, to a population with no true place of their own.

The author also introduces readers to other regular migrant worker hangouts such as "Indonesia Street" – an alley near Taipei Station where food and news from home are always enthusiastically shared. Follow Jiang's carefully laid narrative to discover the little appreciated or understood lived experiences and stories of Southeast Asian caregivers, laborers, fishermen, and factory workers across the country.

Finishing this book offers a fresh perspective on the question, "Why are migrant workers always live-streaming?" The answer rewards curiosity over subjective judgment. After all, better understanding and empathizing with the migrant worker experience moves us all further along the path to self-awareness and understanding.

WHY ARE MIGRANT WORKERS ALWAYS LIVE-STREAMING?

By Jiang Wan-Ci
Translated by Joel Martinsen

> "Author Jiang Wan-Ci's "thick description" approach to this work captures brilliantly the authentic lives of migrant workers in a narrative that explores migrant worker culture as well as these workers' various and sundry Taiwanese employers. Interactions between migrant workers and their employers generate authentic stories that bear only a passing resemblance to traditional employee-employer relationships.
>
> The narrative follows the everyday lives of migrant workers, from neighborhood clean-up activities and weekend get-togethers at Taipei Main Station to shared celebrations of Ramadan and Eid al-Fitr, motorbike outings, experiences caring for their disabled clients, and participation in local festivals. The unique experience of each migrant worker is part of a shared tapestry of life, with their work in Taiwan projecting clarity and singular brilliance into their own lives."
>
> — ***Openbook*** **/ Translated by Jeff Miller**

Taipei Main Station: Life at a Crossroads

Taipei Main Station was my starting point for making Indonesian friends. Four years after meeting Indri, she told me that for her, coming to Taiwan had been *pelarian* – escape. "You know something? That's the case for 70% of the people around me," she said. There were many reasons to escape: a failed romance, an unhappy marriage, the shame of a failed business. "People with happy homes don't come to Taiwan. Believe me."

I understood her immediately. Perhaps I didn't know my previous interview subjects well enough, and that's why they tended to emphasize earning money as the reason for coming to Taiwan. That's the general impression of migrant workers you get from the media: they've come to Taiwan to make money. But there are actually lots of reasons why migrant workers find their way to Taiwan.

That being the case, I had to rethink. If escape was a reason for coming to Taiwan – if lots of people had that weighing on their mind – then coming to Taipei Main Station might bring them to a crossroads in life.

Lost

The migrant workers who spend their free Sundays at Taipei Main Station belong to a minority fortunate enough to have time off. In my many interviews with these people, I discovered their journeys all seemed to involve a period of "learning how to take holidays".

Female caregivers must negotiate with their employers for any time off they receive, as such is not required under the Labor Standards Act. For workers whose employers do give them days off, I've found that most treat breaks during their first year in Taiwan as "language-learning time". They say their employers have them watch the news, primetime TV,

and the drama series *A Traditional Story of Taiwan* to learn how to communicate with their elderly charges. Within three years, a caregiver is typically comfortable enough with the language and familiar enough with the environment to be bolder about speaking up to her employer. Then she can use language as a tool for negotiations or to go outside and explore the world beyond her employer's home. At a nearby Indonesian shop, she might buy an Indonesian magazine with reports of the splendid activities migrant workers get up to at Taipei Main Station every weekend. Or, she might read on social media that her compatriots spend their days off at the station, so she might as well check it out. Perhaps she's already started using buses or the MRT. But even if she hasn't yet, she can still reach the station by taxi and find a well-established social group she probably knew nothing about only three years earlier.

Male factory workers, on the other hand, spend most of their time in their dorm and rarely go out on their days off. A friend told me that many factory workers stay in on Saturdays and Sundays, spending the time shopping at 7-11, cooking for themselves, and vichatting with family. Unlike caregivers, factory workers don't have to spend day and night chatting with elderly Taiwanese, so most of them aren't good with the language. A worker with poor Chinese who wants to go to Taipei Main Station on his day off either has a wife in Taiwan, has met a girl locally, or has connections to a social group. Otherwise, the vast majority simply stay inside. If a group of workers go out, they rely on girlfriends or caregivers with better Chinese to guide them to the station. Because male factory workers amuse themselves differently than women, they won't necessarily go to the station. Instead, they head to New Taipei Metropolitan Park to fish along the riverside in hopes of catching tilapia or visit the storied street markets around Lungshan Temple or in Sanchong District to buy mobile phones and other cheap essentials.

Wie (Chia Yang-ti) went to Taipei Main Station for the first time in 2008, during her first year in Taiwan. At the time, she didn't have monthly days off but did occasionally visit Indonesian shops in the neighborhood to buy dried goods or wire money. Her first trip came on a day when she felt a particularly strong craving for Indonesian food. She told her boss she needed to go out to wire money but headed off to the station on her own.

Prior to actually visiting, her impression of the station was of a wonderful, huge, and crowded place with lots of people sitting and eating in a big hall and plenty of space to sing and dance. A friend warned her to avoid the underground Taipei City Mall, fearing she'd get lost. Sticking to the above-ground Indonesian street, her friend said, was a better bet. She took a bus to get there but asked an Indonesian friend to help her ride the MRT back to her employer's home.

"Anyone, Indonesian or Taiwanese, can get lost in Taipei Main Station."

On that day, she had *sate* and *bakso* at an Indonesian eatery. Prices are high around the station – that bowl of meatball soup cost NT$150 (US$4.50). She said she's never sure how much individual items cost, since the cashier only tells her the total amount.

The Dead Train

Taipei Main Station is a transport hub, so off-duty migrant workers from all over converge there in search of a public space to share their time off. Wie said typical spots to meet friends include the statue behind the main hall, the clocks at either end, clearly numbered and labeled entryways at each of the station's four sides, and the "dead train".

The old locomotive and train car displayed outside the station's east gate is what Indonesians call *kereta mati*, which literally means "dead train". They said that on visits to Taipei, it's a photo stop, a landmark, and a meeting place. Similar to the way young Taiwanese used to use the station's "bird-head man", Indonesian workers use the kereta mati as a familiar landmark. Search for the hashtag #keretamati on Instagram and TikTok and you'll find photos and videos from various angles of migrant workers with the dead train.

The train is dead.

The train – a LDK58 steam locomotive built in Japan in 1923 and one carriage – ran on the narrow-gauge Taitung Line in an era when eastern Taiwan was just beginning to be developed. It primarily took

students to and from school and was known as the "yellow-skin train". When the Hua-Tung Line gauge was widened in 1982, these narrow-gauge engines were retired, and the dead train was installed outside Taipei Main Station in 2000 as a historical exhibit. By that point, migrant workers had been in Taiwan for a decade. Indonesians say that if you visit Taipei without getting a photo of the kereta mati, it's like not having visited the city at all.

Another popular photo spot is the fountain – *air mancur* – located outside South Exit 2. In 2008, Wie and her friends spent *Lebaran* at the station. She recalled how they chatted in the main hall first before going outside to take pictures at the fountain, where the Shin Kong Mitsukoshi Department Store and tall buildings in the background give an international vibe to the scene. Afterward, she proceeded to the dead train for more photos. If you want to take a picture at the dead train during Lebaran, expect to wait in a very long line.

Circles

Indonesians tend to sit in circles on the polished floor inside the main hall on the first floor of Taipei Main Station. When Wie and her friends had finished taking photos, they went inside to sit down for a chat. The problem was, there were so many people they knew there that they ended up gravitating from circle to circle as people raised their hands and called over to them "I'm over here!" Wie said that so many people had packed the hall during Lebaran that cellphone signals were spotty and text messages and phone calls seldom came through. Those circles – and the sharing of food – made her feel she was back in an Indonesian village celebrating Lebaran.

The conversation circles at Taipei Main Station intermingle with one another on holidays and ordinary Sundays alike. When someone in one circle hears a familiar voice in another, or if they recognize someone from their hometown, they'll often join in the conversation, making that circle even larger.

When joining a circle or running into friends or strangers at the station, shaking hands is an essential courtesy with deep roots in Indonesian culture. At first, I had to watch everyone else to learn the proper way to shake hands.

There are various styles of handshakes, but for all of them, the final step is to put your right hand over your left breast to indicate that you have seen the other person and placed them in your heart.

Handshakes are the foundation of a relationship. As I was learning, I'd often forget to shake hands and would feel bad. "How could I have forgotten *again*?" I'd say to myself. But I was also curious – when migrant workers first arrive and meet Taiwanese who don't normally shake hands, do they feel they are being kept at a distance? My migrant worker friends told me they tend to see different circles on every visit, but once you've shaken hands with a person twice, it means you'll be remembered as a friend.

With every handshake, I increasingly felt the person-to-person interactions so commonplace in Indonesia had taken on a greater significance in Taiwan. Culturally ingrained patterns had become features distinguishing the communities at Taipei Main Station. For me, going inside is like entering a new social order, but for them it is a return to a familiar environment. Only here does shaking hands seem normal. In the station, handshakes are the normal order, an order not found in Taiwanese culture at large but commonplace here.

A Handshake, a Smile, and "What's your name?"

As I spent more time in Taipei Main Station, I discovered lots of common names among my Indonesian friends. When I think of the groups of migrant workers there, the names Linda, Siti and Wendy most often come to mind.

Many migrant workers in Taiwan hail from Pulau Jawa – the island of Java. Wie told me that the most common names for Javanese men are Yanto, Anto and Susanto and that women's names often end in -i, like Ati and Yanti.

This might be why lots of Indonesian caregivers are called "Ati" by their employers. Ati and Eka are common names for a family's eldest daughter, while

Dwi is common for the second and Lastri for the third daughters. Common names for Christian Indonesians include Christina and Linda, while those with Hindu backgrounds may be recognized through such names as Rita, Rintha, and Hindra.

Outside of the station along Beiping West Road and around Exit Y27 of the underground Taipei City Mall is home to lots of Indonesian shops. In the main hall, I'd occasionally see people going from circle to circle peddling Indonesian dishes they prepared themselves. Hot food is pricey at eateries near the station – forget that NT$150 bowl of bakso! A trip to an Indonesian buffet can easily cost NT$200-300 (US$6-$9). Wie shared that she usually spends over NT$200 for five sate skewers and a soft drink. I asked her how much that would cost back in her village in Indonesia – Rp13,000, she said, or around NT$26 (US$0.80). "Then it's really expensive!" I exclaimed.

"So when we shop in Taiwan, we can't always think about the conversion to rupiah. We'd only get depressed," Wie said. "You've got to treat yourself from time to time." She also remarked on the less expensive aspects of Taiwan. At a market, clothes could be had for NT$100 (US$3). "I tend to buy infrequently, but I buy clothes in the style that suits me," she said.

I asked her about the wage gap between Taiwan and Indonesia. She said a caregiver in Taiwan averages around NT$17,000 (US$530) a month. That's the level of a university professor or doctor in Indonesia. Cities and rural areas are different, of course, but the average monthly income in Indonesia is 1-2 million rupiah, or around NT$2,000-4,000 (US$60-120).

Sitting Down

When migrant workers come to Taipei Main Station on their weekly, monthly, or annual holiday, they tend to sit in the main hall. The Taiwanese have the impression that migrant workers love sitting on the station's floor. But was it always this way? "No," Wie shares. "There used to be chairs here."

The chairs the hall used to provide for weary travelers were removed during major renovations in 2011. In an article that year under the headline, "Taipei Main Station removes chairs from main hall; passengers cope by sitting on the floor," a reporter wrote, "Gazing across the hall, I see not a single chair. But in every corner, people lean on pillars or sit against walls, setting their food directly on the ground." The people described sitting on the ground in that article were Taiwanese. The station was the scene of the "Red Cordon Incident", when Taiwan Railway officials, responding to public outcry against migrant workers occupying the main hall with their conversation circles during Lebaran 2012, cordoned off the hall to prevent people from occupying the floor. In 2013, the station relented slightly and installed seats around eight of the station's main pillars. However, those were removed in 2015 due to public aversion to their being used by the homeless.

Sitting on the floor in circles is how people in Indonesia chat with friends, hold events, and conduct meetings. Sitting down is part of everyday life for them. Migrant workers and the station's unhoused are all aware of the unwritten rule: no lying down before 9:00 p.m.. The questions they deliberate – *Can I sit down? Can I lie down?* – to me aren't necessarily questions of etiquette. When I interviewed a few homeless people, I discovered that each had internalized these station rules, applying them even when out on the streets. "*This* is when I can sit down. And by *this* time, or when no one's watching, I can lie down." Being able to take a seat or lie down is actually a discipline demanded by society. But have we forgotten that our bodies are our own?

When you consider the mental rules the homeless follow for sitting and lying down, and the dissatisfaction felt toward migrant workers sitting on the ground, you'll sense that what disgusts us seems to be a reflection of the things we want to, but cannot, do. Does sitting on the floor make us uncomfortable? Pop star Lim Giong once sang his hit "Marching Forward" in Taipei Main Station. As we march forward in Taipei, do we too feel the pressure in our hearts to say, "I must work hard!" As we speed ahead, can we take a moment to sit down? Must we remain standing?

蘇昭旭的世界鐵道大探索

EXPLORING THE WORLD'S GREATEST

Born in 1967, Su Chao-Hsu has visited over 50 countries and published over 50 books in pursuit of his life's mission to create the definitive reference series on the railways of Taiwan, becoming in the process the most-prolific writer on the subject of trains and railways in the Chinese-speaking world.

Su Chao-Hsu
蘇昭旭

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RAILWAYS

Taiwan's most-widely published expert on rail transportation Su Chao-Hsu has distilled a career's worth of knowledge and insights into this landmark four-book reference series. Get the lowdown on faraway exotic and scenic travel destinations while becoming comfortably conversant with "all things railroad".

Trains and railways, the mainstay of large-scale land transport for two centuries, are naturally associated with countless fascinating stories. This latest work by railway expert Su Chao-Hsu is a compendium reference on "all things railroad" that invites readers on a globe-spanning adventure exploring the history, evolution, and diversity of steam trains; traveling popular tourist train lines; and visiting train-themed museums and iconic train stations on every continent.

Volume one examines in bright, engaging detail the 300 or so types of steam engines developed over the past two centuries. The text is well seasoned with the author's own pictures as well as engine schematics and rarely seen contemporary models.

In volume two, readers take a captivating deep-dive into world railway heritage, learning along the way about the state of railway heritage preservation in various countries and embarking on eye-opening tours of some of the world's best rail scenery and tourist rail lines – quite a few of which are UNESCO World Heritage sites.

Volume three takes readers through some 70 railway-related museums around the world. The author also plumbs the merits of establishing a Taiwan railway museum, discussing its ideal scale, character, and mode of operation and pondering on how some of its more iconic collection items might best be presented.

In volume four, readers learn all about railway stations and stops, starting with differences among building, track, and platform elements; then distinguishing among functional, architectural, scenic, and design characteristics; and finally ending with introductions to over 300 of the world's most iconic stations.

The closely interwoven narrative, photographs, and illustrations in this series compellingly reflect the fruits of a career's worth of dedicated work and research. This is both the perfect travel guide and educational reference book for casual readers and hard-core train enthusiasts alike.

EXPLORING THE WORLD'S GREATEST RAILWAYS

By Su Chao-Hsu
Translated by Sarah-Jayne Carver

> "This encyclopedic work on railways of the world was organized and written over two and a half decades, during which time the author traveled regularly in search of anything and everything train related. His dedication proves without a doubt that one dedicated individual can indeed craft a world-class encyclopedia of world railway history and knowledge.
>
> The author, a self-styled "biologist", led numerous field surveys worldwide targeting railway-related individuals and infrastructure. "Samples" collected by the author, categorized, verified, analyzed, were finally compared with Taiwan's own railway heritage to show the country's position in worldwide railway heritage and highlight the unique aspects of its railway culture. The author concisely explains relevant principles as well as curates his own railway experiences over the years to help readers clearly understand the history and import of railways globally and in Taiwan."
>
> — **Lily Huang (Travel Writer) / Translated by Jeff Miller**

Author's Preface: Classifying Steam Locomotives and Broadening Your Train Worldview

What exactly is a steam locomotive? From their birth in 1804 to the first-ever engine-hauled passenger train built by George Stephenson in 1825 all the way up to the present day, steam locomotives span over 200 years of history and are still going strong as an indispensable part of tourist railways all over the world. As well as being a crucial part of modern history, they also necessitated the creation of a completely new word in English: *Loco* from the Latin meaning "from a place" and *motivus* meaning "causing motion." So what are steam locomotives? They are one of the most significant inventions in human transportation which, just like the birth of the Industrial Revolution, fundamentally changed human history and influenced industrial development for the two centuries that followed.

In my opinion, steam locomotives are as diverse as living organisms. They have evolved over such a long period of time and exist in so many different types that it's impossible to describe them all in a single sentence, making it very difficult indeed to get a complete picture of them without some kind of taxonomy. There are several internationally standardized classification methods such as the Whyte Notation and the UIC system, the latter of which is managed by the International Union of Railways and provides a practical taxonomic approach based on axle configuration. While these provide useful points of reference, they still leave a long way to go for readers wanting to understand steam locomotives from scratch.

There are some fundamental concepts for classifying steam locomotives, including: Tank vs. Tender; Saturated vs. Superheated; Two-Cylinder vs. Multi-Cylinder; Inside Frame vs. Outside Frame; Track Gauge Classification; as well as different categories

for various Articulated, Geared, Rack, and Specially Modified locomotives. These are all simple, basic ways to categorize steam locomotives, and I believe it is crucial to include them if we're going to establish a system of locomotive classification.

Why should we establish a classification system for steam locomotives? Anyone who knows me will tell you that I have long been calling for the preservation and revitalization of Taiwan's railways as a cultural asset. The preservation of steam locomotives, a global trend for both private and government rail networks alike, is the only way to revitalize railway lines as a cultural asset. From our neighbors in Japan to countries in Europe and the Americas, the movement to preserve steam locomotives for tourism purposes has achieved dazzling results. In Taiwan, we are somehow more than a decade behind the rest of the world, and, even now, our vision of preserving steam trains still seems to be faltering. So, what is causing these problems in Taiwan?

First and foremost, we don't have a database of steam locomotives that we can use to understand them. Without this understanding, we tend to perceive them as representatives of a bygone mode of transportation without realizing their value, and, on the off chance we do manage to recognize their value, still lack the requisite knowledge about how to preserve and utilize them as cultural assets. Perhaps then the answer lies in understanding and analyzing steam locomotive success stories from other countries.

However, the world is so big and Taiwan has a relatively small and limited collection of different steam locomotive types. However, my lifetime love of trains has driven me, with biologist-like passion, to diligently harvest "samples". I discovered these "organisms" may be categorized by "leg" (i.e., wheel) number and arrangement, which can tell us how a steam locomotive moves, its intended operating environment, and track gauge size. They can also be categorized by "shape", with their outward appearance revealing trains of the same class or regional pedigree. An interesting byproduct of this research is that, by looking at how these steam locomotives were invented, manufactured, and modified over time, we can learn the stories behind the development of related technologies and about shifts in contemporary geopolitics.

I would have never been able to write a book on a topic as vast as the classification of steam locomotives had I not spent over twenty years of my life amassing this information, traveling to more than fifty countries and collecting photographs from all over the world. Over the last two decades, I have built up a railway database and a "taxonomy" of railway knowledge in a deliberative process quite similar to creating an encyclopedia. I call it "Unabridged Railway Knowledge" and it's available for the public to browse online via the Taiwan National Science and Technology Museum's internet portal. I frequently speak at various organized events, sharing without reservation my experiences and research. In the beginning, most of my books were either about Taiwan's railways or popular tourist railways around the world. Now, hoping that Taiwan's railways may earn increasing recognition as international cultural assets, I have been using my own research and statistics on railways around the world in various analytical case studies. This new four-book series, *Exploring the World's Greatest Railways*, is the culmination of this effort, providing readers with a new perspective on Taiwan's railways and their place in world railway heritage.

I am grateful for the support received over the years from railway workers and train fans from all walks of life. Thank you to Ecus Publishing House for giving me the chance to publish this book, and, as the final result of my twenty-plus years of research and hard work goes to press, I sincerely hope it will benefit readers by offering a totally new perspective that will broaden their appreciation and understanding of trains.

Chapter 1: Understanding the Wonderful World of Steam Locomotives

Basic Classifications of Steam Locomotives

What are steam locomotives? They are one of the most significant inventions in human transportation which, like the Industrial Revolution, fundamentally changed human history and influenced industrial development for the two centuries that followed.

The Relationship Between Steam Locomotives and Rail Transportation

Mankind's use of railways has a long, storied history dating back to before the sixteenth century, when mines in Europe employed horse-drawn vehicles that used wooden tracks and wheels fitted with flanges. Utilizing tracks to reduce friction may have been the original impetus behind the creation of railway transportation itself. The later discovery that iron rails and steel wheels further reduced friction was critical to enabling the long-distance railway transportation networks we have today.

The mining railways used in continental Europe spread to England during the early seventeenth century. Then, at the dawn of the Industrial Revolution in 1760, the ironmaster Abraham Darby II managed to stabilize a roadbed with railroad ties at his Coalbrookdale Foundry and went on to invent L-shaped metal plates as a replacement for wooden tracks to reduce friction further while increasing efficiency. Later in the eighteenth century, the iron rails and wheels introduced to reduce friction also allowed the transport of increasingly heavier loads.

The Birth of the First Steam Locomotive

The invention of the steam locomotive was closely related to mining. During the second half of the seventeenth century, more mines opened to keep up with the demand for metal, and increasingly powerful pumping motors were required to excavate the deep underground pits. To improve rail transportation in these mines, steam locomotives gradually replaced human and horse-powered carts and, eventually, began to be employed above ground as well.

In 1769, the French engineer Nicolas-Joseph Cugnot built the world's first steam-powered three-wheeled vehicle. It could carry four passengers at four kilometers per hour on open roadways and, although not running on tracks, it signaled the era of train travel was imminent. In 1776, James Watt built a fully functional steam engine, the widespread use of which vastly improved train performance and became a driving force behind the Industrial Revolution. Another key driver of steam locomotive development was the European-wide war against Napoleonic France that had begun in the waning years of the eighteenth century. The widespread military requisitioning of horses had driven up prices for these animals, encouraging mine owners to seek alternatives leveraging the potential of new steam-driven train technologies.

On February 21st, 1804, Richard Trevithick successfully built the world's first steam locomotive on rails, which regularly conveyed passengers and their luggage through Wales at speeds of up to eight kilometers per hour. Although this attracted worldwide attention, the technology had yet to reach the stage where it was commercially viable.

The Contributions of George and Robert Stephenson

On September 27th, 1825, George Stephenson introduced the first-ever steam locomotive capable of towing passenger cars. This train carried more than 600 passengers from Darlington to Stockton at a top speed of twenty-four miles per hour, covering the twenty-five-mile journey in three hours. That twenty-five-mile rail line was both the world's first public transportation railway and first commercially operated railway. At that time, steam locomotives were mainly used to transport goods, while people commuted using horse-drawn carriages. However, starting with Stephenson, long-distance passenger transportation slowly began to gravitate towards passenger railways. It was a moment tantamount to announcing the arrival of a new era: the age of trains and public transportation.

Subsequently, Britain authorized the construction of a railway from Manchester to Liverpool in 1826, and the Rainhill trials were held near Liverpool to determine which locomotives would be used on the line. Stephenson's *Rocket*, built by George and his son Robert's company, emerged as the best of the five competitors and was awarded a prize of 500 pounds for its top speed of thirty miles per hour. This win also served to formally grant the Stephensons the contract to produce the railway's steam locomotives. The Liverpool and Manchester Railway (also known as the L&MR)

officially opened on September 15th, 1830, and was the world's first railway to be built with a standard gauge of 1,435mm, which came to be known as the "Stephenson Gauge." The Stephenson valve gear confirmed its operational reliability, allowing stable control of the train in both forward and reverse travel, thus ushering in a new phase in which steam locomotives were commercially viable and could be mass-produced.

This series of events not only enshrined steam locomotives' place in history but also changed the English language, with the term "locomotive" being born from a combination of the Latin words *Loco* ("from a place") and *motivus* ("causing motion"). The term "rail" originally referred to railings, while the word "railway" denotes the arrangement of railroad ties into a continuous track, and "rolling stock" is a phrase that is now used to describe railway vehicles. From the new connotations of these words, it is easy to see just how important steam locomotives have been in the development of human civilization. However, to truly understand locomotives, we must start with the inner workings of the steam engine and its constituent valve gear structures.

Classifying Steam Locomotives

Since that first recorded journey in 1804, steam locomotives have persevered for more than 200 years and today remain an integral part of tourist railways around the world. Over the years, steam locomotives have been catalysts in major historical events and evolved to encompass thousands of different types, making it difficult to get a complete picture of them without some kind of taxonomy.

In general, steam locomotives may be categorized by structure, track gauge, and application, and are often distinguished using six feature-based categories: Tank vs. Tender; Saturated vs. Superheated; Two-Cylinder vs. Multi-Cylinder; Inside Frame vs. Outside Frame; Track Gauge Classification; and Specially Modified Mountaineering locomotives. Several international bodies have issued classification standards for steam locomotives that resemble how different species are classified in the biological sciences. These include the Whyte Notation and the UIC system, the latter of which is managed by the International Union of Railways and uses its own set of practical classifications based on axle configuration.

Each section of this book explores one of these classification standards in detail to provide a comprehensive overview of steam locomotives around the world.

The Composition of Steam Locomotives and Valve Gear Structures

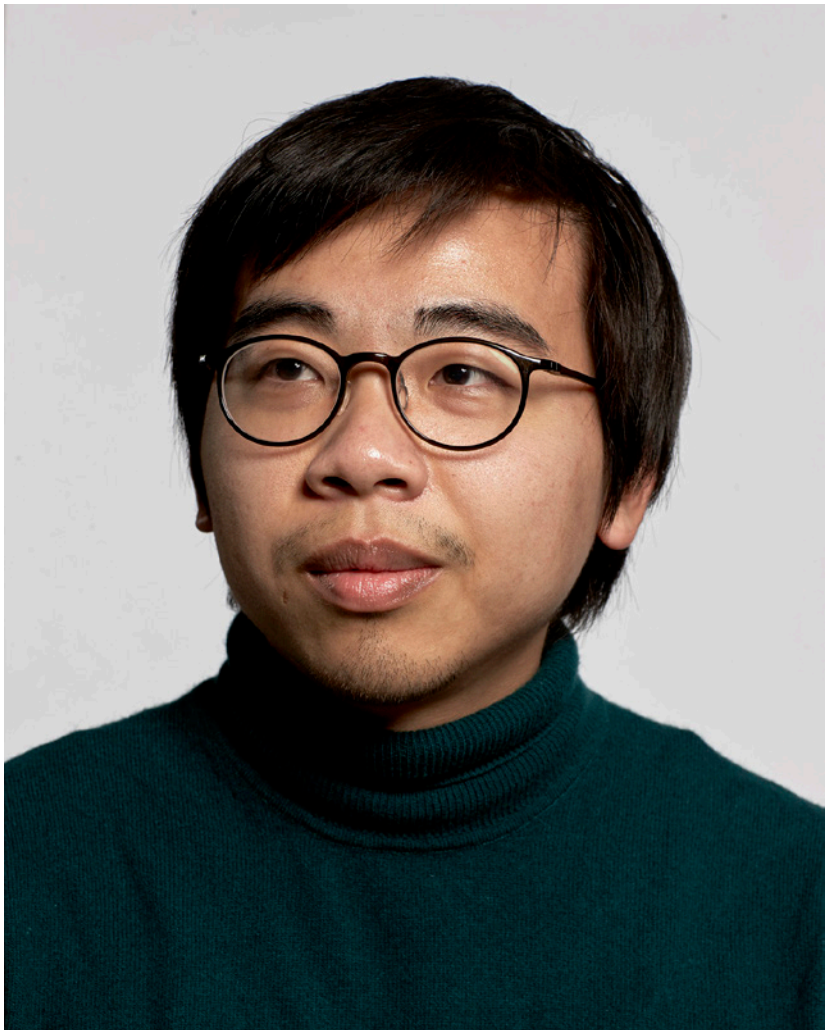
While most people refer to steam locomotives as steam "trains", steam locomotive is the proper scientific term for these steam-engine-powered vehicles. The earliest locomotives lacked precise control over forward and backward momentum, requiring the development of a set of mechanisms able to control the steam-powered piston. These mechanisms are collectively known as valve gears, and it was their invention that made steam locomotives practical to use.

Many different types of valve gears have appeared over time may and they can be organized into four main categories: Stephenson, Allan, Joy, and Walschaerts. All four types are found on steam locomotives in Taiwan. Of these four, Walschaerts is the most common type of valve gear worldwide.

Stephenson Valve Gear

To accurately control the piston in a steam locomotive, the valve gear is operated by the axis of the driving wheel, which is equipped with an eccentric disk that feeds back along the eccentric rod to either open or close the valve gear. This design, known as the Stephenson Valve Gear, first appeared in 1829 on Stephenson's *Rocket*, which hid the valve gear and the feedback mechanism on the inside of the driving wheel. This type of valve gear was dominant in locomotives produced during the nineteenth century.

綠色牢籠：埋藏於沖繩西表島礦坑的
GREEN JAIL: TAIWANESE MEMORIES



Huang Yin-Yu
黃胤毓

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Born in Taitung County and a long-time resident of Japan, Huang Yin-Yu is an accomplished director and producer as well as the founder of Moolin Films (Taiwan) and Moolin Production (Japan). He has been engaged in documentary film work since 2010, with one of his films earning finalist status in the Swiss Visions du Réel Film Festival. Huang began work in 2013 on his continuing series of films focused on Taiwanese prewar migration to the Yaeyama Archipelago in Okinawa and subsequent historical issues.

台灣記憶

BURIED IN AN OKINAWAN MINE

*** 2021 Openbook Award**

Documentary filmmaker Huang Yin-Yu beautifully narrates the behind-the-scenes story of the seven years spent planning, coordinating, filming, and producing the documentary* Green Jail. *Follow the author's journey in bringing this compelling, little-known corner of history from drawing table to finished documentary film.

Iriomote in Japan's southern Okinawa Island chain is covered in dense Amazon-esque forest. Few remember now, but, before the war, this island was home to a notorious mining operation where laborers from Kyushu, other Okinawa islands, and the then-Japanese-colonies of Taiwan and Chosen (Korea) were sent by the thousands to work the mines, living precarious and wretched lives. Documentary filmmaker Huang Yin-Yu invests his highly honed curiosity to this filmmaking odyssey and consummate professional skill in connecting each step in the post-production process. Huang's eponymously titled book *Green Jail* narrates the author's unfolding thoughts and emotions while making this important work.

As in many of his previous films, Director Huang centers *Green Jail*'s expansive narrative on a central figure, in this case Granny Hashima. Born in Taiwan, she was brought to Iriomote by her stepfather and mine-labor recruiter Yang Tien-Fu when just ten years old as a future wife for his young son. Illiterate, rarely seeing other island residents, and her children now long gone, Granny Hashima holds to her lonely post, watching over the family home and the graves of her adoptive parents. As she reflects on her long life, emotions difficult to put to words clutter her mind. It is when memories of her adoptive father take the fore that the history and stories of the miners of Iriomote begin to emerge in vivid relief.

Granny Hashima is a firsthand witness to and survivor of Iriomote's mining heritage. Her memories of banal, everyday events, inadvertently remembered as oral history, provide a sturdy throughline that, together with other historical information and interviews, fills a gap in our historical understanding and awareness. We can now appreciate that this island, today overrun with trees and vegetation, was once home to many who sacrificed their youth, and for some their lives, in involuntary service to those intent on extracting the island's subterranean riches. For countless workers, Iriomote was indeed their green prison.

GREEN JAIL: TAIWANESE MEMORIES BURIED IN AN OKINAWAN MINE

By Huang Yin-Yu
Translated by Mike Fu

> *Green Jail* is author and filmmaker Huang Yin-Yu's personal, emotively written memoir of his pursuit of memories and a heritage on the verge of disappearing. While interviews with Granny Hashima bring the outlines of the life story of Yang Tien-Fu, Iriomote Island's last Taiwanese mine foreman, into gradual focus, past and present are juxtaposed to paint a picture of the Japanese Empire at both its height and dissolution and, in the process, resurrect long-buried memories of colonial-era Taiwan.
>
> Readers follow the author's meticulous preparations for this groundbreaking historical documentary. Although meant as an addendum to the film, this work stands well on its own. The narrative honestly reveals the author's rationale for retaining and omitting certain information and lines of inquiry in the final film, how Huang established his relationships with key individuals, and how he cobbled together key facts from the meager clues still remaining. The deep consideration invested in making this film may be gleaned only from the pages of this book.
>
> — **Dr. Wu Yi-Cheng (Psychiatrist) / Translated by Jeff Miller**

Preface: Days of Glittering Waves

Perhaps one day I'll remember my time with *Green Jail* in this way: a period in my youth when I met someone much older, who taught me all sorts of things about the past and inspired me to live for the future. Why did I cling desperately to these people near the end of their lives, following them with a sense of urgency, hoping that they'd be able to tell me just a bit more? Over the past years, I've often been asked this question about my documentary ethics: Was I merely using a helpless old person to attain my own perspective on history, as if she were an object of academic research? Was I exploiting her emotions in order to obtain my materials and narrative? While I found these kinds of questions offensive, I couldn't help but wonder: What am I really looking for? What part of this work still feels incomplete?

Time. All of these questions return to the theme of time. While editing and organizing materials, I found myself revisiting the seven years we had spent making *Green Jail*, our tracks all over Iriomote Island and other areas, the countless mornings and afternoons with Granny Hashima, and the forgotten slivers of time that had been condensed in my memory. I realized that I was no longer the same young man who'd sat behind a table, waiting to meet Granny's gaze from beside my camera. I'd also grown up, and become an objective observer. I sat in front of the editing computer determining what was valuable, deciding which images could be used and which could not. I've moved on from this film; *Green Jail* was finally completed, and

this book is more or less a very long farewell letter to this project and a testament to the memories made along the way.

So, I'll treat this book as a long letter to Granny then. I hope that Granny, who never even got to see the film, can forgive my selfishness and remember instead the pure and simple relationship we shared during our time together. I suppose documentaries are fundamentally complicated like this. How I treasure my student days, when I had a simple, straightforward relationship with my subjects and was as of yet unconcerned with such things as film companies, distribution, copyrights, and film festivals. Nonetheless, the film we ended up making did eventually get watched and scrutinized.

What you don't see in the documentary are the experiences my cameraman partner Nakatani Shungo and I shared as classmates in university, as we created our company, and as we worked together on Okinawa's Yaeyama Islands. During this period, we established a relationship with the local landscape that bore traces of our student days and our amiable dynamic, which still persists to this day. This place in Japan is like my second home. It taught me how to treat others and manage my affairs; it taught us the value of time.

Wild Mountains over the Sea is the title I've given to this documentary series about Taiwanese immigrants to the Yaeyama Islands. Beginning in early 2013, I spent about a year traveling all over Japan to interview the immigrants and descendants of immigrants connected to this piece of history. Between 2015 and 2016, I completed the first part with *After Spring, the Tamaki Family*…, which focused on the Tamaki family's trip to discover their roots in Taiwan and make sense of their elders' emigration experience during the 1980s. As for *Green Jail*, I had worked on it from 2014 until Granny Hashima's passing in 2018, then spent several more years on historical research, one year preparing and shooting reenactments, and one year on editing and post-production, finally completing the film at the beginning of 2021. The third and final film in the series will follow a group of third and fourth-generation young people of Taiwanese descent, members of the Yaeyama Islands branch of the Ryukyu Overseas Chinese Association, over several years. Filming is expected to wrap up in 2023.

During our film work and investigations, we'd take the forty-minute ferry from Ishigaki Island to Iriomote Island, rocking back and forth, feeling at once dizzy and sleepy. When we arrived, it was like entering a whole other world. The scenery and natural environment, the ferocious tropical plants, and the coastal road devoid of people remain vividly in our minds. To cut down on costs, we always took the long route, traveling south to Ohara Port, where rental cars were cheap. Then, we'd set out from the starting point of the coastal road, driving an hour and a half to reach its end at Shirahama, the village where Granny Hashima lived.

Those days of scorching sunlight and glittering waves were sometimes so hot that it looked like a colorless energy was about to spark flames onto the road before us. It was blazingly hot, a summer with no end in sight. Of course, we also experienced winters filled with cold and rain. But in my mind, Iriomote will always be a place of fiery heat. The signal on the car radio would cut out intermittently. When we did have signal, we could pick up local stations from the main island of Okinawa, United Front Radio from Fujian Province on the mainland, and regional stations from Yilan or Hualien. Sometimes it was hard to tell which was which.

These long journeys of anticipation on the road to Granny's place were so serene, with no pressing matters to discuss and beautiful weather all the way. Occasionally we'd even encounter an endangered eagle on the road. The massive "green jail" behind this island, its history from the Meiji period to the imperialist expansion before World War II, the countless souls who were sacrificed to develop the mines here, and the yakuza-like social structure that leveraged the island's isolation – as times have changed, these pieces of the past have vanished into thin air, with no one even left to mourn their disappearance. The place has since transformed into a massive landscape of ruins within a wilderness. Meanwhile, we were driving our car to the other side of the island to the village of Shirahama, which had been founded to support the mining industry, in order to interview our sole protagonist, Granny Hashima Yoshiko (Chiang Shih Tuan). From her eighty-eighth year of life until she passed away

at ninety-two, in her long and solitary old age, we shared a handful of small, practically inconsequential moments together.

But I hope that these moments can become a testimony to a particular period in time, and a valuable message to contemporary society.

Chapter 1: Shirahama

The first time I came to Shirahama, I simply couldn't believe these islands were right there before my eyes. From Shirahama you have a clear view of these uninhabited islands across the water: Uchibanari Island, the island right next to the inner bay, looks at first glance almost like a mountain range in the sea. Most of the mines before the war had been on Uchibanari, which back then had a population of more than two thousand. It lived up to its name as Island of the Mines. Once upon a time, it had been so brightly lit that it appeared like an industrial metropolis on the sea. Shirahama, meanwhile, was a major port on the western coast of Iriomote, the harbor from which the mining companies exported huge amounts of coal. Nowadays, only a single village remains, couched in the natural landscape like a *genkan*, or entry hall, to the "last secret place in Japan". This village, Funauki, can only be reached by boat. Divers and rafters who come after hearing of its reputation carry out preliminary exercises around here on the coast before heading into deeper, more secret places for further exploration.

The mines were disbanded during the war, and the village of Shirahama burned down completely in air raids. This had never been anyone's ancestral home. The residents who had moved here from various parts of Japan to meet the demands of the burgeoning mining industry dispersed or fled to their hometowns. After the war, only a tiny number of people returned, their past having already become a long-buried secret.

The neighboring uninhabited island is called Sotobanari Island. There used to be a few scattered mines, but it's long been an island devoid of human activity. The island became infamous for an *ojisan* who had once lived there completely naked, embracing a primitive lifestyle after the war. Supposedly, an English television station had come all the way just to interview him. In recent years, the now quite elderly ojisan moved elsewhere, leaving behind his uninhabited kingdom where it seems only wild animals and forests remain.

Shirahama and these two islands are closely dependent on each other. When viewed from above, the three look like a mountain range partitioned by the sea. The distance between them reminds me of being in Granny Hashima's home in Shirahama, talking about things of the past that linger in her mind, so close and yet so far, inside the blurred boundaries between history and memory. In order to reach the Island of the Mines of our imagination, however, we still needed a boat and a guide. When I first began filming, I was hoping to stay in the tranquility of Granny's home and didn't feel quite ready for a long journey. But the booming noise of port construction beyond the window felt like a constant reminder to me that this was a harbor village, and we would ultimately have to depart.

1. Granny Hashima's Home

Granny's home was a dim, dark place, with funeral portraits of her parents and husband who died young on the wall. An elderly woman living by herself, she safeguarded this house that her foster parents had built by hand. Everything was dilapidated and badly damaged, or long fallen into disuse. The house itself, its wooden floorboards, the old table, cupboards, and family photographs that hung on the wall – all of these were keys to unlocking Granny's many memories and stories. The house seemed to speak of Granny's long life as a *sin-pū-á* daughter, betrothed to marriage since childhood.

> *Back in the day it was called "Dead Man's Cave", so who would have dared to come? They said it was called Ryukyu, and it was a deadly place.*
> *In the beginning, my friend said to me, "Your dad is bringing you there to die!" I said, "What the hell are*

you talking about! Speaking such nonsense before I've even gone." That's how I got in a fight with this friend.

Going to Iriomote is going to Dead Man's Cave, the friend says to me. Whoever goes there dies! What kind of person has the guts to go here?

—interview with Hashima Yoshiko, 2015

I came to this place for the first time in January 2014 to visit Granny Hashima, who was then eighty-eight. It certainly wasn't the first time Granny had been interviewed. Previously there'd been a television station and a reporter who'd found out about her adoptive father Yang Tien-Fu, the last Taiwanese person to serve as a *kinsakibori*, a main contractor or foreman, in the mines on Iriomote. The whole family was cloaked in mystery, both to the other residents of the island and to the researchers and interviewers who came from afar.

But as for me, what drew my attention most was the unique atmosphere of this old house: Taiwanese in appearance but impossible to describe with any accuracy. What manifested within this ancient home were memories, messy and entangled like overgrown weeds. The Hashima family had been in the village of Shirahama since the mining era before World War II and had returned to Taiwan afterward. Following the February 28 massacre, they stowed away and came back to Iriomote, where they lived through the "Yaeyama Development" project during the American occupation era and then through the myriad changes that came with Okinawa's return to Japanese rule. These memories were so heavy, and yet this house bore the dreams and aspirations of Taiwanese people who wanted to set down roots on this island, demonstrating resilience and perseverance in their fervent desire to create a space of their own.

Later on, I would conduct countless interviews sitting at the only table in this old house. They were all shot from the same camera angle and position. Those interviews continued until just months before Granny passed away. This was the bulk of the footage used in *Green Jail*: shots taken over the years, all from the same position and same angle. We often talked about "things from the past": Granny's third son who went "inland" (what Okinawans call the main Japanese island of Honshu) and never came back; the eldest son vaccinated by a military doctor upon returning to Taiwan after the war and inadvertently becoming infected with polio; and trivial matters concerning the other children who didn't make it into the final documentary. Granny addressed her own parents in Taiwanese as *iúnn-pē* or *iúnn-bú*, underscoring the fact that she'd been adopted. In Japanese, she called them *jiisan* and *baasan*, terms typically denoting grandparents. But she never once referred to them as her mother and father. When I'd ask about her *otousan*, or simply "father", she'd think of the biological family she'd been with for only three days; family members she could recall from childhood but never saw again after growing up.

Perhaps because I was always asking about things from the past, details about Granny's adoptive father and mother became clearer over time. Sometimes I felt like I could look right through the ninety-something Granny who sat before me and see the little girl who'd been brought to this unfamiliar island, the one who had been so fearful and reliant on her parents. With her incredibly sharp tongue, Granny often sounded like she was telling someone off when she spoke Taiwanese. At the same time, it also seemed like she was protecting her family, her words revealing the vulnerability of someone who has suffered.

地緣政治1：島鏈風雲
GEOPOLITICS: ISLAND CHAIN

Geopolitics Editorial Department
地緣政治編輯部

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This book, under the chief editorship of Eric Lin, benefits from the insights and experience of five international affairs experts (Li Shi-Hui, Albert Chiu, Matteo Chang, Tang Chih-Mao, and Liu Bih-Rong), three geopolitical researchers (Ou Si-Fu, Huang An-Hao, and Chai Wen-Chung), one high-ranking military officer (Chang Yen-ting), one popular geography educator (Wu Yang-Jui), and three senior international observers (Ko Pi-Chen, Tao Yu-Jung, and Lin Chun-Yu). In clear prose and easy-to-decipher graphs, each provides insightful new analysis, elucidating problems and potential solutions sensitive to the region's geography, international relations, strategic priorities, economics, industries and trade flows, cultural landscape, and points of chronic friction.

The island chain off mainland Asia in the Western Pacific has historically had an outsized impact on geopolitical strategy and stability. This book tackles systematically the close relationship between geopolitics and international cooperation and competition, as well as the important role and relevance of these islands in this context.

The necklace of volcanic islands running south to north off Eurasia's eastern coast represents, in geopolitical terms, the "first line" of defense in postwar US strategic efforts to contain Russia, North Korea, and China. With Cold War vibes once again shaping the US-China relationship, Taiwan, at the center of this Western Pacific island chain and a visceral target of Chinese territorial ambition, is being increasingly discussed as a potential flashpoint for war. *Geopolitics: Island Chain* details the perspectives of thirteen subject experts from Taiwan on the strategic importance and position of this island chain and its effect on global geopolitics.

The first of this book's seven chapters discusses the defining differences between traditionally land-power and maritime-power based states, and how these may influence their respective standing and prospects in this island chain. Chapter Two launches into the region's history, the emergence of the concept of these islands as a geopolitical barrier, and its shadow over post-Korean War geopolitics. Chapter Three discusses the natural and cultural heritage of these islands and disputes over reefs and islets in the East and South China Seas. In Chapter Four, the authors attempt an overall analysis of major-power views and strategies with regards to this island chain. Chapter Five explores the current status of the island chain, and Chapter Six examines Taiwan's relationship with the overall island chain from the perspectives of international relations, socioeconomics, military strategy, and national defense. The final chapter spotlights the authors' varied perspectives on various island-chain-related issues.

Geopolitics is an erratic and ever-changing game, and plenty of articles and books may be found on most any political situation or potential flashpoint. This book was written to provide an easily digestible introduction to the background and current situation in East Asia's island chain in hopes of injecting a uniquely "Taiwan perspective" on relevant issues into the broader discourse.

GEOPOLITICS: ISLAND CHAIN

By Geopolitics Editorial Department
Translated by Paul Cooper

> "Few countries are more aware of the realities and serious nature of geopolitics than Taiwan. After the Second World War, Taiwan, at the center of the first Western Pacific island chain, stood firmly on the frontlines of the global Cold War, its position further complicated by unresolved animosities with its neighbor, the People's Republic of China. Now, well into the 21st century, Taiwan, in upholding its sovereignty and helping secure this strategically vital island chain, must persistently strategize to survive in a landscape defined now more than ever by great power conflict.
>
> This book brings an invaluable Taiwanese perspective to East Asian politics and regional military affairs, with firsthand observations and opinions provided by relevant experts. Should global conflict erupt again, this island chain, with Taiwan at the center, will undoubtedly be a key battleground. Readers may appreciate this work as an informative, much easier-to-understand 21st century update to Sun Zi's *The Art of War* that not only reveals the likely nature of future conflict in the region but also shows how peace may be sustained. This is an excellent work for all readers interested in international affairs and geopolitics."
>
> — **Weng Chi-An (Associate Professor, Department of History, National Chi Nan University) / Translated by Jeff Miller**

Chapter 1: Understanding the Geopolitics of Island Chains

Reemerging Importance of Island Chains

Text by Lin Chun-yu

With a new cold war emerging, the island chains are resurgent, with Taiwan at the center of conflict. Geopolitics can provide the most realistic perspective on this dynamic.

The Sleeping Lion Has Awakened, and It Is Roaring

The Pacific island chain strategy was born out of a rare confluence of natural geology and international relations. Recent East Asian international relations history is a story of confrontation between sea and land powers, with island chains playing a central role.

Two classic metaphors illustrate the importance of the island chain strategy: the "lion awakes" and the "clash of spear and shield."

The first metaphor derives from a well-known quote widely attributed to Napoleon: "China is a sleeping lion, and when the sleeping lion awakes, the whole world will tremble." On the map, along the eastern side of the Eurasian continent, three archipelagos extend out into the Western Pacific. They may be likened to three waves of sound projected by the land power China's roar or to three layers of chains used by the sea powers to keep that landbound lion in check.

The Pacific island chains, formed through tectonic collision and compression, are separated from the Eurasian continent by marginal seas, marked by rapid ocean currents and strong typhoons during the typhoon season in the summer months, which, while connecting these islands to the continent, also make them difficult to reach over water. From its earliest beginnings, China has been threatened mainly by the various nomadic peoples living along its northwest frontier, and, throughout its history, China has had to expend considerable manpower and financial resources to build and maintain the Great Wall in the north to prevent these peoples from encroaching south. By contrast, the Chinese have had little time to pay attention to the rich resources beyond the coastline to the south and west, taking a relatively passive approach in dealing with attacks by *wokou* (Japanese pirates) off the coast.

During the Age of Exploration, Western nations sought to extend their reach to the Orient, and European sea powers set up bases of operations in these island chains, from which they could knock on the gate of China. During the 19th century, the sea power of Great Britain initiated the First Opium War against the Qing Empire, after which Hong Kong Island in the south of China was ceded to the British. Subsequently, France gained Vietnam as a colony in the Sino-French War and Japan gained control over Penghu and Taiwan after the First Sino-Japanese War. The Western sea powers had maritime power bases, and took advantage of the decline and weakness of the Qing Empire to extend their influence in China through footholds within the empire obtained either outright or leased at highly preferential terms. The "sleeping lion" had not only been trussed, it was being dismembered.

Taiwan: At the Center of Spear and Shield

After the Second World War, the island chain strategy took on a different form, which may be explained using the aforementioned spear-and-shield metaphor.

The influence of communism spread south from Soviet Union in the north down throughout China and into parts of Indochina. The US, a sea power, conceptualized an island chain strategy as a maritime Iron Curtain to contain the spread of communism. This strategy successfully contained communist influence to the Eurasian continent and heralded the start of the Cold War.

The maritime Iron Curtain proved extremely effective for several decades in the late twentieth century, not only limiting the spread of ambitions of the land powers but also leading communist China to implement economic reforms and the policy of opening up, transforming the country into the "world's factory" and the main engine of globalization as well as a crucial global trading partner.

However, the island chain nations and Western countries had made a serious misjudgment, mistakenly thinking that economic growth and modernization would eventually result in China's democratization. The lengths to which the Chinese Communist Party system would go to maintain its grip on power went far beyond what the outside world anticipated, and it was Western economies that became increasingly dependent on China's manufacturing chain and consumer market. China, they discovered, had begun to challenge the world democratic order. However, by the time this realization had sunk in, the optimum time for constraining this land power's ambition had already passed.

It is as if, as Soochow University political science professor Liu Bih-Rong noted, the three Pacific island chain archipelagos are a spear and shield drawn by the hand of God for the purpose of geopolitical competition. A glance at the map shows China as a "spear" protruding into the Western Pacific, wanting to transform itself into a sea power and pierce the Pacific Ocean. An alliance of the US, Japan, Taiwan, the Philippines, and Australia form the shield in this scenario, with the island chains creating successive layers of containment nets that help maintain the status quo in the Western Pacific.

On the map, whether viewed north to south or east to west, Taiwan is located at the intersection of the confrontation between the two opposing sides, serving both as the tip of the "continental spear" and the handgrip of the "maritime shield" while playing a central role in the global semiconductor industry's supply chain.

Realignment: Five Points

The spear and shield confrontation between the sea and land powers has realigned the importance of the island chains.

In the north of this island chain, South Korea, which was originally on good terms with China, has now taken sides. Economically, it has joined the "Chip 4 Alliance" with Taiwan, the US, and Japan, while politically, South Korean President Yoon Suk-yeol has made it clear that China presents a security threat, that the Taiwan issue is an international issue, and that the US-South Korea military alliance is of tantamount importance.

In April 2023, President Yoon and US President Joe Biden signed the Washington Declaration, which granted US nuclear submarines permission to dock at South Korean ports. This is the first such agreement made in over forty years, and, with the US "Boomer Submarine" capable of carrying twenty Trident II "nation-killer" ballistic missiles, it is an effective deterrent against North Korea and a further reason for China to think twice about challenging the status quo in the region.

However, at the center of the island chain, the tacit agreement between China and Taiwan regarding the Taiwan Strait median line acting as the boundary separating their mutual sovereignties has been broken, with China's People's Liberation Army now breaching this line on a regular basis.

In 2019, after news broke of Taiwan purchasing F-16V jets from the US, China responded by flying fighter jets close to the median line, with Taiwan dispatching fighters to shadow and monitor their activity. In 2022, then-US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi visited Taiwan to underscore America's commitment to maintaining its friendly relations with Taiwan, after which China began ignoring prior precedent about not crossing the median line. Chinese fighter jets and naval vessels now repeatedly crossed the line, attempting to establish a "new normal" of violating the median line.

At the southern end of the island chain, China has extended its reach into the South China Sea, constructing artificial islands and military airports. It even started broadcasting local weather reports as well as building movie theaters, coffee shops, supermarkets, banks, hospitals, post offices, and hot pot restaurants to foster an image in the media of everyday civilian life there to bolster its claims to sovereignty over the entire South China Sea area.

In 2023, in response to China's frequent activity in the area and after a five-year hiatus, the US and the Philippines reinstated the Balikatan military drills, after which the US also held the Exercise Cope Thunder military exercise. In 2022, the US and Indonesia elevated the scale of the Garuda Shield bilateral joint military exercise to include fourteen participating countries under the name "Super Garuda Shield".

To the east of the island chain, Australia, which acts as the hub of the second and third island chains, has found itself within range of Chinese missiles, and, as such, can no longer rely on its geographic isolation to guarantee national security. In recent years, Australia has been working to implement a nuclear submarine program, and has been assisting South Pacific Island nations such as East Timor and Papua New Guinea in the realms of trade, finance, and infrastructure development to reduce their reliance on China.

China, for its part, further ramped up its Belt and Road Initiative, investing in and creating infrastructure construction projects, and providing financial assistance to South Pacific island nations. The US has tried to bolster preparedness by discussing formal cooperation with Taiwan's diplomatic allies Palau and the Marshall Islands, which may allow the US military a presence in their territories. The US has also signed an MOU with Micronesia, and it is anticipated that Micronesia may at some point establish diplomatic relations with Taiwan.

Significantly, the Chinese weather balloons that drifted east and crossed into mainland US airspace in early 2023 raised US public awareness of the direct threat posed by China, and, from this point onward, US public opinion began supporting a more confrontational approach to China in international affairs.

In South Asia, India, originally considered as having little to do with either the Pacific or its island chains, found itself having to address the "String of Pearls" strategy being employed by China to encircle India

to the south. It was this that ushered India into the US-led Indo-Pacific strategy and expanded its geopolitical thinking to considerations of the security of the Western Pacific island chains. As a democratic nation, it joined the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (the Quad) with the US, Japan, and Australia, and realigned its foreign policy stance to support the tenets of the Act East Policy. This has given India a more active security role in East Asia and has expanded its military relations with other nations in the region.

Where Next? Geopolitics as the Solution

Island chains are resurgent, and all eyes are on the tensions at the center of the first island chain, with significant attention given to what Taiwan will do next. The geopolitical landscape cannot change overnight, but the question is how can Taiwan take control of the situation to turn its geographic situation into a "spear and shield" of its own to avoid being used as a mere pawn in the ongoing game between land and sea powers. As Taiwan is an island, should it view the world from a land power or sea power mindset? Might it gain control of the island chain using its inherent economic and cultural strengths?

Will Taiwan's proactive deployment of a three-dimensional strategy incorporating land, sea and air defense necessarily increase tensions? Should the Taiwanese stand firm on their democratic values, or would pursuing a more China-friendly path dissipate some of the current tensions in Cross-Strait relations? Geopolitics points to solutions to these questions, as it facilitates discernment of the most practical and realistic path. Looking at a map and disassembling its constituent pieces will shed insightful light on the current circumstances, the problems, and the potential solutions in the island chains as well as on which "black swan" events are most likely to come to pass. The process of thinking over these issues will gradually produce insights pointing the best way forward.

In this new cold war between sea and land powers, the value of the island chains is being redefined. Thus, understanding geopolitics will be critical to providing Taiwan the best path forward to divesting itself of nationalistic and ideological frameworks. Only then, starting from an understanding of the most pertinent characteristics of island chain geopolitics, can Taiwan move confidently and strategically forward.

The Characteristics of Island Chains

Feature 1: Confrontation Between Maritime and Land Powers

He Who Controls the Island Chain Controls the World

"Sea power" and "land power" are the two most important concepts to consider in the study of geopolitics.

Sea power involves the belief that a nation need only to control the oceans to dominate the world. In other words, sea power nations pursue a maritime strategy to secure military security and, in turn, ensure national prosperity. In particular, this strategic approach emphasizes securing and maintaining the ability for rapid and free movement on the seas, which, through the resultant ability to allocate and manage global trade routes, bolsters major power status.

Land power perceives Eurasia as a global hub that is easily defended and difficult to attack. Thus, control of Afro-Eurasia is the key to controlling the world. The strategic thinking revolves around expanding territorial holdings to gain access to the greatest amount of natural and human resources so that, even if maritime trade routes are blocked, continental resources may still be tapped to maintain and sustain national power. As such, the more territory controlled, the better.

塵封的椰影：細川隆英的南洋物語和臺

ARCHIVED SHADOWS: HOSOKAWA TA SOUTH SEAS MANDATE AND THE STO TAIHOKU IMPERIAL UNIVERSITY

Hu Jer-Ming
胡哲明

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Hu Jer-Ming earned his PhD in Plant Biology from University of California, Davis and is currently a professor at National Taiwan University's Institute of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology and Director of the NTU Herbarium. He specializes in plant taxonomy, the evolution of plant reproductive systems, phytogeography, and ethnobotany. *Archived Shadows* is Hu's first popular science book.

臺北帝大植物學者們的故事

AKAHIDE'S SEVEN ADVENTURES IN ORY OF BOTANISTS IN THE AGE OF

This docufiction novel is inspired by the compelling, true-life story of a now little-known young botanist in prewar Taiwan who invests his expertise and energies on expanding our understanding of the plant sciences.

It was only in the 1930s that Taiwan's colonial education system, and its modern approach to scientific studies, produced the island's first crop of skilled and motivated botanical researchers. Between his 1932 graduation from Taihoku Imperial University in Taipei and his permanent relocation to Japan in 1946, Hosokawa Takahide (1909-1981) forged a fruitful career as a Taiwan-based botanist, leaving over 6,000 botanical specimens that are still conserved today in the National Taiwan University (NTU) Herbarium. However, despite his contemporary importance, he and his legacy have largely faded into obscurity. In *Archived Shadows*, author and botanist Hu Jer-Ming explores the scientific, historical, and sociological underpinnings of Hosokawa's work and specimen collection, weaving a compelling story of Imperial Japanese botany in the early-mid twentieth century.

After introducing Hosokawa's personal background, the story-like narrative follows the budding botanist through his friendships and studies while at Taihoku Imperial University as well as his subsequent research expeditions through Southeast Asia and atolls in the Western Pacific. Readers follow Hosokawa on his journeys to learn about iconic and interesting regional flora and discover the importance to native cultures of elephant-ear taro leaves, kava root, and many other plants. *Archived Shadows* brings stale scientific knowledge to life and a new, eye-opening familiarity to exotic plants.

The story woven here by widely read author Hu Jer-Ming is a botanical adventure in time that invites readers to see through Hosokawa's eyes tropical Pacific islands decades before the arrival of package tourism and modernity and to appreciate the moxie of field botanists willing to risk life and limb to sate scientific curiosity.

ARCHIVED SHADOWS:
HOSOKAWA TAKAHIDE'S SEVEN ADVENTURES IN SOUTH SEAS MANDATE AND THE STORY OF BOTANISTS IN THE AGE OF TAIHOKU IMPERIAL UNIVERSITY

By Hu Jer-Ming
Translated by Jim Weldon

"*Yashi no Hakage* (Under the Shade of Coconut Fronds) is an early twentieth-century compilation of diary entries made by Taiwan Sotokufu Museum's first director Kawakami Takuya during his travels through the South Pacific and East Indies. This book, compelling to Taiwanese readers in translation today, is a classic from colonial-era Taiwan offering insight into the ecological landscape and natural history of contemporary Southeast Asia. A considerable translation and editing effort in more recent years created a Chinese version of this work that brought this work to light among Taiwan readers.

Paying tribute to Kawakami's work, *Archived Shadows*, centering on the life of Hosokawa Takahide, leverages delightful prose and vivid illustrations to capture the thrill and excitement surrounding botanical field work during the first half of the twentieth century. This ostensibly non-fiction effort touches on many historical places and scenes. Also, the author's occasional metaphysical side journeys detract not a whit from the rigor invested in creating this serious literary work."

— ***Openbook* / Translated by Jeff Miller**

Author's Preface

When the average person pictures a botanist, the image probably does not go beyond that of a person who likes spending time raising plants in a greenhouse, or has a passion for charging about the rainforests in search of rare species. Yet, for academics engaged in the basic research work of botany, understanding the typology of varied plant morphologies, why they grow in particular locales, how they adapt to their environment and the diversity of their outward forms are all, in and of themselves, questions rich in interest. Not so strongly drawn to agricultural development or to the exploitation of natural resources, they tend to shake their heads and sigh at unbridled land reclamation and tree-felling. Botanists of this latter type most often work in obscurity, yet they are frequently frontline observers of Nature, seeing from a perspective apart from the common run, with a more profound and intuitive perception of the principles governing human interactions with the environment.

Hosokawa Takahide, the man at the heart of this book, was just such a scholar, dedicating his life to the study of the taxonomy and ecology of plants. He spent the first half of his life in Taiwan and was a student in the second intake at Taihoku Imperial University,

joining the faculty of the university after graduation and remaining there until after the end of the Second World War. His scholarly career may be said to span the rise and ultimate demise of his alma mater. He was afforded the opportunity to make numerous research and study trips to the South Seas, and was one of only a very few natural scientists to conduct long-term exploration and fieldwork in that region. Perhaps most readers' ideas about the South Seas are somewhat superficial, and most are likely entirely unaware of the thousands of valuable botanical specimens from the South Seas housed in the collections at National Taiwan University. Beyond this, botanical research was quite active during the Taihoku Imperial University era, with a stream of research published by both faculty and students and quantities of specimens collected. Although this book centers on Hosokawa Takahide, it also tells the story of the diligent work of these Taiwanese botanists in the early part of the twentieth century.

The specimens in the herbarium were collected in the field by botanical taxonomists, carefully dried and pressed, and then labelled with information such as the date and location of acquisition. The impression most people have of herbariums is of yellowing pages of withered brown leaves stacked in an endless array of cabinets, something only botanical taxonomists might be interested in looking through. Yet, aside from being specimens providing evidence awaiting research, they also have academic value in and of themselves. Much extended research in recent decades has used the information contained in specimen labels to reconstruct the temporal-spatial distributions of plants inferred in past times. The studies presented in this book similarly seek to use the information on these labels to reconstruct the itineraries of collection expeditions organized by earlier botanists. Because the research workers at the Taihoku Imperial University Herbarium produced large quantities of specimens and published research but little in the way of travel diaries or manuscripts, reconstructing their life stories and scholarly explorations has proven quite a challenge. Fortunately, the former National Digital Archives Program and current Taiwan Cultural Memory Bank hold many well-ordered resources and databases that allow for rapid searching. Using this vast storehouse of materials, it is possible to reconstruct and present the fieldwork careers of the herbarium's collectors. As regards putting into order the specimens collected by Hosokawa Takahide across Oceania, my student Cheng Yi-Ru spent a number of years examining and comparing them, material that then provided the basis for her completed master's thesis. It was only by drawing on such information that I was able to reconstruct the collection expeditions and interpersonal networks of the persons in this book.

However, when it came to actually writing, much time also had to be spent combing through and checking available documentation, to ascertain not just the relationships between the various people involved but also the social and academic conditions of the time; even down to what the weather was like. Some of the scholars, including Kudo Yushun, Masamune Genkei, and Hosokawa Takahide published collected memoirs after retirement or were described in retrospectives published at the time of their deaths, making it easier to get a glimpse of their lives. However, materials related to the lives of botanists and other persons linked to main figures such as Hosokawa are almost entirely absent, leaving me no choice but to follow up on a mishmash of tenuous clues and traces. I put a great deal of thought into how best to make this book hang together better and give it the strongest possible narrative, interpolating situations found in other materials or creating dialogues in the text and drawing on my own experience of fieldwork as I came to bring the book together as a literary whole. I was able to avail myself of the valuable suggestions of Lo Su-Mei in the Anthropology Department at National Taiwan University when writing accounts that touched on anthropological themes, saving me from falling into vagaries and error.

I benefitted from a number of domestic and international open-source platforms when assembling my reference materials, which made checking through materials quick and efficient. These included the Integrated Electronic Resource Database for Taiwan Studies, the Taiwan Rare Book Collections, the Taiwan Sotokufu Personnel Directory, the National Diet Library of Japan, the Japan Center for Asian Historical Records, Japan Search, and the University of the Ryukyus

Library, among many others. During the years I spent writing this book, I also purchased many valuable reference works from online second-hand booksellers, which, together with the rich holdings at the National Taiwan University Library, the TAI Herbarium Library and Institute of Modern History at Academia Sinica, proved of great assistance in completing my work. .

I also had regular contact with Hosokawa Takahide's surviving family. His second daughter Kanako and her husband Nagano Hiroshi provided quite a large number of precious family photographs and numerous anecdotes, enabling me to tease out the threads of my story much more clearly. I would also send whatever new materials I came across to Hosokawa's family, and there were numerous unexpected discoveries. Among the most notable were Liu Chiu Elementary School's Principal Chang-Chien Chen-feng's finding biographical materials relating to Hosokawa's father, Hosokawa Takaaki and the discovery of Hosokawa Takahide's athletic records Taihoku High School's student magazine, the *Shofu*, which his family found very moving. During those years, Nagano Hiroshi, Kanako, and their daughter Minako would send cookies baked in their own store for me to share with my colleagues at the Herbarium; a genuinely heart-warming way for them to reciprocate. Lastly, I want to give special thanks to my father, Hu Ting-Ho, and mother, Hu-Wu Tsai-Yueh, who not only helped with a great deal of the translation from Japanese and in clearing up ambiguities but also shared many of their memories from childhood. Now both in their nineties, they are among the very few remaining elders able to provide first-hand accounts of the 1930s and 1940s, enabling me to get a genuine feel for the atmosphere in Showa-era Taiwan.

Although the horrors of war lay as a shadow over Taiwan in the 1940s, strictly speaking, the vast majority of ordinary Taiwanese had less direct experience of the shock of conflict than their peers in China, Southeast Asia, and the Pacific territories, as Taiwan was never invaded directly. Most of the damage done to Taiwan came from US bombing raids and the resulting fires and so forth. In writing this text, I think I have given my readers, particularly in the parts of the final two chapters describing the war and early post-war years, some taste of the brutalities of war, and the hopeless situation it put so many in. The book overall was written to address a variety of different themes, including botanical taxonomy, ethnobotany, history, and sociology, which was perhaps an over-ambitious goal. While creating a coherent whole has perhaps not been entirely possible, I hope that by making linkages across disciplines, my readers may gain insights wholly different from anything previously encountered.

Sumiko, Fiora, and Dores are three of the handful of fictional characters included in my narrative, although they are all based on actual people. I have added such characters to Hosokawa's story mainly to bring the situation of those times to the fore, to emphasize subthemes such as ethnobotany applications, or to describe books with scientific illustrations in ways that aren't overly dry or dull. Other fictitious elements were also included as needed to provide plausible back stories. For instance, the tale of Fiora's skirt adds a bit of romantic imagination to Hosokawa Takahide actual presentation of a grass skirt to the Museum of Anthropology at Taihoku Imperial University.

I dedicate this book to Hosokawa Takahide and all of those others who strived so hard and diligently during the most trying of times.

Prologue

The sun sank slowly below the Pacific Ocean, the sky gradually took on the hues of night and now the moon is shining through the coconut palm fronds; I had not previously imagined how dazzlingly bright the moonlight could be in the South Seas. The men and women of the village are gathered around a campfire, talking in a language I do not understand. I sit on the veranda, putting specimens in order by candlelight, [……]and enjoying some of the delicious local food. The village headman had informed me with no little pride that Professor Kanehira Ryozo of Kyushu Imperial University had once stayed in this house. There is a

constant sound of waves breaking against the rocks of the shore. I barely slept at night, tossing and turning, since I am unused to travel among native peoples.

Two weeks after setting out from the port of Yokohama on July 31st, 1933, the exhaustion of a long sea voyage was finally replaced by the excitement of being on an expedition to collect specimens of tropical flora. On Kosrae Island, Hosokawa Takahide finished his evening meal and came to a natural pause in the work of putting his specimens in order. He gave his field kit a quick clean and set it to dry, carefully stowed away his round-rimmed spectacles, then wrote the words quoted above.

That trip was Hosokawa's first collecting expedition to the islands of the South Seas since graduating from Taihoku Imperial University. Made in the eighth year of Showa (1933), it lasted three months and was the first and longest of seven such expeditions Hosokawa would be making to Micronesia over the next eight years.

Hosokawa Takahide was part of the second graduating class at Taihoku Imperial University, and he had stayed on after graduation, taking up a post as an assistant in the Faculty of Science and Agriculture. He remained at the university in various roles until the end of the Second World War, after which he transferred to a teaching post at Kyushu University, working there until his ultimate retirement. He left behind more than six thousand botanical specimens in the herbarium at National Taiwan University (known as Taihoku Imperial University during Taiwan's half-century under Japanese rule), including almost four hundred rare and highly prized type specimens. Type specimens differ from ordinary specimens, as they are the actual specimens referenced by botanists when assigning scientific names to newly discovered plants. If a researcher wishes to confirm the identity of a found specimen, they must compare it to its associated type specimen and confirm no differences in the two in terms of time and place. These are the most important specimens for each particular plant species. Researchers typically make special trips to herbariums with type specimens if they need to confirm the identity of species found in the field. This means that, by and large, the number of type specimens held in a collection is an indicator of the history and scale of an herbarium. The only two herbaria in Taiwan with over one thousand type specimens in their collection are those of the Forestry Research Institute and National Taiwan University. Of the one thousand four hundred or so type specimens held by National Taiwan University, almost a third were collected by Hosokawa Takahide. Most of Hosokawa's specimens were collected on the islands of Micronesia. However, they were shut away and out of sight for many years after the end of the Second World War. No curation was made and most Taiwanese botanists had little idea about the collection, which also meant that few knew of Hosokawa Takahide or what he had achieved. Yet beyond the considerable academic importance of these botanical specimens, Hosokawa as a person was deeply connected with Taiwan, and his research travels between the island and Micronesia stand as important testimony to the interactions between Taiwan and the South Seas region in those times.

…

Hosokawa Takahide's initiation into the study of tropical plants began under the guidance of his tutor at Taihoku Imperial University, Kudo Yushun. Kudo was the university's very first Lecturing Professor in botany, charged with teaching and researching plant taxonomy and ecology. Hosokawa was enormously interested by what he learned under Kudo's tutelage when it came to the particular characteristics of tropical plants such as giant lianas and the arboreal ecology of towering rainforest trees. While in his third year, Hosokawa read a paper published in *The Botanical Magazine* by Kanehira Ryozo describing the woody plants of Micronesia. This was his first introduction to the flora of the South Seas. A series of subsequent reports by Professor Kanehira noted how much of the great biodiversity of Oceania was still unknown to science. Because much of this tropical region was new territory of the Empire of Japan, Hosokawa developed an acute interest in travelling to Micronesia to carry out research.

尋找動物烏托邦：跨越國界的動保前

SERACHING FOR ANIMAL UTOPIA

Lung Yuan-Chih 龍緣之

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Lung Yuan-Chih, an experienced animal rights advocate and author, currently serves on the board of the Taiwan Human-Animal Studies Institute and as an Asia Region ACTAsia representative. Leveraging her significant field research experience and academic research skills, Lung launched the Animal PepTalk media platform in 2019 and has been recognized with an annual award from the Culture and Animals Foundation.

線紀實

Animal protection warrior Lung Yuan-Chih has traveled to countless locations around the world as an advocate for animal rights and to show her concern for the relationship between humans and animals. Lung's biting, insightful commentary on her lived experiences leaves much for the reader, and all humankind, to consider.

Zoos and circuses are both cute and deadly. In *Searching for Animal Utopia*, author Lung Yuan-Chih investigates the current state of and challenges to the global animal protection movement while giving her readers insights into the complexities and various facets of this movement via her lived experiences in Taiwan, China, Japan, and Scandinavia.

Particular attention is given to how regional and cultural mores shape how "animal protection" is perceived and practiced in different countries. Beyond graphic depictions of the cruel realities of animal-exploitative business such as China's live bear-bile abattoirs and traveling circuses and Europe's fur farms, Lung paints an in-depth, critical portrait of the effort invested by many animal rights advocates. Her treatment of this issue doesn't shy away even from spotlighting the heavy psychological burdens and exhaustion regularly borne by frontline volunteers. *Searching for Animal Utopia* further delves into the role of religious groups in the movement, detailing the problems of captive animal releases and sanctuary farms, allowing readers to better appreciate both the complexities and the critical importance of the animal protection movement.

Much more than a litany of the works of animal protection activists, this book is a heartfelt call to action. Lung hopes her retelling of what she has seen and heard firsthand inspires readers to launch their own journeys into exploring and better understanding the relationship between humans and animals as well as to actively work toward equitable coexistence.

SERACHING FOR ANIMAL UTOPIA

By Lung Yuan-Chih
Translated by Serena Ye

> "The scope and promotion of animal welfare are deeply tied to both local and international considerations, with issues of animal mistreatment and exploitation inexorably affected by region-specific inequalities in terms of access to resources and by the priority given worldwide to humans in environmental and resource planning.
>
> In this work, the author combines her experience in grassroots activism and academic credentials to successfully bridge local and international perspectives on animal welfare. The narrative fluidly weaves together field notes, cross-cultural observations, and personal reflections to expand awareness and understanding of, and inspire deeper thinking on, the subject of animal welfare."
>
> — ***Openbook*** / **Translated by Jeff Miller**

Prologue: Flying and Rock and Roll

Action is born out of curiosity. I arrived alone in Beijing on the fifth day of the Spring Festival in 2008, beginning a journey of almost ten years. I first rented a room in Yanbei Garden at Peking University. There were three cats in my apartment – one, Koko, had been adopted by my roommate in Taiwan, while the other two were staying with me over the winter break. Maybe cats get lonely spending a whole winter break on their own. Arriving at the Soviet style townhouse on the side of the 5th Ring Road in the evening with my cumbersome luggage, I opened the door nervously with my freezing hands and turned on the light. The three cats in the teeny-tiny living room were purring and wandering about.

Beijing Belongs to Us

When I first arrived in Beijing, my days spent together with the cats weren't completely lonely. When I sat in front of the computer, Koko was always on the desk with me. But naturally, I still wanted to meet new friends here, longing to get to know a place other than home inside out, and looking forward to one day being as comfortable and sophisticated as an "old Beijinger". As I was on the campus of Peking University, I inadvertently came across a post on the "Weiming Bulletin Board System" from a student club called the "Vegetarian Culture Association" announcing an upcoming animal-protection-themed rock and roll performance. Having never been to a bar before, I was pleasantly surprised, and for a whole week, pleaded with the only female high school student I knew in Beijing to come with me to see this group of young rock performers who were vegetarians and animal protectors.

Before the day of the event, I scoured the internet for information about the organizers. It turns out he was a stick-thin man in his early thirties with a big forehead and long hair tied back into a ponytail who had written a lot on his blog about his experience going vegetarian. Just like me, he had chosen vegetarianism to reduce harm to

animals. His blog also had many photos of him living with cats. He looked to be living true to the title of an article about him published in a Japanese magazine: "Cat and Man, Conjuring the Magic of Happiness". His disposition seemed vastly different from that of Taiwanese men, with a determined and daring look about him. This sense of distance from cultural unfamiliarity, while being ideologically resonant, attracted me.

At 8 p.m. on the night of the performance, we arrived at *Lanqi Ying* in the Haidian District. There were two rock and roll bars there, situated next to Peking University and Tsinghua University, but none of the people coming in or out seemed to be students. One of the bars, D22, looked fashionable. The space inside was narrow, long, and poshly lit, but I didn't spend much time looking around. The other, 13 Club, was more old-school, hidden from view without much decoration, and had a simple stage. The square "rock area" in front of the stage was already crowded with people in seats that formed an *n* shape around the stage, as well as in the grandstand on the second floor, which was where the Animals are Friends performance that I had come to see had already begun. The bar area was filling with smoke, and the entrance was lined with the strips of plastic used as insulation in all shops around here. The thick smoke stung my eyes, and I couldn't hear clearly how the song being performed related to animal protection, but I was moved by the host's conviction when talking about the tragic situation of bear bile farming and of the cruelties done to other animals. The long-haired man named Xie Zhen, dressed in a red shirt and red pants, was the lead singer of Overnight Youtiao, a band from northeastern China. He and the other musicians were all vegetarian. My attention zeroed in on him, and, outside the bar, I worked up the courage to introduce myself and we exchanged emails. Xie Zhen was the first friend I made in Beijing.

The following Sunday, Zhen invited me to go to Tuanjiehu with his friends to "discuss the overall situation of animal protection". It was bright and sunny in Beijing that day, with no dusty winds. There were friends from Dandong in Liaoning, Hebei; and Zhen was from Anshan. There were men and women with different dialects, builds, and appearances. It all brought a sense of newness for me. It turned out that Animals are Friends was a public welfare group just recently founded by Zhen from the Overnight Youtiao band members. Performing as an underground band, they planned to first make an impact on the capital's somewhat rebellious and impressionable young people, starting with issues such as cat and dog meat, fur and leather, and bear bile farming, so that people can gradually gain an understanding of animal protection and plant-based diets. Animals are Friends hadn't hosted many performances yet, but planned to expand to other provinces to tour, and Overnight Youtiao composed music in the Chinese pentatonic scale, with recent works all related to animal protection. I listened with great relish to them talking about the philosophy of the band and animal protection, as well as their lives in Beijing and their hometowns. There was also a girl they had met on the bus who volunteered to help with costume designs after hearing about their ideas on animal conservation. It seemed that Zhen and his friends didn't miss any opportunity for publicity. They had a passion I had never before witnessed. We were a few young people sitting in Tuanjiehu Park, discussing the new age of revolutionizing society through music and increasing awareness for the spirit of animal protection.

During that time, I got to know Zhen's friends. There was the trueborn Beijinger Xiao Shu, who was short, small, and feisty, with phoenix eyes and a long head of hair always with a straight fringe. She rode her bike all across Beijing, and I jokingly said she was Nezha[01]. There was Tang Jing from Nanchong, Sichuan, a postgraduate student at the Central Academy of Fine Arts. She looked Tibetan, was very blessed by the Buddha, and had a thin figure with an expression that exuded both persistence and feminine gentleness. Shi Ya from Anguo, Baoding, Hebei was almost 170 cm tall. She didn't give off much of a city girl vibe, but radiated independence and gave me the impression of being a Chinese feminist intellectual. I hit it off with all of these girls. Zhen's "brother" Lin Fan had unusually large eyes and a sense of mighty and serious masculinity about him. He was the band's drummer. I also got to know the band's guitarist, Madman, a cute and innocent boy who was four years older than me and lived in Beijing.

01 Translator's note: Nezha is a deity with extraordinary powers in Chinese mythology, characterized by his energetic and passionate personality.

We later dated for four years. The bass player, also from the northeast, was Chu Xinzhi. Zhen invited me to go with him to pick up Xinzhi from the Beijing West Railway Station one day. Even small matters like this felt novel to me. There are so many people in China, and I had never seen this many people. With these new friends I made, it was as if Beijing was beneath our feet; the streets belonged to young people, and its future was also ours.

Vegan Utopia

Zhen rented a small house with a courtyard in the outskirts of Beijing, located in Fenghuangling, for RMB¥1,000 (about US$142) a month. From the Summer Palace public transit hub in the northwest corner of Beijing, it took forty minutes to an hour to get there on the 346 bus. The body of the bus was divided into two parts. The road after the 5th Ring Road was bumpy, and had to inch forward, making the acrylic windows rattle tremendously, as if mimicking the adversities of life. Over the next two to three years, I often caught this bus, rockily making my way to Zhen's place to see him and his friends, cats, and a wolfdog named Pang Pang that had long been trained and adopted by the yard's owner. Sometimes, I brought toys for the cats, and other times I brought some daily necessities for my friends. I also collected some bracelets, jade jewelry, and other things to compensate these young idealists, hoping my friends might sell them for a bit money outside of their performances. However, I was not observant enough to notice that Zhen took to wearing the jewelry I left with him. That small courtyard housed a myriad of my hopes and dreams, pure and unwavering; the people there were like my family in Beijing, and I'd often go there to eat, and do the dishes too. On the first night, Lin Fan said that everyone sleeps on the same bed like brothers and sisters. Beijing was really cold during the night, and there was no indoor heating. Young people like us were always thinking of ways to save money. Whatever we wore during the day, we wore at night as well. No one had a nighttime routine – they just got on the bed and lay down in their clothes. Beijing was dry and dusty, and water was a commodity in perennially short supply in that region, so many people showered only once in a while. But even so, no one had much of a body odor.

Most of the young rock and roll Beijing drifters lived in the suburbs of Beijing, just like the Old Summer Palace's painter's village of old. In the years that followed, I got to know more of these artists, musicians, poets, underground journal editors, and others. At the time, rent in Beijing was still somewhat reasonable, and concrete apartments between the 5th and 6th Ring Roads all went for about RMB¥800 to 1,000 per month. Further out of the city from where I lived, there was even less urban planning, with a lot of illegal construction being carried out in the middle of the night. Alleyways were often dirt roads, and smelt of excrement. There were also many people who urinated in public – even I could name a few. In fact, the name of the place, where Yanbei Garden of Peking University was located, was called "Saoziying"[02], with the sign next to Old Summer Palace, located in the middle of the two major gardens of Old Summer Palace and Summer Palace. Apparently, this place is where they used to dump the urine for people in the Old Summer Palace, hence the name.

Life then was simple and happy. My family still supported my expenses away from home, and, apart from preparing for graduate school, my time was my own. In addition to attending shows in Beijing centered on animal protection, Zhen invited me, along with several other girls, to go on tour with them to Shandong, and we traveled with the band to Jinan, Tai'an, and Qingdao. The minibus took me through the northern countryside, small towns, and unfamiliar cities. Some performance venues were discos, while others were unregistered nightclubs not much bigger than a single room in buildings that looked unsafe. Each place had their own "small animal protection societies", which surprised me. It wasn't until much later that I realized some societies were operating outside their means. The group that invited us to perform in Shandong had sold their office dog on the internet to raise money. We talked and laughed along the way, while also often

02 Translator's note: Literally translated to "Camp Stinks-a-Lot", the name derives from the odor associated with the place.

solemnly discussing the heart-wrenching stories we'd heard about animals. We discussed the grave situation at livestock farms, including the suicide of a dog who had been heartlessly abandoned, and the tragic death of Lin Fan's parents, who died of gas poisoning while making meat stew for him. It was when I frequently saw "dog collection" ads on utility poles in the countryside that I realized eating dogs and selling one's own dog to butchers was so prevalent in the suburbs of Beijing.

I stopped eating meat in my second year of college, but still ate some dairy and egg products. Zhen and his mates didn't eat any animal products at all, nor wear fur, leather, or down. I quickly adopted this philosophy, became vegan, and ditched all my leather shoes. When my college classmates from Taiwan, I-Chih and Pei-Yin, came to visit me in Beijing, I proudly introduced my group of friends. We also toured Tianjin together so everyone could experience the life of young people in the north, spending nights in bars, restaurants, and many a spare room. I-Chih half-jokingly said to me that he'd heard that Western rock bands often took girls with them on tour, who assisted during the day and slept with the band members at night. In China, they called young girls like that "guo er"[03]. I couldn't care less because, in my heart, my friends had integrity and were full of dreams, and weren't like that at all.

We sometimes met some extraordinarily distinctive people, like the "fruit-eating superhuman" who could eat raw lemons. Another young girl we met had taught Buddhism to thousands by the age of ten and had a sizeable following. Zhen insisted that he could fly, but no one had ever seen him do it. He also had some other skills I can't now remember, but some people liked to joke that he looked like a Taoist.

During those years, I also wanted to do what I could for animals. Outside of studying, I spent most of my time with my Animals are Friends mates and did volunteer work on occasion with different grassroots or international organizations. I felt that everyone was looking for opportunities everywhere, in all sorts of ways, to influence and transform society through strict veganism and animal rights activism (strictly speaking, these two terms had not been popularized at the time), particularly by promoting less meat consumption.

Shared Animosity Among Young Animal Protectors

In retrospect, I used to rely heavily on this group that revolved around Zhen. I genuinely wished for its long-term progress, so I wanted to support them in every way possible. I bought a handheld DVR and wanted to film a documentary with these friends as the main characters. One or two nights every week, my group of friends and I would play in bars all over Beijing, and, while the guys were on stage singing for the animals, I would be filming off stage while other girls took photos. The underground music venues we frequented included Hao Yun, Liang Ma Qiao, Yugong Yishan, The Salt of Thin, and 2 Kolegas Bar. There seemed to be a lot of passionate young people like us. Tickets cost about RMB¥30 each, but the bars and sponsors took most of the revenue. In total, each band member earned about RMB¥15 to 30 a day, enough to carpool home after midnight shows. Whenever Zhen and the others missed the late-night bus back to Fenghuangling, they would stay at my rental place for the night. I was always happy about it, and even let Zhen give QQ and Kaka vaccines he'd bought online. It was unbelievable now that I think about it.

There's a concept in the rock world called 3X: No smoking, no drinking, no promiscuity. I once thought this was basically the attitude Zhen and his friends had toward life. It was true we didn't drink much, but Lin Fan sometimes smoked quite heavily and had a lot of troubles. He said the only thing we lacked was money. If we had money, he said, Animals are Friends could tour everywhere and spread the message of animal protection to young music enthusiasts, who would then take this message far and wide. Aside from the issue of never having enough money, I felt like everyone was helping us find opportunities.

03 Translator's note: This is a Beijing slang word literally meaning "fruit", commonly referring to young women who like rock bands.

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