

生活在大都會：台灣人旅日回憶錄

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中文摘要

本文透過摘選數位日本殖民時代留日學生的回憶錄篇章，來探討所謂「成為日本人」此一概念。對於習於以傳統中國心態與行事邏輯的台灣留日學生而言，日本化帶來許多新奇的經驗。那些文化價值被台灣留日學生視為優越而近代的表徵，而他們在日本境內又如何對應這些價值？本文指出這些近代性的行事方式並非全然出自日本傳統，而是由日本與周邊區域和國際世界多方互動所致。藉此，來說明某些台灣留日學生藉以發現並挑戰其認同的那些共通感的模式，還有二十世紀全球化邏輯下所框架並滋養的社會對話。張深切、楊肇嘉、杜聰明、陳逸松之回憶錄是本文著力所在。

關鍵詞：台灣、日本、殖民地、認同、敘事

Adapting to the Metropolitan Way of Life: Taiwanese Memoirs in Japan

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Abstract

Late 19th century imperial expansion constituted one of the hallmarks with a lasting impact on the international order. The exportation of new “modern”, “civilized” ideas became a global movement. Within this process of cultural transfer, one cannot fail to pay attention to the encounters between coloniser and colonised. Said otherwise, the manner in which Taiwan entered the global world was conditioned by its Japanese colonial experience (1895-1945). This colonial legacy continued to live on in the post-Japanese-colonial period, and still plays a significant role as to how Taiwanese society at present positions itself in the global world. In between the exportation of modern and new ideas, displacement from the Taiwan periphery to the Japanese center and subsequent cultural encounter, we may discern some of the commonalities which arise from sharing about the collapse of traditional ways to interpreting anew one’s own tradition and culture. As shall be demonstrated, through the passage of “becoming Japanese” and equalling modernity with Japaneseness, Taiwanese students and young professionals in Japan

discovered and challenged the core of their identity in a cultural and social dialogue as framed and nurtured by the logic proper to early 20th century globalization. I have selected Taiwanese autobiographies or Memoirs as a particular genre of literary writings that enables us to disclose some features of Taiwan's globalization process. Illustrations are drawn from the narratives of the following authors: Zhang Shenqie, Yang Zhaojia, Du Congming, and Chen Yisong.

Key words: Taiwan, Japan, colonialism, identity, narrative

Adapting to the Metropolitan Way of Life: Taiwanese Memoirs in Japan

Introduction*

* = Note on romanization. I have used the Hanyu-pinyin system for the transliteration of personal names and terminology. For place names in Taiwan, I have used the Wade-Giles system.

Expanding the history of globalization as a topic invites us to take a closer look at an investigation into the interpretation of Taiwan's immediate past.¹ Since the 1980s, Taiwan's postcolonial self-definition - seeking its place as historical subject² - has been accompanied by a historiographical revolution. A boom in Taiwanese historiography on the Japanese colonial period has played a tremendous role in the localization of Taiwan as an entity. The very concept of this national-identity history writing and emphasis on historical consciousness in the making of the Taiwan nation is one aspect of Taiwan's globalization process.

¹ This article draws on an earlier version presented at Rikkyo University, Tokyo in 2004. See, アン・ヘイレン (Ann Heylen). “都會人として生きていくには；台湾人の日本生活の思い出” In: Mark E. Caprio (ed.) 近代東アジアのグローバリゼーション(Globalization of Contemporary East Asia), Tokyo: Akashishoten, 2006, pp. 150-182. I would also like to thank the “MOE The Talent Cultivation Project of Taiwanese Literature, History and Art in Globalization (教育部顧問室全球化下的台灣文史與藝術國際交流計畫)” for providing financial support which allowed me to update this research.

² See Elleke Boehmer's description of postcoloniality in *Colonial and Postcolonial Literature* Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1995, p.3.

For the Taiwanese, the shift in belonging from Chinese province to Japanese colony in 1895 increased the pace by which Taiwan came to participate in the general culture of modernity. In the grand discourse of the colonial rhetoric, the Japanese empire was open to all the peoples of Asia from which they could actively pursue a place in the modern world that was promised by Japan. Underlying this grand discourse was that the Taiwanese were to be culturally and linguistically subdued over time, they were to abandon and replace their Chinese culture repertoire with that of Japan. This process of cultural negation and dissolution, i.e. coercive assimilation, informs us of what scholars have described as the making of mobile subjective identities. C.W. Watson in this respect refers to the metamorphosis trope in disclosing the distinctiveness of Indonesian nationalist discourse.³ His metaphorical usage of “mask” comes to the fore when the notion of ‘exact congruence’ in intercultural perceptions is challenged by the immediate social environment.⁴ These dilemmas of representation constituted the locus of the challenges and crises for Taiwanese passing in “becoming Japanese”. Viewed as such, Homi Bhabha’s account of “colonial mimicry”⁵ - which he designates as the gap between the normative metropolitan vision of grand discourse and its distorted colonial (mis)imitation - in fact defined and at times even sharpened one’s sense of belonging and core values. In other words, the unsettling sense of “almost the same, but not quite” or “being Taiwanese after all” was precisely what enabled these Taiwanese to reformulate their own cultural identity as distinct from the Chinese and Japanese variants, and yet at the same time underscoring the commonality in 20th century intercultural exchanges and community-building.

In this essay, I follow the argument that Taiwan’s introduction to modernity coincided with logic proper to the early 20th century process of globalization.

³ Watson, C.W. *Of Self and Nation, Autobiography and the Representation of Modern Indonesia* Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2000.

⁴ *Ibid.*, chapter 2, “The metamorphosis of a Javanese Aristocrat”, pp. 38-69.

⁵ Bhabha, Homi K. *The Location of Culture*, London: Routledge, 1994, pp. 94-95

Acknowledging that globalization in those days did not have the same extensiveness, velocity and intensity as it does today, nonetheless, it would be erroneous to conclude that this process of early 20th century globalization did not equally entail challenges and crises to one's traditional understanding of culture and identity.⁶ The experience of Japanisation was a novelty in many aspects of Chinese cultural understanding and practices. These practices of modernity were not exclusively Japanese either, but resulted from an interaction with the regional and international world.

To date analyses of colonial literature⁷ serve to illustrate colonial identity politics in Taiwan. A good example is Leo Ching's analysis of Wu Zhuoliu's novel *The Orphan of Asia* (*Ajia no koji*).⁸ In addition to such works of nativist literature, whose semi-autobiographical nature has been acknowledged, personal documents such as memoirs and autobiographies, may equally serve as demonstrations of a concern with writing and narrative as formative elements in this process of self-fashioning, called modern life.⁹ Under investigation in this article is the concept "becoming Japanese" as a trope for participating in the general culture of modernity that Japan promised. The grand discourse of imperial rhetoric defined a Taiwanese as a subject of the Japanese Empire, it gave him a new identity whether he accepted this new allegiance or not.

This essay draws on a selection of Taiwanese memoirs, in particular those that have included recollections of prolonged study journeys in Japan during the colonial period. Most Taiwanese did not leave for Japan, but the ones who did were in a

⁶ Arguing otherwise, would render more futile the argument that globalization results in a greater salience of identity. See, Cha, V.D. "Globalization and the Study of International Security", in *Journal of Peace Research*, vol. 37, no. 3, 2000.

⁷ for a discussion of colonial literature within the Taiwanese literary canon, see Kleeman, Faye Yuan. "The Boundaries of the Japaneseness: Between *Nihon bungaku* and '*Nihongo bungaku*,'" in *Proceedings of the Association for Japanese Literary Studies* 6, Summer, 2000.

⁸ Ching, Leo T.S. *Becoming Japanese: Colonial Taiwan and the Politics of Identity Formation* Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001, chapter 5. "Into the Muddy Stream": Triple Consciousness and Colonial Historiography in *The Orphan of Asia*, pp. 174-210.

⁹ On the use of (auto)biography in eliciting features of 19th century global imagination and modern consciousness, see Erlmann, Veit. *Music, Modernity and the Global Imagination. South Africa and the West New York*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999, chapter 2 "Style is Just the Man Himself", and chapter 3 "Inventing the Metropolis", pp. 32-58 and pp. 59- 85 respectively.

sense privileged in that they were able to broaden their horizons. Which cultural values were presented as superior and constituted as modern and how did the Taiwanese student in Japan interact with these? In between the exportation of modern and new ideas, displacement from the backward periphery to the cosmopolitan center and subsequent cultural encounter, we may discern some pattern of commonalities in the manner in which Taiwanese who went to study to Japan in the colonial period, discovered and challenged the core of their identity in a cultural and social dialogue as framed and nurtured by the logic of early 20th century globalization.

Written Legacies: The Authors and Their Writings

The autobiographical accounts presented here are separated by four decades (late 1940 to 1990s). One commonality is that all invariably narrate their educational formation in the metropole (Japan). The incentive for going to Japan was inspired by educational motives; furthering the education that they were denied or felt was inadequate in the colony of Taiwan. As the length and tone varies, so also does the literary generic as these accounts were written and published at different chronological distances from the events at the time of writing. However, it is precisely their reflection on experiences in “becoming Japanese” that enables us to discern certain patterns in the underlying cultural interaction at the time, and its interpretation against the backdrop of postcolonial textual politics in identity formation throughout this chronological scheme of four decades.

One of the colonial realities was the unequal opportunity in educational training, based on a policy of segregation between Taiwanese and Japanese and merely providing primary and vocational schooling to Taiwanese. It was not in the interest of the colonial authorities to create a fully educated Taiwanese workforce, but furthering one’s education in the Japanese homeland was considered a privilege. Social background and/or good relations with Japanese residents in Taiwan enabled a small segment of gifted Taiwanese youngsters to pursue their education in Japan.

Especially in the early years, it was not unusual for Japanese educators stationed in Taiwan to see that bright children went to Japan.¹⁰ Yang Zhaojia (Yang Yaw-Jia 1892-1976) went to Japan in 1908 under these circumstances. Upon the instigation of Japanese school principal Okamura Tamakichi, Yang departed for Tokyo at the age of 16. The first year, he studied at the Kuroda High School, and in 1910 he successfully enrolled at the Tokyo Kyōka Commercial School from which he graduated in 1914. After 1915, it became obvious that seeking higher education in Japan was the only means to improve one's chances for social mobility in society. Zhang Shenqie (Chang Shen-chieh 1904-1965) went to study in Japan in 1917 under the patronage of Lin Xiantang (Lin Hsien-tang 1881-1956).¹¹ Zhang completed his middle school in 1919, and furthered his studies at Tokyo Vocational School the following year. When Du Congming (Tu Tsung-Ming 1893-1986) graduated with honors from Taiwan governmental medical school in 1914, he was assigned a position as a general practitioner at the Red Cross hospital. With the help of Horiuchi Tsugio, dean of the medical school, Du could further specialize in bacteriology at the Medical Department of Kyoto Imperial University. Du's study years in Kyoto cover the years 1915 to 1921, during which he completed his Ph.D. In 1920, at the age of 13, Chen Yisong (1907-1999) was sent to Tokyo together with his brother Chen Jindong. Chen Yisong finished his secondary education at the Okayama School (1921-1928), and enrolled at Tokyo University (1928), from which he graduated in 1931 in law.

Zhang Shenqie's Memoirs, entitled *Milestone –Black Sun* (Lichengbei – you ming: heise de taiyang) was published in 1961.¹² It draws extensively on an earlier narrative,

¹⁰ For a discussion, see Kaminuma, Hachirō. "Nihon tōjika ni okeru taiwan ryūgakusei. Dōka seisaku to ryūgakusei mondai no tenbō," (Taiwanese Overseas Students under Japanese Colonial Rule, Evaluation of the Assimilation Policy and Student Problems) *Kokuritsu Kyōiku kenkyū sho kiyō* (*Journal of National Educational Research*) 94, 1978, pp. 133-157.

¹¹ Lin Xiantang was heir of the wealthy Lin clan in Wu-Feng in central Taiwan. Concerned with the limited educational opportunities in the colony, he devised a scheme of scholarships and study allowances for gifted youngsters in the local community to study in Japan.

¹² Zhang, Shenqie. *Lichengbei – you ming: heise de taiyang* (Milestone –Black Sun) 4 volumes Taizhong: Shenghong Chubanshe, 1961.

entitled *My Life and My Thought* (Wo yu wo de sixiang), published in 1948, and reprinted in 1965.¹³ *Memoirs of Yang Zhaojia* was written by Yang Zhaojia and edited by Yang Jiwei. The book was published in 1967 by Sanmin Shuju in Taipei, one of the politically correct publishing houses under KMT auspices. Du Congming's *Recollections of Tu Tsung-Ming*, Taiwan's first Doctor in Medicine was published in 1974, by the Dr Du Congming Grant Foundation, and reprinted in 2001 by Longwen Publishers in Taipei.¹⁴ Chen Yisong's *Memoirs of Chen Yisong* is the first publication in the series known as the Taiwan Oral History Research Unit. In 1993, it was published as a serial in the journal *Literary Taiwan* and the *Zili Wanbao* newspaper. Its 1997 publication by Qianwei (Avantgarde) is a revised edition from 1994.¹⁵

A critical reading of autobiographies cautions to take note of the socio-political context that was prevalent at their time of writing. This kind of contextualization pertains to the usage of particular narrative structures, interpretations, selection in content, deliberate insert or omission of certain events, significance and implication of certain stylistic tropes employed and brought out in various ways. Also, each autobiographer went through different life experiences, and acquired a different status and position within Taiwanese society or abroad during and after the colonial period.¹⁶ Significantly, recent reprints of these *Memoirs* confirm the view that there is indeed

¹³ Zhang, Shenqie. *Wo yu wo de sixiang* (My life and my Thought) Taizhong: Zhongyang Chuban, 1948. Zhang's 1948 and 1961 publications are reprinted in Zhang, Shenqie. *Zhang Shenqie quanji* (Complete Writings of Zhang Shenqie) 12 volumes, arranged by Chen Fangming, Chang Yen-hsien, et.al. Taipei: Wenjingshe, 1998.

¹⁴ Du, Congming. *Du Congming Huiyilu Taiwan shouwei yixueboshi* (Memoirs of Tu Tsung-Ming, the First Medical Doctor Ph.D.) [1974] reprint Taipei, Banqiao: Longwen, 2001.

¹⁵ Chen, Yisong, Wu, Junying, Lin, Zhongsheng (ed.) *Chen Yisong Huiyilu* (Memoirs of Chen Yisong) Taipei: Qianwei, 1997.

¹⁶ In 1943, Yang Zhaojia moved to Shanghai. After retrocession in 1945, circumstances compelled him to return to Taiwan, and he became a functionary in the Taiwan provincial government. During the 2.28 Incident in 1947, Zhang Shenqie went into hiding in the mountains in Nantou during which he wrote *My Life and My Thought*. Denied a public career afterwards, he devoted his time to literary writings and opened a coffee house. Du Congming remained in the medical profession throughout his life. After he resigned as dean from the Medical Faculty at National Taiwan University in 1953, he established a private medical school in Kaohsiung. The school became renowned for training aborigines with a medical degree. Chen Yisong engaged for a short period in local politics in his heimat Ilan but was forced to abandon this career and went into business. In 1972 he fled Taiwan, lived for 10 years in the mainland, and settled in the USA in 1983.

a need to supplement the historiography of the Taiwanese collective memory and engage with a historically informed consciousness on the local and national level.

In the overall narrative of their experiences in Japan, I have singled out passages that disclose commonalities on the following issues: the journey from Taiwan to Japan, the arrival in Japan and finding accommodation, the interaction with Japanese people. Throughout the process of narration, they all invariably, but making use of different contexts, touch on the self-identification topic; that what keeps them busy and defines the core of their existence at the time.

The Cultural Encounter

The experience of going overseas started with the boat trip from Taiwan to Japan. The boat trip took about four to five days, departing from Keelung and bound for one of the four Japanese harbour cities: Moji, Kobe, Yokohama, or Osaka. In most cases, youngsters and students travelled in small groups, or were accompanied by a family member of their beneficiary. The second part of the journey was continued by train. Once the destination was reached, fellow Taiwanese or Japanese provided a helping hand with getting to their lodgings. The younger students lived with one of their Japanese schoolteachers until they were old and responsible enough to stay at the Takasago dormitory.¹⁷

The frame of reference through which these Taiwanese youngsters perceived Japan and recorded it as such in their *Memoirs* should be seen against the existing relations of powers between Japan and Taiwan. Astonishment resulting from the grandeur of Japanese cities and its material advancement compared to their home atmosphere in Taiwan are frequent opening sentences or inserted passages describing the arrival in Japan.¹⁸ It was as if truly a new world opened to them, a

¹⁷ The Takasago in Tokyo dormitory was especially built for Taiwanese overseas students.

¹⁸ We may also refer here to Xie Nanguang (Xie Chunmu)'s sojourn in Osaka in the 1930s, in which he describes his return to Osaka after a period of five years. The narrative describes his confrontation with an Osaka that was even bigger, more prosperous and that many commodities

world that was very different from what they had imagined Japan to be, based on their experiences with what Japanese culture and its nationals represented to them in Taiwan. Two illustrations from Zhang Shenqie (1908) and Chen Yisong (1920) respectively:

“We embarked in Kobe, and set first foot on the Japanese soil. We took the Sannomiya train to Tokyo. Throughout the journey, the scenery was delightful, particularly attractive were the simple dwellings in the countryside, and what caught my eye the most was that in Japan the peasants were also working the land, they used many horses, small oxen, the plain and simple farming... Before I thought that the Japanese people were all scholars and officials. It was not until I went to Japan, that I discovered that Japan also had farmers and workers, and that there were more poor than rich people, thus I also considered myself in a better position, and this made me feel more confident.”¹⁹

“As soon as we had set foot on shore, the five kids of us who came from Taiwan, we could not stop looking around. Shimonoseki seventy years ago was like a city that had the flavor of all seasons, the shops were crowded, everywhere people were queuing, on the streets horse carriages loaded with goods were incessantly shuttling back and forth, and in case a horse dropped his dung, the owner of the carriage at once picked up his dung with a shovel and put the shovel in a wooden bucket that was attached at the horse’s back, so as to keep the streets clean. It was completely different with Taiwan at that time where the ox dung laid arbitrarily on the streets. I was so moved by this fact that I won’t forget it in my lifetime.”²⁰

were cheaper than in Taiwan. Xie, Nanguang. *Xie Nanguang zhezuo xuan* (Selected Writings of Xie Nanguang) Taipei: Haixia xueshu shubanshe, 1999, pp. 152-154. Xie was politically active in colonial Taiwan, author of *Taiwan no yōkyū* (The Demands of Taiwan) Taihoku: Taiwan Shinminpōsha, 1931. More research awaits a proper evaluation of his writings.

¹⁹ Zhang, Shenqie. *Milestone*, pp.57-58.

²⁰ Chen, Yisong (ed.) *Memoirs*, p. 32.

Once in Japan, the Taiwanese were to participate in the Japanese way of life, in particular in the areas of dress, manners and language. The outward metamorphosis started with looking like the Japanese. Again, in the colony there was less exposure to these, in that segregation between Taiwanese and Japanese was a common practice. The most obvious cultural markers were already done away with in Taiwan: Taiwanese boys cut off their pigtail when going to study in Japan.²¹

Zhang Shenqie narrated how in the beginning he was looked at by Japanese people on the street. Mrs. Nagateru, the wife of his landlord explained to him that he did not wear a kimono appropriate for his age. The kimono made in Taiwan for Zhang was for adults, because it had a pocket in the sleeve. So, she gave him a small bag and told him to put it in the pocket of his sleeve. Zhang continued the narrative:

“I appreciated the advice and tied the small bag in place. When I went out on the street, I somewhat took on the Japanese manners, swinging to and fro, very funny, people did not stare at me differently any more.” ... “Mrs. Nagateru changed my inappropriate kimono and also taught me “the etiquette” - taking presents when visiting people. Of all these (polite manners), the most difficult was to sit straight on my knees during dinner time, the manner of holding chopsticks, and putting the chopsticks down while drinking soup, holding the bowl firmly ...”²²

Yang Zhaojia’s narrative:

“School principal Okamura almost every day came to see me. Each time he brought me some casual things to wear. One time he gave me a many flowered silk ‘kimono’. At home, we all wore Taiwan clothes. When going to Japan, we took two pairs of ‘Western suits’ with us. Wearing them

²¹ Chinese pigtails was a cultural marker for the Chinese to the outside world. Its Manchu origins are not the issue in this context.

²² Zhang, Shenqie. *Milestone*, p. 70.

was not that different from at home, however, the kimono was different, the strangest were that pair of trousers, it simply looked like the skirt that girls wear. I did not know how to put it on, but my roommates told me how.”²³

Chen Yisong relates:

“One early morning, dressed in my new kimono, skirt and wooden clogs, I slowly walked out of the Takahara house, onto the big road. I noticed a field, and turned into the little field road. At that time, a peasant coming towards me said ‘good morning!’ when he passed me, and when he made his turn into the field, he gave way to me. I was flabbergasted. Had this been in Taiwan, dressed like this walking on a small way in the fields, it would have been really strange if I were not scolded for doing so.”²⁴

In addition to putting on a Japanese dress and acquiring Japanese etiquette, the Japanese language constituted another resource through which the Taiwanese student adopted the cultural values of the new homeland. The *Memoirs* variably elaborate on Japanese language learning, encountered difficulties and various responses to their use and choice of languages.²⁵ I have selected two illustrations from Zhang and Chen that indicate the importance attributed to the Japanese language as a vehicle for “becoming Japanese”.

“When we speak Japanese in Taiwan, although we made mistakes, no one would laugh at us, it didn’t make much of a difference, the Japanese understand that we speak Japanese badly, they speculate and then for the greater part understand. When they want to talk to us, they are afraid that we will not understand, and speak slowly word by word, so that we can hear everything. Here the situation is different. They do not care where you

²³ Yang, Zhaojia (ed.) *Memoirs*, p. 42.

²⁴ Chen, Yisong (ed.) *Memoirs*, p. 39

²⁵ See in this latter respect, narratives in which the autobiographers reflect on speaking Taiwanese in class.

come from; every day speech is very fast. Moreover, the Japanese language in Taiwan mostly has the accent of Kyushu and Shikoku, their phrases are not elegant, and as we are used to it, the Tokyo standard speech feels strange to us.”²⁶

“In the past the Japanese people were very demanding in the education of boys. This means that no matter how much you were suffering, you could not call it suffering. These were the circumstances under which I was educated in Japan as a 13-year-old boy. Naturally, it impacted me. Until now, I still walk straight, this is what Mr Otojirō taught me, many of my movements and manners seem Japanese, I speak Japanese like Japanese people, without any accent, therefore, at times when I go to a Japanese restaurant to eat Japanese food, they often mistake me, this Taiwanese for a Japanese person!”²⁷

So far, not much room has been created for interpretation resulting from the cultural interaction with the Japanese people. What were some of the contemporaneous Japanese perceptions of these Taiwanese students, and more importantly, how has this representation been reproduced in the Memoirs. Two illustrations can be given.

Yang Zhaojia lived with the Okamura's. When the neighbours hear that Okamura had brought with him three Taiwanese young boys, they came over to have a look:

“But, when they saw us, they were at ease, also maybe because they heard from the explanation of school principal Okamura that we would not damage people's brains; at the same time we were also satisfied, because they did not at all resemble the many Japanese in Taiwan who were superior, conceited, egoistic and full of themselves.”²⁸

²⁶ Zhang, Shenqie. *Milestone*, p.61.

²⁷ Chen, Yisong (ed.) *Memoirs*, p. 37.

²⁸ Yang, Zhaojia (ed.) *Memoirs*, p. 40.

The second illustration is taken from Chen Yisong who after lunch at Mr Watanabe's house took a rest on the tatami. He dozed off and is awakened by noises. He noticed the many holes in the rice paper door, and when he tried to peep through these, he saw moving eyeballs. He abruptly stood up, opened the door and six small children scattered hurriedly away. At that moment, Mr Watanabe's sister-in-law walked by and stammered to Chen:

-These children are really hopeless, yesterday the news headlines wrote 'the child(ren) of the Taiwan mountain chieftain have arrived'. This immediately attracted the attention of the neighbours, and talk spread. Some even said, 'It is said that they eat humans', that's why the little children secretly came to look at you.

-'I have eaten venison meat, but I have not eaten human flesh' I replied in a very serious manner.²⁹

The informed reader may remark that the Han Chinese is mistaken for an aboriginal, as can be seen from the allusions to the still customary headhunting practices.³⁰ However, the reproduction of the "savage" in the *Memoirs* may be interpreted as a literary trope denoting that "being taken for a savage" was a reality in cultural interaction, and one of the expressions of identification with "being Taiwanese", as shall be demonstrated further below in Du Congming's account.

Becoming Japanese

As a social construct the notion "becoming Japanese" draws the attention to a conscious state of mind coming into being - constructed - that was not there in the

²⁹ Chen, Yisong (ed.) *Memoirs*, pp. 40-41.

³⁰ It is debatable to what extent the autobiographers deliberately positioned themselves as "savage", thereby implicitly perpetuating the Sino-centric nationalist discourse and/or employed it as a strategic device to reproduce within the narrative the colonial rhetoric of the existing relations of power, and in so doing omitting the specific historical conditions, namely that at the time the Japanese press reported the visits of aboriginal chieftains to Japan.

first place. In as much as adapting to the metropolitan way of life could facilitate this process of becoming, the very experience was prone to a set of challenges and crises. These obstacles presented themselves on the occasions when one's native identity was deliberately recalled.³¹ Zhang's narrative elaborates in detail his internal struggle. It captures in several stages the dilemmas of representation whereby the new social environment challenged his traditional understanding of culture and identity. These experiences, his choice of strategies, and post-event reflections, provide a unique opportunity to analyze and interpret the growth of his peculiar Other, leading to the discovery that he is Taiwanese.

When Zhang Shenqie went to Japan, he was still too young to lodge at the dormitory or rent a room. Together with another Taiwanese student called Hong Yaoxun, he was given lodgings in the house of his Japanese teacher. At a certain moment, his peer Hong falls ill and is taken to the hospital. Zhang decides to visit him. He is so delighted seeing Hong that he starts talking in Taiwanese to him. What startles him is Hong's reaction:

“Then I knew that he did not want to speak the language of home, I spoke Taiwanese, he spoke Japanese, after we finished our conversation in Taiwanese-Japanese, he urged me not to speak Taiwanese, because it would impede me becoming proficient in Japanese. Listening to him, I felt disappointed, and at the same time, I also felt that always wanting to customarily speak Taiwanese in Japan and holding on to the traditional (old) way of life was not the thing to do, and should not be done.”³²

³¹ For a similar experience in the Indonesian context under Dutch rule, see Watson, C.W. *Of Self and Nation*, chapter 2, pp. 55-69.

³² Zhang, Shenqie. *Milestone*, p. 65. The narrative in “My Life and Thought” is as follows: “After I had said a few sentences, I then realized that my hope turned into disillusion. Not only did he not speak Taiwanese with me, he even urged me absolutely not to speak it, as when I would speak it often, I would not learn Japanese well. Because of this ‘disappointment’, I realized that I should become a Japanese citizen, speak Japanese, read Japanese books, study the customs and manners of the Japanese people, apart from that, there was no other hope to entertain.” Zhang, Shenqie. *My Life* p. 10

Zhang described the conversation during this visit in terms of shiwang (disappointment). The feeling of disappointment resulted in an awareness that speaking Taiwanese was not compatible with “becoming Japanese”. He felt rejected by his friend, but accepted his advice. Zhang then decided to “become Japanese”. He mobilized all his forces, befriended Japanese and described his becoming Japanese to the extent that he also started adopting a denigrating attitude towards the Chinese *shinajin* (for which he uses the Japanese word) and he takes on a Japanese name, “so that no one would know that I was also a shinajin”.³³ Zhang negated his Chinese cultural allegiance and put on a Japanese mask. In *My Life and Thought*, Zhang concluded this passage with “Because I wanted to become Japanese, I felt I ought to take Japanese courses, such as judo and fencing, courses that I studied with fervent enthusiasm and dedication.”³⁴

Yet, his disguise lead to another even more traumatic experience of “disenchantment and rejection”, illustrated with an incident during his fencing class. Zhang narrated that he made good progress and became very adept in the sport. One day in class, he duelled with his teacher. At one point, his teacher gave him an incorrect stab, and he went to the ground. The headmaster ran in and argued with the teacher. The conversation went as follows:

-Don't you see, this imperial servant (*qingguonu*) is too used to being pampered. He must be taught a lesson’.

The headmaster replies:

-You do know that he is Taiwanese, don't you, so, you should not insult him, because in Tokyo there are very few Taiwanese students.”³⁵

³³ Zhang, Shenqie. *Milestone*, pp. 67-68 and *My Life*, p. 11.

³⁴ Zhang, Shenqie. *My Life*, p. 11.

³⁵ Zhang, Shenqie. *My Life*, p. 12. The narrative in *Milestone* is slightly different. Zhang narrates that the teacher who stabbed him was told of by the headmaster who interrupts: “what happenend, you beat my student!”. Zhang situates the reply of the teacher “Don't you see, this Imperial servant (*qingguonu*) is too used to being pampered. He must be taught a lesson” in a defensive way as to cover up his embarrassment. Then follow a few sentences narrating the short argument between the two teachers. The headmaster replies: “This is an overseas

What impacted Zhang the most is that none of them was under the impression that he is Japanese: “One said that I was Taiwanese, the other insulted me as an imperial servant from China, not one recognised me as a Japanese.”³⁶ The mask is unveiled. The challenge in “becoming Japanese” turns into a crisis. Zhang experienced the unsettling sense that he was “Taiwanese after all”, and that this equalled “not as good as Japanese”. Again, against his wishes, he is recalled to his native identity. The manner in which the narrative unfolds reveals that Zhang at this stage remains conscious that he is not-Japanese, while at the same time his Taiwanese identity is forced upon him, yet he does not know yet how to negotiate between these two perceptions. In the narrative, he quits fencing class and loses interest in school. The Japanese people become his enemies and he takes his frustration out on his Taiwanese classmates. They, more than anyone else, reinforced the idea that he was “Taiwanese after all”.

While struggling with his “inferiority label”³⁷, he discovers that in his shattered world, there is one thing in which he is good at: kite flying. He narrates his fondness for this leisure activity and how he made several different shapes. When out kite flying, Japanese people noticed that his was different, but Zhang never bothered to engage in a conversation in his state of rebellion. On one occasion, his kite draws the usual attention, until one of the accompanying adults inquires: “what kind of kite is yours? It’s such a good one!”³⁸

student from Taiwan, we must take care of him”. The teacher: ‘What is there to take care of an imperial servant!’ Headmaster: Caring, he has come to study here since primary school, that is to care about!’ Teacher: Taiwanese people are also Chinese (shinajin), you make Japanese people lose face, on the contrary you side with him and this causes me trouble...” Zhang, Shenqie. *Milestone*, pp. 79-80.

³⁶ Zhang, Shenqie. *Milestone*, p. 80. The narrative in *My Life*: One said imperial servant, the other said Taiwanese, none mentioned that I was Japanese...’Zhang, Shenqie. *My Life*, p. 12.

³⁷ The feeling of inferiority is evoked in the narrative: “It was now that I felt the pain of being a citizen of a conquered people (wangguonu). I thought: as a conquered people, you have now become a servant of the conquerors. No matter your capacities or knowledge, it is to no avail, conquered people should not be equal to the citizens who have a nation, a servant should not be on the same level as the master. The wish for equality, for wanting to be on the same level, turned into rebellion (panni). Even though I did not have a strong consciousness, in my heart I realized that I could not have the same thoughts as the Japanese people”. Zhang, Shenqie. *Milestone*, p. 76.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 84.

“This time I felt really satisfied, and I replied in a straightforward way:

-It is a Taiwanese kite.

-What? A Taiwanese kite?

-You, you aren't Taiwanese, are you?

-Yes, I am Taiwanese.

Since coming to Japan, this was the first time that I openly declared to the Japanese my roots (*jiguan*).”³⁹

The discovery of his true self is narrated through the eyes of the Japanese audience. This time, they are disenchanted that Zhang is not Japanese, while Zhang experiences their reaction as a reversal in his perception of the social environment. It draws the attention to a sharpened awareness of his sense of belonging, hence the particular usage of “roots” in the narrative. Are we then to conclude that Zhang from now on fully embraces his Taiwanese identity? Not quite. His dilemma of representation is still predisposed to “becoming Japanese”, captured in the following illustration.

On one occasion at school during break, a senior student tells him that he wants to have a talk with him outside the school gate. As Zhang goes through the school gate, he notices a group of six senior students waiting for him at a tree. The narrative unfolds that this group of Japanese youngsters threatens him because he does not want to take off his cap. His reaction - he takes on a “fight me” pose - surprises the Japanese boys.

“They take a few steps back and talk for a while to each other. Then one says:

-Are you a Taiwanese?

-Taiwanese, so what?

-Oke, you are a Taiwanese, so we won't bother to fight you. However, we don't agree that you wear that school cap, it is the cap that bad students wear.

³⁹ Ibid., p. 84.

On this account, they stepped down. I also didn't feel much for causing trouble, and here ended the incomplete battle scene."⁴⁰

This cultural encounter differs substantially from the one with the kite. From the moment the Japanese boys find out that he is Taiwanese, they step back, act upon his Taiwanese identity and refrain from fighting him. In so doing, they once more put him into his inferior social place. In Zhang's eyes we tend to read that they did not give him the chance to act like an equal with them. He cannot beat the Japanese. Zhang remains conscious that he is Taiwanese, but it is not something that makes him proud.

At this juncture, we should take the socio-political context into consideration. Zhang's reflections on "becoming Japanese" are coated in a dialectical process that emphasises how he turned against his own kind. In the literary generic prevalent at the time of writing, "his own kind" is to be understood as the Chinese nation, sons of the Yellow Emperor. Within the nationalist discourse at the time, it was simply not acceptable to take the suffering of Chinese identity for granted. Whenever Zhang refers to his 'national (ethnic) identity' (*minzu yishi*), he makes sure that the reader interprets this as an anti-Japanese rebellion (*panni*). Interestingly, the narrative also entails an element of self-identification with Taiwan challenging KMT propaganda of Chinese nationalism on Taiwan at the time. Again, I refer here to the notion of *jiguan* in the kite story.

Jiguan was a social construct, introduced by the KMT government, which classified a person not by his or her subjective ethnic identification (ethnic consciousness), but by province of registration by birth. Written on the ID card, it became an instrument of identity categorization by law, distinguishing between those whose *jiguan* was a province on the Mainland and those whose *jiguan* was the "Province of Taiwan", with the necessary consequences for employment and preferential treatment. Zhang's strategic use of *jiguan* in a passage that clearly highlights his localisation in Taiwan may be read as a painful and distressing

⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 89.

reference to the continuity of structural and cultural inequalities of the KMT regime. This way, it could appeal to the readership to recognize this moment of self-disclosure as a symbolical expression protesting from the Chinese cultural subjugation that befell the native Taiwanese after retrocession. Opposite this, the usage of *jiguan* to the politically correct readership confirmed the geopolitical context that situated Taiwan in the cultural myth of the Chinese nation.

The administrative practice of *jiguan* was abolished in 1992 and by 1997 it was suppressed from all administrative documents.⁴¹ Meanwhile, Taiwanese democratisation shifted the nationalist pendulum from the Sino-centric to the Taiwan-centric interpretation. Self-identification with Taiwan no longer required the guise of *jiguan*. This is not to say that the “imperial servant” and the “Taiwanese after all” passages are omitted in recent *Memoirs*. Rather, the self-reflexive tone of the autobiographer in dialogue with the reader accentuates his cultural allegiance to Taiwan. For instance, Chen Yisong incorporated two similar school stories that recall him to his native identity. The narrative structure put these two stories together as follows:

Story 1. At the time, marbles was a popular children’s game. Chen also had about 30 to 40 marbles to play with. One day, he seeks his classmate Okazaki to play with him, but the Japanese boy yells at him: “You are an imperial servant, who would want to play with you?”⁴²

Story 2. Chen farts in class. His classmate Yasumoto makes the kind of gestures to indicate that it really smells and says: “Taiwanese farts really smell! Taiwanese farts really smell!”⁴³ Chen starts to fight him and the teacher has to come in between them. The passage concludes with Yasumoto being reprimanded and the teacher tells him to apologise to Chen.

⁴¹ For a discussion of the *jiguan* practice, see Corcuff, Stéphane. “Taiwan’s Mainlanders, New Taiwanese,” in Stéphane Corcuff (ed.) *Memories of the future: national identity issues and the search for a new Taiwan* New York: M.E. Sharpe, 2001, pp. 170-171.

⁴² Chen, Yisong (ed.) *Memoirs*, p. 44.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 44-45.

In the first narrative, Chen showed his indignation: “In my heart I thought of myself as a Taiwanese, and that was different from them. I also thought with sadness that Taiwan had sunk to the low level of a Japanese colony.”⁴⁴ In the second narrative, Chen’s anger resulted from his self-awareness as a Taiwanese: “If he would have said ‘farts smell’, that would have been acceptable, but he said ‘Taiwanese farts really smell’, and this he should not have done. Japanese farts smell as bad, so I wanted to beat him.”⁴⁵ Moreover, Chen is touched by the words of the teacher after the apology: “You must be nice to each other. From now on, you should be friends. Chen has come from such a far place, you should take care of him even more, that is the right thing to do.”⁴⁶ The emotion correlated with the inequality status - Chen scolded for a colonial subject - is followed by a counter-narrative. Even if he represented the imperial servant to some Japanese, there were occasions that endowed him the self-respect as a Taiwanese.

Returning to “becoming Japanese” as a social construct, Yang Zhaojia’s discovery of his Taiwanese roots and traditions shed a different light on the connotation “Taiwanese after all”. In particular, Yang perceived his roots and responsibilities through the reality of life at home. The experience is presented by means of an internal struggle when he receives a letter from his stepfather who urges him to drop out of school, get married (customarily arranged) and return to Taiwan. He received the letter around the time that his school organizes the annual abacus competition. Yang had participated every year in this competition and was quite skilful. But this time he refuses and says repeatedly to his teachers that he will not participate and no longer cares about the competition. This reaction angered his teachers.⁴⁷

The passage draws the attention to the Taiwanese reality, so far left blank in the discussion. Yang seemingly accommodated to the Japanese way of life and lost his

⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 44.

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 45.

⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 46.

⁴⁷ Yang, Zhaojia (ed.) *Memoirs*, pp. 64-66.

affinity with traditional Taiwan. The letter confronted him with the reality of having to go back home, returning to a reality that did not enable him to move on, progress. We should keep in mind here that Yang's generation had grown up in a Confucian society where pigtail, opium smoking and the filial piety responsibility drag were a daily reality. The underlying narrative can be read as "all is lost now, what is the point of participating any longer". In a reverse sense, Yang who saw himself as a Japanese subject joining the abacus competition, is recalled to his native identity. In the eyes of his family, he knows that he is not that Japanese boy. Conscious that he is Taiwanese, he returns home and gets married. Meanwhile the narrative reveals that he also knows that he is expected to participate in the abacus competition. The time period between the arrival of the letter and the competition plunged Yang in an internal turmoil in which he fervently tried to negate his Japanese consciousness. Finally, three days before the competition, two of his Japanese classmate friends convinced him to take part.⁴⁸

Expressions of Coming to Terms with Modernity

Borrowing from the W.E.B. Du Bois' black minority experience, the idea of double consciousness may be helpful in illustrating some of these Taiwanese dilemmas of representation in the Japanese colonial period. Du Bois used this term to describe the way in which Afro-Americans had two perceptions of themselves: one which derived from their own community and its traditions, and the other from how they perceived the majority of white population to regard them. As a consequence of this double consciousness, their lives were lived as a negotiation between those two perceptions.⁴⁹ This combination of external and internal, seeing yourself as a subject who is also an object amounted to a social behaviour in corresponding to the expectations of the white people, yet at the same time guarding their sense of self-respect.

⁴⁸ Ibid., pp. 64-66.

⁴⁹ Cited in Watson, C.W. *Multiculturalism* Buckingham, Philadelphia: Open University Press, 2000, pp. 7. Also see Du Bois, W. E. Burghardt. *The Souls of Black Folk* [1903] New York: Bantam Books, 1989.

Here is a reading of Du Congming's *Memoirs* on how this idea of double consciousness may be interpreted in the self-reflection on his student years in Kyoto between 1915 and 1921.

“At the time, the Japanese in Kyoto did not eat pig intestines. At the butcher's I asked them the price of a pig's liver, and he replied that a pig's liver together with a heart cost 10. *Because I was afraid that they would laugh at me and take me for a savage*, I explained them that I needed them for experiments at the university laboratory, and so they often sold me pig liver and heart that I cooked and ate with relish in the dormitory. Likewise, the chicken heads at the poultry stores were not for consumption and thrown away, we bought 20 or 30 chicken heads that we then cooked. Apart from that, in the summer season there were always many frogs in the pools. These frogs were smaller than the ones in Taiwan, but edible, so together with my roommates from the dorm we caught quite some frogs that we cooked and ate. These were the extra happy moments of life as an overseas student in Kyoto.”⁵⁰

At the butcher's, Du used the pretext of the university laboratory to buy intestines, conscious of his Taiwanese identity, illustrated with “Because I was afraid that they would laugh at me and take me for a savage”. Once in the dorm, together with his Taiwanese and Chinese roommates, he takes off his Japanese mask, and indulges the Chinese culinary practice. The phrase “*extra happy moments*” in the final sentence indicates Du's understanding of what it took in “becoming Japanese”. Du's *Memoirs* were privately published in the mid 1970s. Its form represents one of the first models of autobiographical writing in which the notion of self implicates a consciousness of two identities, Japanese and Taiwanese.

Yang Zhaojia's *Memoirs*, published in 1967, in contrasts is still heir to the orthodox version that ascribes to the nationalist process of self-imagining

⁵⁰ Du, Congming. *Memoirs of Tu Tsung-Ming*, pp. 76-77.

framed in a KMT discourse. Other major differences in narrative structure between the four *Memoirs* are that Zhang and Yang narrate the facts like an unfolding of their life story, whereas Du and Chen insert explanatory passages. In so doing they make the reader constantly aware that they are reflecting on their time as student in Japan, seen as part of their late childhood and early adolescence. And if the narratives to their readership reflect a dialogue between the autobiographers and the nation, we must note that the defining boundaries of what constituted Taiwan as a nation differed substantially in the 1960s and 1990s. These differences particularly come to the fore in the usage of certain phrases with special reference to the subjectivity of Taiwanese identity in the changing nationalist discourse.

Finally, particularly striking in these several moments of disclosure that run through the narrative is the profound engagement with stages and expressions of self-identification. The reader gets the impression that a significant aspect of modernity to the writers was consumed by this soul-searching. This notion invites us to ponder over the way in which they narrated their identity complex and the extent it is related to strategies of writing and the literary generic prevalent at the time of writing. The underlying structure of the account at the time of the writing and publishing date cannot be ignored. Talking about the Japanese colonial period in the late 1940s, 1960s or 1990s was a very different thing. In the earlier *Memoirs* the Taiwanese self is still coated in an orthodox Chinese nationalist version, using the anti-Japanese resistance rhetoric. In the recent *Memoirs*, the exact pronunciation of this self-understanding underlying the narrative captures the essence of the changing nationalist discourse. The popularity of identity politics and national-identity history writing since the 1980s has impacted the narrative of more recent written memoirs, but this does not conceal the fact that reflecting on expressions of self-identity was an integral part of their confrontation with modernity.

Conclusion

The various accounts in this article have demonstrated the manner in which Taiwanese youngsters in Japan accommodated to the metropolitan way of life. These accounts are by no means exclusive; nonetheless they allow us to draw some commonalities from their experiences. The challenges and crises embedded in the process of “becoming Japanese” revolved around the convergence between practices of modernity and one’s traditional understanding of culture in the -Japanese -Taiwanese -Chinese cultural interaction. Changes in the international world order (re)defined the status of Taiwan. Interrogating the construction of a Taiwanese identity as a product of modernity may discern one avenue of understanding identity related issues in a global context. “Becoming Japanese” was one solution to the changes in cultural contact. It promised a future. I have not engaged with the question if they really did become Japanese, instead I have attempted to present a picture of what it took to become Japanese and where to draw boundaries. Framed in a global context, this amounted to participating into the general culture of modernity. The cultural interaction with the immediate environment, i.e. Japan became decisive in Taiwanese acceptance of modernity. Such was the challenge and crisis of globalization proper to its 20th century logic. The shift in allegiance from Japanese to Chinese culture since 1945 revolved once more around identity and dilemmas of representation, and it still does. The current challenge and crisis in the present era of globalization is not in “becoming Japanese” but in “being Taiwanese”. The parade of double consciousness, masks and mirrors goes on.⁵¹

⁵¹ In this respect, see Li Kuang-chün’s contribution “Mirror and Masks. An Interpretative Study of Mainlanders’ Identity Dilemma,” in Stéphane Corcuff (ed.) *Memories of the future*, pp. 102-121.