

---

Theses and Dissertations

---

2011

# Taiwan Xiangtu writer Huang Chunming: three short stories, with a critical introduction

Willy Chenja Du  
*University of Iowa*

Copyright 2011 Willy Chenja Du

This thesis is available at Iowa Research Online: <http://ir.uiowa.edu/etd/4966>

---

## Recommended Citation

Du, Willy Chenja. "Taiwan Xiangtu writer Huang Chunming: three short stories, with a critical introduction." MFA (Master of Fine Arts) thesis, University of Iowa, 2011.  
<http://ir.uiowa.edu/etd/4966>.

---

Follow this and additional works at: <http://ir.uiowa.edu/etd>



Part of the [Comparative Literature Commons](#)

TAIWAN XIANGTU WRITER HUANG CHUNMING:  
THREE SHORT STORIES, WITH A CRITICAL INTRODUCTION

by  
Willy Chenja Du

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the Master of  
Fine Arts degree in Comparative Literature - Translation  
in the Graduate College of  
The University of Iowa

December 2011

Thesis Supervisor: Associate Professor Maureen Robertson

Graduate College  
The University of Iowa  
Iowa City, Iowa

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

---

MASTER'S THESIS

---

This is to certify that the Master's thesis of

Willy Chenja Du

has been approved by the Examining Committee  
for the thesis requirement for the Master of Fine Arts  
degree in Comparative Literature - Translation at the December 2011  
graduation.

Thesis Committee:

---

Maureen Robertson, Thesis Supervisor

---

Steven Ungar

---

Aron Aji

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION.....	1
About the Author .....	2
<i>Xiangtu</i> Literature: Historical and Contextual Introduction .....	3
Huang Chunming’s Creative Output .....	12
Methodology of Translations.....	15
The Stories .....	20
 CHAPTER TWO: TRANSLATION (THREE SHORT STORIES BY HUANG CHUNMING).....	 30
“Spring Dreaming” .....	30
“Gone Back” .....	42
“Cheers, Soldier” .....	49
 BIBLIOGRAPHY .....	 64

## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

This introduction serves to provide a sketch of the circumstances that led to the prominence of “nativist,” or *xiangtu* literature 鄉土文學 from the Republic of China (i.e. Taiwan) in the late twentieth century. Huang Chunming, the author of the stories featured in this thesis, has been a prolific writer from the east of the Taiwan Straits since 1962, and has contributed to the popularization of *Taiwanese xiangtu literature* 台灣鄉土文學 in the decades of the island’s industrialization experience. In Huang’s world of fictional characters, readers have multifaceted records of the Taiwanese people’s lives and the culture of their native soil.

### About the Author<sup>1</sup>

Huang Chunming, author of the stories translated for this thesis, was born in the township of Luodong, Yilan county in 1939, the eldest of five children. As a schoolboy, he consistently found himself in all sorts of interpersonal trouble—skirmishing with angry classmates, defending abused peers, and getting expelled from several different institutions. After reading fiction by Anton Chekov and seeing characters whose lives were burdened with greater adversity and were more miserable than his was, Huang soberly acknowledged that his was not the most tragic fate of all people. This contributed to the author's later realization that he could “weep no more” for himself (Jiang, ix), which became a factor toward his impetus to assist people with similarly negative views.

The affinity between Chekov's rural characters and the peasants of Taiwan narrowed the distance between the cultures in Huang's literary imagination. The author's acknowledgment of the fictional characters on the social scale further motivated him write for a wide—if not general—audience, with broader concern for the problems real people were facing in society. Huang writes “novels of short story length” and foregoes the usual length of novels dealing with the anxieties and anomie of brilliant thinkers of the modernist temperament. The lengthiest of his works is “The Gong” 鑼 (1970), a novelette.

After spending his adolescent years in Taipei, Huang Chunming returned to his native Yilan with family in 1993. Afterwards, he set up a workshop, “*Good Fortune*” 吉祥工作室, in Yilan, to engage in writing and miscellaneous creative crafts and indigenous artwork. The author's broad, humanistic concerns also found expression in his surroundings; he participated in his community's city planning efforts in the mid-1990s and compiled dialect acquisition materials for Taiwanese and aboriginal children. Huang

---

<sup>1</sup> Jiang Baochai's *The Taste of Mud: Discussion on Huang Chunming's Writing* (translations mine) was the primary source of the author's biographical facts.

seems to remember the majority of his relationships with people with whom he has had some level of personal association, a good memory that served the author's capacity for writing fiction, providing an ability to recollect content and themes that interrelate with his realistic style of writing. The stories included in this thesis are from differing periods of Huang's writing career and address various themes, ideas and people.

Even though Huang Chunming has for three decades been recognized as a “national treasure writer of Taiwan” 國寶級作家, he has preferred a public persona with a lower-profile than his status would suggest. His work credentials include apprenticeship as an electrician, radio show broadcaster, and lunch box vendor. Huang, now in his mid-70s, concentrates his energies on children's publications, fairytales and plays. He has also been an active participant in the theater scene in Taiwan since 1970. He contributed as the arts-supervisor of the *Lanyang Theater Troupe* 蘭陽劇團 and founded *Big Fish Huang Children's Troupe* 黃大魚兒童劇團 in the mid-1990s. Both groups have performed for national and local audiences for more than a decade. Appreciation for the *Big Fish* children's troupe has been expressed most fervently among its indigenous audiences, especially those located in his hometown Yilan. Having committed much time as an actor, script writer, director, and former arts supervisor, his stories, plays, art and life have generated numerous discussions among contemporary Taiwanese audiences and critics.

### *Xiangtu Literature: Historical and Contextual Introduction*

China's May Fourth Movement began in Beijing, China, in 1919. The Chinese government's lukewarm response to the handover to Japan of the former German concession in Shandong province at the international Paris Peace Conference that year triggered a sizeable student-led protest. Students, intellectuals, and writers in the movement demanded that China's traditional social and political system, as well as

traditional healing arts, be discarded in favor of democracy and science, which was more compatible with the modernizing temperament of the times and necessary to prevent further infringements on China's sovereignty as a nation.

Along with other thinkers and writers, authors of *xiangtu* literature, the “literature of the native soil,” endeavored to explain the chaotic condition of 1920’s China, then experiencing both external forces from the West and Japan and internal political turmoil. The themes of this literature concerned the culture, folklore and economic plight of farmers and workers in rural parts of China.<sup>2</sup> Of the many stories depicting Chinese village life, none were as influential as Lu Xun’s “My Old Home” 故鄉, which poignantly captured the decline of rural life in this period (Haddon 1992, 31).<sup>3</sup> A contrast to Lu Xun’s view of China’s rural life was that of mainland writer Shen Congwen, who viewed the countryside as a “stronghold of ‘Chinese consciousness’ which protected and nurtured the legacy of past traditions” (Haddon, 77-78). Shen returned to his homeland of West Hunan in search for the source materials of his later writings. He later wrote in a heavily ethnic, romanticized form of *xiangtu* literature which often drew upon folkloric elements. Shen’s vision for a national cultural revival was distinct from the temperament of the May Fourth which had espoused social Darwinism.<sup>4</sup>

*Xiangtu* literature from China in the 1920s depicts the plight of peasants and laborers.<sup>5</sup> The agricultural upbringing of Shen and other Chinese *xiangtu* authors enabled

---

<sup>2</sup> In *Nativist Fiction in China and Taiwan: A Thematic Survey*, Rosemary Haddon explains that in the case of Taiwan, “modernization” signified social change such as the replacement of traditional values, the increase of international-orientation in business and the growth of manufacture (Haddon 1992, 5).

<sup>3</sup> Lu Xun (1881-1936) was a Leftist writer who critiqued China through iconoclastic fiction in the 1920s. He later became known as the father of modern Chinese fiction.

<sup>4</sup> In his return to West Hunan, Shen found a vibrantly appealing cultural ethos “which made the ritualism of Confucian China seem time-worn” (Haddon, 101).

<sup>5</sup> Chinese *xiangtu* literature of the first few decades of the 1900s may be summed up as “a fiction about the poor, the disempowered lower orders of the Chinese social classes and the rural” (Haddon, 103).

them to write about village life with certain fluency, despite their limited exposure to official pedagogy, as *xiangtu* writers rarely received the Confucian training of their May Fourth counterparts. The mainland *xiangtu* writers of this decade had transitioned from Lu Xun's culturalism and wrote with a correspondingly greater degree of mimetic realism (Haddon, 22). *Xiangtu* literature in the 1940s and 1950s shifted even further away from Lu Xun and Shen Congwen and became increasingly formulaic as the communist movement demanded that literature serve revolutionary ideology.

During the Japanese colonial reign on Taiwan (1895-1945), the mining of natural resources became the focus of the island's economy.<sup>6</sup> The Japanese maintained social and political conformity of its colonized subjects through strict measures of regulation, which involved government-sanctioned use of force, education skewed to produce manual labor, and measures of indoctrination propagating pro-Japanese sentiment. The implementation of an official system of education yielded results that were ultimately beneficial for the people: clan and familial hostilities were significantly reduced, and Taiwanese children enrolled in mandatory Japanese schooling formed the basis of the Taiwan national identity after its liberation from Japan. In spite of the harshness that characterizes the Japanese legacy on Taiwan, the physical structure of Taiwan's subsequent economy was established during the Japanese reign.

The government of Mainland China had, by 1949, assumed a predominantly communist national ideology. In direct opposition to the communist agenda were the Chinese Nationalists, which had collectively retreated to Taiwan, where they governed as the Nationalist Party. The Nationalists elected to rule Taiwan through promoting an illusion that they would ultimately reclaim the mainland. To this end, Generalissimo Chiang-Kai-Shek, their *de facto* dictator, tried to convince the Taiwanese that the

---

<sup>6</sup> The "luxury" of cane sugar was the most successful and productive agricultural product under the Japanese (Haddon, 70).

Nationalists brought with their relocation to Taiwan a Mandate of Heaven, by which the government received an “entitlement” with which to rule Taiwan with supreme authority. Paradoxically, the totalitarian aspiration of Chiang-Kai-Shek established a framework that enabled Taiwan to charter a national identity that became increasingly distinguishable from the mainland in succeeding decades (Manthrope 2005, 201).

The social infrastructure established during the Japanese reign served as a springboard to Taiwan’s economy. Land reform and farmers were the focal point of the island’s economic transition in the decades following World War II. However, a series of political setbacks in the early 1970s all but erased the Kuomintang’s fantasy of unification with the Mainland.

The speed and intensity of Taiwan’s industrialization experience peaked between 1952 and 1972. Five million people left the agricultural trade of the countryside to work in the factories of the island nation’s populated urban districts, most of which were located in the North and the West of Taiwan. The general temperament of a new middle-class consisting of light industry workers and businessmen was aggressive and modernistic. Industrialization and commercialization had assumed new significance: the Western backdrop of the new phase of Taiwanese history was viewed favorably by the majority; now, economic advancement could be channeled towards a future of their own shaping, a luxury that was unattainable during the former colonial period.

The government’s censorship in speech, publication, and assembly prevented the new middle-class of independent farmers, small business owners, and land-owners from expressing Taiwanese views of the policies of the ruling Kuomintang (Nationalist party) in the public domain. Moreover, the Kuomintang’s declaration of martial law in 1948 further intensified native political resistance toward the regime.

Fiction of the 1950s was dominated by anti-communist sentiments that characterized Nationalists’ ideology. Nevertheless, the island’s economic rise added fuel

to the engine driving toward a unified national consciousness, and Taiwanese writers sought a literature that would reflect the new social, economic and political conditions.

As the economic welfare of Taiwan shifted its dependence from the educated elite to the new middle class, many intellectuals of the island became subject to feelings of alienation under the nation's emergent materialistic outlook. The educated elite that had received literary training projected their frustrations in sophisticated word games through the period's *airport literature* 機場文學, a "literature of the transients," which was a literary practice characterized by surrealist and existentialist themes and dominated by authors whose families had migrated to Taiwan from the China mainland. Although *airport literature* featured prominently in Taiwan academia of the 1960s, the fantastical and stream of consciousness aspects that dominated the literature precluded any real potential for its development as a representative literature for Taiwan.

Writers of Taiwan's emergent "native" middle-class became actively engaged in a search for cultural "roots." A literature familiar to many readers in the decades before the arrival of the Kuomintang was *xiangcun wenxue* 鄉村文學, or "village literature," which consisted of short stories set in the Taiwanese landscape and referring to the customs of its people. This literature had functioned as a socially-conscious form of writing during the Japanese colonial period, providing authentic and detailed accounts of the relations between Taiwanese and the colonizers of the island. The arrival of the Nationalists in 1949 was greeted with an expectation that the government of the Chinese newcomers would usher in a restoration, to some degree, of the Taiwanese socio-ethnic heritage that had been suppressed in prior decades; this expectation remained, to a large extent, unrealized.

The ideology of the Nationalists under Chiang reinforced a belief that the province of Taiwan was simply a cultural and political extension of the former Nationalist regime in mainland China. However, the decades-long period of political separation between Taiwan and the China mainland had also lessened the collective

emotional ties between the Republic of China with its ethnic counterpart (Woei 2001, 38). Therefore, the re-discovery of a representative literature for the island seemed destined to occur on Taiwanese soil. In the decades of the 1950s and 1960s, “native” Taiwanese writers built on the provinciality of village literature by embracing Western pseudo-scientific objectivity in their writings. The new genre, Taiwan *xiangtu* literature 台灣鄉土文學, provided native writers with a realism that corresponded to the need to record the various changes accompanying the island’s industrial developments.

Beginning with the advent of Taiwan’s international exchanges with the United States and Japan, the island’s economic and cultural growth in the 1950s onward marked the “second colonial period” of the island’s national development (Haddon, 74). Much of the period’s labor force was comprised of offspring of farmers from Taiwan’s central and southern villages and of fishermen from the island’s coastal villages. The new crop of estranged migrant workers to metropolitan Taipei included *xiangtu* writers Huang Chunming (1939- ), Wang Tuo (1944- ) and Yang Chingchu (1940- ), whose writings echoed the nostalgia for the lifestyle of their upbringing along with deep feelings of alienation. However, unlike writers of *airport literature* who displayed literary talent in word-games, the emergent “worker-writer” brand of Taiwanese writing directed its focus toward the crises of displaced workers and their new urban settings.

*Xiangtu* literature translates literally as “literature of the native soil.”<sup>7</sup> A term closely related to *xiangtu* is *bentu* 本土, literally, “our earth/ground/soil,” which emphasizes the exclusivity of the homeland. *Bentuhua* (i.e. indigenization) is the concept in the form of a socio-political construct, and as such, conveys a message of implementing the ideas of *xiangtu* fiction into political action.

---

<sup>7</sup> *Xiangtu* 鄉土 is a Chinese compound word. The literal meaning of *xiang* is “country/folk/rural/homeland;” *tu*, the latter half of the compound, is “earth/ground/soil.”

In the 1960s Taiwanese literary circle, Taiwan-born *xiangtu* writer Ye Shitao 葉石濤 was the leading proponent of *xiangtu* literature within its political context of “back to *bentu*.” Despite that most of the influential writers and critics were of mainland Chinese origin, the majority of Ye’s literary associations in the decade were with other native-born Taiwan writers. One of the group’s chief literary aims was to construct a narrative of *xiangtu* literature as one reflecting the collective memory of “native” Taiwanese people. Therefore, Ye’s collaborators used “our province’s *xiangtu* literature 本省鄉土文學” or “Taiwanese *xiangtu* literature” 台灣鄉土文學 to designate its literary activities in Taiwan in the 1960s and 1970s (Makeham 2005, 132).

As the *xiangtu* literary movement 鄉土文學運動 of Taiwan’s literary milieu gathered momentum, particularly in the latter half of the 1970s, Ye Shitao provided *xiangtu* literature with a historical frame of reference in his *Introduction to the History of Taiwan’s xiangtu literature* 台灣鄉土文學導論. The historical outline of the *Introduction* declared that Taiwan *xiangtu* literature had progressed from a local literature for the Hoklo tribal majority to the national literature of Taiwan.

Writers and critics from the literary journals *Taiwan Literature* 台灣文藝 and *Li Poetry Magazine* 笠詩刊 that had been focusing on the geopolitical sphere of Taiwan in the decade collaborated to advance the historical narrative which favored Taiwan literary autonomy 台灣文學的自主性 as outlined in Ye’s *Introduction* (Makeham, 132). Furthermore, members of literary Taiwan 文學界 attempted to advance a Taiwan consciousness 台灣意識 which served as a precursor to Taiwan independence ideology (Makeham, 135).<sup>8</sup> Nationwide literary discussion on the status of Taiwan *xiangtu* literature’s “autonomy” from the literary developments of the China mainland became the lightning-rod theme of the Taiwan *Xiangtu* Literary Debate 台灣鄉土文學論戰 in 1977-78.

---

<sup>8</sup> Their primary agenda was to “de-Sinicize” Taiwan literature so that literature from Taiwan would be distinct from the modern literature of post-*May Fourth* China.

The Formosa Incident was a pro-democracy demonstration which took place in Taiwan on December 10, 1979. The period's writers, those who had associations with *Taiwan Literature*, *Li Poetry Magazine* and *Literary Taiwan* that also supported Ye's "Taiwan-centric conception of history" 台灣史觀, contributed to Taiwan *xiangtu* literature's development as the national genre for literary and political debates, especially those contentions which pertained to an aura of Taiwan consciousness 台灣意識.

The tradition of modern literature produced since the colonial period was gradually constructed by them [Taiwanese writers] as one of particular, indigenous character that had little connection with the modern literature of post-May Fourth China. Increasingly, they replaced the term "xiangtu literature" with "indigenous literature" 本土文學 and then with "Taiwanese literature" 台灣文學 to demonstrate their growing identification with Taiwan (Makeham, 133).

The transition of Taiwan *xiangtu* literature from popular fiction to a form of literary activism in the 1970s and 1980s mirrored the rapid sociopolitical changes which occurred on the island during those decades. As the spirit of the genre shifted further away from its earlier designation as the fiction of the migrant worker, Taiwanese critics, writers, and members of literary journals persisted in their attempts to separate Taiwanese local identity from Chinese national identity through the literature's relevance to contemporary social issues. Moreover, the role of *xiangtu* literature was further complicated by the Nationalist government-imposed martial law, which restricted free speech and writings that emphasized the socioeconomic issues in the decades that followed (i.e. the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s).

*Lang-zi* literature 浪子文學, or "literature of the wanderer," which had also appeared in Taiwan during its industrialization period of the 1950s, was a literature that exhibited close ties to Taiwan *xiangtu* literature by virtue of its recurring themes of the departure of the individual from his native land. *Lang-zi* literature further resembled the sociocultural role of Taiwan *xiangtu* literature in the 1970s in light of the motif of the writer's search for his cultural roots. However, unlike the nostalgic recollections of the

rural lifestyle which prevailed in the writings of Taiwan *xiangtu* authors, the fiction of *lang-zi* literature evoked a more realistic, or rather disillusioned, view of the homeland (i.e. Taiwan or mainland China) of its writers. According to Taiwanese literary critic Shi-kuo Chang 張系國, *lang-zi* and *xiangtu* literature complement each other in illustrating the paradox:

“... man cannot sever relations with his native place, nor can he be imprisoned in his native place forever” (Faurot, 39).

Howard Goldblatt, a famed translator of *xiangtu* writer Huang Chunming’s short stories, described the latter as a singular Taiwanese writer in light of the inherent drawing power and the sheer readability of his stories (Huang, 1990).

Most of the people and events portrayed in Huang’s stories are the so-called “insignificant characters” 小人物—peasants, peddlers, laborers and social misfits from the lower rungs of the social ladder—people caught in the throes of modernity whose lives are inseparable from the Taiwanese countryside. Their identities and struggles are the main subjects Huang Chunming’s writings, since the author’s initial period of Taiwan *xiangtu* 鄉土 fiction (1956-1969).<sup>9</sup>

As “model expressions of Taiwan consciousness,” the bulk of Huang’s writing career highlight the nationalist discourse of Taiwanese politics (Yip 2004, 43). Works such as “The Drowning of an Old Cat,” “The Fish,” “His Son’s Big Doll,” “The Story of Ching Fan Gong,” and “The Gong,” are considered to be among the best of Taiwanese *xiangtu* 鄉土 fiction by virtue of their identification with the geopolitical sphere of Taiwan, in addition to the highly realized worlds of their characters. The unmistakable *Taiwanese-ness* (i.e. Taiwanese “folk flavor”) of the setting and people of Huang Chunming’s stories enable nationalist interpretation that are distinguishable from the works of other Taiwan writers (Yip, 42). Huang’s characters seem to retain their

---

<sup>9</sup> Huang has written about people in various walks of life who have experienced changed lifestyles under the encroaching urban spread of 1960s Taiwan.

relevance among readers from later generations because they are “as representational and as typically Chinese” as the characters of mainland writer Lu Xun (Haddon, 82). Huang Chunming writes slice-of-life narratives dealing with various aspects of Taiwan’s social fabric. His stories describe the disparity between the native and the foreign, and between rural values and present realities.

*Fangsheng* 放生 (1998)<sup>10</sup> is a collection of ten short stories about the generation of Taiwanese born before the Nationalists’ retreat to the island in 1949 and who had lived under Japanese colonial rule. They were liberated in 1945 by the defeat of the Japanese, and subsequently placed under the scrutiny of the Nationalist regime for nearly four decades. Huang considers these idiosyncratic portraits as “testimonials” to them, a generation of people who contributed to Taiwan’s earlier economic prosperity but who subsequently find themselves neglected in the family and marginalized in society. While Huang admitted that his particular selection of old men and women do not exhibit flashiness in their daily goings-on, he highlights them in the volume’s introduction as important subjects to address.<sup>11</sup>

### Huang Chunming’s Creative Output

Taiwanese literary critics generally classify Huang Chunming’s writings into three periods. The first period (1956-1969) consists of lightweight short stories that were published in Taiwanese literary journals and newspapers. Huang’s most productive phase as a writer resulted in a corpus of fiction that displayed the author’s flair for storytelling.

---

<sup>10</sup> The title is a colloquial expression that means, literally, “to set loose” (e.g. “letting geese graze freely”). The meaning of the anthology echoes the rural context of Huang’s earlier writings, but relates more directly to the figurative use of the term (e.g. involuntarily setting children apart from the supervision of caretakers) to refer to the abandonment of the elderly.

<sup>11</sup> The aging population of Taiwanese society was a major sociopolitical topic in Taiwan at the time of the volume’s publication.

“The Drowning of an Old Cat” 溺死一隻老貓 (1968) and “Sea-Gazing Days” 看海的日子 (1968) are prime examples.<sup>12</sup>

Several of the most popular stories of Huang’s writing career are set in the township of Luodong in Yilan County, whose industrial transformation was delayed by virtue of its support for traditional cultural practices vis-à-vis other parts of Taiwan. Both the author’s native roots and his affinity with the countryside are reflected in the traditionalism of his stories.

The humanistic concern so typical of the author’s imagination is expressed most fully through the universal traits of his characters (Faurot, 130). In “The Fish”, one of Huang’s earliest stories, a grandchild and his grandfather’s relationship is put under fire by forces beyond their control. The first half of the story establishes Ah-Cang’s personhood—lively, youthful, but inwardly insecure. Ah-Cang, the young grandson who wishes to prove that he is a contributor to his household, suffers from a lack of assurance of his self-worth. Although he sincerely wishes to please his aged grandfather, faltering on a promise to bring home a bonito results in total devastation of his emotions.

The movement of the story is driven by dialogue, which builds the measure of closeness between Ah-Cang and his grandfather, the two active characters of the story. Nowhere in the plot is the absence of Ah-Cang’s parents explained. However, Ah-Cang’s inability to come to terms with his blunder and the ensuing emotional breakdown is a forceful statement for the preservation of traditional family structure.

The title character of “The Story of Ching Fan Gong” and Uncle Ah-Sheng in “The Drowning of an Old Cat” and introduce two underdogs characters that attempt to free themselves from the encroaching urban spread of their fate; both of the characters’ worldviews are shaped by the geography of their villages. They are prime examples of

---

<sup>12</sup> First translated into English by Howard Goldblatt, published in *The Drowning of an Old Cat and Other Stories* (1990); translated into English by Earl Weiman, published in Joseph S.M. Lau’s *Chinese Stories From Taiwan, 1960-1970* (1976).

Taiwanese plain folk whose essence cannot be separated from the customs they have cherished for a lifetime.

The emotions that accompany Uncle Ah-Sheng's fatal attempts to recover his turf run the gamut from tragedy to mockery. The existential threat he and his village compatriots suffer in the story prevailed even as the man leaps into a swimming pool devoid of water, an act that erases all doubt that Uncle Ah-Sheng is a cat with nine lives to spend.

"My Son's Big Doll" tells the tale of Kuen-Shu, the father to a very young son. This story is one that cemented Huang Chunming's status as a Taiwan *xiangtu* writer; it offers a prime example of the degradation of individual dignity when one is marginalized by society<sup>13</sup>. The opening paragraph of Howard Goldblatt's translation offers the reader a vivid account of how Kuen-Shu became the village "adman." The circumstances of this "sandwich man," or individuals in the line of business of walking human billboards, which was a foreign import of Taiwan in the latter part of century, attest to Kuen-shu's troubled selfhood and is portrayed with unmitigated psychological realism in the story. Howard Goldblatt translates a passage from "My Son's Big Doll" that captures Kuen-shu's introspection:

He had regretted going into this line of work from the very first day, and he was eager to find another. The more he thought about what he was doing, the more ridiculous it seemed. He laughed at himself, even if no one else did, and this self-imposed mental torment was forever on his mind, increasing in intensity as his fatigue grew. He'd better find a new line of work. But then he had had the same thought for more than a year. (Goldblatt, 1990, 38)

---

<sup>13</sup> Marxist alienation of the individual is a major theme of "My Son's Big Doll". The story is a "pyrotechnic display of literary devices such as interior monologue and stream-of-consciousness in a flashback mode," devices inherited from the "fertile medium" of modernism that make up the technical aspect of Huang Chunming's style of writing (Haddon, 86).

The dialogues between Kuen-Shu and his wife about the abortion of their baby is another example of Huang's realistic presentation of the controversies of society, which often remain unsolved in his fiction.

"The Gong" is the story of an imaginary town crier called Kam-Kim-ah, a personality modeled after someone Huang Chunming observed in his hometown as a child. "The Gong" is rife with insights about the desperate figure's flawed thinking in relation to his will to survive. The prologue introduces Kam-Kim-ah in vivid detail.

"You had only to say the three words, Kam Kim-ah, and anyone—literate or illiterate, man, woman, or child—would have known at once of whom you were speaking." (Huang, 62)

Kam, who beats a heavy gong, was not a stranger to anyone in his town. The crassness of Kam's persona is further magnified with his formidable alter-ego as the gong-beater. Such self-deification caused the man to view the township as the domain where he claims supremacy as an advocate; and yet, despite the self-serving nature of the character, Huang shows that Kam Kim-ah is like any other character who, after clinging to memories for prestige and survival, is forced into the treacherous waters of self-deception until the reality of external changes grow beyond his ability to control.

The stories from Huang's last major period of writing (1995-1998) comprise of fiction that retains the author's brand of realism, one that fosters a sense of universality to the reader; notwithstanding that Taiwanese society in this period of the author's writings had become more materialistic culturally, marginalizing people from merely one generation ago. On the other end of forty years of economic gain are diminishing traditional values and a society bent on pluralism.

#### Methodology of Translations

In this thesis, my attention for the translations has been focused on prioritizing sense when lexical and syntactic literalness were not effective in transmitting meaning in the translations (target texts). The translations in this thesis used a formula of “word-for-word” initial interpretation; followed by a recasting of the texts with greater emphasis on “sense-for-sense,” concluding with texts that adhere to a “literalist” strategy that will be described in detail in this methodology section. My objective for the target texts was to transfer as much of the nuanced meaning of the Chinese ideographs as possible.

I attempted to show some of the stylistic features found in the source texts, such as the hallmark realism of the author<sup>14</sup> and his frequent use of Chinese colloquial expressions that mimic speech patterns of the characters in the stories.<sup>15</sup> “Spring Dreaming,” the first short story translation of the thesis, begins with the sentences:

“These were very humid days.”

“It rained and rained.”

The opening of the narrative includes several colloquial phrases, one of which may be uttered by any real person in an actual rural setting like that in the story. The aim of transferring the source text author’s narrative tone and personality into the target text, viewed as an alternative to domestication in the target language, was the option I took in the selection of register for the target texts, which correspond to the authorial voice in many of Huang Chunming’s writings.

A careful reading of the short stories selected in this project reveals the author’s narrative voice. A close reading of some of the author’s earlier works (e.g. “The Gong,”

---

<sup>14</sup> The translations include examples of mimetic realism, with psychological and rhythmic mimeses: “The plan he had for his next visit—to get three incense sticks from home that could ignite—this he kept forgetting.” (from “Spring Dreaming”) “After I switched gears to faster, shorter steps, I was trotting. Xiong turned and looked at me.” (from “Cheers, Soldier”)

<sup>15</sup> The atypical word-grouping of 眯眼瞄, translated in “Spring Dreaming” as “with squinted eyes he peeped,” is an example of the author’s habit of encoding vivid meanings by means of Chinese colloquial expressions. Another example of this would be 烏漆抹黑 (i.e. 「仍然是一片烏漆抹黑」 from “Cheers, Soldier,” which is translated here as “one big chunk of dark.”

<sup>16</sup> “His Son’s Big Doll,”<sup>17</sup> “Two Sign-Painters,” among others) confirms that Huang Chunming prefers plainness of style in his brand of storytelling, the voice that best illustrates the author’s affinity for the conversational, the ambiguous, and his earnest humor.

The plain authorial voice allows easy access into the frame of mind of the narrator, providing the reader with a direct channel into the folk flavor of the stories. These attributes may be gleaned from another opening passage of “Spring Dreaming:”

“Every household in the village had been a farm. Provided there was enough rain for a good harvest, there were rarely any complaints from anyone. Whether it was damp or not, whether it was mildewing or not was hardly of concern to anyone.”

The matter-of-fact narrative, with hints of expressionless (i.e. dead-pan) humor, invites the reader to give pause for a moment and reflect: “Are there farms in the village anymore?” “There most likely was *somebody* who complained!” “Whether it was mildewing or not *had* to be a concern to *someone*.”

One of the chief concerns of the translation was the inclusion of pronouns which were absent in the source texts into the target texts. An indiscriminate use of pronouns would suggest a departure from the plainness of style that is prevalent in the texts. For an illustration of the decisions that involved the use of pronouns, consider the opening of “Spring Dreaming:”

“The people of this village kept warm under their blankets, serving as human fire-logs for themselves as they toasted their sheets. After the damp, heavy blankets sealed their bodies, the villagers curled into a ball.”

Here, the individuals in the narrative contribute to the generating of heat within their homes. Although “themselves” was not present in the source text, I decided that inclusion of the pronoun was necessary to show that the villagers were motivated to helping (i.e.

---

<sup>16</sup> “...beating a gong doesn’t interest me anymore” 老是打鼓沒意思 (Haddon, 82).

<sup>17</sup> “...(after all,) a cat is not a dog” 貓不是狗 (Huang 1990, 35).

“serving”) themselves; the absence of it would potentially mislead the reader into thinking that self-immolation was the motive.

In order to obtain the lexicon appropriate for the target translation, I began with a “simple but time-consuming” process of forming correlations between Chinese characters and English words that involved an extensive use of lexical references (e.g. dictionaries and online thesauruses). The “literal” component of the “literalist” strategy provided the main substance of the translations, and illustrated the concisions and density of Chinese words and their lexical compactness.

In practice, these literalist translations prefer close, albeit not “exact,” adherence to correlating the lexical and syntactical attributes of the source language with those of the translating language, where feasible, and translating sense for sense where this is not feasible, with an intent to transfer as much of the meaning and form of the Chinese text as possible, guided by the idea of “correlation” rather the ideal of precise equivalences.

In other words, the aims and preference for close correlation led me to a strategy with an operational credo of *onward*—word-for-word correspondence *when possible*; word-for-word correspondence combined with syntax-for-syntax correspondence *when possible*; word, syntax, idiomatic correspondence at all points *possible*. From this process, I derived translations that shift indeterminately between two linguistic fields and two zones of unresolved meaning.<sup>18</sup> A completely “literal” translation word-for-word and syntax-for-syntax would, in this case, depend for its successful reception on an exclusively bilingual readership. Thus I decided that the “literal” (word-for-word approximation) approach would best serve the mixed “literalist” strategy as an operational concept in the initial stage of the translation process only. Ultimately, rigid adherence to correlative lexical and syntactic choices that were too “close” would

---

<sup>18</sup> Quoting Willis Barnstone’s the “ABCs” of translation: “... a translation dwells in imperfection, using equivalents and shunning mechanical replicas... It gives us the other. Or under another name it gives us itself” (Barnstone, 265).

threaten to produce cryptic, unreadable results which perhaps only a bilingual reader could decipher. The search for near-equivalents for the target translation frequently involved detailed modifications of the lexical referents and syntactic forms featured in the source texts.<sup>19</sup>

The translations derived from the literalist method do not depart from the literal meanings of the source text so far as to render these translations “free translations;” since the shifts in lexical meanings in this approach culminated with target texts that steer a path between the extremes of metaphrase and paraphrase to keep the graces of the author (Munday 2001, 19). As “literalist” translations, the texts are able to retain a degree of the authorial voice and the stylistic content of the source text, which I believe merited inclusion in the target texts.

In the final analysis, the literalist approach, with its injunctions for both formal correspondences and linguistic modifications, led to a negotiation between the author, the texts, and me, which altogether made the translation possible. Overall, however, I still consider the translations in this thesis experimental.

### The Stories

Huang Chunming’s earliest stories have been described by the author himself as reflections on existential struggles many Taiwanese experienced between 1956 and 1966. “The Street-Cleaner’s Son” 清道夫的兒子 uncovers the inner turmoil of a fourth-grader named Liu Ji Zhao, whose poor self-image resulted in an existential struggle for individual dignity. Yin Yu, the protagonist of “A Man and His Blade” 男人與小刀, chose to end his existential dilemma through cutting himself to the point of ending his

---

<sup>19</sup> For an illustration of the application of the *literalist* approach, consider a passage from the story “Cheers, Soldier”—山 [mountain] 谷 [valleys] 間 [between] 蝙蝠 [bats] 穿梭 [zigzagging] 低飛着 [low-flying] 捕食 [catching] 飛蟲 [flying insects] 天 [the light of the skies] 開始 [beginning to] 昏暗 [become darker] (Huang 2009, 169). One way to translate it would be: *Between green mountain valleys, with low-flying bats catching insects in the air not far up, the skies started to go cloudy.*

own life. These and other stories from the initial phase of Huang's writing were featured in Taiwanese literary journals such as *Youshi Wenyi* (幼獅文藝) and the *United Daily* (聯合報) in the 1960s.

Huang's early efforts in short story publications were experimental as he tested the waters of his writing ability. Huang admitted that his motivation for the literary works from this phase of writings was the byproduct of his search for the means to express deep personal anguish.<sup>20</sup> However, his investigation of the basic human need of individuals facing the unresolved issues of Taiwan's capitalist transition served as springboard to Huang's later awakening to his social mission.

The author's newfound motivation provided Huang with a strong yearning to honor the legitimacy of his trade. The resiliency and spirit of survival of the characters of those stories resonate with the themes of the short stories that follow, which were written and published between 1988 and 1997.

"Spring Dreaming" is a lighthearted piece with characters from top to bottom on the age spectrum. Typical among Chinese families of the past is the phenomenon of different generations of people interacting under the same roof. In the story, the theme of this heaven-on-earth ideal is manifested in an estranged old man, who, under imaginary circumstances, still yearns for domestic bliss.

Scenes of the old man playing with children could engender a reaction that suggest these emotionally-gratifying scenes as mere culturally-embedded fantasy; presuming the American zeal that champions individual initiative persists unto old age. Cultural differences aside, the pursuit of emotional fulfillment is an ageless human need, and Huang's demonstration of this in the figure of Uncle Honor is an example of how Huang invokes universal themes in his writing.

---

<sup>20</sup> Excerpted from preface of 莎啞哪拉，再見 "Sayonara/Zaijian"(1974).

The translation of “Spring Dreaming” adds certain measures of complexity to the story that do not occur in the story’s original content. The seeming ambivalence of whether the sight of rain could be a cause for celebration, or, for regretting the hiddenness of the sun, is simply, “it rained and rained.”<sup>21</sup>

Another instance of nuanced difference relates to semantic properties that reside between the lines of sentences. In an early passage of the story, a suggestion to an old man from his family was rejected:

“Uncle Honor’s old joints began aching two days before it started to rain. His family wanted to bring him to a doctor. The old-timer didn’t want to spend anything, and refused; insisting that his ankles would turn well again after the sun came back.”

In the story, the four Chinese ideographs that make up the old man’s reply—“and refused”—begin with 硬 (“hard”). This Chinese word conveys that the old man is reluctant to yield his will and that his stubbornness exceeds normal parameters. Moreover, the blending of this Chinese word into the sentence embeds the author’s personal opinion; he is amused with the old man’s vantage point.<sup>22</sup> In an early scene where the children identify the old man with the earth god, the children are put at ease through a pretense of the old man changing his posture of sleeping. The old man’s gesture, referred here as “this move,” is a humorous allusion to martial arts.

Another subtlety that barely escapes the reader’s eye may be found in the utterance: “See, how white and how long his beard is; it is just like the earth god’s.” The sentence ends with the Chinese word 啦 (“la”), an interjection that indicates the excitement of the speaker and is substituted by “it is just” in the translation.

---

<sup>21</sup> The phrase 「一直落雨」 is the first of several instances in the story where a different pronunciation occurs. To the native Taiwanese reader, 「一直落雨」 would be interpreted as the spoken Taiwanese dialect rather than the conventional written script. Huang’s “freelance” treatment of alternating the pronunciations from Taiwanese to Chinese is a trademark of his Taiwan *xiangtu* writing style.

<sup>22</sup> Here, the source text reads 「硬說不用」, literally, “he stubbornly refused.” This is Huang telling his reader that the character has a strong-will.”

Finally, “with squinted eyes he peeped” does not capture the effect of the three ideographs of the source text: [squinting] [squinted] [squinted-eyes] [eying] [peeped] [peeping],<sup>23</sup> whose grammatical properties are as indistinguishable as they are inseparable.

“Gone Back” is a portrayal of the disintegration of traditional familial bonds. The heartbeat of the story is sustained by the brief locutions of its protagonist, Dust Maiden. Through most of the narrative, Dust Maiden shows fatalistic acceptance toward her looming death and the kin that anticipate her earthly departure. Her fatalistic acceptance is transferred to the people surrounding her at the final scene of the story, despite Dust Maiden’s miraculous experience of regaining consciousness.

The contrast between the final words of the “revitalized old dame” and her family members’ silent intentions calls attention to the general apathy that is presumed of certain individuals of Taiwan’s post-war generation. The absence of a genuine instinct to grieve in a society which had a history of employing professional mourners for such occasions reflects the extent that modernization and materialist lifestyles have replaced native values over the short span of two generations.

Meticulous readers of Huang Chunming speculate that the temporal progression of his stories reflect changes that correspond to the decades of Taiwan’s transformation as a society.

Huang features himself as the author-narrator in “Cheers, Soldier” and sets himself apart from the flat-characters of his other stories. Today, “Taiwanese” refers to Han Chinese who immigrated to Taiwan from the mainland in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century. “Native Taiwanese” *benshengren* 本省人 is a term used for this group of Han Chinese. Taiwan’s aboriginals are considered “native Taiwanese,” but are commonly identified as

---

<sup>23</sup> The grouping of 眯眼瞄 operates on multiple levels, as two of the ideographs are simultaneously adjectives and verbs, and also semantically linked compounds with alliteration.

Taiwanese aboriginals 台灣原住民. The Lukai are one among thirteen groups of Taiwanese tribal aboriginals.

Taiwanese aborigines were dominated socially and politically since the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The Lukai, whose past comprises an acidic microcosm of the political history of Taiwan, had combated Chinese and Japanese seafarers on Taiwanese soil prior to the arrival of the Dutch in 1624, who forced them into the island's hills and mountains. During the occupation period (1895-1945), the Japanese attempted to do away with aboriginal culture by substituting its languages and customs with their own through government-sanctioned means. After the Japanese left, the Nationalists tried to do the same, but did not accomplish their ends.

One can readily understand how and why the story of Taiwan's aboriginals in general and the tribe of Lukai in particular unsettles the intellect. The story in the epilogue of "Cheers, Soldier" is one of grim oppression. What more than three-generations of Lukai endured bespeaks an unalterably harsh reality. However, such a dark history can be stirring to the emotions if understood through the storytelling of a Huang Chunming.

In "Cheers, Soldier," Huang returns to the writing style of the social pathologist, who "deals with the diagnostic rather than the prescriptive or the remedial." (Yip, 44) The historical dimension of this story about Lukai men illustrates *xiangtu* literature's earlier designation as the literature of the oppressed.

Given Huang's persistent attention for the underprivileged of Taiwan, it should come as no surprise that part of what compelled him to tell the story of the Lukai was a wish to call the attention of Taiwanese readers to the history and culture of an indigenous tribe that had limited access to its own identity. Huang seems to have moved them in the direction of collective self-awareness with this narrative, which he later condensed into a poem and then adapted for the stage, providing them with an emotional footnote that has entertained Taiwanese audiences for four decades.

In *Inevitability of the Untranslatable: A Cultural Translation of Huang Chunming's "To the Warriors!"* Beryl Chiu notes that none of the critics commenting on "Cheers, Soldier" before 2009 has highlighted the contrast of personas between the narrator Huang and Xiong (Chiu 2010, 135).

Some critics have pointed to the friendship between Huang and Xiong as one imbued with symbolic contrast between the active intellectual and the aborigine. It would seem that their minds could not have converged because there was no mutual recognition of the past and no common mindset for the present. The disparity of their views would be all the more obvious in the context of the grandfather's analogy of "burning a nest of ants," since Xiong could not understand the ties to the past Huang carried in his conscience.

Huang took the route of temporary self-deprecation to bridge the gap between Xiong and himself, for the two had come from very different walks of life. In the story, the natural-born fondness for conversation of the narrator (representing the author himself), is comfortably in its element after hearing of a place called *Haocha* 好茶.<sup>24</sup> After a brief conversation with Xiong, he found an opportunity to visit *Haocha* through the subtle force of words.

In an internal monologue at the outset of his trek to *Haocha*, the narrator informs his readers how he intends to collect the findings of the trip he would soon make. In the spirit of Gu Yanwu, an empiricist from seventeenth century China, Huang chose for his personal encounter with *Haocha* the method of concrete learning. According to the former, observations that may prove relevant for study are gathered from direct observation. Huang's soliloquy suggests that the mind, unlike the brain, does not feed on fragmentary bits of information.

---

<sup>24</sup> This translates literally as "good tea," "pleasant tea," or "quality tea."

In one of the story's early scenes, we are introduced to Xiong, one among many physical specimens from an indigenous tribe famed domestically for its marathon runners. With Huang Chunming as his subaltern companion, Xiong prowls and scavenges a trail through the cymbodium grass to *Haocha* village, where the Lukai live. Since subaltern status is commonly reserved for folk of country origin, the encounter of the unlikely duo exhibits a subtle reversal of roles.

The mountaineer's thrashing of the Cymbodium grass points to the possibility that he is releasing raw emotions. This fusion of mindless robustness with slicing blade tells the reader something about the DNA of Lukai tribesmen, a detail that also supplies a clue to the state of Xiong's mind. That something is missing there is affirmed midway through the story, when an impulse to gauge the condition of his feelings yields a tone-deaf response.

In what critics note as the pivotal scene of the story, an emotionally-charged conversation about deceased Lukai warriors between an utterly shaken though determined Huang, and the seemingly care-free and detached Xiong, controversial topics ranging from ethnic superiority, martial dominance, mass elimination, and negation of the individual line up for scrutiny. The exchanges are brief and taut:

“Who is the one next to the Japanese soldier?”

“Oh! You mean that communist bandit...”

At the dinner table, Xiong's unreserved use of the politically-sensitive “communist bandit” stunned his guest, who was raised in an isolated anti-communist atmosphere in which the use of the term would be considered dangerous. The intellectual prudence of Chinese cultural politics seemed to backfire completely in the jungle.

“Don't these things make you upset?”

“upset...”

“Make you sad and angry, ...”

Ironically, Huang does not ask questions about retribution or judgment in a place where they seem to be legitimate. “*Doesn’t that make you sad and angry*” was neither the “why” of tragedy nor the “why” of unequal justice, it was, “how can you *not* care?” A plain and simple question asked with sincerity. However, the question seemed to fall on deaf ears:

“What I said made him pensive. After a few moments, I questioned him further:

“Don’t you feel sad and angry?”

“Angry? At whom?”

Xiong’s indifference engenders a frustration that bespeaks of a chasm between the indwelling personhood between the two individuals. While the narrator unblushingly confesses to feeling excruciatingly guilty, his host’s tone-deaf reaction underscores the absence of something fundamental. The sequence of rapt exchanges may be summed up with a caption: *Xiong’s impassiveness meets human “souliness.”*

The irrepressible pounding on the door of Xiong’s soul is telling of Huang’s genuine curiosity. One may be in good company in pausing to wonder where the soul has drifted when a question like that beckons the heart and silence issues from the other end. Here is a challenge for Huang’s reader to think deeply in view of the intricate issue stated as a direct inquiry.

One critic has noted that Huang’s emotional trial was so forceful because he put Xiong in his own position of carrying his cultural baggage.<sup>25</sup> The guilt was exacerbated by the historical awareness of his ancestors’ imposition of systemic violence on the aborigines. That was precisely the frame of mind that found Xiong’s carefree manner extraordinary.

---

<sup>25</sup> Beryl Chiu, see *Inevitability of the Untranslatable: A Cultural Translation of Huang Chunming’s “To the Warriors!”*

Another critic notes that Huang willingly lowered himself and the cultural prestige that a Han-Chinese would be prone to assume before an aboriginal.<sup>26</sup> This self-depreciatory manner allowed Huang to pay close attention to the mountain youth's narrative of his tribal history, as he investigated both his familial past and the fate of his ancestors.

Could not the ensuing remorse for the pain and persecution inflicted toward deceased Lukai by the narrator's forebears suggest that the aggressors were not simply the ethnically superior, but one that represents the historical oppression of the stronger over the lesser?

Yu Ping Wang Hong suggests that the sharing of wine between the Mandarin Huang with the aboriginal Xiong is a symbolic gesture calling for peace, a hope that readers, especially Taiwanese readers, could identify as one of historical significance. The willingness of the narrator to drink the millet wine of a Lukai aborigine offers a glimmer of hope that two distinct cultures might somehow be reunited as one people—in the cultural context of the story—as “one” Chinese, or Taiwanese Chinese. Indeed, as John Makeham had succinctly stated:

“The factor determining that Taiwanese literature is a form of autonomous literature, rather than a dependency of a particular alien ruling nation is Taiwan's historical destiny over the past four hundred years... alien rulers dominated every stage of Taiwanese history. They are all birds of a feather in that they set themselves the major task of eliminating Taiwanese historical memory and phasing out Taiwanese culture. They attempted to root out Taiwan consciousness and to turn the Taiwanese people into a mass of lifeless spirits who would docilely obey...

Taiwanese literature is a literature of the oppressed, that is, a... literature that a weak and small nation created in order to resist alien rulers. This kind of literature must fight on behalf of the oppressed and struggle for the “political, economic, and social liberation” of the Taiwanese people. Taiwanese literature is grounded in the essential fertile soil of Taiwanese culture and is rooted in the desire of the Taiwanese people for democracy and

---

<sup>26</sup> Hong Wang Yu Ping, (from: <http://www.taiwanpedia.culture.tw/web/content?ID=14725>).

freedom. It must resist any crushing oppression. The most important index to this sort of resistance consciousness is precisely a strong and steadfast Taiwanese consciousness that involves identifying with the Taiwanese land and people, recognizing Taiwan as an independent and autonomous community of fate, deeply loving Taiwan's natural scenery and essential spiritual civilization, and being ready to make a devotion to and a sacrifice for her.

During the past seventy-odd years Taiwanese literature has been a literature that is rooted precisely in this kind of Taiwan consciousness, identifying itself with the Taiwanese people, and recording the life-history of the Taiwanese people's arduously surviving their oppression by alien nations." (Makeham, 136)

All the tragedy unfolds beneath a web of foibles that temper the solemn theme.

"My maternal grandfather also was a warrior. He said that when we burn a nest of ants, and later see ants somewhere else, then you know that the ants from before did not perish in the fire."

... In an ideology of negation of the individual, with national and racial consciousness as its sole focus, sacrificing individuals appears as nothing in the bigger picture

The *ideology of negation*, explained analogically as "burning a nest of ants", underscores the human capacity for a destructive ethnocentricity. When a long held belief is expelled, particularly one that is at the core of a value system such as that of the Lukai, one is not left with a position of neutrality; such a thought must have lingered in Huang's initial bewilderment and contributed to his attempt to solve the riddle.

Xiong was having a lot of difficulty with his words because he was trying to convey something so that I could understand. Afraid that I didn't get what he was saying, he continued: "Really did burn that nest of ants, you get it?"

In accord with the universal tendency to latch on to received empathy, Xiong was quick to respond to Huang's nod of affirmation.

A Chinese proverb says that if you want to know what water is like, don't ask the fish. Xiong and Huang's meeting might very well be interpreted as a footnote on the differences between feeling and thinking. In telling the story, the thoughts lacking from Xiong's experience are supplied by Huang's deeply felt emotions of his host.

One is left to ponder how staying for one day more would have changed Huang's views of his hosts. Seeing their wounds, Huang left the village. Perhaps Huang had decided he knew the whole picture after what his experience there revealed. Having the wisdom to keep a distance from his feelings, he decided to let his emotions be at rest and spend the following day away from the village. Huang must have felt that he saw all he needed to see.

After decades of representation as a central figure of Taiwan's literary arena, Huang's visit offers a token of goodwill to a person inextricably linked to one of Taiwan history's most dastardly crimes. Huang infuses his portrait of Xiong as a sensible and competent individual with an anguished awareness of the history of maltreatment of the indigenous Lukai tribal people.

CHAPTER TWO: TRANSLATION (THREE SHORT STORIES  
BY HUANG CHUNMING)<sup>27</sup>

“Spring Dreaming”

This spring season, it rained and rained.

These were very humid days. The people of this village kept warm under their blankets, serving as human fire-logs while they toasted their sheets. After the damp, heavy blankets sealed their bodies, the villagers curled into a ball. As the coziness of the sheets made them comfortable, the skies brightened right that moment. Other things in the village were beginning to mildew—the legs of tables and stools and the pig pen fences just above ground—on them were growing mushrooms that looked like little open umbrellas.

Every household in the village had been a farm. Provided there was enough rain for a good harvest, there were rarely any complaints from anyone. Whether it was damp or not, whether it was mildewing or not was hardly a concern to anyone. Uncle Honor’s old joints began aching two days before it started to rain. His family wanted to bring him to a doctor. The old-timer didn’t want to spend anything, and refused; insisting that his ankles would turn well again after the sun came back. But it continued to rain. Every morning and evening he would stroll to the small earth god temple to light incense. With his umbrella as a walking stick, he would stagger along until he reached his destination. The sticks of incense were too wet to ignite long before he got there. The plan for his

---

<sup>27</sup> The stories selected for this thesis appear in the anthology *Huang Chunming Xiaoshuo Xuan* (2009).

next visit—get three incense sticks from home that would ignite—this he kept forgetting. Sometimes his old joints didn't cooperate; he wasn't able to go back to pick up the sticks and return as he had often wished. He stood at the entrance of the temple, and with his body outside of it, he reached his head and hands into the temple's interior to let the incense catch fire. Didn't work. Another try.

He didn't give up until his thumb felt the burn of the metal tip of his lighter. Holding up his umbrella against the rain, he shielded the small earth god shrine that stood waist-high to him. He waited. He waited with an open mind.

When his old joints had wind in them again, his first thought was to go home and to get more incense sticks. His joints seemed strong-willed; barely allowing him to stand. All Uncle Honor could do was look at his lighter-burned thumb as time marched on. In recent years, the villagers all said he was growing to look like the earth god. That cheered him up; he basked in the honor.

The rain didn't stop. Lifting his head, he looked into the sky, mumbling in his heart: "Still coming down? Pour on. You've been pouring for so long; I'm betting that you'll run out soon."

After a few days, the sun came out. Uncle Honor's old joints weren't hurting anymore. Lifting his hands to block the sun's rays, he took a peek at the sun with squinted eyes, whispering to himself: "I'll be darned if you didn't come out." The people in the village brought their chairs and tables out from inside, and turning them upside-down, put them up to the wind and sunshine. They also brought clothes and sheets out to dry.

Meanwhile, the children were once again fully absorbed in their own world. After the sun's return, there was no place they couldn't go. The big kids raced to the urban neighborhood; some went to admire the village girls who found work at the bubble-tea shops in the city. Others found a big bowl of shaved ice after roaming the town for a good time. The five- and six-year-olds that enjoyed matchmaking games played in the fields near home.

The sunshine that appeared after so many days of rain made no one want to stay under a roof. Even the chickens, ducks, cats and dogs looked for spots to flex their limbs under the sun. The little bugs and all the wild flowers also welcomed the sun: pink lavenders, yellow dandelions, purple and white flowers all blossomed furrow-side overnight. Seeing the bees with all the white and yellow butterflies darting in the air, the children could not help but play. Five or six of them, each with fresh-picked pink lavenders in their palms, were ready for another game under the banyan tree next to the earth god shrine. They arrived there too late; already under the tree was an old man with a white-mustache who was sound asleep with his back leaning against the tree trunk. The children hadn't intended to disturb him at first, but hearing his unusually loud snoring made them curious, and they all gathered around him.

“Whose grandpa is he?”

“Never seen him before. Might not be from here like us.”

“That's right! He isn't one of us.”

Having decided that the elderly man was a stranger, not only did they lower their voices, they also moved half a step backwards.

“He has such a red face, and his beard is so white!”

“His nose is the reddest.”

“His wrinkles are deeper than my granddad’s at home.”

“Look, his ears are so big. It’s really strange.” The grandmother of this child often boasted about his large ears, a sign of good fortune, so he often paid attention to other people’s ears.

“He’s even smiling in his sleep. This is interesting!”

Everyone started laughing.

“Shhh—!” A little girl reminded everyone to keep still. In the half-circle made around the elderly man, the children could not move their feet one inch closer; they could only touch heads together. Looking from behind, you couldn’t see the old man’s torso; it was completely blocked from view.

One of the children suddenly remembered.

“I’ve seen him before!”

“Where?”

Right then, the child asked couldn’t say. He went on: “And not just once, I feel like I see him all the time.”

“Whatever.”

“In... At...,” the child was thinking very hard. His feelings were contagious and passed on to the rest of the children. The looks on their faces were no longer doubtful.

“I, I think I’ve seen him before too,” said another child anxiously, because he was afraid that the others would think he wasn’t serious.

But it turned out that the four other children felt the same way.

“Doesn't he look a lot like the earth god in the earth god shrine?” Another child said, without being too sure of it himself.

But right after hearing this hint, they all came up excitedly with the same idea.

“That's right! A *lot* like the earth god.”

This shout really startled the old man. The children had actually awakened him a long time ago, but so as not to disappoint them he had been pretending to still be asleep; at the same time, hearing them discuss him also felt somehow delightful.

The children, for their part, also knew loud shouting would wake the old man and, in their own surprise, moved back several steps to observe him, quietly. To reassure them, the old man changed his sleeping posture, and deliberately started to snore; inhaling and exhaling evenly, so that his silvery white, cotton candy-like beard quivered gently.

This move really put the children at ease. Cautiously, they drew closer, crowding around again. Then, someone said in a tiny voice:

“Look at him! He *is* the earth god.”

All of them thought so, but in believing it, their minds were filled with a vague dread of something mysterious.

“But, but the earth god wears a costume. The clothes this man's wearing are the same as what my granddad wears at home.”

“Yeah. The earth god wears boots. But he's barefoot.”

“Let's just go and see if the earth god's there and then we'll know.” Someone suggested they should make sure.

They all raced happily toward the shrine. When they had almost reached it, everyone began to slow down, at last tip-toeing with shaky movements toward the small shrine, until they were about five or six steps away. Then nobody dared to move any closer. They bunched up together, pushing and shoving, and bending down, took several peeks inside. Because the sun was behind the shrine, for a moment there was no clear view.

“Ya! The earth god’s really gone.”

“Really!”

The ones behind pushed to get ahead, flooring those in front.

“Yup! I see it,” exclaimed a child on his belly. At first he wanted to blame the others who pushed him down, but he had forgotten to feel pain. “Look!”

All the children bent down and tried looking from different angles. They saw the head of the diminutive earth god, its back facing the open-air ventilator. “I see it! It’s inside.”

*Just then, for some mysterious reason, all the children’s previously frightened spirits returned to their normal place.* They quickly shoved their way to the front of the little temple.

“I’ll see whether it looks like him or not.”

The temple entrance was just big enough for one grownup to enter sideways; for two children at once it was a stretch.

Two children had already stuck their heads in to see. The ones outside could only hear the sound of two heads talking inside.

“Do they look alike to you?”

“They do a bit, and also not really.”

“Now do you think they are alike?”

“Not very much.”

“Not very much?” asked another one in a louder voice.

“They are, are a little.” Saying it like he wasn’t confident. “But now it feels like they are.”

“It’s so strange,” said a slightly discouraged voice, “when you said the earth god looks very much like him, I felt like it didn’t really.”

Hearing them talk that way, the children outside got all the more anxious to see.

“Hurry up—, it’s our turn to look.”

Before those two had ducked their heads and come out, the children outside were pushing for the right to go next.

After everyone had taken their turn, they all agreed that the old man was not the earth god. They were just slightly alike, and slightly unlike; the old man was someone whom they had never laid eyes on before, someone not of the village.

Curious, they all returned to where the old man was, under the tree. Seeing the children return, the old man again pretended to be snoring and faking sleep; he felt that the children were very loveable and fun, and decided to play on. The children shared his feelings; they, too, found this unfamiliar-though-not-unknown old man very lovable and so much fun. Cautiously, they drew near to surround him.

“See, how white and how long his beard is; it is just like the earth god’s.” This child could not resist touching the beard, so he bent down and caressed it gently more

than once. The old man was still pretending to be sound asleep. After one child had succeeded, everyone else had their turn. They smiled contentedly.

One child holding a lavender flower had an idea pop into his mind; he tried stitching the flower into the beard. Everybody liked his idea, and they all fought to put their flowers on. They were at the age where they had just learned how to tie shoelaces, but to sew different materials—the stem of a flower and a beard together—was difficult because of their clumsy-clunky age; it was already a challenge in and of itself. If the old man had not adored the children's delightfulness, this had the makings of a disaster. The children were together in this joint adventure, all nervous from the excitement of the risk. Having adventures often involve reckless abandon, the sort of indulgence that places one's survival at risk. They started with the beard roots first, targeting an exact point and sewing with their best precision. Tying the flower was already hard to do; they also needed the right positioning. The pushing and shoving of taking turns made it many times more difficult. Working nervously, they eventually became careless and caught a portion of the old man's cheek as they twitched his beard. The old man was able to endure it when their work was light, but he had to move and pretend he was about to wake up when they were heavy-handed. Then the kids all fell back. The old man knew that this game would end if he suddenly woke up. That would be disappointing to the children... and to himself? Since he had no grandchildren himself, could the present scene not be counted as domestic bliss? Just when the kids perceived that the old man was done with sleeping, they heard a loud snoring as he went back to sleep. They gathered all around him to finish their creative work, weaving the little pink flowers to his gleaming silver beard.

The children in back, waiting their turn, watched as the clumsy hands and feet of their coworkers strung the flowers, blaming them for their roughness with small voices, wishing that they were gentler with the old man and his beard. They continued to observe the old man's face as they had from the moment they began.

"Look! He's crying." said a frightened little girl who was tapping the shoulder of someone else who was busy tying a flower.

All of their eyes were focused on the face of the old man. It was true; two luminous beads of old tears, inlaid between the corners of his eyes and eyelashes, were quivering there softly. All of the children stood dazed, condemning themselves, feeling in their conscience as though they had done something wrong.

"He's not crying, is he? That's a smile on his face!" This child wanted very much for the old man to not have a face that was crying. There could be no doubt. The expression on the edges of the old man's lips was covered by the beard. But the raised cheek muscles betrayed a smile not even an infant could miss.

When that smiling face met their eyes, the nervousness on the smaller faces departed. Uncontainable laughter burst from all sides. Of course, the scene of that moment, everything of that moment, the old man was well aware of; aware to the point of saturation. The two droplets, distilled from the warmth of his heart, were pushed to the brink of falling by the tears harbored behind like two children, one on each side, getting ready to race down a slide. In that moment, the children all saw the tears at the corners of his eyes slide past facial muscles that were raised from smiling, then on down the sides of his nose, pause, and then, *plop*, dive into the forest of his beard.

Said the children, surprised, "He's crying."

“He isn’t crying. He’s smiling.”

After the old man’s tears entered his nose, he was anxious they would roll out from his nostrils. This was not for the old man to decide; he was choking. He wanted to endure it. But after he had endured it a little, the sneeze that came after the effort to suppress it was especially loud. The children were so scared they did not have time to run away, so they hid behind a big tree. The tree was not big enough to conceal them, so they squeezed together, making noises in the huddle that were barely audible.

This all took place where the old man had sneezed. After pretending to be asleep for so long, he was afraid to move. He felt stiff and ached all over. He knew the kids were behind the tree but pretended he didn’t know. He stood up, stretched, and began to walk in the direction of the entrance to the village where the little earth god temple stood still. Many little pink flowers adorned the old man’s beard; the way he walked, the way the wind blew, with flashes of light and shadow, all seemed to vivify the local scenery.

Stealing glances at the cheerful state of the old man intoxicated the children with unspoken warmth. Their vision blurred as they sent the figure of the old man off with their eyes. After the last sight the children had of the old man’s back before the earth god temple blocked it, his figure had seemed to evaporate in a whiff. The children all ran and scurried over to look: in the temple, in the woods, in the dark-leaved vegetable field, back to the tree and finally to the little earth god temple, running back and forth from place to place. The old man was nowhere to be found.

The children felt disappointed and were totally upset in their thoughts. One by one they peeped into the temple to see if the bearded-one had returned. The old man certainly

wasn't there, but everyone felt that the earth god's benevolence was unusual, its smiling eyes squinted more, and its furrowed smile was deeper.

Uncle Honor came by, walking the long distance from the village. He did not stagger, because his old joints were no longer hurting. He wanted to tidy things up in the temple and replace the stick of incense with a dry one.

"Back for more deity cake, are you?" He asked the children happily. Then, after greeting them, he turned and went about his business in the temple.

The children didn't dare to bring up what had happened with the old stranger. All they wanted was to remind Uncle Honor to examine the earth god and see if it was now different in some way. One little child said:

"Uncle H, do you know why the earth god smiles?"

Shifting his body from his task, Uncle Honor said with a smile:

"Because the sun's back!"

Seeing their puzzled faces, he thought he hadn't made his answer clear. "How long we have had rain in our village!" He turned and went inside the temple again. This time, on the small stone tablet at the foot of the earth god shrine, he saw more than a few pink lavender flowers. Tilting his head, he could also see flowers sewn to its beard. He thought that it must have been the work of those mischievous kids. He changed his posture and came out the temple. With little flowers in his hand, he had a few words to say to them. Lifting his eyes, he saw that all the children were gone. He looked at the little flowers in his hand, bent low, and looked at the little earth god. Then came a gust of wind; he felt fresh air in his heart. From the road leading to the village came the shouts of the youngest of the children: "Brother—wait for me—."

Uncle Honor turned his head and looked toward the village; shaking his head, he started to laugh.

### “Gone Back”

It was not an illness. The doctor’s diagnosis suggested the old tree’s roots had gone bad, nothing more could be done. They knew—especially the old country folks—and none wished to be left out of the coming and going. They had no time left, better hurry home.

The ambulance that had taken her to the hospital brought the old woman back to the mountains with her last breaths.

Among the Xie family members living in this world, eighty-nine year old Dust Maiden was the eldest and highest in its hierarchy. As she lingered at home for another day, as though waiting for the return of her relatives, her final breath did not come as quickly as had been predicted by hospital personnel. Even though not everyone returned to make a full house, forty-eight big and small folk did rush back from many different places. To them, it was rare to be under the same roof together.

For years, many of them had skipped the more important holidays, citing various reasons for not returning to pay homage. They had been in the cities far from those mountains. Now the hour was late. Many had come for the plots of land that would soon be theirs. Relatives living overseas made calls asking for details of their future property.

On top of a pile of pin-and-needle gowns were garments in a red that was arresting. These were traditional garb woven for a show of filial piety. Living to become a fourth-generation elder was no different from becoming a fifth—all “merry funerals” alike. But the atmosphere suggested otherwise; her youngest son, Yen Kuen, who lived with and took care of her, and her six married daughters all seemed ready to weep on her behalf. However, the sum of their sorrows was lightened by the reunion. All the surviving

Xies gathering together lessened the morose feel of the occasion. Having finally come home, they gathered outside under a camphor tree and chatted, while the younger relatives walked past the bamboo enclosure<sup>28</sup> to sightsee and take photographs. Yen Kuen went in and out of the house, attending to the needs of family members returning from distant places. He went back in to check on his aged mother. He opened the curtains and—shocked—heard his mother ask for food. Surprised, everyone came back inside to crowd around and observe the seemingly revitalized old dame.

Dust Maiden asked to be helped to a sitting position. Seeing that her children and grandchildren were all assembled together brought much glee to her heart. She busily inquired after everyone: “You’ve eaten, haven’t you?” Everyone felt amused at this unexpected turn of fate. All were happy for a moment, though not without a sense of absurdity considering their source of amusement.

Kuen asked her bluntly: “Me, who am I?”

“You? You’re foolish Kuen, everyone knows that.” That made everyone burst with laughter.

They continued to test her. Calling someone by name or linking a genealogy correctly won her immediate applause and laughter. But she could not name more than half of them, despite their reminders of who they were. Some of Dust Maiden’s great grandchildren were thrust to the front of the old one. Without breathing space, almost crying each of the little ones said “I don’t want to be here” in Mandarin. Dust Maiden said: “What are you talking about? Why can’t I understand one bit?” The fact was she faulted herself for birthing too many, faulted her old age, her weakened memory.

---

<sup>28</sup> In rural villages, farming homes use 竹圍, or bamboo enclosure, to keep livestock (i.e. chickens and ducks) within their bounds.

Driving cars, catching trains, they all left amid a chorus of complaints from their children about mosquito bites in the mountains. The day before, the loyal old dog that howled at the guests was awarded its master's stick as a result of frightening the children. How could it have known that they were Dust Maiden's closest relatives? The dog scampered toward a far-off bamboo thicket and did not return until things were returning to normal again in the house, then it came home with its tail wagging. The dog's head was still unsettled from the commotion caused by the guests' visit. It lifted its eyes to look at its master; its master also was thinking, and he appeared to remember nothing from the day before. He turned off the television-set. Again, the bamboo-enclosed ones of the mountains were distanced from the rest of the world.

The following morning, the anticipation of daybreak preceded dawn. Dust Maiden, frail in body, needed support from fences and walls as she moved slowly to the temple. To her dismay, the incense dedicated to Matzu<sup>29</sup> had already finished burning. She sat on the wicker chair in the living room, feeling sorrow for her failure to dedicate tea to her beloved foreign gods.<sup>30</sup> She thought about the events of yesterday; it *was* yesterday—wasn't it? She was not free from all doubt, but she knew that her family members, big and small, did return to the mountains to see her. That gave her the

---

<sup>29</sup> To many of its devotees, Matzu, (literally “foremother”), means “‘Immortal’ Mother of the Heavens” 天上聖母, whom they refer to as “*ma-tzu*” 媽祖 or “*grandama-tzu*” 媽祖婆. The adherents of “Matzu” refer to this entity as “Queen of the Heavens” 天后. In the Min dialect, “ma” is the highest honorary title for elderly and/or venerable women (德高望重的婦人). The complex beliefs concerning the “deity” Matzu, who some people believe had as a young woman elevated to the status of a “goddess,” seem to parallel those of the devotees of the Mary of Catholic and certain Protestant faiths (for a contemporary investigation of the phenomenon of Mary, refer to Messages from Heaven, a DVD). Footnote source: <http://163.20.110.113/it/webfair/mother/html> (Mandarin Chinese).

<sup>30</sup> In the source text, 土地公群, or “the many images of earth god(s);” appears to refer to the earth god and the grandma earth god (土地公), the designated “partner” of the earth god, according to folk religion.

consolation she needed. At the very least, she had a concrete dream that it had happened. That is where her thoughts rested.

Seeing that his old mother was away from her bedroom gave Yen Kuen a jolt to his system as he entered the main room of the house. “Ma,” he cried, as he hurriedly approached.

“Go make tea by the stove quickly. I have already lit all the incense for Matzu; clear tea is the one thing missing. I told Matzu the whole family, big and small, had returned, and asked for their safekeeping with peacefulness and prosperity, and that the children would grow up quickly and complete college.”

With his feet clutching a stool, Yen Kuen straightened two crooked sticks and said: “Ma, don’t be climbing like that, leave the business of incense to me.” He had another look at the Eight-Seat Table, Red Council-Chamber Table;<sup>31</sup> he could hardly believe how his frail old mother could reach her hand and position the sticks in the incense burner.

“I told Matzu that the whole family—big and small—all came back...”

“You said that a few moments ago.”

“Oh?” Dust Maiden did not remember.

Yen Kuen went away to steam tea. Dust Maiden settled her hands on the arms of the wicker chair, sat comfortably down, smiling contentedly as she gazed at the old Bodhisattva of Compassion—Guan Yin, the Land Deity, and the others portraits hanging

---

<sup>31</sup> The Eight-Seat Table refers to a square-shaped table that seats people on opposite sides, with a capacity of eight persons. The number eight is an indirect reference the “Eight Immortals” (八仙), entities worshipped in the *Taoist* religion. The Red Council-Chamber Table (八閤桌) is an altar that can be found in some *Taoist* households; its primary function is for the placing of incense for dedication to ancestors and to *Taoist* deities.

on the wall. She looked at the red flare of the incense in the dim corridor; the weak light there mirrored her very life. The fragrance of sandal wood filled the house as wispy, silk-like mist drifted outdoors, blending with the turbid morning light.

In less than two weeks, Dust Maiden had lost contact with reality again and was rushed to the hospital.

The staff was greatly amazed at her return to the human world. But they nonetheless suggested that they take her back home, lest she die inside the ambulance, something no one wanted to happen.

Once again, Dust Maiden lingered in the living room. The doctor arriving on the scene examined her pulse, her heartbeat, and her pupils with a flashlight.

“It won’t be long,” he said.

Yen Keun asked someone to bring his youngest daughter back from school on a scooter, so that she could contact their relatives. Most of them requested to speak to Yen Kuen directly.

“Will it be like last time?”

“As a son, of course, I hope the same thing happens, but the doctor said the same thing. Having seen her myself, I don’t think the heavens will grant our wish.” Reactions came from the other side of the line; Yen Kuen continued: “You’re on her side of the family; and considering your late father, you must come back. Last time you returned she talked about it for days she was so happy.”

Almost everyone who spoke with Yen Kuen had the same conversation. Those who thought it was inconvenient had difficulty saying so. In the end, six daughters, all senior-women, made the trip; all three of her surviving sons also returned. Most of the

grandchildren didn't make the trip; the great-grandchildren were all spoken for by the mothers to be too young and in need of special maternal care; none of them came back.

Another day came and went. After Yen Kuen confirmed that his old mother had no pulse and no heartbeat, the Daoist monk came to perform a ceremony. Just as the ceremonial gong was about to chime, the monk discovered that a segment of the white cloth covering Dust Maiden had fallen to the ground and the supposed 'corpse' was lying sideways. He called Yen Kuen to have a look. Seeing Yen Kuen, Dust Maiden said she was hungry.

The Xies quickly emptied the ceremonial water, bowls, sand-filled censer, paper money and the monk's altar in the background. There were no less than nineteen relatives chatting there under the camphor tree, all of them came into the house, encircling Dust Maiden. Helped to a sitting position, Dust Maiden's glance swept slowly around as they all watched. She read some incredulity on their faces. Apologizing, she said to all: "So sorry, made you run a blank errand again. I was really there. Being there, I bumped into that surname-recorder of yours,<sup>32</sup> who said: 'Ghost Month, unsightly month, what are you here for?'" To prove that she had been to the gates of the underworld, she continued, "I also bumped into Dame Ah-Rei. She said her house leaked so hard, how could the newborn grandchildren possibly be without defects...." The family gathered around her, staring. Now they had even more doubt in their eyes. She said as one taking an oath:

"Next time, on my next, I will really be gone. Next time."

---

<sup>32</sup> Translated from 查譜祖, the "surname-recorder" gets the mantle of "the ancestor who is in charge of documenting genealogies for families in the spiritual realm." Although the second personal pronoun 譜 of the composite noun 查譜祖 references a specific *Taoist* entity, the title given to it in the story implies that the surname-recorder does not hold a significant status in the traditional pantheon of *Taoist* figures.

The last “next time” could barely be heard.

After saying this, awkwardly, a wearied smile drifted across her face, and she no longer spoke.

“Cheers, Soldier”

*In modern history, to hear of four generations of men from the same family, from the same society, from the same country—all four, fighting wars for their country. To hear of four generations of men, in the name of family, in the name of society, taking the role of clan-warriors, sent to fight foreign militias, or made into soldiers under its colonizer, fighting invaders of the invader’s enemy, within one generation—or less than one generation—made into soldiers of the next invader of his native soil. Fighting a people with no history of bad blood, warring until one is gone. In the world of today, it might be difficult to find a scenario so absurd.*

Planning my documentary film production *Fragrance Island* in the early summer of 1973, I was all over Taiwan, searching for and collecting subject matter with reportage potential. Immediately after concluding eight days of Matzu ceremonies in Dajia, then back to Beitou Taipei for a night, up early playing with children all morning the next day, on I went to Wutai. Knowing it has produced one marathon runner after another, a golden goose of marathoners, I wanted to see Wutai firsthand, to scribble down some notes and take pictures. Travelling from Shandimen to Wutai on a steel oxcart, I befriended an aboriginal youth, Mr. Du, whom the people there called Xiong. While we chatted, *Haocha*,<sup>33</sup> the name of his village, charmed me. Despite Xiong’s warning that *Haocha* had no electric lighting, lots of insects and snakes, and took a four-hour trek to get to, I nevertheless told Xiong that unless he did not welcome me, I wanted to go there. Xiong quickly guaranteed my pseudo-lost self that he welcomed my visit and that nothing contrary to that had crossed his mind; he even offered me his home in the mountains for spending the night, if I wanted to stay. I then decided to drop my original plan and head deep into the mountains with Xiong that very afternoon.

---

<sup>33</sup> “Good tea,” “pleasant tea,” or “quality tea” (see footnote 24).

With a firm grip on his bush-cutting machete, Xiong chopped away the Cymbidium grass that flushed the edges of the lane. He told me that all *Haocha* villagers passing through had to do this, or else the road would disappear in a matter of days. “Especially now, in summertime,” he added. Xiong was quiet but not taciturn. If I asked a question, he answered. Our conversation was like starting a fire; if no one fanned the flame, the sparks would go out. As we approached *Haocha*, I had pretty much obtained everything I needed to know from our conversation; my understanding of *Haocha* would be fuller and deeper after I blended the pieces of mental information in my mind with the actual scene the moment I stepped into it. My perspective more or less coalesced with Gu Yanwu’s preference for concrete learning over wishy-washy theorizing: learning through direct and indirect experience; with an emphasis on learning on-the-spot, and so on, made the effort of getting there worthwhile.

In the valleys between mountains, where bats caught insects flying low in the air, the sky began to go cloudy. I looked at my watch. We had been walking for nearly five hours, and ought to have already arrived. Xiong said that my pace was too slow and that we still had some ground to cover. I was put off with that; he might be the more capable walker, but I could go at a healthy pace; I counted myself very competent at walking. I told him to let me be and to walk however he pleased and I’d keep pace behind him. Just moments after having said that, I looked ahead at my friend, whose steps seemed identical to those before. Mine were forcibly widened as I tried to stay not far behind. The effort was becoming strenuous. After I switched gears to faster, shorter steps, I was trotting. Xiong turned and looked at me. I had no surplus energy in my tank for asking this or that anymore. After continuing for a while in silence, he suddenly eased off the throttle. Turning around, he told me my way of walking wasn’t right; my forward steps landed too heavily. The energy misspent made me prone to fatigue. That explained why I couldn’t walk fast. He added that I didn’t breathe right and that my panting was very loud. He suggested that it would be better if I slowed down. He said light from the sun

wasn't a concern; he had a flashlight. While he spoke, at some point he turned on the flashlight he was holding and shone it on my face. Maybe because my look of total exhaustion seemed comical, or because I was so tired after a trek like this, he turned off his flashlight, laughing. The beams of his flashlight touched my face for less than ten seconds, but the moment he switched it off, he seemed to flick the sunlight off in one motion. I couldn't see anything. By the time my pupils adjusted, the sun had settled into the dusky skies.

All dark nighttimes seem the same everywhere. But because of the stillness and feathery sweetness of an angelic breeze here and now, even if I had been deliberately placed in this dark mountainous night in secret; I would know, just by my senses, that where I was now was already very deep inside that place. Xiong told me we had arrived. Dogs barked. I listened attentively for a moment. Almost a complete halt was needed before I could hear them yowling from a distance. It didn't sound convincingly real, almost like a sound in a delusion. Not long after, their barking got louder; not fully confident with my listening, still I was able to hear them, and it was the sound of more than two or three dogs. It was also the hour when it became absolutely clear we had arrived in *Haocha*. Why did I single this out to tell myself, emphasizing this feeling of having arrived at *Haocha*? I couldn't really say. I felt there was a great difference of opinion between Xiong's and my own mind's-eye about the distance we covered to make it to *Haocha*. When about seven or eight dogs came circling our heels, they rendered me a kind of bonus procedure; one by one they pressed their icy-cool noses to my hands, giving them a few sniffs. I looked around at my surroundings: still one big chunk of dark without a trace of light. And the village? Xiong said it was straight ahead. We walked for another ten minutes or so before arriving.

We had left Wutai shortly after two o'clock. It was already past eight when we got there. Since the villagers used no electricity at night, and because they were early sleepers, I was still unable to see the village. Yet I, the outsider, giving off a scent of

*otherness* to the air, did cause a stir among all the dogs of the village. Had it not been for Xiong, who hollered at them the whole time, the uproar could have awoken the whole village.

Xiong pushed open a half-closed door. From the shadowy interior, the voice of a woman talking became audible. It was a form of mountaineese I couldn't understand. Xiong responded with a few short sentences. He told me that the woman was his mother. She was sick, and it was not good for her to get up from bed. I could not see where Xiong was, but I still managed to hear his voice. One moment it was right beside me, the next it came from inside. Just as I was pondering how Xiong managed to walk to and fro without his flashlight, I saw a spark of light from the place he had entered. Then out walked Xiong with a candle in his hands. By the yellow flare of the candle I had my first clear look at the inside of the house. Compared with the houses I've seen before of my countrymen from the mountains, there wasn't much of a difference, it was just simpler. Building with dark schist chiseled from the sides of river valleys is a hallmark of Lukai tribal construction. There were also items made of fabric woven from moon plum bark; those placed on the ground were mats, others put up on the sides were wall coverings. I was familiar with that, too. Moreover, other than the trophies and tapestries that studded the walls, in between were two windowsills lined with little photographs, and three framed portraits of people.

Xiong was starting a fire under stone cookware, preparing noodles. Curious, I fetched the candle stuck to the table, and brought it before the figurines. Aside from the one of Christ's Passion, the piercing eyes of every photograph seemed intent at tracking me down. One in particular gave me chills—the portrait that resembled a Japanese soldier, next to Jesus. On its head was a cloth battle cap, on his back and by his sides hung cloth sun discs. The person was clad in the uniform of Japanese soldiers dispatched to southern China during the Pacific War. It was obvious that the figure had been enlarged from a group photo; the bottom left corner showed half of another person's

head; its pixels were visible, almost as much so as in a high-contrast effect in photography.

“Who is this soldier?”

“My mother’s husband.” Answered Xiong from the kitchen.

“Your father?” I felt the manner of his reply was very strange.

“No, I was born after my mother married her second husband.”

“And what about this soldier?”

“My mother told me he died in combat in the Philippines. The Japanese soldiers said he was very brave, the medals on the wall are his.”

My visual trajectory was drawn to the third figure on the wall. That, too, was a soldier, but he had a different sort of hat, like the small ones made of cloth worn by early Nationalist troops. The image quality was as coarse as the second one with the Japanese soldier; it too had been enlarged from a joint photo.

“Who is the one next to the Japanese soldier?”

“Oh! You mean that communist bandit...”

The manner of Xiong’s replies kept me tense.

“Communist bandit?”

“Yeah, he was from the last group of soldiers sent to fight in mainland China after Taiwan became free of Japanese rule. Many from our village went. Rumor has it that they all were caught by the Eighth Route Army and made into bandit troopers by the communist bandits.”

I couldn’t see Xiong, who was in the kitchen. His words seemed to issue from all sides of the shadowy surroundings and I could hear them clearly.

“What was his place in your family?”

“Just my old man.”

The light of the candle wick was flickering, my hands were shaking; the little flame was dancing in panic. The figure before my eyes grew tired, its body seemed to

sway slightly, but those eyes that glared—at me—they did not change. My heart turned weak, as if it could not contain anything more. I became dazed. Dazed before the Figure of the Passion, the Japanese soldier, before the one whom Xiong called “communist bandit.” Suddenly, I felt as if I’d been brought before a judge. Oh Gosh! My Gosh! I was screaming inwardly at the thought of this family, at the thought of this minority group, and the thought of my ancestors who had come to pioneer this island, all this structural violence formed a flurry of emotions within me.

““Old Huang,” the voice issued from behind the moon plum mat. Even though I recognized it as Xiong’s voice, it astounded me, I had turned so weak. Xiong said: “I thought you were going to keep asking about the communist bandit. My mother said he’s probably dead. News of him never came. When we were little kids, mother said every year that she couldn’t support us if she didn’t remarry, but she never did. She doesn’t say it anymore... old now, ‘Old Huang?’”

“I, I’m here.”

“I’m telling you their stories only because you have an interest in these photographs; what’s the point of just looking at them?” As he spoke, he brought two large bowls of noodles from inside. “Nothing fancy in the mountains. Now come, we don’t have main dishes, we’ll open canned fish and eat.”

I was still standing in front of the photographs, half dazed, fearing my field of vision would touch him. I wasn’t completely sure why this was so, but was clearly aware that I was afraid at that moment.

He put down his noodles, walked over and stood alongside me.

“What, aren’t you hungry? This is my older brother.” He drew my attention to the small photograph in the large picture frame and, pointing to the camouflaged Nationalist soldier in it, said: “He’s dead too. He was a frogman, sacrificed for the country after having been sent on a mission. Look!” He pointed to the other colored photograph. “This was at our village meeting place where he was mourned. Even the chief of the squadron

came for this. Heard he was killed by communist bandits during an ambush in China, though at the meeting the squadron chief said my brother's unit accomplished their mission. They were heroes."

Instinctively I became aware that I could listen to no more about the tragic events all taking place in this one family, hearing him tell it as though it were someone else's story. No. Even if he were telling me about another person's tragedy, the tone just would not be as matter-of-fact as Xiong's now. Then I didn't have the nerve to cut him short.

"This is my second eldest brother. He wasn't killed. Before he retired from the military, he joined the Ju Guang Unit. He fished on the seas. He was also a marathon runner of Wutai township." He pointed to the photograph of his brother wearing a big military hat, and then to one among the many faces of marathon runners.

"Mercy from heaven!" The screams I had inside my mind burst from my lips.

"Heaven? What heaven?" Xiong asked.

"It's nothing. Let's eat noodles."

We turned around and sat at the table. Xiong grabbed his chopsticks and started eating away. My stomach was really empty, but I had no appetite at all. I suppressed the pain of all the sorrow from the mixed emotions I had inside me and glanced at Xiong, who was relishing his meal; seeing his unfettered, un-resentful look, I felt that either him or me, one of us does not belong in this room; it should be him, I thought. Images of the men in the photographs on the wall were whirling about in my mind. I hadn't really left that room. But then again, how long had Xiong had those photographs as company! However I tried to explain it, I was unable to see how Xiong, when he talked of what had befallen those people, when they were his very own kin, he couldn't have been more calm and unperturbed. Xiong raised his eyes and looked at me. Sipping the wet noodle on the edge of his bowl, he said:

"You won't eat?"

"In a minute. I'm thinking about a lot of things right now."

“We’re up in the mountains, what’s there to think about?” Xiong took another mouthful of noodles.

“Is there a photograph of your grandfather?”

“How could there be? In our mountains...”

“Do you know what your grandfather’s ancestors did?”

“What they did? Mountain people hunt of course. He used to hunt bear. The old men in the mountains here all say they hunted bear when they were younger.”

“He wasn’t a soldier, was he?”

“No. But he fought some Japanese.” He paused a moment, “And my grandfather’s father.”

“Great-grandfather.”

“Yeah, my great grandfather was in a war too, with you flatlanders, ...”

“Han-Chinese.”

“Yeah, fought you Han-Chinese many times. Pastor Lo said, our great-grandfathers and grandfathers were very fortunate; they all fought wars for our own tribe.”

“Pastor Lo’s a foreigner?”

“No, he’s one of us Lukai.”

“He said my great-grandfather and grandfather were the tribal warriors of us Lukai.”

I finally saw Xiong become animated and emotional. He quickly finished his noodles and cleaned up his soup.

“Here, have this other bowl. I’ll add noodles for you.”

“Very delicious. You won’t eat? There isn’t anything else.”

I shook my head; Xiong hesitated for a moment, picked up his chopsticks and started having his second bowl. The summer insects dancing around the candlelight

burned up their wings, fell to the table, and crawled aimlessly. One by one I flung them off the table randomly with the tip of my finger.

“You asked earlier whether I had photographs of my grandfathers. Is that because you also want to see them hanging there too?” What Xiong said startled me. I had just been thinking that. I actually pictured two more warrior photographs in my mind, one with a rattan helmet and armor, holding a spear; that would be the great-grandfather. Another wearing neither helmet nor armor, with a curved knife strapped to his waist; that would be the grandfather.

“If they were lined up with photographs of Japanese, communist bandits, and our own Chinese soldiers, heh, that’d be real lively.” Xiong talked without a hint of strain.

“Has it ever occurred to you that these people are your family?” I was talking seriously.

“Well yes. Many of us mountain people are like this.” His tone turned flat as before.

“Don’t these things make you upset?”

“upset...”

“Make you sad and angry, ...”

What I said made him think. After a few moments, I questioned him further: “Don’t *you* feel sad and angry?”

“Angry? At whom?”

Xiong’s question might well have been an indictment. He left me speechless there for a moment. Had he discontinued, I would have been even more ill at ease.

“My maternal grandfather also was a warrior. He said that when we burn a nest of ants, and later see ants somewhere else, then you know that the ants from before did not perish in the fire.” Xiong was having a lot of difficulty with his words because he was trying to convey something so that I could understand. Afraid that I didn’t get what he was saying, he continued: “Really *did* burn that nest of ants, you get it?”

I nodded more than once. Xiong, still worried, asked me again: “You get it? Sometimes even I doubt whether he truly knew the philosophy behind it.” The story about his grandfather took me by surprise. Total aggressive extermination was its embedded message. There was no denying that, historically, the lot of these mountain folk was to be attacked. The flipside to this philosophizing was resistance; there would be hope for them if just one of their soldiers remained. In an ideology of negation of the individual, with national and racial consciousness as its sole focus, sacrificing individuals appears as nothing in the bigger picture. Did Xiong understand this form of thinking, or had it become a social grammar of their aboriginal culture, causing them to act before they understood? That explained how Xiong could appear so calm emotionally when he talked about those framed photographs and their ill-fated subjects.

While we talked, Xiong’s mum tossed out a few words from her bed. I heard two or three exchanges between them in their mountain dialect, in a quarreling tone. Xiong told me she thought we were drinking; she wanted some of it, too.

“How about a little wine?”

“Oh! Nonono, I can’t drink. I get drunk after a few drops, badly drunk, as if I had caught dropsy.” I had no capacity for wine, whenever someone brings up the topic, I find it necessary to elaborate with many explanations. “If you want to, go ahead and drink, don’t mind me.”

“All right. I’ll have half a bowl to help myself sleep.” He rose as he spoke, and came back with a half-bottle of *michiu*. Holding the bottle, he moved it toward the candle, had a look and said: “Oh no! My mum stole some. She has a bad liver, she can’t be drinking.” Turning his head, he talked to the other one inside the room, this time with a stricter tone. Xiong’s mother also talked back, but her voice was overpowered by Xiong’s, who was louder. Then all of a sudden, Xiong’s mother stopped speaking. She started to sing instead; it was a half-sung, half-hummed, without-a-real-tune noise. During the day it wouldn’t have had much effect, but at twilight deep in the mountains, it

felt as if it saturated the earth, tingling the spine. I sensed something familiar; in our own villages, the rural requiems, especially those sung by very old women, don't sound much different. I listened intently.

“Pay no attention to her, have a small dose yourself.” There was a small soda glass on the table, he filled it half way: “Just this much.” He poured the rest into his noodle bowl, filling it with precision.

“Is there any meaning to your mum's tune?”

“Yes. She says her life is miserable, says I refuse to let her drink; she wants my dad and our ancestors to weigh in on this. All the people she's talking to are dead, those dead guys on the wall. Pay no attention to her, tonight she'll be singing till dawn; come.” He raised his glass, “welcome to you, let's have ourselves some.” He took a big gulp.

I took half a glass. I didn't expect to feel no burning whatsoever when it touched my lips; it was the same when I savored it in my mouth. “This is millet wine?” “Yes. It's *michiu* from the Bureau of Public Trade. Look.” He picked the bottle up and put it on the table.

There's a saying, *drinking depends on mood*; I experienced this now for the first time. I drank again and finished what was left.

“Old Huang, you can drink. Come, let us drink our *xiaomichiu*.” Xiong went looking for some.

Very quickly, the alcohol from the *xiaomichiu* started to have an effect on me. Besides feeling like I had a fever, I began having illusions. It was a moment where the spirit songs hovering from the bed summoned an uncanny air, and the candle's flame—like the pounding artery of a breathing creature, its center, with all its unease wanted to escape from its glowing stamen. Its quivering hastened the fall of the candle's teardrops, the emerging stamen of the candle appeared to look longer as it burned, and the flame stamen flowered into a blaze. Xiong's shadow shook turbulently on the wall, the images of the photographs turned vivid amid the flickering candlelight.

As Xiong was pouring my glass full with *xiaomichiu*, to his left and right stood two little children, who looked curiously at me one moment, then at the table the next.

“Oy! What did you get up for?”

“What are you eating?” asked the younger child.

“Go, off, away. My mother woke them up again. They’re my brother’s children, there are three more.”

“Oh right, I have crackers here.” I pulled up two packs of Nutrition Crackers and a can of throat candies from my bag, which I gave them. Then suddenly, I noticed there were three more bashful, giggling little girls standing next to the table. “Uh-oh.”

“Not at all. Here take this, hurry back to bed.” The youngest took it and, neither heavily nor softly Xiong slapped him on the head saying: “Don’t know how to say thank you!”

The little kids all started laughing. The spirit song circled the dim room as it did before, unnoticed by the little ones.

“You all need to squeeze to the inside more, you need to leave some space, uncle will be sleeping here with you tonight.”

The little ones started to laugh again, especially the three little girls.

Seeing that the children didn’t want to go to sleep, Xiong lifted his drinking glass, saying, “Come, let’s all have a drink, now hurry to bed, you still have school tomorrow.” Having said that he brought the wineglass near their mouths, the children had a mouthful each. “This little rascal took the biggest swig.”

He pointed at the kid who was hugging the crackers: “To bed, go!”

With great reluctance, the little ones entered the corner in the dark, though they could not be seen, their giggles and whispering could still be heard.

“Your young ones also drink?”

“No, it was just for fun. Come, cheers.”

I had a look at the glass, gulped down some clean saliva, and downed the millet wine. Maybe it was the fact that my forehead looked exaggeratedly creased, but Xiong said, laughing: “Oh yeah! You are my kind of a person.” He gurgled down one big bowl.

The alcohol content of *xiaomichiu* was apparently much higher than that of *michiu*. I felt my breath quicken, my heartbeat race, and my head grow thick. I knew I could not drink even a tiny bit more. Making the most of my moment of sobriety, I indicated to Xiong that I wished to stay at the table to write a few things by myself, and asked him to get some rest before I had mine. Xiong was someone who was rarely demanding of other people and very respectful. After showing me where to sleep and the agenda for tomorrow, he said to me: “By the way, if you bump into a big serpent, don’t be afraid, that’s the *elaphe* snake of the house, and it does not bite people; we don’t have a single rat in the house because we got him. He rarely comes out. I actually hope you’ll see him.” Having said that he left the table.

I spread my notebook on the table, but my feelings were mixed and dense. For a while I did not know where to start remembering. All I could do was put down my ballpoint pen, support my head with both hands, and allow my thoughts to wander wherever they wanted. After a little while, several drops of uncontainable tears splattered the notebook. I fixed my eyes on the watery marks of my teardrops. After seeing the Japanese soldiers and communist bandits beside Jesus’ Passion, I could also picture two Lukai warriors clearly on the other side of the wall. I knew this was all part of an illusion, and yet the spirit song from the sickbed and the sound of children’s agitated laughter were clear in my ears. Then finally, I also heard slapping sounds as Xiong went over to the children.

Everything got quiet, the winding spirit song made the night all the more still. The illusory human figures like phantoms in the mind deepened the night even more. I still remember, on the top of the notebook wet with my tears, grabbing my pen, the pen that had trouble listening to my summons, writing crookedly the slated words: “On earth,

where could there be a history more disheartening than this? Where would there be an ethnic minority with a fate more heartbreaking?”

Whichever way I faced the wall, the warrior figures from different generations continued to appear before my eyes. Just before my will succumbed to the influence of the alcohol, those figures seemed to bulge. Facing the wall lined-up with the photographs, I was still able to pick up the wine glass that was empty except for a few drops and mumble repeatedly in my heart:

“Cheers, soldier!”

Dropping my head, I felt my nose tremble, dropping as I lost all my bearings. I felt so sad at heart that I resorted to opening my mouth to control the agitation. Drool and tears, all the more. I knew I could not hold back my urge to sob; all I asked of myself was to make no sound, to not lose my control, and not to startle the others. I did my best to keep my mouth wide open. That was the one method I knew to keep myself from making noise.

I could still hear faint shouts of, “cheers, soldier.” I still...

The next morning, we walked, quietly, to the village in Ahli. Xiong said there was a factory route by which I could return to Wutai if I took a steel oxcart. Xiong thought very hard as he tried to make me feel better, but didn't find a way to do it. He would not understand my ancestors—who came to pioneer the island—how they felt; nor the guilt from the systematic violence they inflicted on the indigenous mountain people. He could not have understood why I wanted to leave the village before I'd even seen it.

“You scared the daylights out of my mother too. Or she would have sung until daybreak.”

“Did I really not do anything embarrassing?”

“All you did was yell ‘cheers, soldier,’ retch, and cry loudly, that was all.”

“My sincere apologies.”

“None of that. The whole village came to see you. After I told them about you, the older people all said you were a friend indeed.”

“You have already explained this to me in great detail, I know my way back. You can stop sending me off here.”

“No. This hill is very steep, all the way down for two hours will get you to Ahli. Sending you off to Ahli and no further will do.”

“But will you have to go up on this steep hill on your way back?”

“My maternal grandfather says, up the steep hill once increases your years by one.”

I meditated on those words after hearing Xiong’s second mention of his maternal grandfather. Do the Lukai consider him a philosopher of theirs? And yes, he’s also a warrior of the Lukai.

“Old Huang.” His tone expressing sincerity, calling to me Xiong said, “Will you come to our *Haocha* again?”

“I will! I will come to *Haocha* again to toast cheers with the soldiers!”

“Cheers, soldier!” Xiong exclaimed.

Along our return path of gloomy sentimentality, this was the first moment of spontaneous laughter. And together we laughed the mirth right out of the sky.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Barnstone, Willis. 1993. *The Poetics of Translation*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Chi, Pang-Yuan and Der-Wei Wang, eds. 2000. *Chinese Literature in the Second Half of a Modern Century*. Bloomington IN: Indiana University Press.
- Chiu, Beryl. *Inevitability of the Untranslatable: A Cultural Translation of Huang Chunming's "To the Warriors!"* Tamkang Review 39, no. 2 (2009): 131-157.
- Dong, Cheng Yu 董成瑜. 1999. 凡有喜怒哀樂必能讀黃春明 "Anybody with Emotions Can Read Huang Chunming," Oct. 21, 1999; available from: <http://blog.chinatimes.com/openbook/archive/2006/07/17/79770.html>; accessed on 12.11.2010.
- Faurot, Jeannette L, ed. 1980. *Chinese Fiction from Taiwan*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.
- Haddon, Rosemary. 1992. "Nativist Fiction from China and Taiwan: A Thematic Survey." Ph.D. Diss., University of British Columbia.
- Hong Wang Yu Ping 洪王俞萍 1990. 談黃春明戰士乾杯; available from: <http://www.taiwanpedia.culture.tw/web/content?ID=14725>; accessed on 12.1.2011.
- Huang, Chunming. 1990. *The Drowning of an Old Cat and Other Stories*. Howard Goldblatt, trans. Bloomington IN: Indiana University Press.
- Huang, Chunming 黃春明. 1999. *Fangsheng 放生*. Taipei: Lianhe Wenxue.
- Huang, Chunming 黃春明, Pan, Yao-Ming 潘耀明 and Yuan Mian 原緬 eds. 2009, *Huang Chunming Xiaoshuo Xuan 黃春明小說選*. Singapore: Singapore Chingnian Shuju.
- Ito, Kiyoshi. *Taiwan-400 Years of History and Outlook*. Walter Chen, trans., available from: <http://taiwandc.org/history.htm>; accessed on 2.21.2011.

Jiang, Baochai 江寶釵 and Lin, Zhenshan 林鎮山 eds., 2009. *The Taste of Mud: Discussion on Huang Chunming's Writing 泥土的滋味—黃春明文學論集* Taipei: Lianhe Literature.

Makeham, John, and A-Chin Hsiau eds. 2005. *Cultural, Ethnic, and Political Nationalism in Contemporary Taiwan Bentuhua*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Manthrope, Jonathan. 2005. *Forbidden Nation: A History of Taiwan*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Munday, Jeremy. 2001. *Introducing Translation Studies: Theories and Applications*. London, New York: Routledge.

Norman, Jerry. *Chinese (Cambridge Language Surveys)* 1988. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Woei, George Tsai and Peter Kien-hong Yu. 2001. *Taiwanisation: Its Origin and Politics*. Singapore: East Asian Institute: National University of Singapore.

Yip, June. 2004. *Envisioning Taiwan: Fiction, Cinema, and the Nation in the Cultural Imaginary*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.