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History and the built environment in Taiwan’s southern capital

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Submitted in September 2002.
This thesis is an original work undertaken by myself (the candidate). It is the result of research undertaken solely by myself.

Jeremy E. Taylor
Abstract

This thesis is a study of history as it is made through the built environment in Taiwan. In order to explore this topic, I have chosen to focus this study on one particular locality in Taiwan—the city of Kaohsiung. In doing so, I analyse the multifarious ways in which the historic built environment of this city has been codified, restored, preserved and written about, and consider the relationship between these activities and broader historiographical developments.

The thesis consists of six core chapters, as well as an introduction and a conclusion. The first two chapters represent an analysis of historiographical trends in post-war Taiwan, and a study of how these trends have been reflected in the island’s built environment. In Chapter 3, a more empirical approach is undertaken, as I trace the development and latter-day revival of colonial concepts of the South in Taiwan, and how these concepts have influenced the landscape of cities such as Kaohsiung (as well as the ways in which these landscapes are appreciated).

The final three chapters deal specifically with Taiwan’s “southern capital”. Chapter 4 is a study of the ways in which this city, so often described as a place of no historiographical worth, has been furnished with a variety of official and lay histories over the last two decades. I then examine how these histories have been reflected in the city’s historic environment: in Chapter 5, through a particular relic and its associated “national” landscape; and, in Chapter 6, through a recently demarcated “historic maritime district”.

In terms of the themes discussed, this work represents an original approach to the study of history, and history-making, in Taiwan. It sheds new light on the relationship between the nation and localities in the history-making process in Taiwan. What are the dynamics of this relationship? And how do national and local histories inform or influence one another? Another, related question concerns the legacy of colonial rule in Taiwan. How
are the architectural, and ideological, vestiges of fifty years of Japanese imperialism on the island now interpreted? And what role do they play in the making of new histories?
Acknowledgements

This thesis would not have been possible without the support of many individuals and institutions in a variety of cities around the world. The only way that I have managed to conceptualise a listing of all those who should be mentioned is by way of geography.

I will start in Canberra. My sincerest thanks to the four members of my supervisory panel: Geremie Barmé, Tessa Morris-Suzuki, Craig Reynolds and Tom Griffiths. Their intellectual stimulation throughout the course of my studies, as well as the more practical advice and suggestions that they have provided, is appreciated beyond measure. Their input shaped this thesis, and my scholarship, in ways too numerous to detail here. It was a privilege to have studied under their supervision.

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of the most employed romanisation systems for Hokkien in Taiwan.\(^2\)

For Japanese words, the Hepburn system of romanisation has been employed. Japanese toponyms, however, are rendered according to standard English spelling (e.g., “Osaka”, rather than “Ōsaka”). Furthermore, when reference is made to Japanese words, names or titles of books dating from the pre-1945 era, kanji have been rendered according to their pre-war (rather than present) forms.

In the few instances in which references are made to Cantonese expressions or words, the Yale system of romanisation (without tone markers) has been employed.\(^3\)

For the purpose of accessibility to those readers who may not hail from an Asian studies background, the names of Chinese cities are rendered according to the Postal System throughout this thesis.\(^4\) Although considered archaic in the People’s Republic of China, this system is still widely used in English-language texts today, both in Taiwan and elsewhere. Thus, toponyms such as Nanjing, Beijing and Guangzhou are rendered as Nanking, Peking and Canton respectively. Where practical, the standard Hanyu Pinyin spellings of these toponyms are also provided at the points where they first appear in the main body of the thesis.

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\(^2\) Despite familiarity with this system of romanisation for a number of years, I am yet to ascertain an official title for it. The system was developed by British Presbyterian missionaries in southern China in the late nineteenth century, and has been used since by foreign students of Hokkien in Taiwan. This system is set out in Bernard L. M. Embree, \textit{A Dictionary of Southern Min (Taiwanese-English dictionary)} (Taipei: Taipei Language Institute, 1984). It should be noted, however, that in the People’s Republic of China (specifically in Fujian province where Hokkien is the main vernacular), and in Hokkien-speaking communities in Southeast Asia, different systems are employed.

\(^3\) As set out in standard texts such as Stephen Matthews and Virginia Yip, \textit{Cantonese: A Comprehensive Grammar} (London: Routledge, 1994).

\(^4\) This system was formulated in the late nineteenth century by the Imperial Chinese Maritime Customs Service. It renders Chinese toponyms according to local pronunciations and, at times, rather esoteric spellings.
Taiwanese toponyms are written according to the standard spellings used in Taiwan today, which may or may not accord with any given romanisation system. 台北 is thus written "Taipei" (rather than "Taibei"), and 高雄 as "Kaohsiung" (rather than "Gaoxiong"). The exceptions to this rule are found in those cases where nineteenth-century or Japanese colonial-era toponyms are used.

All personal names in Chinese are given in Hanyu Pinyin unless these names are known commonly by another spelling system. The names of well-known figures and personalities, such as Koxinga or Sun Yat-sen, for instance, are rendered according to the standard and generally accepted spellings. And when available, the preferred spelling of Taiwanese personal names are used rather than the Hanyu Pinyin equivalents. To avoid confusion, all Chinese and Japanese personal names appearing in the main body of the thesis are accompanied by Chinese characters.

Unless otherwise stated, all translations into English are my own.
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Introduction

Located on the southern coast of the Taiwanese mainland, and providing a home to its largest and busiest harbour, Kaohsiung 高雄 claims an ambiguous place in Taiwan’s history. Despite being the second largest city on this island, Kaohsiung is commonly deemed “ahistoric” by many professional historians. Because its built environment is not defined by the architectural stereotypes that determine what an “historic” Taiwanese city ought to look like, it is yet to attract the same amount of attention as have other urban centres, such as Tainan 台南 and Taipei 台北.

Yet Kaohsiung is a city in which a complicated past is always pressing upon the present. It is the sort of place in which an abandoned nineteenth-century British consulate attracts dozens of local couples each week as a backdrop for wedding photographs; in which a naval harbour first constructed by a southward-advancing Japanese military in the 1930s is still staffed by conscripts awaiting a hypothetical communist invasion; where statues of Confucius (Kongzi 孔子) and Chiang Kai-shek (Jiang Zhongzheng 蒋中正) still guard over public parks and university campuses. Competing histories are found everywhere in the Kaohsiung landscape.

I first visited Kaohsiung in the northern hemisphere summer of 1995, alighting at the city’s colonial-era train station after a five-hour journey along the North-South trunk line from Taipei. On that occasion, I knew very little about Taiwan’s southern metropolis. It took a number of years of reading, listening and discussion before the historical significance of the railway line along which I had travelled became clear, or indeed the historical peculiarities of the name Kaohsiung—a point to which I shall return—began to make sense.

Even before arriving in Kaohsiung, however, my ideas about what to expect of the city were being shaped. For one will hear all kinds of generalisations about Kaohsiung voiced
in Taiwanese society, and most especially in Taipei. Kaohsiung’s climate is often described as oppressive, and its people are said to be “darker” (bijiao bei 比較黑)—but friendlier—than their Taipei cousins; the city makes for a pleasant stop on the way to some other destination, but there is apparently little of cultural note there. Interestingly, such generalisations find a ready response in what Kaohsiung people themselves say about their city. This is an industrial port—the seafood is cheap, but there is nothing of historic import.

On the many occasions that I have returned to Kaohsiung since 1995, the earlier impressions I had of this city have undergone continual revision. Kaohsiung’s sea breezes provide a contrast to the humidity of a Taipei July, and I have yet to discern any correlation between the city’s latitude and the pigmentation of its populace. Moreover, far from there being nothing to see, Kaohsiung’s streetscapes tell of a fraught but fascinating past. They challenge the perceptions of a city that has “no history”, and contradict many of the standard narratives now common in the nascent field of “Taiwan history”.

Consequently, the substantial differences between the generalisations often heard about the city, and what I have actually seen and experienced, have evolved from a source of frustration into one of curiosity. And I have found the stereotypes and myths that circulate regarding Kaohsiung just as instructive as the history and topography of the city itself.

At one level, this thesis was born out of an interest in just such discrepancies. I am fascinated by the question of how generalisations about the history, culture and geography of particular localities develop, as well as by the influence that such popular ideas have on the shape of cities. What are the origins of phrases such as “the New World of the South”, “the maritime capital”, or “the pearl of the Orient”—all apparently simple catchphrases that have been used in reference to Kaohsiung (and all of which shall be examined in this study), yet which carry with them a range of ideas about the history and culture of the city?
And how do such ideas accord or conflict with the historical complexities that continue to arise in debates about Kaohsiung's historic built environment?

In essence, this thesis is a work of historiography. It is a study of history "in the making". Kaohsiung itself is home to a small yet energetic community of historians, curators, bureaucrats and writers who have been busy inscribing the landscape of this city with a multitude of histories for well over a decade. Examination of their efforts makes for a substantial portion of this study.

Yet the present work is not focused on the making of local histories in Kaohsiung for its own sake. Rather, I am seeking to shed light on the complicated yet hitherto largely ignored relationship between local histories and national histories in Taiwan (and, for that matter, in other societies also). Kaohsiung provides us with an ideal environment in which to study the dynamics of this relationship—not because it is unique in claiming a local history community, but because the frequent references to this city as an "ahistoric" place have, in themselves, provided an incentive to "make history" there. What are the relationships between the histories being written and codified in "provincial Taiwan" as opposed to those being formulated in the Taipei offices of the central government? The tensions, conflicts and cooperation that have developed between these different dimensions of the past take place within the skein of a complicated process of negotiation and cross-referencing, one that includes the omnipresent nation, as well as a burgeoning interest and awareness in local history that has occurred throughout Taiwan in recent years. All of this helps to illustrate the (often overlooked) importance of the past and its reinterpretations at a time when ideological contestations over the definition of "Taiwan history" continue to rage.

Furthermore, I shall explore the relationship between local and national histories with particular reference to the historic built environment. I believe that it is in the landscapes of Taiwan's cities, towns and villages that we can best witness the struggles over the
interpretation of the past. Thus, in this study, I examine the process of “history making” in its broadest sense. In considering the development of certain historical narratives, for instance, I assign refurbished relics with the same historiographical weight as school textbooks or television documentaries.

This is not a general history of Kaohsiung. Indeed, despite attempts authored by some Taiwanese scholars, I do not believe a definitive history of this city is either plausible or necessary—for by including any given person, place or event, one will invariably exclude others from the Kaohsiung story. This being the case, there are many aspects of Kaohsiung’s history that are not canvassed in the present work, whilst there are certain elements of Kaohsiung’s history that are touched upon tangentially. Even in those sections of the thesis in which I delve into the standard cultural histories of this city, it has been the ideologies that inform the various interpretations of the past that form the basis of my analysis, rather than a desire to discover “what happened”.

If the descriptions of Kaohsiung offered in the above paragraphs sound strikingly similar to other localities in Taiwan, or for that matter, other places around the world, then so much the better. For the themes explored below are of relevance well beyond the borders of the special municipality of Kaohsiung. Indeed, I have deliberately adopted a comparative approach in this work, drawing on parallels between Kaohsiung and other cities, and between historiographical trends in Taiwan and those in other societies. Such a methodology is rare in recent scholarship about Taiwan. The myth of Taiwan’s uniqueness—something which has been vigorously propagated by voices within the island’s academic and political elite, and which I shall touch upon in the first chapter of this thesis—has defined the very ways in which Taiwan has been studied.

This thesis commences with an analysis, in the opening chapter, of the key themes and narratives that have dominated the study and interpretation of the past in Taiwan since the end of the Second World War. I then examine, in Chapter 2, how these themes have been
interpolated onto the island’s built environment—both in terms of how the built environment is codified and written about, as well as how it is modified, preserved or embellished. It is in the third and fourth chapters that I focus more specifically on the city of Kaohsiung, considering how the modern history of this city, so intimately connected to Japanese colonial rule in Taiwan, has shaped its landscape, and also the study of its past. Chapter 3 details the creation of Kaohsiung as a harbour city at the southern extremities of the colonial Japanese empire, and goes some way in filling the lacunae left in the wake of recent academic concerns with Manchuria (and to a lesser extent, Korea) in the field of Japanese imperial history. Chapters 5 and 6 are case-studies—the first of a particular “relic” in Kaohsiung; the second of a recently-designated “historic district”—in which the historiographical debates that have been played out around these sites are detailed.

As with any thesis, the present study is far from exhaustive. And as is probably apparent even at this early stage, the directions taken in this thesis reflect my own interpretations of Kaohsiung and its historic built environment as much as they do the histories I propose to examine. Future studies will no doubt determine numerous relevant issues not addressed herein. Yet I believe, nevertheless, that the questions raised in this thesis contribute, not simply to the study of Taiwan, but just as crucially, to the study of historiography and “history making” in many other societies throughout the world.
Chapter 1: Nation, locality and the city in Taiwanese historiography

The nation and its historiography

Following the publication of Benedict Anderson’s pivotal work *Imagined Communities*, the nation has become arguably the single most popular area of research in much of the Humanities. Whilst scholars in fields such as cultural studies have been hard at work deconstructing the nation in the last decade or more—ranging from nineteenth-century Europe through to the independent nationalist movements of the post-Second World War era—others have been examining how the nation as a concept has influenced various societies throughout the world. The flourishing of new nationalisms since the end of the Cold War, meanwhile, has attracted the attention of many social scientists, as reasons are sought for the continuing popularity of an idea that had, at one stage, been all but discredited by the world’s intellectuals.

It is now widely accepted that the concept of the nation is closely linked to the academic discipline of history at a number of levels. As Hayden White, Stephen Bann, and others have shown in their work on nineteenth-century European historiography, history in the Rankean sense, as a “replica of the real”, with its attention to empirical detail and its writing of the past as a linear progression towards the present, grew out of a desire to record and, indeed, invent histories in the aid of the nation. Recent contributions from scholars working within the field of postcolonial studies have gone further in revealing the extent to which history, more than many other academic disciplines, was tied closely to

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European nation-building and empire-building projects in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In turn, it has been argued that the quintessential mythologies of the nation—national heroes, the narratives of progress and development, ethnic homogeneity, and so on—were, in many cases, nothing more than “invented traditions”, under which are hidden historic authenticity or “truths” about the past.

With growing activity in the fields of environmental history and historical geography, questions about the physical residue of such national mythologies and histories in the landscape have inspired no shortage of interest. Such work in turn has gained a great deal from the academic questioning of “space”, particularly following the publication of Henri Lefebvre’s highly influential *The Production of Space*. From Pierre Nora’s work on *lieux de mémoire* in France, and the relationship between “memory” and “history” as played out in the French landscape, to the extensive work on nation-building and its influence on the topography of Southeast Asia by geographers at the National University of Singapore, this area of study has revealed much about the ways in which history has served the nation through the environment—both built and natural. The markings that nations have left in the environment to legitimate themselves have, in turn, begun to be de-constructed and de-mythologised. Intellectual interest in the question of heritage, ranging from actual

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involvement by academics in heritage projects, to what the late Raphael Samuel has termed “heritage baiting”, also demonstrates the depth of fascination that such issues provoke.

For scholars interested in these very questions, Taiwan offers fertile ground. The critical historian finds in the Formosan landscape a wide spectrum of symbols and images connected to various national ideals just waiting to be de-constructed. The KMT nation-building machine offers some of the most obvious and, at times, farcical examples of this, from grotesque shrines commemorating national martyrs, to statues of posthumous national leaders. Monuments, historic relics, architecture, and various other types of site, have all played a central role in KMT rule in Taiwan, as well as in the party’s claim to represent the crucible of Chinese culture in the latter decades of the twentieth century. Marshall Johnson’s eloquent study of nation-building-through-heritage in KMT Taiwan is perhaps the most thorough criticism of this phenomenon in English, whilst the work of Taiwanese scholars such as Ye Nai-chi (Ye Naiqi 葉乃齊) is of like importance in Chinese. In some ways, I would hope that this dissertation will come to represent a contribution to this field of critical scholarship in that I shall also examine the ways in which historic relics and other forms of commemorative architecture have played a crucial role in perpetuating particular myths about the nation, and adumbrating new ones.

Yet the relationship between the nation, history, and the built environment, can in turn aid in a reading of Taiwan history in the “postcolonial” sense. Much of the cultural studies

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11 “KMT” is the most widely used acronym for the Guomin dang 國民黨, or Chinese Nationalist Party, that came to Taiwan following the Second World War.
13 Ye Nai-chi, “Taiwan guji baocun yundong de guoqu yu weilai” [The past and future of Taiwan’s relic preservation movement], Taiwan shiliao yangjia 6 (1996.11): 169-185.
field in Taiwan, led by scholars such as Kuan-hsing Chen (Chen Guangxing陈光興)\textsuperscript{14} and Liao Binghui廖炳惠,\textsuperscript{15} and more specifically in the case of the built environment, Chu-joe Hsia (Xia Zhujia夏鍾九),\textsuperscript{16} has done just this. In this interpretation, Taiwan’s past is read as a series of continual invasions, from that of the Dutch East India Company to late twentieth-century American capital. The built environment is in many cases viewed as proof of colonial violence played out in the name of the nation, as has been the case with the listing of Dutch and Spanish forts throughout the island and the many architectural remainders of Japanese military administration in Taiwan. Like other “postcolonial” societies throughout Asia, Taiwan is in turn presented as a victim (at the hands) of the Euro-American national ideal. The landscape has thus become a valid form of historical data through which this can be proven.

For historians inclined to what might be termed “liberalism”, Taiwan provides challenges that relate once again to the idea of the nation and its residue in the landscape. Scholars writing in this mode approach Taiwan as a place in which national histories, though often having dubious pasts, can be reformed and made more “user-friendly” for future generations. Having apparently shrugged off the more unpleasant elements of authoritarianism in the late 1980s,\textsuperscript{17} Taiwan offers the hopes and dreams of a new China, the salvation of the Chinese nation and its history according to the Euro-American model of the nation-state and Republican Chinese “May Fourth” principals. Scholars such as Ramon Myers declare that “…the new Chinese civilisation on Taiwan may hold the key to

\textsuperscript{14} For a representative example of Chen’s work, see Kuan-hsing Chen, “The Decolonisation Question”, in Kuan-hsing Chen (ed), Trajectories: Inter-Asia Cultural Studies (London: Routledge, 1998), pp. 1-53.

\textsuperscript{15} Liao Binghui, “Cong zhumin dao hou zhimin: jige yanjiu fangxiang” [From colonialism to postcolonialism: some directions in research], in Feng Pinjia (ed), Conghua bianjie: Waiguo wenxue yanjiu zai Taiwan [Redrawing the boundaries: the study of foreign literature in Taiwan] (Taipei: Shulin, 1999), pp. 1-14.

\textsuperscript{16} For a recent example of Hsia’s work, see Chu-joe Hsia, “Taiwan de guji baocun: yige piduanxing huigu” [Historic conservation in Taiwan: a critical retrospective], Jianzhu ya chengxiang yanjiu xuebao 9 (1998.12): 1-9.

\textsuperscript{17} A notion that is open to question.
China’s future”, whilst in the official literature of reformed government departments, similar sentiments exist.19

Elsewhere, the concept of the nation is taken to its literal extreme in studies of Taiwan and its landscape. The idea of a Taiwanese nation-state emerging as a future Kosovo or Palestine might do has provided the impetus for much of the work done on Taiwan in the English-speaking world over the last decade. In such work, the nation-building process is not so much questioned as nurtured, and the use of the landscape in creating and sustaining national narratives is encouraged. This is especially so in the nascent discipline of Taiwan shi 台灣史, or “Taiwan history”, in the Sinic world (an area that will be looked at in greater detail below), as well as in the field of “Taiwan studies” in North America.20 In this reading of the past, history and its relics play a role in recording those aspects of the Taiwanese past that simply could not be written during the years of single party dictatorship under the KMT, and which can be now made to demonstrate a Taiwanese history that is consciously independent and different from a Chinese history.

Debates about the nature, origins and structure of the nation are important. More crucial still are questions that relate the nation to the discipline of history. How mythologies of the nation justify themselves through the manipulation of the landscape and built environment is a critical area of research which is far from exhausted. Yet academic interest in the nation and its de-construction has meant that other issues have contemporaneously gone out of fashion in recent times. Indeed, focus on questions of the

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19 Government publications from Taiwan, such as Free China Review/Taipei Review and Sinorama are typical examples.

20 Led by scholars such as Murray A. Rubinstein. For a typical example of “Taiwan studies” writing which openly promotes the independent Taiwan “nation-building” process, see Murray A. Rubinstein’s “Postscript and conclusion”, to the edited collection, Taiwan: A New History (Armonk NY: M. E. Sharpe, 1999), pp. 481-500.
nation has meant that the histories of many locales that do not fit neatly within the
definition of “nation” (existing, latent, future, or otherwise) are simply not considered.
Areas of historiography not directly linked to nationhood have been too often ignored.
This is particularly so within the field of “Asian studies”, with the question of nations
emerging from colonialism and negotiating their place in the world becoming dominant.21
This has been the case regardless of positioning—whether writing old-fashioned national
histories in the school textbook sense, reformist national histories in a more liberalist
mode, or “writing from the periphery” to deconstruct the nation in a postcolonial tenor.

Local histories, for example, are commonly deemed far too limited in their scope to attract
the attention or imagination of many scholars. An interest in the local is often labeled too
“parochial” for its own good—as much within the history departments of Taiwanese
universities as elsewhere—and a focus on the local level past is thought to automatically
disqualify an ability to see the “big picture”. The very phrase “local history” continues to
conjure up images of the eccentric side of scholarship; antiquated libraries, collectors of
old photographs, or genealogy workshops.22 Even the brief interest in local history that
accompanied the rise of oral history in the English-speaking world of the 1970s, for
example, has all but petered out over the last two decades, eventually being absorbed into
other disciplines such as “urban studies”.23

And what of imperial history? This is a field that has suffered for its association with
European colonial expansion up until the mid-twentieth century. The focus that this area

21 A point raised by Nicholas Tarling in Historians and Southeast Asian History (Auckland: New Zealand Asia
Institute, 2000), esp. pp. 70-83.
22 For more on the academic anxiety about local history, see Tom Griffiths, Hunters and Collectors: the
23 An elegant example is Frank Leeming’s writing of local histories in Hong Kong. See Frank Leeming, Street
Studies in Hong Kong: Localities in a Chinese City (Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 1977). Leeming’s book,
despite being a self-proclaimed work of “local history”, nonetheless raises a number of questions about “big
picture” subjects such as modernity, colonialism, and class.
of study has placed on the history of settler societies (though not as yet on Taiwan), or on the history of intra-empire cultural trends, has nonetheless resulted in some fascinating findings in the area of British commonwealth history by scholars such as John MacKenzie.\textsuperscript{24} Even more relevant to this thesis is the growing body of literature on Japanese imperial history—a field which has not yet fully taken into account Taiwan’s role in Japan’s imperial past.\textsuperscript{25} Such work has shown that history, though closely linked to the idea of the nation, need not always be dominated by it in terms of focus.

Regional histories have likewise dwindled in popularity over recent years in the face of the nation. Historical studies that take entire geographic regions as their focus have experienced various peaks at different periods—one might mention the work of the Annales historians, most obviously Fernand Braudel and his Mediterranean.\textsuperscript{26} This can also be said for ideas such as the “port polity”,\textsuperscript{27} which played an important role at one stage in Southeast Asian historiography by encouraging interest in the rise of city-states and their economic inter-relationships. Regional histories, though often deemed the territory of economic history, have demonstrated that an understanding of the past can produce interesting work without being tied down to questions of the nation.

In this thesis, I do not propose to ignore the debates that have been raging over the last decade or more about the nation and its uses (or abuses) of history. In fact, a large portion of this first chapter is devoted to national histories in Taiwan. Yet I do propose to take a


\textsuperscript{25} The glowing example of Japanese imperial history is, of course, Louise Young, Japan’s Total Empire: Manchuria and the Culture of Wartime Imperialism (Berkeley CA: University of California Press, 1997).


wider view and to suggest that the approach which takes the nation as the sole focus of history somewhat limits our understanding of how the past is being reinterpreted today. This is especially so in Taiwan, where competition over control of the past and its relics continues at various levels, of which the question of Chinese or Taiwanese nationhood is but one.

As a study of the reinterpretation of history through the historic built environment, this thesis cannot help but look beyond the confines of the nation. Indeed, in considering how best to understand debates and developments around the historic built environment in Taiwanese historiography, I have found it most beneficial to structure this thesis around a particular locality in Taiwan (i.e., the city of Kaohsiung). In doing so, and as I hope to illustrate later in this thesis, this study seeks to shed light on the relationship between local, national, and urban historiography, all of which are continually influencing and competing against one another in contemporary Taiwan. This approach does nothing to discredit or contradict the work that has been done on national histories. Nor does it belittle the importance that the very concept of the nation in determining how the past in any given Taiwanese locality should be preserved, forgotten, transformed or interpreted. Yet to read current events linked to the preservation of certain historic buildings in various localities throughout Taiwan as simply another manifestation of Taiwanese or Chinese nation-building would mean missing a large part of what is going on. The nation is but one player in a rich and wide range of debates that encompass questions about local history and its autonomy from the organs of central government, regional historical identities, and the relationship between local history groups across national boundaries. Any study of such a topic must further take into account historiographical traditions that exist outside the modern concept of the nation-state (and the postmodern practice of de-constructing it). As we shall see below, many such traditions continue to resonate in various forms in the debates currently raging around the interpretation and presentation of the past throughout Taiwan.
Chinese national histories in Taiwan

There exists a common assumption in much of the literature today that Taiwan represents all that the People’s Republic of China is not.²⁸ Elements within the ROC (Republic of China) government in Taiwan²⁹ have been instrumental in perpetuating this view over recent decades, employing organisations such as the Government Information Office (Xinwen Ju 新聞局) and, more recently, the Council for Cultural Affairs (Wenhua Jianshe Weiyuanhui 文化建設委員會) to present a picture of the Chinese Republican nation on Taiwan as being more progressive, tolerant, and ultimately more agreeable than China under the Chinese Communist Party (CCP)—Taiwan the “better China”.³⁰ Yet despite such efforts, many of the rituals, symbols and histories that continue to surround Republican Chinese nationhood in Taiwan today betray the common roots that KMT ideology and Republican concepts of the nation share with their cousins on the mainland.

The making of a Republican Chinese nation and its associated national history in the early years of the twentieth century has been critically detailed by Prasenjit Duara³¹ and John Fitzgerald.³² Duara has argued that the adoption of enlightenment precepts and the linear model of a continuous national history in early Republican Chinese historiography was so

²⁸ For a typical example, see Allan Patience, “A bullet that needs biting”, Canberra Times, 23 August 1999.
²⁹ The official title of the state that currently exists on Taiwan is “The Republic of China” (Zhonghua Minguo 中華民國). Taiwan was made a part of the Republic of China in 1945, following the defeat of Japan in the Second World War. Prior to 1945, Taiwan had been a Japanese colony from 1895, having been ceded to Japan from the Qing dynasty following the latter’s defeat in the Sino-Japanese war of 1894-1895.
³⁰ Following the establishment of the People’s Republic of China in 1949, the Republic of China government, at that stage a single-party autocracy under the rule of Chiang Kai-shek, evacuated en masse to Taiwan.
³¹ On this idea, see Thomas Zimmer, “Taiwan, the better China: Bo Yang’s cultural criticism as a contribution to an identity of modern Taiwan”, in Christina Neder (ed), Transformation! Innovation? Taiwan in its Cultural Dimensions (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, forthcoming).
directly linked to the nation-building project as to be virtually inseparable from it. As Western European countries had used the discipline of history in the aid of nation-building, so had the new Chinese Republic. Fitzgerald’s work, meanwhile, has shown how many Republican ideas about the nation, such as centralised unity and, connected to this, an obsessive dislike of “regionalism”, grew largely out of a sense of inferiority that early Republicans felt in relation to “the West”. Such ideas had a large influence on the ways in which history was written in the Republic of China.

When the KMT concept of the nation and its associated historiography arrived in Taiwan after the Second World War, it brought with it certain ideas about time and space—that the nation looked like, its geography and topography, its climate and weather, and the nature of its past. Such ideas may have been formed in an enlightenment model and moulded to counter what were perceived to be deficiencies by the nation’s founders, but they had been refined and modified through years of war and chaos in China prior to the retreat of Chiang Kai-shek and his armies to Taiwan. Anti-Japanese xenophobia, for example, a direct product of the experiences of the Sino-Japanese War during which the Republican Chinese nation itself faced the very real possibility of annihilation, became a defining feature of postwar KMT national and cultural ideology. Likewise ideas about national heritage and the value of material remnants of the past that had been threatened or destroyed in wartime, and later in exile. The desire to preserve material remnants of a national patrimoine came to dominate KMT historiography from an early date following Taiwan’s “retrocession”—a point to which I shall return later in this thesis.

Much of the early postwar government-sponsored literature on Taiwan presented Chinese history as vertically deep. Despite the founding of the Republic in 1911 being made into a new “year zero” of national re-creation to which Taiwanese calendars adhere to this day, Chinese history was collapsed into an ahistorical (though very much “historic”) paradigm
of “five thousand years” (*wu qian nian* 五千年)—something that Grace Chen has termed the “intangible and magnificent Chinese past”. 34 *Guo shi* 国史, or “national history” as espoused in the history textbooks of postwar school courses in Taiwan, reached far back into prehistory and myth for its beginnings, finding a supposedly single biological ancestor in a figure that existed outside historical time, i.e., the Yellow Emperor (*Huangdi* 黄帝). 35

The same paradigm of five thousand years was strengthened by the politics of the Cold War, during which the KMT, aligned to powers which claimed themselves to be the inheritors and protectors of Western civilisation, claimed the moral high ground of a Chinese national heritage *vis-à-vis* the People’s Republic on the mainland. The KMT authorities in Taipei acted as signatory to a host of international agreements on heritage protection, including the *Venice Charter* of 1964.

Official KMT historiography returned to unmistakably Chinese forms for its representations of the past. Added to the general histories, or *tong shi* 通史, that had been standard historical material since the beginnings of the Republic were more dynastically-inspired forms and content matter. The history of the nation was portrayed as a series of political reigns. And an ability to recite the chronological reigns of emperors or dynasties was, and in many cases still is, considered to be the mark of a good historian. Antiquity

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33 A typical example is Zhu Jiangyuan, *Zhonghua wu qian nian* [China’s five thousand years] (Taipei: Huayu Chubanshe, 1971).

34 Grace Y. Chen, “Social change and collective memory: Taiwan’s two pasts”, paper presented at the North America Taiwan Studies Conference 1999, University of Madison-Wisconsin, Wisconsin, 4-7 June 1999. Interestingly, other “new nations” have made use of the five thousand-year paradigm in the writing of national pasts. See, for example, R. E. M. Wheeler, *Five Thousand Years of Pakistan* (London: Christopher Johnson Publishers Ltd., 1950). It should also be noted that there were a number of variations on the theme of five thousand years (including four, six and eight thousand years). See, for example, *Zhonghua wenhua tongshi* [General history of Chinese cultural artifacts] (Taipei: Guoli Lishi Bowuguan, 1998), brochure, no page numbers.

35 For an example of such, see Huang Dashou, *Zhongguo tongshi yanlue* [A summary of the general history of China] (Taipei: Da Zhongguo Tushu Gongsi, 1983).
provided both historical legitimacy for the KMT on Taiwan, as well as a comfortable intellectual retreat in which émigré (waisheng 外省) intellectuals and officials could hide from the trying experience of exile. History in effect became something removed and cut off from the present “...where all passion is spent, all strife ended, and action that once was alive and dangerous is stilled in the calm of death”.

Chinese history as civilisation in turn took its place in the discipline of shijie shi 世界史, or “world history”, beside Egypt, Greece and Rome. The standard texts of world history employed in Taiwanese schools and universities, such as Hayes, Moon and Wayland's A general history of the world (Shijie tongshi 世界通史), listed the Chinese civilisation of national legend early in their volumes and the usurping and supposedly destructive nature of communism in twentieth-century China towards the very end. In its recentness, the nation on Taiwan rarely found its way onto the pages of such works.

The nation’s geography was deemed as horizontally wide as its history was deep. Maps produced by government-affiliated agencies during the postwar decades showed the Republic of China’s borders encompassing parts of modern-day Kazakhstan in the West,

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38 On the question of preferences for the ancient past over the recent past in Chinese historiography, Wang Gungwu has suggested that the political turmoil experienced in China since the mid-nineteenth century has made “modern history” simply too fragmented and complicated as a field of study. This sense of a fossilised antiquity being far more comprehensible than the recent past may also be a contributing factor to the preferences for antiquity in officially-sanctioned Chinese historiography in Taiwan. See Wang Gungwu, “Loving the ancient in China”, in Isabel McBryde (ed), Who Owns the Past? Papers from the Annual Symposium of the Australian Academy of the Humanities (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1985), pp. 175-195.
Mongolia in the North, the Kuril Islands to the East, and most of the South China Sea.\textsuperscript{39} Indeed, the borders of the Republic looked remarkably similar to those of the Qing dynasty that the KMT’s revolution had supposedly ended.\textsuperscript{40} As a recent examination of ideas about “race and history in China” by W. J. F. Jenner suggests, this geography of the nation that developed under Chiang Kai-shek’s presidency (1945-1975) overlapped with myths of Chinese racial ancestry that were broached in earlier paragraphs; the borders of historic China were “organically determined”, and could supposedly be traced back, with the Chinese people themselves, many millennia.\textsuperscript{41}

The Republic presented itself as the inheritor of a vast, continental Chinese tradition with its origins in the “birthplace of four thousand years of recorded Chinese history”,\textsuperscript{42} i.e., the zhongyuan 中原, or central plains—an area that could, in fact, only ever be imagined by much of the KMT leadership, and indeed by virtually all of Taiwan’s populace. Yet as the ideological and geographic centre of the nation lay in the central plains, the South (and especially Taiwan) was seen as little more than a far-flung appendage. The defining

\textsuperscript{39} For a typical example of such, see Tseng Wen-wei, \textit{et al.}, \textit{Our China} (Taipei: Guocui Shubaoshe, 1965), pp. 256-257.

\textsuperscript{40} It as at this stage that an important point made by Benedict Anderson regarding the often overlooked though important difference between nations and states might be raised. As Anderson reminds us in an essay entitled “Old state, new society: Indonesia’s New Order in historical perspective”, “…most states have genealogies older than those of the nations over which they are perched”. To strengthen this argument, Anderson points to “the revolutionary and socialist rulers of the Soviet Union and the People’s Republic of China find[ing] nothing bizarre in pursuing their territorial quarrels by brandishing maps and treaties produced by absolutist Romanovs and the “feudal” Manchu Ch’ing dynasty”. One need look no further than the “Republic of China on Taiwan” for another example of the same. See Benedict Andersen, \textit{Language and Power: Exploring Political Cultures in Indonesia} (Ithaca NY and London: Cornell University Press, 1990), p. 94.


\textsuperscript{42} A description given in Rewi Alley, \textit{Struggle around the Central Plains} (Peking: New World Press, 1980), p. 3. Interestingly, this description comes from a work published in the PRC—suggesting there is little difference between the reverence paid to the central plains by certain voices on either side of the Taiwan Strait. It is also worth noting that Alley’s work on the central plains speaks only of a four thousand-year (rather than five thousand-year) history.
moments of the nation’s birth as the ROC were associated with a landlocked country too, as the heartland war against Japanese expansionism, and later against the communists, shaped how the nation defined itself.43

It was this physical or geographic element of Chinese nationalism on Taiwan that made its presence felt in terms of new sites and objects of commemoration in place of those lost to exile. Some of the most obvious examples of these, and ones that have been studied at length by scholars in Taiwan, were the re-making of many (though certainly not all) existing Japanese Shinto shrines as shrines to the martyrs of the Republican Revolution.44 There was also the commemoration of localities in mainland China through street names in Taipei, Kaohsiung and other cities around the island.45

The writing of the nation’s past in KMT Taiwan was thus always tied to questions of place and landscape, a point to which I shall return at various points later throughout this dissertation. Yet the five thousand-year paradigm also relied heavily on material history for legitimacy. And in this realm, history found itself closely tied to the institutions responsible for housing and preserving the objects of Chinese patrimony. Chief amongst these various collections were the cultural treasures that the KMT had inherited from the Qing emperors in the early years of the Republic—the contents of the National Palace Museum

43 For a typical text which links the ROC’s national survival in the 1930s and 1940s with the image of the central plains, see Chen Senfu, Zhongguo zhanzheng shi [A history of the war in the central plains] (Tainan: Dehua Chuanshe, 1977). On the historiography of the war in the central plains, see Zhu Wenyuan, “Mingguo yi lai de shiliang yu shixue taolun hui jiyao” [Historical materials and historiography since the founding of the Republic], Huxue yanjiu tongbao 17.1 (1998.2): 15-21.

44 I shall return to this topic in later chapters.

(Guoli Gugong Bowuyuan 國立故宮博物院). In effect, the National Palace Museum (the institution created to house these imperial treasures), became a microcosm for Taiwan itself; a "...condensed version of China’s five thousand-year old historical and cultural heritage". Following completion of the museum’s building in 1965, the National Palace Museum’s almost two hundred and forty thousand artifacts collectively became the showcase of Chinese civilisation for foreign guests and homesick KMT officials alike. It legitimised the KMT’s claim to be the inheritor of a central plains cultural tradition, and the custodian of a northern, permanent civilisation. It also meant that, in terms of material history at least, ideas of antiquity and history were monopolised by the definitions of the objects contained within the walls of this museum and others like it—such as the National History Museum (Guoli Lishi Bowuguan 國立歷史博物館) and Taiwan’s de facto “national archives”, Academia Historica (Guo shi Guan 國史館).

It is significant that the climax of this five thousand-year/central plains paradigm of an officially-sponsored Chinese “national history” came just months after the completion of a new building for the National Palace Museum in Taipei. In 1965, Chiang Kai-shek proclaimed that the Republic of China was to undertake a “Chinese Cultural Renaissance Movement” (Zhonghua Wenhua Fuxing Yundong 中華文化復興運動). This

46 Though debates of course continue to rage about the amount of material that the KMT managed, or chose, to take with them. For a recent addition to the debate, see Robert McGlynn, “Cultural revelation”, The South China Morning Post, 13 March 2001.
48 Chang Bide, Gugong qishi xingzhuang [The seventy years of the National Palace Museum] (Taipei: Guoli Gugong Bowuyuan, 1995).
50 Xia Meixun, Lishi wenwu yu jishu [Historic artifacts and fine arts] (Taipei: Guoli Lishi Bowuguan, 1984).
movement, which as been examined at length by Allen Chun, was to enshrine many of
the precepts about antiquity and tradition which had been present since the arrival of the
KMT in Taiwan. It furthermore sought to present the Republic of China as a bastion of
"traditional" Chinese culture at precisely the same time as the Cultural Revolution was
unfolding in mainland China.

This movement not only celebrated the material history of depositories such as the
National Palace Museum, but also sanctioned a particular view of the nation as an ageless
civilisation. Historic China (with the ROC as its heir) was listed alongside India, Babylon,
Egypt and other civilisations of antiquity; like these civilisations, China could claim a great
corpus of architecture and literature, religious and cultural achievements, and a wealth of
archaeological sites that supported the narrative of a long chronology relatively
undisturbed by foreign influence. At times, China was even deemed superior to
civilisations of non-Asian origin, with Sun Yat-sen's (Sun Zhongshan 孫中山) famous
words on "Greater East Asianism" resurrected in support of Chinese cultural ascendancy:
"The ancient cultures of Europe's oldest nations, such as Greece and Rome, all came
originally from Asia".

As this reference to Sun Yat-sen might suggest, another major way in which history was
presented by the Chinese Cultural Renaissance Movement and its worship of continental
civilisation was through a Carlylian reverence for "great men". As we saw in earlier
paragraphs, the Yellow Emperor had been a common character on the stage of Chinese

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52 Allen Chun, "From nationalism to nationalising: cultural imagination and state formation in postwar
53 Zhonghua Wenhua Fuxing Yundong Tuixing Weiyuanhui [The Promotional Commission of the Chinese
Cultural Renaissance Movement], Zhonghua wenhua guishu [A general explanation of Chinese culture] (Taipei:
Zhonghua Wenhua Fuxing Yundong Tuixing Weiyuanhui, 1974).
national history, and his presence was further called upon through this movement.\textsuperscript{55} Prominent also was Confucius, commemorated with new temples and bronze statues throughout Taiwan in the years following the movement’s introduction.\textsuperscript{56} Together with these figures were listed great military leaders, including the most recent addition to the pantheon of Chinese war heroes—and founder of the movement itself—Chiang Kai-shek.\textsuperscript{57}

Historically, geographically and ideologically, Taiwan counted as peripheral and transitory in the five thousand-year/central plains narrative and the official policies that promoted it. The island’s landscape and built environment were generally not considered worthy of special attention, and were rarely raised in either support or refutation of Chinese national history. In Taiwan’s landscape, KMT officialdom found few echoes of the central plains; indeed, in contrast to the myths of antiquity around which 	extit{guo shi} revolved, Taiwan’s landscape was shockingly young and immature, many urban sections of it little more than fifty years old. And as a former Japanese colony, the ephemera of a foreign (and enemy) presence was to be found everywhere in Taiwan. As a result, for much of the postwar period, history remained something firmly set in the myth of the nation-state, and linked to the aspirations for return to the motherland which were harboured by many members of the ROC’s political and military elite.

\textsuperscript{55} Qian Mu, \textit{Huangdi} [The Yellow Emperor] (Taipei: Dong Da Tushu Gongsi, 1978) is a typical example.

\textsuperscript{56} The government-sponsored cult of Confucius shall be touched upon in later chapters with specific reference to the construction of Confucius temples throughout Taiwan in the 1970s.

\textsuperscript{57} For an extensive list of military leaders glorified through this movement, see Zhonghua Wenhua Fuxing Yundong Tuixing Weiyuanhui [The Promotional Commission of the Chinese Cultural Renaissance Movement], \textit{Zhonghua ming jiang} [Famous Chinese generals] (Taipei: Zhonghua Wenhua Fuxing Yundong Tuixing Weiyuanhui, 1985); for an intriguing and thought-provoking study of the Chiang Kai-shek cult more generally, see Stéphane Corcuff, “Que reste-t-il de Chiang Kai-shek? Ritualisation d’une commémoration politique à Taiwan” [What is left of Chiang Kai-shek? Ritualisation of a political commemoration in Taiwan], \textit{Études Chinoises} 16.2 (Autumn, 1997): 115-146.
Anti-colonialism and maritime China: alternative national histories

In December 1999, as the Portuguese colony of Macau was being transformed into a Special Administrative Region of the PRC, the National Palace Museum in Taipei was celebrating events in the enclave with a special exhibition entitled *The Twists of Destiny*. This exhibition was made up of various historical documents relating not only to Macau but also to the former British colony of Hong Kong, as well as to the various treaty ports and foreign concessions that had once dotted the Chinese coast. The exhibition was triumphalist in tone, casting the change of sovereignty in Macau, in glowing terms, as the final step in the “...abrogation of inequitable treaties” in China. In language befitting the most strident of anti-colonial revolutionaries, explanatory notes accompanying the exhibits detailed how the Republic of China had always been “...struggling for freedom and equality” against Western expansionism in Asia.

The existence of this quite different reading of Chinese history—one that orbits around inequitable treaties and foreign incursion—alerts us to an important point about the making of national histories in postwar Taiwan, as does the fact that such an exhibition was held in the hallowed halls of the National Palace Museum. For despite the central position that antiquity claimed in the national histories of Republican Chinese thought on Taiwan, “five thousand years” did not represent the sole historiographical tradition in the postwar decades. Indeed, the totalitarian nature of KMT rule in Taiwan was not always reflected in monolithic ideas about the national past. The themes of revolution and anti-

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58 *The Twists of Destiny* exhibition, hosted by Academia Historica, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Government Information Office, was held throughout the months of December 1999 and January 2000. It was given the Chinese title *Cang hai sang tian: Aomen xihuo terban* 滄海桑田: 澳門史料特展.

59 For an instance of similarly radical language from sections of the Taiwanese intelligentsia regarding the change of sovereignty in Macau, see Wu Xiangxiang, *Xiandai shi shi luncong* [Essays on modern history] (Taipei: Yuandong Tushu Gongsii, 1999), esp. the essay entitled “Xi ying Xianggang, Aomen huigu zuoguo” [Welcome the return of Hong Kong and Macau to the motherland], pp. 4-34.
colonial struggle have also shaped narratives of Chinese national history in Taiwan throughout the latter half of the twentieth century.

Criticism of European imperialism has been present in Republican Chinese ideology from the very birth of the Republic. This anti-colonialist side to Republican thought was fostered in the many “tos and fros” over the question of extraterritoriality in the treaty ports and foreign concessions that dominated the ROC government’s foreign relations from the founding of the Republic until the end of the Second World War. 60 In the postwar years, such sentiment was fuelled by the persistent question of sovereignty over Hong Kong and Macau, as well as the KMT’s political role, both open and clandestine, in these colonies, well into the 1950s. 61

This strain of thought gained currency again during the 1970s, as anti-Western and anti-Japanese feeling peaked following the ending of diplomatic ties between most of the industrialised world and Taipei, and events such as the first of many disputes concerning the sovereignty of the Senkaku/Diaoyutai islands. 62 It was also at this time that the ROC government began actively courting the diplomatic friendship of various “Third World” nations in Latin America, Africa, the Pacific, and parts of Asia, many of which themselves had only just emerged from colonialism as independent nations. As government agencies in Taipei sent agricultural or medical experts to West Africa or

60 Such sentiments were expressed in many of the works of the official KMT canon, such as Chiang Kai-shek, China’s Destiny, trans. Wang Chung-hui (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1947)—see the section entitled “Conclusion of the unequal treaties and the people's reaction”, pp. 24-46. For more on this topic, see Zhong-ping Peng, The British Government’s China Policy, 1945-1950 (Keele: Ryburn Publishing, 1994).
61 For an intriguing example of KMT anti-colonial literature about Hong Kong from this period, see Chou Zhang, Xianggang jiandu zhan: quanji [Hong Kong spy wars: a complete collection] (Hong Kong: Xin Shijie Tushu Chubanshe, 1953).
62 For a non-partisan discussion of this topic, see Greg Austin, China’s Ocean Frontier: International Law, Military Force and National Development (Sydney: Allen and Unwin, in association with the International Relations and Northeast Asian Programme, Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, the Australian National University, 1998).
Central America, bilateral ties were said to be based on a shared historical experience of humiliation at the hands of European colonialism, and the desire to foster a sense of anti-communist “self-reliance” (zì zì qiáng 自立自强) throughout the developing world.⁶³

The persistence of this anti-colonial element within historiography in Taiwan has had far reaching implications that go beyond the sovereignty of Macau and Hong Kong, or questions of diplomacy within the developing world. It has also produced a different reading of the national past which has little to do with five thousand years of antiquity. This anti-colonial tradition reads Chinese history on Taiwan as a series of setbacks or triumphs over foreign aggression. In doing so, the material or topographical reminders of such aggression are highlighted, indeed more so than the material history of institutions such as the National Palace Museum. This revolutionary strain of KMT historiography has thus had a large influence on determining how, and for that matter why, the many historic relics left in the Taiwanese landscape by various empires—from the Spanish and Dutch forts in Tamsui (Danshui 淡水) and Anping 安平 respectively, to the many relics of Japanese imperialism throughout the island—have come to be preserved or otherwise. Fort Santo Domingo (known as “Hongmiao cheng” 紅毛城, or “the Red Hair’s Fort”, in Chinese) and an adjoining British consulate building in the northern town and former treaty port of Tamsui, for example, were preserved in the early 1980s precisely because they bore witness to a history of national shame and exploitation at the hands of foreigners.⁶⁴ An article on these buildings which appeared in Echo magazine (Hansheng zazhi 漢聲雜誌) in 1981, wrote of seeing “our national flag fluttering on the top of the “Red Hairs’ Fort”, and “washing away the dark shadow of three hundred years of colonial rule

⁶³ For an instance of such sentiments, see Yang Fengtai, Minhzu zìjī de liàn běi shìjì [The theory and practice of ethnic self-determination] (Taipei: Zhengzhong Shuju, 1975).
⁶⁴ Guoli Taiwan Daxue, Tumu Gongchengxue Yanjiusuo, Dushi Jihua Shi [Office of City Planning, Institute of Civil Engineering, National Taiwan University], Danshui Hongmiao cheng guī ju gu bāo shì jìhuà [Plan for conservation of the Fort Santo Domingo relic precinct in Tamsui] (Taipei: Neizheng Bu, Minzheng Ju, 1983).
under the Spanish, the Dutch, the English [sic], and the Japanese” now that the fort and its adjoining consulate had been returned to the Republic of China (fig. 1). This “...relic that has only recently been handed back to us...” demonstrated the need to be self-reliant in the face of foreign humiliation.65

![Figure 1. The ROC flag flutters above Fort Santo Domingo (taken from entry ticket to the site, purchased in 2000; from the author’s personal collection).](image)

In this anti-colonial narrative then, the actual appearance and topography of Taiwan counted for something very important in Chinese history. Deserted consulates or forts actually aided in the documentation of the nation’s failures or successes in relation to imperialism. The appearance of the “blue sky, white sun and blood-stained earth”66 of the ROC flag replacing a Union Jack atop an old consulate, for instance, not only gave

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65 “Guí zì lù de dì yì zhàn: Hongmào chéng” [First stop on the relic tour: Fort Santo Domingo], *Hansheng zhōng* 10 (1981): 29-30. As in most other literature on this relic and others like it, no distinction is made between “the Dutch” and the Dutch East India Company, or between “the English” and “the British”.

66 The national flag of the ROC is known as the “Qīng tiān, bái rì, mǎn dì hēng” 青天白日滿地 紅 (lit., “Blue sky, white sun, and blood-stained earth”).

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credence to the anti-imperialist traditions of ROC patriotism, but also reminded people of an inequitable history. And in this regard, such a view was linked to other interpretations of the nation’s past which developed most especially during the years of the Chiang Ching-kuo (Jiang Jingguo 蔣經國) presidency (1977-1988) in Taiwan. The link to the treaty ports was of special importance too, as it meant the focus of the nation’s past need not always find itself directed towards the inland, or be saturated by the continental imagery of the central plains. In this regard, a clear link can be found between this narrative and others that developed during the same time with a focus on the sea and the coast.

One such idea that is well worth considering here is that of haiyang Zhongguo 海洋中國, or “maritime China”. The concept of “maritime China” became particularly evident in the late 1970s and early 1980s. The interest and shift of focus away from the central plains and onto the Chinese coast in Taiwan-based historiography followed the publication of a number of works on Chinese maritime history at that time. Whilst never refuting the cultural ascendancy of the central plains to national history, scholars writing histories in this tradition began to focus on historical figures and events that could be read into a quite different style of national history, one that focused on economic trends, trade routes and maritime communities. As in the central plains/five thousand-year narrative, however, there remained a strong element of infatuation with the “great men” of the (maritime) Chinese historical pantheon. The Ming-era exploits of Admiral Zheng He 鄭和 became particularly popular; the swash-buckling, anti-Qing resistance of Koxinga (Zheng Chenggong 鄭成功) and his family-dynasty on Taiwan took pride of place alongside the jade and porcelain of ancient dynasties.

Furthermore, this re-evaluation of China’s maritime past meant that seafaring Hokkien (Fujian 福建) culture on Taiwan, as representative of a wider historical Chinese coastal

67 The classic example is Chen Ruiqin, Liu Hongxi and Cao Yonghe, Haiyang Zhongguo [Maritime China] (Taipei: Jinxu Chubanshe, 1982).
68 I will discuss the importance of Koxinga and his image in the following chapter.
experience, suddenly became historically valid. Taiwan, as representative of this coastal or maritime China, marked the home of Chinese ship-building technologies, navigational expertise, and seaborne migration. None of this challenged the “historic” goal of national unification, however; the sea was presented, rather, as a bridge linking Taiwan to the mainland. Ancient shipping charts were faithfully reproduced in the textbooks and journals, showing Taiwanese ports linked to coastal towns on the opposite shore of the strait.

Taiwan shì and the rise of bentu historiography

If we take into account the revival of earlier anti-colonial historiography as well as the rise of the “maritime China” concept, it becomes evident that the 1970s marked something of a turning point for the ways in which the past was written and presented in Taiwan. But the reign of Chiang Ching-kuo did not only see the revival of pre-war revolutionary sentiment in the form of anti-colonial patriotism, and a shift toward the coast for historic data and inspiration. It also worked to kindle a far-reaching interest in the local—or bentu 本土—and paved the way for what has since become known as “nativist nationalism” in Taiwan, as well, the histories that such nationalism inspired.

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60 A notion that still dominates many of the studies of Taiwan being produced in the PRC today. For an example, see Chen Bisheng, Taiwan difang shi [Taiwan local history] (Peking: Zhongguo Shehui Kexue Chubanshe, 1982).

70 Such an idea was also linked to a sense of coastal Chinese culture representing something unique and different from an inland civilisation of the central plains. This point continues to be argued by scholars in Taiwan and abroad, including Leo Ou-fan Lee and his work on “littoral China” (bianyuan Zhongguo 邊緣中國) and “coastal China” (yanhai Zhongguo 沿海中國). See Li Ou-fan, “Xianggang wenhua de bianyuanxing chutan” [Preliminary discussions of Hong Kong’s littoral culture], Jintian wenxue qazhi 28.1 (Spring, 1995): 75-80.
Bentuhua 本土化, or “localisation”, is a name given to a loose set of cultural and social phenomena that can be traced back to the 1970s. It is most commonly used to refer to the emergence of a “local” Taiwanese nationalism or “national consciousness” that rose (supposedly) in opposition to the ethnocentric chauvinism of KMT political and intellectual culture. This movement coincided with a number of socio-political changes which occurred in Taiwan in the mid- to late 1970s—these included, most noticeably, a rapid shift towards urbanisation, which saw Taiwan’s agricultural economy replaced by increasing levels of industrialisation. Such changes were exacerbated by anxiety regarding Taiwan’s place in the world. With the KMT government’s departure from the United Nations in 1971 and the subsequent ending of diplomatic ties between Taipei and most developed countries abroad, political and intellectual discussion in Taiwan became dramatically domestic in focus.

Writing from and about this era suggests how a return to the xiangtu 鄉土 (lit., “the native soil of the hometown”), was in many ways a natural progression from earlier anti-colonial and nationalist historiographical traditions. Take this typical passage from a 1979 essay by the critic Zhang Zhongdong 張忠東 which bears the title “Native soil, ethnicity, and self reliance” (Xiangtu, minzu, zìlǐ zìqiang 鄉土, 民族, 自立自強):

The native soil is a good thing, and a strengthening of the “native soil outlook” will allow us to clearly identify with our native soil, and to have pride in the things

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71 Although occasionally, this is translated into English as “indigenisation” and other terms such as zài dì huà 在地化 are sometimes employed to represent the idea of “localisation”.

72 “Local” in the bentu sense referring to those people and things in Taiwan not associated with the postwar arrival of the KMT.


74 This is a topic which has been detailed in various previous studies and does not need to be repeated at length here. For one of the most thorough accounts of the rise of nativist nationalism in Taiwan, see A-chin Hsiau, Contemporary Taiwanese Cultural Nationalism (London: Routledge, 2000).
associated with it. In this way, we will not lightly accept all the attractions that come from abroad, and will avoid being polluted by foreign cultures.75

These appeals to look away from foreign influence, and towards the native soil, were gaining currency in various cultural spheres during the mid- to late 1970s. It was during this era, for instance, that xiaoyu wenxue 鄉土文學 or “native soil literature” was coming to define much of the intellectual Taiwanese nationalism that exists today. In its 1970s incarnation, and through the writing of authors such as Chen Yingzhen 陳映真 and Huang Chunming 黃春明, native soil literature expressed a deep nostalgia for the literal “native soil” of Taiwan; such writing found in Taiwan’s landscape a means through which to express an interest in the local side of history and culture, and to challenge the monolithic national histories that had once dominated Taiwan’s sphere of cultural production.76

In much of this writing, the Hokkien-speaking country towns of southern, rural Taiwan—the “guxiang” 故鄉—were dichotomised against the island’s burgeoning cities, and especially Taipei. As the literary theorist Jing Wang has phrased it: “Village and city were set up as antipodes, agriculture was made to confront industry…”.77 It was this concept of the guxiang (or jiaxiang 家鄉)—lit., the “hometown” or “native place”—which became central to native soil literature. This writing chronicled the guxiang as a landscape ravaged by social change and industrialisation. The island’s villages were often presented as culturally and morally superior to the city streets of Taipei. Furthermore, the guxiang was believed to represent a cultural repository of authentic Hokkien culture and history, one

75 From Zhang Zhongdong, Xiangtu, minzu, guoji [The native soil, ethnicity, the nation] (Taipei: Lianjing Chuban Shiye Gongsii, 1979), p. 11.


that had been ignored at the expense of the same Chinese national histories that I outlined in earlier sections of this chapter. I shall return to the image of the guxiang that was promoted in the artistic elements of the bengu movement later in this thesis; it will suffice for now, however, to note that this image had far-reaching implications, eventually coming to dominate other fields of artistic or cultural enterprise, and the ways in which many people thought about the past.

Another pertinent factor in considering how perceptions of the past were transformed during the 1970s (though one seldom touched upon) is the way in which history and geography were called upon to play a role in the public relations exercises of the Chiang Ching-kuo presidency. The president’s liking for public works programmes, as witnessed in the so-called “ten great projects” (Shi da jianshe 十大建設)—a series of public works plans which sought to improve the island’s infrastructure—laid the basis for economic growth in the 1980s. Yet alongside these more pragmatic projects were other historically-inspired ones. The Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Hall (Zhongzheng Jinian Tang 中正紀念堂) in Taipei is perhaps the best known example of these, yet it represented only the most celebrated in a whole range of pseudo-historic monuments which included Confucian temples and cultural centres, examples of which I shall return to in later sections of this thesis. The point here, however, is that by actually filling the Taiwanese landscape with such monuments, the Chiang Ching-kuo presidency inspired (or permitted) some level of public pride in Taiwan as a place, and a greater interest in the aesthetics of Taiwan’s past.

78 There are remarkable similarities between the image of the guxiang in Taiwanese bengu discourse, and what Tricia Cusack has termed the “Irish cottage landscape” in Irish nationalism. See Tricia Cusack, “A ‘countryside bright with cosy homesteads’: Irish nationalism and the cottage landscape”, National Identities 3.2 (2001.11): 221-238. A comparative study of the iconography of Taiwanese and Irish nationalisms would, no doubt, provide some fascinating insights, but is beyond the scope of this thesis.

Thus, whilst historic China (and its five thousand years of civilisation) that had been promoted during Chiang Kai-shek’s reign had been decidedly abstract in nature, existing more within the pages of textbooks or the musings of politicians than in reality for most people in Taiwan, the xiangtu, or bentu, China of Chiang Ching-kuo’s reign was alive and dynamic. The president himself was seen on news reports sampling local produce, inspecting construction sites, or making offerings at temples (fig. 2). Such propaganda may well have been designed to foster a greater sense of popular rapport with the president, yet it also resulted in an officially-sanctioned shift of focus towards a greater appreciation of the local side of history. By the 1980s, all this had helped to inspire an entire genre of folkloric studies and oral histories to take root, with the work of scholars such as Lin Hengdao 林衡道 emerging to replace much of the grander narratives of national history that had been so prevalent in earlier decades. In the space of a just a few years, Taiwan was given a history and a culture, and a very visible one at that.

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81 The late Lin Hengdao was an antiquarian who collected folktales and anecdotes about localities all over Taiwan. His publications are simply too numerous to list here, but for some representative examples, see Lin Hengdao, Taiwan ye tan: xiangtu yu minshu [Stories from Taiwan: native soil and folk arts] (Taipei: Zhong Wen Tushu Gongsu, 1980); Peng Guifang (ed), Lin Hengdao tan gu shuo jin [Lin Hengdao chats about the past and the present] (Taipei: Liming Wenhua Shiye Gongsu, 1980).

82 For a classic example of Chiang Ching-kuo and his tours throughout local Taiwan, see Lianhe bao bianjibu [The Editorial Division, United Daily News] (ed), Zhe cai shi gongzu [Now this is a public servant] (Taipei: Lianhe Baoshe, 1978). Each of this book’s short chapters depict a safari-suited Chiang Ching-kuo at a new location somewhere in Taiwan, carefully inspecting the welfare of the people or the progress of some public works project.
Locality, and especially the aesthetics of place, played a crucial part in the rise of this *bentu* interpretation of Taiwan’s history. And the result was a picture of an idyllic Taiwan located in the regional town or *guciang* of the island’s southern plains. Sugarcane fields, rice paddies, and Mazu 媽祖 temples defined the landscape;83 farmers and water buffaloes trod through it. The past became static and ahistoric: a constant cycle of seasons and harvests that existed outside the time of colonial rule, foreign incursion, and in many instances, KMT oppression.84

The idea of a *bentu* Taiwaneseness thus came to the fore alongside certain social and intellectual changes occurring throughout the 1970s. Yet one of the most significant outcomes of this shift towards the “native soil” was the emergence of a distinct “Taiwan history” in the following decade. As in the title of a book by the historian Dai Baocun

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83 Mazu is the goddess of the sea and arguably the most widely-worshipped deity amongst the Taiwanese populace, as well as in other Hokkien-speaking societies around the world. The Mazu temple is a common feature of many Taiwanese towns and villages.

84 For a typical example of *bentu*-oriented “ahistoric history”, see Lai Zongbao, *Xiangtu wangshi: chiji ao de shidai* [The xiangtu past: the era of bare-feet] (Changhwa: Lai Xucan Wenjiao Jijinhu, 1986).
Taiwan the Island, Taiwan the Province, Taiwanese the Nation, Taiwan progressed through this period to become not simply an island at the edge of the nation, nor a province of the Republic of China, but an eventual inheritor of the ROC’s nationhood, writing its history in the Republic’s shadow (fig. 3). Indeed, by the early years of the Lee Teng-huei (Li Denghui 李登輝) presidency (1988-2000), the “guo” 國 of KMT rhetoric was being usurped by the ambiguous “Tai~” 臺 of hengtzu thought. This occurred in almost every sphere. As the “national language” (guoyu 國語) was given an opposite in the christening of Hokkien as “Taiyuy” 臺語 (“Taiwanese”), so was the national history of China, or “guo shi”, given an “Other” in the establishment of a Taiwan shi 臺灣史 (or Tai shi 臺史), i.e., a “Taiwanese history”.

Even for those intellectuals working outside of government or party-sponsored organisations, KMT historiographical models have proven extremely adaptable when it has come to the writing of this new Taiwanese history along hengtzu lines. Indeed, for a school of historiography that has so often purported to represent an alternative view to the Chinese national histories that once denied Taiwan a place in the Chinese nation’s past, Taiwan shi looks remarkably similar in form and content to the histories that preceded it.86

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85 Dai Baocun, Taiwan dan, Taiwan sheng, Taiwan guo [Taiwan the island, Taiwan the province, Taiwan the nation] (Taipei County: Taibei Xianli Wenhua Zhongxin, 1996).

86 For a highly readable account of the rise of Taiwan shi, see Yin Ping, “New enthusiasm for local history”, trans. Fred Steiner, Free China Review 42.3 (1992.3): 30-37.
Figure 3. Dai Baocun's *Taiwan the Island, Taiwan the Province, Taiwan the Nation.*
For example, “Taiwan history” has followed Chinese national history in equating the nation’s past with a set length of time. One need look no further than the titles of highly influential works in the emerging “Taiwan shi” canon to find references to “Taiwan’s three hundred years”\(^\text{87}\) or the “four hundred years of the Taiwanese people”.\(^\text{88}\) Such titles suggest a history that corresponds in vocabulary and framework with the “five thousand years” that remain prevalent in monolithic histories of the Chinese nation. In some slightly more esoteric readings of the historical chronology, such as that offered by the national academician (guojia boshi 国家博士) Lin Yuxiang 林裕祥, Taiwan’s three or four hundred-year time span is said to represent the “confluence of many millennia of Chinese culture that has moved southwards”, Taiwan thus being a “new central plains” (xin zhongyuan 新中原) to replace the older (usurped) one in mainland China.\(^\text{89}\)

Furthermore, Taiwan shi has found in Chinese Republican historiography a model for overlaying this larger numerical figure (i.e., five thousand years/four hundred years) with historic periods, these being split according to political rule—“the late Qing era” (Wan Qing shidai 晚清時代); “the war of resistance” (Kangzhan shidai 抗戰時代), and so on. The course of Taiwan’s three or four hundred year history has thus been ordered into what the French historiographer Michel de Certeau has termed a “chronology of periods”.\(^\text{90}\) Taiwan shi starts with the arrival of Han Chinese on the island, continuing through what is now a standard set of periods or eras (shidai 時代), each corresponding to changes in the political

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\(^{87}\) Wang Guofan, et. al., Taiwan sanbai nian [Taiwan’s three hundred years] (Taipei: Huwai Zazhi Chubanshe, 1981).

\(^{88}\) Shi Ming, Taiwanren si bai nian shi [A four hundred year history of the Taiwanese people] (Taipei: Qianwei Chubanshe, 1992). See also Chen Haoyong, Taiwan si bai nian zhe min shi [The four hundred year history of Taiwan’s hidden people], trans. Jiang Qiuling (Taipei: Zili Wanbaoshe, 1992).

\(^{89}\) Lin Yuxiang, “Wei Hua Songcun xiansheng bianxuan chuban Taiwan xiangtu quanzhi yu” [A foreword to the Complete Taiwan xiangtu gazetteer which was edited and published by Mr Hua Songcun], Hua Songcun (ed), Taiwan xiangtu quanzhi [Complete Taiwan xiangtu gazetteer], Volume I (Taipei: Zhong Yi Chubanshe, 1996), no page numbers.

rule of the island: the “late Qing era” the “Japanese occupation/colonial era” (Raj/Rezhi shidai 日據/日治時代); “post-retrocession” (Guangfu hou 光復後), and so on.91

Moreover, like the Chinese national histories before it, the nascent field of Taiwan history took to institutionalising itself throughout the 1980s and 1990s. There were formed various organisations, institutes, and other bodies where newly acquired documentary evidence could be stored, and out of which the Taiwan shi view of the past could be disseminated. The anthropologist cum historian Lin Meirong 林美容 notes how this began in 1986, with the establishment of a Taiwan History Field Research Project (Taiwan Shi Tianye Yanjiu Jihua 台灣史田野研究計劃) at Academia Sinica. This project eventually evolved into the Institute of Taiwan History, Preparatory Office (Taiwan Lishi Yanjiusu Choubei Chu 台灣歷史研究所籌備處) in 1993.92 Another example is the privately-owned Wu Sanlian Foundation for Taiwan Historical Materials (Wu Sanlian Taiwan Shiliao Jijinhui 吳三連臺灣史料基金會) which was founded in 1991 and which has since been active in publishing and organising conferences.93 It was through institutions such as these that Taiwan shi started to catalogue its own canon, this being

91 Aboriginal Taiwan has, in this process, been relegated to the timeless realm of ethnography, with only the most limited work done on the history of Aboriginal Taiwan even today. This has also been the case for many bentu-influenced works in English since the mid-1990s also. Gary Marvin Davison and Barbara E. Reed, for example, list “Aboriginal Taiwan” (pp. 4–6) separately from their “history” section (pp. 7–26), and locate the origins of Taiwanese history at the point of the arrival of the Dutch East India Company on the island in their book Culture and Customs of Taiwan (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1998).

92 Lin Meirong, Taiwan wenhua ya lishi de changgou [The reconstruction of Taiwanese culture and history] (Taipei: Qianwei Chubanshe, 1996), p. 82.

93 Many of the leading Taiwan shi luminaries hold positions on the board of this foundation. These include, amongst others, Chen Qiliu 陳奇禄 of the National Taiwan University, Taiwan’s most celebrated material historian Zhuang Yongming 莊永明, the anthropologist cum historian Lin Meirong 林美容, and the head of Academia Historica Zhang Yanxian 張炎憲. See Wu Sanlian Taiwan Shiliao Jijinhui ji Taiwan Shiliao Zhongxin Jianjie [An introduction to the Wu Sanlian Foundation for Taiwan Historical Materials and the Centre for Taiwan Historical Materials] (Taipei: Wu Sanlian Taiwan Shiliao Jijinhui, c.2001), brochure.
comprised of the works of leading bentu luminaries, both living and posthumous,\(^{94}\) and supplemented by seminal English-language works produced by "friends of Taiwan".\(^{95}\)

Nonetheless, despite the similarities in form that Chinese national histories and Taiwan history share (i.e., a "chronology of periods"; an institutional base; a set canon, and so on) some differences do exist. The latter tends to focus on small things and short time-spans—a consequence of the favour for the local-side of history that Taiwan shì inherited from 1970s nativism—in a conscious effort to dichotomise itself against the grandeur of the Chinese nation. Furthermore, Taiwan shì as a field has taken on the role of documenting those lacunae left by the traditions of the Chinese Cultural Renaissance Movement, and to archive the lost documents, events and stories which have become highly symbolic to Taiwanese nationalism, in particular the 28 February massacre of 1947.\(^{96}\) In its links to Taiwanese nationalism, the field also excels in locating, and thereafter stressing, factors which apparently make the Taiwanese past different from that of China, or which make Taiwan unique amongst other societies throughout the world. A suggestive undercurrent in at least some of the work produced on the history of Japanese imperialism in Taiwan, for example, is that the experience of full Japanese colonisation produced a

\(^{94}\) Such as Lian Heng, Taiwan tongshi [A general history of Taiwan] (Chungking: Shangwu Yinzhuguan, 1946).

\(^{95}\) Most frequently cited are George Leslie MacKay, From far Formosa: the Island, its People and Missions (New York: F. H. Revell, 1898), and George H. Kerr, Formosa Betrayed (London: Eyre and Spottiswoods, 1966).

\(^{96}\) The 28 February massacre involved the killing of more than 20,000 people by ROC troops, and the deaths of thousands more in reprisal attacks by members of the civilian population following revolts against KMT rule in early 1947. Until the 1990s, this massacre was never mentioned in public discourse. The historian Xu Xueji 許雪姬 has been active in this particular area, completing a series of oral histories of the 28 February massacre which have subsequently been published through the Institute of Modern History at Academia Sinica. Significantly, and reflecting the extent to which Taiwan shì as a field now influences a good deal of policy in Taiwan, the recently established National Archives (Dang'an Guanli Ju 檔案管理局) has undertaken a 28 February Incident Archives Collecting and Arranging Project (Er er ba shijian dang'an shenji zhenglie zhan'an 二二八事件檔案收集整理專案). See this agency's website at <www.archives.gov.tw> for details.
society in Taiwan that was infinitely more experienced with modernity than China has ever been.\(^{97}\)

The reference to Japanese colonialism is an important one here. For in the decade or so within which the field of Taiwan history has flourished, it has been the “period of Japanese colonial rule” that has captured the historiographical imagination like no other. Indeed, perhaps in conscious effort to distance themselves from the anti-colonial elements of KMT historiography that I examined above, countless individuals working in this field have seen the examination and re-evaluation of Japanese colonialism to be the most pressing question facing Taiwan sāi.\(^{98}\) The result has been a comprehensive re-appraisal of the Japanese colonial era, and the simultaneous emergence of what might best be termed a “pro-colonial” strain of historiography in Taiwan.\(^{99}\) Indeed, what for guo sī was perceived as a period of prolonged “occupation” and national shame at the hands of Japanese invaders (i.e., the Japanese colonisation of Taiwan) has become for Taiwan sāi an era in which Taiwan achieved modernity, and in which were felt the hypothetical rumblings of a future Taiwanese nation-state.

This “pro-colonial” lineament has been noted and criticised by the historian Qi Jialin 威嘉林 of Tamkang University (Danjiang Daxue 淡江大學). Qi has examined the works of many intellectuals involved in the Taiwanshi movement—ranging from academic historians such as Dai Baocun, Xu Xueji and Zhang Shouzhen 張守真, to bureaucrat-

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\(^{97}\) Typical of this type of history is Shi Ming, Taiwan bushi Zhongguo de yi bu fen. Taiwan shehui fazhan si bai nian sī [Taiwan is not a part of a China: a four hundred year history of the development of Taiwanese society] (Taipei: Qianwei Chubanshe, 1992).

\(^{98}\) It may also be the case that, due to the highly efficient way in which the Japanese colonial administration documented, filed and stored the evidence of its stay on the island, research in colonial archives now represents an extremely simple task to undertake, and thus attracts many more historians than other areas do.

\(^{99}\) Making Tai sī unique amongst genres of academic writing in the “postcolonial” world.
scholars such as the current head of Academia Historica, Zhang Yanxian. In doing so, Qi has noted the inclination for these and other historians to “beautify” (meihua 美化) their depictions of Japanese colonialism in Taiwan, and to concentrate on the tangible and functional sides of the colonial past at the expense of a more socially-oriented history. Qi’s analysis is supported by Leo Ching’s recent work on a similar topic, which has similarly pointed to the central themes of “modernisation” and “development” in some of the more overtly “pro-colonial” of Taiwan shi texts.

This “pro-colonial” element in Taiwan shi has sparked numerous debates about the positive and negative aspects of Japanese rule on the island. It has also prompted a number of Taiwanese historians to depict the colonial period in a wistfully nostalgic fashion. Some scholars have even gone so far as to claim that the island’s climate was more pleasant under Japanese colonialism. Pro-colonial historiography has also seen much of the imagery present in nativist depictions of Taiwanese culture and history today taken directly from Japanese colonial discourse. Postcards, maps and art works produced

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100 Academia Historica is the organisation which stores the archives of the ROC government that were brought to Taiwan in the 1940s. It also holds the archives of a limited number of Taiwan-based government departments from the post-1949 era.

101 Qi Jialin, Taiwan xin shiguan [A new historical outlook for Taiwan] (Taipei County: Nongxue Gufen Youxian Gongsu, 1999).


103 One of the most recent examples of this was the debate that emerged following the publication in 2001 of the Chinese edition of the book Taiwan lun 台灣論 [Taiwan theory] trans. Lai Qingsong and Xiao Zhiquiang (Taipei: Qianwei Chuabanshe, 2001) by Japanese cartoonist Kobayashi Yoshinori 小林善紀. For an example of some of the reactions to the “pro-colonial” elements expressed in this book, and indeed, the “pro-colonial” elements that were expressed in support of the book’s publication, see Lin Biyao, “Taiwan lun de lishi shangzheng” [The historical scars of Taiwan lun], Ziyu shibao, 26 February 2001; Xie Xiamin, “Taiwan lun bu ying zuowei zhengqing gongju” [Taiwan lun should not be used as a political tool], Taiwan ribao, 26 February 2001.

for and by Japanese travellers in Taiwan during the early decades of the twentieth century, for instance, have today been reproduced for mass consumption by groups closely connected to the Taiwan shi field, including publishing houses such as Yuanliu 遠流 and Qianwei 前衛, and popular outlets for the sale of Taiwan shi-related products, such as the Taiwan e tien 台灣金店 bookshop in Taipei (fig. 4). Indeed, there has emerged an entire industry of reproduction of Japanese colonial books, photographs and maps in Taiwan. This is a point to which I shall return in Chapter 3, when I examine the rediscovery of colonial discourses of “the South” on the part of Taiwanese intellectuals and officials in the mid- to late 1990s.

Figure 4. Advertising for “the shop of Taiwan” (from the author’s personal collection).

105 Taiwan e tien (literally meaning “shop of Taiwan” in Hokkien) is one of the largest outlets in Taipei specialising in the sale of Taiwan shi-related books, postcards and other materials.

106 As I was informed by a school history teacher who makes an extra income out of reproducing and selling Japanese colonial-era maps in Taipei, Taiwan’s rather lax copyright laws have aided in the growth of this “pro-colonial” history industry.
In more recent years, alternative bentu visions of the past have emerged to present a different view of Taiwanese history and geography. Once again, however, such interpretations have borrowed extensively from earlier historiographical traditions. The alpine forests of Taiwan’s central mountain range have become the focus of an increasing amount of attention, for instance. In this version of Taiwan history, which might provisionally be termed “alpine Taiwan” (gaoshan Taiwan 高山臺灣), Jade Mountain (Yu Shan 玉山; also known as “Mount Morrison”)—as Niitakayama 新高山, once the highest peak in the Japanese empire—has been re-appropriated as a recurrent symbol in the Taiwan shi iconography, often appearing on the covers of bentu books, websites and art works. 107 Connected to this are the forests of the island’s central mountain range, numerous shennu or shinboku 神木, 108 and the traces of Aboriginal life that still exist in this part of Taiwan. Much of the work that has been done on Taiwan’s environmental history might be counted within this “alpine Taiwan” discourse, as too can the upturn in interest in Taiwan’s forestry history. 109

The rise of the “maritime Taiwan” 海洋臺灣 concept and its associated literature in the early to mid-1990s is of similar, if not greater, importance. This idea represents efforts by some nativist intellectuals to dissociate themselves from the aesthetic imagery of mainstream bentu thought (and in particular the rural guxiang), this being achieved through appropriation of an earlier discourse of “maritime China” that was explored above.

“Maritime Taiwan” borrows much from the idea of “maritime China”. It stresses the historic importance of the island’s seaborne trade as well as its maritime traditions, such as

107 An image of Yushan was employed in the cover design of President Lee Teng-hui’s treatise Taiwan zhuxiang [The Taiwan position] (Taipei: Yuanlin Chubanshe, 1999), for instance.
108 “Sacred trees” that were featured in Shinto worship during the Japanese colonial era, and remain sites of cultural significance today.
109 A recent example of such being Ts’ui-jung Liu and Shi-yung Lin, “A preliminary study of Taiwan’s forest reserves in the Japanese colonial period: a legacy of environmental conservation”, Taiwan Historical Research 6.1 (1999.6): 1-34.
fishing and boat building. In essence, this “maritime Taiwan” concept represents an attempt by some elements within Taiwan’s *bentu* intelligentsia to promote and examine the coast rather than the countryside, and to write Taiwan into wider, regional histories of East Asia and imperial Europe. It is a project that started in the early 1990s, yet is ongoing today.110 “Maritime Taiwan” gained particular currency following the publication of a number of essays by the influential historian Cao Yonghe 曹永和, who called for a re-appraisal of Taiwan’s past as an “island history” (dao shi 島史).111 Books such as Yin Ping 尹萍’s *Maritime Taiwan* (*Haiyang Taiwan* 海洋台灣) were similarly instrumental.112 And a *Haiyang Taiwan* foundation was established in the northern Taiwanese city of Keelung (Jilong 基隆) in 1995, with a number of respected historians such as Huang Junjie 黃俊傑 and Dai Baocun taking part in this organisation’s activities.113

This rewriting of Taiwanese history from a maritime approach made much of the aesthetic appeal of the sea; “maritime Taiwan” history conferences were typically adorned with pictures of sailing ships, sea charts and photographs of scenic coastal sites around the island. This appeal to the aesthetic side of maritime history was encouraged by the lifting of restrictions on photography and access to the coast which had been in force since the martial law years.114 With Taiwan’s coast no longer being the sole domain of naval

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110 The Institute of Taiwan History, Preparatory Office at Academia Sinica, for example, established a “Maritime History Association” (*Haiyang Liushi Xuehui 海洋歷史學會*) in 2001.

111 Cao Yonghe, “Taiwan shi yanjiu de ling yi tujing: ‘Taiwan dao shi’ guanjian” [Another path for the study of Taiwan history: the “Taiwan island history” point of view], *Taiwan shi tianyi yanjiu tongzhan* 15 (1990.6): 7-9. For an instance of similar writing by Cao, see “Huan Zhongguo hai yu jiaoliu shi shang de Taiwan he Riben” [Taiwan and Japan in the history of exchange in the oceans around China], in Zhan Yanxian, Li Xiaofeng and Dai Baocun (eds), *Taiwan shi lan jingxuan* [A selection of essays on Taiwan history] (Taipei: Yushan Chubanshe, 1996), pp. 103-134.

112 Yin Ping, *Haiyang Taiwan* [Maritime Taiwan] (Taipei: Tianxia Zazhishe, 1993).

113 See the foundation’s website at <www.ocean.org.tw>.

114 I thank Wen-yen Chiau (Qiu Wenyan 邱文顏) of the National Sun Yat-sen University (Guoli Zhongshan Daxue 國立中山大學), for pointing out to me the influence that photographic and travel restrictions has had on the study of the coast (and its history and culture) in Taiwanese academe. Mention is also made of
checkpoints and pillboxes, "maritime Taiwan" was open for fieldwork, photography, and exploration. I shall explore "maritime Taiwan" in greater detail in Chapter 3.

Local histories

In previous sections of this chapter, I have outlined how Chinese national histories on Taiwan had depicted the past of the island in various ways, or else focused on China itself with little regard for Taiwan as such. I have also argued that the field of "Taiwan history" grew out of a desire to re-direct interest into the local Taiwanese landscape itself, yet how such a view of the past was influenced by other intellectual spheres, such as nativist literature, as well as by the structures of the same nationalist Chinese historiography that bentu intellectuals had sought to challenge. In this section, however, I would like to return to a point made earlier in this chapter about the need to look beyond the nation (i.e., both the Chinese Republican nation and nativist Taiwanese nationalism) to understand more about the ways in which the past is represented in Taiwan today. Below, I will examine the rapid rise in activity around local history (as opposed to simply "localist" history) that has been experienced in Taiwan in the years since "localisation".

A browse through the periodicals section of any Taiwanese library or bookshop today will reveal a wealth of journals and magazines with names such as Taitung Historiography (Taidong Wenxian 臺東文獻), Tainan Culture (Tainan wenhua 臺南文化) and Changhua Arts and Literature (Changhua Yiwen 彰化藝文). The local nature of material produced in such publications is, furthermore, echoed in the cultural and "human interest" pages of most of Taiwan's mass-circulation broadsheets. Such has been the result of a renewed interest in the local side of history throughout Taiwanese society that has occurred in the 1990s—the creation of an entire "local studies" publishing industry, much of it emanating out of local cultural centres (wenhua zhongxin 文化中心) in cities and counties across the island. This

the changing nature of (formerly illegal) waterborne leisure activities since the end of martial law in Violet Chang, "Take Five", Free China Review 49.4 (1999.4): 10-17.
becomes particularly obvious once one departs Taipei, and ventures to the many regional cities and towns throughout the island. Indeed, beyond the capital, an interest in the local level of history is evident everywhere: in museums, on cable television channels, in regional newspapers and magazines, and at local festivals.

For whilst one result of the localisation movement of the 1970s and 1980s which I outlined above was to encourage a greater interest in the history of a familiar Taiwan rather than a distant China, another consequence was a general decentralisation of history itself. Academics and lay scholars with some connection to particular localities have been instrumental in the production of such work, usually through their own “cultural-historical workshops” (wenshi gongzuo shi 文史工作室), and administrative changes over the last two decades in Taiwan which have seen greater autonomy given to city and county governments has also been influential—something I shall illustrate in Chapter 4 (fig. 5). The results have been, not surprisingly, an entire body of work on history in Taiwan which is extremely local in its focus, and which has looked to particular genres of history production that make this focus possible.

Figure 5. Business card from a typical “cultural-historical workshop”—the Jiufen wenshi gongzuo shi in Taipei county (from the author’s personal collection).
Most prominent of these has been the gazetteer. Gazetteers (known usually as fangzhi 方志 or difangzhi 地方志) represent a style of writing that can be traced back centuries in the Chinese-speaking world. This writing has always straddled the boundaries between what today are counted as the separate disciplines of geography and history. A focus on place rather than period is perhaps the single most important feature of this genre, as gazetteers list in minute detail every aspect of a city, county or other administratively defined area, resulting in what has been described as an "historical-geographical-economic-literary genre". Gazetteers entail the recording of selected sites of interest in any given place, as well as myths, events, products and families associated with these sites. As the focus is on place, the gazetteer genre has resulted in a style of history writing that relegates time and period to a position well behind locality in importance, thus contradicting the "chronology of periods" model that I examined in earlier paragraphs.

As a genre of recording the past, gazetteers are local in the extreme. Indeed, such writing often does not directly address history in terms of the nation except at those points at which national level issues impinge upon the local past. These differences of priorities have been articulated by, amongst others, Zhang Denan 張德南, a school teacher and lay historian from the city of Hsinchu (Xinzhu 新竹), who has had experience in co-authoring local gazetteers in recent years. In a thought-piece on gazetteer writing, Zhang notes that criteria differ for the collection and evaluation of materials for local and national histories, arguing that in some cases, the private collections of local individuals or the oral recollections of elderly residents holds more intellectual weight than the collections of the National Palace Museum or other such institutions as far as local scholars are concerned.

116 For a thorough discussion of the gazetteer genre, see Zhou Xun, Zhongguo de difangzhi [Gazetteers of China] (Taipei: Taiwan Shangwu, 1994).
In other words, the focus on place rather than time dictates the methods and priorities for compiling local histories through gazetteers.\textsuperscript{117}

The influence of the gazetteer style on Taiwanese local history has been profound.\textsuperscript{118} Indeed, countless professional historians have taken up the task of compiling gazetteers of localities throughout Taiwan, and have thus been influenced by this genre of history writing in their wider work.\textsuperscript{119} And just as Taiwan shi as a field has consciously shifted away from the sweeping grandeur of the central plains to the familiarity of Taiwan and its island landscape, so in turn has bentu discourse inspired a shift of focus to even smaller subject matter—to the literal xiangtu (i.e., native soil) of individual villages, streets and buildings.

I believe that this interest in local history has been aided by the rise of cable television in Taiwan since the mid-1990s. “Magazine programmes” and documentaries that take the gazetteer format into the visual sphere, bringing local history to the screen, have been particularly instrumental in widening the appeal of Taiwan’s many pasts. The highly successful television series Real Taiwan feelings (Taiwan nian zhen qing 台灣念真情), produced and presented by the film director Wu Nianzhen 吳念真 and first broadcast on the TVBS cable television network in 1995, brought a new and exciting snippet of geo-

\textsuperscript{117} Zhang Denan, “Difang wenshi gongzuozhe de man man chang lu: yi ge zaidi ren de chensi yu jianyi [The long, hard road of the local lay scholar: a local person’s thoughts and suggestions], Taiwan yanjiu tongzhi 4 (1995.4): 26-34.

\textsuperscript{118} Something of which Taiwanese academe is well aware. There was in fact a gazetteer conference organised at the Institute of Taiwan History, Preparatory Office, Academia Sinica, on 27 and 28 May 1999, entitled “Wushi nian lai Taiwan fangzhi chengguo pinggu yu weili fazhan: xueshu yangxuohui” [Critiques of the results of Taiwanese gazetteers over the last fifty years and the prospects for future development: an academic conference].

\textsuperscript{119} The aforementioned Lin Meirong has authored an entire book on the question of writing gazetteers, entitled Xiangtu shi yu zhenzhuang shi: renlei xuezhe kan difang [Xiangtu history and village history: an anthropologist looks at the local] (Taipei: Tai Yuan Chubanshe, 2000).
historical information to viewers each week from localities throughout Taiwan (fig. 6).\textsuperscript{120} The story behind the building of a mountain railway, life in a fishing village, or work on a petroleum refinery—all were covered; the more local the topic matter, the better. Gazetteer-style television continues to excel in the Taiwanese rating stakes, with a host of programmes bringing the history and geography of Taiwan’s localities to an eager audience.\textsuperscript{121} Other technologies, particularly photography and the internet, have also played a major role in fuelling the interest in local history, so that the visualisation of national histories that were experienced in the 1970s have been amplified in the shift of focus towards locality in the 1990s.

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{figure6.jpg}
\caption{Gazetteer-style television—Taiwan nian zhen qing (Source: Wu Nianzhen, Wu Nianzhen’s real Taiwan feelings: searching the corners of Taiwan, front cover).}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{120} For details of this television series, refer to the books which were published from it: Wu Nianzhen, Taiwan nian zhen qing zhi xuanzuo Taiwan jiandao [Wu Nianzhen’s real Taiwan feelings: searching the corners of Taiwan] (Taipei: Maitian Chuban Gongsi, 1997); Wu Nianzhen, Taiwan nian zhen qing: zheceo dang; zheceo ren [Wu Nianzhen’s real Taiwan feelings: these places; these people] (Taipei: Maitian Chuban Gongsi, 1998). The title of the programme is a pun on the two characters of Wu’s given name, i.e., nian 念 (to read; to miss), and zhen 真 (real; true).

\textsuperscript{121} Examples include San Li Television’s (Sanli Dianshi 三立電視) Zai Taiwan de yushi [Stories in Taiwan], and Chinese Television System’s (Zhonghua Dianshi Gongsi 中華電視公司) Taiwan zhi [Taiwan gazetteer].
At first glance, one might assume that local history has risen as a direct response to the earlier jingoistic national histories of the Cold-War years. One could draw parallels with the rediscovery of local history in the English-speaking world in the 1970s and 1980s, something which Raphael Samuel has argued emerged as a reaction against both diplomatic history, with its world of politicians and treaties, and the *Annales* focus on geography rather than people.\(^{122}\)

Yet local histories do not always offer a diametric contrast to the national histories that were examined above. And there is no end to the grey between them. A number of scholars have argued, for instance, that the gazetteer genre, though very much local in focus, has long played an important role in national-level historiography throughout the Chinese-speaking world. As Craig Clunas informs us, the genre is anything but “an innocent primary source” for local studies.\(^{123}\) The work of Chen Jiexian 陳捷先 on gazetteers in Qing-dynasty Taiwan has shown how the genre was employed by the Qing court as an instrument of data collection on the peripheries of its empire.\(^{124}\) And even under KMT rule in Taiwan, the compilation of gazetteers was sponsored by government bodies precisely because such work aided in the documentation of the geography and history of the lost motherland. Gazetteers leant themselves perfectly to the catchcries of KMT nationalism, such as the ubiquitous “huo wo be shan!” 還我河山 (lit., “Return the country to me”),\(^{125}\) for only through a history that listed the actual mountains, rivers and relics of the nation could such doctrine be defended.

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\(^{124}\) Chen Jiexian, *Qingdai Taiwan fangzhi yanjiu* [A study of Qing-era gazetteers in Taiwan] (Taipei: Xuesheng Shuju, 1996).

\(^{125}\) “Huo wo be shan” literally means “Return the rivers and mountains to us”. This was a popular government catch-cry up until the 1980s in Taiwan, and implied that the territory of China had been illegally usurped from the KMT by the Chinese Communist Party. The origins of the phrase can be traced to the
Nor would it be correct to suggest that the 1990s-generation of gazetteer-style local history in Taiwan has simply emerged “out of the blue”. In the archives room of the Kaohsiung Historiography Commission (Gaoxiong Wenxian Weiyuanhui 高雄市文獻委員會), one will find the remaining dusty copies of The Journal of Kaohsiung Artifacts (Gaoxiong wenwu jikan 高雄文物集刊). This journal dates from just after the establishment of the said commission in August 1952—a era when, following the 28 February massacre of 1947, KMT rule in Taiwan was arguably at its most ruthless. It lasted only a few issues, but the articles within this journal covered all manner of topics relating to local Kaohsiung history.

The existence of such a journal is not surprising in itself; it represents the texted manifestation of a Republican Chinese intellectual institution, in the form of historiography commissions (wenxian weiyuanhui 文獻委員會)—the first of such bodies being the Historical Research Commission of Taiwan Province (Taiwan sheng wenxian weiyuanhui 臺灣省文獻委員會), established in 1949—onto the Taiwanese context shortly after the KMT’s procurement of the island. What is intriguing, however, is the fact that such work borrows freely in topic matter, reference information and indeed, written style, from pre-war Japanese-language material produced by colonial agencies. In listing sites of interest in Kaohsiung, one author includes sites with as much colonially symbolic significance as the former racecourse where Japanese residents of the city once went for


126 Kaohsiung Historiography Commission, A Brief Introduction of work of [sic] Kaohsiung Historiography Commission (Kaohsiung: Kaohsiung Historiography Commission, no date), brochure.


pleasure, or Kaohsiung’s Mount Longevity (Shou Shan/Kotobukiyma 壽山) and its Shinto shrine. Indeed, in many instances, the journal portrays local Kaohsiung history as an unbroken line that stretches back to the city’s restructuring under Japanese colonial rule in the 1910s and 1920s, with an almost nonchalant disregard for either the five thousand years of the Chinese nation, or the Republican anti-colonial (and specifically anti-Japanese) fervour that one would expect.

The point here is that local history in this context actually manages to enlarge the boundaries of how one understands or thinks about the past in ways that national histories could simply never do. Locality becomes paramount, and the nation only becomes important when it has something to offer a local story. In some cases, these local histories openly disregard national sensibilities about colonialism or antiquity. They contradict narratives of the nation; they locate or create new fissures in time, whilst questioning or ignoring pre-existing ones.

I have found Søren Clausen and Stig Thogersen’s study of local history writing in the city of Harbin (Ha’rbín 哈爾濱) to be particularly helpful when trying to understand how local and national histories interact with one another in Taiwan. The case of Harbin provides a striking parallel to the city which forms the basis of this thesis (i.e., Kaohsiung) as it too has experienced Japanese colonisation and Republican Chinese rule, and has been dismissed by many historians as being “…too modern and even too foreign to be of any historical interest”. As Clausen and Thogersen’s demonstrate, Harbin’s history is one that is just as closely linked to the Japanese and Russian empires as it is to China. And the desire to compile a local history of this city has always involved dealing with various ambiguities about Harbin’s impermanent and troubled place within the Chinese nation.

The desire to collect local material, to preserve the tangible remnants of the local past, and to publish gazetteers, has always had to be balanced against the pressures of giving Harbin a distinctly Chinese past—something which organs of the PRC central government, and historians of patriotic persuasion, have attempted to promote in recent decades.

Yet as Clausen and Thøgersen’s study demonstrates, the relationship between local-level scholars and bureaucrats and their administrative colleagues in the capital has not been straightforward. As they point out, it is the gazetteer form that has allowed those involved in the compilation of a Harbin local history to break away from the pervading anchor of the nation. “The gazetteer juggernaut moves head-on into the ‘forbidden zones’ of modern and contemporary history”, listing sites and events that have little to do with the history of the Chinese nation, and at times openly conflicting with and challenging attempts at Sinicisation of the city’s past, much as journals such as Gaoxiong wenwu jikan managed to do in the 1950s, and a host of publications, television programmes and other media are doing all over Taiwan today.

**Urban histories**

The comparison between local history in Harbin and Kaohsiung leads us to other questions about the nature of local history in Taiwan. For in examining local history as a distinct field, one has to consider what kind of locality such histories take. Are the plethora of urban histories that have blossomed in Taiwan in the last decade, for instance, merely another manifestation of local history and the rediscovery of the gazetteer tradition, or is something quite different going on? Is there anything particularly urban about the emerging sub-fields of “Taipei studies” (Taipei xue 台北學), “Kaohsiung studies” (Gaoxiong

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and their many cousins? And can a city claim a tradition of urban histories alongside and concurrent to local history, or for that matter, national or imperial histories? I do not propose to provide answers for such complicated questions; I do, however, suggest that the distinction between bentu-influenced local histories, and an emerging field of “city history” (shi shi 市史) or urban history should, at the very least, be acknowledged.

As we saw with examples of gazetteer-style studies of places such as Harbin and Kaohsiung above, the gazetteer form has been used by historians who analyse the history of urban localities just as it has for those with rustic sites in mind. Moreover, I outlined how certain geographic stereotypes have become central to the nativist historiographical tradition. The concept of the guxiang, for instance, carries with it certain connotations about the appearance of localities throughout Taiwan, and has had a strong influence on determining the idea of where one goes to find traces of “authentic” Taiwanese locales and their pasts. In the quintessential Taiwanese guxiang of nativist thought, the built environment remains subordinate to the natural environment; life moves to turn of the seasons in the sunny South of the island, and the traces of humanity on the landscape work with nature rather than against it. But what does this mean for urban localities and their histories?

132 On the emergence of a sub-field of “Taipei studies”, see Li Qingzhi, Niao gua kuang: shijimo Tai bei kongjun wenhua xianxiang [Crazy about the damn country: spatial and cultural phenomena in fin de siècle Taipei] (Taipei: Chuang Xing Chubanshe, c.1994), pp. 124-125.

133 Tanaka Kazuji 田中一二, a Japanese author based in Taipei (Taihoiku) during the colonial era and whose work we shall return to in Chapter 3, compiled a “History of Taipei” (Taihoku shi shi 台北市史) in 1931. See Tanaka Kazuji, Tai bei shi shi [A history of Taipei], trans. Li Chaoxi (Taipei: Taibei Shi Wenzian Weiyuan Hui, 1998). The existence of such scholarship suggests that “urban histories” of Taiwan have a long lineage which predates the more recent interest in local history. It is, moreover, significant that works such as this are currently being translated into Chinese and republished by local history organisations, such as the Taipei Historiographical Commission (Taibei Shi Wenzian Weiyuanhui 台北市文獻委員會).
To complicate matters, it remains the case that not all urban histories take place outside of, or beyond, the nation. Certain cities and their histories (quite unlike Kaohsiung or Harbin), retain positions of great import in the mythology of the nation in Taiwan. Chinese cities such as Nanking (Nanjing 南京), as “the centre of the revitalisation (fuxing 復興) of Chinese culture” occupy a position in nationalist historiography on Taiwan that is far from local or urban in nature, as do other sites of Republican political and military glory, from Canton (Guangzhou 廣州) to Chungking (Chongqing 重慶). As I shall explain in the following chapter, the city of Tainan holds a place of parallel importance for nativist nationalism in Taiwan. The history of these cities continues to influence the Taiwanese historical imagination, with their presence felt not only within history textbooks or museum exhibitions, but in street names throughout Taiwan’s cities, and even as settings for television period dramas.

The work of Ackbar Abbas on history and nostalgia in Hong Kong has raised a number of questions relating to urban history in this regard, and may provide some interesting comparisons with Taiwan. Like many cities in Taiwan, and as Abbas suggests, Hong Kong defies the norms when it comes to the compilation of national histories; it is a place where “the archetypal narratives of nation-building—those of aboriginality, struggles against ‘the land’, or the ‘civilising’ of territories and peoples cannot be grounded”. Hong Kong and its historiography not only developed outside of any national ideal

134 Wu Xiangxiang, Nanjing [Nanking] (Taipei: Zhongzheng Shuju, 1957), p. 7. This book was one in a series entitled Dishi shucong [Collection of books on local history] published by Zhongzheng Shuju 中正書局 which included other titles on cities in China, such as Peking (Beijing 北京), Hangchow (Hangzhou 杭州), and so on.
136 M. Ackbar Abbas, Hong Kong: Culture and the Politics of Disappearance (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 1997).
(Chinese, British, or otherwise), but did so with a far more international outlook than any rural locale could ever do, having been linked to other cities throughout the British empire (and later, the Commonwealth), and the wider world, for most of its history as an urban entity. Indeed, so urban and yet simultaneously international is Hong Kong’s modern history that it defies both national histories and gazetted local histories in the bentu sense.

It is this unique feature of Hong Kong’s urban history that the body of scholarship known as “Hong Kong studies” has had to face, emerging at precisely the same time that the city has been trying to negotiate its place (since 1997) within a Chinese national history. Yet as a brand of urban historiography that fits uneasily in with either pre-modern localities or national histories, Hong Kong studies shows that urban histories can exist and develop outside the bounds of the nation, and yet do not necessarily have to resort to bentu-style localism in order to do so. This would suggest that there are substantial differences in the way that one goes about understanding local histories in a city as opposed to a rural locality. The parallels between “Hong Kong studies” and the new brand of urban history in Taiwan are striking—something we shall see in Chapter 4, when I examine the conscious construction of a “Kaohsiung history” over the last decade or more.

There exist other noticeable differences between local history, especially in its bentu sense, and the new generation of urban history studies that have become popular in Taiwan in recent times. In his much-quoted study of history and memory in Germany, Andreas Huyssen has argued that the idea of Utopia, once so dear to modernity in its capitalist and socialist manifestations, has been openly attacked and largely discredited since the end of the Cold War. Yet whilst Huyssen’s observation of an anti-Utopian cynicism may ring true throughout much of the Euro-American world, the same has not been the case in

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138 Alan Birch, Y. C. Jao and Elizabeth Sinn, Research Materials for Hong Kong Studies (Hong Kong: Centre of Asian Studies, 1984).
Taiwan. Urban histories, and urban studies more generally in Taiwan, represent one sphere in which Utopias of various kinds still flourish, much as they have done since the beginning of the twentieth century. It is in this focus on the future rather than an idealised past that places many urban histories in Taiwan in a firmly different camp from local histories in the bentu sense.

Take, for example, the work of Wu Yingming 吳英明, a scholar based at Kaohsiung’s National Sun Yat-sen University (Guoli Zhongshan Daxue 國立中山大學) who, as we shall see later in this thesis, has been personally involved in the creation and promotion of an official “Kaohsiung history” since the mid-1990s. Wu’s multi-disciplinary work on urban life in Taiwan is primarily future-focused, though always with an eye on the past and its inferiorities. Indeed, in his writings, the past and present are grouped together as points on a progressively evolutionary scale that lead invariably to a bright and utopic future of convenient city living. In a collection of essays that Wu published under the English title Civil Society and Global Village [sic] in 1999, for example, the concept of the “citizen’s city” (zhimin chengshi 市民城市) of tomorrow, is juxtaposed to the equally vague concepts of the “colonial city” (zhimin chengshi 殖民城市) or the “immigrant city” (yimin chengshi 移民城市) of the past.\(^140\)

Whilst the bentu imagination focuses firmly on specific localities, from the intricacies of a village economy to the actual bricks and mortar of a given temple, much of the urban studies work, and by connection urban history, moreover, focused on abstract ideas.\(^141\)

\(^{140}\) Wu Yingming, Shimin shehui ye diqu cuo guanqiu shiye, difang xingdong [Civil society and the global village: global perspectives, local actions] (Kaohsiung: Hongwen Guan, 1999).

\(^{141}\) Urban history in Taiwan, like many other fields, is also strongly influenced by trends in the American academy. And the fact that Benjaminesque studies of streetscapes tend to be in vogue in fields such as cultural studies in Taiwan would suggest that “urban history” differs substantially from bentu-inspired local history in its origins. For an excellent critique of the current fashionability of urban histories within academe worldwide, see Beatriz Sarlo, “Forgetting Benjamin”, trans. Francisco Gonzáles, Cultural Critique 49 (Fall, 2001): 84-92.
There has arisen an interest in the idea of the city-state, for example. The work of Hu Baolin 胡寶林, an essayist whose writing on urban life in Taiwan takes the connection between the citizen, the city and its history even further, indeed as far as ancient Athens and Rome, is one such example. For Hu, urban history offers the panacea to Taiwan’s current ills, with concepts such as the *polis* and the city-states of the ancient Mediterranean world frequently emerging as historical examples worth emulating. The streets and buildings of Taiwan’s cities are present in such depictions, but are only alluded to insofar as they illustrate certain arguments about the nature of the modern urban experience.\(^{142}\)

The idealisation of concepts such as the “*shimin*” 市民, or “citizen” (i.e., resident of a city as opposed to a nation), “civil society”, and “city states” present in much of this work, suggests a strong influence from liberalist American thought.\(^{143}\) But in Taiwan these have all had interesting ramifications for the ways in which the past has come to be interpreted. In particular, such ideas have provided an entire vocabulary through which citizens’ groups and local cultural foundations have been able to enter debates about the nature of Taiwan’s past and how it should be presented or restored. History as it exists in an old building, for example, becomes a tool through which citizens of any given urban centre can beautify their environment and encourage a sense of community (community being something cities apparently lack but which villages abound in). And this strain of thought has found its clearest expression in the adoption of “community construction”—a community-based urban conservation and preservation movement that I shall examine in depth in the following chapter.


Chapter 2: The “inscribed landscape”

Inscribing Taiwan’s landscape

In the previous chapter, we saw how national, local and urban history writing in Taiwan had all placed considerable importance on the aesthetics of the past. This was as true for the grand civilisational histories produced in support the Chinese nation as it was for the more recent concept of a “maritime Taiwan”. We also saw how the priorities and foci of different levels of historiography in Taiwan have sometimes evolved into conflicts or disagreements, whilst in other cases, there has been a substantial interflow between the national and the local. In this chapter, I will examine what all this has meant for the built environment. For it is precisely the ways in which the codification of the built environment has been worked into different narratives of the past in Taiwan, which form a major theme of this thesis.

I have borrowed the title of this chapter from a book about travel writing in imperial China by Richard Strassberg. In Strassberg’s work, the reference to “inscribing the landscape” takes on a double meaning. The author examines the ways in which, on the one hand, particular sites have often been inscribed with meanings through their inclusion in travelogues, and on the other, how sites of touristic appeal have themselves been literally inscribed by literati wishing to record their visits. This chapter is not an examination of specific inscriptions at celebrated sites of travel in Taiwan. Yet I employ Strassberg’s phrase because I believe it encapsulates the sense by which the historic built environment in Taiwan has been given various meanings both through writing about the landscape, and through the recording and codification of sites in the landscape. The idea of an “inscribed landscape” is as relevant for late twentieth-century Taiwan as it is for historic China. And in the period covered in this thesis, the most important ways in which

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landscapes have come to be “inscribed” with particular meanings is, I would argue, through the preservation, restoration and re-interpretation of the landscapes themselves. Of course, this is not only true for Taiwan. A concern for the preservation of the built environment and the landscapes of cities in particular is something to which many societies throughout the industrialised world have been witness over the last decade or more. As urban topographies have become the focus of many people’s ideas about the past, historiographical debates (such as those I examined in the previous chapter) have been taken out of textbooks and transferred onto the streets and waterways of cities and towns. In essence, the urban landscape has itself become a type of historic text, or as some theorists have argued, a form of “public history” in its own right.²

Below, I shall explore the ways in which the built environment in Taiwan has been codified and inscribed with certain, often conflicting, historical meanings. I shall start by looking at the terminology used in the world of Taiwanese preservation and restoration. Thereafter, I shall turn my attention to the changes that have been occurring in Taiwanese intellectual circles over the last decade. This will lead, in following chapters, to a closer examination of one particular locality in Taiwan—the city of Kaohsiung.

The vocabulary of preservation

When examining texts about the history of the urban landscape, or talking to Taiwanese people about the historic built environment, the single most commonly heard term is “guji” 古蹟. This word has a long history of usage in the Chinese-speaking world. The authoritative Sea of words (Cihai 詞海) dictionary defines guji as “the vestiges of ancient times”, and classifies three uses of the term in the Chinese literary tradition; interestingly, it is “natural” relics such as rivers and mountains that make up the first category, the second and third consisting of architectural relics and “vestiges” (tombs, ruined cities, and so on)

respectively. Prior to the 1980s, when associated with architectural relics, the term guji had a somewhat limited usage, being restricted mainly to monuments of civilizational note on the Chinese mainland. This was also the case in KMT Taiwan, where the term came to be associated with the lost sites of the “homeland”. Indeed, when the term was officially employed in the *Constitution of the Republic of China* (Zhonghua Minguo xianfa 中華民國憲法) of 1946, the war-torn Republic was probably more concerned with the protection of threatened guji on the mainland than those in the newly-appendaged province of Taiwan.

In the Republican Chinese codification of historic relics on the mainland, the KMT had also used the term “guji” in an official capacity, and often in combination with the term “ningsheng” 名勝, or “scenic spots”. In this earlier period, these two terms were combined to produce the four-character phrase of “ningsheng guji” 名勝古蹟, or “scenic spots and relics”. In this usage, the word guji referred to an extremely wide array of architecture as well as to other types of site that bore little connection to the historic built environment at all. Take, for example, the liberal use of the term guji in the *Regulations for the preservation of relics, scenic spots and artifacts* (Mingsheng guji guwu baocun tiaoli 名勝古蹟古物保存條例), which were formulated by the Nanking-based ROC government in 1928 (fig. 7). In these regulations, the Ministry of the Interior (Neizheng Bu 内政部) listed sites of the “lake and mountain variety” (hu shan lei 湖山類) as the first in three categories of mingsheng guji 名勝古蹟, using the phrase in reference to all kinds of natural features of the landscape. It then went on to list no fewer than seventeen types of building (ranging from city walls to towers) that could be categorised as “architectural” (jianzhu lei 建築類) guji, as well as ten

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4 For a typical example, see Qian Yue, *Guji yu mingsheng* [Relics and scenic spots] (Taipei: Guangwen Shuju, 1965).
5 Article 166 of the 1946 constitution stipulates thus: “The state shall encourage scientific discoveries and inventions, and shall protect ancient sites and articles of historical, cultural or artistic value”. See *Constitution of the Republic of China* (Taipei: Government Information Office, 1997), p. 34.
types of “ruin” (yiji 遺跡).  According to these 1928 laws then, one could just as well be referring to a mountain cave as to mausolea or city gates when talking of “yiji”.

Indeed, so varied are the types of yiji listed that it is difficult to locate any common thread in their codification whatsoever. In terms of architecture, the only prerequisite appears to be that such structures pre-dated the founding of the Republic itself; and that all yiji had to exist “within the territory of the Republic of China”.

More recently, the term yiji has been sanctified through the Cultural Property Preservation Ordinance (Wenhua Zichan Baocun Fa 文化資產保存法) of 1982, and the Cultural Property

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6 Neizheng Bu [Ministry of the Interior], Minzhu yiji gaiju baocun tiaoli [Regulations for the preservation of scenic spots, relics and artifacts], Academia Historica, Guomin zhengfu [Nationalist government], 200000000A; 0121; 2779.01-01; 323/1157-1170.

7 Although now rare in Taiwan, this lack of distinction between natural and artificial sites is still common in other parts of the Chinese-speaking world. For an example, see Li Mianmin, Zhongguo minzhu yiji [China’s scenic spots and relics] (Hong Kong: Yuandong Youxian Gongsi, 1983), in which all manner of architecture and natural formations are listed side by side.

Preservation Executive Act (Wenhua Zichan Baocun Fa Shixing xingce 文化資產保存法施行細則) of 1984. These laws embodied the spirit of Chinese national histories that had been a mainstay of KMT nation-building in Taiwan, and which had been celebrated through the Chinese Cultural Renaissance Movement (as discussed in Chapter 1). However, they also came in the wake of what the architectural theorist Chu-joe Hsia has argued were changing attitudes amongst the Taiwanese intellectual elite toward the built environment, driven foremost by economic development and a growing concern for the vernacular side of history. This argument is supported through a similar study conducted by Ye Nai-chi, who has identified benduhua, or the localisation that Taiwanese society experienced during 1970s, as one of the main forces behind a rapid rise in interest in historic sites more generally, something which eventually channeled into the formulation of relic protection laws in the following decade. In the context of these 1980s regulations, the term guji came to relate to those buildings codified and protected as historic sites by one or more government agencies in Taiwan.

Whether it be in the 1928 regulations, the 1946 constitution, or the laws of the early 1980s, there has always been a strong connection between the term guji, and the Republican Chinese nation-state. The purpose of the above-mentioned Cultural Property Preservation Executive Act of 1982, for example, was said to be “...to preserve cultural property, to substantiate the spirit of the nation’s citizens, and to carry forward Chinese culture”. In keeping with such sentiments, cultural property (wenzhuan zichan 文化資產) was described broadly as those places or things “...that have historic, cultural or artistic value”. Yet such “value” was generally determined by how these sites could aid in the promotion of nationalist visions of the past.

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9 He also lists the growth of the nativist nationalism and changes to the nature of tourism as factors. See Chu-joe Hsia, “Historic conservation in Taiwan...”.
10 Ye Nai-chi, op cit.
11 For a full text of the Wenhua zichan baocun fa, see Taiwan fengwu 23.3 (1982.9): 79-87.
The very idea of the guji was heavily infused with the patriotism of national histories. Consider the language and sentiments inherent in this passage taken from a guide to guji management published soon after the introduction of the 1980s laws:

[The sight of] grand mountains and rivers [zhongkao de shan he 莊極的山河] can arouse in the patriot a feeling of moral fortitude [zhijì 志節] like a fervent song; paying homage at an ancient battle field will invariably cause us to reminisce about the martyrdom of the heroes of old....[Thus] when we visit relics, apart from admiring them for their beauty, we can also be encouraged morally; historic relics don’t simply move us personally, but can also help to consolidate a sense of belonging to the [Chinese] race [minzu 民族]....The project to protect relics symbolises our patriotism, and our goal [in protecting relics] is to strengthen a sense of unity and pride....

As references to “race”, “martyrdom”, “patriotism”, and even to “grand mountains and rivers” or “ancient battle fields” might suggest, the same sorts of historic narratives that we examined in the previous chapter made up a substantial proportion of the official impetus behind the protection of relics in the 1980s. Quite simply, the value that cultural property represented was one situated unequivocally in the framework of the nation and its historiography. It embodied a set of sites that were of national importance, and which validated national histories.

In this 1980s legislation, guji represented but one in a group of five types of “national cultural property”, the other four being artifacts (gawù 古物), folk/ethnic arts (minzu yìshù 民族藝術), folk customs and related artifacts (minzu ji you guan wenwu 民俗及有關的文物), and natural cultural landscapes (ziran wenhua jingguan 自然文化景觀). The laws also touched upon other categories of national relevance, such as “guobao” 國寶, or “national

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treasures”, equating these with “important artifacts” and works of art (most of which were of considerable age).  

Like the earlier Republican concept of mingsheng guji that had been documented in Nanking in 1928, sites in Taiwan were determined as guji according to criteria that stressed antiquity. “Historic and cultural value”, as well as architectural merit, were other standards employed. The laws further stipulated that guji would be sub-divided into three grades. First-grade sites, or “yiji guji” 一级古蹟, were those deemed by the Ministry of the Interior to be of the foremost national importance. This group was accordingly administered at the national level by the central government, and relics which fell within this category usually reflected the ideology of the ROC nation-state on Taiwan. The administration of second- and third-grade sites was, on the other hand, passed to provincial and local government bodies respectively.

This division of the Formosan landscape into national and local administrations was to have a profound and lasting effect. I would argue that it was not simply a case, as Marshall Johnson has suggested, of “…sites of modest value [being]…designated Rank 3 and left to the financially strapped localities”. Rather, this division determined the very different priorities inherent in national, urban and local histories, the same histories that we examined earlier in this project. The results of this division shall be examined in later sections of this chapter.

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14 In the course of compiling this thesis, the provincial government was gradually disbanded, and the responsibility for the protection of the relics that were once under its jurisdiction has been divided between the central government and local bodies.

The term guji, and the sites this term now represents, must also be understood within the context of an entire vocabulary used in Taiwanese preservationist circles today. It exists alongside a plethora of other words referring to the remnants of prior human habitation or activity in the landscape. Any list would have to include terms such as “traces” (yiji 遺蹟), “ruins” (yizhi 遺址), “former sites” (jinzi 舊址) and “vestiges” (canji 殘跡). As well as these, one could include other terminology and phrases such as “old houses” (lao fangzi 老房子), “abandoned buildings” (fei lou 廢樓), or “historic buildings” (lishi jianzhu 歷史建築). Together, such terms exist within a glossary specific to the historic built environment in Taiwan, and one that is used by both professionals involved in the protection of cultural property, as well as by those writing or talking about it.

As well as these, the term guji has been employed interchangeably with the word shiji 史蹟, or “historic relics”, in many instances. This second term was in fact far more common for much of the postwar era in Taiwan, and it has only been since the 1980s that it has been replaced by “guji”. As I shall demonstrate below, the roots of the term shiji in Taiwan lie firmly in Japanese colonial rule on the island. That guji has now become a far more widely used term, however, suggests an important shift in the way in which “relics” have been codified in the 1980s, and one which, again, is linked to the ideology of the nation and its histories.

The two words guji and shiji differ only slightly. Both words contain the character ji 蹤, with the shi 史 (lit., history) of shiji referring to the “historic” nature of a site, and the gu 古 (lit., old or ancient) of guji referring to a site’s age. Yet it is precisely the reference to the ancient inherent in “guji” that has been responsible for this term’s dominance. This

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16 Despite having been popularised amongst Western scholars through the title of the Lao fangzi book series published in the PRC by Jiangsu Meishu Chubanshe 江蘇美術出版社, the use of this term in Taiwan appears to have little to do with these books.

17 One could also mention more specific terms such as “wenhua” 文化, a word that usually means “culture”, but can also be used to refer to archaeological sites of considerable age.
semantic difference, and the question of what this means for the way in which sites are registered or studied, has been explored by a number of Taiwanese scholars. In an article published only a short time after the introduction of the 1980s legislation, one theorist attempted a differentiation of the two terms thus:

Marks left [on the landscape] are of course referred to as shiji; but after long periods of time have passed, these take on an “ancient feel” [guwei 古味]. In other words, guji are basically just one type of shiji, but shiji are not always guji. This [distinction between shiji and guji] comes as a result of the alteration, dilapidation and the passing of the years [that these structures experience].

For this author, then, guji are distinguished from other sites in the landscape by their antiquity, or the sense of their being “ancient”. Any type of site with a vaguely historical significance could ostensibly be counted as a “shiji”, but only those that have survived the passage of time are authentic guji.

This question of time and vintage was a criterion of guji codification as set out in the 1980s legislation. Indeed, it was stipulated in these laws that only structures “more than a century old” would be listed as guji. One can find a precedent for this in the earlier uses of the term guji, such as in the 1920s legislation, which stressed a KMT preference for pre-Republican sites when formulating lists of guji. Yet as we saw earlier in this thesis, this veneration of old things was also a manifestation of the entire discourse of antiquity present in the ideology of ROC nation-building on Taiwan and its claims to the inheritance of “five thousand years” of Chinese civilisation. It may, of course, have been impossible to find a single structure or monument of Chinese origin on Taiwan that could be dated one millennium, to say nothing of five; but at the very least, a relic built over a

century ago would suffice in the absence of any sites temporally closer to the central plains.

This reification of the antique in Taiwanese preservation circles can be illustrated through reference to the controversy surrounding the restoration of specific sites. A fitting example is the Bao’an temple (Bao’an Gong 保安宮), a listed gúji in Taipei city, at which restoration work was undertaken in 1996. As this structure was found to have fallen into a state of disrepair, a series of conferences and workshops were formed by Taipei city officials and architectural academics to suggest ways in which restoration work could be appropriately undertaken. The consequent decision of the Taipei City Government to hire a group of heritage restoration “specialists” from Australia, however, was met with consternation from certain quarters of the academic elite in Taiwan. The architectural critic and head of the National Tainan College of the Arts (Guoli Tainan Yishu Xueyuan 國立台南藝術學院), Han Baode 漢保德, argued that such a decision reflected “...how childish our [i.e., Taiwan’s] own restoration efforts are.” 20 The crux of the argument was that experts from a nation “...with only a century of history” such as Australia could never possibly understand relics in the same fashion that people from “ancient European countries” could. 21 Surely specialists from a suitably “old” country could be invited instead?

Like relics themselves, terminology has a tendency of transmogrifying and developing over time, however. For since the 1980s, even this most nationalist and “ancient” of terms has begun to produce new meanings. The growth of Taiwan’s environmentalist movement, as well as ideologies such as “alpine Taiwan” which were examined briefly in Chapter 1, for instance, can be seen to have had an influence on redefining the boundaries of the term

21 Claire Liu, op cit., p. 127.
guji. The debate around so-called “green relics” (liuse guji 緑色古蹟) or “living relics” (huoqie guji 活著古蹟), that has been on-going since the mid-1990s demonstrates how official categories can be appropriated by the media and intellectual groups and significantly altered in the process. The idea of “green relics” first appeared following a number of instances in which plant life connected to sites of historic or cultural significance faced destruction, and has now come to denote individual trees or groves that are famed sites in their own right. Trees within temple grounds are commonly referred to in this way,22 arbres d’alignement (yandao shu 沿道樹; sometimes given as xingdaoshu 行道樹)23 have likewise attracted attention as historic “sites” worthy of protection.24 One might also find a precedent for “green relics” in the colonial-era discourse on the historic environment. The numerous shenmu/shinboku or “sacred trees”, found today fenced-off and sign-posted in tourist spots throughout Taiwan’s central mountainous regions, were first codified as such by Japanese Shinto priests in the early years of the twentieth century.25

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22 Some examples include the “thousand year old banyan tree” in the Shilin 士林 district of Taipei, and the “three hundred year old banyan tree” in Da Gangshan 大崗山 near Taian. See Gong Zhaojian, “Hong Zhishanli shushen, qian nian lao rong ju shi” [After a sudden attack on the tree god of Zhishan neighbourhood, a thousand year old banyan tree has died], Zhongguo shibiao, 1 December 1999; Wang Huaming, “San hai nian lao rong shengqi bobo” [This three hundred year old banyan tree is flourishing], Taiwan xinwen bao, 16 March 2001.

23 Françoise Choay (ed), Baron Haussmann: Mémoires (Paris: Editions de Seuil, 2000), pp. 942-945. I use Haussmann’s term, “arbres d’alignement”, as the planting of trees along city boulevards was a practice perfected through Haussmann’s Paris, and exported to cities throughout much of the modern world, including Taiwan. I know of no English equivalent for “arbres d’alignement”. (The English phrase “roadside trees” can denote trees growing by a road which have not deliberately been planned as part of a landscaping scheme; “arbres d’alignement” denotes stretches of roadside trees planted specifically for landscaping purposes).

24 On the protection of trees in a relic-like manner, see Xin Dai, Taiwan lao shu zhi lü [A tour of Taiwan’s old trees] (Taipei: Shibao Wenhua Chuban Gongsi, 1999). On the protection of historic arbres d’alignement, see Luo Huajuan, Taiwan de zhengui xingdaoushu [Taiwan’s precious arbres d’alignement] (Taipei: Taiwan Sheng Zhengfu, Nongceun Ting, 1992).

Other terms associated with the historic built environment are undergoing semantic shifts as well. The word guobao, as noted above, has generally been used to refer to artifacts of Chinese antiquity. Yet in recent times, this word has become a common part of everyday speech in Taiwan, and is now used in reference to objects and beings far beyond the glass cabinets of the National Palace Museum. Numerous features of Taiwan’s flora and fauna have been dubbed “national treasures” throughout the 1990s. And elderly men who are deemed to have made cultural contributions to the nation in any number of fields—from academic scholarship to songwriting—are now likewise termed “national treasures”.

Excessive attention to the terminology of preservation and conservation may seem pedantic. Yet the question of vocabulary is important, for different words correspond to different ways of observing and codifying the historic landscape. This becomes more evident as we consider that much of the content of the laws under which relics were codified in the 1980s was modeled, at least to some extent, on Japanese colonial regulations introduced in Taiwan in the early part of the twentieth century.

Recent work by the scholar Wu Yonghua 吳永華 has revealed that under colonial rule, listed relics included most types of site that are now typically associated with the term guoji in Taiwan—city gates, forts, batteries, and the vestiges of former political and religious

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27 See, for instance, Zhang Jian Linwen, “Ye shi guobao: Taiwan gaoshan tianshu” [Taiwan’s alpine rodents: they are national treasures too], Ziran baoyu jikan 17 (1997.3): 47-49.

28 The lyricist Ye Junlin 叶俊麟 was, for instance, given this (unofficial) title late in his life as recognition for the contributions he had made to the field of Hokkien popular music. That a writer of popular songs (performed in a language that was all but banned until the 1990s) could be called a “national treasure” suggests that this term has come a long way in the space of only two decades. Taiwan guobao Ye Junlin zohon gojuwai Taïyô guo wushî nian qingzhù [A commemoration of fifty years of song making by the Taiwanese national treasure Ye Junlin], concert held at the Sun Yat-sen Memorial Hall, Taipei, 5 July 1996.
institutions—and that the protection of such sites followed models established along European lines in metropolitan Japan during the late Meiji 明治 period (1895-1912).29

Yet there were also some peculiar qualities to the nature of preservation in the colonial context. Despite the postwar tendency to equate Japanese colonial rule purely with barbarity and state-sponsored violence, the protection of historic relics such as city gates, forts and temples in fact played an important role in the creation of Taiwan’s image as a “model colony” under scientific, modern Japanese rule. Travel writing from the 1920s and 1930s (produced for both metropolitan Japanese and international markets) suggests that sites such as European-built forts, old city gates and Qing-era batteries around the island were common stops on the tourist itineraries of the day.30 The conservation and touristic promotion of ancient Roman and Egyptian sites in Japan’s first colony echoed the preservation of ancient African that was well underway at the same time.

The codification of the historic built environment in colonial Taiwan might also be read, at least from the Taishō 大正 period (1912-1926) onwards, as a pan-imperial movement which was being instigated in other Japanese colonies as well, including Korea. Recent work by the historian Hyung Il Pai has suggested, for instance, that the codification of the

29 Wu Yonghua, Taiwan lishi jianianwu: Ricghi shiji Taiwan shiji mingzheng yu tianran jianianwu de gushi [Taiwanese historic monuments: the story of historic relics, scenic spots and natural monuments in Japanese colonial-era Taiwan] (Taichung: Zhenxing Chuban Gongsi, 2000). Because I am discussing Taiwanese colonial history, I list the “Meiji period” (i.e., in the Taiwanese context) as beginning in 1895—the date that marks the beginning of Japanese rule of Taiwan—rather than 1868, the starting date of the Meiji reign proper.

30 See for instance Nippon Yusen Kaisha, The Charm of the East: Guide to Japan and China (Tokyo: Nippon Yusen Kaisha, 1919), brochure. In this brochure, new landmarks such as Shinto shrines, parks and museums are listed alongside natural scenic landmarks. For examples in Japanese, see Taiwan Sōtokufu Kōtsūkyoku [Taiwan Government-general, Bureau of Transport], Taiwan kankō no kan [A guidebook to tourism in Taiwan] (Taipei: Taiwan Nichinichi Shinpōsha, 1939). For more on the general link between tourist literature and colonialism, see Mary Louise Pratt, Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturatiuon (London and New York: Routledge, 1992).
historic built environment in Korea went hand-in-hand with the promotion of particular historic narratives in that colony, as well as the maturation of new academic disciplines, such as archaeology, in Japan. Furthermore, Pai’s study has demonstrated that the very same vocabulary of preservation and codification, with words such as “kosaki” 古蹟 (i.e., *guk*), “shiseki” 史蹟 (i.e., *shiji*) and “meisho” 名勝 (i.e., *mingsheng*), was employed in colonial Korea through a series of laws relating to the control of the historic built environment, just as had been the case in Taiwan. And like Taiwan, ancient relics provided other colonies with historic tourist sites for the benefit of metropolitan, foreign and local elite visitors, especially following the establishment of Manchukuo and the subsequent growth of an intra-empire travel industry. This is a point to which I shall return later in the thesis, when I examine the ways in which the Zuoying old city wall in Kaohsiung has been renovated and re-interpreted over the last century or more.

Coupled with the colonial term *shiseki* was the concept of “scenic spots”, or *meishō* 名勝. In fact, as had been the case in Republican China, the two were combined in the four character phrase of *meishō shiseki*, i.e., “scenic spots and historic relics”. A typical inventory of *meishō shiseki* in colonial Taiwan included sites associated with the Japanese royal family (i.e., Shinto shrines, memorials, and so on); existing architectural remains associated with defence or administration, such as city walls and forts; sites of scenic beauty such as mountains, lakes or coastal areas; and places of recreational interest—hot-springs, beaches, golf courses, and the like. Flora, fauna and geological formations were also codified under the category of “natural monuments” (*tennō kinenbutsu* 天然紀念物).

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Another interesting connection with Korea is the way in which, in both these former Japanese colonies, the vocabulary and institutional framework of colonialism survived well after the end of formal Japanese rule. In Taiwan, prior to the introduction of the cultural property laws in the early 1980s, the word ก่อน, for example, was far less commonly used than 史迹, the Mandarin Chinese reading of the Japanese word “shiseki”. Indeed, many organisations and government departments responsible for the recording or study of the historic environment, and which were founded prior to the 1980s, employed the term 史迹 in their titles. Perhaps the best known of these is the Taiwan ROC Centre for the Study of Relics (Zhonghua Minguo Taiwan Shiji Yanjiu Zhongxin 中華民國臺灣史蹟研究中心). This institution was founded by the Taiwan Provincial Government in 1970, and is affiliated with Taiwan’s largest archival agency, the Historical Research Commission of Taiwan Province.34 Predating the 1980s legislation that replaced the 史迹 of its title with another term, this centre has been active in presenting a rather conservative vision of the island’s built environment through exhibitions and publications.35 And in style and form, the work of this organisation suggests a strong influence from colonial Japanese ideas about “shiseki”. The Centre for the Study of Relics continues to publish widely on the restoration and preservation of the built environment in Taiwan through its journal, Shikan zazhi 史聯雜誌, though its current role is limited. A similar institution that could also be mentioned is the Relics Research Office (Shiji Yanjiu Shi 史蹟研究室), formed by National Cheng Kung University’s (Guoli Chenggong Daxue 國立成功大學) History Department, also in the 1970s. This institution, though much smaller and less influential than the Centre for the Study of Relics, played a similar role.36

34 Ye Nai-chi, Guji baocun lunshu xingcheng [The formation of a discourse of relic preservation], Masters thesis, Graduate Institute of Civil Engineering, National Taiwan University, Taipei, 1989, pp. 52-54.

35 Such as Zhonghua Minguo Taiwan Shiji Yanjiu Zhongxin, Taiwan shiji yuanliu zhanlan zhuanji [Catalogue from an exhibition on the story of Taiwan’s relics] (Taipei: Zhonghua Minguo Taiwan Shiji Yanjiu Zhongxin yu Guoli Lishi Bowuguan, 1979).

What all this suggests is that the colonial system of “inscribing the landscape”, signified through the use of this term *shiszeki*, did not end with the dismantling of the colonial Government-general in 1945. The framework of a Japanese colonial discourse of relic preservation survived relatively intact in the Republic of China on Taiwan, with the vast majority of listed *shiszeki* also being codified by KMT officialdom on the island after the war. This is not to suggest that the Chinese Republican traditions of relic codification and protection had no impact on the methods of preservation in KMT Taiwan; rather, the KMT found in Taiwan an existing semantic infrastructure around which their own national historiography and ideas about the historic built environment could be woven.

Another tradition of codifying the built environment that was introduced into Taiwan under a far earlier system of government, but which has survived in various guises well into the present, is the “Eight Views” (*Ba Jing* 八景). Recent scholarship has demonstrated how the “Eight Views” grew out of traditions in the fine arts, such as the “Four Views” (*Si Jing* 四景) of Ming landscape painting.37 Others have traced this tradition back further to the Song dynasty.38 The “Eight Views” was a system by which eight particular sites in any given city, province or other administrative area could (and still can) be listed as aesthetically pleasing and culturally significant. Its most widespread use was in local gazetteers produced in the mid- to late Qing era, during which time localities throughout the Chinese empire were all given a system of Eight Views, often through the aid of landscape-inspired poetry. Owing to the artistic origins of this system, it was the picturesque features of a landscape, rather than necessarily historical ones, that were most often listed. However, any mention of a locality’s Eight Views would typically blend the cultural with the natural features of a place. “Fishing boats returning to harbour”, perhaps,


or "the scent of flowers" by a certain pagoda are typical example of listings that one can find counted amongst a list of Eight Views.

In Taiwan, this system was initially introduced following the island's amalgamation into the Qing empire and subsequent attempts during the reign of the Kangxi 康熙 emperor to collect and collate information about Taiwanese localities through gazetteers. Yet it was later appropriated under Japanese colonialism, and promoted thereafter primarily for touristic purposes. For example, in 1927, a list of "Eight Views and Twelve Scenic Spots" (Hakkei Jūni Shō 八景十二勝) was unveiled by the Government-general's Railway Department (Tetsudōbu 鐵道部), an agency that took responsibility for the promotion of Taiwan as a tourist destination. The "Eight Views of Taiwan" made popular subjects for landscape painting and picture postcards throughout the pre-war period (fig. 8). And sites that could claim to be both meishō shinkei on the one hand, and were included as one of the Eight Views ("hakkei" in Japanese)—either of Taiwan as a whole, or of a certain city or locality—on the other, took on a cultural and historical potency.

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39 One of the most thorough studies of the institution of the Eight Views in Taiwan is Liu Liqing. Qingdai Taiwan ba jing yu ba jing shi [The Eight Views and their poetry in Qing-era Taiwan], Masters thesis, Department of Chinese literature, Chung-hsing University, Taichung, 1999.

40 "Shū Taiwan hakkei jūni shō tōsen" [Congratulations on having decided on the Eight Views and Twelve Scenic spots of Taiwan], Taiwan nichinichi shinpō, 22 September 1927.
That lists of Eight Views are invented and reinvented constantly in the Chinese- and Japanese-speaking worlds is nothing new. The process was clearly illustrated recently in the case of Macau and the recent change of sovereignty in that city. The invention of "the Eight Views of Macau" (Aomen Ba Jing 澳門八景) was clearly a part of the PRC government’s efforts to sinicise Macau’s history and geography in the lead up to December 1999. This was undertaken not by adding to the city’s streetscape with new and specifically Chinese sites so as to offset a predominance of Iberian architecture, but rather by re-discovering, codifying and thereafter promoting areas within the city that were both aesthetically pleasing and culturally appropriate to the role that Macau was expected to play as a “Special Administrative Region” in twenty-first-century China. Like the idea of guji in Taiwan in the 1980s, and shiseki some decades before that, the Eight Views of
Macau represent a different yet parallel system of codification of the environment, and one that retains a very political function.\(^{41}\)

The revival of this form of the Eight Views in Taiwan’s intellectual world throughout the 1990s—aided by the popular rediscovery of the gazetteer genre that was mentioned in the previous chapter—suggests that the same dynamics that are shaping Macau’s postcolonial landscape and, more importantly, the way it is codified and written about, might also be influencing Taiwan. Certainly, there has been a tendency for local governments in Taiwan to begin re-excavating both colonial Japanese and imperial Chinese lists of Eight Views in a multitude of Taiwanese localities. And this has coincided with the general interest in the built environment that has been experienced in Taiwan over the last decade. This is hardly surprising, as lists of Eight Views commonly include sites that are also registered guji, or else overlap with registered guji.

### The unequal distribution of relics

Today, the distribution of codified relics in Taiwan is remarkable for its geographic inequalities. Third-grade relics (those relics registered by local city and county administrations) are, of course, numerous and can be found all over the island. Yet in terms of first-grade relics, (those relics registered by the central government), there is a tendency for them to be listed in only a few select localities—particularly Tainan and Taipei.\(^{42}\) According to recent statistics, Tainan boasts seven first-grade relics and fifty-two relics (of all three grades) overall. Compare such figures to those of Kaohsiung, a city which has only one site deemed historically significant and aesthetically pleasing enough to be granted first-grade status, and (until recently) only seven registered relics in any grade.

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\(^{42}\) With a noteworthy number in Quemoy (Jimmen 金門) and the Pescadores (Penghu 澎湖) as well.
Other cities and counties have none (fig. 9). Such a lack of first-grade relics might suggest (as many professional historians in Taiwan do indeed assert) that certain localities are more “historic” than others. Yet it might also lead us to question the guji decision-making process, or the commitment of officials and scholars to historic preservation in particular localities throughout Taiwan. I would argue that these numerical discrepancies between certain localities reflect, most importantly, certain biases that link in with the national histories that we examined in Chapter 1. The landscapes of Tainan and Taipei adhere closest to Chinese and Taiwanese nationalist histories; those of other parts of the island do not, and are thus virtually ignored in the first-grade relic registration process.

The statistical supremacy of Tainan in terms of first-grade relics can tell us much about the cultural prestige granted to this city more generally. Tainan, more than any other locality in Taiwan, can claim to have the single most powerful position in national (both Chinese and Taiwanese) historiographies. Tainan’s port of Anping is commonly described as the “cradle of Chinese society” on the island, and is home to “Taiwan’s first street”. Indeed, this city with the lion’s share of first-grade relics is often referred to as “Taiwan’s first” (Taiwan diji 台灣第一), encapsulating the dubious claim that it represents the island’s earliest site of settlement. In a typical report on the use of relics in Tainan published by the Council for Cultural Affairs in 1996, it was argued that Tainan represented the most historic streetscape in Taiwan.45


Figure 9. The distribution of first- and second-grade *guji* in Taiwan (Source: Lee Ch‘ıan-lang, *Tour of Historical sites of Taiwan*).
Accordingly, Tainan goes by a number of unofficial (though officially encouraged) laudative sobriquets which point to the cultural importance in which it is held throughout the country. It is commonly called the “ancient city of culture” ( Wenhua gudu 文化古都); elsewhere, it is spoken of as the “prefectural capital” ( fucheng 府城)—a reference to the city’s one-time role as capital of the “Taiwan prefecture”, when the island was administered as such under the Qing dynasty. As these references to the city being a “capital” of sorts suggests, Tainan emits a strong aura of cultural and intellectual power. Tainan is assumed to be the kind of place that breeds national leaders, from Koxinga to Chen Shui-bian 陳水扁, as well as celebrities and intellectuals. The connection that Tainan has with the figure of Koxinga and his quasi-mythical “Ming government in exile”, heightens this sense of the city having some kind of imperial past, and a historically legitimate claim to be a “capital” today. Indeed, Tainan has become almost a mirror of an absent dynastic centre, be it imperial Peking (Beijing 北京) or Republican Nanking. Tainan’s role as de facto cultural capital of the island may even be read as something similar to the cultural phenomenon Stephan Feuchtwang has identified as the “imperial metaphor”, whereby the institutions and rituals of Chinese dynastic power are transferred onto regional or local contexts.

46 For some recent examples, see Zhou Juxiang, Fucheng jinwei [The prefectural capital, today and yesterday] (Tainan: Tainan Shi Zhengfu, 1993); Liu Xiaoyan, “Fucheng zhi yange yu fazhan” [The history and development of the prefectural capital], Guoli lishi bowuguan xuebao 1 (1995.12): 209-224; Fan Shengzong, “Fucheng duo qi miao” [There are many wonderful temples in the prefectural capital], Taiwan wenxian 50.3 (1999.9): 125-144.

47 The current ROC president, Chen Shui-bian, makes a good deal of his hailing from a village near Tainan; Chen is assumed to be an “authentic” Taiwanese due to his familial proximity to Tainan. For another example, see Xie Guoxing, Fucheng shenzhong: Xing Wenbing he ta de zhiye (yi jiu yishi'er nian zhi yi jiu jin jiu nian) [A gentleman of the prefectural capital: The enterprises of Xing Wenbing (1912-1999)] (Taipei: Nantian Shuju, 2000). The Tainan City Government has in fact published a list of “cultural people” from the “prefectural capital”—Huang Yuwen (ed), Fucheng wenhua ren minglu [A list of cultural people in the prefectural capital] (Tainan: Tainan Shi Zhengfu, Wenhua Ju, 2000).

Tainan was indeed, at one stage, the prefectural capital of Taiwan, being chosen as such following the island's inclusion in the Qing empire. This role was usurped by Taipei, however, following the Taiwan's accession to the level of "Chinese province" in the 1880s. Furthermore, Tainan's economic and demographic importance declined in relation to its neighbour Kaohsiung in the early years of the twentieth century. Yet Tainan's role as the island's cultural and historic capital is now portrayed as a permanent and natural state to which it must always adhere.

The historiographer Yael Zerubavel has examined similar instances of what she has termed "thematic distance" in the preservation of certain historic ruins and relics in the state of Israel and their use in the production of an Israeli national history. Zerubavel notes how particular historic sites that have become the centre of commemorations or rituals often end up existing within a kind of "commemorative time". As with the case of Masada and other sites that form the basis of Zerubavel's study, Tainan has, through virtue of the codification of its historic relics, been virtually removed from any sense of a chronological history. Instead, a single period of its history (i.e., its time as a prefectural capital) has been extended in the use of the term "fucheng", and has been represented as a kind of permanent state that is historically credible. In essence, Tainan is presented as the height of Taiwan history's "four hundred years", and, together with its port of Anping, the epitome of a traditional "maritime China" that exists in the Taiwanese landscape.

Unusual as such a statement may seem, many structures in Tainan are listed as guji precisely because they are located in Tainan. In turn, Tainan's landscape rich in registered first-grade relics is seen to support the claims of the city being Taiwan's one, true cultural capital. Indeed, the city is considered to be Taiwan's home of guji, the place to go to see

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relics. In its Confucius temple (Kongzi miao 孔子廟), the city lays claim to Taiwan’s “first school” (Quan Tai shou xue 全台首學) (fig. 10);\(^50\) its temples are some of the island’s oldest.\(^51\) The Chikan lou 赤崁樓 (or Fort Provintia) and Anping gubao 安平古堡 (or Fort Zeelandia) remind visitors of the Dutch East India Company’s colonisation of the island, the latter also marking the spot where Koxinga expelled his European rivals and established his trans-national, Hokkien-speaking empire, with Tainan as its centre. There are also the remaining city walls of the prefectural capital; the city’s South and East gates are important relics on the Tainan tourist itinerary.\(^52\)

![Figure 10. Tainan’s Confucius temple (entry ticket: from the author’s personal collection).](image)

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\(^{50}\) Fu Chaoqing and Liao Lijun, *Quan Tai shou xue: Tainan shi Kongzi miao* [The first school in Taiwan: Tainan’s Confucius temple] (Tainan: Taiwan Jianzhu Yu Wenhua Zichan Chubanshe, 2000).

\(^{51}\) He Peifu, *Tainan shi simiao wenwu xuancui (di er ji)* [A collection of artifacts from Tainan’s temples (Volume II)] (Tainan: Tainan Shi Zhengfu, 1996).

\(^{52}\) For a full list of Tainan relics, see Xiao Qiongrui and Chen Meijuan, *Fucheng gushi: Tainan shi guji xunli* [The story of the prefectural capital: a pilgrimage to the relics of Tainan] (Tainan: Tainan Shi Zhengfu, 1996).
These relics, as well others scattered throughout the city, seem to actually infuse Tainan with a historical, scholarly legitimacy. Many bentu scholars, in particular, work to promote the image of Tainan as the home of an “authentic” or “pure” Taiwanese culture, and they stress the gravity of the city’s historic built environment. Take, for example, this typical passage by the literary critic Peng Ruijin 彭瑞金, as he writes about the importance of Tainan’s relics to the intellectual development of the celebrated bentu author Ye Shitao 葉石濤—a figure I shall return to later in this thesis:

The prefectural capital is an ancient city of culture in which relics and temples can be found everywhere, where one can, at any time of the day, pay homage to the ancestors, and in which one can walk in the footprints of past generations. As such, it is a city perfectly suited to scholars who wish to pursue lofty goals.51

Tainan is, moreover, home to the National Cheng Kung University (an institution which takes its name from Koxinga), widely considered to be one of the island’s leading academic centres for gyji education, and complemented with a campus that claims a third-grade relic—the Lesser Western Gate (Xiao Ximen 小西門) of Tainan’s old city wall.54 With such credentials, it is hardly surprising that the Council for Cultural Affairs decided on Tainan as the site of a preparatory office for the newly established National Centre for the Research and Protection of Cultural Property (Guoli Wenhua Zichan Baocun Yanjiu Zhongxin 國立文化資產保存研究中心) in 1997.55 It was not simply that there were suitable lodgings for such an office in the city; rather, Tainan was so closely associated with Taiwan’s “cultural property” that few other localities were seriously considered.56 In

54 It might be noted here that only the most “respected” of tertiary institutions in Taiwan tend to have listed relics on their campuses. Other examples are the aforementioned National Taiwan University, and the National Taiwan Normal University (Guoli Taiwan Shifan Daxue 國立臺灣師範大學).
55 See the centre’s website at <www.ncrpcp.gov.tw>.

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more recent years, the ongoing debate around the possible establishment of a branch
office of the National Palace Museum in the southern half of the island has once again
tended to favour the “prefectural capital” over Kaohsiung, Pingtung (Pingdong 屏東) and
other southern cities.57 After all, there is a precedent for doing so—the National Palace
Museum dispatched a cavalcade of “national treasures down to the ancient capital” (i.e.,
Tainan) in the late 1970s.58

Tainan’s role as an “ancient city of culture” has been promoted over the last two decades
by the Council for Cultural Affairs, an organ of the central government which has been
responsible for formulating much relic-related policy. Yet once more, we see in the case of
the listing and protection of guji throughout Tainan a case of Japanese colonial policy
being kept largely intact by government agencies in “postcolonial” Taiwan. Indeed, most
of Tainan’s relics were first registered as shiseki under the Japanese colonial administration,
and a number, including the Tainan Confucius temple, were actually renovated by
Japanese planners and architects.59

This is also the case for sites associated with Koxinga. Ralph Crozier’s eloquent study of
the veneration of Koxinga has revealed how this figure was as important to the mythology
of Japanese colonialism in Taiwan as he was to postwar Chinese nationalism. Crozier’s
study demonstrates that Koxinga was beatified from the Meiji years onwards as a Pan-

57 Zeng Genghui, “Gugong zai Nanshi she fenyuan” [The National Palace Museum to establish a branch
Museum in Tainan city], Taiwan xinwen bao, 9 March 2001.
58 As Su Nancheng 蘇南成, the former mayor of Tainan (and later of Kaohsiung), recalled triumphantly in
his memoirs. See Su Nancheng, Sigu peng xia [Under the loofah lattice] (Tainan: Daqian Chuban Gongsi,
1981). See the section entitled “Guobao xia gudu” [National treasures come down to the ancient capital], pp.
194-195.
59 Lee Ch’ian-lang, Tour of Historical Sites of Taiwan (Taipei: Tourism Bureau, Ministry of Transportation,
Asian hero of part-Japanese ancestry⁶⁰ who defeated European expansionism;⁶¹ his achievements in removing Dutch mercantile colonialism from Taiwan were indeed celebrated through a “Koxinga retrocession day”, observed annually on 29 April. And it was under Japanese colonialism that the sites associated with Koxinga’s life in Tainan were first codified and celebrated, with a Shinto shrine being erected in his honour as early as 1897.⁶² The esteem in which this figure was held continued under KMT rule, with the very same sites that had been codified during colonialism being listed as relics, and embellished with the calligraphy of Chiang Kai-shek.⁶³ Indeed, Chiang himself was often portrayed as a latter day incarnation of the “Ming loyalist”—both were presented as Chinese leaders who had defeated foreign aggression, but whose mandate had been “usurped” on the mainland.⁶⁴

The argument that Tainan represents Taiwan’s most significant of built environments is, of course, highly debatable. Perhaps it tells us more about the ethnocentrism and cultural prejudices inherent in a significant portion of the Taiwanese cultural elite than it does about the relics of old Tainan itself. For the advocates of Aboriginal Taiwan, Tainan does

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⁶⁰ A point that remains central to the mythology of Koxinga to this day. See Fukuzumi Nobukuni, *Zheng Chenggong de Riben muqin* [Koxinga’s Japanese mother], trans. Ye Zhusuan (Taipei County: Daotian Gongsi, 1992).


⁶² The Meiji restoration of Koxinga-related sites is commented on in Nanbu Taiwan Bussan Kyōshinkai [Southern Taiwan Commodities Competition Society], *Nanbu Taiwan* [Southern Taiwan] (Tainan: Taiwan Nichinichi Shimpōsha, 1915), pp. 87-90.


⁶⁴ In more recent times, the image of Koxinga has grown to a position of equal importance in Taiwanese nativist nationalism, an ideology which worships him as a kind of patriarch of the “Taiwanese people”. For an example of such writing, see “Kanjian Zheng Chenggong” [See Koxinga], *Chengxiang zhenghao zazhi* 65 (1999.6): 6-37. Future studies would do well to compare the relationship between the two “founding fathers” of history in Taiwanese historiography, i.e., the Yellow Emperor, as the founding patriarch of the “Chinese race”, and Koxinga’s similar place in the firmaments of Taiwanese nativist nationalism.
not mark the site of the island’s first settlement, with the East coast holding far greater cultural importance for Taiwanese aboriginal groups than the sites of the prefectoral capital. For Hakka (Kèjia 客家) Taiwan, Tainan represents a space of southern Hokkien-speaking bias and cultural arrogance rather than any historic glory. And for many residents of cities such as Taipei and Kaohsiung, Tainan is little more than a regional centre of marginal importance. Yet this is the historic Taiwan that successive regimes have sought to promote as the island’s centre of cultural capital—one that is semi-rural, pre-industrial and ethnically homogeneous. Such a view has aided in the promotion of national histories in Taiwan, and it has only been extremely recently that such historiographical hegemony has been challenged.

Heritage

One predicament that scholars working on modern Taiwan face is that they are dealing with a society which has been the recipient of significant cultural influences from various parts of the world over the last century or more. In Taiwan’s intellectual sphere, gravitational pulls come from a variety of angles: from a Chinese Republican tradition of scholarship, a colonial system of knowledge inherited from Japan, and from Cold-War US thought, to name only a few. The inconsistencies between these various influences become clear when we examine the ructions that have developed between the pre-1990s concepts of “guji” and “shiji”, and the English word “heritage” which has been added to the Taiwanese glossary more recently. With increasing numbers of Taiwanese students returning from abroad with academic qualifications in heritage-related disciplines (architecture, civil engineering, and heritage management, for instance), this clash between an Anglophone tradition of “heritage”, and the earlier concepts of guji and shiji, has reached a climax in the 1990s.

There is no Mandarin Chinese or Hokkien cognate for the English word “heritage”. In many cases, this word is used interchangeably with “wenhua zìchàn”, or “cultural
property"—a term which itself owes much to the international language of heritage as expounded by agencies such as ICOMOS (The International Council on Monuments and Sites). Elsewhere, the lack of an exact local equivalent has meant the term “heritage” has been left non-translated, appearing in Chinese language texts fully spelt out in letters of the Roman alphabet. Yet the question is not merely one of wording. The obstacle of finding a translation for the word “heritage” in a Taiwanese vernacular has reflected the foreign nature of the heritage concept in Taiwan. It also points to disparities between pre-1990s ideas about the historic built environment that centre around terms such as “gūjī” and “shīji”, and the idea of “heritage” as a Western academic import in more recent years.

Raphael Samuel’s study of historic preservation in Britain suggests that the lineage of the idea of heritage is anything but unified. In an essay entitled “Semantics”, Samuel traces the multiple roots of this term, and in the process suggests that there are in fact many “heritages”, ranging from the 1960s excavation of English folk tradition to the grand country mansions celebrated by the National Trust. He also suggests that heritage has become a thoroughly cosmopolitan idea, with British heritage practices being informed, at least since the 1970s, by Francophone concepts such as patrimoine. The point is that when we talk about “heritage”, it is almost impossible to clarify exactly what we mean. Indeed, it is a genuine challenge to identify a coherent definition of the word, for as Brenda Yeoh and Lily Kong have noted, “…what constitutes heritage is differently interpreted in

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65 Zhang Tongxiang 崔同情 of the Kaohsiung Historiography Commission has also noted the difficulties in reconciling a European tradition of “relics” and “heritage” with a Sinophone one of “gūjī”. See Zhang Tongxiang, “Mantan gūjī” [On relics], Gào shì shīji 1 (1999): 1-3
different quarters with different sectoral and communal interests”. Yet it is precisely this ambiguity and breadth of meaning within the English language tradition of heritage that has made the use of this word such an attractive proposition to many groups in Taiwan. “Heritage” offers relief from the strictures of earlier, official categorisations. The breadth of the word’s definition means that almost everything can be taken seriously, from seventeenth-century temples to twentieth-century apartment blocks. Entire landscapes that were ignored by earlier generations of scholars and bureaucrats can, within the elastic boundaries of the word “heritage”, now be re-appraised, and in some cases, protected.

An important institutional backer for the introduction of the Euro-American discourse of heritage has been the Graduate Institute of Building and Planning (Jianzhu yu Chengxiang Yanjiusuo 建筑与城乡研究所) at the National Taiwan University (Guoli Taiwan Daxue 國立臺灣大學) in Taipei. There, North American and European ideas about heritage and patrimony have been actively studied, and the lessons learnt on foreign ground by Taiwanese theorists have been imported into the local context. Many of the earlier perceptions surrounding the concept of guji have been re-assessed, re-written and at times openly challenged. The study of the built environment has been widened so as to understand guji within a broader context of city planning and urban space. Outside of universities too, Taiwanese historic preservation has been influenced by the activities of international non-profit heritage organisations that are part of a wider “heritage

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69 In Taiwanese academic circles, it is a strange matter of fact that a North American education is deemed far superior to any other, including a Taiwanese one. As such, ideas and terms imported from the United States are commonly used as verbal currency in the cultural capital competition. An ability to complement a Mandarin language seminar presentation with English vocabulary (such as “heritage”) is considered a great plus.

70 This institute has been involved in drawing up plans for the restoration and/or preservation of a number of Taiwan’s best known historic sites.
movement”. For example, the Penang-based Asia and West Pacific Network for Urban Conservation (AWPNUC) organised a series of workshops in Taiwan in 1997 which involved various local groups from Taipei, Kaohsiung and Quemoy, and have continued to sustain links with Taiwanese heritage groups since then.\(^\text{71}\)

This shift towards adoption of the word “heritage”, and the associated movement to have Taiwan made a part of a broader international “heritage community”, has been echoed in the introduction of disciplines such as museology (bowuguan xue 博物館學) in Taiwanese universities, and the professionalisation of the management of historic sites and relics along Western lines.\(^\text{72}\) The organisation of “international” exhibitions on public and material history in numerous Taiwanese museums that emulate the style of presentation common in European, Australasian and North American museums, as well as attempts by such institutions to produce bilingual (i.e., Chinese and English) publications, suggests that at least part of the projected audience is an international one. Examples of these can be found right across the country: the glossy interiors of the Beitou Hot-spring Museum (Beitou Wenquan Bowuguan 北投溫泉博物館), opened in Taipei in 1998, are one example; the Kaohsiung Museum of History (Gaoxiong Shili Lishi Bowuguan 高雄市立歷史博物館) is another. These two institutions, and dozens more like them, are often housed within city-registered gōji, and endeavour to exploit the architectural setting in which they are located in exhibitions. In doing so, they have frequently rejected earlier traditions of museum management in Taiwan, such as those formulated in the National Palace Museum, or categories such as “national treasures”.

\(^{71}\) The Sixth AWPNUC International Symposium was held in Taipei, 23-24 November 1997.

\(^{72}\) See, for instance, the academic journal Bowuguanxue jikan [Museology Quarterly] which is published by the National Taiwan Museum (Guoli Taiwan Bowuguan 國立台灣博物館).

\(^{73}\) Taibei Shi Zhengfu, Minzheng Ju [Bureau of Civil Affairs, Taipei City Government], Beitou wenquang bowuguan chongzheng [The rebirth of the Beitou Hot-spring Museum] (Taipei: Taibei Shi Zhengfu, 1998), brochure.
However, perhaps the single most noticeable influence that the introduction of a discourse of heritage has had in Taiwan has been in the widening of the field of historic preservation itself. In the 1980s, guji often referred to buildings that had once claimed a military, administrative, or spiritual (e.g., temples, shrines and churches) origin. Yet increasingly over the last decade, and coinciding with the evolution of a discourse of heritage, there has developed a concern for the preservation of industrial and commercial landscapes and their relics—from the deserted gold and copper mines of the Northeast coast, to the wharves of Kaohsiung and Keelung harbours.\textsuperscript{74} This has challenged earlier notions that "industrial society destroys historic architecture",\textsuperscript{75} an opinion prevalent amongst many involved in the 1980s generation of relic codification and protection. And it has challenged the prevalent ideas about the value of antiquity.

Heritage has also encouraged Taiwanese professionals to look abroad for examples where industrial archaeology and heritage have become thriving fields of enquiry. As early as the 1970s, for example, sections of the British heritage field had begun to turn towards industrial landscapes such as Ironbridge and later, London's Docklands, as valid sites worthy of analysis, preservation and, in some cases, restoration.\textsuperscript{76} And in the popular trend towards the conservation of early twentieth-century art deco architecture in Australia throughout the 1980s and 1990s, factories have taken pride of place alongside government

\textsuperscript{74} For an example of the codification of industrial harbour heritage by local government agencies, see Chen Chengzhang, \textit{Jilongshi ganggu lishi jianzhu diaocha} [An investigation of historic architecture in the harbour district of Keelung city] (Keelung: Jilong Shili Wenhua Zhongxin, 1999).

\textsuperscript{75} As one architect has put it. See Xu Yufu, "Guji baocun zhi wo gan" [My feelings on relic preservation], in Gaoxiong Shi Jianzhushi Gonghui [The Kaohsiung city architects' union] (ed), \textit{Jianzhu khai-kang: s\=xin\=dai\=ren de jianzhu renshi} [Chatting about architecture: the architectural understanding of modern people] (Kaohsiung: Gaoxiong Shi Jianzhushi Gonghui, 1991), p. 329. Note, I have rendered part of the title of this book in Hokkien, as it is derived from a common phrase in that language—\textit{khai-kang} 開講, meaning "to chat".

offices and residential flats. Now it is the factories, mines and warehouses of Taiwan’s industrial landscapes that are being examined by heritage professionals. At the local level of city and county administration, a growing number are being listed as third-grade relics. That a concern for the industrial and commercial landscapes is percolating into the pre-existent discourse of the guji in Taiwan suggests that the arrival of an Anglophone tradition of “heritage” has done much to alter the boundaries of this field of study.

It has not simply been a matter of new types of site being valorised with the entry of foreign heritage practices. Heritage has also altered the boundaries that were set around relic codification over the issues of vintage and age. As we saw above, antiquity had been a central theme in the histories of both official KMT historiography (“five thousand years”) and bentu thought (“four hundred years”); these ideas were also manifest in the ways in which sites were deemed significant. Yet in taking even the most recent additions to the landscape seriously as valid guji, at least in the registers of city-listed third-grade sites, this veneration of the old is actually being challenged by the arrival of the heritage idea. That sites such as wharves, factories, and shop-houses are now swelling the inventories of local government handbooks in what appears to be an open disregard for the antiquity of earlier years would point to the very different set of priorities for the listing and management of guji by local government groups in Taiwan. Whilst the central government, through agencies such as the Council for Cultural Affairs, may never have openly rescinded on the claim that “guji must be over a hundred years old”, city and county governments are moving ahead with the listing and protection of dozens of sites of twentieth-century vintage.

Heritage-related technologies perfected abroad are increasingly becoming a part of the Taiwanese historiographical sphere as well. Song Pingsheng 宋平生 notes how much can

77 P. Van Daele and R. Lumby, A Spirit of Progress: Art Deco Architecture in Australia (Sydney: Craftsman House, 1997). Art Deco architecture was also the subject of an exhibition at the Museum of Sydney, simply entitled Art Deco, held between 12 June 1999 and 5 September 1999.
be learnt from lighting effects such as the "son et lumière" shows of continental European fame.™ "Yin yu guang" 音與光 as "son et lumière" is now known in Taiwan, is used regularly at festivals in bringing many guji to life after dark. The recent inclusion of flood-lit guji in various local festivals demonstrates the extent to which heritage as a more internationalised discourse has well and truly arrived in Taiwan. Even the most clichéd of heritage symbols popularised in the West over the last decade have found their way to Taiwan. Tall Ships, a contemporary heritage phenomenon that the historian Graeme Davison has linked to the myths of settler societies from Australia to the United States, have sailed into Taiwanese visions of the past.™ The Pride of Baltimore II arrived in Kaohsiung harbour to the accompaniment of water-spraying fireboats in May 1998, bringing with it a cargo of bicentennial celebrations and maritime heritage that previously had had little to do with the Taiwan historical experience.™ One could well speculate as to how such heritage events have influenced ideas about the past in Taiwan, or whether or not the presence of Tall Ships in the island’s former treaty ports prompted any thoughts about Taiwan’s treaty-port past. In any case, events such as the visit of Tall Ships to Taiwan marks a quite different tradition of memorialising the past which is relatively new to Taiwan.

Yet the arrival of the heritage concept on Taiwanese shores has not meant a wholesale adoption of this idea. One element of “heritage” that has yet to be taken on board in Taiwan, for instance, is the gentrification of former industrial heritage sites so prevalent in

79 Graeme Davison, The Use and Abuse of Australian History (Sydney: Allen and Unwin, 2000). For Davison’s analysis of the Tall Ships phenomenon, see Chapter 4, entitled “The Great Voyage”, pp. 56-79.
80 Li Guangrong, “Mei fanggu fanchuan shouci guanglin Gaoxiong” [American Tall Ships visit Kaohsiung for the first time], Zhongyang ribao, 12 May 1998. Of course, sailing ships did frequent Kaohsiung harbour in the nineteenth century, from at least the 1850s onwards. Yet what I am suggesting here is that the far more recent tradition of Tall Ships and their use in heritage activities, bicentennial celebrations and a general maritime nostalgia throughout Australasia, North America and Western Europe, is something very new to Taiwan.
Europe, Australasia and North America over the last decade. Taiwanese property
developers have shown little interest in renovating industrial relics for use as up-market
apartment blocks as their counterparts in “the West” have done. Indeed, in contrast to the
cityscapes of Sydney, London or San Francisco, it is difficult to point to even a single
instance of former factories or warehouses having been transformed into middle-class
residential blocks in Taipei, Kaohsiung or other major Taiwanese cities. 81

Colonial history and the built environment

The art historian Pierre Ryckmans has noted a preference for the written word, as
opposed to monuments, as markers of antiquity in Chinese societies. Ryckmans argues
that in Chinese perceptions of the past, physical remainders of that past matter little—a
point at which one finds a major cultural divergence between East and West. History in
the Chinese world, suggests Ryckmans, does not reside in ancient relics, but in calligraphy,
toponyms and other word-based expression; all one has to do is glance at a Chinese train
timetable to find “…long lists of city names to which are still attached the vivid glories of
past dynasties”. 82

Other scholars from an area studies background have similarly argued that a concern for
the intangible, rather than concrete elements of heritage is a point at which Asian and
Western societies substantially differ when it comes to preserving the relics of the past.
The Vietnam-specialist William Logan, for example, argues that “… a sharp contrast exists

81 This reference to the middle-class is noteworthy too, as there is as yet very little attention to the issue of
class in Taiwanese scholarship on the historic landscape. This may well reflect the lack of a Taiwanese
scholarly tradition of labour history—research that meant engaging in any form of Marxist theory was
virtually forbidden under the KMT dictatorship.

between the Western and East Asian...approaches" to the historic built environment, the latter placing far less emphasis on the tangible remainders of the past.\(^3\)

Yet I would suggest that Taiwan represents a radical break from this model. For much of the island's past is today remembered through relics rather than words. As a historical text in its own right, the built environment is now one of the central features of many people's understanding of the past in Taiwan. The example of the railway timetable that Ryckmans employs is, nonetheless, extremely relevant, as much of the current wave of preservation activity that can be observed in Taiwan is linked in some way to the experience of colonial modernity on the island, of which, in any context, the railway is a powerful symbol.\(^4\)

In contemporary Taiwan, and despite KMT efforts to the contrary, the relics of Japanese imperialism have become decidedly fashionable, and many Taiwanese intellectuals have taken to re-assessing Japanese colonialism through the protection of historic sites associated with that portion of the island's past. The actual "bricks and mortar" of the Japanese empire have, in many respects, come to outweigh the written word, or indeed, the intangible side of the historic landscape (such as myths, stories, the skill involved in the making of sites, and so on).

In any context, the conservation or renovation of historic relics is linked closely with the study of history. Taiwan is no different in this regard. One of the most popular claims since the mid-1990s for instance, has been that relics represent a legitimate form of historical text or data. Lee Ch’ian-lang 李乾郎, an architectural professor based at the Chinese Cultural University (Zhongguo Wenhua Daxue 中國文化大學), and a key figure


\(^4\) For more on the links between railway timetables, clock towers, nostalgia, and history, see Malcolm Chase and Christopher Shaw, "The dimensions of nostalgia", in Christopher Shaw and Malcolm Chase (eds), *The Imagined Past: History and Nostalgia* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1989), pp. 1-17.
in the renovation and/or preservation of numerous first-grade relics around Taiwan, argues that the actual physical structure of colonial-era buildings should be preserved primarily as “historical materials” (shiliuo 史料), or even as a new form of “textbook” (fig. 11). The theorist Fang Chunlan 方春蘭, meanwhile, suggests that the promotion and pursuit of “native soil”, or xiangtu, education is one of the main ways in which guji can be assured proper protection—students should be encouraged to look at relics as historic texts. As a form of data or text, then, the built environment is firmly connected to history as an academic pursuit in Taiwan, and has become the space within which a number of historiographical debates are now played out. Relics matter in such debates not simply because they represent some “intangible” cultural significance, but because they are themselves concrete texts left in the landscape by Japanese colonisers.

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85 Lee Ch’ian-lang, “Xu yan” [Preface], in Zhang Junli, et al. (eds), Tai Min diqu de guji yu lishi jianzhu [Historic architecture and relics in the Taiwan and southern Fujian areas] (Taipei: Jiaoyu Bu Renwen ji Shehui Xueke Jiaoyu Zhidao Weiyuanhui, 1996), no page numbers.


87 Fang Chunlan, “Taiwan guji weihu zhi tantao” [An inquiry into the defence of relics], in Gaoxiong Shi Wenxian Weiyuanhui (ed), Taiwan diqu lishi guji weihu yu dahui fazhan yantaohui lunwenji [Collected papers from the conference on the protection of relics and city planning in the Taiwan area] (Kaohsiung: Gaoxiong Shi Wenxian Weiyuanhui/ Guoli Gaoxiong Shifan Daxue Dilixue Xi, 1995), pp. 1-18.
Figure 11. Guji as "historical data". (Source: Lee Ch'ian-lang and Yu Yiping, Relics for beginners).
However, although there is now some broad agreement amongst preservation professionals, scholars and officials on the use of the built environment as “historical text”, incongruities have arisen as to what histories such texts should speak of. The notion that relics should “advance Chinese culture” as they did in the early 1980s, for instance, has been undermined by the introduction of ideas such as heritage and the diversification of the field of preservation more generally. Yet if relics no longer “advance Chinese culture”, then what purpose do they serve? Such questions take scholars, officials and preservation workers into the more sensitive domains of historiography. The same sorts of historiographical debates that we observed in the previous chapter subsequently come into play, and scholars are forced to confront Taiwan’s colonial past under Japanese rule.

As the constant references to Chinese things and culture might suggest, the 1980s legislation aimed to protect historic sites associated with Han Chinese settlement in Taiwan. Almost all relics listed as first-grade sites by the Ministry of the Interior were, and still are, sites that claim an association with Han Chinese settlement in Taiwan, or which can be traced back to Chinese architectural traditions. In this regard, it can be seen that relics in fact aided in the KMT’s “ethnic cleansing” of Taiwan’s past in the postwar era. The converse of this was that sites associated with other ethnic groups, and most especially with the Japanese colonial presence on the island, were barred from the gǔjī category, being most often referred to simply as “historic buildings” (lǐshì jiānzhù). This was not always explicitly stated in the legislation, but was achieved by other means, such as via

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88 The only exceptions are European-built forts in Tainan and Tamsui and two former British consulate buildings.

89 By this I am referring to the removal of those elements of Taiwan’s past linked to the presence of Japanese people on the island. There may, of course, be other reasons for a lack of interest in Japanese-era relics however. In the book from which I have borrowed the title of this chapter, Richard Strassberg in fact argues that traditionally, Chinese literature “…showed little interest in foreign countries and non-Chinese ethnic groups” (Strassberg, op. cit., pp. 3-4). It may well be that a KMT lack of interest in Taiwan’s colonial past was part of this wider Chinese tradition of self-imposed ignorance when it came to non-Chinese (and especially Japanese and Aboriginal) peoples and their sites.
the above-mentioned “one century old” rule—in the 1980s, a reference to anything more than a hundred years old meant anything erected \textit{prior} to Japanese colonialism. This recourse to time and period erased any hope of Japanese-built structures gaining official legitimacy as first-grade \textit{guji}. The words of a tour guide at the “Crown prince’s lodgings” (Taizi binguan 太子賓館) in the Northern Taiwanese town of Jin Guashi 金瓜石 summed up the situation succinctly when explaining a lack of government interest in preserving that particular colonial-era building: “This building was constructed by the Japanese; it therefore doesn’t count as a \textit{guji}.”

Yet an acknowledgement of pre-colonial sites posed problems for those within the academic and official elites who saw \textit{guji} foremost as an expression of a \textit{Chinese} (and, later, Taiwanese) history. For all over Taiwan are the remnants of other, European empires that had at one time or another left their marks on the island’s landscape. How can a Dutch-built fort or old British consulate building possibly work as \textit{guji} to “substantiate the spirit of the nation’s citizens”, and to “carry forward Chinese culture”?

One way this question was circumvented was to discredit any influence that such buildings may have had on the broader Taiwanese landscape, identity or past. “The winds of the West may have shaped the outward appearance of pillars or decorations”, writes Lee Ch’ian-lang in a chapter on nineteenth-century Western architecture in Taiwan, “…but they never reached into our ancestral halls or bedrooms”. Unlike the Chinese temples and shop-houses of a place such as Tainan (i.e., sites which are presented as actually infusing cultural legitimacy into the “native soil” of Taiwan), the remnants of Taiwan’s past as a European colony or sphere of influence, despite ranking as legitimate \textit{guji} in

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\textit{Zhe dong jianzhu shi Ribenren gai de; suoji bu suanshi guji}. [This building is Japanese decided; all are not classified as \textit{guji}]. personal communication, 25 May 2001. The Taizi binguan is a wooden structure that was built as temporary lodgings for the visit of Crown Prince Hirohito 裕仁 to Taiwan in 1920. It is now owned and protected by the Taiwan Power Company (Taiwan Dianli Gongsi 台灣電力公司).

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\textit{Lee Ch’ian-lang, Taiwan jianzhu yuanlan} [A Taiwan architectural reader] (Taipei: Yushan She, 1996), p. 120.
terms of their age—many in fact outdate the vast majority of listed guji of the Chinese architectural tradition—are presented as sites on the landscape, rather than part of it.

Another method by which a distinction is made in terms of the categorisation of guji is by legitimising relics associated with a non-Chinese presence on the island as architectural proof of a victimised past. This is where the anti-colonial strain of nationalist historiography that I examined earlier in this thesis can be harnessed to provide a precedent for preserving or restoring sites such as forts, churches or consulates, as reminders of past injustices at the hands of foreign aggression and invasion. The example I raised in Chapter 1—that of one of the most celebrated guji in Taiwan over the last two decades, Fort Santo Domingo in Tamsui—has a recent past of this sort. On account of this building’s age (it predates many Chinese structures in Tamsui), this building is listed as first-grade relic. Yet it “substantiates the spirit of the nation’s citizens” primarily by marking the spot upon which successive foreign empires (Spanish, Dutch, British) supposedly heaped shame and humiliation upon the Chinese nation.

The question of preservation and codification of historic sites connected to a European heritage in Taiwan has not, however, generated any amount of controversy comparable to the issues surrounding relics that have been left in the landscape from the era of Japanese colonialism. This in itself is hardly surprising. Anti-Japanese sentiment has been a defining feature of most forms of modern Chinese nationalism, and, as we saw in the preceding chapter, was actually accentuated in the case of the KMT and its “war of resistance” against Japan in on the Chinese mainland.

It is intriguing, therefore, to discover just how many tangible remainders of the colonial Japanese presence on Taiwan still exist intact, even despite extensive Allied bombing towards the end of the Second World War, and the vociferously anti-Japanese xenophobia of the KMT leadership in the decades after “retrocession”. Strolling through the streets of large Taiwanese cities today, one cannot help but notice significant numbers of individual
buildings (in a multitude of architectural styles), that date from the colonial era or that continue to betray signs of their colonial origins. This is to say nothing of the actual layout and design of these cities, or their topography, substantial portions of which hark back to a Japanese colonial obsession with modernity and rationality.

Remarkably, however, it has only been since the mid-1990s that structures associated with Japanese colonialism have been taken seriously as “guji”, and have been viewed as parts of the historic built environment more generally in Taiwan. And it has been predominantly at the local level of relic administration, in the offices of city and county governments, that this has occurred. To be sure, much of this interest has been led by architectural professionals rather than historians. Yet nonetheless, many of the debates and arguments that have come forth as a result of this architectural interest have lead straight to the discipline of history, and in particular, to questions about Taiwan’s past role within the Japanese empire.

One clear example of this entire trend has been the fascination in which Taiwan’s surviving Shinto shrines (jinja 神社)—structures that were either defaced under the KMT or else converted into martyrs’ shrines (zhongjie ci 忠烈祠) to the heroes of the Republican Chinese revolution—are now held by a large section of the island’s scholarly elite. Since the mid-1990s, local government bodies throughout Taiwan have been busy (literally) excavating local Shinto shrines,\(^{92}\) or else protecting the stone lanterns, torii (traditional gateways to Shinto shrines) and other architectural elements of these structures that survived postwar spoliation.\(^{93}\) The work of government bodies has been encouraged by a

\(^{92}\) Such as was the case in Yilan 宜蘭 county, where a construction project was postponed so that the recently re-discovered vestiges of a Shinto shrine could be assessed. See Lin Hanqing, “Yuanshan zhongjie ci faxian Ri shenshe jizuo” [Foundations of a Japanese Shinto shrine discovered at the Yuanshan Martyrs’ shrine], *Zhongyang ribao*, 15 June 1999.

number of books and theses on the topic by architectural historians and geographers, such as Lai Zhizhang 賴志彰 (significantly, a graduate of the above-mentioned National Taiwan University’s Graduate Institute of Building and Planning), who has examined both shrines themselves, as well as the processes by which these structures have come to be re-evaluated in recent years. As Lai notes, this interest is a relatively recent academic phenomenon, and despite the role of some historians, it has been led primarily by scholars from the fields of geography and architecture. In the case of a surviving Shinto shrine in Taoyuan 桃園 county, a building which, despite being renamed as a martyrs’ shrine immediately after “retrocession”, structurally survived in its original form until the 1980s (ironically, due to a lack of funding that would have enabled earlier county administrations to do away with the building and replace it with a new structure). Subsequently, it was local architectural professionals that undertook restoration work (fig. 12). Although the Taoyuan shrine and others like it have yet to be officially designated as guji, the point is that interest in them as historical texts demonstrates how the priorities of relic preservation and restoration have changed considerably in Taiwan over the last decade—up until the 1990s, it would have been inconceivable that these most potent architectural reminders of the excesses of Japanese cultural imperialism could have been registered as third-grade guji, let alone restored.

94 Lai Zhizhang, “Taiwan zhimindi shenshe de yanjiu: cong da huanjing, peizhi, jianzhu tanqi” [The study of colonial Taiwan’s Shinto shrines: a discussion from the point of view of environment, placement and architecture], Yilan wenxian 50 (2001.3): 33-79. There has also been some interesting research conducted by Cai Jintang 蔡錦棠 of Tamkang University on the transformation of Shinto shrines into martyrs’ shrines. See Cai Jintang, “Zhonglie ci yanjiu: ‘Guoshang shengyu’ jianli de lishi yange” [A study of martyrs’ shrines: the history of the establishment of “sacred spaces of national mourning”], paper presented at Guokehui Taiwanshi zhuanti yanjiu jihua chengguo fabiao yantuohui [Conference for the presentation of the results of the National Science Council’s research plans in Taiwan History], Institute of Taiwan History, Preparatory Office, Academia Sinica, Taipei, 28-29 June 2001.

95 For details of this project, see Fu Chaoqing, Taiwan jianzhu: Rizhi shiqi, 1895-1945 [Taiwan architecture: the era of Japanese rule 1895-1945] (Taipei: Dadi Dili Chuban Gongsi, 1999).
In a similar fashion, there has been a noticeable increase in the study of so-called “crown-style architecture” (diguanshi jianzhu 帝冠式建築), associated with the Greater East Asianist ideologies of the Japanese empire during the late 1930s and early 1940s. Crown-style architecture is called thus as one of its defining features is the use of pseudo-Tang dynasty-style roofing which gives the tops of buildings a crown-like appearance. This style of architecture was used throughout the Japanese empire from the late 1930s until the end of the Pacific war and reflected ideas about Pan-Asian unity and the supposed superiority of Asian civilisation which were disseminated at the time. As in Manchuria, Korea and elsewhere, it was most commonly employed in the design of public buildings in Taiwanese cities. In Taiwan, Kaohsiung claims the largest number of surviving buildings in this style, including a railway station, the former City Hall (now the above-mentioned Kaohsiung Museum of History) and the Bank of Taiwan Building (Taiwan Yinhang Gaoxiong Fenhang 臺灣銀行高雄分行) (fig. 13).  

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97 For more on this style of architecture, see Fu Chaoqing, Taiwan architecture: the era of Japanese colonial rule, 1895-1945, pp. 41-71. There is, furthermore, a permanent exhibition in the Kaohsiung Museum of History on the Yokohama-born architect Kiyomizu Kinosuke 清水喜助 who was responsible for designing many buildings in this style throughout Taiwan in the late 1930s and early 1940s.
The rediscovery of this colonial Japanese architectural heritage in Taiwan over the last ten years, and the codification of colonial-era relics by local county and city governments, has had interesting ramifications. It is not enough to dismiss a renewed interest in Taiwan’s colonial heritage as the result of some pro-imperialist conspiracy. Nor is it simply a case, as some broader studies of heritage have suggested, of Japanese relics being rehabilitated once colonialism itself is “no longer perceived as a threat”\(^{98}\). Rather, I would suggest that this reflects the quite different priorities held by local government agencies (i.e., those that have the power to list and protect third-grade relics) and the central government, as represented in groups such as the Council for Cultural Affairs and the Ministry of the Interior—bodies that control the listing and definition of first-grade guji, and which continue to gazette Taiwan’s historic built environment with one eye always on the nation. At the same time, it is linked to the rise of the “pro-colonial” tendencies in Taiwanese historiography that have come to the fore over the last decade and that I examined in the preceding chapter.

Taiwan’s recent rediscovery of a Japanese architectural heritage also alludes to more general trends in Taiwanese society, and is connected in particular with a contemporary fascination with Japanese exotica—a trend which, in its more popular form, has come to be termed “ha Ri” 哈日, or “Japanophilia”. It is no coincidence that an interest has developed around structures associated with the more exotic and aesthetically novel side of Japanese imperialism—at the heart of this trend have been Shinto shrines, hot-spring resorts, and massive “crown-style” public buildings (rather than the functional façades of colonial police offices or schools). Shinto shrines radiate an aura of mystery and the foreign, with architectural features that are rare elsewhere in Taiwan. And due to their placement on higher ground, and usually on the outskirts of towns and cities, former Shinto shrines are places of relative serenity—something much sought after in crowded Taiwanese cities. Crown-style architecture, in displaying references to an imagined pan-Asian civilisation, provide Taiwan’s streetscapes with landmarks seemingly from another place (Shina 支那) and time (the Tang dynasty via the Second World War), whilst the general size of these public buildings means that they remain important landmarks in numerous localities throughout Taiwan. Through relics, Japanese colonial history has become exotic and aesthetically pleasant.

99 The expression “ha Ri”, is derived from a Hokkien word (“ha 哈”) meaning “to be fond of”, and “Ri”, which is the first character (日) in the Mandarin construction for Japan (i.e., Rihon 日本). The term “ha Ri” is used to refer to a contemporary Taiwanese fascination with Japanese popular and material culture. The phrase originated in reference to youth culture but is now employed in a much wider context. When used in regards to intellectuals or academics, it is considered pejorative. For more on the use of this term, and on “Japanophilia” in Taiwan more generally, see Chen Mioling, “On the cutting edge of fashion: the Japanophiles”, Sinorama 24 (1999.8): 38-47.

100 Moreover, all this has surfaced at the same historical moment in which the aesthetics of imperial Japan—tatami, sliding doors, hinoki 檜木 furniture—have reached a nostalgic peak in Taiwanese interior design. And in this regard, the rehabilitation of Japanese colonial historic sites in Taiwan borrows heavily from an international trend towards colonialism as a style (e.g., for interior design and clothing) rather than as a period of the past. In modern day Taiwan, Japanese imperialism is not just a part of history—it is also a fashion. A similar point is made in Judith Williamson, “Woman is an island: femininity and colonisation”, in Tania
Viewed from a more international approach, however, the trend throughout the 1990s to see Japanese colonial relics listed, protected or restored, places Taiwan in a somewhat interesting position. For it is in this rediscovery of a colonial built environment that that which I termed, in the previous chapter, the "pro-colonial" strain of Taiwanese historiography becomes most evident. By restoring colonial sites as historical texts, local government agencies are actually taking the lead in encouraging a re-assessment of Taiwan's colonial history. Local governments are, in general, not demolishing the remnants of Japanese colonialism, but instead distributing funds for their restoration. The Japanese past is highly visible through its relics—and it looks attractive and interesting.

A number of studies of relic preservation in other postcolonial societies throughout the world have noted how the residue of colonial rule is commonly not given high priority when it comes to preservation. This is especially so when such architecture played a symbolic role in its colonial context, such as reinforcing the power of the métropole or imperialist ideologies. The cultural historian Michel Jantzen, for instance, has noted French governmental efforts to dismount monuments of German rule in the region of Alsace following the end of the First World War, and the subsequent change of sovereignty in that region.¹⁰¹ One could well identify similar dynamics in KMT attempts to, if not always disassemble, then certainly discredit those architectural symbols of Japanese colonial rule in Taiwan following "retrocession" by refusing to officially acknowledge such sites as relics worth protection. Likewise, Stephen Royle has examined the examples of Georgian architecture in urban Ireland, as well as buildings related to a history of slavery and indentured labour in Mauritius, in his study of colonial-era

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architecture and its place in newly-independent societies. In both cases, the relics of colonialism are seen more as architectural reminders of a shameful past than relevant parts of a contemporary heritage—much as had been the case in Taiwanese officialdom prior to the 1990s.

Perhaps an even more relevant comparison can be made with South Korea. In that country, one of the few other societies in the world in which a similar amount of the historic built environment is the product of Japanese colonial rule in the early years of the twentieth century, similar debates have been taking place over the last decade. The question of what place the architectural remnants of a colonial Japanese past should play in Korea is, like Taiwan, a sensitive realm of inquiry. Yet it is clear that the case of Korea, and specific events there—such as the decision, arrived at in 1993, to demolish the former Korean Government-general (Chōsen sótokufu 朝鮮總督府) building in Seoul—have been closely observed in Taiwan. Take, for example, this plea for the protection of historic railway stations that date to the era of Japanese colonial rule offered by the lay scholars Hong Zhiwen 洪致文 and Li Qinxiang 李欽賢:

As far as our forebears were concerned, we ought to have followed the example of the Koreans in removing the old Korean Government-general building so as to wipe out the memory of Japanese rule. But if we look at things from a broader angle, aren’t they [i.e., these buildings] remnants of the history that Taiwan has experienced; and if we look to the future, there is no way that we will ever see such architecture again.

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104 Hong Zhiwen and Li Qinxiang, Taiwan guilao kuochu zhuan [Old railway stations of Taiwan] (Taipei: Yushan She, 1996), p. 74.
In Taiwan, the rediscovery of Japanese architectural heritage, and the ever-growing number of colonial-era buildings being listed as third-grade relics by city and county governments (in open challenge to the tacit “hundred-year” rule mentioned above) suggests that the experience of colonialism may be read as a source of historic novelty and pride, instead of a source of shame. Indeed, the former Taiwan sōtokufu (now Taiwan’s Presidential Palace, or “Zongtongfu” 总统府), unlike its Korean counterpart, is currently undergoing restoration rather than destruction.¹⁰⁵

Importantly, one can also sense an element of the national/local historiographical divide being played out in the politics of colonial relic management. After all, it has been local governments and their academic allies that have been responsible for codifying much of the colonial-era streetscape as third-grade relics, far more so than agencies such as the Council for Cultural Affairs or the Ministry of the Interior. For cities where entire sections of the urban streetscape were themselves invented under Japanese colonialism—Taipei, Kaohsiung, and Hualien (Hualian 花莲) are all examples—this is more about presenting a truly local historical experience which may or may not adhere to the narrow definitions offered by paradigms such as “five thousand years”.

“Community construction”

The diversification of the study and appreciation of Taiwan’s historic built environment in recent years has had interesting results. The entire discourse of guji and shizeki/ shijii which had dominated Taiwanese relic preservation circles for decades is now being challenged from a variety of angles. As we saw above with the question of Japanese colonial

¹⁰⁵ A “Capital Plaza Tranformation Plan” (Zongtongfu Guangchang Gaizao Jihua 總统府廣場改造計劃) is currently being instigated by the central government, with the aim of transforming the area around the Presidential Palace in Taipei into a public recreational space. All indications are that the building itself will not only remain, but will actually become this space’s primary attraction in years to come. For more on this plan, see Jiandao shi 27.9 (2001.9).
architectural heritage, one such angle is from “below”—from the local level of history that has not always shared national historiography’s concern for antiquity, grandeur and patriotism.

Numerous local scholars have felt frustrated with the more conservative discourse of preservation that evolved around the word *guji*. Such frustration has not been limited to the different priorities given to national and local (or for that matter urban) pasts, but goes to the very nature of historic preservation in Taiwan. Li Yan Xiufeng 李巖秀峰, the head of the Association for the Promotion and Conservation of Privately-owned Chinese Relics (Zhonghua Siyou Guji Baocun Cujin Hui 中華私有古蹟保存促進會) has framed the issue in the following terms:

> At the moment, there is no way of linking the protection of cultural property with history, with the realities [of their locality or current use], with communities and local residents, and with general research that is taking place in the Humanities. The practice of relic preservation has become bogged in the mire of architectural protection. Yet when we preserve relics, we should first try to enable their history to re-appear, and their culture to be reborn. We should preserve them as living things in which software and hardware are interlinked. This is the only way in which we will be able to give relics vitality and a truly historical significance.\(^\text{106}\)

What is the point of restoring a relic as a stationary and lifeless piece of architecture? Should not relics have a relevance to the communities around them? This is in essence part of a wider international debate on cultural property which has seen an earlier object-centric focus on the part of some preservation professionals challenged by those who favour a functionalist approach to heritage management.\(^\text{107}\) The peculiarities of Taiwan’s case however, are that such arguments have arrived simultaneously with a rapid rise in


interest in local history and a shift towards an appreciation of the island’s xiangtu, or “native soil”. For many scholars, armed with new ideas sustained by overseas heritage practices and with a local view of history that does not see the point of national monuments in a local landscape, this raises all kinds of urgent questions that have yet to be fully addressed.

The architectural scholar Fu Chaoqing 傅朝卿 has noted the importance of the social context of relics in Taiwan. Fu argues that the dominant traditions of relic management in Taiwan (i.e., those enshrined in the 1980s legislation), stressed authenticity and originality. These ideas were closely linked to the national histories we examined in Chapter 1 of this thesis. The restoration or preservation of relics in this more conservative sense was all about “getting it right”, of faithfully saving old buildings with little regard for other structures around them and even less for the significance that such sites had for local communities. At the root of such thinking was the belief that the preservation of historic buildings could retain, in Fu’s words, “a frozen past”. ¹⁰⁸

In contrast, many local scholars are now looking at ways in which relics can aid in the creation of city or village histories. It is these concerns, coupled with a gazetteer-inspired interest in the detailed history of localities, that have become perhaps the strongest incentive behind the rise of a new concept in Taiwanese relic preservation circles in recent years, i.e., that of “shequ yingzao” 社區營造, or “community construction” (sometimes given as “shequ zongti yingzao” 社區總體營造, or “comprehensive community construction”). This is a phrase for what has been identified as an actually quite disparate

¹⁰⁸ Fu Chaoqing, “Originality versus alteration: Discourse on historicity [xié] in the conservation and adaptive re-use of historical buildings in Taiwan”, paper presented at the International Symposium on Conservation and Adaptive Reuse of Historical Buildings, Department of Architecture, National Cheng Kung University, Tainan, 27-28 March 1995. The fact that the climate in most parts of the island is anything but frozen suggests just how unrealistic such desires are. Taiwan’s tropical temperatures and high levels of humidity, to say nothing of the Formosan termite, have made the task of freezing the built environment virtually impossible.
set of phenomena in Taiwanese historic preservation, including “...historic research activities, tours of ancient sites, and exciting festivals...” in various localities across Taiwan. The one thing that holds such activities together is their common concern for the local level of historiography, and the primacy of the built environment as historic text rather than a set of lapidary monuments.

As the phrase “community construction” suggests, this is a concept that is extremely local in its focus, and one that aims at building a sense of community in which scholars work with local residents to conserve traditional lifestyles together with old buildings. The argument behind this movement is simple—relics cannot stand alone in time or space; they should be managed and appreciated as part of wider efforts to preserve disappearing lifestyles, and they should be given a relevance to the community around them, rather than the nation. That such an idea has been only recently adopted reflects wider socio-political changes—until the end of martial law in 1987, any kind of civic movement which involved the unofficial gathering of communities may well have been seen as a source of opposition to central government control. At the very least, such political changes have been identified by some scholars who have been involved in this movement as one of the key reasons for the blossoming of “shequ yingzao” only since the mid-1990s. Yet above all, the “community construction” movement has arisen in tandem with the shift towards the interest in local history that I examined in Chapter 1; in essence, it represents in the built environment the same concerns and priorities that have been expressed through the revival of the gazetteer genre in Taiwan.

In the space of only a few years, “community construction” has become such a powerful force that even the former bastions of old-style relic preservation, such as the Council for Cultural Affairs, have been convinced of its importance. Indeed, since 1994, the Council has begun supporting sheng yingzhao as a central building block for Taiwan’s overall cultural development, encouraging a move “from the central to the local in administration” of the past.\footnote{Su Zhaoying and Cai Jixun, \textit{Taiwan sheng yingzhao de geji} [The locus of Taiwan’s overall community construction] (Taipei: Xingzhengyuan, Wenhua Jianshe Weiyuanhui, 1999), p. 26.} City and county governments also began to formulate cultural policies around this idea in the mid-1990s.

At the centre of the sheng yingzhao movement has been an entire class of “local cultural workers” (\textit{difang wenshi gongzuozhe} 方文史作者) and so-called “lay scholars” (\textit{minjian xueze} 民間學者). These are the generic titles given to non-academic scholars who are active in recording and promoting the history, geography and culture of local areas, usually doing so out of local “cultural-historical workshops” (\textit{wenshi gongzuoshi} 文史工作室). Many of these same scholars that have been active in the promotion of community construction projects throughout Taiwan have also been involved in the compilation of gazetteers and gazetteer-inspired texts. In the cultural-historical workshops that such scholars establish, community leaders (such as local teachers and low-ranking officials from local government bodies), and professional scholars from nearby tertiary institutions will often also be included.

Community construction groups and their aligned cultural-historical workshops find their closest models in Japanese \textit{machinami} 町並, or “streetscapes”. Indeed, the “sheng yingzhao” model appears to have been derived from the Japanese notion “\textit{machi zukuri}” 町造り (lit., “town construction”)—the Japanese movement that has been explored by Jennifer
Robertson in her seminal study, *Native and Newcomer*. The *machinami* model combines preservation of the built environment with protection of other forms of cultural property, and considers lifestyles and traditions as important as the buildings in and around which these take place. In Taiwan, the Taipei-based Yaoshan Foundation (Yaoshan Wenjiao Jijinhui 樂山文教基金會) is one group that has actively promoted this holistic model of preservation, and has encouraged exchange between *machinami* groups in Japan and preservation professionals in Taiwan. Japanese localities such as Furukawa 古川 in northern Honshū 本州 have proved particularly popular with Taiwanese historical and architectural scholars. There have been frequent exchanges between Furukawa and localities in Taiwan. As proof of the faith that Taiwanese preservation professionals have placed in the *machinami* template, one could point to the aftermath of the 21 September earthquake of 1999, when the Taipei City Government’s Bureau of Civil Affairs, together with private and academic groups, invited a number of Japanese *machinami* experts—including the head of the Machinami Preservation Alliance (Machinami Hozon Renmei 町並保存聯盟)—to tour the island and offer their thoughts on post-disaster community (re-)construction.

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114 This is not to suggest that *shequ yingzao* is simply a wholesale adoption of the *machinami* model. It may also have grown out of a Taiwanese interest in preserving the façades of “old streets” (laujie 老街) in cities and towns throughout the island. The lure of tourist-generated income has driven many local governments to protect, renovate and promote aesthetically pleasing elements of the urban landscape of “old Taiwan”, a trend that can be traced back at least to the early 1990s. Better known examples of such *laujie* include Dihua Jie 迪化街 in Taipei city and Sanxia 三峡 in Taipei county.


116 “Machinami baocun lianmeng zhenzai fangshihuan xinde baogao” [Report on the findings of the Machinami Preservation Alliance visiting group after touring disaster areas], workshop held at Taibishi Kejia Wenhua Huiguan [The Taipei City Hakka Cultural Association Hall], Taipei, 5 December 1999.
The community construction model represents an open attempt at inventing history. It shares little of the concern that many Western theorists have had for deconstructing "invented traditions". The geographer Jason Hung (Hong Fufeng 洪富峰), himself an active promoter of the shequ yingcao idea in Kaohsiung, has openly claimed that this concept is in fact a way of "creating history". Indeed, in an affront to the sensibilities of many Anglo-American heritage intellectuals, Hong openly suggests that a "construction of history" can be used positively in localities that have been previously left off Taiwan's historiographical map or where sites that have little to do with national histories are abundant. In doing so, it has undermined many elements within the discourse of guji. Community construction is about making it right rather than getting it right. And the history of the constructed community is invariably a polished and happy one in which the less savoury elements of the past are ignored or forgotten. It shares with the field of "urban studies" concern for the future and a belief that there is a need to create a sense of community, especially in Taiwan's crowded cities.

Examples of local community construction can be found right across Taiwan. When residents of Fengtian 豊田, a village in eastern Taiwan's Hualien county, established a "cultural-historical hall" (wenshiguan 文史館) in 1999, for instance, they listed the hall's first aim as being "...to enable big steps to be taken in the direction of a more complete and clear community construction..." Yet in this particular locality, "community

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117 For a recent example, see David Lowenthal, "Fabricating heritage", History and Memory 10.1 (1998): 5-24.
119 Fengtian Wenshi Gongzuoshi [The Fengtian cultural workshop], Shoufeng xiang wenshiguan [The Shoufeng township cultural-historical hall] (Fengtian: Fengtian Wenshi Gongzuoshi, c.2000), no page number, brochure. The current name of this village in Mandarin Chinese is Fengtian. However, the same characters are pronounced as "Toyota" in Japanese. This village was originally given the Japanese name Toyota in the late Meiji period, at which time it was specially designed as a rural migrant village for farming families from metropolitan Japan. It is located just outside the township of Shoufeng 壽豊, hence the name of the hall in question.
construction” translated into listing, protecting and promoting the village’s colonial landscape—Fengtian had been one of many villages established by the Japanese colonial authorities in the latter Meiji years precisely for the purpose of housing Japanese rural emigrant families.\(^{120}\)

When I visited Fengtian’s cultural-historical hall in May 2001, I met school teachers, officials from a farmers’ organisation, and residents, all rummaging through photographs that had been donated by local people, and which they hoped could be made into a publishable book on the village’s colonial-era past. The walls of the their headquarters had been adorned with maps of the local region and black and white photographs of “old Toyota”.

Fengtian is representative rather than unique. In this village, as in so many other localities around the island, a history that finds its expression in the local landscape is being crafted by local residents and amateur historians. By mapping the relics that Japanese rural migrants left behind in this village after their postwar eviction (e.g., a Shinto shrine, Japanese migrant housing, and so on), the cultural-historical hall in Fengtian is educating the community about the village’s past as a site of relevance for Japanese colonial migration to Taiwan. In doing so, Fengtian’s history is in effect being brought into a wider history of organised Japanese colonial migration—one that stretches geographically from Borneo to Manchuria. The fact that “community construction” activities in the village now include visits from descendents of the same Japanese rural migrants who had settled in this village in the early twentieth century, and who had been forced to leave Taiwan after “retrocession”, only serves to reinforce the sense that “community construction” shares little in common with Chinese or Taiwanese national histories. The history being constructed in Fengtian is at once an international and a local one. In the pride that the

cultural-historical hall shows in genuine colonial Japanese architectural heritage, and the complete disregard that such a history has for “five thousand”, “four hundred” or any other set of “years”, this example of “community construction” is openly contradicting the hegemony of the nation (fig. 14).\textsuperscript{121}

Community construction marks a new phase in historic preservation in Taiwan. In its concern for the history and culture of the “community”, it has looked beyond the boundaries of the nation that had once defined so much of relic preservation in Taiwan. Yet despite its popularity, it has not and cannot completely dispel the earlier discourses of relic preservation that pre-date it: whether these be the dynastic Eight Views, the colonial meishō shiseki, the term guī, or the more recent Anglophone discourse of heritage. Such differing ways of “inscribing the landscape” represent different historiographical priorities which continue to compete against one another. They also correspond, to some degree at least, to the levels of historiography that were examined in Chapter 1.

\textsuperscript{121} Other instances of the same that might be mentioned here are the contacts that have been established between the Taipei district of Beitou 北投 (where various efforts to rediscover the area’s hot-spring past have been on-going throughout the 1990s), and Hong Kong’s Central and Western Districts. See Zheng Ruyi, “Beitou yu Xianggang Zhong Xi huan qu dimeng” [Beitou forms an alliance with the Central and Western districts of Hong Kong], Zhongguo shibao, 14 February 2001.
Figure 14. The "cultural-historical hall" in Fengtian (Source: The Fengtian cultural workshop, The Shoufeng township cultural-historical hall).
Chapter 3: The making of a southern capital

A “New World of the South”

In December 1998, Frank Hsieh (Xie Zhangting 謝長廷), the Democratic Progressive Party (Minzhu Jinbu Dang 民主進步黨) candidate for the mayorship of Kaohsiung, came to power with the slimmest of majorities. On being sworn in as the city’s new leader—the first non-KMT-affiliated leader of Kaohsiung since the end of the Second World War—Hsieh unveiled a number of slogans and mission statements through which he outlined his vision for the city under a new administration. With the DPP claiming victory not only in the Kaohsiung city electorate, but also in the adjoining Pingtung and Kaohsiung counties, Hsieh urged the establishment of a greater social equilibrium with Taipei, the capital in the North of the island. Hsieh’s grand plan was to found what was termed a “New World of the South” (Nanfang xin shijie 南方新世界), with the burgeoning metropolis of Kaohsiung at its centre. Together with the adjoining DPP-controlled counties, the greater Kaohsiung region was to be reborn after years of cultural stagnation under KMT neglect. The bentu visions to which the DPP had aspired since the 1980s were to transform the city. Kaohsiung itself was to graduate from being simply a “harbour city” (gangdu 港都), to become Taiwan’s new “maritime capital” (haiyang shoudu 海洋首都). ¹

I begin this chapter with Hsieh’s electoral victory and the slogans that surrounded it not because this event marks any major turning point in Taiwan’s recent history, but rather because the use of slogans such as “New World of the South”, and “the maritime capital” bring into focus some of the key themes that have defined debates about Kaohsiung and its place in the Taiwanese past over the last century or more. In talking about the “Nanfang” 南方 in Taiwan, what exactly did Frank Hsieh mean? Is Nanfang, the South,

¹ For further notes on these slogans, see Tony Wu, “Frank Hsieh’s appreciation speech”, Taiwan International Review 4.6 (1998.11-12): 9. See also Liu Zhenhua, “Dazao Nanfang Xin Shijie” [Creating the New World of the South], Gaowei jhuan, Special Issue (1999): 14-17.
simply a geographic space; or might it also refer to a particular culture, landscape or history? What deeper associations does “the South” evoke in this context, and is there anything that makes it distinct from the North, or for that matter, the East or West? And why is the city of Kaohsiung, the centre of this New World of the South, the natural choice for a DPP-inspired “maritime capital”, the urban inheritor of the Taiwanese and Chinese maritime historiographical traditions we examined earlier in this thesis? Whether or not the Kaohsiung city electorate takes slogans such as “New World of the South” or the “maritime capital” seriously is one issue. Yet perhaps more crucial is the lineage of such slogans. These phrases not only represent certain political ideologies that have since been translated into policies and projects—they also represent beliefs about Kaohsiung and its place in the Taiwanese South that can be traced back a century, if not more.

Figure 15. Advertising for Kaohsiung as “the maritime capital” (from the author’s personal collection).
One of the constant themes running through the multifarious depictions of Kaohsiung's past has been an association with “the South” in some form or another. Indeed, Kaohsiung’s position in the South (of Taiwan, of the Japanese empire, and of the Chinese Republic), and its proximity to southern China and Southeast Asia, has become, at various periods, perhaps the most defining feature of the city’s local historiography.² At the same time, Kaohsiung has often been viewed as a “new” city since the early years of the twentieth century, a place defined by its modernity. Indeed ever since Kaohsiung became Kaohsiung,³ the city has been considered by many to be a place with no history.

It is the connection between southerness, trade, modernity, and a perceived lack of history in Kaohsiung that I seek to explore in this chapter. Below, I will examine how different ideas about “the South” and southerness which have existed in Taiwan over the last century have come to dictate the ways in which Kaohsiung and its history have been presented. My examination of these questions starts in the early years of the twentieth century, at a time when Taiwan was the newest, and indeed southernmost, colony in the Japanese empire. Whilst I acknowledge that Chinese dynastic knowledge contains a rich literature on things southern—one that no doubt informed Japanese imperialism as much as it did earlier Qing histories written about Taiwan—it remains the case that the city of Kaohsiung as we know it today was very much a product of Japanese empire-building. Imperial Japanese ideas about southerness informed the design and construction of this new metropolis as it expanded over the remains of pre-existing settlements and villages. And it was precisely these ideas that were to make Kaohsiung the perfect candidate to become the centre of a “New World of the South” and a “maritime capital” at the close of the twentieth century.

² Although in contrast, Kaohsiung has not necessarily been a mainstay of the historiography of southern Taiwan.
³ Details of the origins of the toponym Kaohsiung will be examined further below.
Taiwan and the Nanshin

The Nanshin 南進 or “southern advance” philosophy of the pre-war Japanese empire is a subject that has exercised many scholars of modern Asian history. Some of the better known English-language studies of the topic, such as that produced by W. G. Beasley, have tended to examine the Nanshin through the lenses of military history or political economy.⁴ These studies have pointed out that the sense of Japan having some kind of destiny to advance southwards via trade, emigration and territorial expansion has a history that can be traced back to the sixteenth century.⁵ Yet such studies have tended to stress the more concrete political manifestations of the “southward advance” from the 1930s onwards. It is the economic and militaristic incarnations of this philosophy, and indeed the subsequent territorial expansion of the Japanese empire into China, Southeast Asia and eventually the Pacific that it informed, that has most often caught the academic eye.

The growing body of work on the Nanshin being produced by Taiwan-based historians, on the other hand, has looked increasingly towards the importance of coastal southern China—Fukkien (Fujian 福建), Canton and Hainan 海南—in the development of Nanshin thought and policy—not only in Japan proper, but in colonial Taiwan as well. This work has further examined the role of colonial organisations and individuals in Taiwan (administrators, business people, migrants and military personnel) in putting Nanshin-related ideas into practice from the beginning of the twentieth century to the end of the Second World War.⁶

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⁵ The other standard texts on the topic are Henry P. Frei, Japan's Southward Advance and Australia: from the Sixteenth Century to World War II (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1991); and Yano Toru, Nanshin no keifu [A genealogy of the southern advance] (Tokyo: Chuo Koronsha, 1975).

⁶ The two leading Taiwanese scholars in this field over the last decade have been Zhong Shumin 鍾淑敏 and Liang Huahuang 梁華璜. For some representative examples of work by the former, see Zhong Shumin,
What exactly was the “southern advance”? Mark Peattie’s excellent and detailed study of this “vague and polemic term”, and indeed of the ramifications this philosophy had for the fate of the Japanese colonial empire, underscores the difficulties scholars face in trying to define the “southern advance” in any meaningful way. Peattie nonetheless provides us with one of the most helpful definitions of the Nanšhin when he argues that it:

...embodied the idea that, by virtue of historical ties dating back to the sixteenth century, economic necessity, and of its place as the moral exemplar of Asia, Japan had a destiny to advance its influence toward the Nan’yō—the South Seas—an equally nebulous term which, after World War I, came to be thought of as including all of what is now Southeast Asia, Melanesia and Micronesia.

Whilst the earlier part of Peattie’s definition is perhaps as near a succinct explanation as might be afforded of a philosophy whose tone and even meaning shifted considerably over the years, one might also add to his definition in the geographic sense. For it was not just Southeast Asia, Melanesia and Micronesia that fell within the bounds of the Nanšhin imagination—just as important were the coastal regions of China, all of the South Pacific,

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“Mingzhi moqi Taiwan zongdufu de ‘duì an’ jingying” [The operations of the Taiwan Government-general on the “opposite shore” during the late Meiji period], *Taiwan fengyu* 43.3 (1993.9): 197-230; Zhong Shumin, “Rizhi shiqi Nanjin yanjiu zhi huigu yu zhanwang” [A retrospective and overview of the study of the southern advance of the Japanese colonial period], in *Zhonghua Mingyo shi zuhuanti lunwenji di sì jie sanbian hai* [The fourth ROC symposium on special topics in history] (Taipei: Academia Sinica, 1999), no page numbers. For a recent example of Liang Huahuang’s work, see Liang Huahuang, *Taiwan zongdufu de ‘dui’an’ zhengce yanjiu: Rijū shidai Taiwan Min guanci shi* [A study of the “opposite shore” policy of the Taiwan Government-general: a history of Taiwan-Fujian relations during the period of Japanese occupation] (Taipei County: Daoxiang Chubanshe, 2001).


9 Indeed, the term Minami Shina 南支那, or southern China, often found itself used in tandem with Nan’yō in the language of the southern advance. For an example, see Taiwan Sōtoku, Kanpō, Chōshaka [Survey
and even Australasia. Indeed, throughout the Nanshin’s career, there were many “Souths” towards which the Japanese empire was seen to be advancing.

Also central to Peattie’s above-quoted passage is the sense that the Nanshin encapsulated far more than geo-politics or economic expansion. The Nanshin was, equally, an ideology, and one which developed its own set of symbols and vocabulary. In this sense, we would do well to note a point that Nicholas Thomas has raised in regards to the ways in which we approach the study of colonialism and its ideologies—that colonialism is not simply a “political or economic relationship”, but is also a “…cultural process … energised through signs, metaphors and narratives”.  

Browsing today through the catalogue of the Southern Resources Hall (Nanpō Shiryō Kan 南方資料館)—the archives of the Taiwan Nanpō Kyokai 臺灣南方協會, or “Taiwan Southern Association”, a Taipei-based institution which was instrumental in collating and analysing Nanshin-related information during the 1930s—one is struck with a sense that even as the idea of the “southern advance” was informing so much of how the Japanese empire functioned in Taiwan, it did so with a very open view about the Nanpō 南方 (South) or Nan'yō 南洋 (South Seas)’s constitution. One finds in this institution’s collections the standard travelogues from Japanese adventurers in the “South Seas”, maps of French Indochina, books about the “southern lands” of Australasia, and even texts on “the Great White South” of Antarctic expeditionary legend. It would of course be far too

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section, Secretariat, Taiwan Government-general], Taiwan to Nanbi Nan'yō [Taiwan and South China/the South Seas] (Taipei: Taiwan Sotokufu, 1935). For more on the place of southerness within the discourse on Shima, see Stefan Tanaka, Japan’s Orient: Rendering Pasts into History (Berkeley CA: University of Press, 1993).  
11 The Southern Resources Hall was opened as late as 1940 though the work of collecting the materials stored therein had begun some years earlier.  
12 I take these terms from the titles of books that were held in the collections of the Southern Resources Hall: E. D. Laborde, The Southern Lands (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1931); Herbert G. Ponting,
simplistic to suggest that the collections of the Southern Resources Hall in Taipei somehow represent Nanshin ideology as a whole. Yet these collections do direct us towards a number of important points about Nanshin thought as it developed in the colony of Taiwan.

In the first place, the nature of these collections hints at the extremely intricate, indeed almost Linnaean way in which data about the Nan’ýó, Nanpó, Minami Shina 南支那 (southern China) and other categories of the South were collected in colonial Taiwan; the South was bound, catalogued and filed excellently. Just as importantly, it becomes clear that there was never much agreement on where the boundaries of “the South” began or ended. Was Taiwan a part of the Nanpó—a quasi-Minami Shina or Nan’ýó perhaps? Or was it somehow removed from or superior to the generic South of the Nanshin? These two seemingly paradoxical points, i.e., the extremely scientific nature of Nanshin knowledge in Taiwan, juxtaposed to the vagueness and at times “mystical” nature of the Nanshin concept, came to typify ideas about the South in Taiwan throughout much of the period of Japanese colonial rule.

From at least the early years of the twentieth century, Taiwan was seen largely to be an experimental colony, a place in which various sciences that were themselves new to Japan—from botany to city planning—could all be tried without fear of failure. In essence, Taiwan became a massive laboratory in which knowledge of the tropical world and administration in equatorial dominions could be collected, perfected, and eventually

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The Great White South: Being an Account of Experiences with Captain Scott’s South Pole Expedition and of the Nature Life of the Antarctic, 2nd ed., (London: Duckworth, 1922). It should be noted, however, that whilst information concerning areas as far afield as Antarctica were collected by this institution, the vast majority of its texts related to the tropics.

distributed elsewhere throughout the empire. Much of this knowledge collection was informed by the ideology of the “southern advance”, especially in its more economic form. Indeed, an identifiable pattern emerged in which colonially-backed organisations and enterprises would leave Taiwan for the “South Seas”, returning with things and knowledge which would in turn be analysed, reproduced or commodified in Taiwan, before being exported and consumed throughout the empire. In the latter years of the Meiji period, for example, the Formosa Sugar Company (Taiwan Seitō Kabushiki Kaisha 台灣製糖株式會社) was already sending its scientists to places such as Java, Hawai‘i and Queensland to collect new varieties of cane that might be later mass produced on the plains of southern Taiwan.\textsuperscript{14} In the Taishō and Shōwa 昭和 years (1926-1945),\textsuperscript{15} it was groups such as the Taiwan Development Company (Taiwan Takushoku Kabushiki Kaisha 臺灣拓殖株式會社), an enterprise that collected and subsequently experimented with all kinds of tropical plant varieties from equatorial Asia and the Pacific, cultivating large tracts of land along Taiwan’s East Coast with tobacco, coffee and rubber, and eventually exporting its crops, and indeed knowledge, to Japan and the occupied zones of Southeast Asia and southern China.\textsuperscript{16} One could also point to the Bank of Taiwan (Taiwan Ginkō 臺灣銀行) that, whilst actually expanding into Southeast Asia from the 1920s onwards,


\textsuperscript{15} As was the case with the Meiji period, I have listed the Shōwa period here as lasting only until 1945 in the context of colonial Taiwan.

\textsuperscript{16} For some recent work on this organisation, see Adam Schneider, “The Taiwan Development Company and Indochina: subimperialism, development and colonial status”, \textit{Taiwan Historical Research} 5.2 (1998.12): 101-132. On the educational activities of the Taiwan Development Company in occupied Hong Kong, see Robert S. Ward, \textit{Asia for the Asians? The Techniques of Japanese Occupation} (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1945), p. 108.
produced large numbers of research reports on topics such as “the trade of China and the South Seas”, or “the financial institutions of the South Seas Chinese”.\(^\text{17}\)

What was true of companies was true also of governmental bodies. The Taiwan Government-General established a number of departments and bureaux dedicated to the study of the Nanpo, and/or the dissemination of Nanbin ideology. Under the governorship of Gotô Shinpei 後藤新平, colonialism was made a science within which tropical colonisation became the single most important area of study. Gotô himself collected vast amounts of information on the administration of European and American colonies in Asia and the Pacific for instance, whilst the first public library in Taiwan that was established under his governorship claimed as its “distinctive characteristic” a “…large collection of rare and valuable books relating to South China”.\(^\text{18}\) Such work was aided by research conducted in the laboratories and classrooms of the Taihoku Imperial University (Taihoku Teikoku Daigaku 臺北帝國大學) which, after its establishment in 1928, claimed academic excellence in fields such as tropical medicine, botany, and Nan’yo anthropology (fig. 16).\(^\text{19}\)

\(^{17}\) Taiwan Ginkō, Chōsaka [Survey Section, Bank of Taiwan], *Shina to Nan’yo bōeki yōran* [An overview of the trade of China and the South Seas] (Taipei: Taiwan Ginkō, 1920); Taiwan Ginkō, Sōmobu Chōsaka [Survey section, Department of General Affairs, Bank of Taiwan], *Nan’yo Kakyō no kin’yū kikan* [The financial institutions of the South Seas Chinese] (Taipei: Taiwan Ginkō, 1915).


\(^{19}\) A comprehensive list of educational and academic institutions specialising in Nanbin-related knowledge in Taiwan (and for that matter metropolitan Japan) is provided in Nanshin Seinenkai [The Nanshin Youth Association], *Dai Nanjō o hiraku* [Colonise the Great South Seas] (Tokyo: Taku Minamisha, 1942), pp. 207-243. A permanent exhibition in the University History Room (Xiaoshi shi 校史室) of the National Taiwan University today provides details of the academic study of “the South” in colonial times at that particular institution.
Together with a vast corpus of *Nanshin* knowledge being assembled in metropolitan Japan, the data collected and published by Taiwan-based organisations formed a reservoir of knowledge about the South Seas, Southeast Asia and southern China. As a consequence of this, and in keeping with the more “mystical” elements of the *Nanshin* and the ways in which this philosophy depicted the Nanpō, a number of consistent themes came to evolve within colonial ideas about “the South”. Perhaps the single most consistent of these was an association between southerness and climatic warmth. In the literature on the southern advance, the South was always hot. The term “*Nan shi Nan’ya* 南支南洋 (lit., “southern China and the South Seas”) for example was used virtually interchangeably with the “tropical regions” of the Asia-Pacific, an area that stretched from the China coast to the islands of the South Pacific. Owing almost certainly to the role of the Japanese Imperial Navy in promoting the very philosophy of the southern advance (and in administering Taiwan), the South was also associated strongly with the sea. The South *Seas* were presented as a net of interconnecting trade routes, a realm of islands and peninsulas. This connection between the South and the ocean that was inherent in much of *Nanshin* thought was to return to Taiwanese historiography, as we shall see in the closing section of this chapter, in the final decade of the twentieth century.
Yet perhaps most important of all was the connection that developed between “the South” and economic potential. In Nanshin thought, the South Seas, southern China and Southeast Asia were all generally depicted in Nanshin texts as realms of untapped and, at times, boundless riches. This was a sphere of exotic commodities, a place to which the business and trade of the empire was destined to expand and in which Japanese colonial modernity would soon take root. As we shall see later in this chapter, and throughout the thesis, this economic factor was to have a long-lasting effect.

The evolution of a discursive vocabulary of the tropics in nineteenth-century Europe forms the subject of Nancy Leys Stepan’s work Picturing Tropical Nature. In this book, Stepan traces the emergence of a discourse of “the tropics” within the workings of European imperial expansion in South America, Asia and Africa, revealing how the publications of naturalists such as Alexander von Humboldt and Alfred Russel Wallace were to have a profound impact on how Europeans came to visualise other parts of the world. Stepan’s analysis stresses the significance of visual imagery in establishing a sense of difference and otherness between a temperate Europe and the landscape of its tropical colonies. The author goes on to examine the ways in which a visual vocabulary of the tropics was developed, noting in particular the utilisation of tropical nature, especially vegetation, as symbols of the tropics.

In many cases, this transformation of plants into visual symbols involved the conscription of pre-existing botanic symbols into the service of a new visual archive of the “tropics”. The classic example of this was the palm tree. The palm tree, argues Stepan, “...had long symbolised the origins of civilisation in Asia or biblical desert lands of the Middle East”. Yet by the end of the nineteenth century, palm trees had become “...the ubiquitous sign of the tropics, images of...[them]... instantly signalling less a botanical species than an

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imaginative submersion in hot places". The rise of the palm tree as an icon of the tropical world in the European imagination occurred in the middle decades of the nineteenth century. Its ubiquity came as a result of quasi-scientific and educational institutions such as the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, which popularised palm trees as bizarre and even grotesque features of the tropical landscape, presenting them to an inquisitive public as classic examples of exotic tropical flora (the Great Palm House at Kew was opened in 1849). In published texts also, the palm was called upon with increasingly frequency in artistic depictions of distant colonies. Thanks to the visual stereotypes of the tropics that were established in the mid- to late nineteenth century, today one can rarely imagine the quintessential tropical landscape without palm fronds.

Like the tropics of nineteenth-century European imperialism, the Nānpō, Nānyō and Minami Shina of the Nanshin ideology developed an elaborate visual vocabulary which made continual use of certain images in its references to half-imagined southern landscapes in the early decades of the twentieth century. This became particularly prevalent from the Taishō period onwards, and the most frequently recurrent images within this vocabulary were, like those in Europe decades earlier, commonly botanic or floral in nature. Indeed, in Nanshin thought, it was often exactly the same botanic symbols that came to be associated with the generic South as had been employed in the service of European depictions of the tropics.

21 *Ibid.*, p. 19. Stepan notes that the transformation of palm trees into the classic symbols of the tropics had much to do with Alfred Russel Wallace’s 1853 treatise *Palm Trees of the Amazon.*

22 *Ibid.*, p. 33. It should be noted that the city which forms the basis of this thesis, i.e., Kaohsiung, was directly involved in the European formation of a body of knowledge and imagery about the tropics in the nineteenth century. The founder of the field of “tropical medicine”, Sir Patrick Manson, had spent a number of years in the treaty port of Takow (Kaohsiung) as a medical officer in the Imperial Chinese Maritime Customs Service; he based some of his early work on tropical diseases he had encountered there. Philip H. Manson-Bahr and A. Alcock, *The Life and Work of Sir Patrick Manson* (London: Cassell and Company Ltd., 1927), pp. 5-7.
An example is the palm tree. The palm tree was the icon most commonly associated with the *Nanshin* ideology in Taiwan. Countless books, magazines and journals that theorised on the “southern advance” made liberal use of artistic impressions and, in some cases, photographic images of palm trees swaying on exotic desert islands (fig. 17). The “palm plantation” (*yashi’en* 椰子園) was said by one *Nanshin*-affiliated author to be the most representative of “South Seas” landscapes; the same theorist even wrote of the *Nanshin* ushering in a new “palm tree era” to replace the eras associated with production of other tropical commodities (rubber, coffee, and so on) that had preceded it.  

![Figure 17. *Nanshin* [The southern advance] 2.8 (1937.12), cover page.](image)

In colonial Taiwan, however, palm trees hardly symbolised an exotic or distant Other landscape as they might have done for Stepan’s Victorian readers or the metropolitan Japanese public. On the contrary, palm trees were everywhere. By this I mean that palm

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23 Ōno Tenpei, *Nanshin shi* [My views on the southern advance] (Tokyo, 1915), pp. 72-76.

trees that grew naturally in Taiwan were not merely used in Japanese depictions of the colony (though indeed they were used in such a way), but that these and other introduced varieties of palm were actively cultivated all around the island by colonial authorities. The Taihoku Botanical Gardens boasted numerous species of palm, and postcards of "the cocoanut [sic] trees in the Taihoku Botanical Garden" were reproduced for tourists (fig. 18); other depictions of the same trees produced in tourist literature habitually included exotic choungsam-clad (southern Chinese?) beauties strolling in their shade (fig. 19). In other public spaces too, palm trees were used and promoted as graceful proof of the southern nature of the colony.

Figure 18. The Taihoku Botanical Gardens (courtesy of the Institute of Taiwan History, Preparatory Office, Academia Sinica).
Many varieties of palm utilised in the colonial landscape were imported from other tropical localities. The Cuban Royal palm, or *roystonea regia* genus, for instance, was imported and employed as the *arbre d’alignement* of choice by Japanese city planners throughout Taiwan, this in effect being an emulation of techniques used in European colonies throughout the tropics.\(^{25}\) This genus was planted neatly along the thoroughfares of many of the island’s

\(^{25}\) Many colonial-era works on the topic cite European and American city planning examples. See for example, Taiwan Sōtokufu, Eirenkyoku [Taiwan Government-general, Bureau of Forestry], *Kōdōju to shison shokuyu yōran* [An overview of *arbres d’alignement* and the planting of trees in towns and villages] (Taipei: Taiwan Sōtokufu Eirenkyoku, 1920).
major cities, including Taihoku and Takao. And the main road running through the middle of that centre of Nanshin academia, the Taihoku Imperial University, became metonymous with its palm-lined walkways (an association that remains strong to this day). These trees were said to afford relief from the tropical sun, whilst creating a “South Seas” ambience in many urban centres. Other species of tropical palm, such as the betel palm (*areca catechu*), were harnessed as decorative embellishments in the gardens of public buildings, parks and educational institutions.

Equal in popularity as a botanic symbol of a southern ambience in Taiwan was sugar cane. Sugar cane had become both a visual and linguistic symbol of the Nampó from an early date in the development of the Nanshin idea. The importance of sugar as a commodity in places such as the Dutch East Indies, the Philippiones and other areas that fell within the Nanshin imagination meant that there had been intense interest in cane as a commodity. In Taiwan too, large amounts of funding and time were invested in the rationalisation and expansion of the sugar industry. The image of endless swaths of cane stretching out across the plains of southern Taiwan became one of the most widely reproduced photographic

26 Seikiyo Matayoshi, *Taiwan jinci zhi lü* [A tour of Taiwan, then and now], trans. Wei Tingchao (Taipei: Qianwei Chubanshe, 1997), p. 80-81.
27 A genus which, though not native to Taiwan, nonetheless predates Japanese imperialism on the island.
28 Palm trees not only fulfilled a symbolic role of making the colony look “southern”, but were also easy to cultivate and use in landscaping projects. On the favourability of using palm trees (and especially *myristica regia*) in landscaping in tropical climes, see David L. Jones, *Palms throughout the World* (Sydney: Reed Books, 1995), pp. 73-74. For a more Taiwan-specific study of the uses of palms in landscaping and city-planning, see Zeng Kuan, *Nan Taiwan de wuxian* [The resources of southern Taiwan] (Taipei: Changmin Wenhua Chubanshe, 1997), esp. Chapter 5 (pp. 81-92), entitled “Yezhi shu; yaoqian shu” [Coconut palms; a source of wealth].
29 One of the most thorough studies of the colonial sugar industry in Taiwan is Ka Chih-ming, *Japanese Colonialism in Taiwan: Land Tenure, Development and Dependency, 1895-1945* (Boulder CO: Westview Press, 1995).
images in the colony (fig. 20). Such images portrayed the South’s economic potential as a producer of tropical crops, even more so than the decorative palm tree.  

Figure 20. The sugar cane of southern Taiwan as depicted on an undated colonial postcard (courtesy of the Institute of Taiwan History, Preparatory Office, Academia Sinica).

Much of the Taiwanese landscape, both built and natural, could be made to fit neatly with these visual stereotypes of the South. The island’s climate was perfect for the production of tropical commodities (sugar, tropical fruit, tobacco), and it boasted a wealth of tropical flora and fauna in its own right. The prevalence of Nanshin-related iconography such as palm trees and cane fields in the actual design of the urban and rural landscape respectively (most of this instigated by the Government-General in Taihoku) as well as in visual and written portrayals of Taiwan, certainly aided in the creation of a southern

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30 Ironically, however, the cane field was at times used as the symbolic site at which fellow Asians were exploited at the hands of European imperialism in the countries of Southeast Asia and the Pacific. The South of rippling cane fields may have been southern, but it was not always idyllic.

31 Though this was, of course, selective. Those parts of the Taiwanese landscape that reach into alpine altitudes could hardly help sustain the Nanshin mythology. Such areas were conveniently played down in the Nanshin narrative.

32 The Government-general of Formosa, Bureau of Communications, The Climate, Typhoons, and Earthquakes of the island of Formosa (Taiwan) (Taipei: Taihoku Meteorological Observatory, 1914).
ambience in the colony. Even the people of the island were believed to be related to those that the empire encountered as it advanced territorially: those of Chinese descent spoke a language originating in Minami Shina; Aboriginal people were said to be of South Sea Austronesian stock. Thus, the colony was “southern”—a Nangoku 南國, or “southern land”—and not merely a site from which the empire looked southwards.

Yet within the southern colony, there developed, furthermore, what might be called a hierarchy of southernness. This is to say that the assumptions about what a southern landscape, climate or even people looked like came to be used as markers of difference between geographic localities within Taiwan (and not just between Taiwan and other colonies or spheres of influence). This hierarchy was accentuated by the pivotal position of the colonial capital Taihoku. This city may have housed many of the organisations and institutions that had been instrumental in studying the Nanpô, and its very streets may have been decorated with that classic symbol of southernness, the palm tree. Yet Taihoku was also located in the geographic North of the island. The further geographically South one travelled out of Taihoku (and towards the generic South of Nanshin thought), on the other hand, the more evident a “southern” feel became: the temperature and humidity rose, while tropical flora became more prolific.

The difference between Taihoku as the colonial capital, and “southern Taiwan” (Taiwan nanbu 臺灣南部) was codified in the landscape of the island itself. In the Nanshin-coloured ideology of the Taiwan Government-General, the dividing line between the island’s North and South was located at a fixed geographic point—at the latitude of 23°27 ´, where the modern science of geography dictated that the Tropic of Cancer sliced the island in two. It was here that the tropics started, and it was below this invisible line that Taiwan’s “southern” nature became clearest. In the early years of the Taishō era, this latitude was

33 I am yet to ascertain as to whether or not the tropic of Cancer may even have marked a dividing line between what some historians have identified as the “inner” and “outer” South Seas in the doctrine of the Nanshin. On this point, see Frei, op cit., pp. 70-71.
in fact classified as the dividing line between northern and southern Taiwan. A monumental Tropic of Cancer Tower (Kita Kaikisen Hyōtō 北回歸線標塔) was designed to illustrate the point, this concrete structure being erected in close proximity to the North-South trunk railway line shortly after its opening in 1908 (fig. 21). Indeed, passengers on this line passed the tower (and the tropic it represented) as they journeyed southwards. The tower was adorned with the numerical co-ordinates of the tropic, and an arrow atop it pointed along the North-South axis. “South of this tower”, stated a tourist guide published in 1923, “are the tropics, and the colours of the southern land (Nangoku) become stronger”. 34

![Figure 21. The Tropic of Cancer Tower (courtesy of the Institute of Taiwan History, Preparatory Office, Academia Sinica).](image)

34 Yamakawa Iwakichi, Saikin no nanbu Taiwan [Southern Taiwan recently] (Tainan: Taiwan Daikansha, 1923). A virtually identical passage appears also in Taiwan Sōtokufu, Kōtsūkyoku, Tetsudōbu [Railway Department, Bureau of Transport, Taiwan Government-general], Taiwan kankō no kan [A guide to sight-seeing in Taiwan] (Taipei: Taiwan Nichinichi Shinpōsha, 1939), p. 28.
Takao: "base of the southern advance"\textsuperscript{35}

Given the highly centralised nature of colonial administration in Taiwan, few places could ever compete with Taihoku for the sheer concentration of expertise on Nanshin-related matters. This is not to suggest that Nanshin and the ideas of southernness that this philosophy brought to Taiwan meant anything less for other localities throughout the colony, however. Indeed, as we shall see below, the city of Takow was in many ways the main Taiwanese locality in which the knowledge analysed and collated in Taihoku was distilled into an urban mythology of "southernness", and later, into real and concrete things—roads, port facilities and public buildings.\textsuperscript{36} Much of the physical transformation of Takow that was undertaken between the 1910s and 1940s was clearly tied in with Nanshin-related ideas in one way or another. Few places in Taiwan were quite as representative of the southern advance as was Takow.

The relationship between the (re-)design of Takow under colonial rule and the Nanshin ideology of imperial Japan forms the topic of a Masters thesis completed by Li Shufen 李淑芬 at Taiwan's National Cheng Kung University in 1995.\textsuperscript{37} To my knowledge, this

\textsuperscript{35} I refer to Kaohsiung by a number of different toponyms in this chapter. "Takow" is the name I give to the city when referring to its pre-1920 history, and was the toponym that was used in English-language texts since the nineteenth century. As we shall see below, the city was given a new name (i.e., Takao) in 1920. Thus, for the period covering 1920 to 1945, I refer to the city as Takao. I use the current term, i.e., Kaohsiung, for anything relating to the postwar era.

\textsuperscript{36} I do not employ this idea of an "urban mythology" here in a critical studies sense—as a "fallacious thought" that represents something inherently false about the city and which obscures a genuine or more authentic history. For such a definition, see Graeme Gilloch, Myth and Metropolis: Walter Benjamin and the City (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1996), esp. pp. 9-13. I would instead agree with Raphael Samuel and Paul Thompson's charge that mythologies (including those imposed by governments, colonial or otherwise) deserve to be taken seriously as artifacts worth examination. See Raphael Samuel and Paul Thompson, "Introduction", in R. Samuel and P. Thompson (eds), The Myths We Live By (London: Routledge, 1990), pp. 1-22.

\textsuperscript{37} Li Shufen, Riben Nanjin zhenghe xia de Gaosiong jianshe [The development of Kaohsiung under Japan’s southern advance policy], Masters thesis, Department of History, National Cheng Kung University, Tainan, 1995.
thesis represents the only academic analysis of the influence of the ideology of the “southern advance” in determining the shape of Kaohsiung. Li’s study details a range of public works programmes that saw what had been a series of minor fishing townships, Qing military outposts and a small but thriving treaty port transformed into Taiwan’s second largest city and busiest harbour by the 1930s. Yet whilst Li contributes substantially to our understanding of Takow’s urban development, her thesis does not take into account the substantial differences in the way in which the Nanshin ideology influenced the development of Takow over time. For the relationship was not quite as simple as it might seem at first. Takow was not always a Nanshin city, though it had certainly become one by the years of the Pacific War.

The need for a large, modern harbour in southern Taiwan was identified as an economic necessity for the colony by a young Director of Civil Affairs, Gotō Shinpei, during his inspection tour of the island in 1899. However, at this early stage of planning, there is little evidence to suggest—as Li has done in the above-mentioned thesis—that Takow was chosen directly as the site for a large, new harbour because of pre-existing links to the “South Seas”, the prevalence of a southern landscape, or a prophecy that Takow would become the main base from which military forces would be dispatched to southern battlefields in future decades. In fact, the reasons were more pragmatic than ideological, and were related primarily to the proximity of Takow to the fertile plains of the island’s

38 The choice of Takow may have reflected a desire by colonial authorities to override objections and difficulties that would have been faced if attempts to modernise another pre-existing port, Anping, had been carried through. The port of Anping, servicing what had been the prefectural capital of Taiwan (now Tainan), was one of the most commercially important trading ports in southern Taiwan throughout the nineteenth century. In his book Lukang: Commerce and Community in a Chinese City (Albany NY: State University of New York Press, 1995), Donald R. DeGlopper notes that there is at least a popular belief in Taiwan that other harbours developed under Japanese colonial rule, such as Taichung harbour (Taizhong gang 台中港), were likewise built anew so as to avoid the need to improve existing ports (pp. 115-119).
South-west. A modern port in the southern portion of Taiwan would aid in the transfer of raw materials such as sugar and timber produced in the city's hinterland and beyond.39

Figure 22. Plans for the city dating to 1895, the year of Taiwan's annexation by Japan (Source: unitled map held at the Taiwan Branch of the National Central Library, Taipei).

Plans to develop Kaohsiung harbour and its environs were drawn up in tandem with the construction of a modern port in Taiwan's North at Kiirun (Keelung). The decision to undertake harbourworks in Takow and Kiirun must be understood within an islandwide context of improvements to the efficiency of the colony's transport and communications, and the extension of major roads and railway lines. Moreover, it coincided with the promotion of modern European city planning techniques in Taiwan, heralding the

39 Rice was also a factor. It is ironic that the need for a harbour at the southern end of the empire was reinforced during the Russo-Japanese war, a time when the idea of a "northward advancing" (bokkaishin 北進) empire was far more prevalent. Shipments of rice left Takow in 1904 for Japanese troop formations in North Asian theatres of war. *Japan. Supplementary Report for the year 1904 on the trade of the consular district of Taiwan (S. Formosa)*, No. 3490 (Reprinted in Taipei: Ch'eng-wen Publishing Co., 1972), p. 8.
deliberate erasure of traditional Qing city walls in many settlements around the island, and the adoption of rational grid-patterned cities in their place. In creating modern port cities in Taiwan, Japanese colonialism could be legitimised in a family of modern imperialisms in Asia.

The building of a modern port city in Takow involved changing the face of the area’s land and sea. The first phase of a massive land reclamation programme around the foreshores of a shallow Takow harbour was undertaken between 1900 and 1907 by the The Taiwan Land Construction Company (Taiwan Jisho Kenchiku Kabushiki Kaisha 臺灣地所建築株式會社). This land reclamation coincided with perhaps the most important infrastructural project undertaken in the new colony, i.e., the completion of the North-South trunk railway line. Takow had been designated as the southern terminus of

40 Chu-joe Hsia, “Zhimin de xiandaixing yingzao: chongxie Riben zhimin shiqi Taiwan jianzhu yu chengshi lishi” [Constructing colonial modernity: re-writing the architectural and urban history of Taiwan during the Japanese colonial era], Taiwan shehui yanyuan jikan 40 (2000.12): 47-82.
41 On this point, it might be noted that there was an element of “prestige port” mentality at work here, i.e., the need for modern ports in Taiwan was motivated by the desire to “look good” in the eyes of other colonisers, and not just by economic necessities. I was made aware of this idea through discussion arising out of a conference paper regarding the construction of the Indonesian port of Tanjung Priok under Dutch colonial rule: Arjan Veering, “Tanjung Priok: Port of Batavia-Jakarta, 1857-1957”, paper presented at Maritime History Beyond 2000: Visions of Sea and Shore conference, Western Australian Maritime Museum, Fremantle, 11-14 December 2001.
42 That the construction or extension of port cities is usually connected to wider transport and communications schemes is a point made by Brian J. Hudson, Cities on the Shore: the Urban Littoral Frontier (London and New York: Pinter, 1996), esp. p. 52.
43 For the official story of these land-reclamation projects and their relation to harbourworks in Takow, see Rinji Taiwan Sōtoku, Kōjibu, Takao Shutchojo [Takow branch office, Department of Public Works, Provisional Taiwan Government-general, Takao shikkō kōji [Harbour works in Takow] (Takao: Rinji Taiwan Sōtoku Kōjibu, 1917); Taiwan Sōtoku, Doboku Kyoku [Bureau of Civil engineering, Taiwan Government-general], Takao shikkō yoran [An overview of harbour works in Takao] (Taipei: Taiwan Sōtoku, 1923).
44 I say completion of the North-South trunk line, because the beginnings of such a line had in fact been put in place during late Qing rule. For a more detailed study of the origins of the trunk line and the adaptation of
this railway line, and reclamation work on the Takow waterside had been undertaken with
the specific aim of providing land for a new railway station (fig. 23) and its surrounding
service industries. The “new town”\(^{45}\) of Takow that resulted from this reclamation radiated
northwards from the railway station, and was to become, for the next decade or more, the
heart of an expatriate Japanese community in the town.\(^ {46}\) It was no coincidence, then, that
the project to create this technologically advanced, deep water harbour began in Takow
just a few months before the first trains from Kiirun in the North were pulling into the
town’s new railway station in 1908.

![Figure 23. The Kaohsiung station—terminus of the North-South trunk line (courtesy of the Institute of
Taiwan History, Preparatory Office, Academia Sinica).](image)

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the plan under Japanese rule, see Takahashi Yasutaka, *Nihon shokuminchi tetsudō shiron* [A history of Japanese

\(^{45}\) “Minato-chō at the foot of Kotobuki-yama [sic] is the oldest part of the city and is the site of government
offices and residences”. Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, *Civil Affairs Handbook, Taiwan (Formosa):

\(^{46}\) One which, through the Takow Homelanders Association (Takao Naichijin Kumiai 打狗内地人組),
documented its own existence and history. See Takao Naichijin Kumiai, *Takao ichō enkaku shi* [A short history
of Takow] (Tainan: Tainan Shinpōsha, 1916).
The construction of a new harbour in Takow was a project of substantial proportions. Natural rock formations at the harbour’s entrance which had previously hindered the entrance of larger vessels were demolished using dynamite, and a shifting bar that lay outside the harbour was dredged, as was much of the harbour floor, thus furnishing anchorage for steamships of an increasing size. Coastal mangrove swamps around the northern and southern shores of the harbour were almost completely cleared. And along the harbour’s northern banks, quays, warehouses and customs facilities were built, with the 130 metre-long Shinhama pier, located just a short distance from the railway station, becoming the centrepiece in this new set of waterside infrastructure (fig. 24).47 In turn, a coastal line (”hamaser” 暗線 in Japanese) was laid alongside the pier, linking it with other port facilities and the Takow railway station. It was here by the harbourside that, “...all the administrative buildings and large mercantile institutions...[of the town were]...situated”.48 Harbour construction continued unabated from 1908 until the end of the First World War, and by the late 1910s, Takow had been completely transformed from a minor coastal town into the island’s largest, busiest and most modern port city South of Taihoku.49

In creating the modern port city of Takow, colonial planners and engineers only showed regard for the preservation and adaptation of those portions of the pre-existing landscape, both natural and built, which could play a functional role. The Chinese fishing village of Kigō 旗後 survived on the opposite banks of the harbour from the new railway station.

47 This eventually becoming the main site at which most arrivals in port took place. For an example, see Hideo Yamanouchi (ed), Second Student Educational Trip to Japan (Philippines): our Thirty Days in Japan (Manila, 1936), p. 1.
48 Japan Tourist Bureau, Taipeih Branch, Tainan and Vicinity: Takao and Anping (Taipei: Japan Tourist Bureau, 1919), p. 10.
49 Other than the above-mentioned thesis by Li Shu-fen, and the already-footnoted Japanese-language material on Takao harbourworks, other useful sources on this topic include H. Nagao, Irrigation Works and Harbour Improvements of Takao in Formosa (Taipei: Government-general of Formosa, 1909). A good Chinese-language source is Huang Shimeng, Guangdong zhe zong xin xin zhi hui huayu zhanwang [Hopes and retrospectives as Kaohsiung, city and harbour, welcome in the new century] (Taipei: Guoli Taiwan Daxue Jianzhu Yu Chengxiang Yanjiusuo, 1992), pp. 5-7.
The area’s adjoining Qing-era fort that sat atop the harbour’s southern head was renovated for Japanese military installations.\textsuperscript{50} The same district claimed a British-designed lighthouse that had been administered by the Imperial Chinese Maritime Customs Service; this structure was likewise replaced with a new state-of-the-art facility at the conclusion of the first phase of harbour construction in 1908.\textsuperscript{51}

\textbf{Figure 24.} The Shinhama pier (courtesy of the Institute of Taiwan History, Preparatory Office, Academia Sinica).

Furthermore, and as had been the case in some other parts of the island, improvements made by Japanese colonial authorities in terms of harbour construction were, in many ways, based upon ideas and failed attempts at the same by European governments and private firms present in Takow during the treaty port era—a time when the port had been home to the opium hulks of Jardine Matheson, Dent & Co., and other hongs of the Victorian “China trade”. This is clear from Japanese-language works of the Taishô and Shôwa eras, in which public works projects are written into a long line of improvements

\textsuperscript{50} Ironically, the same fort had been first built in the 1870s to repel a Japanese expeditionary force.

\textsuperscript{51} Shen Wentai, \textit{Yandun liang hui nian} [Two hundred years of lighthouses] (Taichung: Taiwan Sheng Zhengfu, Xinwen Chu, 1998), pp. 18-22.
that Europeans had attempted to make to Takow, from the bunding of the waterfront to the erection of harbourside facilities such as a custom house and go-downs. The triumph of Japanese imperialism, in literally moving mountains and parting seas, was only the latest and most successful of foreign presences in the port. Those elements of treaty port Takow’s built environment that were deemed unnecessary in the new port were razed: a German consulate building dating from the early 1890s together with go-downs nearby belonging to European firms being amongst them. A British consulate building, military installations and other facilities, on the other hand, were retained, eventually being incorporated into the new harbour landscape and, in many instances, given new roles.

Ironically, and despite the debt that much of Takow’s new town around the railway station and the Shinhamar pier owed to the memory of this earlier form of imperialism in the port, most of it was reclaimed directly over the top of what had been the treaty port’s “gun boat harbour”.

The land reclamation and harbour dredging works that saw Takow transformed were attributable to Japanese empire-building, as well as events half a world away from Taiwan. Improvements in Takow were made possible through war in Europe that saw industries such as harbour construction and ship building decline in that part of the world for much of the 1914–1924 decade. The involvement of Japan’s navy in the same war’s Far Eastern Front, and the mandated territories in Micronesia that Japan extracted from the Versailles Peace Treaty, also added much to the development of Takow’s harbour, railway and other

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52 See for instance Taiwan Sōtokufu Kōtsūkyoku [Taiwan Government-general, Bureau of Transport], Takao ko [Takao harbour] (Taipei: Taiwan Nichinichi Shimpōsha, 1928), pp. 2-6; and Taiwan Sōtokufu Kōtsūkyoku, Taiwan no kōwan [The harbours of Taiwan] (Taipei: Yoshimura Shōkai Insatsu-bu, 1930), pp. 74-77.


public works by stimulating shipping and other maritime industries, almost all of which would eventually use the new deep water harbour as a base from which to travel southwards.

In other words, up until the Taishō period and the First World War, Takow’s development can be understood as part of a wider process of colony-building, and not necessarily as a manifestation of the ideology of the Nanshin. A new harbour was needed so that the communications and transport system of the island as a whole could be modernised. Takow was juxtaposed to Kūrun in the North, the two becoming major hubs at either end of a railway line and various shipping routes. One might interpret these island-wide developments as manifestations of a vague, Meiji view of the Nanshin, and the need for Japan to ameliorate the facilities of its southern colony.

However, there is little to suggest that Takow itself, the layout of its streets or the design of its port infrastructure, was in any way an expression of a Nanshin imagination at this early stage. Indeed, if anything, the transformation of Takow had been started at a time when the Nanshin ideology was experiencing something of a lull, and when the Russo-Japanese war saw the empire’s popular imagination turn sharply towards the North.

It was only in the late 1910s, and after many of the proposed improvements to the harbour had been completed, that Takow “discovered” its Nanshin destiny. And this happened rather suddenly. In their book *The industrial area of Taiwan: Takow harbour*, published two years before the granting to Japan of a League of Nations mandate in Micronesia, Tanaka Kazuji and Shiba Tadachi 芝忠一55 detail the development of various infrastructural

55 A native of Fukuoka 福岡, Tanaka Kazuji was one of colonial Taihoku’s most prolific writers and publishers; Shiba Tadachi was a Takao-based journalist-turned-politician. On the former, see *Taihoku shimin jishokoroku* (naichi jin no bu) [Address book for Taipei residents (Japanese section)] (Taipei: Jūsho Geppō Sha, 1939), p. 137; on the latter, see *Takao shika kanmin shokuiroku* [List of government officials in Takao province] (Taipei: Niiitakasha, 1940), p. 15.
projects in and around the port of Takow from the late Meiji period to the end of the First World War, and list the many ports around the world to which Takow was linked through shipping routes by the 1910s. Yet there is a surprising element of imagination and emotion in the closing pages of their work. Here, with reference to palm trees, coral reefs and tropical islands, the authors begin to summon up an almost magical vision of a southern world that lies beyond Takow’s horizon. All at once, Takow is no longer just a port; it is a platform from which one might gaze southwards towards a checkerboard of islands rich in exotic flora and fauna. The authors in fact describe Takow as a stage from which the “homeland of our Yamato race” (waga Yamato minzoku no furusato 我大和民族の故郷), nestled amongst coral reefs and swaying coconut palms of the Pacific, can almost be seen.

The tone of this text combines the dry language of the engineer and economist with the most emotional elements of the Nanshin philosophy. Yet this text marks a change in writing about Takow, in that it is one of the earliest instances in which the port’s very nature is discerned through the Nanshin prism. And this text does not exist in isolation. In fact, within the space of a few years, Takow-based authors and groups had found a new raison d’être for their city beyond the export of commodities, the ease of transport or the end of a railway line. A renewed Taishō excitement about the Nanshin inspired by the addition of the Micronesian islands into the empire, and coinciding with “…the Taiwanese economy [being] further integrated into Japanese expansion to the South”, gave Takow’s

56 Tanaka Kazuji and Shiba Tadachi, Taiwa n no kōgōshi: Takao kō [The industrial area of Taiwan: Takao harbour] (Taipei: Taiwan Nichinichi Shimpōsha, 1918).

57 Ibid., pp. 111-112. In this regard, the book shows some interesting influences from racial debates of the time in which Japanese ethnic origins were claimed by some theorists to be found in realms of “the South”. For further details of such debates, see Tessa Morris-Suzuki, “Becoming Japanese: imperial expansion and identity crises in the early twentieth century”, in Sharon A. Minichiello (ed), Japan’s Competing Modernities: Issues in Culture and Democracy 1900-1930 (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 1998), pp. 157-180.
geography a whole new significance. As the site of the southernmost railway station in the empire, Takow marked the extremity of Japanese industry and modernity, the place where land-bound transport of trains and automobiles gave way to ferries and ocean-going steamers. In like fashion, the wharves of Takow harbour marked the spot from which ships sailed to and from the South Seas and the countries of Southeast Asia; where Taiwanese products and expertise set forth for southern spheres of influence. Maps dating from the 1920s show the railway ending at the Takow waterfront, and the harbour opening towards a horizon peppered with names such as “Manila”, “Celebes” and “Hong Kong” (fig. 25).

This transformation of Takow—from a peripheral bay into a large modern harbour; and from a functional port into a southward gazing one—was codified by colonial officialdom in 1920. For in May of that year, the city was re-christened. Its hybrid name of Takow 打狗 which had sufficed since the late Qing period was replaced with the two characters: 高雄. The new toponym of “Takao” was a borrowed one; it belonged to a mountain near Kyoto. Yet it fulfilled the dual purpose of sounding almost identical to its predecessor when read in Japanese, and fitting the heroic mood of the era. Now, Takao was forging valiantly towards the South Seas. Indeed, so popular was the new toponym that it was evoked again only a few years later in christening a new model of warship in the fleet of the Japanese Imperial Navy. The town had shed the backward and foreign connotations

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58 Leo T. S. Ching, op cit., p. 102. The fact that the 1918-1920 period marked a turning point in Taiwan as a whole is something that Ching remarks upon here, despite his study being related to assimilationist policies rather than the concept of Nanshin.

59 As one Kaohsiung-based historian has noted, the meaning (as well as the sound) of the characters mattered also. With its new name, the city was said to be “flying high and gallantly through the realms of the South” (南方の天地に高く雄飛す). See Zeng Yukun, Discussion of the origins of Kaohsiung’s toponyms, p. 143.

present in its former (i.e., Aboriginal) name, and was ready to take its place at the edge of a proud and expanding empire.\footnote{For more on the Japanese origins of the toponym Takao, see Yin Demin, “Gaoxiong shi deming yuanyuan zhi yanjiu (xia)” [An investigation into the origins of the toponym Takao [Kaohsiung] [Part II]], \textit{Gao shi wenxian} 2.4 (1990.7): 15-30.}

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{figure25.png}
\caption{This 1937 map shows "southern" ports on the horizon as one looks southwards from Takow/Takao (courtesy of the Institute of Taiwan History, Preparatory Office, Academia Sinica).}
\end{figure}
Writing shortly after the town had been given its new name, a Western visitor to Takao was in no doubt that he had arrived in a tropical metropolis, one in which “monkeys scamper through the shrubbery...palm-trees here and there stand out against the dense tropical sky-line” and where “flowers grow in a certain profusion in Japanese gardens and in the modified jungle beyond the outskirts”.62 Another foreign traveller who passed through the city in the early 1920s noted the “streets were broad and well laid out; in some of them avenues of coconut trees had been planted”.63 In other words, the very urban mythology that had been rising since the years of the First World War was already coming to find its way into the city’s landscape.

In 1924, and following an administrative restructure of the colony, Takao was designated as a self-governing city and given its own municipal government or shiyakusho 市役所. A new city bureaucracy was subsequently formed, taking up its task of governing and defining the city of Takao through offices dotted throughout the quarter around the railway station. It was this new level of Takao-based bureaucracy that, by the start of the Shōwa period, began commonly referring to Takao as not simply a city with a Nanshin destiny, but even as “the Nanshin’s site of origin” (Nanshin no kigenchi 南進の起原地), or “the base of the southern advance” (Nanshin no konkyoichi 南進の根據地).64 These were terms for the city not necessarily formulated in Tokyo or Taipei as much as in Takao itself.

63 Rutter, op. cit., p. 4. Interestingly, Rutter also notes that the “coconut trees” he observed in Takao were in fact ill-suited to the city’s climate, and were thus “not flourishing” at the time of his visit.
64 For some representative examples of the uses of these phrases, see Shiba Tadachi, Shinkō no Takao [Rising Takao] (Kaohsiung: Taiwan Nichinichi Shinpōsha, 1930), p. 241; Takao Kōwan Kyōkai [The Takao Harbour Association], Takao Kōwan Kyōkai gaiyō [An outline of the Takao Harbour Association] (Kaohsiung: Takao Shōko Kaigisho, no date), p. 1; Takao Shū, Chiji Kanbō, Bunshōka [Documents Section, Takao Province Governor’s Office Secretariat], Takao Shūsei ichiran [A summary of conditions in Takao Province] (Kaohsiung: Nanpō Shōjisha, 1936), pp. 1-2; Katayama Sugao and Nakayama Kaoru, Yakushin Takao no zenbo [A complete overview of the rising Takao] (Tokyo: Rikkōdō, 1940).
And it was local groups such as the Takao Chamber of Commerce and Industry (Takao Shōkō Kaigisho 高雄商工會議所) that promoted them with the most vigour, applying such ideas to the city through their publications and activities. Nor were they particularly accurate given that, as we saw above, it was the northern capital of Taihoku that had become the undisputed centre of southern knowledge collection. The Nanshin idea and its vocabulary was simply appropriated by Takao-based interests and the city’s local administration in their efforts to encourage investment in the city, Japanese migration to the city, funds from the Government-General, and even domestic and international tourism.

This Nanshin-inspired urban mythology that emerged over the next decade had infiltrated almost all official depictions of Takao by the early Shōwa years. The Takao harbour exhibition (Takao kōsei tenrankai 高雄港勢展覽會) is a case in point. This event was held in May 1931 to celebrate the completion of yet another phase of harbour construction which had seen the port provided with ever more facilities, further dredging undertaken, and the size of the city swell with labour from surrounding areas (most predominantly Tainan and the Pescadores). Organised by the city’s municipal authorities, the exhibition involved the participation of official and business groups such as the above-mentioned Chamber of Commerce and Industry, with the local representatives of Japanese shipping giants Nippon Yūsen Kaisha 日本郵船會社 and the Ōsaka Shōsen Kaisha 大阪商船會社 also present. The exhibition included various official functions and speeches, as well as public celebrations of the port and the city around it. Many of the new, modern public buildings that had been erected to house offices of the city government were for the first time flood-lit in the evening; regattas and other water-based

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65 Typical of such was the Chamber of Commerce and Industry's journals Takao Economic Information (Takao keizai jihō 高雄經濟情報) and The Takao Industry and Commerce Review (Takao shōkō jihō 高雄商工時報), which commonly featured articles stressing Takao's connections to South China and Southeast Asia, and made continual references to the city as the "base of the southern advance".
activities were scheduled to coincide with the event. Significantly, the exhibition was officially opened on the Shinhama pier.⁶⁶

On the placards that greeted visitors in the exhibition halls, Takao was compared with other “great ports” of the world, from Liverpool to Vancouver. Yet most importantly of all, Takao was presented as the southern port par excellence of the Japanese empire—the “uniquely finest harbour at the southern extremities of the empire” (taikoku no kyōkunen muni no ryōkō 帝國の極南無二の良港).⁶⁷ Posters produced to accompany the exhibition made full use of visual imagery that had come to dominate depictions of the South, showing Takao as a thoroughly modern yet tropical metropolis. The art deco curves of two towering ocean-liners bob in a harbour that bustles with commerce; in the foreground are palm fronds, and a bright red sun (reminiscent perhaps of the rising sun flag) blazes in the background.⁶⁸ Such symbolism did not stop at the printed paraphernalia that accompanied this exhibition, but was present even in the lyrics of the Takao Harbour Exhibition Marching Song (Takao kōsei tenrankai kōshinka 高雄港勢展覽 會進行歌), which exclaimed:

Palm fronds shade the chirping birds,
Fishes leap beneath the mangrove trees,
In our joyous land of Takao,
Let us sing and rejoice.⁶⁹

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⁶⁶ Takao Shiyakusho [The Takao City Government], Takao kōsei tenrankai [The Takao harbour exhibition] (Kaohsiung: Takao Nanpō Insatsujo, 1931), p 1.

⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 1. Similar descriptions can be found throughout Takao Shiyakusho, Takao Tai kan [A general survey of Takao] (Kaohsiung: Nangoku Shashin Taikansha, 1930).

⁶⁸ Such imagery bore striking resemblances to the depictions of ocean liners common to the art deco poster art of A. M. Cassandre and other graphic artists of the same era. See Alistair Duncan, The Encyclopaedia of Art Deco (London: Quantum Books, 1988), pp. 80-82.

⁶⁹ This is the song’s second verse. See Takao Shiyakusho [The Takao City Government], The Takao harbour exhibition, p. 207.
There was, of course, a large gap between the realities of a developing and increasingly industrialising Takao in the 1930s and the Nanshin-inspired iconography that groups such as the city government promoted through this particular event, and indeed through many other publications. Yet at the same time, the influence that these more abstract ideas about “the South”, and the wider perceptions about what the South should look and feel like in Takao, had on the further development of the city cannot be underestimated. At the turn of the twentieth century, Takao may not have been designated as a site at which the Nanshin ideology would be translated into urban planning, yet in the post-World War I era, this is in many respects what happened.

With the completion of the Sun Moon Lake hydro-electric scheme in 1933 providing high voltage electrical power to the city through a series of new and interconnected substations, Takao grew and industrialised at a rapid pace. The heavy industry of Japanese conglomerates—Asano 浅野 cement, Mitsubishi 三菱, Mitsui 三井, and so on—established factories in and around the city, where land and labour were cheap. This, in turn, stimulated the demographic and geographic growth of Takao (fig. 26). Though there was nothing idyllic or particularly “southern” about, for example, the Asano cement factory that was built on the lower reaches of Kotobukiya 壽山, such additions to the city did nonetheless come to be linked to the idea of Takao as the “base of the southern advance”. For just as the South Seas were seen to be the site of economic potential for an expanding Japanese empire, so was Takao presented as a site of economic and industrial potential within the southern colony itself.

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70 On the importance of the Sun Moon Lake hydro-electric scheme to the industrialisation of Taiwan, see Lin Bingyan, Taiwan dianli zhushi huishe fazhan shi: Taiwan jingyan de kaizhan [A history of the development of the Taiwan Electricity Company: a first step towards the Taiwan experience] (Taipei: Taiwan Dianli Zhushi Huishe Ziliao Zhongxin, 1997), pp. 125-131.

In keeping with the growth and industrialisation of the city, the shape of Takao itself changed even further. Avenues and boulevards of extraordinary width were designed to radiate outwards from the harbour and the bureaucratic centres of town, linking Takao’s harbourside districts with what had been peripheral areas, such as the new naval base at Zuoying 左營 in the city’s North.\(^{72}\) The completion of these arterial roads was linked furthermore to the more militaristic side of the Nanshin philosophy that had emerged by the mid-1930s, with a number of roads being paved to support the transport of ordnance.\(^{73}\) Takao harbour and the naval base of Zuoying were indeed places from which the southward expanding Japanese Imperial Navy sent its troops in various South China campaigns. Yet the Takao streetscape was not simply functional—it could claim a

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\(^{72}\) On the (rather ill-informed) use of streets of extreme width in British colonial city planning in the tropics, see Robert Home, Of Planting and Planning: the Making of British Colonial Cities (London: Chapman and Hall, 1997). Although there is no direct evidence to suggest that the design of streets of extreme width in colonial Takao represented a Japanese attempt to imitate British design, it did nonetheless have the effect of giving the Takao streetscape a similar appearance to that of colonial cities in other parts of Asia.

\(^{73}\) I thank Mr Oliver F. L. Yu 洪芳來, Director of the Kaohsiung Harbour Bureau, for pointing this out to me when I spoke to him in January 2000.
symbolic role as well. Typical of this was the far-fetched, though extremely powerful, claim that from one particular street—the Shōwa Road, located in front of a new railway station—one could gaze southwards “as far as the Spratly Islands”.

In this top-down structuring of both a southern streetscape and an associated mythology of Takao, that most pervasive symbol of the Nanyō, the palm tree, was also present. Many of Takao’s main streets were, like Taihoku, lined with Cuban Royal palms and other palm varieties. On the bathing beach developed for the use of Japanese migrants at the foot of Kotobukiyma, palm groves were cultivated for decorative purposes and were marketed as tourist attractions in themselves. On the opposite side of the harbour in the (predominantly Chinese) district of Kigō, palms were also chosen as the suitable tree for a long line of windbreaks, and were reproduced on postcards and maps of Takao (fig. 27). This symbolic importance of palm trees to the colonial landscape of Takao has been noted by Lin Shuguang 林曙光, the late Kaohsiung-based journalist cum historian. Writing in 1994, Lin recalled how as an expatriate school student in metropolitan Japan in the 1930s, he was asked to compose an essay about his native city of Takao—he chose to write about the city’s palm trees, “plants of which we in Kaohsiung and Pingtung should be most proud”, and flora which were for Lin at least, most representative of the city’s landscapes.

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74 This is summarised in Ye Xiuze, Daoxiongshi fazhan lishi zhongyao yinsu zhi yanjiu [A study of the important factors behind the history of Kaohsiung’s development], Masters Thesis, Institute of Sun Yat-sen Thought, National Sun Yat-sen University, Kaohsiung, 1985, p. 94. The Spratly islands (Spratly 南沙, or “Southern sands”, in Chinese) are located in the South China Sea, between Vietnam and the Philippines.

75 Lin’s reminiscences about the palm trees of colonial Takao can be found in Lin Shuguang, Dasou suoku [Trifling discussions about Takow] (Kaohsiung: Chunhui Chubanshe, 1994), pp. 225-228.
The project to create in Takao a Nanpō landscape continued until at least the late 1930s. In 1936, influential officials and intellectuals within the city were considering ways through which Takao could be made even more “southern”. In his book *A Treatise on the Design of Greater Takao*, for instance, the local resident and theorist Katayama Sugao postulated that the city would grow even larger and more “southern” over the years to come, eventually becoming a tropical counterweight to the Manchurian port of Dairen (Dalian 大連) in the empire’s North. Katayama believed that Takao could and should be

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76 Recent work by Keiko Ono and John Lea, both of the University of Sydney, has shown that the project to develop tropical towns that were at the forefront of colonial modernity was also undertaken in Japanese-ruled Micronesia during the same period. See Keiko Ono and John Lea, “Colonial towns of the northern Marianas: rediscovering the urban morphology of Saipan and Tinian”, seminar presented at Resource Management in the Asia-Pacific series, Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, the Australian National University, Canberra, 31 May 2001.

77 It is highly relevant that Manchurian “showcases of municipal splendour” such as Dairen and Shindyō (Xining 新京) of which Louise Young has written were developing a parallel mythology of northern urban modernity at precisely the same time. See Louise Young, *op cit.*, esp. pp. 248-250.
made into something of a tropical “Utopia” (a word he uses frequently throughout the work), a city in which the art of “tropical living” (nettai seisatsu 熱帶生活) could be perfected. Katayama advocated the use of tropical flora in various parts of the city to suit certain types of architecture and space. And he examined the ways in which other Nan’yo or Minami Shina localities, such as Hong Kong, might provide blueprints for the design of an emerging Takao. The heights of Kotobukiyama might be adapted, for example, into a residential quarter for wealthy Japanese expatriates and migrants to the city, much as the Peak had been in the British colony of Hong Kong.  

**Negotiating Souths in postwar Kaohsiung**

The project to promote Takao as a kind of tropical metropolis at the southern edge of empire did not end with Japan’s surrender in 1945 and the subsequent change to Taiwan’s sovereignty. Indeed, for a few years at least, it flourished. The city’s colonial toponym itself was left unchanged, with the two ideographs that make up the name “Takao” merely being pronounced in Mandarin Chinese as “Gaoxiong” (i.e., Kaohsiung). And whilst many of the city’s public buildings had been destroyed by Allied bombing in 1944, there were no major efforts to remove those elements of the city’s built environment that harked back to Japanese imperialism or the ideology of the Nanshin with which it had been associated. Even the city’s Shinto shrine, though reconsecrated as a shrine to the martyrs

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78 Katayama Sugao, Dai Takao kensetsuron to shi no genzei [The design of Greater Takao and current trends in the city] (Takao: Nankai Jihōsha, 1936), p. 300. For a similar example of such writing, see Takao Shiyakusho, Takaochi jōran [An overview of Takao city] (Takao: Takao Shiyakusho, 1934).

79 There is some evidence to suggest that many people in Kaohsiung continued to use the Japanese pronunciation of the city (“Takao”), until well into the 1960s. In Bernard Cheyenne’s Cold-War spy thriller Sabotages à Takao [Sabotage in Takao], which is set in the city during the 1950s, a special point is made of this. See Bernard Cheyenne, Sabotages à Takao (Paris: Presses de la Cité, 1960), p. 31.

of the 1911 Chinese Revolution and the Sino-Japanese War, was left architecturally intact.  

This was also true in terms of the urban mythology of the city. References to Kaohsiung in promotional material of the immediate postwar years, such as the bilingual New Taiwan Monthly, continued to speak of the city’s “tropical views” and its littoral position at the edge of the Pacific Ocean. Even as late as the 1950s, Kaohsiung-based political leaders were still speaking of the city as “the most suitable site for the base (jidi 基地) of our country’s southern advance policy” (wo guo Nanjin zhengzhi 我國南進政策). Descriptions produced by Kaohsiung’s local publishing industry continued to stress the city’s littoral location in the ROC’s South. Such writing shared the Nanshin focus on Kaohsiung’s position in the region generally, and associated the city’s southern location with a natural propensity for industry and trade. Take this example from a 1953 work on the city produced by a local newspaper, which could just as easily have been written about Takao the Japanese harbour as it could Kaohsiung the city at the edge of a Chinese “province”:

Kaohsiung is one of our country’s international ports, and is located at an important position in the extreme South [Nanbao 南端] of the province [i.e., Taiwan]; it represents the most ideal construction of a trading harbour, is our gateway onto the

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81 The architecture of the Shinto shrine was not altered until the 1970s, when it was made to fit its postwar role as a shrine to Chinese martyrs. On the issue of early postwar restoration and KMT preservation of Japanese colonial structures (both architectural and ideological), see Huang Shimeng, “Rizhi shiqi Taiwan dushi fazhan ji fenxi” [An analysis of urban development during the era of Japanese rule], in Chen Meirong and Zhang Yanxian (eds), Taiwanshi yu Taiwan shiliao [Taiwan history and Taiwan historical materials] (Taipei: Zili Wanbao Chubanbu, 1993), pp. 221-243. I shall return to this discussion of this site in Chapter 6.


83 Such ideas were expressed by the KMT legislator and Kaohsiung native Guo Guoji 郭國基. See Guo Bashan (ed), Guo Guoji yanjiu ji [Guo Guoji’s collected speeches and writings] (Kaohsiung: Da Wutai Shuyuan, 1979), pp. 21-22.
world of seaborne trade, and is a key to the southern extremities [Nanduan de yuoyao

Such references to the “southern extremities” (perhaps replacing the “South Seas” of the
colonial vocabulary) may appear contrary to the mythology of the central plains that KMT
scholarship brought with it to postwar Taiwan, what with its fascination with the land-
based civilisation of Chinese antiquity. The colonial mythology of an urban southernness
that had been cultivated in Kaohsiung under Japanese colonial rule, however, did find
something of an ideological cousin in certain elements of KMT political history.

Figure 28. An (undated) postwar photograph of the Kaohsiung Railway Station with its distinctive “crown-
style” roof (courtesy of the the Institute of Taiwan History, Preparatory Office, Academia Sinica).

Cities had long held an esteemed place in Republican Chinese legend, a point I made in
my brief examination of urban history in Taiwan earlier in this thesis. Certain cities of the
Chinese South had indeed been depicted as paragons of a KMT revolutionary tradition.
This is a theme implicit in John Fitzgerald’s work *Awakening China*, in which the author

84 Gonglun Bao, Da Gaoxiang [Great Kaohsiung] (Kaohsiung: Gonglun Bao Gaoxiong Fenshe Ziliao
Yanjiushi, 1953), foreword (no page numbers).
notes how Canton was viewed as a home of an anti-Manchu revolutionary activity, and later anti-imperialist movements in the earliest years of the Republic. In the 1920s, Canton had been presented as the epitome of a southern Chinese modernity and cosmopolitan urban culture. Its landscape was accordingly dotted with memorials to the pantheon of early Republican heroes. One might also point to the importance of Nanking as a loyal southern city of Republican China, that locality being commemorated through its reproduction in street-names (e.g., Nanking East Road in Taipei) in many Taiwanese urban centres after 1949.

The loyal southern city narrative, however, was linked to a Republican veneration of the Chinese nation and the place of a locality such as Kaohsiung (or Canton) therein. In this regard, there existed some major differences in the ways in which the Nanshin had been appropriated in the 1920s and 1930s by local Takow/Takao-based interests to promote the city within Taiwan and throughout the greater Japanese empire. Under colonialism, it had been an imperial ideology (i.e., the Nanshin) that had been appropriated into the service of a local urban mythology, and which had subsequently come to influence the design of the city’s landscape and topography. In the postwar years, however, it was this localised view of Kaohsiung as the “base of the southern advance” which was worked back into KMT nationalism and national historiography of the kind I outlined in earlier chapters.

The welding of these two historiographical traditions (i.e., Kaohsiung as the vanguard of the Japanese empire’s southern advance on the one hand, and what might be termed a Republican urban tradition in Nationalist political history on the other), made a good deal

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86 For an example of such writing, see Edward Bing-shuey Lee, Modern Canton (Shanghai: Mercury Press, 1936). Lee presents all kinds of civic improvements as symbolic of a southern, Cantonese modernity, from the demolition of old Qing-era city walls to “...the use of women operators...in the Canton telephone exchange [which] affords a striking contrast to the prevailing situation in North China” (p. 72).
of sense for KMT officialdom in the early postwar years. When in 1949 the ROC Navy relocated en masse to the naval base (left behind by the Japanese Imperial Navy) in Kaohsiung’s northern suburb of Zuoying, the idea of Kaohsiung as a valiant garrison city at the southern edge of the nation was found to coalesce as much with ROC nationalism as it had done with Japanese imperialism. Such an idea resonated with the anti-colonial strain of Republican historiography in particular.

The subsequent arrival of thousands of mainland Chinese naval personnel and their dependants in the city, a large proportion of whom claimed ancestry from the coastal provinces of southern China, actually supported this combination of historical traditions. In a strange twist to the connections that Kaohsiung had established with the occupied zones of Minami Shina during the war years then, Kaohsiung became a base for a different (though related) “southern advance”. In post-“retrocession” Taiwan, however, Kaohsiung was made to actually absorb the southern Other (i.e., KMT refugees from southern China) rather than colonise, exploit or mimic it.87

As a locality that had not been so substantially transformed by the experience of Japanese colonial modernity as had Kaohsiung, Tainan had been focused upon as the most suitable site in which to present and thereafter preserve a Chinese landscape, one which conformed to this quite different reading of what it meant to be “southern”. As I demonstrated earlier in this thesis, it was this “ancient city of culture” that took precedence as the crucible of a Chinese (and later, nativist Taiwanese) culture and past. And it was to that city, rather than Kaohsiung, that the eyes and funds of both the central

and provincial governments turned in search of a true or authentic jiangnan 江南—China’s Lower Yangtse cultural heartland—in Taiwan.

Tainan’s place as the pinnacle of an historic Chinese high urban culture—and from the 1970s onwards, a southern Taiwanese culture and history—was further strengthened through the rise of bentu, or nativist thought, a phenomenon I examined in Chapter 1. With the fundamental changes in thinking about history and place that were experienced in Taiwanese officialdom and intelligentsia in the wake of the bentu movement in the 1970s, the history and geography of Taiwan were increasingly visualised (something that was also examined in the first chapter of this thesis).

Moreover, through its idealisation of the rural, the bentu movement worked to discredit Kaohsiung’s landscape. As we saw above, “nativisation” saw the grand narratives of national Chinese histories challenged by the local side of the island’s past. The quintessential expression of this was found in the theme of the home-town (guxiang/jiaxiang). The true Taiwanese guxiang of bentu thought was presented as an essentially rural landscape of rustic bliss. And most importantly, it was always located in Taiwan’s South, as far away ideologically and geographically as possible from Taipei. In the popular culture of 1970s Taiwan, the local hometown of Taiwan’s rural South was celebrated as the cradle of true Taiwaneseness; it was venerated through the titles of countless southern Hokkien popular songs, and in the pages of various bentu novels and journals.88

As Karl Ning of Taiwan’s National Central University has pointed out, this concept of the southern guxiang came about largely through the work of individuals from particular parts of rural Taiwan for whom the hometown held a powerful ideological value in the face of

rapid urbanisation, and the political hegemony of Taipei. Ning describes the *bentu* idea of southern authenticity as “illusory”—a term which alerts us not only to the fact that much of its was idealised, but also to the predominance of visual imagery in the ways in which the Taiwanese South was presented by the *bentu* movement.  

So what to do with a landscape such as Kaohsiung’s? The city’s position in the South had long been a defining feature of its appeal and local mythology. Yet its colonial-era streetscape was about as far removed from the quintessential southern hometown of nativist thought as could be imagined. Interestingly, this confusion about Kaohsiung’s relationship to other historiographical traditions became the source of debates about how authentically and geographically “southern” Kaohsiung actually was. A recent publication from the Institute of Modern History at Academia Sinica relates the story of a bronze equestrian statue of Chiang Kai-shek that was erected on one of Kaohsiung’s busiest traffic roundabouts in the mid-1960s. Following the unveiling of the statue, disagreements emerged between KMT party headquarters in Taipei and local Kaohsiung officials over which direction the image should face. When in Kaohsiung, should the generalissimo be made to face North or West on his march back to the mainland? The question was not merely one of whether Chiang should be gazing toward Canton (West) or Nanking (North), but more importantly, whether or not Kaohsiung sat in a legitimately southern position at all (fig. 29).  

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81 This anecdote is retold in Xu Xueji, *Mingyong Tamngong gongzi xiangguan renwu fangwen jilu* (*Forging the future: an oral history of the Tang Eng Iron Co.*, 1940-1962) (Taipei: Zhongyang Yanjiuyuan, Jin Dai Shi Yanjiusuo, 1993), p. 234-245. Another interesting and related side-note is that when, in 1983, a group of Chinese *émigré* army veterans decided to erect and consecrate a temple in Chiang Kai-shek’s honour in the Kaohsiung district of Qijin 旗津, they ensured that the temple’s effigy of Chiang was made to look *west* across the Taiwan Strait. I visited this temple, the Jiang Gong Gan’en Tang 蒋公感恩堂, in May 2002.

81 Canton lies almost directly West of Kaohsiung, whilst Kaohsiung is further North (in part) than at least three southern Chinese provinces: Hainan, and at least part of Kwangsi (Guangxi 廣西) and Canton.
Figure 29. Chiang Kai-shek faces the mainland on a Kaohsiung roundabout (Source: Xu Xueji, Forging the future..., p. 235.)

In examining texts produced by both Kaohsiung-based authors and Kaohsiung government interests of the 1970s and 1980s, one can sense the difficulties that this contradiction posed. On the one hand, the remnants that Japanese colonialism had left in the Kaohsiung landscape, and in ways of depicting the Kaohsiung landscape, were undeniable. Nanshin icons such as palm trees, botanical symbols of the southern modernity present in Kaohsiung’s streets, were clearly linked to the ideology of the “southern advance”. Yet it was precisely these connections to Japanese imperialism that saw Kaohsiung’s “southerness” discredited under KMT rule. The result, in the comparatively small amount of material produced on Kaohsiung for much of the martial-law era, was a constant uneasiness when it came to discussion of the residual elements of the city’s Nanshin past.

Let us consider this depiction of the city offered by the Kaohsiung-based author and academic Zhong Ling 鍾玲 in her essay “Kaohsiung, Kaohsiung”. For Zhong, Kaohsiung is “the southernmost city in China” and “the authentic land of southern barbarians”; it embodies all that is typical of a southern Chinese identity, and is charmingly provincial in its
tastes: “ Everywhere throughout Kaohsiung, the city still bubbles with wildness”.92 But at the same time, such “southern” qualities are deemed irreconcilable with the modernity of the southern metropolis itself: “Kaohsiung, oh Kaohsiung”, laments Zhong, “…as the waves of industrial civilisation (gongsheng wenming 工商文明) wash up one after the other on your shores, how much of your wildness and amity will you retain?” Modernity as it is found in Kaohsiung is corrosive of a “southern” identity, rather than consistent with it.

Whilst authors such as Zhong chose to situate Kaohsiung within a Chinese geography of a friendly, rural South, other, more official depictions instead chose to embrace the modernity of the city and ignore its geography. Kaohsiung was a city in which “…rows of chimneys of various industrial plants can be seen…”, whilst the northern suburb of Zuoying was “…a natural born [sic] cradle for China’s new navy”.93 Yet such industrial or military prowess were not presented as being determined by the city’s position in the South.

And up until the 1980s, there was a reluctance on the part of many government agencies to mention the role of the city in the “southern advance” of the Japanese empire, let alone celebrate those elements of the city’s landscapes which might be considered in some way “southern”.94 The city’s Nanshin-inspired topography was, in fact, actively denied—one publication even disassociated the city’s colonial past from its palm trees, claiming “there were no tree-lined boulevards to be seen” (kanbudao linyuan dadao 看不道林園大道) in

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94 There were some exceptions. The benta author Hong Suli 洪素麗, for example, celebrated the city’s tropical plantlife and topography in ways similar to Nanshin authors decades before her. A typical example is her essay “Mugua shu de jiyi” [Memories of the papaya tree], in Shi nian sanji [A decade of essays] (Taipei: Shibao Wenhua Chubanshe, 1981), pp. 27-30.
early postwar Kaohsiung, and that such elements of the city’s landscape had been added later.\textsuperscript{95}

**APROC, the Nan xiang and the maritime capital**

In the early 1990s, however, Kaohsiung’s position as the base of the southern advance, and a commercial hub at the nation’s littoral, was re-discovered. This change occurred in the space of less than a decade, and it was connected to a set of interrelated policies and trends in the Taiwanese political and intellectual world that began to alter radically the ways in which Kaohsiung’s history and geography were viewed. In particular, I would argue that Kaohsiung, as a city that was “invented” under Japanese colonialism, only came to be regarded as a city with a legitimate history within the bounds of the pro-colonial historiography of *Taiwan shi* that I examined in Chapter 1. In the paragraphs below, I shall examine how this occurred, and explore the extent to which this rediscovery of the colonial discourse of the *Nanshin* at the end of the twentieth century had profound implications for the writing of Kaohsiung histories, and more generally, for Taiwan history.

In the wake of intellectual debates over “maritime Taiwan”, there had been an increasing interest in Taiwan about defining the island’s place within the context of a greater maritime Asia. The promotion of Taiwan’s coastal history and culture by academic and government groups also aided in the more partisan goals of the *bentu* movement in the 1990s. “Maritime Taiwan” was often evoked to emphasise perceived cultural differences between Taiwan and the PRC. Indeed, inherent in much of the literature about “maritime Taiwan” was the sense that Taiwanese society represented a stark and diametric opposite

\textsuperscript{95} Gaoxiong Shi Zhengfu Xinwenchu, *Gaoxiong shi: zoeri, jixir, mingu* [Kaohsiung city: yesterday, today and tomnorrow] (Kaohsiung: Gaoxiong Shi Zhengfu, 1985), preface (no page numbers).
to land-bound China. Within this, “maritime Taiwan” was presented as an open and free society with a history of coastal trade and exchange; China (or more correctly the PRC—for it was China in its PRC incarnation that many of the expositors of a maritime Taiwan sought to distance themselves from) represented a northern, static and continental society.

This Taiwan/South/seaborne/capitalist versus China/North/land-locked/communist dichotomy may have had peculiarities in its Formosan context, yet it appropriated much from an American discourse of the Asia-Pacific. As Christopher Connery suggests in his insightful study of the “Asia-Pacific” idea, the emergence of this géographie imaginaire in the 1970s was linked to US government and business aspirations in East Asia. In actual fact, the association between the PRC and land-bound backwardness (in spite of the PRC’s many thousands of kilometres of coastline) had long been a part of anti-communist propaganda in the West. Yet it was only in later decades that the focus of America’s

96 For a typical example of such dichotomies, see Dong Nian, “Haiyang Taiwan yu haiyang wenxue” [Maritime Taiwan and maritime literature], Lianhe wenxue 13.10 (1997.8): 166-168.

97 Despite the use of “maritime Taiwan” in defining a separate geo-historical space for Taiwan vis-à-vis China, this concept actually peaked at precisely the same time at which the coastal history of the PRC was attracting a huge amount of political and, indeed, academic attention in the wake of the economic success of the Special Economic Zones—a number of which were, like the primary sites of the narrative of “maritime Taiwan” (such as Kaohsiung), located in former treaty ports. Frank Hsieh, the mayor of Kaohsiung, has also promoted Kaohsiung’s maritime cultural links with the city of Amoy (Xiamen) in China, and has attempted to re-establish the links that these two cities had in treaty port days. See Editorial, “Chuan Xiamen shi yao Xie Zhangting wang fang” [Xiamen city instructed to invite Frank Hsieh to visit], Xin bao, 4 July 2000.

98 It may also have inherited something from the questions raised by the 1988 mainland Chinese television series, The River Elegy. See Geremie R. Barmé and Linda Jaivin (eds), New Ghosts, Old Dreams: Chinese Rebel Voices (New York: Times Books, 1992), esp. pp. 138-164.


100 One early Cold-War commentator noted of the Chinese communist leadership: “The Communists’ principal partner was the Soviet Union, a land power, so they placed less importance on sea-borne trade”.

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“free world” political vision shifted more permanently towards the Pacific “chain of
defence”—that vague set of island- and peninsula-based societies along the “Pacific Rim”
that for a time at least included Taiwan.\(^{101}\) The Pacific Ocean, as the body of water that
bound the United States with its East Asian allies, was presented as the home of openness,
expansion, and trade. This association between the geography of the Pacific as an ocean,
and its cultural nature, was juxtaposed with continental Asia and Europe which were in
turn portrayed in US propaganda as sites of cultural backwardness and economic
protectionism. And this Asia-Pacific “mythology of capital”, argues Connery, was linked
closely to “…the bourgeois idealisation of sea power and ocean-borne commerce…”
which was becoming prominent in the 1980s.\(^{102}\) The Asia-Pacific as a liquid space defined
by its capitalist (and more importantly, laissez-faire) culture was thus presented as a kind of
balance to both state Communism and European protectionism more generally.

In the discourse of baiyang Taiwan, the island had historically always been linked closely to
the sea. But when the Asia-Pacific concept of American thought met baiyang Taiwan, there
were interesting results. In the emerging concept of Ya Tai 亞太, or “Asia-Pacific”,
Taiwan’s maritime history and culture was one of trade. And in the newly appreciated
history of Taiwan in its maritime, Asia-Pacific position, it was businessmen\(^{103}\) that became
the objects of study and celebration. Private companies engaged in seaborne industries,
such as the Evergreen Group (Changrong Jituan 長榮集團), were identified as the
inheritors of a supposedly natural Taiwanese penchant for trade and entrepreneurialism

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\(^{101}\) On the very idea of the “Pacific Rim” and its roots in American Cold-War thought, see Bruce Cumings,
“Rimspeak: or, the discourse of the ‘Pacific Rim’”, in Arif Dirlik (ed), *What is in a rim? Critical Perspectives on the

\(^{102}\) Connery, *op cit.*, p. 40.

\(^{103}\) And they were, indeed, businessmen.
that was only now being allowed to flourish after years of KMT neglect.\textsuperscript{104} In keeping with the idea of “liquid capital” inherent in the discourse of the Asia-Pacific, trade routes were even viewed by some as the basis of new Taiwanese empire that went beyond the Pacific Rim, and on which “the sun never set”.\textsuperscript{105} This fascination with the businessman as the architect of a Taiwanese maritime history was reflected in a growing interest in “commercial history”, or \textit{shangye shi} 商業史, throughout the island’s universities and research institutes.\textsuperscript{106}

It was out of this more general context of Taiwan as an Asia-Pacific, capitalist, maritime society that Kaohsiung began also to redefine itself and its own local history. For just as such concepts were gaining currency within Taiwan as a whole, the sense of Kaohsiung becoming Taiwan’s new “maritime capital”, or \textit{haiyang shoudu} 海洋首都, was beginning to take root.\textsuperscript{107} The rise of this idea may have been directly related to “maritime Taiwan” and the Asia-Pacific, but it also borrowed freely from many of the associations between

\textsuperscript{104} In a recently published biography of the Evergreen Group’s founder Zhang Rongfa 張榮發, the themes of a Taiwanese maritime business heritage are stressed in explanations of the group’s success in the freight and shipping industries. See Jing Gang and Xia Yuxue, \textit{Changrong zhi dao: Zhang Rongfa de zhiji zhexue} [The Evergreen way: Zhang Rongfa’s get-rich philosophy] (Keelung: Yaxiya Chubanshe, 2000). It might be noted that Evergreen Marine Corporation (the group’s shipping wing) has its main base of operations in Kaohsiung harbour and is generally accepted as having a role in influencing policy matters related to the harbour’s development.


\textsuperscript{106} Indeed, \textit{shangye shi} flourished alongside the idea of “maritime Taiwan”, and resulted in an increasing number of conferences and courses in which the island’s maritime history was presented with a strong bias towards business. For an example, see Huang Fusan and Weng Jiayin (eds), \textit{Taiwan shangye chuantong lunwenji} [A collection of essays on Taiwan’s commercial traditions] (Taipei: Zhongyang Yanjiuyuan, Taiwan Lishi Yanjiusu, Choubeichi, 1999).

\textsuperscript{107} For further details of the idea of the “maritime capital” (\textit{haiyang shoudu}) in Kaohsiung, see Wen-yan Chiau, “Haiyang shoudou ‘kuaihe chuhang’ de xingdong celüe” [An operational strategy for letting the maritime capital “set sail happily”], \textit{Gaoxiong bukan} 1999.1: 24. See also Wu Mengfang, “You chuan zai tianshang feiyang de chengshi: haiyang wenhua suzao Gaoxiong jiao’ao” [The city that has ships soaring through its sky: maritime culture moulds Kaohsiung pride], \textit{Xin Taiwan} 200 (2000.1.23): 42.
Kaohsiung and the “South” that had been established within the discourse of the Nanshin half a century or more earlier. This shall become clearer below, as I examine some of the texts that emerged out of this movement.

At the national level, the clearest official expression of this Asia-Pacific concept in Taiwan was the adoption of the “Asia-Pacific Regional Operations Centre” (or simply “APROC”) plan, introduced in 1993 by the Ministry of Economic Affairs (Jingji Bu 經濟部). This plan sought to boost Taiwan’s economic vigour by improving internal infrastructure and streamlining bureaucracy. APROC aimed to re-create Taiwan as a “...bright new beacon of enterprise at the very heart of the Asia-Pacific region”. In practical terms, the plan involved massive injections of funds into the commercial infrastructure of the island with improvements being planned for Taiwan’s harbours. Such changes were expected to make Taiwan’s economy more efficient and thus attract foreign investment. Yet APROC was very clearly informed by the superstructure of an Asia-Pacific discourse that went beyond imports and exports—the plan brought with it a sense that Taiwan represented a natural site for such a centre, precisely because of its maritime, Asia-Pacific nature.

In the initial catatonic years of the APROC plan’s implementation, Kaohsiung became the centre of intense focus from government and business interests. Kaohsiung was highly suited to the maritime and capitalist qualities so common to the discourse of the Asia-Pacific. As Taiwan’s largest harbour, it was seen to be a perfect place in which to develop the island’s trade with other societies throughout the region. Within the new interest in Kaohsiung’s place in the Asia-Pacific that the APROC plan brought to the city, the Kaohsiung City Government took up the task of promoting the city’s economic, cultural and historic ties to other ports along the Pacific Rim including many of those same ports that had featured in the earlier discourse of the Nanshin. With the 1997 change of

108 Although this plan was never officially abandoned, it had quietly faded away by the end of the 1990s. The final issue of the official APROC Newsletter was published in December 2000.
109 See the plan’s website at <http://www.aproc.gov.tw/index_e.html>.
sovereignty in Hong Kong, for instance, Kaohsiung-based intellectuals and officials discussed how their city might rival the former Crown Colony (soon to be PRC “Special Administrative Region”) as a new “Asia-Pacific centre of politics and finance.” Indeed, there may well be some merit in the argument that APROC represented a Taiwanese “discovery of Hong Kong”, as some commentators have suggested, for in the APROC-literature on Kaohsiung, the image of Hong Kong as a vibrant entrepôt makes frequent appearances. In describing Kaohsiung as a “rising star in the Asia-Pacific”, for instance, the Kaohsiung City Government’s Department of Information claimed that the city was “…likely to link itself with Hong Kong and Shanghai and become a ‘golden triangle’ in due course.” Elsewhere, the addition of new skyscrapers to the Kaohsiung skyline in the mid-1990s was said to “make the city look more and more like Hong Kong”. And for a brief period in 1997-1998, there were efforts on the part of the city government and some of the city’s intellectuals to christen Kaohsiung anew as a “Dongjiang mingzhu” 東方明珠, or “Pearl of the Orient”—a phrase with blatant Hong Kong (and Shanghai) connotations. This connection to coastal, southern China had wider implications for Kaohsiung as well, for it began to influence the ways in which the history of Kaohsiung was to be written and preserved. This is a point to which I shall return in future chapters.


111 On the question of APROC representing a Taiwanese attempt to mimic Hong Kong’s economic successes, see Hong Qingtian, Ershijyi shijihaiwui Tai Gang Dalu [The promises and perils of the twenty-first century for Taiwan, Hong Kong and the mainland] (Hong Kong: Long Source House, 1996), pp. 337-343.


The APROC policy represented an official reappraisal of Taiwan's (and Kaohsiung's) place in the world. Yet the introduction of this plan was accompanied by another government-sponsored catchphrase, and one which had a profound effect on the way in which Kaohsiung came to redefine itself in fin-de-siècle Taiwan. This was the "Nan xiang" 南向, a term which might be translated as "go southwards", or "the southern orientation". This expression came into popular parlance during the northern hemisphere winter of 1993-1994. In the years prior to this, increasing numbers of Taiwanese businesses had begun to invest in the burgeoning economies of Southeast Asia, especially Vietnam and the Philippines. Within this context, President Lee Teng-huei toured a number of ASEAN states over the 1994 New Year holidays. The media coverage that supported this presidential tour ignited intense interest in Southeast Asia and encouraged the publication of a series of books on the region. But it was following Lee's return to Taiwan, and after his government began encouraging Taiwanese companies to "go southwards" to new markets, that the term was made part of official policy.

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115 Literally, "Nan xiang" means "towards the South", or "in the direction of the South". As there is no verb in the phrase, it is difficult to render it into fluid English. Some sources give the phrase as "southward investment strategy" in English despite their being no reference to "investment" in the Chinese phrase. See, for example, Government Information Office, The Republic of China Yearbook, 1998 (Taipei: Government Information Office, 1998), p. 144. Others have interpreted it as "Go South" or "go southwards", terms with loud echoes of the phrase "Go West" of North American thought. Whilst occasionally employing the phrase "go southwards" in this thesis, I do so recognising that the Nan xiang had little to do with the "Go West" terminology of the American frontier, and that the similarities between the two phrases are more likely to be coincidental than causal.


117 Typical of this genre of writing is Qiu Zhang, Qianjin Yunnan: Yuenan touzi zhidao [Forward into Vietnam: a guide to investing in Vietnam] (Taipei: Yongran Wenhua, 1995); see also Gao Yixin, Cong Taiwan kan Aomen [Looking at Macau from Taiwan] (Taipei: Waimao Xiehui, 1999). Such titles bear remarkable resemblance to the published studies of Southeast Asian markets produced by Taiwan-based organisations during the 1920s and 1930s.
One 1997 report published by the Taipei Bank suggests that the “southern orientation” concept as adopted during the Lee Teng-huei presidency represented the fulfilment of earlier KMT policy: “The ‘southern orientation policy’ is the diplomatic realisation of Sun Yat-sen’s theory of ‘Greater East Asianism’”, it claimed.\textsuperscript{118} Yet the more likely explanation can be found in the similarities between the expression \textit{Nan xiang} and the imperial Japanese concept of \textit{Nanshin}. The two phrases only differ in terms of a single ideograph; the term “\textit{Nanjin}” (the Mandarin Chinese pronunciation of the Japanese \textit{Nanshin}) was even used interchangeably in Taiwan with the term \textit{Nan xiang} for some time.\textsuperscript{119} Like its intellectual predecessor, the \textit{Nan xiang} included within its sweep Southeast Asia, the Pacific, and in some interpretations, southern China.\textsuperscript{120} And like the \textit{Nanshin}, the “southern orientation” ideology went beyond economics to include fundamental ideas about Taiwan’s place in the world. Indeed, I would argue that the \textit{Nan xiang} policy of the 1990s, as well as the rather nebulous notions of geography and history that surrounded it, was little more than a revival of the colonial concept of \textit{Nanshin}. And it was no coincidence that it emerged in precisely the same years that an overall re-appraisal of Taiwan’s colonial past began to develop.

Most government literature on this topic avoids any mention of Japanese imperial ideology, and states that the \textit{Nan xiang} policy was introduced “...to divert Taiwan investment away from the mainland”\textsuperscript{121}—something that would suggest a link with the same sorts of dichotomising tendencies that we viewed above (i.e., maritime, capitalist

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\textsuperscript{118} Taibei Yinhang, Jingji Yanjiushi [The Economic Research Office, Taipei Bank], \textit{Taiwan chanhsbang dai Dengnan gwoja taozi zhi yanzi} [An analysis of investment by Taiwanese manufacturers in Southeast Asian countries] (Taipei: Taibei Yinhang, 1997), p. 7.


\textsuperscript{120} For a general description of what \textit{Nan xiang} entailed, see Peng Baixian (ed), \textit{Nan xiang zhengce yu Taiwan jingji weili} [The southern orientation policy and the future of Taiwan’s economy] (Taipei: Xin Shehui Jijinhui, 1995).

Taiwan; land-bound, communist China). Yet the similarities between Nanshin and Nan xiang have not gone unnoticed by the Taiwanese academic Kuan-hsing Chen. For Chen, the adoption of a 1990s “southern orientation” policy represented a kind of postcolonial adoption of imperialist philosophies on the part of those he terms “the nativist Left” in Taiwan—a case of nativist Taiwanese nationalism using the ideological tools of its former colonial master to conquer its Southeast Asian neighbours economically and culturally.  

Chen has also pointed out that the implications of the Nan xiang policy went far beyond the economic realm, just as the Nanshin meant far more than military expansion. In going South, Taiwan’s very geography and history was being reinterpreted. As Chen notes, for instance, it was within the Nan xiang “craze” that an academic fascination with Southeast Asian area studies took root in Taiwan. And it was in the same period that Taiwanese scholars began to trace, with increasing vigour, the Austronesian (i.e., non-Han Chinese) roots of the island’s aboriginal peoples, and how such roots linked them with the peoples of the South Pacific. This is precisely what “going southwards” was all about—linking Taiwan, in terms of economics, culture and history, to the “Asia-Pacific”. In effect, the Nan xiang policy thrust a compass into the hands of the “maritime Taiwan” debates that had preceded it.

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123 Rob Wilson’s brief analysis of the “southern orientation” ideology naively accepts such constructs, and even argues that a re-definition of Taiwan as an “Asia-Pacific” or “Southeast Asian” nation represents the discovery of Taiwan’s authentic “primordial past”. Wilson does not seem to be aware of the colonial origins of the term “Nan xiang” itself, or the thinking behind it. Rob Wilson, *Rethinking the American Pacific from South Pacific to Bamboo Ridge and Beyond* (Durham NC and London: Duke University Press, 2000), esp. pp. 51-56. For an example of recent attempts to Austronise Taiwan history, see “Nandao Jiayuan” [Austronesian home], *Jingdian* 37 (2001.8), map. This map shows Taiwan at the head of a family of Austronesian societies in the Pacific. The map’s depictions of the movement of Austronesian peoples out of Taiwan and to sections of the South Pacific at different periods look strikingly similar to the movements of the Japanese empire that were depicted on some of the colonial-era maps I mentioned earlier in this chapter.
Like the APROC plan, the concept of the Nan xiang meant a great deal for Kaohsiung. In the first place, it was largely Kaohsiung-based heavy industry that was moving off-shore (and southwards) in its wake—one could cite examples such as An Feng 安鋒 Steel and the Evergreen Group, both of whom eyed opportunities for untapped resources and cheap labour in places such as Vietnam and the Philippines. Yet at a more general level, the encouragement to “go southwards” meant that the entire history of Kaohsiung that had once been the “base of the southern advance” could be legitimately rediscovered and studied. This is a point which also alerts us to the ways in which the Japanese colonial past came to be reinterpreted during the 1990s—a topic I have touched on earlier in this thesis. As we saw in the previous chapter, for instance, the physical remnants of Japanese imperialism found in the Taiwanese landscape were not treated as legitimate “guji” until the mid-1990s—i.e., at much the same time as the Nan xiang idea was coming to the fore. This suggests that the recent rediscovery and re-interpretation of the colonial past in localities such as Kaohsiung was not limited to the built environment, but extended to the very ideologies that shaped the landscape and the way it was presented.

The “southern orientation” policy also bore strong resemblances to the Nanshin ideology insofar as it influenced the development of a local Kaohsiung mythology of southernness—something that had been almost invisible throughout much of the martial-law era. As we saw above, it was only during the years immediately following the First World War that an urban mythology about Kaohsiung (then Takow/Takao) as a Nanshin-oriented city developed. It was this urban mythology of “Takao as the base of the southern advance” which inspired the city’s leadership to re-interpret the city’s landscape, topography and indeed history from within a Nanshin narrative. And it was the same mythology which informed much of Takao’s urban development thereafter.

The same dynamics were at work in the 1990s. With the rise of an “Asia-Pacific”, maritime Taiwan, and the calls to “go southwards” growing in intensity, groups such as the Kaohsiung City Government, the Kaohsiung Harbour Bureau (Gaoxiong Gangwu Ju
高雄港務局), and intellectuals at the National Sun Yat-sen University, all began to reinterpret Kaohsiung’s geography and history in the light of an Asia-Pacific, southerly orientation. This was especially so in regards the aesthetics of the city and its landscape. In the 1920s, it had been the roads and waterways of Takao, many built with the most pragmatic of modern city planning techniques in mind, that had been re-interpreted as symbols of a Nanbin destiny. In the 1990s, it was new skyscrapers and department stores, designed and built on the back of the 1990s financial boom, that were re-interpreted in the same fashion.

The T&C Tower, or Dong Dishib dalou 東帝士大樓, is perhaps the most typical example. This building was funded by, and named after, the Tuntex Group (Dong Dishib Jituan 東帝士集団), a KMT-affiliated enterprise that had expressed support for the adoption of the “southern orientation” policy. At its completion, the almost three hundred and fifty metre-high tower was (and, at the time of writing, still is) the tallest building in Taiwan, and its massive black outline dominates Kaohsiung’s skyline from all angles. The building houses Taiwan’s largest department store (operated by the Japanese retailer Daimaru 大丸), as well as almost eighty storeys of office space, and a five-star hotel.

Yet even as little more than a scaffolded frame of the building began looming over the city from the mid-1990s onwards (fig. 30), the tower was being adopted as an architectural symbol of Kaohsiung’s southward gazing, Asia-Pacific identity. It has been continuously promoted by the Kaohsiung City Government as a twenty-first-century landmark for Kaohsiung ever since. Indeed, given the post-Asian financial crisis difficulties faced in

124 The “C” of the T&C Tower signifies another conglomerate which jointly financed the building’s construction, i.e., the Chien-Tai Cement Corporation (Jian Tai Shuini Jituan 建台水泥集團). Regarding the Tuntex Group’s support for the southern orientation policy, see Shen Shenhua, “Nan xiang zhengce yu Taiwan jingji qianjin” [The southern orientation policy and Taiwan’s economic progress], in Peng Baixian (ed), op. cit., pp. 144-146.

filling the office space of the building, and the spectacular failure of the Daimaru department store housed within,\textsuperscript{126} it might well be argued that the new Asia-Pacific/southward-orientated symbolism of the tower now outweighs its economic significance. As the most recent addition to the Kaohsiung skyline, the T&C Tower was interpreted as representing the heights to which the city could aspire in the coming Pacific century. Some in the city’s media heralded the new building as a means through which to make Kaohsiung a new “Taiwanese Manhattan”,\textsuperscript{127} whilst the building’s management team stressed similar themes in advertising materials.\textsuperscript{128}

![Image](image_url)

Figure 30. “Come and have fun in Kaohsiung”—the T&C Tower prior to completion (undated tourist poster; from the author’s personal collection).

\textsuperscript{126} In the course of compiling this thesis, the Daimaru department store closed after recording substantial financial losses.

\textsuperscript{127} Wang Shufen, “Weilai de Manhadun: Sanduo shangquan” [The commercial quarter on Sanduo Road: a future Manhattan], 	extit{Taiwan xinwen bao}, 6 December 1997. As a Taiwanese Manhattan, was Kaohsiung perhaps again challenging that other so-called “Oriental Manhattan”, Hong Kong?

\textsuperscript{128} See, for example, 	extit{Dong Dishi dalou: tamen renshi Guoxiong Dong Dishi dalou, suoyi renshi le Taiwan} [The T&C Tower: Because they know the T&C Tower in Kaohsiung, they know Taiwan] (Kaohsiung: Zizi Xingjian, Dong Dishi Jituan and Jian Tai Jituan, 2001), advertising brochure.
However, the real significance of the building went beyond its position as the tallest structure in Taiwan. It was also one of the tallest buildings “in Southeast Asia”, reminiscent of other great Asia-Pacific skyscrapers throughout the region such as the Petronas Towers of Kuala Lumpur or the Bank of China Building in Hong Kong. The silhouette of the T&C Tower has come to be one of the most frequently used visual symbols for an Asia-Pacific, southwardly advancing Kaohsiung. In literature produced by the Kaohsiung Harbour Bureau, the tower is featured commonly next to phrases that describe the harbour as a “gateway to Asia-Pacific trade”\(^{129}\). The building’s location adjacent to the Lingya Commercial Harbour area—a site which had been eyed for potential urban re-development as early as the 1970s (long before the advent of the maritime Taiwan/Asia-Pacific/\textit{Nan xiang} rhetoric)\(^{130}\)—has added to the sense that the T&C Tower represents the perfect symbol for this maritime incarnation of Kaohsiung. Indeed, the tower has at times been compared to that other generic symbol of maritime port cities, the lighthouse.\(^{131}\) And from the seventy-fifth-floor observation deck, and with a little guidance from accompanying signage, one can almost see the same southern ports that had once dotted colonial maps of Takao.\(^{132}\) From the heights of the T&C Tower, the city could literally gaze southwards once more.

In the space of a few years, then, Kaohsiung has been transformed from just another port, to Taiwan’s maritime capital that gazes towards the South Seas. In an uncanny return to

\(^{129}\) See the \textit{KaPort Newsletter} published by the Kaohsiung Harbour Bureau. For another example of promotional material that makes extensive use of the building, see Kaohsiung Harbour Bureau, \textit{Port of Kaohsiung} (Kaohsiung: Kaohsiung Harbour Bureau, 1999).


\(^{132}\) Looking South, signage on the building’s seventy-fifth-floor observation deck directs the visitor’s view toward the outlying Xiao Liuqiu 小琉球 islands, for instance.
pre-war perceptions of the South that had seen this city take a privileged position in the 
Japanese empire, Kaohsiung has found itself once again located at the threshold of the 
exotic realms of the Southeast Asian tropics. Even the visions of a southern metropolis of 
modernity that had been envisioned by theorists such as Katayama Sugao in the 1930s 
seemed to be re-appearing, with the T&C Tower becoming the classic symbol of a tropical 
and Asia-Pacific Kaohsiung that was at the same time at the forefront of urban modernity 
(fig. 31).

It is this latest spin on Kaohsiung as the “maritime capital” and the mercantile histories 
connected to it that have informed many of the ways in which the city’s local past is 
presented today. In Chapter 6, this point will become clearer when we examine the 
example of Hamaxing, a heritage district which has emerged at precisely the same time as 
these latest ideas about the South in Taiwan have developed. As we shall see, the 
rediscovery of a colonial ideology and its geopolitical imagination has had a profound 
influence on history-production in Kaohsiung over the last decade.

Figure 31. “Asia-Pacific; Kaohsiung” (Source: The T&C Tower: Because they know the T&C Tower in 
Kaohsiung...).
Chapter 4: Giving Kaohsiung a history

The city without a history

Kaohsiung was once mocked as a "cultural desert". To this shame, we've composed a sweet melody.¹

I ended the previous chapter in the 1990s, examining some of the ways in which a set of symbols of, and connotations about, "the South", most of which originated under Japanese colonial rule in Taiwan, have been excavated and put to liberal use in the promotion of Kaohsiung as Taiwan's self-proclaimed "maritime capital". This has become particularly manifest since the election, in late 1998, of Frank Hsieh as the first non-KMT mayor of Kaohsiung since Taiwan's "retrocession" to the Republic of China. Political catchphrases such as the "maritime capital" and "new world of the South" have endorsed the appropriation of earlier historiographical narratives of the city and its place within Taiwan. They have carried with them a vision of Kaohsiung's maritime past which stresses commerce, business, and connections with the world of the "Asia-Pacific".

In this chapter, I will examine how this particular vision of Kaohsiung's history has become perhaps the most prevalent one within the city's official, academic and intellectual circles in the 1990s. In doing so, however, I hope to show that the process through which this "maritime history" of the city has come to establish its dominance has been one of constant cross-referencing between various, and at time mutually adversarial, views about Kaohsiung's past. In particular, I hope to identify those institutions and individuals who have been the agents of historiographical developments in Kaohsiung. Yet more importantly, this chapter will also shed light on the relationship between these various groups, and will examine some of the ways in which they have influenced one another's

interpretations of the past. Furthermore, although the idea of Kaohsiung as Taiwan's "maritime capital" has been promoted with particular vigour by the Kaohsiung City Government since the mid- to late 1990s, I will suggest that other histories of Kaohsiung—some of which predate the contemporary rediscovery of colonial Japanese narratives of "the South" and the "maritime capital", and others that have arisen in response to it—continue to persist in different guises. Later chapters take the form of "case-studies" through which I shall examine the ways in which these various histories have been inscribed onto the landscape of this city.

This chapter is entitled "Giving Kaohsiung a history", not because I herein propose to "give a history" to this city. Rather, I am suggesting that one of the constant desires that various organisations and institutions in Kaohsiung—from the departments of the city government, to local museums, and from Kaohsiung-based academics to "lay scholars"—have expressed, has been that of wanting to provide this city with a viable history and culture that will enable it to compete on an equal intellectual footing with other localities in Taiwan, though especially with Taipei and Tainan.  

As soon as one begins to examine texts about "Kaohsiung history" (or simply about Kaohsiung), it becomes clear that a sense of cultural and historiographical inferiority vis-à-vis other urban centres in Taiwan has been probably the single most recurrent theme in a substantial amount of writing about this city. Amongst Kaohsiung's intellectual elite, there is a persistent sense that Kaohsiung is somehow culturally backward and impoverished—a "cultural desert" (wenhua shamo 文化沙漠).  

3 Li Zhelang, "Ziyou fengqi yu wenhua shamo" [A mood of freedom and the cultural desert], in Minzhong Ribaoshé [The Minzhou Daily] (ed), Minzhong ribao yuandun xuanji [A collection of essays from the Minzhou Daily] (Kaohsiung: Minzhong Ribaoshé, 1980), pp. 271-272; Lin Xiangling and Zeng Shuhuang, "Wenhuasha mo cheng lüzhou: xiri cungu bian guifu" [The cultural desert will become an oasis; the country girl will become a noble woman], in Li Shuli (ed), Gaociong shih Zhongzheng Wenhuasha Zhongguo qishi liu nian niankan [The
This undercurrent of historiographical and cultural inferiority is, at least to some extent, understandable. Kaohsiung is, after all, a “city of migrants” (yiminxing de dehui 移民型的都會). It is a locality which few residents refer to as a “guoxiang”, or hometown, as many Kaohsiung families claim an ancestry elsewhere (mainly in counties and towns in surrounding areas such as Pingtung, Tainan and the Pescadores). And despite attempts on the part of certain Kaohsiung-based intellectuals to foster a sense of “hometown” community in the city, its industrial topography has always fitted uneasily with the expectations inherent in the nativist formulation of the typical rural “guoxiang”, or for that matter, in bentu images of “the South”. In some cases, this has translated into definitions of Kaohsiung as a place in which an industrial present has hidden an essentially bentu heart. “Kaohsiung people employ a village life-style in the midst of the city”, claims one author.

Hong Wanlong 洪萬隆 of the National Sun Yat-sen University similarly argues that 

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4 Such a description finds voice in an unusual source, appearing in Huang Huirong, Gaoxiong xiaochi [Kaohsiung snack food] (Taichung: Caoshi Tang, 1997), no page numbers. It is telling that this work is on the city’s xiaozi 小吃, or traditional fast food, as there seems to be a connection between history and xiaozi in Taiwan. The most obvious example is Tainan, which is not only Taiwan’s “oldest” town but which apparently is also the place of origin of some of its best snacks.

5 The origins of Kaohsiung’s population is an entirely different area of research which lies beyond the scope of this thesis. It will suffice to state here that since the 1970s, more than half of the population of this city have been officially registered as originating from beyond its borders. This topic is touched upon in Zhang Kunshan and Huang Zhengxiong, Difang pai xi yu Taiwan zhengchi [Local factionalism and Taiwanese politics] (Taipei: Lianhe Baoshu, 1996), esp. pp. 35-49.


beneath Kaohsiung’s smokestacks can be found a “grass roots” (草根性) culture and a “farmer personality” (農夫個性).\(^8\)

Moreover, there is an intriguing indifference displayed by most professional historians in Taiwan towards the history of their society’s second largest city. This remains the case in spite of the very rich modern history of this locality, elements of which I explored in the preceding chapter. Within the discipline of “Taiwan history”, for example, Kaohsiung is barely noticed. The \textit{Taiwan shi} canon includes virtually no works that deal with Kaohsiung’s past in any depth. And few academics engaged in this field openly claim a Kaohsiung ancestry.\(^9\) Even in the course of composing this thesis, the issue of Kaohsiung’s place (or lack thereof) within \textit{Taiwan shi} has surfaced. In studying Kaohsiung and its histories over recent years, I have been confronted with reactions ranging from derision to bewilderment within the \textit{Taiwan shi} field. Academics and bureaucrats in Taipei and other cities around the island have reminded me that there is no history department in any Kaohsiung university; one professional historian attacked the very idea that Kaohsiung could be chosen as the subject of a study of the historic built environment in Taiwan with the argument that: “Kaohsiung is just a place for workers; it simply has no history!”\(^10\)

Kaohsiung is perceived to be lacking in terms of an historic built environment by many. Its few recorded \textit{guyi} are not often considered equal in relevance to those in Tainan, and rarely are its vistas described as spectacular. When a group of academics gathered at Kaohsiung’s National Sun Yat-sen University in 1996 to discuss the city’s historic

\(^8\) Hong Wanlong, “Wenhua zhengce” [Cultural policy], in Hong Wanlong, Li Lijuan and Su Qingzu (eds), \textit{Gaoyxiong minjian wenhua baipiшу} [White paper on Kaohsiung people’s culture] (Kaohsiung: Gaoyxiong Fuwen Tushu Chubanshe, 1996), pp. 1-14.

\(^9\) On the other hand, historians who claim a familial connection to Tainan are usually eager to promote it—so much so that one often hears spoken references to the \textit{Tainan heng} 台南幫, or “Tainan gang”, of academic history in Taiwan.

\(^10\) \textit{“Gaoyxiong jiushi ye zhongren de difang, genben mei shenme lishi?”} 高雄就是個工人的地方; 根本沒甚麼歷史! Tsai Tsaihsiu (Cai Caixiu 蔡采秀), personal communication, 4 September 2001.
landmarks, they did so by asking the question “Gaoxiong you sha kantou?” 華雄有啥看頭 [What is there to see in Kaohsiung? ]—aware that the question was rhetorical. What, indeed, is there to see in Kaohsiung? ⑪

In this penchant for historiographical self-loathing, so the logic goes, Kaohsiung has only itself to blame. Writing about the dilapidated state of one of the city’s listed guji, the former British consulate building (Gaoxiong qian Yingguo lingshiguan 高雄前英國領事館), the architect Lee Ch’ian-lang complained that Kaohsiung “workers don’t know that relics should be cherished, and keep taking tiles and granite blocks to use as landfill”. ⑫ Similar complaints have been made against Kaohsiung residents and their treatment of another listed relic, the old city wall in Zuoying—a point which shall be examined in Chapter 5.

Kaohsiung residents not only lack respect for their relics, however. Similar sentiments can be detected in sources relating to the treatment of other types of historic remnant. In compiling a report on the state of Kaohsiung archives in 1998, a group of bureaucrats from the Kaohsiung Historiography Commission (Gaoxiong Shi Wenxian Weiyuanhui 高雄市文獻委員會) berated the carelessness that generations of Kaohsiung civil servants had shown for government records throughout the city. After years of mishandling, Kaohsiung’s “…archives have trickled away, and all that are left of [our] historical documents are a few odds and ends”. ⑬ The point made goes beyond a lack of archives—the state of the archives is of a Kaohsiung making. “One third of the total population of

⑪ “Gaoxiong you sha kantou? Gaoxiong yixiang zhuangjia zuotan huiyi lu” [What is there to see in Kaohsiung? Record from a colloquium of experts on Kaohsiung imagery], Kongjian zazhi 86-87 (1996.10): 105-111.


1.4 million are labourers”, apologises the Kaohsiung City Government’s Department of Information (Xinwen chu 新聞處), “…that’s why Kaohsiung naturally has a cruder…characteristic [sic]”. 14 A “crude”, working class city such as Kaohsiung could never be expected to appreciate the value of culture and history.

It might be argued that the lack of interest on the part of a wider Taiwan shì field, and the claims that the residents of Kaohsiung have themselves shown little interest in preserving the material remnants of their city’s past, would make for a poor choice of topic in considering history-making in Taiwan. Contrarily, however, I would argue that it is precisely this perceived lack of a history which makes this city such a fascinating place in which to observe wider historiographical trends at work. The reasons for this are twofold. In the first place, this perceived lack of historical depth in Kaohsiung tells us a good deal about the ways in which the past is viewed and understood in Taiwan; it helps us to determine the boundaries of the “historic” (and thus non-“historic”), especially as it operates in the nascent field of “Taiwan history”. These historiographical biases become manifest in the codification of the historic built environment, in that they determine which sites or districts are deemed historically “valuable”, and are thereafter protected.

Yet even more crucially, references to Kaohsiung as a place without a history have in themselves formed the motivation behind much of the work on Kaohsiung history and culture to have been produced in recent years, and have inspired an array of local “Kaohsiung histories” which have arisen during the 1990s. “Commentators say that ‘Kaohsiung has no history’”, complained the late amateur historian Zeng Yunkun 曾玉昆, “…but in all honesty, such statements are far from the truth!” 15 In discussing the reasons behind the organisation of a conference on Kaohsiung history and culture, the Kaohsiung

14 Department of Information, Kaohsiung: a City full of Sunshine, Friendship and Passion (Kaohsiung Shi Zhengfu, Xinwen Chu, 1998), video recording.
city councillor Chen Tianmiao 陳田錦 expresses the same sentiments in the following terms:

Kaohsiung, the largest city in Taiwan’s South, has been relentlessly improving its international standing; however, from the political to the academic sphere, few people have expressed any interest in the development of its Renfu culture.¹⁶

For these and other Kaohsiung-based intellectuals and officials, this perceived need to counter the claims that Kaohsiung is a “cultural desert”, has actually given impetus to the many expressions of a local culture and history that have been blossoming forth over the last decade. A desire to prove that the city can be a viable locality in which to discover, write and preserve history has developed.

**Official Kaohsiung histories**

As we saw in the last chapter, the rediscovery in Kaohsiung of historical narratives such as the Nanshin, has been driven over recent years by the Kaohsiung City Government. It is City Hall that has taken to promoting Kaohsiung as a maritime capital, and it is in city-funded projects that we find the clearest expressions of a southwardly-gazing history related to business and commerce. Yet the promotion of Kaohsiung as the “maritime capital” of Taiwan, or the crucible of an “island history” of modern seaborne commerce, represents only the latest in a series of narratives of a Kaohsiung local history which have been promulgated by the city’s administration. Indeed, the Kaohsiung City Government has been “giving Kaohsiung histories” for much of the last two decades.

In June 1979, and following demographic changes which had seen this city’s population exceed one million, Kaohsiung was designated as the second “special municipality” (zhixia

\textit{shi} 直轄市) in Taiwan. This meant that the city's administration was taken out of the hands of the Taiwan Provincial Government, and transferred to a newly structured Kaohsiung City Government (Gaoxiong Shi Zhengfu 高雄市政府). Significantly, this translated into a level of bureaucratic autonomy matched only by Taipei, as well as substantial increases in funding from the Executive Yuan (Xingzhengyuan 行政院). At the time of writing, Kaohsiung remains the only "special municipality" in Taiwan other than Taipei.

Since its administrative restructure in 1979, the Kaohsiung City Government has made incessant efforts to promote a local history for the city, and to cast off the stigma of Kaohsiung as a "cultural desert". Much of this has of course gone beyond "making history", and can be understood within the context of a broader process that has been identified by the discipline of geography as "place selling" (i.e., the marketing of localities with the aim of attracting investment, tourism, and inward migration).\textsuperscript{17} Much if it has also been driven by a desire to "catch up" with other cities, though most obviously with its special municipal cousin, Taipei.\textsuperscript{18}

In the "selling of Kaohsiung", the question of a local history has always been present. Almost as soon as Kaohsiung was granted "special municipality" status, the city administration began to encourage the creation of instruments through which its official views of Kaohsiung's history, geography and culture could be propagated. In 1980, for


\textsuperscript{18} On the issue of Kaohsiung's perceived need to catch up with Taipei culturally, see Chen Bilin, "Long Yingtai: fazhan gangdu tese, bubu xue Taibei" [Long Yingtai: in developing the special features of the harbour city, there is no need to copy Taipei], \textit{Zhongshi dianji bao}, 30 September 2000, <www.chinatimes.com.tw/news/papers/online/local(locals/c8993010.htm>. A pertinent side note here is that Long Yingtai 能應台 is both a former resident of Kaohsiung, and the current Director of the Taipei City Government's Bureau of Cultural Affairs (Taibei Shi Zhengfu, Wenhua Ju 台北市政府文化局).
instance, the first edition of *Kaohsiung pictorial* (*Gaoxiang huakan* 高雄畫刊) was distributed from the offices of the city’s Department of Information (fig. 32). In a similar vein, the year of Kaohsiung’s administrative restructure was heralded with the publication of the first issue of *Gaoxiang wenxian* 高雄文獻, a journal dedicated to the academic study of Kaohsiung history, and published by the Kaohsiung Historiography Commission, housed within the walls of the city’s Confucius temple.¹⁹

![Figure 32. Kaohsiung Pictorial 19.6 (1998.6): front cover.](image)

Kaohsiung’s official history as it developed in these and other city government-funded media in the years immediately following the 1979 administrative reformation was one of linear progress. Official histories told of the physical transformation of the city’s geography through the diligence of its inhabitants. The city’s history was typically presented as a chronology of “sweat and blood, wisdom and untiring effort” on the part

of the city’s patriotic populace. Kaohsiung’s story was that of a locality that had been transformed, through public works, “from [a] fishing village to [a] special municipality.”

In this narrative of the “steel city” (gangtie xianshi 鋼鐵縣市) created through the hard work and sacrifice of locals, the past was utilised predominantly as a point of reference for the modern and ordered metropolis of the present. In the history presented through government-sponsored television series such as the 1983 Beneath Mount Longevity, for instance, the city’s modern shipyards, schools and roads were juxtaposed to a backward topography of the past (echoing the “cultural desert” sentiments mentioned in earlier paragraphs). City government books correspondingly presented black and white photographic images of the ox-drawn carts of the past alongside coloured images of buses and trains; the cargo-handling coolies of yesteryear were contrasted to the mechanised docks of the 1980s.

This concentration on a past of public works and development, however, was always formulated around the grander narratives of national histories that we examined in Chapter 1. Even in this local history, the nation was never absent. In exhibitions timed to coincide with the city’s ascension to administrative autonomy, for example, Kaohsiung’s history was presented as being inextricably linked to the “distant source” of Chinese

21 Ibid., p. 183.
civilisation. In the glossy publications of the Kaohsiung City Government too, the sentiments of the Chinese Cultural Renaissance Movement and its associated paradigm of “five thousand years” were always evident—early editions of Kaohsiung Pictorial stressed the importance of Kaohsiung in national celebrations of 1980 as “the Year of Self Strengthening” (Ziqiang nian 自强年) and lauded the memory of the great men of Chinese national history.

With the dominance of these national narratives, and a concentration on development and progress as the central themes of a Kaohsiung history within these, there was further, and perhaps unsurprisingly, a general avoidance of more sensitive questions about the city’s colonial history. In the 1980s, the Japanese imperial origins of the Kaohsiung toponym, or the relation that the city’s topography had with colonial ideologies such as the “southern advance”, were seldom raised in official publications. Though descriptions of the

26 Xu Shuide, “Leguan fendou huanjie ziqiang nian” [Let’s optimistically strive to welcome in the Year of Self Strengthening], Gaoxiong huakan 1.2 (1980.3): 2. The official commemoration of 1980 as the “Year of Self Strengthening” was inspired by Taiwan’s increasing diplomatic isolation, and particularly the ending of diplomatic ties between Washington and Taipei in 1979.
28 There were, nonetheless, sporadic attacks on the use of this toponym so clearly linked with Japanese imperialism, mostly from within the city’s academic elite. In 1982, Li Yongmin 李雍民, an academic from the National Kaohsiung Normal University (Guoli Gaoxiong Shifan Daxue 國立高雄師範大學) wrote an article for the newspaper Taiwan xinwen bao 臺灣新聞報 entitled “Wo hen ‘Gaoxiong’ ming” [I hate the name ‘Kaohsiung’]. In this piece, Li objected to the fact that the two characters which made up the name of Gaoxiong (in Japanese “Takao”), had been chosen by the Taiwan sōtokufu rather than the people of Taiwan; he also claimed that this toponym had been chosen on ideological grounds, being the name of a warship involved in the Sino-Japanese war of 1894-1895, and that the city should thus either revert to its Qing-era name of Dagou, or else choose another name for itself. Li’s arguments are paraphrased in Yin Demin, “Gaoxiong shi deming yuan yuan zhi tanju” [Probing the origins of the Kaohsiung name], Gao shi wenxian 2.4 (1990.7): 15-30. Whilst one might question the xenophobic patriotism that informed Li Yongmin’s article in the first place, it is, nonetheless, rather surprising that such arguments have not been
modernity of the city’s roads, harbour and other infrastructure were common, there was
scarce discussion of the colonial origins of these elements of the Kaohsiung urban
environment. Nor was the issue of “the South” raised to any great extent. Indeed, in
concentrating on the sweeping geographies of the ancestral homeland, city government
histories showed less concern for Kaohsiung’s “southerness” as they did for its
“Chineseness”. In doing so, references to the Nanshin policy of colonial days were made
only in passing, if at all.

Indeed, even despite the fact that a considerable number of the city’s mayors were
themselves educated in Japan, the city’s “era of Japanese occupation” (Riji shidai
日據時代) was typically shortened into relative insignificance in Kaohsiung’s “chronology
of periods”. In one publication emanating from the offices of the city’s historiography
commission in 1983, the “era of Japanese rule” was actually replaced with the “Republican
period” (Mingao yi lai 民國以來), within which Japanese colonialism was presented as a

more frequent over the course of Taiwan’s postwar history. Just as significant is the fact that members of the
city bureaucracy have, at times, revelled in this colonial toponym. A typical example is Liu Huolong,
“Gongtong nuli guangda ‘Gao’ qie ‘xiong’ de wenhua” [Let’s work diligently together to glorify our “high”
and “heroic” culture], in Liu Huolong (ed), Gaogiong Shih Zhongzheng Wenhua Zhongxin baihi’er nian niankan
[The Kaohsiung City Cultural Centre report for 1993] (Kaohsiung: Gaoxiong Shili Zhongzheng Wenhua
Zhongxin, 1993), p. 2. The title of this paper is a pun on the two characters gao 高 (high), and xiong 雄
(heroic) which make up the name Kaohsiung.

In books such as Zha Xianlin, Gang [Harbour] (Taipei: Xingzhengyuan, Wenhua Jianshe Weiyuanhui, 1987), for instance, the fact that Kaohsiung’s deep water harbour was a product of Japanese imperialism is
not even mentioned. The harbour just exists, outside of time and context, as a testimony to the Republic of
China’s economic might.

One might speculate as to the extent to which the Kaohsiung Incident (Gaogiong shijian 高雄事件) of
December 1979—during which civil rights and anti-KMT protestors were arrested, beaten and tortured—
actually influenced the desire within the Kaohsiung City Government to counter the image of the city as a
hotbed of nativist politics. The Kaohsiung Incident was also known as the Formosa Incident, or Meili dan
shijian 美麗島事件, Formosa being the name of a Kaohsiung-based journal, the offices of which marked the
spot from which anti-government marchers set out.

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short-lived aberration.\textsuperscript{31} Kaohsiung history was presented as commencing with an interlude of “Dutch rule” (\textit{Hêjû} 荷據) followed by a prolonged period of rapid \textit{Han} migration known as the “Ming-Zheng” (明鄭), or “the Ming and Koxinga period”.\textsuperscript{32} Taiwan’s annexation into the Qing empire was also concentrated upon as a time of great importance for a local Kaohsiung history—indeed, by the late 1980s, the city government was encouraging local intellectuals to use the city’s pre-modern name of Dagou 打狗 in conscious reference to this locality’s Qing past. In keeping with the sensitivities of “national histories”, the late Qing, however, and in particular, the opening of the harbour to European and American treaty port trade, was presented as a moment of national (i.e., Chinese) humiliation at the hands of avaricious foreigners.\textsuperscript{33}

It was also in these early years of “special municipality” status that the Kaohsiung City Government sought to better inscribe the city’s built environment with the same sorts of narratives it was promoting through written texts. This was undertaken in spite of the fact that large tracts of the city remained demarcated as militarised zones, and public access was limited to many sections of “old Kaohsiung”, particularly those around the waterfront and other areas deemed strategically sensitive.\textsuperscript{34}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{31} Xu Chengzhang (ed), \textit{Gaoxiong shi gejin shici xuan} [A selection of new and old poetry from Kaohsiung] (Kaohsiung: Gaoxiong Shi Wenzian Wei yuanhui, 1983), p. 3.
\item \textsuperscript{32} The most detailed official history of Kaohsiung is \textit{Gaoxiong shi fazhan shi bianzuan xiaozu} [Editorial committee of \textit{The history of Kaohsiung’s development}], \textit{Gaoxiong shi fazhan shi} [The history of Kaohsiung’s development] (Kaohsiung: Gaoxiong Shi Wenzian Wei yuanhui, 1995).
\item \textsuperscript{33} For a typical example of a city government-sponsored chronology in this vein, see Yang Rensheng (ed), \textit{Gaoxiong shi jinxi tu shuo} [Pictures of Kaohsiung then and now] (Kaohsiung: Gaoxiong Shi Wenzian Wei yuanhui, 1990).
\item \textsuperscript{34} The relationship between historic preservation and military control of land in Taiwan is a complicated yet fascinating question. At the time of writing, it remains the case that many parts of Kaohsiung, particularly the harbourfront, remain off-limits to civilian visitors. In some cases, access is allowed on condition that photography and sketching is not undertaken. I shall address this issue more thoroughly in future chapters, especially in relation to the role of the military in occupying and altering sections of Kaohsiung’s only first-grade relic, the old city wall in Zuoying.
\end{itemize}
Many of the city’s most widely recognised “guji” were renovated, listed, or protected in the years following the 1979 administrative restructure.\(^{35}\) Although the Ministry of the Interior had listed eleven sites in the city as nominal “guji” in the 1970s, it was only in the early 1980s that a systematic and legally-binding process of examining, and subsequently, listing and grading guji was undertaken. As we saw earlier in this thesis, this was not simply a period of administrative change in Kaohsiung, but was also a time during which a wider interest in the island’s historic built environment was being fostered through the *Cultural Property Preservation Ordinance* and the *Cultural Property Preservation Executive Act*. Following a series of studies jointly funded by the Council for Cultural Affairs and Kaohsiung City Government, and undertaken by a specially formed “Relic Appraisal Focus Group” (*Guji jianding zhuan’an xiaozu* 古蹟鑑定專案小組), Kaohsiung emerged in 1985 with a handful of official guji.\(^{36}\)

In keeping with the national focus inherent in the 1980s cultural property laws, only those elements of Kaohsiung’s historic built environment which promoted an ethnically Chinese history of Kaohsiung, and one consistent with the chronicles of “national history”, were registered as guji. Indeed, looking back on the period shortly after Kaohsiung obtained special municipality status, a former mayor of the city, Xu Shuide 許水得, claimed that the process of codifying guji in Kaohsiung represented, primarily, an “...important task within the policy of the Chinese Cultural Renaissance Movement”.\(^{37}\) Kaohsiung’s guji spoke of a Chinese history.

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\(^{35}\) Interestingly, a number of temples which had been listed during the 1970s were not graded as guji following the early 1980s re-listing. This process is described most thoroughly in Lu Bolin, *Gaoxiong shi minzheng zhi kao chu Bian* [A preliminary overview of civil administration in Kaohsiung city] (Kaohsiung: Gaoxiong Shi Wenxian Weiyuanhui, 1993), esp. pp. 156-170.


The list of officially sanctioned “historic relics” in Kaohsiung was relatively short, and usually appeared in the following order amongst the pages of city government-published catalogues: (i) the Zuoying old wall (Zuoying juicheng 左營舊城); (ii) the former Kaohsiung British consulate building; (iii) the Qihou battery (Qihou paotai 旗後砲台); (iv) the old Confucius temple (Jiu Kongzi miao 舊孔子廟); (v) the North gate battery (Xiongzhen Beimen 雄鎮北門) (fig. 33); (vi) the Qihou Mazu temple (Qihou Tianhou gong 旗後天后宮), \(^{38}\) and; (vii) The Qihou lighthouse (Qihou dengta 旗後燈塔).\(^{39}\)

Figure 33. The North gate battery (photograph by the author, 1999).

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\(^{38}\) Mazu, the goddess of the sea, is often referred to as the “Queen of Heaven”, or Tianhou 天后, when temples are named in Her honour. I have translated the phrase Tianhou Gong 天后宮 as “Mazu temple” (rather than “Queen of Heaven temple”) so as to avoid any confusion in references to other Mazu temples elsewhere in the thesis.

The only first-grade relic on this list—i.e., a relic deemed worthy enough to fall within the protective responsibility of the central government rather than local authorities—was the old city wall in the northern suburb of Zuoying. In keeping with the continuing dominance of the “central plains” and other related narratives of national histories on Taiwan, this gyji (or rather, set of gyji, as the jiucheng included a group of physically unconnected gates and stretches of wall) provided Kaohsiung with an architectural heritage that conformed completely with the dominant narratives of Chinese “national history”. This relic forms the basis of Chapter 5 of this thesis.

Whilst it was this sole first-grade relic which linked Kaohsiung with the nation’s antiquity, however, other sites listed as “second-grade relics” (and therefore administered by the now defunct provincial authorities), namely the former British consulate building and the Qihou battery, represented another variant of “national history”. Both were remnants of the late nineteenth-century treaty-port era, and were employed to display evidence in the city’s built environment of the shame of foreign incursion. In the early 1980s, the consulate building was renovated under the guidance of the aforementioned architectural scholar Lee Ch’ian-lang, and converted into a “Relic and Artifact Display Hall” (Shiji Wenwu Chenlie Guan 史蹟文物陳列物館) in which the material evidence of foreign aggression during the Opium Wars was exhibited;40 the Qihou battery—a structure first erected by the Qing authorities in the 1870s out of fear of a possible Japanese invasion of the island41—was promoted as a site at which Chinese resistance to Japanese rule could be commemorated.42 The Qihou Mazu temple and old Confucius temple, despite the rather

small physical stature of both these structures, were celebrated as sites clearly connected to an ethnic Chinese high culture in the region.\textsuperscript{43}

Only the lighthouse could claim an architectural heritage directly linked to Japanese imperialism—though even this 1908 structure could be traced to an earlier lighthouse raised at the same site by the Imperial Chinese Maritime Customs Service in 1883 (fig. 34). In case of any ambiguity about the reasons behind the renovation and listing of such a site, exhibits within the lighthouse included an example of Chiang Kai-shek’s calligraphy which read, significantly, “\textit{Guan shui zi\'zhu}" 閭稅自主—“tariff autonomy”.\textsuperscript{44}

\textsuperscript{43} Yang Shiming, \textit{Gouji qing wenwu gui: Qihou Tianhou Gong} [National level artifacts and relics: the Qihou Mazu temple] (Kaohsiung: Gaoxiong Shi Qijinqu (Qihou) Tianhou Gong, no date), brochure.

\textsuperscript{44} “Tariff autonomy” has always been linked to the question of national sovereignty in the official histories of the Republic of China. The ROC’s tariffs and customs were controlled by the Imperial Chinese Maritime Customs Service—an agency that was nominally part of the Chinese government, yet which had always been headed by British and American officials in keeping with conditions set out in the \textit{Treaty of Tientsin} (Tianjin)—from 1859 until 1950. There was thus a strong association between a tariff and customs system controlled by foreigners, and the humiliations that the nation was deemed to have suffered during the Opium Wars. In displaying calligraphy from the hand of one of the “great men” of Chinese history, the content of which celebrated the nation’s tariff autonomy, the lighthouse in Kaohsiung was thus being consciously linked to the anti-colonial narratives of national history that I examined in earlier sections of this thesis. For a Kaohsiung-specific discussion of this topic, see Li Wenhuan, \textit{Gaoxiong haiquan shi} [A history of the Kaohsiung customs] (Kaohsiung: Caizheng Bu, Gaoxiong Haiguan Shui Ju, 1999).
The Wu Dunyi mayoralty

In 1991, Wu Dunyi 吳敦義, a KMT party member and former head of Nantou County (Nantou xian 南投縣) in central Taiwan, was elected mayor of Kaohsiung in the first ever direct ballot held for this position. Wu’s accession to the position of mayor occurred within the wider context of the bentuhua movement, and coincided with a growing interest in local history—something which I detailed in the first chapter of this thesis. Yet Wu Dunyi’s electoral victory to the position of Kaohsiung’s mayor was highly relevant for another reason, as this was the first (and only) time that the city had been headed by a trained historian—Wu held a degree in history from one of the island’s most respected tertiary institutions, the National Taiwan University (Guoli Taiwan Daxue 國立臺灣大學).

It is evident that Wu Dunyi understood a good deal about the process of “history making”, perhaps more than any other of his bureaucratic predecessors. And though rarely recognised as such, it is clear that Wu Dunyi’s mayoral administration was pivotal in the
development of an official “Kaohsiung history”. Indeed, history was always present in the Wu mayoralty. When Wu Dunyi complained to his party colleagues in Taipei about the poor state of the Kaohsiung water works, he suggested that the city’s subterranean infrastructure was so out of date as to be made up of “Qing-era piping” (Man Qing shuiguăn 滿清水管) (fig. 35).\(^4\) As Taiwan became embroiled in diplomatic disputes with Japan and the PRC over the sovereignty of the Senkaku/Diaoyutai islands in 1996, Wu Dunyi was there to assert the Republic of China’s historic right of ownership.\(^6\) And as Taiwan watched Hong Kong “return” to the embrace of China, Kaohsiung’s mayor appealed to the mythical figure of the Yellow Emperor to convey the historic significance of this event.\(^7\)

![Figure 35. Mayor Wu inspects “Qing-era piping” (Source: Liu Xiumei, Our city, our home, p. 80).](image)

\(^4\) Yi Qian, “Feng lin huo shan”; Wu Dunyi de shizheng fengge [“Wind, forest, fire and mountains”: Wu Dunyi’s administrative style] (Taipei: Da Tun Chubanshe, 1997), pp. 154-158.


\(^7\) Wu Dunyi, “Quanqu Yuan Huang zisun xin suo tonggan” [Descendants of the Yellow Emperor the world over are united in feeling], in Hong Qingtian, Lian nanban zheg de Xianggang wenming [The miscarriage of Hong Kong civilisation] (Hong Kong: Longshui Tang, 1996), p. 8.
Yet Wu Dunyi's appeals to history went beyond political theatrics and slogans. The construction of a city government-sponsored "Kaohsiung history", one that could be counted relevant alongside the local histories that were emerging in other Taiwanese locations at the time, became one of the primary objectives of the Wu Dunyi mayoralty. It was in these years, for example, that the city was provided with a new museum which was dedicated specifically to the promotion of a Kaohsiung history and culture (an institution I shall examine in greater depth below). "Kaohsiung history"—including everything from archaic lists of "Eight Views" to the protection of guji—was introduced into the textbooks of the city's elementary schools under this city administration. Wu Dunyi's government also recognised the importance of the built environment in the promotion of local histories. A series of new third-grade sites were added to Kaohsiung's list of registered guji; those guji previously listed were in many cases renovated. In Wu's Kaohsiung, a number of new "historic districts" also began to emerge, one of the most of successful of which (i.e., Hamaxing) forms the basis of Chapter 6 of this thesis. The greater diversification in the appreciation of historic preservation that was being undertaken elsewhere in Taiwan was also encouraged during these years—even in this city of concrete and steel, the Kaohsiung City Government funded research on Kaohsiung's historic trees, for instance.

It was also under Wu's administration that interaction between members of city's academic elite, based at universities such as the National Sun Yat-Sen University (Guoli

48 See, for example, Luo Wenji (ed), Ai wo Gaoxiong [Let's love our Kaohsiung] (Kaohsiung: Gaoxiong Shi Zhengfu, Jiaoyu Ju, 1995). As a special municipality, the content of elementary school textbooks used in Kaohsiung city is decided upon by the city government's Bureau of Education (Jiaoyu Ju 教育局).

49 The Wu administration congratulated itself on such achievements in Gaoxiong Shi Wexian Weiyuanhui, Gaoxiong shi li ren shizhang zhengzheng chengguo jishi [A record of the achievements of city administrations and mayors in Kaohsiung] (Kaohsiung: Gaoxiong Shi Wexian Weiyuanhui, 1998).


Zhongshan Daxue 国立中山大學) and the National Kaohsiung Normal University (Guoli Gaoxiong Shifan Daxue 国立高雄師範大學), and the city authorities, was officially encouraged. The first of a series of annual “conferences on the development of Kaohsiung culture and history” (Gaoxiong wenhua fazhan shixue yantaohui 高雄文化發展史學研討會) was held, significantly, within the Kaohsiung Assembly building in 1992.\textsuperscript{52} And many of the ideas behind government policies related to local history during these years can actually be traced to the city’s universities. It has been the National Sun Yat-sen University’s Centre for Marine Policy Studies (Haiyang Zhengce Yanjiu Zhongxin 海洋政策研究中心) for instance, that lobbied since at least the mid-1990s for the adoption of the idea of “Haiyang shoudai”;\textsuperscript{53} and much of the stress placed upon commercial history which we saw in the latter stages of the previous chapter come directly from trends in academe.

Moreover, Wu Dunyi was also fond of adopting historically-inspired catchphrases in his efforts at “place selling”. His administration demonstrated a particular affection for the use of the generic term “gangdu” 港都, or “harbour city”, for instance—a term which has been used in the Chinese language to refer to many port or harbourside cities elsewhere—

\textsuperscript{52} A series of these conferences has been held over the last decade. For more details, see Huang Junjie (ed), Gaoxiong lishi wenhua lunji [Essays on Kaohsiung history and culture] (Kaohsiung: Caituan Faren Chen Zhonghe Weng Cishan Jijinhui, 1994); Huang Junjie (ed), Gaoxiong lishi wenhua lunji (er) [Essays on Kaohsiung history and culture (II)] (Kaohsiung: Caituan Faren Chen Zhonghe Weng Cishan Jijinhui, 1995); Huang Junjie (ed), Gaoxiong lishi wenhua lunji (san) [Essays on Kaohsiung history and culture (III)] (Kaohsiung: Caituan Faren Chen Zhonghe Weng Cishan Jijinhui, 1996); Huang Junjie (ed), Gaoxiong lishi wenhua lunji (si) [Essays on Kaohsiung history and culture (IV)] (Kaohsiung: Caituan Faren Chen Zhonghe Weng Cishan Jijinhui, 1997).

\textsuperscript{53} Yijiu Jiuba Nian Guoji Haiyang Nian Tuidong Weiyuanhui [Committee for the Promotion of 1998 as the International Year of the Ocean], Guoji haiyang nian tekan: chuangzao Gaoxiongshi chengwei yi ge zhengzheng you haiyang chuanzong de xiandai dushi [Special edition for the International Year of the Ocean: turning Kaohsiung into a modern metropolis that has genuine maritime traditions] (Kaohsiung: Gaoxiong Ershiji Shiji Dushi Fazhan Xichui, 1998).
in specific reference to Kaohsiung.\textsuperscript{54} And it was during Wu’s second term as the city’s leader that a short-lived attempt was made to appropriate the term “Pearl of the Orient”\textsuperscript{55}—a phrase more commonly associated with Hong Kong and, to a lesser extent, Shanghai—into the service of Kaohsiung’s past.\textsuperscript{56} Even the use of the term “haiyang shoudi”, though not officially promoted by the Wu Dunyi administration, was being formulated amongst the cities intellectual elite at this time, and its adoption in late 1998 as an official slogan (promoted not by Wu Dunyi, but by his successor, Frank Hsieh), might even be interpreted as the result of the greater interest in local history that was encouraged under the Wu mayoralty.

At one level, Wu Dunyi’s promulgation of such terms suggests that the desire to slough Kaohsiung’s perceived lack of historical relevance remained strong throughout these years. Indeed, in promoting Kaohsiung as a “shoudi” of sorts, one can detect a sense of inter-city rivalry with the “wenhua gudu” of Tainan, and the Republic’s provisional “shoudi” in Taiwan—Taipei.

\textsuperscript{54} The northern Taiwanese port city of Keelung is also commonly referred to in this way. The title “gangdu” has, furthermore, been applied to other localities throughout the Chinese-speaking world, such as Hong Kong. See Jiang Yun, Gangdu yeyu [Rainy night in the harbour city] (Hong Kong: Xiao Cao Chubanshe, 1972). The origins of the use of this term in relation to Kaohsiung are unclear. In any case, the Wu Dunyi administration, whilst certainly not being the first to refer to Kaohsiung as the “gangdu”, made liberal use of this phrase in its official vocabulary.

\textsuperscript{55} For a representative example, see Editing Panel, op cit., p. 28; see also Liu Xiumei, Zan de chengshi, zan de cuo [Our city, our home] (Kaohsiung: Gaoxiong Shi Zhengfu, Xinwen Chu, 1998), esp. pp. 34-35, entitled “Gangdu xin mingzhu” [New Pearl of the harbour city].

\textsuperscript{56} On Hong Kong as the “Pearl of the Orient” in the Chinese-speaking world, see Zhou Weiping, Dongfang zhi zhubia: Xianggang [Pearl of the Orient: Hong Kong] (Canton: Guangdong Keji Chubanshe, 1987); Hou Weimin and Hou Shusen (eds), Dongfang zhi zhubia: Xianggang de liyou yu gongwang [Pearl of the Orient: travelling and shopping in Hong Kong] (Peking: Zhongguo Wenlian Chubanshe, 1996); Wu Chunhe (ed), Dongfang zhi zhubia shuo miaoxian [Scanning the Pearl of the Orient] (Hong Kong: Xianggang Wenyuan Chubanshe, 1997). The Oriental Pearl Television Tower, known in Chinese as Dongfang Mingzhu Ta 東方明珠塔 (lit., the “Pearl of the Orient Tower”), was completed in Shanghai in 1995.
Yet the use of anonyms such as “Pearl of the Orient” and “harbour city”, also alludes to a far wider historiographical shift that was occurring during these years, one that went beyond the issue of historically-inspired sobriquets for Kaohsiung. Consider the phrase “Pearl of the Orient”. There are clear treaty port and “colonial” connotations inherent in this, a phrase that has found expression at different moments in Shanghai and Hong Kong. Indeed, the use of this term in Kaohsiung coincided with the “retrocession” of Hong Kong to Chinese rule in 1997, an event which, as we saw in Chapter 3, inspired numerous debates about Kaohsiung’s historical legitimacy as a hub for the “Asia-Pacific Regional Operations Centre” plan. Yet most important of all is that, as a “pearl of the Orient” and a “harbour city”, Kaohsiung’s treaty port and colonial past could be granted a far more wistful and nostalgic aura than it could ever have claimed in the 1980s or earlier. Colonial (or semi-colonial) history was no longer being equated primarily with national humiliation or shame. Kaohsiung was instead adopting a romanticised vision of the semi-colonial past, and this was being made possible through the growing trend towards “pro-colonial historiography” in the wider Taiwanese context, something which translated into a greater freedom to explore the colonial past of the island without being tied to the nationalist rhetoric of the Chiang Kai-shek and Chiang Ching-kuo years. Even more

57 The origins and uses of this phrase throughout Asia would make for a fascinating study, but lie outside the scope of this thesis. Hong Kong, Manila, Penang, and other cities have all been termed “Pearls of the Orient” at one time or another, as have entire societies, such as Burma and Sri Lanka. For some representative examples of the former, see Manila Merchants’ Association, Manila: Pearl of the Orient (Manila: Manila Merchants’ Association, 1908); on the latter, see Harry Williams, Ceylon: Pearl of the East (London: Robert Hale Ltd., c.1951), and Pearl Aung and P. Aung Khin, Pearl of the East: a Guide to Burma and its People (Rangoon: Pearl Publishers, 1961).

58 “Semi-colonial” (半殖民) is a term favoured by mainland Chinese scholars when speaking of the nature of the nineteenth- and early twentieth-century treaty ports (i.e., not formal colonies, but encompassing many of the power structures familiar to colonialism). It emerged out of Maoist historiography—see, for example, Mao Tse-tung, Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung, Volume II (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1965), pp. 309-314. I use it here to differentiate the colonial (i.e., post-1895) era of Japanese rule, from the late nineteenth-century era during which Takow (Kaohsiung) was opened to foreign trade as a treaty port.
crucially was that the city was looking literally beyond the borders of the nation for inspiration, finding a world of treaty port imagery and vocabulary in those other “Oriental pearls”—Hong Kong and Shanghai.

Rather than fitting a local Kaohsiung history into larger national narratives then, it was now a case of selectively choosing elements of national historiography to suit locally-derived city histories. Gone were the linear narratives of progress which had dominated earlier city government-sponsored histories. In their place was a vision of “old Kaohsiung” which, as we saw in the previous chapter, was far from deficient or shameful. The five millennia of history or the centrality of China’s central plains may still have been present, and were called upon when the city government saw fit, yet they were made to coalesce with a local history. Now it was a case of Kaohsiung claiming a history of “...over four thousand years...”, rather than the nation.59 Guo shi was called upon only so far as it could be sourced for images, symbols and slogans. It was not, however, used as set of dominant narratives to which an official Kaohsiung history was required to adhere. Indeed, it was the Wu Dunyi mayoralty that instigated the appropriation of many of the central government-sponsored slogans—from the APROC plan, to “maritime China/Taiwan”—into the service of an official city history.

Sites in the historic built environment that had once been negatively associated with colonialism—such as the former British consulate building and the lighthouse—could now be legitimately subsumed into a romantic Kaohsiung history, one which began to look remarkably similar to the “old Shanghai” that was produced through the

59 For a typical example of the uses of national paradigms in the service of Kaohsiung histories, see Liu Yingjun, The International Port City Kaohsiung (Kaohsiung: Department of Information, Kaohsiung City Government, 1994), esp. p. 9, in which it is claimed that: “Archaeologists have discovered traces of human activity in the Kaohsiung area that date back over four thousand years”.
contemporary Hong Kong entertainment industry.\textsuperscript{60} I shall illustrate this trend more thoroughly in Chapter 6, when I examine the ways in which architectural remainders of the treaty port and colonial past are being worked into the “community construction” project of Hamaxing in Kaohsiung.

\textbf{The institutionalisation of Kaohsiung history}

The appropriation and reinterpretation of elements of national historiography in the assemblage of a local Kaohsiung history becomes clearer once we begin to examine the institutions that were responsible for these changes under the Wu mayoralty, and indeed, through until the end of the 1990s. For over and above the publication of journals, magazines and books, or the official registration and protection of “relics”, the promotion of city government-sponsored histories of Kaohsiung has become clearly manifest in the increasing number of governmental and quasi-official institutions in the city that are now involved in the history-making process. With a number of new museums established in the mid- to late 1990s, and institutions which predate the 1979 administrative restructure of Kaohsiung being progressively transformed over the last decade or more to take on a locally-focused role, Kaohsiung is now home to a range of organisations and institutions through which an officially-sanctioned local history can be constructed and exhibited. As we shall see below, this increasing institutionalisation of Kaohsiung history has actually led to a greater diversification of ideas. And in some cases, it has enabled non-official narratives and historiographical traditions to evolve. Therefore, whilst the previous section examined the ways in which the Kaohsiung City Government has sought to overcome the derogatory claims that Kaohsiung is a “cultural desert”, I shall look below at the role of specific organisations that have been established with the aim of disseminating official histories in the city.

\textsuperscript{60} This Hong Kong reproduction of “old Shanghai” is noted in Francesca Dal Lago, “Crossed legs in 1930s Shanghai: how ‘modern’ the modern woman?”, \textit{East Asian History} 19 (2000.6): 103-144.
Some cultural institutions that have emerged as key agents in this history-making process were in fact formed with quite different aims, and long before there was anything akin to a government-sponsored “Kaohsiung history”. Emblematic of these is the Kaohsiung City Cultural Centre (Gaohsiung Shili Zhongzheng Wenhua Zhongxin 高市立中正文化中心). Despite its title, this institution was not originally designed to promote Kaohsiung culture or history. In keeping with the general sense amongst organs of the central government in the 1970s that Kaohsiung lacked a culture of any worth, and within the context of the Chinese Cultural Renaissance Movement under the aegis of which this institution was established, the Kaohsiung City Cultural Centre was designed to provide Kaohsiung with a Chinese high culture of which it had been hitherto deprived. The design of this cultural centre included a bronze statue of the “great leader” Chiang Kai-shek and incorporated decorative elements of “traditional” Chinese architecture.\textsuperscript{61} Significantly, the centre was sited on a disused sports-field that had become a dumping ground for refuse.\textsuperscript{62} The choice to replace rubbish with this architectural manifestation of China’s “five thousand years” of civilisation was itself symbolic—local garbage was being replaced with a national history.

Writing about what was, at the time, a new addition to the Kaohsiung streetscape, the Kaohsiung-based author-cum-official Li Bing 李冰 described the new centre in terms that linked it unquestionably to the “five thousand”-year paradigm of national history that had been common at the time of the centre’s establishment:

> Even though it is not as grand as the Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Hall in Taipei, the Kaohsiung City Cultural Centre emits strongly the air of our great nation, and the distant source of our culture, in terms of its design. One looks up in awe; each time

\textsuperscript{61} Shen Xueyong, *Taiwan diao wenhua zhongxin* [The cultural centres of the Taiwan area] (Taipei: Xingzhengyuan, Wenhua Jianjie Weiyuanhui, 1994), pp. 112-117.

one stands beneath its cloisters, one finds oneself inspired by the spirit of the great man [i.e., Chiang Kai-shek]. He also inspires hundreds of thousands of Kaohsiung citizens, showing them how to live their lives, and how to be true and upright Chinese people.63

In this passage, the centre is associated with all the themes and icons of national history. There are references to antiquity, to the grand geography of the nation, and to the "Chinese people". And Li’s references to the "great leader" are no coincidence either—in the very name of the centre, together with a statue set in bronze beneath its cloisters, one of the great men of history, Chiang Kai-shek, was commemorated here.64

The functions of this cultural centre matched the symbolism present in its architecture. This institution celebrated a highly centralised and monolithic Chinese culture. In the publication of quasi-text books, this institution sought to educate the Kaohsiung populace about the place of the nation in the chronicles of world history.65 Through its annual Kaohsiung Arts Seasons (Gaoxiong shi wenyi ji 高雄市文藝季), the first of which was held in 1980, the centre encouraged interest in "traditional" Chinese arts and crafts, ranging from Peking opera (guojia 国剧) to "ethnic [Chinese] dancing" (minzu wudao 民族舞蹈);66 it sponsored activities such as the annual Kaohsiung Arts Awards (Gaoxiong shi wenyi jiang 高雄市文藝獎), which from 1981 onwards rewarded Kaohsiung scholars

64 The official title of the centre, i.e., Gaoxiong Shili Zhongzheng Wenhua Zhongxin 高雄市立中正文化中心, included a direct reference to Chiang Kai-shek in its use of the two characters Zhongzheng 中正. These are the two characters in Chiang Kai-shek’s presidential title of Jiang Zhongzheng 蒋中正. To this day, a large four-character plaque hanging above the centre’s main entrance reminds visitors of the great man’s passing: "yong huaizhongxin" 永懷領袖—"we will always remember our leader".
65 Gaoxiong Shili Zhongzheng Wenhua Zhongxin [Kaohsiung City Cultural Centre], Lishi shang de jintian [Today in History] (Kaohsiung: Gaoxiong Shili Zhongzheng Wenhua Zhongxin, 1987).
who showed promise in the artistic expressions of Chinese civilisation, from composition in the “national language” (guowen 国文) to traditional Chinese painting (guohua 国画).67

Yet the Kaohsiung City Cultural Centre is also important as an example of how much has changed within this city over the last decade. For this bastion of Chinese civilisation has been transformed to become one of the most active promoters of Kaohsiung local culture, arts and history, in effect transforming itself from a distribution point of central plains civilisation, to a collector and protector of local cultural expression. This has become manifest since the early 1990s. For example, through publications such as the Beauty of literature from the harbour city (Gangdu wenxue zhi mei 港都文学之美) series, first introduced in 1994, the centre has sought to support the works of local authors who write about Kaohsiung.68 The centre’s publications now include some of the most thorough guides to the Kaohsiung historic built environment and cultural institutions to date.69 And the cultural activities organised by the centre have now assumed a saliently local flavour, shedding much of the Sinocentrism that defined them just a few years earlier. The above-mentioned arts seasons, for instance, have emerged into multi-faceted celebrations of specific Kaohsiung localities or features of the city’s topography, and now encourage input from local “lay scholars” and community-based groups in the compilation of local histories. The texts produced in tandem with these festivals have represented some of the

67 A short history of the awards can be found in Gaoxiong Shili Zhongzheng Wenhua Zhongxin, Guanli Chu [Management Office, Kaohsiung City Cultural Centre], “Xu” [Preface], in Gaoxiong shi wenyi jiang ji jia zuyou chuangzuo jiang dejiang ren chuban zhuzuo tuibu mulu [A catalogue of the works of winners of the Kaohsiung arts awards for literature] (Kaohsiung: Gaoxiong Shili Zhongzheng Wenhua Zhongxin, Guanli Chu, c.2001), no page numbers.
68 Li Wenneng, “Zong xu” [General preface], in Shi Moliu, Mei de chuantong yu xiandai [The tradition and modernity of beauty] (Kaohsiung: Gaoxiong Shili Zhongzheng Wenhua Zhongxin, 1994).
most thorough local histories to be produced in the city in the last decade. The cultural centre’s library, though retaining the residuum of its “central plains”-inspired past, is now equally dedicated to the collection of materials related specifically to Kaohsiung, and has become one the best-endowed repositories of written Kaohsiung history, having amassed a wealth of rare and unpublished works by Kaohsiung authors and intellectuals—a collection arguably more thorough than any other in the city.

Alongside the changing roles of organisations such as the Kaohsiung City Cultural Centre, there have also been concerted efforts on the part of the Kaohsiung City Government to introduce new institutional players into the Kaohsiung history-making process. Amongst these new institutions, the most noteworthy and influential example has been the Kaohsiung Museum of History (Gaoxiong Shili Lishi Bowuguan 高雄市立歷史博物館). Despite being opened to the public as recently as October 1998 (two months prior to Wu Dunyi’s loss of the Kaohsiung mayoralty to the DPP’s Frank Hsieh), this museum has been perhaps the most creative in examining and presenting a “diqucing” 地區性, or “regional”, history of the city, drawing on the wider fields of material history and museology in the process.

Significantly, however, and much like the above-examined cultural centre, the Kaohsiung Museum of History has also acted as an architectural symbol of sorts. It is housed in a large “crown-style” building that was first constructed in 1938 as the chambers of the Takao shiyakusho (fig. 36), was later used as the Kaohsiung City Government’s

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70 One of the earliest arts seasons of this type was in 1994, celebrations in that year focusing on the Ai He 愛河, or Lover River. See Luo Fu (ed), Ai He xun meng [Searching for dreams in the Love River] (Kaohsiung: Gaoxiong Shuli Zhongzheng Wenhua Zhongxin, 1994).
headquarters for many years, and which is now registered as a third-grade guji (having been
listed as such during Wu Dunyi’s reign). 71

The choice of this site for the museum during the latter years of the Wu Dunyi
administration was highly relevant. This was the first occasion upon which a structure so
conspicuously associated with the colonial Japanese administration of the city—it was here
at the Takao shiyakusho that many of the texts about this city as the “base of the southern
advance” were in fact written—has been recognised as both a site of cultural import, and a
distributor of official Kaohsiung histories. In other words, just as the ideologies of
Japanese imperialism have been given a proverbial “fresh coat of paint” by the Kaohsiung
City Government and subsequently revived in the late 1990s, so have the architectural
relics of Japanese rule been appropriated and renovated in the service of an
institutionalised Kaohsiung history.

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71 “Gaoxiong Shili Lishi Bovuguan: wei Dagou zhumin baoliu shichuang” [The Kaohsiung Museum of
History: preserving a window on the past for the residents of Kaohsiung], Gaoxiong liue zhoubian (1999.12): 37-
38.
There is nothing clandestine about the museum’s use of this most potent architectural symbol of Japanese imperialism. Indeed, the museum itself has made much of the fact that it is housed in a listed relic dating from the late colonial era, one that is, furthermore, one of the best preserved examples of “crown-style” architecture anywhere in Taiwan. A permanent exhibition on the architectural history of the building now exists within the museum’s walls.\textsuperscript{72} And in recent years, the museum has specifically sought to draw public attention to its premises by the use of flood-lighting.\textsuperscript{73}

This alerts us to a major shift in terms of the interpretation of the colonial past on the part of both the Kaohsiung City Government and its academic allies. A museum such as this is more than just a site for the dissemination of a local Kaohsiung history. This is an institution which, by its very position within the former Takao shiyakusho, acknowledges and celebrates the fact that much of Kaohsiung’s built environment was shaped by the experience of colonialism. It is hardly surprising that such an institution was created within the architectural vestiges of Japanese colonialism at precisely the same moment that the semantic infrastructure of colonial rule was being unearthed and renovated in the service of the APROC and \textit{Nan xiang} policies that I examined in Chapter 3.

The stated aim of the Kaohsiung Museum of History is to “...show the historical and cultural characteristics of greater Kaohsiung”.\textsuperscript{74} As such, the histories presented through its exhibitions are particularly local in focus, and represent the same desires to “give Kaohsiung a history” that the city government has fostered in other institutions. “Not many people know”, boasts the opening line of a catalogue accompanying the museum’s

\textsuperscript{72} “Renshi ben guan” [Get to know the museum], \textit{Gaoxiong shi lishi bowuguan huoong biao} 4 (2001.4): 3.

\textsuperscript{73} On the topic of flood-lighting historic buildings in Kaohsiung since the late 1990s, including the premises of the museum, see Chuen-Chair Kang, \textit{The Beautiful Night of the Harbour City: Kaohsiung 2000} (Kaohsiung: Da Nan Taiwan Shying Wenhua Fang, 2000).

Special exhibition on Taiwanese medical history, for example, “that Kaohsiung, once known as Takow, was the base of Western medicine in Taiwan, or that it was, furthermore, the cradle of international ‘tropical medicine’”75 The museum has also been instrumental in innovating new interpretations of the local past through its publications. Indeed, besides the Cultural Centre and the Kaohsiung Historiography Commission, the Kaohsiung Museum of History is one of the single most active publishers of material on Kaohsiung history.76

Although the generic medium of the museum is now widely accepted as being didactic and regulatory in the ways in which it presents the past,77 the Kaohsiung Museum of History nonetheless marks a break from earlier institutional efforts. Since its foundation, the museum has hosted a vast array of exhibitions which celebrate the material, cultural and public history of the city. In turn, these have depicted the local past in terms which go further than those presented in the glossy pages of government-produced magazines, books or television series. Exhibition topics have ranged from the history of the local ship-breaking industry to the chronology of public lighting in Kaohsiung. Nor are all the contents of the museum’s displays necessarily self-congratulatory—the local ramifications of the 28 February massacre of 1947, for example, form the topic of one permanent exhibition on the museum’s ground floor. And in the very use of the former shiyakusho


76 Most of this work is not sold to the public, but disseminated to other institutions throughout Taiwan. Publications range from catalogues, to postcards and posters. For some recent examples, see Yang Shiming, Xu Langaixiong, Xie Qingxiang and Su Meixue (eds), Jingying mian mian wushi nian: Cai Gaoming ‘wiechen’ gangdu sheying zhan [Fifty years of endless nostalgia: an exhibition of Cai Gaoming’s photographs of the harbour city] (Kaohsiung: Gaoxiong Shili Lishi Bowuguan, 1999); Ye Zhenhui, Diaqun lishi tu shuo [Historical maps of Takow] (Kaohsiung: Gaoxiong Shili Lishi Bowuguan, 2000).

building with its “crown-style” architecture, the museum can be seen to be questioning some of the ambiguities surrounding the continued reluctance on the part of some sections of Kaohsiung bureaucracy and academe to come to terms with the city’s colonial past.

Other histories?

I began this chapter by suggesting that, as far as many people in Taiwan (including professional historians) are concerned, Kaohsiung is a place of “no history”. Yet as we saw in preceding sections, for such an ahistoric place, Kaohsiung certainly has many pasts. Indeed, the years of a perceived lack of history in Kaohsiung have actually resulted in something akin to a blank canvas onto which various government departments, museums and other institutions have, in more recent times, sort to sketch out their own views of the city’s past. In the eyes of the municipal administration, Kaohsiung’s connection to the sea and its importance as a southern counterweight to Taipei, expressed first through paradigms such as the “harbour city”, the “pearl of the Orient”, and, since the election of Frank Hsieh to the mayoralty, the “haiyang shoudai”, have emerged as the most important of these.

It would be misleading to suggest, however, that such paradigms represent the only forms of local history circulating in this city. Nor could one claim that, prior to the establishment of the institutions I examined above, Kaohsiung claimed no historiographical traditions. On the contrary, one could well trace the history of a virtual community of scholars working on the local history of Kaohsiung in one form or another back well over a century, if not further. Moreover, if we were to look into more “unofficial” forms of knowledge such as myth and anecdote,78 we would find an entire world of histories about

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78 On “unofficial knowledge”, see Raphael Samuel, _Theatres of Memory…_, pp. 3-48.
this city, many of which have little to do with government-sanctioned narratives of the sort listed above.

Yet it is not my intention here to simply list different types of narrative, or to choose one particular historiographical tradition, judge it “authentic” or otherwise, and thereafter deconstruct it. A more appropriate path is to search for an understanding of the relationship between these various “other histories” of the city—ones which have been sustained and circulated by voices of less official standing—and those which have been promoted by the city government and the institutions it has created. Do these “other histories” necessarily conflict with “official histories”? And to what extent do different historiographical traditions inform one another?

As we saw in the preceding section of this chapter (and in Chapter 3), the city government’s promotion of Kaohsiung as Taiwan’s “maritime capital” involved the rediscovery and adoption of earlier historic narratives, images and vocabulary. Many of these were taken directly from the annals of Japanese colonialism; others were of more recent origin (e.g., the language of late twentieth-century business). For the city administration and those agencies responsible for preserving or presenting the local past have found their task made far easier by delving into the works of local Kaohsiung scholars for pearls of historiographical wisdom. But it is also in the writings and lectures of lay scholars, or minjian xueye, that more recent additions to the history-making process have found a ready source of content for their own works. These scholars, in approaching the study and compilation of local histories from outside the institutional constraints of universities or local bureaucracies, have had a substantial influence on the ways in which Kaohsiung’s past is now interpreted.
The work of the late Lin Shuguang is typical. Lin has been described as a “pioneer and authority amongst local lay scholars” in Kaohsiung. Although his work is not widely available or even known beyond Kaohsiung, within the city, he is recognised as having been one of the most prolific contributors to the writing of Kaohsiung histories in recent decades. Lin was not a professional historian; much of his career was spent, rather, as a Japanese-Chinese translator, and as a journalist. As is the case with many other intellectuals who have taken to composing local histories in recent years, much of Lin’s work was published through local newspapers such as the Taiwan news (Taiwan xinwen bao 臺灣新聞報) and the China evening news (Zhongguo wanbao 中國晚報), as well as through nativist-affiliated intellectual and literary journals. Today, however, it is the large number of historical short essays and books that he compiled late in life which represent Lin’s legacy to local history.

Stylistically, Lin Shuguang’s local history writing is a typical example of the trend towards the revival of the gazetteer genre throughout Taiwan which I examined in Chapter 1. In gazetteer fashion, Lin’s work includes, and finds inspiration in, every conceivable sector of the Kaohsiung universe: from mangrove trees to temples; and from street names to oil refineries. In “horizontally dissecting” (hengjie 横切) time, Lin’s histories draw on official

79 Ye Shitao, “Difang wenshi gongzuozhe de xianqu he qianwei” [A pioneer and authority amongst local lay scholars], Taiwan xinwen bao, 10 October 2000.
80 For a typical example of Lin’s translation work, see Liu Jie, Taiwan wenhua zhanshang [The future of Taiwanese culture], trans. Lin Shuguang (Kaohsiung: Chunhui Chubanshe, 1994).
documents, oral histories, and personal memories of his own life in the city. Indeed, so
wide in scope is Lin’s writing, that it mirrors in form the tables-of-contents found in any
standard Qing-era gazetteer. The stories behind particular sites or rituals take Lin’s work
into the chronological time of Chinese dynastic history, the social history of recent
institutional and municipal politics, and into the city’s once disavowed colonial Japanese
past.

Figure 37. Lin Shuguang’s Notes on the search for gods in Takow.

83 For some representative examples, see Lin Shuguang, Dagon sser shen Ji [Notes on the search for gods in
Takow] (Kaohsiung: Chunhui Chubanshe, 1994); Dagon caifenlu [A record of collected anecdotes from
Takow] (Kaohsiung: Chunhui Chubanshe, 1994); Dagon suiishi jigu [Memoranda of the Takow seasons]
(Kaohsiung: Gaoxiong Shi Wenxian Weiyuanhui, 1994).
Lin Shuguang is representative of many Japanese-educated intellectuals of his
generation—those who were educated in Taiwan at the height of Japanese imperialism,
who studied for some time in metropolitan Japan, and who used Japanese as their primary
language of composition. Furthermore, Lin's work on Kaohsiung history has always been
linked to the question of Japanese imperialism and its influence on urban landscape and
culture. In a fashion that official histories at both the local and national levels are now only
beginning to do, Lin’s "lay" scholarship has always openly embraced this Japanese colonial
heritage, and has engaged with the question of how this influences his own thought and
writing. In one instance, Lin recounts the influence that studying in wartime Kyoto left on
him;°° elsewhere, he describes the pleasure of rediscovering long-forgotten colonial-era
texts during visits to the Kaohsiung Municipal Social Education Hall (Gaoxiong Shili
Shehui Jiaoyu Guan 高雄市立社會教育館).°° Throughout his essays, Lin is always
conscious of the relationship between Kaohsiung’s modern history, Japanese colonialism,
and the complicated ways in which his own experience as a Japanese-educated Kaohsiung
native is informed by a particular past.

The role of other lay scholars in Kaohsiung has been of equal importance. The late Zeng
Yukun 曾玉昆, for instance, a high school teacher whom I shall examine in greater detail
in Chapter 5, was well known for his work on a range of topics related to Kaohsiung
history. Like Lin, Zeng was not a professionally-trained historian, but took to local history
writing later in life, publishing prolifically from the mid-1980s onwards. As well as writing
for various local newspapers and other media, Zeng was famous for organising historical
tours of relics throughout Kaohsiung. Yet a major part of his work was also based on the
cultivation of a personal connection with the Kaohsiung historic environment. Zeng

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°° Lin Shuguang, "Yizhe houji" [Translator's endnote], in Li Fangzi, Dongguan zhong de Wang Fei [The prince’s
concubine in the midst of upheaval], trans. Lin Shuguang (Kaohsiung: Da Wu Tai Shuyuan Chubanshe, 1976),
pp. 162-164.

°° See the essay entitled "Gaoxiong tushuguan. Gaoxiong xin bao" [Kaohsiung libraries. The Kaohsiung Times], in
Lin Shuguang, Daguo suotan [Trifling discussions about Takow] (Kaohsiung: Chunhui Chubanshe, 1994).
became known primarily as a scholar who learnt everything there was to know about the local past through his own “fieldwork trips”. Although Zeng’s reading of the Kaohsiung local past was informed foremost by Chinese nationalist traditions, it nevertheless shared much in common with the work of Lin Shuguang in terms of its adherence to a gazetteer style, and its concentration on locality.

Another example of a prolific “lay scholar” in Kaohsiung is Zheng Shuiping 鄭水萍. Despite being of a quite different generation from Lin and Zeng before him, Zheng’s work on local Kaohsiung history follows in a tradition that takes to examining the local past from outside the bounds of institutional histories, yet which has since been appropriated into the service of more official versions of the past. Unlike both Lin Shuguang and Zeng Yukun, Zheng Shuiping is an academically-trained historian. Indeed, it has been Zheng and his former supervisor from the National Taiwan University’s Department of History, Huang Junjie, who from 1992, have worked to create a viable academic field known as Gaoxiang yanjiu 高雄研究, or “Kaohsiung studies” through the conferences I mentioned earlier in this chapter. Not all of Zheng’s work on Kaohsiung history has been necessarily academic in nature, however. Straddling the divide between academe and lay scholarship—and appearing remarkably similar to that brand of scholar on the other side of the Taiwan Strait that Geremie Barmé has termed the “mass media historian”—Zheng’s Kaohsiung histories share with those of Lin and Zeng a gazetteer-inspired interest in locality, and are just as wide-ranging in content matter. Furthermore, and like Zeng Yukun, Zheng’s best-known work appears in the form of public lectures, essays in the local print media, television appearances and consulting work rather than academic monographs. Though loosely affiliated with a number of academic and

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86 Such as those catalogued in the 850-page Fengji juzheng shanzhang: Zeng Yukun laoshi zhuanfang jishu [The old scholar from the ancient city of Feng: a record of special interviews with teacher Zeng Yukun] (Kaohsiung: Xinglong Jing Si: 1999).

governmental organisations, Zheng operates, in true *minjian xuezhe* fashion, from his own “workshop” (*gongzuoishi* 工作室).

Lin Shuguang, Zeng Yukun and Zheng Shuiping may all take very different approaches to their study of the local past—the conscious embrace of a Japanese colonial heritage present in the work of Lin Shuguang is far removed from the proud Chinese patriotism that defines Zeng Yukun’s writing. These three lay scholars nevertheless share a common interest in placing locality before time in their work. Unlike professional academics employed to teach in the history departments of Taiwan’s universities, they do not categorise their work according to “period”; in exploring the history of a particular building, for instance, Lin, Zeng and Zheng might straddle decades or even centuries.  

Yet rather than being marginalised at the expense of more conformist historians, the “other histories” that lay scholars such as these three have pioneered have in fact come to influence strongly even the most official and institutionalised of histories in this city. In finding a content for promotional literature on “old Kaohsiung”, for instance, the city government’s Department of Information employed Zeng Yukun to pen a number of major works on the city’s past. Lin Shuguang’s work has likewise provided information upon which government-produced signage at various historic sites throughout the city has been based. And Zheng Shuiping has emerged, more than any “professional historian”,

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88 As we saw in Chapter 1, “Taiwan History” is almost always categorised according to a strict set of periods: “the late Qing”, “the era of Japanese rule”, “the post-reversion era”, and so on. What makes the work of lay scholars so interesting, and I would argue so accessible to a wider audience, is their total disregard for such conventions.

89 Such as Zeng Yukun, *Takou city: a Kaohsiung collection*.

90 Lin Shuguang, *Trifling discussions…*, pp. 284-286. Note also the description of finance street as it appears in Gaoxiong Shifu Daxue Dilixue Xi [Department of Geography, National Kaohsiung Normal University], *Gaoxiong shi Shaochuan tou Hamaxing shequ shebi wenwuguan kexueyuan zheji ji wenhua jingquan daolan budao guihua qimo baogao* [Report on the feasibility and cost of establishing a museum and sightseeing trails in the Shaochuan tou and Hamaxing precincts of Kaohsiung city] (Kaohsiung: Gaoxiong Shili Zhongzheng Wenhua Zhongxin, 1999), p. X/42. This shall be examined further in Chapter 6.
as perhaps the most influential Kaohsiung intellectual since the mid-1990s, contributing to
almost all arts seasons organised by the city’s cultural centre,\(^9\) writing pieces for Kaohsiung
Pictorial and other government publications,\(^9\) and advising numerous city bureaux on
matters relating to the preservation of the historic built environment.

In the process of all this, the lines between “other histories” and those promoted by the
city government have blurred. Rather than being marginalised by the more authoritative
voices of city government departments, these lay histories have actually begun to influence
City hall’s depictions of “Kaohsiung history”. Indeed, other equally less “official” voices
have similarly come to stamp their mark on Kaohsiung historiography, and have provided
templates upon which “official histories” have been subsequently modeled. The shequ
yingzao (or “community construction”) mode of historic preservation that I examined in
Chapter 2, for example, has represented a major factor in the promotion of local histories
in Kaohsiung. Indeed, like the writing of lay scholars such as Lin, Zeng and Zheng, shequ
yingzao projects throughout the city predate official efforts to “give Kaohsiung a history”,
yet have had a substantial impact in prompting more official re-appraisals of the historic
built environment.

One of the earlier examples of shequ yingzao in Kaohsiung can be found in the harbourside
suburb of Yancheng 養城. There, community-based shequ yingzao volunteers have taken to
promoting features of the local built environment and culture that a decade earlier would

\(^9\) Zheng Shuiping, Shou Shan jishi [A record of Mount Longevity] (Kaohsiung: Gaoxiong Shili Zhongzheng
Wenhua Zhongxin, 1995).

\(^9\) See, for instance, Zheng Shuiping “Cong Dagou yi dao Gaoxiong huoche tou” [From Takao Station to
difangzhi: haiyang wenhua de jiaohui yu baocang” [Pratas Islands’ gazetteer: the coming together and
protection of maritime cultures], Gaoxiong huakan, Dongsha zhuani [Pratas Islands’ special edition] (1999):
39-45.
never have been taken seriously in Kaohsiung's cultural or historiographical make-up. An appreciation of the area's light industrial and trading culture has formed the central theme in efforts to “construct a community” there. Particular streets have subsequently been “themed” as cultural sites of relevance to a Yancheng historical experience—a concentration of jewellery shops on the narrow Xinle Street (Xinle Jie 新樂街) led the area's District Office (Qu Gongsu 區公所) to standardise shop signs, and to re-christen it as “Gold Street” (kim-a koe 金仔街), for instance (fig. 38).

![Image of Gold Street](image.png)

**Figure 38. “Gold Street” (photograph by the author, 2001).**

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Yancheng is but one amongst many examples of shequ yingzao in Kaohsiung. In some cases, such as Wenhua Aihe Cujinhui 文化愛河促進會 (lit., “The Association for the Promotion of the Culture of Love River”), the “community construction” model has been utilised in the study and protection of culturally significant features of the city’s topography—in this case, the Love River (Ai he 愛河) which runs through the city and into Kaohsiung harbour—rather than a given district or clearly defined “community”.

For other groups, it is the more generalised themes of local Kaohsiung history which form the basis of publications and activities. The Southern Taiwan Cultural-Historical Workshop (Nan Taiwan Wenshi Gongzuoshi 南臺灣文史工作室), formed during the writing of this thesis, prefers to consider the city as a whole, exploring new ways of modelling local history from a distinctly southern Taiwanese, and especially Kaohsiung-based, point of view.

The rise in the number of shequ yingzao projects and affiliated “cultural-historical workshops” in recent times has been rapid to say the least. In keeping with the Taiwan-wide trend towards the development and dissemination of this model, the use of this form of “grass roots” history-making has offered an alternative to both the central government-sponsored histories, and indeed, the official local histories that have been promoted by the city government in the decade after its founding in 1979. Indeed, it has been these multiple layers of local history as they are presented through various shequ yingzao projects that have actually influenced the histories that the city authorities have begun to compose. It was only in 1996 (i.e., some years after many shequ yingzao projects had been undertaken in the

96 On the activities of the Association for the Promotion of the Culture of Love River, see their journal, entitled Wenhua Aihe [The Cultural Love River], the first issue of which was published in 1994.
97 Nan Taiwan Wenshi Gongzuoshi [Southern Taiwan Cultural-Historical Workshop], “Fa kan ci: xiangtu wenhua, Taiwan de xiwang” [Publication announcement: xiangtu culture, the hope of Taiwan], Nan Tai Wenhua 1 (2001): 1.
city) that the Kaohsiung City Government’s Office of Education belatedly predicted that “Kaohsiung’s cultural development was to ‘take-off’ from community construction”.

By the end of the same decade, there were already over thirty such “shequ yingzao” projects and related “cultural-historical workshops” listed throughout the city and registered within the collective Harbour City Association for Historical Artifacts (Gangdu Lishi Wenwu Xiehui 港都歷史文物協會). And it was from approximately this time that the city government not only began to participate actively in particular shequ yingzao projects which it saw as most relevant to the history of the city, but also incorporated some of its most common methods—such as “themed streets” (tose jie 特色街)—for the wider promotion of Kaohsiung as a tourist centre. In other words, it was a case of independent “community construction” projects actually influencing the ways in which official histories of the city were made.

This point becomes clearer once we consider the major impact that the shequ yingzao model has had in legitimising sites in the Kaohsiung historic built environment which had previously been ignored or scorned as “ahistoric”. In the 1980s, the city government’s view of the historic built environment was one anchored firmly to the discourse of “guyi”; the only sections of Kaohsiung’s built environment considered historically significant were those which appeared in inventories compiled by the Bureau of Civil Affairs (Minzheng ju 民政局) or by central government agencies. However, it is now the case that many of

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98 Li Cuirong, “Gaoxiong wenhua fazhan cong shequ yingzao qipao” [Kaohsiung’s cultural development will take off from community construction], Zhongguo shibao, 8 December 1998.
99 Chen Sufeng, “Gangdu Lishi Wenhua Xiehui chengjun” [The Harbour City Association for Historic Artifacts is forming], Taiwan xinwen bao, 19 November 2000.
100 Zhuang Jinguo, “Chi he wan le chuang tong guan” [Eat and be merry: Kaohsiung’s themed streets aim to please], Xin Taiwan 252-253 (2001.1-2): 82-83.
101 For a typical example, see Lee Ch’ian-lang, Gaoxiong shi guji zhi lu [A tour of relics in Kaohsiung city] (Kaohsiung: Gaoxiong Shi Zhengfu, Minzheng Ju, 1987).
the city's third-grade relics find themselves at the centre of *shequ yingze* projects, and have been listed precisely through the lobbying efforts of local cultural-historical workshops.\textsuperscript{102}

In turn, the creation of all these new "Kaohsiung histories", and the associated reformation of the city's built environment that has taken place in tandem with them, has encouraged other groups and institutions throughout the city to publicise and preserve their own views of the city's past. The contributions made by an agency such as the Kaohsiung Harbour Bureau to Kaohsiung historiography, for example, would usually be considered minimal.\textsuperscript{103} Yet since the late 1990s, even this organisation has started to take part in the compilation of a local Kaohsiung history. Oral histories of the bureau's officials have been compiled, for example,\textsuperscript{104} and a greater public awareness of the harbour's history and geography has been encouraged by the bureau through the granting of permission for private companies to operate "harbour tours".

The same bureau's Kaohsiung Harbour Museum (Kaohsiung Gangshi Guan 高雄港史館), once a site accessible only to government officials and visiting dignitaries, was opened to the Kaohsiung public in 2000, finding a new home, like the Kaohsiung Museum of History before it, in a disused Japanese colonial-era building on the waterfront. Although this museum has yet to rival the Kaohsiung Museum of History in terms of exhibitions or publications, its mere existence, as well its use of colonial premises,

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\textsuperscript{102} This shall be examined in the following chapters.

\textsuperscript{103} For an example of the bureau's publications on the history of Kaohsiung harbour, see Gaoxiong Gangwu Ju, Mishushi [Secretariat, the Kaohsiung Harbour Bureau], *Gao gang erbi nian* [Twenty years of Kaohsiung harbour] (Kaohsiung: Gaoxiong Gangwu Ju, 1982). The bureau also tended to include a good deal of material on Kaohsiung's "harbour history" in its shipping handbooks. For an example, see Kaohsiung Harbour Bureau, *Kaohsiung Port and Shipping Handbook, 1987* (Kaohsiung: Charter Pacific Publications, 1987), esp. pp. 7-8.

\textsuperscript{104} See, for example, Zhang Shouzhen (ed), *Li Lianchi Xiansheng kaozhu lishi* [Mr Li Lianchi: an oral history] (Kaohsiung: Gaoxiong Shi Wenxian Weiyuanhui, 1996). Li Lianchi 李連墀 is a former director of the bureau.
suggests a major shift in the way that bodies which formerly displayed little interest in such affairs have begun to make contributions to the preservation and presentation of Kaohsiung history (fig. 39).\footnote{Xie Yizhen, “Hong lou fenghua zaixian: Gaoxiong Gangshi Guan niandi qiyong” [The elegance of the “red building” re-appears: the Kaohsiung Harbour Museum will open at the end of the year], \textit{Gaoxiong huakan} 1999.11: 44-47.}

Likewise, there has been a move on the part of Kaohsiung-based military bodies to promote the naval aspect of the city’s past. Military authors have taken to publishing collections of reminiscences about \textit{émigré} life in early postwar Kaohsiung,\footnote{A recent example is Zhou Xiaohong, \textit{Mazu, Kaohsiung, Wo} [Mazu, Kaohsiung, me] (Taipei: Er Ya Congshu, 2001).} and naval institutions, such as the Chinese Naval Academy (Zhongguo Haijun Junguan Xuexiao 中國海軍軍官學校), have been active in rewriting their own local Kaohsiung stories.\footnote{Wu Shoucheng, \textit{Haijun junguan xuexiao xiaoshi (daiyi ji)} [A history of the Chinese Naval Academy (Part I)] (Kaohsiung: China Naval Academy, 1997).} The possibility of a future Kaohsiung Naval museum, to be housed on board a

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{image39.png}
\caption{Mr. Po-tsu Tsai (Cai Bozhi 蔡博至) of the Kaohsiung Harbour Museum displays colonial-era harbour charts (photograph by the author, 2000).}
\end{figure}
decommissioned warship, has also been discussed.\textsuperscript{108} And in the \textit{shequ ying\~{g}ao} mode, there has emerged a trend to record the social and cultural history of Kaohsiung’s many \textit{juancun} 眷村, or military dependants’ villages, with groups such as the Kaohsiung Military Dependants’ Villages Cultural Association (\textit{Gaoxiong shi juancun wenhua xiehui} 高雄市眷村文化協會) being perhaps the most energetic in this side of the city’s local past.\textsuperscript{109}

With a historiography populated by such a wide array of workshops, lay scholars, community associations, museums, academics and bureaucrats, it would be tempting to agree with various Kaohsiung-based intellectuals in their affirmation that this city is anything but a cultural desert. Yet the history-making circle in Kaohsiung remains a relatively small and limited one, and one in which everyone “knows each other”. The situation is summed up through a phrase that is heard frequently when conducting any kind of academic research in the city: “Kaohsiung is only so small” (\textit{Gaoxiong jinshi zhenme xiao} 高雄就是這麼小). It is not unusual to find a “lay scholar” such as Zheng Shuiping dividing his or her time between a consultancy at a city government department, the organisation of tours with any number of \textit{shequ ying\~{g}ao} organisations, and the writing of standard academic articles. What is true of lay scholars is true of many others: there are academics who work as bureaucrats and curators, and officials who teach at universities. There is a constant flow, and in all kinds of directions, of people, artifacts and ideas. There are contributions from non-local bodies also, with scholars from central government agencies often taking part in discussion leading to the establishment of new institutions—such as was the case with the founding of the Kaohsiung Museum of History.\textsuperscript{110}

\textsuperscript{108} Although funding problems beset this project at the time of writing. “Junjian bowuguan hao da fei” [Large amounts to be squandered on the warship museum], \textit{Zhongguo shibao}, 18 March 2000.
\textsuperscript{109} Guo Dongbao, \textit{Juancun: Gaoxiong shi juancun wenwu\~{g}uan} [Sentimentally attached: an exhibition of artifacts from military dependants’ villages in Kaohsiung] (Kaohsiung: Yimin Chubanshe, 2000).
\textsuperscript{110} Xie Meifen, “Gao shi shi bo guan: ge jie wei ta dingwei” [Kaohsiung Museum of History: each field orients itself towards it], \textit{Lianhe bao}, 9 May 1996.
In the following chapters, I will explore the ways in which this small but lively historiographical scene has resulted in widely variant readings of the historic built environment in Kaohsiung. As we shall see, the multifarious and often fractious nature of the Kaohsiung history-making community has resulted in a range of interpretations of this city’s past. Far from being a place of no historiographical importance, Kaohsiung might even be described as a city of too many histories.
Chapter 5: Zuoying and the old city wall

Zuoying: Chinese Kaohsiung

The district of Zuoying represents a sizeable section of Kaohsiung and is home to a large percentage of the city’s population. Located in the North of the city, it is bordered on the West by Zuoying harbour, the main base of the ROC navy, and is home to thousands of mainland émigré, or waisheng 外省, families who came to the city after the KMT’s defeat in the Chinese civil war. The district’s high concentration of juancun 箐村, or military dependants’ villages, with suitably naval names such as “Pride of the Sea village” (Haiguang cun 海光村) and “Victory new village” (Shengli xin cun 勝利新村), also suggests a close connection between Zuoying and the Republican Chinese navy. Today, residents from other parts of Kaohsiung visit Zuoying in order to sample “authentic” mainland Chinese food, that with a true “waisheng kouwei” 外省口味, or “émigré flavour”; and Zuoying is home to many mainland Chinese mail-order brides (known in Taiwan as “Zhongguo xinniang” 中國新娘), recent arrivals to this most Chinese slice of southern Taiwan.

Yet it is not only in terms of demography that Zuoying claims a strong link to China. Zuoying’s built environment is overwhelmingly Chinese in nature. By this, I mean that it is filled with the remnants of the Chinese Cultural Renaissance Movement, from monuments raised in honour of the ROC’s political and military heroes, to a new Confucius temple. Zuoying is, moreover, home to a number of officially listed guji, many claiming a heritage of two or three centuries, and most of which have come to be counted as strongly representative of a continual Chinese presence in the area. Chief amongst these, and central to Zuoying’s image throughout the city and, indeed, throughout Taiwan, is Kaohsiung’s only first-grade relic, the Zuoying old city wall.
As a case-study, this chapter is not so much concerned with the district of Zuoying as it is with the old city wall which has become this district’s most celebrated historic landmark. This is an examination of the ways in which the old city wall has been codified and subsequently appropriated into particular visions of the past, many of which are tied inextricably to the grand narratives of national history. The old city wall is Kaohsiung’s only first-grade relic. In terms of the ways in which it has been listed, protected and described, it is also one of the most representative examples of an official guji to be found anywhere in Taiwan. Thus, in examining this site and the particular meanings with which it has been inscribed, I hope to better illustrate some of the arguments I made earlier in this thesis regarding the links between the built environment and historiography, as well as the complicated relationship between national and local histories in Taiwan.

A militarised history

In 1988, a team of archaeologists from Taiwan’s largest research institution, Academia Sinica (Zhongyang Yanjiuyuan 中央研究院), set up camp next to the Pride of the Sea restaurant (Haiguang canting 海光餐廳) on Zuoying Great Road (Zuoying Da Lu 左營大路). With funding from the National Science Council (Guojia Kexue Weiyuanhui 國家科學委員會), the team had come to Zuoying to look for buried material remnants related to Han Chinese migration to Taiwan in the late Ming period. They had chosen this site, beside an eatery, because of its proximity to Zuoying’s old city wall. The historical record suggested that the old wall marked the site of the earliest Chinese settlement in this area, one that could be dated to Koxinga’s arrival in the seventeenth century.¹

Yet the team’s choice of this excavation site beside a restaurant—and others, such as the sports-ground of a neighbouring vocational college—was driven as much by real politik as

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by scholarly estimations about the location of artifacts. As was hinted in subsequent publications, obtaining permission to dig around the peripheries of the old city wall in Zuoying was a difficult task in itself. Restoration of the old wall had only started a few years earlier, and land around and beside it remained in the possession of military dependants’ villages, naval-affiliated schools, and other military institutions. Archaeological digs had yet to be fully accepted as legitimate reasons for trespass onto naval property.

The difficulties that this team of archaeologists faced in gaining access to the Zuoying old city wall and its environs in 1988 are typical, and have troubled many other scholars who share an interest in the history of this district’s built environment. The wall in question was first conceived of as a military structure. Despite the passing of centuries, it remains a site of strategic significance, even today.

Perhaps more significantly, however, is that this architectural dig was undertaken at a particular point in time when the city wall was still in the process of being transformed from an active defensive structure—one with pillboxes and armed guards—into a listed and recognised gyi. In learning of the access difficulties faced by a group of scholars from Taipei, we are reminded that as late as 1988 there was nothing natural or pre-ordained about this site being counted as historically significant. What for academe was a site worthy of study and excavation was for the military a place of great strategic sensitivity. Furthermore, we are reminded that many sites throughout Taiwan now listed as “gyi” only became so at a very recent date, and usually after some contestation from other forces in Taiwanese society—in this case, the navy.

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2 Including myself. In the process of conducting research for this thesis, I was frequently reminded that parts of Zuoying remain off-limits to civilian scholars.

3 Of course, the very presence of a team of archaeologists itself aided in the transformation of this site (from military installation to relic), a process that had been initiated in the mid-1980s.
Zuoying literally means “the left barracks”. This name is derived from army encampments that existed in the area during the seventeenth-century reign of Koxinga and his family. In the latter years of Koxinga’s rule, the settlement was officially christened Wannian county (Wannian xian 萬年縣), being one of the three administrative units into which those southern portions of Taiwan settled by Han Chinese migrants was divided. It was renamed Fengshan 鳳山 by the Manchu authorities following Taiwan’s inclusion in the Qing empire in the 1680s. The twentieth-century revival of the name “Zuoying” can be traced to the latter stages of Japanese colonial rule, a time when, as we saw earlier in this thesis, the state-sponsored cult of Koxinga was actively promoted.

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4 Koxinga apportioned his military infrastructure in southern Taiwan into five ying 营, or barracks. As well as the “Left Barracks” (Zuoying) there were the “Right Barracks” (Youying 右營), “Central Barracks” (Zhongying 中營), “Forward Barracks” (Qianying 前營) and “Back Barracks” (Houying 後營), all of which were scattered over what are now parts of Kaohsiung city, Kaohsiung county and neighbouring parts of southern Taiwan. Today it is only in Zuoying, however, that this Koxinga-era toponym is used. See “Guse guxiang de Zuoyingqu” [Zuoying district with the ancient feel], Gaoxiong bikaan 1.5 (1980.10): no page numbers.

5 Literally meaning “the phoenix and the mountains”. This toponym was apparently derived from the surrounding topography; hills flanking either side of the town were taken to represent the wings of a auspicious Phoenix, the settlement itself representing the bird’s body. See Chen Zhengxiang, Taiwan zhi diming [Toponyms of Taiwan] (Taipei: Fumin Geographical Institute of Economic Development, 1960), p. 22.

6 There is still a place called Fengshan today, and although it is not far removed geographically from Zuoying, it lies outside the borders of Kaohsiung city, being a township in Kaohsiung county. Today’s Fengshan and Zuoying represent different versions of the same settlement that relocated a number of times over the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. This confusion about tides and location reflects Zuoying’s rather troubled history as a site of strategic significance to various empires and political forces since the area was first settled by Chinese migrants.
Most published histories of Zuoying share with the area’s toponym a military bent. As Marshall Johnson has noted, the old city wall that once completely surrounded this settlement has come to be associated specifically with “state violence” in one form or another. The history of the wall itself is traced by most authors to the early years of the Kangxi emperor’s reign, and the decision to build defenses around the settlement in the form of a raised, earthen wall at a time when, as a new addition to the peripheries of the Qing empire, southern Taiwan was far from stable. Insurrections against the Qing authorities, such as that staged in 1786 by Lin Shuangwen 林爽文, saw the wall around this settlement damaged, rebuilt and embellished over the following decades. At one stage, the settlement of Fengshan was even relocated out of a belief that the years of war and strife that it had experienced were due to geomantic inauspiciousness. The old city wall that one sees in Zuoying today is, in fact, based on one particular version of the Fengshan wall that was built between 1824 and 1826. In this, its early nineteenth-century

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8 All these details regarding the wall’s history are found in Zhang Shouzhen and Xu Yinan, *Jincheng jiushi* [Record of the old wall] (Kaohsiung: Kaohsiung Shili Zhongzheng Wenhua Zhongxin, 1997).
9 I say “based on” the structure as it existed in 1820s because the wall has in fact been altered, renovated, and continually tampered with throughout the twentieth century, as we shall see below.
incarnation, the wall included four gates, and was designed to incorporate elements of the
surrounding topography, such as Turtle Mountain (Gui Shan 亀山), for defensive
purposes.

It is difficult to actually trace the remnants of this 1820s structure in today's Zuoying
without the aid of a marked map. Indeed, when people in Kaohsiung speak of the "Zuoying
jincheng," they are not referring to a single structure, but rather to a number of sites, each
a reasonable distance from the other. These include: (i) the South gate (Nanmen 南門),
which currently sits on a traffic island marking the main road entrance to Zuoying from
the South; (ii) the North gate (Beimen 北門) and a connected segment of the remaining
city wall next to it which overlooks Lotus Lake (Lianchi Tan 蓮池潭) and is arguably the
most popular part of the wall with tourists (fig. 41); and, (iii) the East gate (Dongmen
東門) which is also connected to part of the remaining wall. As well as these extant gates,
there are a number of lesser structures connected to the wall, including a well, located
close to the South gate, a temple dedicated to the God of the Earth (Tudi Gong miao
土地公廟), and a temple of the City God (Chenghuang miao 城隍廟) of the Fengshan
settlement.

Figure 41. The North gate (photograph by the author, 2001).

10 Or “Fengshan xian jincheng” 鳳山縣舊城, a phrase that, in reference to the area's Qing-era toponym, is used
interchangeably with the phrase “Zuoying jincheng”.

11 The local temple is known specifically by the title of the Zhenfu she 鎮福社.
Ruins, relics and city walls

The very fact that this wall no longer exists as a single entity, but rather as a scattered collection of sites, some of which have been recently renovated and others which have fallen into ruin, tells us a good deal about the modern history of this wall. In a recently published study, the architectural scholar Chu-joe Hsia argues convincingly that at the heart of Japanese colonial rule in Taiwan lay an attempt to redefine and reshape urban space. The typical walled town of late-Qing Taiwan, the "cheng" 城, represented a particular form of what Hsia terms "pre-colonial cities" (qian zhimin chengshi 前殖民城市).12 Many of Taiwan’s urban settlements could be counted as cheng, having been developed within an imperial Chinese tradition of city planning which stressed the importance of walled settlements.13 Prior to the early twentieth century, and with the exception of a number of small coastal settlements that had been opened to foreign trade as treaty ports in the wake of the Opium Wars (including Takow), the urban tradition of the cheng had yet to be influenced or challenged to any noticeable extent, and walled towns and cities could be found throughout the island.14

Yet the arrival of Japanese colonialism in Taiwan saw such "pre-colonial" urban spaces and systems replaced with modern models of the city imported both from metropolitan Japan, and indirectly, from Europe and its colonies. Nowhere was the project of replacing pre-colonial urban spaces with modern cities conducted in more thorough a fashion than

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12 Chu-joe Hsia, "Constructing colonial modernity...", 47-82.
13 Indeed, there is an entire body of literature on such traditions in Chinese-speaking academe. The work of the architectural historian Huang Lanxiang 蘇蘭翔 on city walls, for instance, has revealed the links between the construction of city walls in Qing Taiwan, and those in Southeast Asia. See Huang Lanxiang, "Jiedu Qingdai difangzhi zhong de Taiwan chengqiang zhi ji" [Unravelling the records of Taiwanese city walls as they appear in Qing-era gazetteers], in Guoli Lishi Bowuguan Bianji Weiyuanhui [The National History Museum Editorial Committee] (ed), Qiang [Walls] (Taipei: Guoli Lishi Bowuguan, 2000), pp. 45-61.
14 For a general study of walled cities (in Taiwan and mainland China), see Sen-dou Chang, "The morphology of walled capitals", in G. William Skinner (ed), The City in Late Imperial China (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1977), pp. 75-100.
in colonial Takow/Takao. As we saw in Chapter 3, the invention of a modern city that would function as the principal transport hub in southern Taiwan was undertaken in the late Meiji years. And the development of what was to become Taiwan’s second largest urban centre, its busiest harbour and premier site of heavy industry is a process that, in the post-First World War era, was closely linked to the ideology of the “southern advance”.

In the process of importing modern city planning technology into colonial Taiwan, older spaces and models were deliberately discarded by the Taiwan Government-general. Indeed, Japanese planners abhorred the Chinese walled city as lacking in hygiene and presenting, in the words of one colonial official, “...an uninviting and filthy condition”.¹⁵ City walls such as that found in Zuoying were considered insalubrious; the thoroughfares in and around walled towns were deemed too narrow, and were believed to be prone to outbreaks of fire and disease (fig. 42).

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"All the Japanese have left of the old city walls of Formosa is here and there an ancient gate for decorative purposes," wrote the American traveller Harry A. Franck in his 1924 account of a visit to the island. The operative word in Franck’s description is "decorative", for although city walls such as that found in Zuoying were oftentimes demolished, their vestiges, and most especially their gates, were just as often deliberately kept intact for aesthetic purposes. In other words, city walls, or cheng, were made obsolete as defensive structures, but were granted new aesthetic roles as relics.

From the late Meiji period onwards, the "ruins of [the] Old Castle near Takao [nishi]" were already being listed as something of an historical curiosity in promotional and tourist literature, and the "ruins of Hozan castle [nishi]" were featured on postcards of the day. Indeed, guides to southern Taiwan referred invariably to the old wall in Zuoying as a site worth visiting if one had the time to spare. "One day will suffice for a tour of the hills within the old wall" advises a Japanese-language guide to Kaohsiung published in 1917. This and other texts customarily provided a brief historical background to the wall, as well as its dimensions and architecture, and instructions on how to reach it. Access to the site had been made convenient following the completion of the North-South trunk railway line and the establishment of an "old wall station" (kyūjō eki 舊城驛) just North of the Takow terminus. As one 1921 publication explained, a trip to the wall entailed a short rickshaw ride from this station.

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16 Harry A. Franck, op cit., p. 176.
19 Majima Fumi, Minami Taiwan no bōka to jinbutsu [The treasure house and people of southern Taiwan] (Tainan, 1917), pp. 41-42. For a similar example, see Sugiyama Yasunori, Taiwan meisho kyōshi [Scenic and historic spots in Taiwan] (Taipei: Taiwan Sōtokufu, 1916), pp. 197-200.
20 Taiwan Sōtokufu Tetsudōbu [Taiwan Government-general, Railway Department], Taiwan tetsudō annai [Guide to the Taiwan railways] (Taipei: Taiwan Sōtokufu Tetsudōbu, 1912), p. 81; see also Taiwan Sōtokufu...
The “ruins of the wall” (jōshi 城址) were officially listed as a shiseki by the colonial authorities in 1933. Reports compiled by the Government-general’s Investigative Committee for Relics, Scenic Spots and Natural Monuments (Shiseki Meishō Tennen Kinnenbutsu Chōsakai 史蹟名勝天然紀念物調査會) suggest that, quite apart from the architectural novelty associated with a ruined wall on the outskirts of the expanding Kaohsiung, the site also correlated with official colonial ideology. Writing just a few years after the site’s official codification as a shiseki, Ozaki Hozuma 尾崎秀真 of the said committee argued that the old wall represented an architectural reminder of Koxinga’s colonisation and “opening” of southern Taiwan. It is hardly surprising to learn, then, that the wall became something of a favoured site for educational school excursions up until the late 1930s—a point that the late Lin Shuguang has noted in his reminiscences of growing up in colonial Takao.

The old wall’s career as a listed shiseki was relatively short, however. For as is the case with many historical defensive installations throughout the world, the same strategic significance that had stimulated the wall’s construction in the first place was soon rediscovered by the Japanese military. The development of Zuoying harbour for naval purposes is a topic that has been studied at length by Liu Fenghan 劉鳳翰 of Academia

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21 Wu Yonghua, op. cit., p. 274.

22 Ozaki Hozuma, “Kyū jōshi”, in Taiwan Sōtokufu Naimukyoku [Bureau of Internal Affairs, Taiwan Government-general], Shiseki meishō chōsa bōka kasho [Investigative report on historic relics and scenic spots] (Taipei: Taiwan Sōtokufu Naimukyoku, 1936), no page numbers (hand-written report). For an example of similar literature, see Tainan Shū Kyōeikai [The Tainan Province Co-prosperity Society], Nankai Tainan shi [Gazetteer of southern Taiwan] (Tainan: Tainan Shinpōsha, 1934), 557-558.

23 Zhao Shi [Lin Shuguang], Dagon两岸 [The vicissitudes of Tokow] (Kaohsiung: Chunhui Chubanshe, 1985). Zhao Shi 照史 is Lin Shuguang’s nom de plume.
Sinica in his 1997 study of the Japanese military in Taiwan. As Liu and others have shown, Zuoying harbour was chosen as the site for a naval station shortly after the Japanese invasion of China. The project to develop state-of-the-art naval installations in and around the area was undertaken in 1938, only shortly before Zuoying was included officially within the borders of Takao city. Two years later, the Taiwan Government-general transferred most land entitlements in the area en masse to the Japanese Imperial Navy, with many residents being evicted or forcibly resettled thereafter.

Walking alongside portions of the wall adjoining the North gate today, one can still see concrete posts sticking out of the ground at regular intervals, each marked with the phrase “Dai shi sakusenku yōsai daitōchiku chikai” 第四作戦区要塞第一週地界 (lit., “Fourth militarily fortified zone; boundary for zone one”). These posts date from the years of the Pacific War, at which time the remnants of the old city wall had actually come to be employed as the borders of the militarised zone of Zuoying (fig. 43). Beyond this point, Zuoying had been transformed into a naval community, complete with modern housing estates for the use of the officer class, munitions stores and arsenals, training facilities, and the Zuoying naval harbour itself.

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26 I have been unable to learn why these rather small concrete posts still stand when so much else on and around the wall has been removed or destroyed over the last fifty years. One might speculate that the posts are themselves rather resilient artifacts and are not easily removed; on the other hand, the posts may well have been deliberately left untouched during the restoration of the North gate that was undertaken in the 1980s, a project that we shall explore further below.
27 I take much of my information on the transformation of this area into a naval community from Yuan Yinglin, “Zuoying ceng shi Riben si da jungang ma?” [Was Zuoying one of Japan’s four great naval harbours?], Nan Tai wenhua 2 (2001.6): 43-44.
As one of the island’s most strategically sensitive areas, most forms of photography were strictly banned there, and maps of Zuoying were no longer made available to the public. The old city wall was in effect reinstated as an item of military infrastructure in that it demarcated the naval harbour and its district from the rest of the city. Access to the wall, and photography of it, was thus tightly monitored.

Control of Zuoying as a military district was barely disturbed by the formal change to Taiwan’s sovereignty which came after the end of the Second World War. The Republican Chinese navy continued what the Japanese Imperial Navy had started. Zuoying remained, for years following the retreat of the KMT to Taiwan, a militarised zone. Indeed many of the installations and compounds that had been erected by the Japanese military throughout the area were simply appropriated and adapted by the Republican Chinese navy in the mid- to late 1940s. Consequently, the old city wall remained, much as it had done under Japanese rule, invisible to a majority of the Kaohsiung public. Although it was catalogued

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28 Ye Xiuzhen, op. cit., p. 97.
in gazetteers and other texts,²⁹ public access to the East and North gates, together with the remaining vestiges of the wall around them, was prohibited.

Indeed, the militarisation of the wall intensified in the immediate postwar era. Remaining sections of the wall were utilised for the demarcation and construction of military dependants’ villages which were first established in the area by the United Society for Anti-Communist and Anti-Soviet Chinese Women (Zhonghua Funü Fangong Kang E Lianhehui 中華婦女反共抗俄聯合會), an organisation headed by Madame Chiang Kai-shek 蔣宋美齡, to house newly-arrived military personnel and their families from the mainland.³⁰ Portions of the wall adjoining the North gate were not only used as the entrance to one dependants’ village—the Donglai New Village (Donglai Xincun 東萊新村) which housed naval families from Shantung (Shandong 山東) province³¹—but actually became its lavatory, the inner vertical face of the wall being transformed into a makeshift urinal; other sections of the wall were made into village garbage dumps and fertiliser stores.³²

As the physical structure of the old city wall was being appropriated into newly-erected dependants’ villages, the ROC navy was also busy making its own additions to the structure. Pillboxes were cemented atop the North gate, for example, and were staffed by military personnel until well into the 1970s. And on Turtle Mountain, which itself had been a part of the wall’s early nineteenth-century defensive design, one can still find abandoned emplacements and others installations dating from the martial law-era. Furthermore, on the same mountain was built “...a memorial tower in honour of the late

²⁹ Such as Lin Hengdao and Chen Xiufang, Taiwan goji gaile [A general guide to the relics of Taiwan] (Taipei: Youshi Wenhua Shiye Gongsi, 1977), pp. 311-322.


Admiral Kwei Yung-ch'ing (Gui Yongqing 桂永清), founder of Free China's modern navy”.33 Commemoration of Admiral Kwei made its mark on the wall in other ways also.34 An elementary school named in his memory (the Yongqing Guomin Xiaoxue 永清国民小学) was built around part of the remaining East gate, the jiucheng itself being used as the school's fence (fig. 44).35

![The Yung-ch'ing Elementary School and the old wall](image)

**Figure 44.** The Yung-ch'ing Elementary School and the old wall (photograph by the author, 2002).

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33 *Da Guoxiong nianjian*, p. 19.

34 For more on Kwei Yung-ch'ing more generally, see Li Yuxi, *Yung huai guojia gongchren Gui shanjiang* [We will always remember the great contributor to the nation, Admiral Kwei] (Taipei: Guofang Bu Shizheng Bianyi Ju, 1988).

35 Interestingly, the question of ownership of this part of the wall, and the responsibility of the school and local military authorities for its maintenance, continues to fuel debate today, long after most of Zuoying has been demilitarised. There was controversy over the decision by the Yung-ch'ing Elementary School to build extensions to existing classrooms near the East gate in 1999. These extensions threatened to obscure the view of the wall from the street, and damage the structure of the wall itself. For details, see Chen Bilin, “Jinling xiaoshe gongcheng, gucheng junlie” [Construction of school buildings has damaged the ancient wall], *Zhongguo shibao*, 4 June 1999; see also Li Xiaofen, “Zuoying jiucheng ‘dai maozi’: wenhuajie tongxin” [The Zuoying old wall has been made to “wear a hat”; the cultural world is heart-broken], *Zhongguo shibao*, 24 June 1999.
The exception to these activities was the old wall’s South gate—a site which, due to its location on the convergence of a number of main roads leading into Zuoying, was never lost to the restrictions placed on its northern and eastern cousins. The South gate was actively protected decades before the rest of the wall. Its wooden fortifications (known in Chinese as chenghou 城樓), apparently dating from the late nineteenth century, had in fact survived until the early postwar era. And the gate itself, together with these fortifications, was renovated in 1969 with financial support from the Taiwan Provincial Government, although only fragmentary details of this project survive today.\(^{36}\)

The South gate retained a highly visible position as a landmark in Kaohsiung throughout much of the postwar era. Indeed, quite unlike other sections of the old city wall, the South gate was expressly called upon as a site of symbolic significance. It was the perfect edifice upon which state and military propaganda could be advertised. Photographs dating to the years of the Chinese Cultural Renaissance Movement, for instance, show the South gate swathed in banners bearing phrases such as “Reform! Mobilise! Fight!” (gexin, dongyuan, zhandou 革新、動員、戰鬥),\(^ {37}\) and, following the death of Chiang Kai-shek, “We will always remember our leader” (yong huai lingxu 永懷領袖)—presumably for the sake of passing motorists.\(^ {38}\) Moreover, a stylised image of the South gate was used to decorate the title page of Kaohsiung Historiography Commission publications, and was accompanied

\(^{36}\) When restorative work on the South gate was deemed necessary in the 1990s, local government architects were unable to locate the relevant plans which had been used during refurbishment two decades earlier. Xie Meifen, “Zuoying Nanmen wuyan shixiu, tiegui yingcheng” [The eaves of the Zuoying South gate are dilapidated, but the steel pillars are enduring nonetheless], Lianhe bao, 14 June 2000.

\(^{37}\) It is worth noting here that the image of the city wall was common in the literature of the Chinese Cultural Renaissance Movement. For example, the idiom “unite and be as strong as a city wall” (Zhong zhi cheng cheng 築志成城) was a popular slogan in the latter Chiang Ching-kuo years, with the image of the cheng used to allude to a “fortress ROC” that could withstand the vicissitudes of international isolation. The same idiom was used as the title of a patriotic biography of Chiang Ching-kuo published in 1984. See Yao Peng, Zhong zhi cheng cheng [Unite and be as strong as a city wall] (Taipei: Zhongyang Ribao Chubanbu, 1984).

\(^{38}\) Huang Xingbin and Zhou Juxiang, Gaoxiang shi jinxi tuhao [Pictures of Kaohsiung city, yesterday and today] (Kaohsiung: Gaoxiong Shi Wenxian Weiyuanhui, 1995), p. 60.
by the slogan: “Fight for the protection of history and culture; fight for the realisation of the Three Principles of the People!” (fig. 45).39

Figure 45. A stylised depiction of the South gate (Source: Gao shi wenwu 1.4 (1955.12): title page).

Figure 46. The South gate today (photograph by the author, 2002).

Restoration and re-codification

Despite the visibility of the South gate, it was only in the mid- to late 1980s that the rest of Zuoying’s old city wall was “rediscovered” as a site of cultural substance in Kaohsiung. This transformation, from a military structure to a relic, occurred within the wider context of historiographical changes in Taiwan that I examined earlier in this thesis. At the local level, for instance, these were the years in which a recently restructured Kaohsiung City Government was actively searching for elements within the city’s historic built environment—especially sites which could be incorporated into national Chinese histories—around which official histories of the city might be manufactured. It also occurred as a nation-wide interest in the protection of the built environment was being fostered by agencies of the central government, such as the Council for Cultural Affairs, and within the bounds of the cultural property legislation I examined in Chapter 2. In other words, the (re)-codification of the Zuoying wall can be traced to a time of great historiographical change in Taiwan.

Over and above the growing interest in the protection of guji that had emerged in the 1980s, and the increasing desire to see a specific Kaohsiung history codified at an official level, there were a number of specific events that initiated the attention of the Kaohsiung intelligentsia in the fate of the Zuoying wall. These events ultimately prompted the Kaohsiung City Government to plan for the restoration of the site from 1986 onwards.40

For example, there is some evidence to suggest that the Kaohsiung City Government had been disturbed by the continued monopolisation of parts of the wall by military agencies for some years. A 1981 report complained that “...the unfortunate building of illegal structures on the top of the gates by military dependants’ villages has destroyed much...”

of the old city wall, "...while the remaining sections of the wall extend for only about one hundred metres". Paradoxically, the Kaohsiung City Government itself, under the mayoralty of Su Nancheng, was also responsible for removing a nineteen-metre length of the wall during a road-widening project undertaken in July 1985—in clear breach of the cultural property laws that had been enacted only a short time earlier.

The decision to transform the old wall and its surviving gates from a prohibited set of ruins within a militarised zone, to a registered guji with signposts and walkways encouraging public access, in many ways reflected the traditions of Chinese nationalist historiography still prevalent at the time. In the wall, the Kaohsiung City Government found an opportunity to provide its city with a landscape that correlated with the themes of antiquity and civilisation. It is hardly surprising then, that in searching for appropriate expertise, the Kaohsiung City Government turned to Lee Ch‘ian-lang, an architect who had written extensively on “traditional” Chinese architecture, and who had been one of the staunchest promoters of the protection of relics within a nationalist framework. Lee has been the driving force behind a multitude of restoration projects throughout Taiwan over the last two decades, and the fruits of his conservational labours abound in Kaohsiung. Indeed, it was Lee’s work in renovating sites such as the old Zuoying wall during the mid-1980s that certified his position as one of Taiwan’s leading gurus of relic restoration.

41 Gaoxiong Shi Wenzian Weiyuanhui, Gaoxiong shi guji diaocha bian [Kaohsiung city relic examination form], 15 April 1981.
42 “Chai chengqiang yinqi pengbo; Su Nancheng biaoshi yihan” [Controversy rises over the pulling down of the old wall; Su Nancheng expresses regret], Zhongguo ribao, 13 February 1986. Su defended his decision to remove a section of the wall on the assumption that only the gates counted as genuine guji, and by claiming that without the widening of the road in question, the safety of motorists would have been put at risk. See Su Nancheng, Gaoxiong riji [Kaohsiung diary] (Kaohsiung: Zhongguo Wanbaoshi, 1986), pp. 116-119.
43 Lee Ch‘ian-lang, Chuantong jianzhu [Traditional architecture] (Taipei: Bei Wu Chuban Gongsi, 1983).
44 As we saw in Chapter 2.
Consequently, Lee was commissioned to examine the feasibility of restoring sections of the old wall that had fallen into disrepair, or that had been altered by military bodies and dependants’ villages. Lee Ch’ian-lang completed his early studies of the old city wall with the task of structural protection and restoration in mind. Lee was called upon because of his knowledge in the field of restoration of traditional Chinese architecture, and his reports were driven primarily by the question of how best the vestiges of the wall might be restored in a way that would do justice to the architectural integrity of the “original” structure.\(^{45}\)

In doing so, however, Lee’s work brought with it particular ideas about the historical significance of this site. In the spirit of the 1980s preservation laws within which the old city wall’s restoration had first been canvassed, Lee wrote the site into a tradition of greater Chinese civilisation. His studies betray clear influences from the sorts of national histories that were examined earlier in this thesis. “Relics of city walls...are the most faithful reminders of how the Chinese people, skilled in the building of city walls for six thousand years, developed Taiwan...” wrote Lee in a 1987 report on the state of the wall, going one millennium further than the standard rhetoric of nationalist discourse.\(^{46}\) This figure of “six thousand years” is a recurrent one in Lee’s writing about the Zuoying wall. It is accompanied by references to civil engineering techniques that date back to the Shang dynasty (Shang chao 商朝) and the revered earthen wall of the ancient Chinese capital, Xi’an 西安. The same tradition is then slowly traced down the centuries to Qing-governed Taiwan. The Zuoying wall is depicted as a valuable architectural relic precisely because it exists within this most Chinese of traditions.

In considering how best to go about restoring the wall, Lee Ch’ian-lang was aware that the heavy weight of six millennia of tradition rested upon his shoulders. His project marked

\(^{45}\) Lee Ch’ian-lang, *Fengshan xian jincheng diaocha yanjiu* (Survey study of the Fengshan old wall) (Kaohsiung: Gaoxiong Shi Zhengfu, 1987), pp. 11-12.

“...the first restoration of the wall since it was built”. In this respect, Lee’s work on the wall in Zuoying can be understood as part of a wider trend towards the restoration of relics associated with “traditional” Chinese architecture throughout Taiwan in the early 1980s, and coinciding with the introduction of the cultural property laws. As well as the Zuoying wall, public interest in relation to the vestiges of city walls and gates in places such as Taipei and Makung (Magong 马公) also emerged during the mid-1980s. Yet for Lee, the Zuoying wall had a number of characteristics that made it stand out from other related sites. The wall’s relative antiquity was said to be of particular importance: “Some people might say that it is more accurate to label the city wall in Tainan as the first in Taiwan”, argued Lee at a public lecture shortly after the completion of the Zuoying wall’s restoration, “…but I firmly believe that the first city wall in Taiwan was our old wall in Zuoying...”.

Allied to the awe with which Lee describes the architectural prowess involved in the old wall’s construction (and his own restoration project) is a distinct sense of disappointment at the state of the wall as he found it in the mid-1980s. Lee’s reports on the site from this period point to a strong disliking for the wall as a ruin, and an equally cogent desire to repair the wall to the state of a presentable and controllable relic. Trees that had grown themselves into the structure of the wall for what was obviously some time were described as eyesores that distorted the site’s original appearance; the structural integrity of the wall was undermined by weeds and roots that pulled bricks apart or threatened to widen clefts.

47 Ibid., p. 78.
48 Makung is the principal city in the Pescadores.
49 Lee Ch’ian-lang was engaged to restore other city walls elsewhere in Taiwan also. These are listed throughout Chu Yigui (ed), Taiwan shijì tuji [A collection of images of Taiwan’s historic relics] (Kaohsiung: Zhonghua Minguo Shiji Yanjiu Zhongxin, 1987).
Despite the shade that such trees provided, they were seen as detrimental to the wall, rather than a natural addition to it. Seismic shifts were another adversary—earthquake-induced cracks were not accepted as the inevitable consequences of centuries of tectonic movement (of which local residents are all too aware), but rather as unsightly signs of weakness that demanded redress.

As such, Lee’s restoration of the wall was a matter of starting over and remaining as true as possible to the structure as it “originally” existed in the 1820s. In his search for authenticity, Lee was not simply concerned with the intangible worth of the wall (the traditions behind it, for example), but with trying, as much as possible, to use original materials to restore the wall to its former glory. Under Lee’s directions, structures above the North gate which has been added by residents of local military dependants’ villages, for example, were demolished. A moat that had once skirted the wall, yet which had become stagnant, was re-dug and widened near the East gate. And various gaps in the wall near the North and East gates were putted over. Sections of the wall were entirely re-built, with Lee consulting colonial-era photographs and Qing gazetteers for guidance. New additions to sections of the wall were included so as to make the gates more inviting to visiting tourists. These included walkways along the top of remaining sections which were re-paved specifically for pedestrians, and rain shelters which were provided nearby. Signage was later added to explain the historical significance of the old city wall to visitors (fig. 47).

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51 A relevant factor in a city that can regularly experience temperatures in the mid-30's Celsius range during the summer months.
53 As the architectural theorist Philippe Harmon suggests, it is usually only through explanatory plaques (such as those found in Zuoying today) that visitors to any site are made aware of the apparent significance of that site. See Philippe Harmon, *Expositions: Literature and Architecture in Nineteenth-century France*, cited in Michael Dutton, *Streetlife China* (Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p. 203.
Old men of the wall

In their study of heritage preservation in western industrialised countries, the geographers J. E. Tunbridge and G. J. Ashworth have suggested a number of reasons behind the popularity of town walls in the old quarters of European cities. Tunbridge and Ashworth argue that old town walls not only catch the imagination of visitors, but also have a far more pragmatic function in providing a set of distinguishable pathways along which tourists can be guided. Many walls were indeed designed to be walked upon, and can be absorbed easily into quasi-historical tourist trails.  

In Zuoying, it remains the case that a sustained and unbroken ramble along the entire length of the old city wall is impossible—colonial city planning has ensured that the gates are no longer linked to one another. Yet the decision of Lee Ch'ian-lang and his architectural team to pave what used to be horse tracks along the top of the North and East gates and the surviving lengths of wall that adjoin them has, nonetheless, resulted in a very walkable relic (fig. 48). In an interesting twist on Tunbridge and Ashworth's theory,

however, the activity of walking the Zuoying wall is today not something purely linked to visiting tourists. Instead, it has been Kaohsiung intellectuals who have turned a stroll along the Zuoying jiucheng into something of an institution.

![Figure 48. Walkways near the wall’s North gate (photograph by the author, 2001).](image)

In Chapter 2, we saw how the term *guyi* has been frequently connected with the concept of *guobao*, or “national treasure”, in Taiwanese historiography. Furthermore, we saw how such “national treasures” can sometimes include living people, and most especially, elderly men. Zuoying provides an engaging example of this association between living treasures and antique relics. For here, walking amongst the parapets and arches of the Zuoying wall has become a codifying act that a number of elderly “national treasures” (or rather “local treasures”) have made their own.

The late school teacher-cum-amateur historian Zeng Yukun and the novelist Ye Shitao, are two demonstrative examples. Neither of these men have been officially recognised as “national treasures” by any government agencies in Taiwan. Yet both are celebrated by the Kaohsiung City Government, as well as by the city’s literati, as virtual “Kaohsiung
treasures”. They are commonly referred to as *qilao* 善老—a term that refers to “elderly gentlemen of virtue and knowledge”—in literature on Kaohsiung. Due to their work concerning the old city wall since the 1980s, both have earned the title of *jiucheng qilao* 舊城耆老—“old gentlemen of the wall”.

Zeng Yukun, the first of these *qilao*, and arguably the one with the stronger popular association with the wall, fits the classic model of the *minjin xuezhe*, or lay scholar, that I have examined elsewhere in this thesis. He was trained as a mathematics teacher, and his relationship to the wall developed primarily through his employment at the Zuoying Middle School (Zuoying Guoli Zhongji Xuexiao 左營國立中級學校) nearby. Zeng’s public association with the *jiucheng* began shortly after part of the wall was damaged during construction work in 1985. From that time until his death in 2000, Zeng wrote prolifically about the wall and other relics in Kaohsiung for local newspapers and periodicals. By virtue of the knowledge that Zeng collected over the years regarding the old city wall, departments of the city administration also began to consult him on matters relating to the wall’s maintenance. And by the late 1990s, he was being employed in the compilation of introductory books on Kaohsiung history by the local historiography commission and the city government’s Department of Information.

Zeng’s talents in leading groups of locals around the wall on self-organised historical walks earned him titles such as “the Kaohsiung expert” and “Mr Takow expert” in the local media. It was this talent for leading guided tours around the wall that was called upon in

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57 Zeng Yukun, *Takow city: a Kaohsiung collection*.
58 Chen Wenping, “Zeng Yukun ‘Gaociong tong’ meiyu: shi zhi ming gui” [Zeng Yukun’s earns the honour of being a “Kaohsiung expert”: where there is ability, there is fame], *Taiwan xinwen bao*, 16 October 1988.
59 Lei Wen, “Dagou tong xiansheng” [Mr Takow expert], *Zhongguo shibao jukan*, 9 November 1990.
the context of the 1997 Kaohsiung arts season, at which time Zuoying had been designated by the city’s cultural centre as that year’s “chosen” district for celebration of local Kaohsiung culture and history. In the manner of many of the arts seasons that had emerged in the mid-1990s, activities in Zuoying throughout March and April of 1997 amalgamated various elements of Zuoying’s history and culture. And at the centre of all this was Zeng Yukun himself, alongside a handful of other elderly scholars, presenting lectures and leading tours. Donning a baseball cap, and with notebook and map in hand, Zeng was photographed escorting parties of visiting dignitaries and residents alike around the relict wall.

Even in a state of deteriorating health towards the end of the 1990s, Zeng continued working on the Zuoying wall, publishing an exhaustive study of Kaohsiung history which contained, besides his own personal recollections of his life in Kaohsiung, extensive passages on the wall. He also continued walking. In a tribute written shortly after Zeng’s death in late 2000, Zhang Tongxiang of the Kaohsiung Historiography Commission reminisced about seeing an elderly Zeng on morning strolls to and from Turtle Mountain, just behind the North gate.

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60 Li Xiaofen, “Gaoxiong wenyi ji: jinnian Zuoying zhuzuo” [Kaohsiung arts season: this year Zuoying will be the host], Zhongyao shibao, 14 January 1997.

61 Zhang Shouzhen and Xu Yinan, Zhong gu, lian xiang, hui jicheng [The tolling of the bells, the fragrance of the lotus, reminiscences of the old city wall] (Kaohsiung: Gaoxiong Shili Zhongzheng Wenhua Zhongxin, 1997). The title of the festival and its accompanying handbook refer to specific places around Zuoying. The “tolling of the bells” refers to the Confucius temple and the sound of the rituals that take place there during the annual Teachers’ Festival; the “fragrance of the lotus” refers to Lotus Lake.

62 Ibid., p. 40. The lectures provided by Zeng and others were referred to as “Qitian jiangshu” 被老講古: i.e., “the elderly men talk of the old days”.

63 Zeng Yukun, The old scholar from the ancient city of Feng.

Zeng’s gazetteer-style histories of the wall, his active defence of “Kaohsiung history”, and the generally limited local audience to which his work spoke, are all typical traits of scholarship conducted by so-called “lay scholars” in Taiwan—i.e., non-affiliated scholars who have been the most active promoters of local history throughout the 1990s. The fact that much of Zeng’s information about the site appears to have been gleaned from what might, in western universities, be termed “field trips”, is also highly typical of the lay scholar image. For Zeng, walking the history of the Zuoying wall was just as relevant as writing it.

Yet paradoxically, Zeng Yukun shows us just how difficult it can be to draw the line between national and local histories. For Zeng’s unabashed admiration for the jiusicheng, and indeed of Kaohsiung history more generally, was clearly informed by his pride in Chinese history and civilisation—the sort that typified the most national of histories—as it was by a devotion to the local Kaohsiung past. For Zeng, there was no contradiction in a site such as the old city wall in Zuoying being of both national and local significance. On the contrary, it was the importance of this site to the nation which provided this author’s native locality with a history worth studying.

Most of Zeng’s work on the wall, and other sites in the Kaohsiung landscape for that matter, betrays a strong nationalist timbre. For example, Zeng is scathing in his condemnation of Japanese colonialism and its role in changing the urban shape of Kaohsiung, referring to the “Japanese bandits” (Riben qie 日本穢) in the sort of rhetoric associated with the Chiang Kai-shek years.65 Yet none of this can be separated from Zeng’s admiration for this guoji. For the patriotic proclivities in Zeng’s writings about the Kaohsiung past seem to be inspired by his belief that the wall represents a Chinese history

of Kaohsiung, one that is untouched by foreign influence, and one which speaks of the cultural ascendancy of ancient China. Zuoying as a whole represents a “cultural oasis” amongst the smokestacks and factories that plague modern Kaohsiung. And the tranquility of Lotus Lake provides Zuoying with a certain air that few other parts of this city can claim. For Zeng, the features of the geography, both natural and built, provide Zuoying with the essential features of a poetic Chinese landscape: a lake, mountains, temples, and a city wall. This is in every way the “Manchu empire’s place of cultural refinement” (Manzhou wangchao de renwen shengdi 滿洲王朝的人文勝地).

“Rome wasn’t built in a day” commences one of Zeng’s descriptions of the wall, going on to detail the great effort expended in the (re-)construction of the wall during the nineteenth century and its earlier incarnations stretching back to the eighteenth century. At one level, Zeng’s comparison alludes to the great weight placed upon the wall by many Kaohsiung locals. Yet there is something more to this Roman reference. By comparing the Zuoying wall to a symbol of ancient European civilisation, Zeng is in essence echoing what Lee Ch’ian-lang had argued when drawing up his plans for the wall’s refurbishment—that the wall was important primarily because it represented Chinese civilisation and antiquity. “The Chinese were building city walls six thousand years ago”, argues Zeng (much as Lee Ch’ian-lang was doing at the same time) in one of his many

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66 Zeng Yukun, “Tianran bianshi you hexiang: Zuoying qu (yi)” [There is the fragrance of lotus on this pool of water: Zuoying district (part I)], Gaowei huakan (1990.1): 27-33. Zeng uses the phrase “wenhua liuzhou de Zuoying” 文化緣的左營, in quite clear reference to the derogatory phrase of “cultural desert”.


68 Zeng Yukun, Discussion of the origins of Kaohsiung’s toponyms, p. 177.
feuilletons about the wall. Another qilao, although one with a very different view of Kaohsiung’s past and the role of the Zuoying wall therein, is Ye Shitao. Ye’s work has commonly been appreciated for its contributions to the genre of “native soil” literature. One point about Ye Shitao’s writing that is not typically touched upon, however, is the prevalence therein of references to the Zuoying wall. This is surprising, as the wall has appeared in a number of Ye’s essays composed throughout the 1990s, and Ye’s descriptions of it have seen this author come to be closely associated with this gaji. He has even been described in some texts as the “most knowledgeable elder of the old wall”.

Ye’s literary connection to the wall was defined in a collection of essays that he published in 1999 under the title From the Prefectural Capital to the Old City Wall (Cong Fucheng dao Jiucheng 從府城到舊城). “What fucheng refers to is Tainan”, explains Ye in the book’s introduction, “…and what Jiucheng refers to is Zuoying”. As we saw in Chapter 2, the term “fucheng” is a common literary expression for the city of Tainan employed particularly

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60 Zeng Yukun, “Zhongguoren zhucheng zai liu qian nian qian” [The Chinese were building city walls six thousand years ago], Taiwân xinwen bào, 9 March 1985.

70 Others have adopted Zeng’s Roman comparison in more recent times. For an example, see Zheng Yipei, “Chi kuang ai xiang: Jiucheng Wenhua Xiehui” [Infatuated with the hometown: the Old Wall Cultural Association], Gaoxiong bukan (2002.2): 64-67.

71 See, for example, Zheng Zhongming (ed), Dìshìnián Taiwân wēnxùe de huàjì. Ye Shitao wēnxùe gōngjī zazhī [Lighting the torch of Taiwanese literature: papers from an international scholarly conference on Ye Shitao’s literature] (Kaohsiung: Chunhui Chubanshe, 1999).

72 Zhu Huijuan, “Jiucheng sìyuè liāntán piāoxiāng” [The old wall’s days of yore and the wafting fragrance of Lotus Lake], in Lin Xijun, et al. (eds), Ling kàn Gaoxiong [Looking at Kaohsiung anew] (Kaohsiung: Gaoxiong Huakanshe), pp. 11-14.

73 Ye Shitao, Cong fucheng dao jiucheng: Ye Shitao huìjì lu [From the prefectural capital to the old city wall: a collection of Ye Shitao’s reminiscences] (Taipei: Hanyin Wenhua, 1999).

74 Ibid., p. 5.
in nativist circles. There are overtly positive connotations inherent in this expression, with Tainan’s one-time role as the island’s “prefectural capital” being called upon to suggest a kind of historical or cultural superiority for that city vis-à-vis other localities in Taiwan.

Figure 49. An example of Ye Shitao’s writing about the old wall—Jiucheng suoji [Trifling notes on the old city wall] (Kaohsiung: Chunhui Chubanshe, 2001).
In adopting this term in connection with the symbol of the Zuoying old city wall, Ye’ s life becomes the story of two “cheng” 城. The first half of my life was spent in the fucheng, and the second half of my life at the jiucheng”. In this inversion, Zuoying becomes a cultural cousin to Tainan in terms of its importance, or at least in terms of the influence that the site has had on Ye’s intellectual development. Whilst the Zuoying jiucheng for someone such as Zeng Yukun thus points westward (or perhaps northward) to the central plains of China, Ye’s old wall directs itself instead towards Tainan, and is contextualized within broader bentu ideas about the Taiwanese South; Ye’s view of the wall is that it links Kaohsiung not with an archaic China, but with “old Tainan” instead.

Ye Shitao was born in Tainan. He attended school there alongside other individuals who were later to become impressive names in Kaohsiung’s intellectual world, including the late lay scholar Lin Shuguang—a figure that I examined in Chapter 4. Yet Ye’s youth in Tainan has not detracted from his connection to the Zuoying old wall in Kaohsiung. On the contrary, it has been dramatized in his own work to stress the affinity that Ye as a “child of Tainan” feels for relics and artifacts, and thus for places of historical significance, such as the Zuoying jiucheng. For an author who is so closely associated with nativist literature, this open promotion of a personal Tainan heritage is a natural and predictable

75 When employed in the construction fucheng 府城, the character cheng 城 does not refer literally to the city walls of Tainan; rather, it is used in the sense of cheng as “city”, as it appears in the common construction chengshi 城市 (i.e., city). Yet in juxtaposing the expressions jiucheng 舊城 and fucheng 府城, it is clear that Ye is aware of the ambiguities in the character’s meaning and possible applications.

76 Ibid., p. 5.

77 Others have made similar claims. The head master of the Old Wall Elementary School (jiucheng Guomin Xiaoxue 舊城國民小學), Fang Yongchuan 方永川, is said to be a talented amateur painter precisely because he lives and works near the old city wall. See Lu Jintang, “Tan xiaozhang huajia Fang Yongchuan de hualu licheng” [On the headmaster-painter Fang Yongchuan’s road towards painting], in Lu Jintang, Zeng Huizhen and Lin Baoling (eds), Fang Yongchuan: jiucheng xiang qing [Fang Yongchuan: hometown emotions by the old city wall] (Kaohsiung: Fang Yongchuan, 2001), no page numbers.
method of sustaining credibility. As we saw earlier in this thesis, Tainan is still viewed as the authentic centre of Taiwanese history and culture in much of mainstream Taiwanese thought. Yet Ye’s appropriation of the Zuoying wall as a bentu symbol in the Tainan-model has further implications.

The image of Ye Shitao sustained in the popular press makes much of the double-wall narrative. “Ye Shitao: he may be in Zuoying, but his heart is tied to the prefectural capital” reads a headline in the Minseng Daily (Minseng bao 民生報), with an image of Ye standing before Fort Provintia in Tainan, admiring the architecture around him. This connection with the actual locality and earth of Tainan reflects a strong thread that runs through a substantial amount of Taiwan’s bentu literature and wider cultural discourse. In literally walking beside a relic, or by laying his hands on the bricks of an old city wall, a writer such as Ye is claiming a familiarity with the Taiwanese soil. The Chinese civilisation of Zeng Yukun’s old city wall is thus replaced by a nativist reverence for the tangible elements of the Taiwanese landscape. The jiucheng may well represent six millennia of civil engineering, but it sits today in the “native soil” of Taiwan.

In keeping with this sense of proximity to the Taiwanese earth, Ye is commonly photographed, as was Zeng Yukun, strolling alongside the wall or passing through the arches of one of the wall’s gates. In a piece appearing in the mainstream daily the China Times (Zhongguo Shibao 中國時報) in early 2000, Ye described his daily routine of rising before dawn and going for an early morning hike to the North gate where he will usually

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78 This is a personal heritage that Ye has himself promoted through books such as Fucheng suyi [Trifling thoughts about the prefectural capital] (Kaohsiung County: Paise Wenhua, 1996).
79 Qiu Ting, “Ye Shitao: shen zai Zuoying, xin xi fucheng”, [Ye Shitao: he may be in Zuoying, but his heart is tied to the prefectural capital], Minseng bao, 15 August 1992.
rest and admire the carved gate gods before heading on to other Zuoying sites, such as the Confucius temple.\(^{81}\) Moreover, strolls around the old city wall have become a major part of Ye’s public persona (much as they were for Zeng Yukun). Indeed, a number of biographical articles appearing in the Taiwanese media have taken to conducting photographic shoots of the author on or next to one of the wall’s gates (usually the North gate).\(^{82}\) In a similar fashion, a recently published guidebook to Kaohsiung advises people to watch for Ye Shitao’s mysterious shadow somewhere around the old wall when they visit.\(^{83}\)

**National histories in the local landscape**

By the 1990s, and with restorations to the North and East gates complete, the Zuoying old wall had become Kaohsiung’s pre-eminent *guyi*—the only site in the city to come under central government jurisdiction as a first-grade relic. Thanks to the work of local scholars such as Zeng Yukun and Ye Shitao, the site was also being infused with particular meanings, and associated with specific historic narratives about Kaohsiung and its past. Since that time, the wall has become one of the few parts of Kaohsiung that tourists visit in substantial numbers, continuing to feature prominently in tourist literature on the city today.\(^{84}\)

Yet this site is more than a tourist attraction. Above all else, it plays an important ideological and historiographical role in providing the city of Kaohsiung with a history linked to the antiquity and grandeur of China and its five millennia, or else with the

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84 For a recent example, see Chen Weilun, “Sanbu qu” [Walk there], *Kaohsiung Walker* 1 (2001.5): 70-71.
“ancient city of culture”, Tainan. Indeed, along with the wall, Zuoying is home to other sites which speak of similar histories, and which have come to be used in tandem with the old city wall to present Zuoying as a kind of local landscape of the nation.

The clearest example of this is the New Kaohsiung Confucius Temple (Gaolou Xing Kongmiao 高雄新孔廟), a massive edifice that was first planned within the ideological framework of the Chinese Cultural Renaissance Movement, and which was built over a two-year period between 1974 and 1976. As a product of the Chinese Cultural Rennaissance Movement, the new Confucius temple speaks unequivocally of the five thousand years of Chinese history. It consists of a large complex of halls, gardens and gates, all designed in the “traditional” Chinese style of architecture that is found in numerous public buildings throughout Taiwan that were erected in the late 1970s and early 1980s (fig. 50). The central hall of the temple (known as the “dacheng dian” 大成殿) was consciously modeled after the main hall of the original National Palace Museum (Gugong Taibedian 故宮太和殿) in Peking, for instance; the encaustic tiles of the temple’s roofs harked back to Chinese antiquity, taking on a remarkably similar appearance to other sites at which the worship of the great men of Chinese history was encouraged throughout Taiwan, such as the Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Hall in Taipei, plans for which were being drawn up as the Kaohsiung temple was being completed.

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85 As Han Baode has pointed out, such a style owed as much to clichéd “Western” notions of “traditional Chinese architecture” as it did to Chinese architectural traditions. See Han Baode, Wei jianzhu kaixiang [Divining architecture] (Taichung County: Mingdao Wenyi Zazhishe, 1985), pp. 89-90.
Figure 50. The architecture of the New Kaohsiung Confucius Temple as depicted in the literature of the Kaohsiung Historiography Commission (Source: Kaohsiung Historiography Commission, A Brief Introduction of work of [sic] Kaohsiung Historiography Commission).
The location of the temple was significant also. It was situated on land reclaimed from Lotus Lake—a body of water that had suitably once been counted amongst the Qing-era "Eight Views of Fengshan" (Fengshan Ba Jing 鳳山八景), and which had been used as a source of drinking and irrigational water for the Fengshan settlement around which the wall once stood. "As the Kaohsiung Confucius Temple was established on the banks of Lotus Lake, it provides beautiful views with water and mountains which reflect off one another in the morning and evening", is how one provincial government publication described the temple in the 1980s. Here was a building that provided Kaohsiung with a Chinese high culture that it apparently hitherto lacked. Like other public buildings that were being constructed in Kaohsiung at the time—such as the Kaohsiung City Cultural Centre—the Confucius temple was designed as a distributor of central plains’ culture and history in the city. Indeed, one of the city’s main administrative agencies for the documentation and publication of historical materials, the Kaohsiung Historiography Commission, literally moved into the New Confucius Temple shortly after its completion. One might even detect some symbolism in the fact that the Kaohsiung New Confucius Temple was deliberately made to resemble Peking’s National Palace Museum—i.e., an institution that once functioned as a crucible of the Chinese nation’s material history, just as the Kaohsiung Historiography Commission does for a local history of Kaohsiung.

Despite the fact that the foundation of this temple predated the codification and restoration of the old city wall by almost a decade, the two sites have, since the late 1980s,
commonly been used in tandem to present this area as a landscape imbued with a five thousand-year historical legitimacy. The tendency on the part of a number of the more patriotic of local Kaohsiung scholars to associate both sites, and Zuoying in general, with the "lishi zhong weida renwu" 歷史中偉大人物, or “great characters of history”, further demonstrates the extent to which these sites have been worked into the sorts of national narratives I examined in Chapter 1. “Travelling southwards on the train”, writes Yin Demin 尹德民 of the ROC Confucius-Mencius Society (Zhonghua Minguo Kong Meng Xuehui 中華民國孔孟學會):

...one can look westward in the direction of Ban Ping Mountain (Ban Ping Shan 半屏山) as one is entering Kaohsiung, and see, off in the distance, the vague shape of a palatial building with a yellow-tiled roof. That is the recently constructed Kaohsiung Confucius Temple where the great teacher, who handed down lessons in culture and morals for more than two thousand five hundred years, is honoured. 93

Similarly, when the Kaohsiung-based naval author Zhu Xueshu 朱學恕 argued for the establishment of a “Harbour City Literature Hall” (Gangdu Wenzhu Gua 港都文學館) in Kaohsiung, he claimed that Zuoying offered the perfect location, precisely because of the links that this landscape of monuments and relics could claim with the great men of the nation’s history: “If this [literature hall] were built near the Confucius temple, we could make the most of the beautiful surroundings, and cultivate literary thought”. Zuoying offered an ideal site for an institution of this nature because it could “…cultivate the morals of Chinese Confucian thought, would pass on virtue to future generations, and

93 Yin Demin’s writing about the temple often includes Sun Yat-sen and Chiang Kai-shek, presenting them as the human embodiments of all that is moral and upright within the five millennia of Chinese history. See Yin Demin, “Cong Gaoxiong shi Kongzi miao gai shu lidai cun Kong jidian ji Zhonghua wenhua daode zhi chengxu” [A general discussion of Confucian rituals handed down through the ages, and the passing on of Chinese culture and morals, from the starting point of the New Kaohsiung Confucius Temple], Gaoxiong wenxian 5-6 (1980.12): 37-57.
could encourage an air of uprightness [reminiscent of Chiang Kai-shek] (da zheng zhi zhong de fengfan 大正至中的風範`).

Interestingly, other sites in Zuoying that may not necessarily have been built with the glory of the nation’s history in mind have since been consumed by this monolithic history of the area and its built environment. In 1991, donations from followers provided the local Lord Yuan Temple (Yuan Di miao 元帝廟) to expand outwards and onto Lotus Lake, just as the Confucius temple had done almost two decades before. At the centre of the resulting new complex was a towering statue of the temple’s patron god, Lord Yuan (Yuan Di 元帝), which can now be seen from almost any position along the banks of the lake. Located on a concrete pontoon, the 38.5 metre-high statue depicts Lord Yuan in a martial stance, subduing a turtle and a snake below Him, wearing a helmet, and bearing a sword (fig. 51). Lord Yuan has been identified by some Kaohsiung scholars as Zuoying’s virtual “patron saint”, and the temple at which He is worshipped can claim its own history that dates back well beyond the Chinese Cultural Renaissance Movement.

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94 Zhu Xueshu, “Rang Gangdu wenxue guan kui dansheng” [Let the harbour city’s literature hall be born soon], *Da haiyang shi yu qi* 63 (2001): 19. The four-character phrase “da zheng zhi zhong” 大正至中 is an inversion of the phrase “da zhong zhi zheng” 大中至正 which appears on the entrance gate to the Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Hall in Taipei. This phrase is rarely used except in reference to Chiang Kai-shek, and is a play on the two characters which make up the personal name within Chiang Kai-shek’s presidential title, Jiang Zhongzheng 蒋中正.

95 Lord Yuan is often worshipped as a protector of children. However, many of His other titles suggest a connection with warfare. Indeed, most include the character “wu” 武 denoting a martial connection (e.g., *Zhen wu Da Jiangjun* 真武大將軍, *Zhen wu Dadi* 真武大帝). Furthermore, some studies have noted that Lord Yuan is associated with the Buddhist legend of King Ashoka (in Chinese, A Yu Wang 阿育王) who relinquished a life of war and butchery for holier pursuits. For more on Lord Yuan, see Jiang Yizhen, *Taiwan de xiangtu shenming* [The folk gods of Taiwan] (Taipei: Taiyuan Chuban Gongsi, 1995), pp. 27-31.


Yet even this most local of sites is now being appropriated by the grander narratives of civilisation that epitomise so many depictions of the built environment in this district. For example, the greatest significance of this statue in its Zuoying context, claim some Kaohsiung intellectuals, is that it is “the largest religious statue on water in Southeast Asia” (Dong Nanya zui da de shui shang shenxiang 東南亞最大的水上神像).\(^98\) By completing such a vertiginous addition to Zuoying’s cultural landscape, the city is thus not merely revering a Daoist deity. More importantly for some, it is adding yet another piece of monumental architecture, one that can be linked clearly to Chinese history and legend, and one that is positioned within an imagined geography of “Greater China”, just as the “tallest building in Southeast Asia” (i.e., the T&C Tower) has been since.\(^99\)


\(^{99}\) It is relevant that the statue was raised at precisely the same time as the international rhetoric of “Greater China” was at its height in the early 1990s. Whilst I do not suggest that such rhetoric prompted the building of this statue (and there is certainly no evidence to suggest that it did), the belated claims that this is the largest religious statue on water in Southeast Asia certainly do suggest a connection with the idea of “Greater China”. On this topic see Harry Harding, “The concept of ‘Greater China’: themes, variations and reservations”, The China Quarterly 136 (1993): 907-925. Taiwan is usually not considered to be a part of
Naval culture

Despite the changes that have been experienced in Kaohsiung since the end of martial law in 1987, and although much of Zuoying has been demilitarised since that time, visitors alighting today at Zuoying North Station (Zuoying Bei Zhan 左營北站) are in no doubt that the military's presence continues to cast a long shadow over this suburb. Information plastered on the station's walls encourages locals to "safeguard national secrets" ("wei hu guoji jimi" 維護國家機密) and "stop mainlanders from infiltrating Taiwan" ("fangzhi Dalu lai Tai renshi shenxian" 防止大陸來臺人士滲透).\(^\text{100}\) As one walks out of the station and onto Zuoying Great Road, army disposals shops, dry-cleaners specialising in military uniforms, and eateries offering discounts to naval personnel, all speak of the continued centrality of the military.

Throughout the twentieth century, the presence of the Japanese Imperial Navy—and following the Second World War the Republican Chinese navy—in Zuoying has determined the very landscape of this district. Furthermore, and as we saw above, many written histories of Zuoying have stressed the link between the old city wall and military history. This military past has actually been championed by government and other groups at particular moments when architectural symbols of national defence have been deemed necessary. This is a point that I illustrated above with reference to the South gate and its use as a site for displaying patriotic propaganda during the Chiang Ching-kuo presidency.

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\(^{100}\) Zuoying zhan gongche lunjian daoluanshouce [Zuoying station bus route guidebook] (Kaohsiung: Gaoxiong Shi Gongche Guanli Chu, 2001).
Nevertheless, it has actually been the military presence in Zuoying that has, since the mid-1990s, come to offer new and interesting reinterpretations about the old city wall and its existence as a listed guji. And it is in a limited yet vibrant literature on Zuoying's many military dependants' villages that we find some of the most challenging re-assessments of Zuoying's historic built environment.

In Chapter 2 of this thesis, I demonstrated how notions of cultural property and preservation centring on the word guji had been questioned by the arrival of new ideas such as "heritage" in Taiwan, as well as the development of the "shequ yingzao" model, from about the mid-1990s. I also considered, in Chapter 4, how much of this was made possible by greater efforts on the part of local governments, and in this particular case, by the Kaohsiung City Government, to foster institutions that would function as distributors of local history. Such institutions have themselves encouraged greater involvement on the part of non-official groups in the process of history-making. Zuoying, as a part of Kaohsiung so intimately affiliated with the city's highest ranking official relic, offers an interesting illustration of the ways in which the "guji" classification has been challenged by these more recent changes. And although these reinterpretations are relatively recent to Zuoying, they warrant mention here.

Zuoying has long been home to a society of naval intellectuals. Authors such as the above-mentioned Zhu Xueshu, who has edited the Great Ocean Poetry Quarterly (Da Haiyang Shi Zazhi 大海洋詩雜誌) since the 1970s, have promoted naval literature and other artistic expressions of Kaohsiung's émigré culture for many years. Such naval culture developed out of the wider veneration for "maritime China" that I examined in Chapter 1. Intellectuals such as Zhu have sought to express a particularly naval, and just as importantly, waisheng connection to the ocean. Kaohsiung, and especially Zuoying, features prominently in literature on "maritime China" precisely because it represents a site at which a continental
Chinese architectural tradition (symbolised in the old city wall), coupled with an overwhelmingly waisengren community, meets the sea.\textsuperscript{101}

Growing out of this naval literati culture has been a fresh wave of attempts at reinterpreting the historic built environment of this area. Military dependants’ villages, once blamed for denigrating the old city wall throughout the martial law-era, have begun to reinterpret their place in Zuoying history, as well as their connections with the old city wall. The Kaohsiung Association for Military Dependants’ Village Culture, itself based on Zuoying Great Road, has started to promote the cultural and historical uniqueness of Kaohsiung’s mainland émigré military communities since the late 1990s, and has concentrated on the material history of such communities in exhibitions and publications,\textsuperscript{102} inspired perhaps by the appreciation of juancun social and material history displayed by organisations elsewhere in Taiwan.\textsuperscript{103} Juancun groups were also represented in the aforementioned arts season held in 1997.\textsuperscript{104}

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{101} See, for instance, Zhu Xueshu, \textit{Kaituo haiyang xin jingjie} [Open up the new boundaries of the ocean] (Kaohsiung: Da Haiyang Wenyi Zazhishe, 1987); see also \textit{Da Haiyang Shi kan} Bianji Weiyuanhui [Editorial Committee of the \textit{Great Ocean Poetry Journal}] (ed.), \textit{Zhongguo Haiyang Shixian} [A selection of Chinese maritime poetry] (Kaohsiung: Da Haiyang Shi kanshe, 1985).

\textsuperscript{102} Guo Dongbao, \textit{ap. cit.} See also “Juancun wenwu zhan ming deng chang” [Exhibition of juancun artifacts starts tomorrow], \textit{Taiwan xinwen bao}, 10 November 2000.

\textsuperscript{103} Take, for example, the “From foreign land to hometown: an exhibition of ‘émigré’ images and artifacts” (\textit{Cong yixiang dao jiaxiang: ‘waisengren’ jingshi wenwu zhan} 從異鄉到家鄉: 「外省人」影像文物展), that was held between November 1999 and January 2000 at the Taipei 28 February Memorial Museum (Taipei Er'erba Jinian Guan 台北二二八紀念館). The use in the exhibition’s title of the term “jiaxiang” (or “ka-hiong” in Hokkien), a term that, as we saw in Chapter 1, is commonly associated with nativist thought, has a profoundly symbolic relevance, and might be interpreted here as implying a “nativisation” of émigré culture in Taiwan.

\textsuperscript{104} Zhang Shouzhen and Xu Yinan, \textit{The tolling of the bells, the fragrance of the lotus, reminiscences of the old city wall}, pp. 50-51.
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There is justification for the re-appraisal of Zuoying’s military past. Recent work on the history of *juancun* by scholars such as Liu Heng 劉-envelope and Ding Wei 丁偉, for instance, has demonstrated how these communities have a valid claim to a history intimately bound up with Zuoying’s built environment. These and other scholars argue that *juancun* themselves represent a spatial form that is the result of peculiar historical circumstance in Taiwan, and that the physical structures of *juancun* (including those in and around the wall) are valid parts of the historic built environment.

I believe that this literature on *juancun* culture and history in Kaohsiung (and elsewhere in Taiwan) raises, indirectly, crucial questions about the standard interpretations of the old city wall, such as those offered by the architect Lee Ch’ian-lang, or by writers such as Zeng Yukuan and Ye Shitao, all of whom have dismissed the *juancun* connection to the wall as a mere subversion from “authenticity”—one that was ultimately harmful to the site. Yet why are the embellishments that *juancun* communities made to the wall in the postwar decades necessarily inauthentic or detrimental? As a military relic that has been continually destroyed, rebuilt and modified over the last two centuries, cannot the modifications that *juancun* communities made to this relic also be counted as valid parts of the wall’s history? Are not the uses of the wall by *juancun* communities, as borders, defenses, and even as lavatories, a form of preservation or restoration?

There may be few simple answers to such questions. Yet at the very least, they force us to critically reconsider many of the assumptions that have been made about the wall’s history, its restoration during the 1980s, and the meanings with which it has been imbued by those who have written about it over the last two decades. It will be intriguing to observe as to whether or not *juancun* themselves, and the additions and modifications that they have made to parts of the old city wall, might even be seen, one day, as valid contenders for the

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105 Liu Heng, *op cit.*

term gyji. At the time of writing, the Taipei City Government is undertaking feasibility studies for the protection of juancun as city-registered (i.e., third-grade) gyji in that city, having already drawn up a "Plan for the Protection of Juancun Culture" (Juancun Wenhua Baocun Jihua 禱村文化保存計劃).\(^{107}\) At this stage, one can only speculate as to whether similar measures might eventually be observed in Zuoying.

The material and social history of the typical Zuoying juancun as it has been constructed by authors and organisations mentioned in preceding paragraphs, and indeed, naval society overall, does not always conform to the dominant narratives that have become so habitually associated with Zuoying and its wall; there is a wide gulf between the domesticity of handicrafts and artifacts found in the homes of mainland Chinese sailors and their families (that have since been included in some of the aforementioned exhibitions of juancun culture), for instance, and the nationalism inherent in earlier efforts to promote Zuoying as home to a first-grade relic. As such, one might argue that this most recent interpretation of Zuoying as a living repository of émigré material history actually challenges some of the earlier notions about Zuoying history which informed writing about, and restoration of, the old city wall. The rediscovery of juancun culture may in fact help to fill the countless gaps left by previous histories of Zuoying and its wall that focused on infrastructure and the "great men" of history, rather than ordinary people.

Yet at another level, this recent discovery of the area’s naval culture coalesces with the themes of national histories that have come to saturate the old city wall. For instance, one of the most enduring images called upon in literature on the juancun is the zhu liba 竹籬笆, or "bamboo fence". The symbol of the bamboo fence has become metonymous with military dependants’ villages in Taiwan. In recently-produced juancun oral histories, for example, the bamboo fence is frequently called upon as a symbol for military dependants’

\(^{107}\) Cai Huiping, “Shezhi huo juancun chuangan; bai li tao yi” [Establishing a window on the life of military dependants’ villages; picking one in a hundred], *Lianhe bao*, 23 March 2002.
villages, whilst the bamboo fences that still surround a few of the older dependants’ villages feature as a favoured subject of juancun photography.  

Most juancun are no longer surrounded by bamboo fences. Multi-storey public housing estates have replaced the makeshift structures of the early postwar years. Yet the bamboo fence has retained its symbolic importance, especially in the parts of Taiwan in which juancun are highly concentrated, Zuoying being the classic example. Furthermore, whilst bamboo fences are indeed far more domestic than are city walls, and although they share little of the foreboding dominance that the jiucheng might do in its manifestation as a first-grade guji, they do share certain symbolic similarities with the old city wall. It is worth considering, for instance, that as a symbol, the bamboo fence reinforces some of the dominant themes of Zuoying’s heritage. It speaks of a history of warfare, and it links Zuoying with the patriotism that others have inscribed into the old city wall. For someone such as Zeng Yukun, the jiucheng marks the site at which Chinese civilisation defended itself against disorder (e.g., the Lin Shuangwen rebellion) and alien invasion (e.g., Koxinga and his efforts to expel the Dutch East India Company). The zhu liba, though far humbler in scale, might also be seen as a site of stoic defence of the nation’s sovereignty against communist infiltration, or against nativist moves towards political independence.  

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108 For an example, see Pan Guozheng, You qing you yi juancun qing: Xinzhu shi juancun de yuhsi, zhaliba nei de chuantian [There are emotions and righteousness in the juancun sentiment: the story of Hsinchu city’s military dependants’ villages, a spring within the bamboo fence] (Hsinchu: Zhushi Wenhua, 1997).


110 The idea of a distinct “juancun culture” in fact only arose after the 1985 decision on the part of Taiwan’s Legislative Yuan (Lifa Yuan 立法院) and the Ministry of National Defence (Guofang Bu 國防部) to rebuild existing dependants’ villages along the lines of modern housing estates. See Zhang Shouzhen and Xu Yinan, Record of the old wall, p. 39.

111 In one of its earliest incarnations in the 1700s, the jiucheng had been a wall of bamboo stakes. See Chen Rousen, Taiwan de chengmen yu pastai [Taiwan’s city gates and batteries] (Taipei County: Yuanzu Wenhua Gongsi, 2001), pp. 114-115.
Kaohsiung’s Great Wall?

Despite the work of military-affiliated groups in advertising a juancun-focused model of a social history in Zuoying, national history continues to dominate in this district. Whether it be through the old city wall, or through more recent additions to the landscape, the past that one reads about in texts about this area, or that is presented on signage and in guide books, is one that stretches back thousands (or hundreds) of years into Chinese (or Taiwanese) history, is populated by great men, and is bound inextricably to the nation.

So strongly associated is this gōji with the history of the nation that even the most strident opponents of the ideas of a civilisational history have been all too ready to embrace this symbol and its histories when it suits them. In the process of electoral campaigning in 1998, for example, the DPP candidate for the mayorality of Kaohsiung, Frank Hsieh, organised public readings of Tang poetry (Tang shi 唐詩) at a stage purposely assembled alongside a section of the old city wall; even Hsieh, a staunch advocate of the idea of
Kaohsiung as Taiwan’s “maritime capital”, and a long-term critic of the five thousand-year/central plains historiography promoted by the KMT, was willing to appropriate the old city wall as a symbol of the nation and its ancient past when it came to the question of votes. It is almost as if the continual references to six millennia of history, defence against invasion, and ancient Chinese architecture with which this site has been constantly described since the late 1980s, has proven too great a weight to combat.

There is something about city walls which, despite the very real connections that such structures have with city-states, urban history and local landscapes, continues to see them associated with the “power and dignity” of the nation and its histories. Perhaps this is simply because, as structures designed to withstand attack, city walls last much longer than other buildings; it might also have something to do with the imposing nature of city walls, a feature which continues well after these structures have become militarily obsolete.

The example of the Great Wall (chang cheng 長城) in modern day Chinese nationalism is instructive. Indeed, many scholars in the Chinese-speaking world are at pains to point out the extent to which city walls, of which the Great Wall itself is but the largest example, symbolise Chinese civilisation itself. As Harry Lamley phrases it, “…the Chinese walled city has been identified more with the continuity evident in China’s long historical tradition than with the diversity characteristic of its local society and rich cultural

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112 Hsieh is completely candid about his momentary appropriation of the old city wall, recounting his experience of reciting Tang poetry there, before visiting potential voters living in dependants’ villages nearby. See Xie Zhangting, Qingting Gaoqiong: Xiu Zhongting gangdu riji [My emotions are set in Kaohsiung: Frank Hsieh’s harbour city diary] (Taipei: Yuedan Chubanshe, 1998), pp. 159-162.


114 See, for example, Li Xiaocong, “Chang cheng” [The Great Wall], in Yuan Xingpei (ed), Zhonghua wenming zhi guang: jianzhu guji [The pride of Chinese civilisation: architectural relics] (Hong Kong: Sanlian Shudian, 1999), pp. 1-18.
heritage". Nor is this a necessarily recent phenomenon. Wang Gungwu has noted Lu Xun's 蘆迅 emotional appeal to ethnic Chinese nationalism that was apparently inspired by the sight of a decaying city wall in Amoy—a site that had been witness to Koxinga's last stand of anti-Qing resistance on the mainland.\(^{116}\)

Yet the point is that city walls are infused with particular meanings which determine the histories they represent through a process of codification and, to return to Strassberg's term that I employed in Chapter 2, inscription. A site is chosen by governmental or academic agencies because it can be made to correlate with narratives that are prevalent at a particular time. And in listing a site such as the Zuoying wall as a first-grade guji, the structure in question at once gains national significance. The process of restoration, such as that undertaken by Lee Ch'ian-lang, further historicises the site by restoring it to its apparently "original" condition, and by removing those elements deemed contrary to the site's history. The imposition of signage ensures that the meanings with which the site has been assigned is made clear to visitors. Then there are the essays, newspaper articles, lectures, books and television appearances that scholars such as Zeng Yukun and Ye Shitao produce, all of which aid in the provision of the relic with a particular significance.

City walls may be commonly listed as relics in Taiwan (and elsewhere), but there is nothing pre-ordained about these structures that makes them candidates for the status of guji. Like most other listed relics in Taiwan, the old city wall in Zuoying was only given a national significance after the term guji was attached to it. That Chinese city walls have elsewhere been identified as symbols of closure, xenophobia and cultural stagnation only helps to


illustrate this important point. The transformation of a ruined item of military infrastructure into a glorious architectural symbol of the Chinese (or, in some interpretations, Taiwanese) nation is but one of many fates that might have been imposed on this site. In the following chapter, we shall see how a similar group of sites located elsewhere in Kaohsiung have undergone a similar transformation, although on this occasion, with the application of the shequ yingzao model, and within a markedly different interpretation of Kaohsiung history.

Figure 53. Repairing the old wall? Refurbishment work undertaken near the East gate in early 2002 (photograph by the author, 2002).

Chapter 6: Hamaxing: Kaohsiung’s historic waterfront

Hamaxing: a *shequ yingzao* project

Throughout the present work, I have traced the ways in which multifarious historiographical debates have been played out in Taiwan’s historic built environment. I have done this by focusing on how history is made in the city of Kaohsiung. In choosing to focus my study on this, Taiwan’s second largest urban centre, I have also consciously considered the interplay between national (i.e., Chinese and Taiwanese) histories and local histories, and how these different historiographical traditions have informed, challenged and shaped one another.

In the previous chapter, I examined Kaohsiung’s most celebrated *gyi*—the old city wall in Zuoying. I considered the different ways in which writing about that relic, as well as the renovation and codification that it underwent in the 1980s and 1990s, reflected a vision of the past consistent with particular historiographical traditions. Yet as we saw earlier in this thesis, the classification of *gyi* is by no means the only way in which Taiwan’s historic built environment has come to be codified. The recent emergence of “*shequ yingzao*”, or community construction, for instance, has challenged many earlier understandings of the historic landscape in Taiwan. And this latter model has been most vigorously promoted by voices within Taiwanese society who have sought to position local histories above concerns for the nation.

This chapter is a case-study of one of the most “successful” *shequ yingzao* projects to have been undertaken in Kaohsiung in recent years.1 As we saw in Chapter 4, Kaohsiung has been witness to various *shequ yingzao* projects throughout the 1990s, many of which have predated the city government’s interest in promoting a local Kaohsiung history. In this regard, Kaohsiung shares much in common with other urban centres throughout Taiwan.  

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1 Although it is difficult to label any *shequ yingzao* project as either “successful” or “unsuccessful”. 

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As I hope to illustrate in this chapter, however, Hamaxing is of particular significance for this study of history and the built environment in Taiwan. For it is here that one finds many of the debates about the re-appraisal of colonial history being played out in the landscape.

**Demarcating an historic district**

The toponym Hamaxing is the Taiwanisation of the Japanese term, “hamase” literally meaning “the coastal line”. This name is derived from a now partially-disused railway line which dates to the early decades of the twentieth century, and which emanates out of the Kaohsiung Harbour Station (Gaoxiong Gang Zhan 高雄港站). During the colonial era (and indeed, after “retrocession”), this coastal line functioned as a transport link between dock areas along the harbour foreshore, Kaohsiung’s Shinhama pier, and the aforementioned railway station which, until the 1940s, marked the terminus of the pan-island North-South trunk line that I examined in Chapter 3. The hamase facilitated the movement of goods and people between these various sites, and was later extended to include branch lines servicing the city’s fish market, as well as other places nearby.²

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² It is, in fact, the Mandarìn Chinese approximation of a Hokkien approximation of a Japanese toponym. In Japanese, “hamase” 濱 lineHeight means “coastal”, and “sen” 線 means “line” (i.e., railway line). The term hamase 濱 lineHeight was rendered into Hokkien as ha-ma-st, and then into Mandarin Chinese as Hamaxing 哈瑪星 (or, occasionally, Hamasheng 哈瑪生). In modern-day discussions of the word’s origins, the term “hamase” is linked to another toponym that shares one of the same characters, i.e., Yokohama 横濱. Whilst this may simply be practical in terms of explaining the origins of the word to Chinese readers, it also points to the importance that Yokohama has had in shaping perceptions of Kaohsiung. Throughout most of the Japanese colonial era in Taiwan, Yokohama was the main Japanese port with which Kaohsiung was linked by way of shipping routes.

Today, however, “Hamaxing” refers to an area beyond the limits of the coastal line. Indeed, in literature on Hamaxing as an “historic district”, the term is used to refer to a triangular tranche of coastal Kaohsiung that was reclaimed in the 1910s as part of the harbour construction and North-South trunk railway line projects. In its recent incarnation as “the Greater Kaohsiung area citizens’ coastal leisure space” and the city’s “cultural area for the restoration of historic glory”, Hamaxing has thus taken on a meaning that bears only a limited connection to the “coastal line”. Indeed, some sections of the hamaseen from which this district’s name is derived are no longer even counted within Hamaxing’s borders.\footnote{Such as the strip of land near the Penglai 蓬莱 commercial harbour area which encompasses the recently-opened Kaohsiung Harbour Museum. The disused railway line that runs past the museum’s front door and acts as one of the attracting features of the museum building is, despite being a part of the original hamaseen, not included in Hamaxing. My thanks to Po-tsu Tsai of the Kaohsiung Harbour Museum for pointing out to me the question of Hamaxing’s borders and their relationship to the railway line in front of the museum.}

The area called Hamaxing covers sixty-seven hectares within the Gushan district (Gushan qu 鼓山區), one of the eleven districts into which the municipality of Kaohsiung is divided (fig. 54). It is geographically tiny in relation to the sprawl of the city, and is home to just over sixteen thousand people.\footnote{Ibid., p. i.} Yet its historiographical significance outweighs its geographic size, for Hamaxing represents one of the most celebrated examples of “community construction” in Kaohsiung.

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\footnote{“Da Gaoxiong diqu zhi shimin shui’an xiuxian kongjian” 大高雄地區之市民水岸休閒空間 and “chongzhen lishi guanghui de wenhua shequ” 重振歷史光輝的文化社區. Yucheng Guoji Guihua Sheji Gongsi [Yucheng International Planning and Design Company], \textit{Gaoxiong shi Hamaxing diqu duishi sheji zhengti cella guihua sheji yanjiu an} [The urban design of Kaohsiung city’s Hamaxing district: a complete strategic plan and design research report] (Kaohsiung: Gaoxiong Shi Zhengfu, 1998), p. 4/1.}
The demarcation and codification of this historic district has been the result of concerted efforts on the part of local community groups, academics, and later, sections of the Kaohsiung City Government. The organised movement to have this area listed as an historic district can be traced to the foundation of the Hamaxing Community Construction Workshop (Hamaxing Shequ Yingzao Gongzuoshi 哈瑪星社區營造工作室) in 1995. Typical of the many shequ yingzao projects that were being established throughout Taiwan in the mid-1990s, this workshop grew out of a non-governmental organisation—the Association for Urban Development in Twenty-First-Century Kaohsiung (Gaoxiong Ershiyi Shiji Dushi Fazhan Xiehui 高雄二十一世紀都市發展協會)—which had been established some four years earlier with the aim of improving city life in Kaohsiung and encouraging greater dialogue between industry,
government, academe and the community on matters such as city planning and architecture.\footnote{A thorough discussion of the workshop’s establishment can be found in Jason Hung, \textit{op cit.}}

In the early years of its existence, much of the Hamaxing Community Construction Workshop’s time was dedicated to the production and dissemination of literature about Hamaxing, most of it finding an audience in local residents themselves. Operating out of private residences before finding a permanent abode on the upper floors of a community market building, the workshop organised cultural activities ranging from reading groups to tours of historic sites, with the aim of strengthening a sense of community involvement in Hamaxing’s upkeep. The workshop was thus conceptualised as a community-based organisation that would encourage, as much as possible, input from local residents.\footnote{Lin Congcheng, “Dazao Hamaxing de xiwang gongcheng” [Engineering hope in Hamaxing], \textit{Xin gaozhang} 1 (Spring, 1999): 12-27.}

Yet it was academics from Kaohsiung’s leading tertiary institutions, as well as a handful of better known “lay scholars”, who lobbied for the workshop’s recognition by government bodies in the first place. In fact, according to one scholar involved in the foundation of the workshop, academics even provided training for local residents in the art of “community construction” itself.\footnote{Wu Yingming of the National Sun Yat-sen University, for example, claimed to have trained the local members of the workshop himself within the grounds of one of the district’s temples when I spoke to him in May 2001.}

Moreover, the establishment of the workshop coincided with the rise in “urban studies” that I outlined in the first chapter of this thesis, and was thus closely tied, from its inception, to nebulous ideas such as “civil society” and “citizenship”. Indeed, some literature produced by those involved in the workshop’s establishment claims that the initiation of a \textit{shequ yingzao} movement in Hamaxing was inspired by civic needs, such as the
desire to make Kaohsiung a “healthy city” in which a true “sense of community” might prosper. On the academic front, it was predominantly scholars with an interest in “urban studies” and related disciplines who represented the strongest voices in the early years of the workshop. Individuals of particular prominence included the geographer Jason Hung and the historian Zhang Shouzhen, both of the National Kaohsiung Normal University (Guoli Gaoxiong Shifan Daxue 國立高雄師範大學), and the landscape planner Guo Ruikun 郭瑞坤 and political-economist Wu Yingming, of the National Sun Yat-sen University. Some of these individuals had previously been involved in efforts at community construction elsewhere in Kaohsiung.\[11\]

The workshop induced the involvement of persons from beyond the limits of academia also. In a fashion similar to other shequ yingzao projects, local community figure-heads, such as the headmaster of the Gushan Elementary School (Gushan Guomin Xiaoxue 鼓山國民小學)—itself a site of some significance in Hamaxing—Yan Chunsheng 顏春生, contributed to the activities of the group from an early date.\[12\] Many of the workshop’s voluntary staff were (and still are) Hamaxing residents with an interest in the antiquarian side of local history. A number of lay scholars, including the ubiquitous Zheng Shuiping, were also called upon at different moments to provide advice on how best to undertake cultural, restorative and promotional activities in Hamaxing.

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\[10\] See for, instance, Lin Lixiang, Jiankang dashi de lihen yu shiwu yi Hamaxing shequ yingzao guihua an li [The theory and practice of healthy cities: the case of the Hamaxing shequ yingzao plan as an example], Masters thesis, Institute of Political Science, National Sun Yat-sen University, Kaohsiung, 1996. Lin’s academic supervisor was Wu Yingming, who at the same time was one of the busiest organisers of the Hamaxing project.

\[11\] Guo Ruikun, for example, was engaged in similar efforts in the district of Yancheng in the early 1990s. See Guo Ruikun, “Comprehensive community construction in the Yancheng district . . . .”.

\[12\] Yan Chunsheng, “Xuwen” [Foreword], in Zhang Shouzhen and Xu Yün (eds), Hamaxing de qianshi jinxibing [The past and present of Hamaxing] (Kaohsiung: Hamaxing Shequ Yingzao Gongzuoshi, 1998), no page numbers.
By 1997, the workshop had developed a strong public presence throughout Kaohsiung. Indeed, in April of that year, President Lee Teng-hui made a highly-publicised visit to Hamaxing during an official tour of Kaohsiung. This was reported in the workshop’s newsletter and appears to have been viewed as a major factor in lending credibility to the Hamaxing project overall. Only a few months later, the Council for Cultural Affairs despatched a team of officials to Kaohsiung to observe and report on the progress of Hamaxing as an exemplar for the shequ yingzao model that was rapidly becoming the preferred mode of historical and cultural preservation for that agency. The council’s subsequent reports were, by all accounts, agreeable.

By 1998, the workshop had evolved into the Hamaxing Cultural Association (Hamaxing Wenhua Xiehui 哈瑪星文化協會). And active participation from various agencies of the Kaohsiung City Government was also becoming more noticeable, as the city administration eyed the area as a possible site in which to take up plans to promote the city to domestic tourists island-wide, and to renovate an area of harbourside Kaohsiung that had been, for many years, considered a blot on the landscape. Although the city administration under Wu Dunyi had certainly not hampered the Hamaxing workshop’s efforts, official involvement began to expand from late 1998, or more precisely, following the election of a new mayoral administration for the city under Frank Hsieh and his Democratic Progressive Party.

For the Hsieh mayoralty, Hamaxing was perfectly suited to the idea of “maritime Taiwan” that had been promoted within sections of Taiwan’s nativist world throughout the 1990s. Here was an appropriately waterside district in a city that Hsieh had himself described as Taiwan’s “maritime capital”. And in Hamaxing, much of the oceanic iconography that the DPP had been promulgating over the last decade could be transferred onto the landscape.

13 See the front cover of Hamaxing shequ yingzao Gongzuoshi’s Hamaxing tongzun 4 (1997.6).
14 Li Youhuang, “Hamaxing shequ yingzao: jiang zhankai jingguan chongjian [Community construction in Hamaxing: redevelopment of the landscape is about to commence], Minsheng bao, 15 July 1997.
Thus, under Hsieh’s administration, Hamaxing emerged as not just one amongst a number of *shequ jingzao* projects throughout the city, but rather as Kaohsiung’s premier historic district, a place in which the city government spent increasing amounts of funding, effort and time.

Accordingly, a number of key local government departments were instructed to become involved in Hamaxing’s renovation. The Department of Urban Planning (Dushi Fazhan Chu 都市發展處) was given responsibility for designing infrastructure—parks, piers, and promenades—within the bounds of a newly devised “Plan for Hamaxing’s Re-creation” (Hamaxing Chengxiang Zaizao Jihua 哈瑪星城鄉再造計劃), the results of which were expected to attract an increase in visitors to the area. The Bureau of Civil Affairs (Minzheng Ju 民政局) set about listing existing relics, and locating new ones (a process that we shall look at in greater depth below). The Department of Information took up the task of publicising the area through literature and advertising. And the Research, Development and Evaluation Commission (Yanju Fazhan Kaohe Weiyuanhui 研究發展考核委員會), headed from 1998 by one of the founders of the original Hamaxing workshop, Jason Hung, continued to consider new ways in which to promote and preserve the area.\(^5\)

**From backwater to waterfront**

The emergence of Hamaxing as Kaohsiung’s most celebrated *shequ jingzao* project is all the more striking when we consider the ways in which this area was written and thought about little more than a decade ago. Up until the mid-1990s, most official references to the area did not even make use of the term “Hamaxing”, instead referring to this part of harbourside Kaohsiung as the Gushan Commercial Harbour (Gushan Shanggang

\(^5\) Chen Xiuli and Xu Wenyu, “Hamaxing” [Hamaxing], *Xiangcheng shenghuo zazhi* 64 (1999.5): 16.
When it was employed, the name Hamaxing was generally associated with the shabbier banks of the Shaochuan tou 哨船頭 canal and its adjoining set of lanes and alleys. It was often described as home to old and dying industries—local fisheries that could no longer catch any mullet (węyu 烏魚) in a polluted Kaohsiung harbour, for example. Many of the buildings and relics that are now proudly marked with explanatory tourist signs, and which I shall examine in closer detail below, were not codified in any sense. On the contrary, some housed squatters; others were seen to be fit only for demolition. At one stage in the early 1990s, the Kaohsiung City Government even considered flattening sections of the area to make way for the foundations of a cross-harbour bridge (kuangang daqiao 跨港大橋).  
  
Furthermore, Hamaxing marked the literal end of the road for many Kaohsiung residents. Prior to the building of the National Sun Yat-sen University in the early 1980s, for example, there was little beyond this area but a web of military road-blocks, militarised zones and barracks. Hamaxing was not only dilapidated, then, but also unpleasant and for the most part, unknown. Indeed, in a recently published interview, a member of the Hamaxing Cultural Association noted that, throughout much of her childhood in the area, roads leading into this part of Kaohsiung were actually sealed off by the army at nightfall, and military police from a neighbouring garrison would regularly patrol the streets.  
  
Paintings of the area portrayed a sad nostalgia. Kaohsiung artist Lee Chun-cheng (Li Chungcheng 李春成) depicts still, sleepy waterfront scenes in works such as Hamaxing Harbour (1990), and Fish Market in the Twilight (1994) in which fishing boats are pictured as

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17 Wang Shufen, “Zhuduo zhong da jianshe Yuan Di kuabu” [Many major public works projects have exceeded their original plans], Taiwan sinwen bao, 31 December 1996.


stationary, at times rusty, additions to a quiet and forgotten corner of the city (fig. 55). Such images differ substantially from the glossy representations that have since become the standard for texts about Hamaxing produced since the mid-1990s.

![Image of fish market in the Twilight by Lee Chun-cheng](image)

**Figure 55.** *Fish market in the Twilight* by Lee Chun-cheng (Source: Wei Ying-hui (ed), *Lee Chun-cheng: Footprints of a Life*, p. 28).

Hamaxing’s decrepitude ensured that the area was occasionally chosen as the backdrop to fiction. Author Hu Changsong 胡長松, for instance, describes the Hamaxing area in renditions of childhood visits to his grandmother’s house “…in a little alley beside the ferry wharf…”, as a “…a tangle of fishing nets, lines and tackle; broken furniture covered in dust; a television with fuzzy reception; walls made out of layer upon layer of sea salt; and a sense that nothing would ever dry out…” 20 The fact that Hu’s autobiographical account is written from gaol also seems to fit the usual mode of description for Hamaxing as a place at the peripheries of Taiwanese society. The Kaohsiung author Lin Yuyi 林裕翼

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also used the area as a backdrop for his story of homosexual life in the work *The Hamaxing Ferry Yard (Hamaxing duchuan chang)* 哈馬星渡船場.*21

The nativist writer Hong Suli likewise focuses on her childhood years in “...the old Takao community of Hamaxing...” in a collection of essays she published in 1986 under the title *Rainy Night in the Harbour City (Kang-to ía u)* 港都夜雨*.

What I remember most about it was the old fellow who collected used newspapers and scrap metal. “He! Bring out your newspapers, scrap metal. Anyone selling?”; I can still remember his loud, guttural yelling. There was the putt-putt sound of small motorboats on the harbour, interspersed with one or two bursts from their whistles. And then there was the murmuring sound of the monks chanting the *sutras* down one of the lanes—the empty sound of a disappearing culture. So terribly polluted had the harbour become that the culture of the boatyard was falling apart. Its decline could be put down to all kinds of factors, from politics and economics, to the changing standards of the people.*22

The reference to pollution is an important one here, for in the 1980s and early 1990s, other, greener areas of Kaohsiung were gaining far more attention than the grey (only later to become “blue”) space of Hamaxing. The popular clamour to open Chai Mountain (Chai Shan 柴山), a few kilometres North of Hamaxing, as a national park, eventually successful following the end of martial law, meant that Hamaxing remained far from popular as a site for recreational pursuits.*23 References to “broken furniture” and “scrap metal” in the above-quoted descriptions further allude to the extent to which Hamaxing was deemed historically worthless in comparison to the supposedly rich architectural

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*22 Hong Suli, Kang-to ía u [Rainy night in the harbour city] (Taipei: Qianwei Chubanshe, 1986), p. 11. The title of this book is given in Hokkien as it is borrowed from the title of a well-known song recorded in the same language.

*23 Tu Xingshi, Chaishan zhanyi [Chai mountain-ism] (Taichung: Zhenxing Chubanshe 1993).
heritage of other parts of Kaohsiung, such as Zuoying; this was a place of rubbish, not civilisation.

All these descriptions provide us with a stark contrast to the Hamaxing of today, with its signposted relics, its tourist maps, and its ferry and train rides. Within a short period of time, Hamaxing has been completely transfigured. So how has this change occurred? In seeking answers to this question, one might do well to explore the similarities between Hamaxing as Kaohsiung’s latest “historic maritime district”, and the changes that have occurred in other port cities around the world in recent times where comparable “historic maritime districts” have evolved.

Recent studies of the maritime heritage movement in the industrialised world have traced the interest in waterfront heritage, and the wider desire to renovate the derelict waterside areas of port cities, to the early 1970s. At one level, it has been suggested that the rehabilitation of harbourside districts, and the associated growing concern for maritime heritage, reflected changing tastes amongst middle-class consumers in much of the Western world that emerged in that decade. Studies have, moreover, highlighted the substantial connection between harbourside regeneration and changes to the industrial and functional role of harbours and other waterways since that time.

It was from the early 1970s, for instance, that many ports around the world were altered substantially by the introduction of new technologies, such as modern containerisation. Containerisation in effect meant the rationalisation of cargo transport between ports. Goods were no longer transported in boxes or chests, but were instead packed into

24 To which Hamaxing featured as little more than a footnote. See, for example, “Hamaxing da miao sanshi nian shengshi; wu chao qing jiao dadian shiw an minzhong canyu [A once-in-thirty-year occasion at the big temple of Hamaxing; thousands of people join in the celebrations], Gaoxiong bnukan 3.2 (1982.4): 25.
standardised containers and thereafter shipped to other ports in vast quantities.\textsuperscript{27} Whereas previously, the loading and unloading of goods at docksides had been a labour-intensive process, containerisation translated into an immediate drop in the numbers of people required in stevedoring and other industries. It also necessitated larger spaces for port facilities, many of which were found at the peripheries of harbour cities where land was cheaper and more readily available.

The result of these technological trends was something that the South African historian Nigel Worden has identified as a “characteristic pattern” in port cities, whereby:

\ldots central dockland areas once vital to the very existence of port cities fell into disuse, often with technological change brought about by containerisation, the decline of heavy manufacturing industries or industrial relocation to suburban areas\ldots with economic change came a split between port and city, in which the harbour waterfront lost its role as the heart of the urban complex.\textsuperscript{28}

The argument that the heritage industry moved in after heavy industry moved out is a theme examined in Robert Hewison’s influential book \textit{The Heritage Industry}. Hewison argues that the dynamics of heritage preservation in Britain during the 1980s were closely linked to economic policies that saw the death of that country’s heavy industries. He claims that the decline of industries and their related ways of life could essentially be mapped by the growth of heritage villages and open-air museums, and that this could be seen clearly in British port cities, where the decline of ship-building, maritime trade and other industries left in their wake large tracts of waterside land that were later transformed into “heritage” sites.\textsuperscript{29} Many of the best known instances of waterfront “renewal” and


\textsuperscript{28} Nigel Worden, “Contested heritage at the Cape Town waterfront”, \textit{International Journal of Heritage Studies} 1.1-2 (Spring, 1996): 60.

\textsuperscript{29} Robert Hewison, \textit{The Heritage Industry: Britain in a Climate of Decline} (London: Methuen, 1987).
heritage rehabilitation in Britain (and elsewhere) have occurred in precisely those port
cities in which changes to maritime-related industry have been most acute, London’s
“post-imperial” Docklands providing us with one widely-studied example.30

Whilst there is admittedly a substantial geographic and cultural gap between London and
Kaohsiung, there are parallels to be found between many port cities in Western European
societies and the case of Hamaxing. For example, as in other port cities, the belated
governmental involvement in Hamaxing appears to have been inspired as much by long-
held plans to rehabilitate the elements of Kaohsiung’s harbourfront that were deemed
unattractive, as by a concern for promoting Kaohsiung’s maritime history. The
“reconstructive engineering of old harbourside areas” (jiu gangqu zhengjian gongcheng
舊港區整建工程) had been considered by both the Kaohsiung City Government and the
Kaohsiung Harbour Bureau for some time prior to the re-discovery of Hamaxing.31 And
as in other port cities, it was the departure of maritime industries in recent decades—
Kaohsiung’s ship-breaking operations were based near (what is now) Hamaxing until the
departure of this industry from the harbour in 1981; Taiwan’s largest deep sea fisheries
market moved out of the area in 198432—that left the district dilapidated.33

The comparison between the well-documented maritime heritage of industrialised societies
and the case of Hamaxing increases in relevance once we consider some of the ways in
which agencies and individuals engaged in the process of Hamaxing’s post-1995
metamorphosis into a “maritime district” have written about the area. In Hamaxing, one

30 For a fine example of recent work on London’s Docklands, see Peter Quatermaine, Port Architecture: Constructing the Littoral (Chichester: Academy Editions, 1999), esp. pp. 67-74.
31 Li Lianchi, Gao gang huiyün [A retrospective on Kaohsiung harbour] (Kaohsiung, 1997). See the section entitled “Jiu gangqu zhengjian gongcheng” [Reconstructive engineering in old harbourside areas], pp. 113-116.
32 The point about industries departing Hamaxing is raised in Xu Liqin, “Yingyun liang gang mian mian guan” [Looking at this fine operational harbour from all angles], Dadi diji zazhi 159 (2001.6): 82-97.
33 Liu Huolong, Duan Bosen and Shen Yaozhang, op cit., p. 38.
can detect clear influences from waterside renewal in other “historic port cities” around the world. In promotional material, it is plain that this maritime element of the area is what appeals most to the institutional backers of Hamaxing. In fact, the city administration has openly lauded Hamaxing as Kaohsiung’s answer to other “historic maritime districts” throughout the world: “The city has also promoted the Hamahsing and Hsiaochuantou [zu] areas of the city for renovation” claims one publication, “planning their conversion to aquatic recreational and coastal art areas which will rival even San Francisco’s famed Fisherman’s Wharf”. And the geographer Jason Hung, who was so instrumental in the establishment of the Hamaxing Cultural Association, has been quoted as harbouring a “San Franciscan dream” (jiujin Shan meng 舊金山夢) for Hamaxing, in which everything from cable cars to seafood restaurants might be emulated. Others have suggested that a landmark comparable to New York’s Statue of Liberty or the Sydney Opera House be built at the harbour entrance at Hamaxing. And historic maritime districts in Japanese port cities such as Nagasaki and Yokohama, where the exotic remnants of European treaty port life make for pretty waterfront districts, have provided further inspiration for officials and academics in considering how best to go about restoring and advertising Hamaxing. The Minato Mirai (みなとみらい) 21 project in Yokohama, for example, was directly studied for what it might teach Hamaxing.

34 Ko King-yi, Kaohsiung: Taiwan’s Maritime Capital (Kaohsiung: Kaohsiung City Government, 1999), p.15.
36 Guo Minneng, “Gang shi he yi, Gaoxiong xin xiwang” [With the amalgamation of city and harbour, Kaohsiung has new-found hope], Guoxiong jianzhu 188 (2001.9): 2-3.
37 See, for instance, Freek Vossenaar, “Holland Village Nagasaki”, 400 Jaar Nederland-Japan Nieuwsbrieft (1998): 8. Other former treaty ports that have since become sites of exotic domestic tourism in Japan include Kobe and Hakodate.
In the maritime props with which the Kaohsiung City Government has chosen to fill Hamaxing since 1998, one can also sense the echoes of many maritime “heritage renewal” sites elsewhere in the industrialised world. Indeed, Hamaxing has begun to take on many of the typical maritime clichés so common to waterside leisure districts. Signage which has been designed to take on the look of ship sails fluttering in the wind, and marked with the phrase “Hamaxing bai’an fengqing” 哈瑪星海岸風情 (lit., “Hamaxing’s seaside feelings”), have, for example, been provided for almost every place of business in the area, from fishing tackle outlets to the local McDonald’s franchise (fig. 56). Together with signposted architecture and tourist-oriented infrastructure, such props have created in Hamaxing something akin to what Brian Shaw, Roy Jones and Ooi Giok Ling have termed “the pastiche port city” feel—a general ambience of waterside pleasure in which heritage sites, tourist facilities and decorative architecture are thrown together with little concern for context.

All this might suggest that the idea of Hamaxing as an historic maritime district—as opposed to a derelict waterfront—has been made possible through changing attitudes amongst the Taiwanese academic and bureaucratic elites, influenced by trends in the Western and Japanese heritage industries. Hamaxing in effect provides us with an example of the ways in which the arrival of concepts such as “heritage” into Taiwanese universities and government departments—something I examined in Chapter 2—has led to a greater diversification in the fields of preservation and restoration. The relevance of Hamaxing is that it represents one of the clearest, and indeed, earliest examples of an area in which maritime industrial heritage has come to be focused on in Kaohsiung.

40 An excellent study of the commodification of waterside heritage districts can be found in Jon Goss, “Disquiet on the waterfront: reflections on nostalgia and utopia in urban archetypes”, Urban Geography 17.3 (1996.4-5): 221-247.

Figure 56. Sail-shaped street signs in Hamaxing; this one marks the Gushan Elementary School (photograph by the author, 2002).

The codification of Hamaxing’s built environment

In examining some of the academic literature on the renovation of harbourside heritage in maritime cities throughout the world, we might be able to locate parallels and appropriate comparisons with Hamaxing. Yet there are also some far more local reasons behind Hamaxing’s rediscovery and subsequent renovation. Hamaxing has been made possible through changing attitudes towards the colonial past in Taiwan. Indeed, it is in this regard that, as an area that has become associated foremost with a foreign and colonial presence in Kaohsiung, I believe Hamaxing makes for such a fascinating example of shequ jingzao. Hamaxing can help us to understand the ways in which some of the narratives I examined earlier in this thesis have been inscribed onto the Formosan landscape. For Hamaxing is more than just a tourist district. It is above all a history—one in which particular ideas
about colonialism and its legacy are promoted. In order to better understand this, we must examine Hamaxing’s historic built environment.

Whilst Hamaxing is typical of many of the new generation of shequ yingzao projects in Taiwan in its concern for the space of the community in its entirety rather than individual relics, codification of historic sites in this district has nonetheless emerged as one of the most important factors in the Hamaxing project. Indeed, one of the most frequent activities undertaken by the Hamaxing Community Construction Workshop/Hamaxing Cultural Association and departments of the city government, has been the grading, and eventual signposting, of third-grade relics.

There are over twenty sites within Hamaxing that have come to be listed by the city government’s Bureau of Civil Affairs as third-grade relics. Other sites where original structures no longer exist, or where a particular space or street is deemed historically or culturally significant, have also been listed, if not as guījì, then at least as relevant stops on the generic Hamaxing sight-seeing map.

The inventory of guījì and other sites within the boundaries of Hamaxing is impressive in terms of its number, and covers a broad range of category. There are governmental and administrative sites, such as the “former provincial office” (jiūzhùting 舊州廳), a post office (youbian ju 郵便局), the former British consulate, a police station (jingcha shù 警察署), and so on; sites associated with trade and commerce, including the so-called “Finance Street” (Jinrong Jie 金融街), the fish market (yushi 漁市) and a number of

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42 I acknowledge here that the idea of “heritage as history” is deemed contentious by some sections of academe, and has been attacked by the likes of David Lowenthal [See The Heritage Crusade and the Spoils of History (London: Viking, 1996)]. As would have become clear throughout the present work, however, I have chosen to include within my definitions of the word “history” all those activities which include interpretation of the past in one from or another. This is a debate to which I shall return in the conclusion of this thesis.
historic shops, such as the Coffee Can Ta Ta (Kafei Kan Da Da 咖啡達達大); sites associated with transport and travel, such as the Shinhama pier, the Kaohsiung Harbour Station, and a ferry wharf (duchuan tou 渡船頭); buildings associated with war and defence, such as a butokuden 武德殿 (a martial arts training hall first constructed for and by the Japanese military), and the North Gate battery. There is also a small number of religious buildings such as the (former) Kaohsiung Shinto shrine (Gaoxiong shenshe 高雄神社), the Daitian temple (Daitian Gong 代天宮), and the Gushan Church (Gushan Jiaohui 鼓山教會). And there are residential buildings, such as a row of “Japanese-style housing” (Rishi jiawu 日式家屋) and a shop-house listed as “South Seas-style architecture” (Nanyang fengwei jianzhu 南洋風味建築).  

These sites make for an eclectic mix. Yet in analysing this list, one can locate some discernable similarities that bind the elements of Hamaxing’s historic built environment together. First of all, with the exception of a small number of temples, many of Hamaxing’s guji are colonial in origin. In terms of sheer quantity, it is sites associated with colonialism, and particularly Japanese colonialism, which are best represented here. In this regard, Hamaxing is unique in Kaohsiung. It marks the first project in which an area has been deemed “historic” because of its association with the period of Japanese rule; it also hints at a major shift during the 1990s—something I touched on in Chapter 4—by which Kaohsiung’s local history was able to move beyond the narrow strictures set by national histories as embodied in other parts of the city, especially in Zuoying.

Moreover, in cataloguing this area’s built environment, there has been an obvious attempt to list sites according to their colonial-era toponyms. Today, many sites throughout the district still house government agencies, businesses or families, most of whom have little

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43 The management of this establishment changed hands in the course of my writing this thesis, and is now known as “Brunch”, though it continues to operate as a café.


or no direct connection to colonialism. Yet such sites are listed according to their colonial-era toponyms in Hamaxing-related promotional literature (despite never being listed so in ordinary maps of the city or other, non-Hamaxing-affiliated, texts). The “former provincial office”, for instance, ceased to act as a “provincial office” (shūchō 州廳) in the 1910s, and is now used as a police station; in tourist maps and literature about Hamaxing as an historic district, however, this building continues to go by its (now archaic) Japanese title. Similarly, the local post office is listed with the Japanese term yūhin kyoku 郵便局 (rather than the word “yōju” 郵局 which is the standard Chinese term for post office used in Taiwan; outside the pages of Hamaxing tourist literature, the building remains simply a “yōjū”) with conscious reference to the site’s Japanese past. Even signs that have been provided at the entrance to the afore-listed Daitan Temple inform visitors that the temple occupies the place at which the first chambers of the Takao shiyakusho were established prior to the completion of its final building (i.e., the one which now houses the Kaohsiung Museum of History).

It might well be suggested that the high number of sites bearing Japanese-inflected titles in Hamaxing reflects the genuine history of this district. The deliberate use of such titles may also represent a desire on the part of officials and scholars involved in the construction of Hamaxing to “get it right”. After all, and as we saw earlier in this thesis, the land that is now known as Hamaxing only came into being during colonial land reclamation schemes in the early years of the twentieth century. Hamaxing was, in every way, a creation of late-Meiji and early-Taishō experiments in city planning.

Yet it is also the case that the modern makers of Hamaxing (i.e., as an historic district) have been ardent in their celebration of the colonial landscape above all else. Indeed, it appears that the borders of the district have been deliberately drawn so that particular colonial relics and buildings might be included within them. The Kaohsiung martyrs’ shrine (Gaoxiong zhonglie ci 高雄忠烈祠), listed in Hamaxing literature and maps as the “Kaohsiung Shinto shrine” (Gaoxiong shenshe 高雄神社), is a case in point. This shrine
is sited a considerable distance from the rest of Hamaxing, on the lower slopes of Mount Longevity. One is required to travel some distance up Mount Longevity to reach it, and there is no direct road link between the shrine and Hamaxing. Furthermore, prior to the mid-1990s, the shrine was not even associated with Hamaxing, having been included within the Mount Longevity Nature Park (Shou Shan Ziran Gongyuan 壽山自然公園). Yet on maps produced by the Hamaxing Cultural Association and the Kaohsiung City Government, the shrine now sits conveniently within Hamaxing’s borders. In the desire to have a genuine Shinto shrine included in this district—a type of site that, as we saw in Chapter 2, has become so popular as a symbol of a Japanese architectural heritage in Taiwan over the last decade—the makers of Hamaxing have actually extended the invisible northern borders of the district to envelop this site, and signposted the shrine according to its Japanese-era function. This has been done despite the fact that the colonial-era shrine which one graced this area was dismantled in 1972, and replaced with a completely new structure (fig. 57; fig. 58).

46 On the removal of the original Shinto shrine in the 1970s and its replacement with a new martyrs’ shrine, see Kan Zhi, “Gaoxiong shi zhonglie ci xingjian zhi jingwei” [Main points regarding the re-building of the Kaohsiung martyrs’ shrine], Gao shi wenxian 1.1 (1988.6): 190-198. One of the strangest results of this re-naming of the shrine according to its colonial-era function is that there are now two conflicting plaques marking the site. One announces the site according to its official title as the Kaohsiung martyrs’ shrine, the other (erected as part of an effort to signpost all Hamaxing-related sites), lists it as the “Kaohsiung Shinto shrine”. When I visited this site in April 2002, the wording on the latter had been erased, though one can only speculate as to who was responsible for this, and for what reason.
Figure 57. The Takao Shinto shrine, late 1930s (courtesy of the Institute of Taiwan History, Preparatory Office, Academia Sinica).

Figure 58. The Kaohsiung martyrs’ shrine today (from the author’s personal collection).

In seeking a coherent landscape that celebrates Kaohsiung’s colonial history, the Western borders of Hamaxing have proven equally flexible. One wonders why, for example, the Shaochuan tou promontory has been included in Hamaxing, when this area is actually separated from the rest of this “historic district” by a stretch of water. It appears that the
borders of the district have been widened here for no other reason than to include two previously-listed guji within Hamaxing. The two sites in question are the former British consulate building and the North Gate battery, both of which were codified by the city government in the early 1980s, long before the idea of an historic district in Hamaxing had ever been discussed. Historically, these two buildings have only the slightest connections with the “coastal line” of colonial days, or even with the surrounding district that has now been encompassed within Hamaxing. Yet in laying claim to these two sites, Hamaxing’s credibility as a kind of architectural repository of colonial history for Kaohsiung is fortified even further. By extending westwards, Hamaxing is able to gain in credibility as a district that includes one of the oldest vestiges of a European imperial presence in the city, as well as all the many remnants of early twentieth-century Japanese colonialism.

Hamaxing speaks of an unambiguously colonial past for this city. Indeed, in almost all writing about Hamaxing published since 1995, whether it be on signposts, in guidebooks or in government reports, the experience of colonialism becomes the cornerstone of this district’s appeal. I would argue that this is precisely what makes Hamaxing so crucial as a shegu yingzao project. It represents one of the first occasions upon which the colonial past, or more correctly, the material and architectural vestigia of colonial policies such as the Nanshin, have been embraced in Kaohsiung. This would simply not have been possible a decade ago, as the city government and its academic allies were busy singing the proverbial praises of Chinese civilisation, with its great men and five millennia, in zuoying and other areas. Yet in Hamaxing, industrial, commercial, military and governmental relics inspired or actually built by Japanese (or European) imperial planners take pride of place.

In Hamaxing, one can find a clear and concrete reflection of what I have termed “pro-colonial” historiography. For one does not just see the remnants of colonialism here; rather, one sees them presented in an idealised fashion. The Hamaxing historic built environment is commonly called upon to demonstrate, for example, the technology and modernity that benevolent British merchants, and later, Japanese officials, brought to this
part of Taiwan. In general, the colonial past is written about in a highly nostalgic and romanticised fashion, the “colonial era” becoming Hamaxing’s “golden era”. Far from being a source of shame or humiliation, the architectural and spatial heritage of colonialism defines Hamaxing as an historic district.

This tendency towards “pro-colonial” historiography can be illustrated through the common use of the term “Gaoxiong diyi” 高雄第一, or “Kaohsiung’s first”, in Hamaxing-related texts. Hamaxing’s past is invariably presented as a story of firsts. “Hamaxing was the site of Kaohsiung’s first complete street layout”, claims the Hamaxing Cultural Association over its website, “...as well as the first place to have running water (1913), electric power, electric lighting, telephones, and so on”.47 Reports commissioned by the Kaohsiung City Government’s Department of Urban Planning continue in a similar vein, claiming that the area’s importance lies in its representing “the first in Kaohsiung” in countless forms of technology, architecture and civil amenity.48

A number of Hamaxing relics are recorded as being the first of their type. The former British consulate building, for example, is deemed important primarily because it is said to be Taiwan’s oldest, and thus, first yanglou 洋樓, or “foreign building”.49 The Kaohsiung Harbour Station is likewise marked with a sign informing visitors that it is “Kaohsiung’s first modern train station”. Kaohsiung’s “first bookshop” can be found here too, as can its “first apartment block”, all close to southern Taiwan’s first deep water harbour. The list of Hamaxing’s firsts is inexhaustible in the city’s first historic waterfront district.

48 Yu Ch'eng, International Planning and Design Company, op cit., p. i. There are echoes here of the “Taiwan first” 臺灣第一 craze that followed in the wake of Zhuang Yongming’s book of the same title, published in 1995. See Zhuang Yongming, Tiawan diyi [Taiwan first] (Taipei: Shibao Chubanshe, 1995). It should also be noted that the city of Tainan is commonly known as “Taiwan’s first”. There may be traces of the inter-city rivalry which I examined in Chapter 2 in the use of such a phrase.
49 Lee Ch’ian-lang, A Taiwan architectural reader, pp. 115-118.
That many of these firsts resulted directly from discriminatory policies which were introduced under a mode of colonial rule that some scholars have termed “one empire/two systems” is never mentioned in the literature on Hamaxing. As a place where many of the instruments of Japanese colonial power—a railway station, government agencies, financial institutions—were first installed, this corner of colonial Takao was populated with a high density of free Japanese settlers from the late Meiji onwards (fig. 59). It is thus hardly unusual that it was provided with modern amenities, many of which were the first of their type in Takao, whilst other districts remained in relative squalor, or were demolished to make way for roads and factories. Yet mention of this would not aid in the cause of community construction in Hamaxing, and thus is rarely raised.

![Figure 59. Japanese settler children in (what is now) Hamaxing, c.1930s (courtesy of the Institute of Taiwan History, Preparatory Office, Academia Sinica).](image-url)

50 This expression I borrow from Eika Tai, “Kokugo and colonial education in Taiwan”, positions 7.2 (Fall, 1999): 512.

51 Interestingly, however, some references made to Hamaxing in the 1980s did suggest a common knowledge that this corner of the city represented a site of ethnic Japanese settlement during the colonial era. Writing under his nom de plume of Zhao Shi, Lin Shuguang described Hamaxing as Kaohsiung’s “new settlement for Japanese residents”. See Zhao Shi, Gaocung renwu pingchu di er ji [The story of Kaohsiung personalities, Part II] (Kaohsiung: Chunhui Chubanshe, 1985), pp. 282-283. One might speculate that this connection with the very human side of Japanese colonialism was one of the reasons for the area’s invisibility in writing about Kaohsiung up until the mid-1990s.
Interestingly, however, contradictions have arisen in response to this pro-colonial reinterpretation of history rendered in Hamaxing. For how does one reconcile the incorporation of a listed guji into a proudly colonial streetscape, when such a structure was first listed and renovated as proof of the shame that colonialism visited upon the nation? The former British consulate building is one such example (fig. 60). This building was codified during the early 1980s, an era when nationalist anti-colonial historiography was still extremely influential in Taiwan. Its refurbishment was directed by Lee Ch’ian-lang, the same architect who had been commissioned to work on the old city wall in Zuoying. The consulate was considered by most government agencies to be “an architectural remainder of the unequal treaties that were signed during the corrupt Manchu dynasty” when it was first listed as a second-grade relic.52 And in describing this building, local scholars such as Zeng Yukun wrote of the shame that this site signified, referring to it as “…an impenetrable corner of the British empire; one small sign that stopped the Taiwanese in their tracks”.53 The “one small sign” was, of course, the “no trespassing” placard that, legend has it, was placed outside another former British consulate in the northern town of Tamsui, and that “…makes us recall a sign that once hung in a park in the French Concession in Shanghai”.54 The Kaohsiung consulate was thus woven into an entire discourse surrounding the “no dogs or Chinese allowed” sign in Shanghai that has been a common symbol within the anti-colonial histories produced in the Chinese-speaking world.55 The same tone is present in works by the Kaohsiung Historiography Commission,

52 Yang Kunnan, “Ying lingshiguang jiusui jue chizi zizheng xiu baocun” [It has been decided that funds will be spent for the complete renovation of the old British consulate site], Taiwan shibao, 17 February 1981.
53 Zeng Yukun, The old scholar from the ancient city of Feng, p. 640.
54 Ibid., p. 641.
55 Further discussion about the myth of this sign can be found in Robert A. Bickers and Jeffrey N. Wasserstrom, “Shanghai’s ‘Dogs and Chinese not admitted’ sign: legend, history and contemporary symbol”, The China Quarterly 142 (1995): 444–466. John Fitzgerald’s discussion of the same sign demonstrates the importance of the story to Chinese nationalism. See John Fitzgerald, op. cit., pp. 119-126. In the course of writing this thesis, a similar sign was reported to have mysteriously appeared in a Kaohsiung park—the sign read “Chinese and dogs not permitted to enter this park; Chinese pigs piss off back [to China]” (Zhongguoren ya gou bu de ru yuan; Zhongguo zhu gen hui gu) 中國人與狗不得入園；中國豬滾回去)—following a public
for which the consulate building “...serves as a witness of [the] many unequal treaties that [the] Ching Dynasty [sic] was forced to accept in modern history...” 56 And similar sentiments are evident in the actual artefacts and other materials now on display within the consulate building—antique plaques bearing the lion and unicorn insignia of the British sovereign, written accounts of the ways in which the harbour below was defended from various waves of invasion, and a list of “unequal treaties” signed between the Qing authorities and foreign powers.

![Image of the former British consulate building](image.jpg)

*Figure 60. The former British consulate building (photograph by the author, 1999).*

Yet in the reconstructed *shequ jingzao* project of Hamaxing, the significance of relics of the British and Japanese empires in Kaohsiung is not that they represent foreign exploitation, dispute concerning the place of mainland *émigrés* in Taiwan which arose shortly after the publication of the Chinese edition of the book *Taiwan lun* by Japanese cartoonist Kobayashi Yoshinori in 2001. Li Ruoquin, “Taiwan lun xianqi tong/du zhengyi” [*Taiwan lun* stirs up the independence/unification debate], *Taiwan xinwen bao*, 9 March 2001. Whilst the appearance of such a sign had little to do with the consulate building, its very existence suggests just how sensitive the public memory of the infamous sign in Shanghai remains.

56 Gaoxiong Shi Wenxian Weiyuanhui [The Kaohsiung Historiography Commission], *Gaoxiong shi gushi jianjie* [A brief introduction to the relics of Kaohsiung city] (Kaohsiung: Gaoxiong Shi Zhengfu, Minzheng Ju, 1999), p. 22.
but that they speak of local modernity. As such, questions about the significance of buildings such as the old consulate—as well as other sites associated with colonial violence or foreign invasion—can be indefinitely and conveniently suspended. The focus can instead be directed towards the architectural prowess involved in the design or construction of such architecture. When local scholars discussed the possibility of transforming the old butokuden into a museum, for instance, there was little discussion of the colonial function of this building, or its links to the militaristic manifestations of colonial policies in Kaohsiung, such as the Nanshin (i.e., the building was first constructed so as to provide members of the Japanese military with a space in which to undertake martial training)—focus instead was directed towards the architectural peculiarities of the building itself.\(^{57}\) After all, why raise troubling questions about the histories of these structures when exotic European or Japanese façades remain so popular with local couples seeking backdrops for wedding photography?\(^{58}\)

This curiosity about the remnants of empire has in turn inspired a search for more evidence of Hamaxing’s links with the colonial or imperial past. For example, two rather unspectacular graves dating from the late nineteenth century, and which can still be found on a crest off Lane 60 Dengshan Street (Dengshan Jie 登山街) (thus lying within the invisible boundaries of Hamaxing), have recently come to the attention of local scholars. Within the broader “pro-colonial” sympathies now expressed by many involved in Hamaxing’s community construction, newly uncovered sites such as these graves provide topic matter for histories of Kaohsiung that are, like Hamaxing itself, modern and cosmopolitan. This is an example from an article about Hamaxing published in the popular press in 1999:

\(^{57}\) Gaoxiong Shifan Daxue Dilixue Xi, \emph{op cit.}

\(^{58}\) Many colonial buildings have emerged as popular sites around which to conduct wedding photography (\emph{hunsha sheying} 婚紗攝影). My observations from frequent visits to the former British consulate over the northern hemisphere winter of 1999-2000 and spring of 2001, for instance, would suggest that wedding photography groups made up the majority of visitors to this site.
It makes one sad just looking at it [a British grave]. We learn from the section that can still be read that this grave belongs to an Englishman who died here in 1869. The name on the grave has been hidden so much by another stone that it can no longer be seen properly…It must be lonely enough for the souls of these foreigners who left their homes and came such a long way to this beautiful island called Formosa, only to die here and be buried in this exotic soil. Who could have thought that after a century they would still be occupying this piece of land, and would be competing for it with the living. Though it might well be said that their bones have long since grown cold, surely it isn’t proper to treat them this way.\textsuperscript{59}

Descriptions of the grave of an Irish sailor who drowned in Kaohsiung harbour in 1880 display similar sentiments.\textsuperscript{60}

Stroking the surface of this foreigner’s tombstone gives one an unusual feeling. I wonder whether he feels any regret about never being able to return to the land of his roots.\textsuperscript{61}

The tenor of such descriptions is unambiguously sympathetic. There is no question of the graves belonging to imperialist invaders. Nor is there any lack of interest. Indeed, local scholars continue to forage through the bramble on Mount Longevity in search of other lost European graves.\textsuperscript{62}

\textsuperscript{59} Chen Xiuli and Xu Wenyu, op cit., pp. 25-26.

\textsuperscript{60} The grave was that of William Hopkins, an Irish sailor who died “crossing the bar at Kaohsiung”. See Harold M. Otten, \textit{One Thousand Westerners in Taiwan, to 1945: a Biographical and Bibliographical Dictionary} (Taipei: Institute of Taiwan History, Preparatory Office, Academia Sinica, 1999), p. 79.

\textsuperscript{61} Guan Shangqing, \textit{Taiwan guyi guanji, disi ce} [A complete guide to Taiwan’s relics, IV] (Taipei: Huwai Shenghuo Zaxhise, 1980), pp. 227-228.

\textsuperscript{62} Professor Yeh Chen-huei 葉振輝 of the National Sun Yat-sen University has organised a number of searches for lost graves in the area. I thank Professor Yeh for inviting me to take part in one of these searches in January 2000.
The hunt continues for other, appropriately colonial sites that can be re-appraised, categorised, signposted, and thereafter made into suitable landmarks in the Hamaxing landscape. A building now listed as the former office of the Taiwan Provincial Fisheries Research Institute, Kaohsiung Branch (Taiwan Sheng Shuichan Shiyansuo Gaoxiong Fensuo 臺灣省水產試驗所高雄分所), which sits just around the corner from the former consulate, is one example (fig. 61). This building was in fact “re-discovered” by the Kaohsiung Historiography Commission during the mid-1990s, despite the fact that it had been used continuously as a communal residence for retired staff of the fisheries institute since that agency abandoned the building in the 1980s.\(^{63}\) The Kaohsiung City Government’s Department of Civil Affairs has listed the site as dating from 1860, at which time it apparently housed the British Commercial Services Office at Takow (Yingguo Dagou Shangwu Banshichu 英國打狗商務辦事處). This was enough for some to suggest that the building should be included in a hypothetical “Hamaxing district British colonial-era cultural sightseeing circle” along with the consulate building, and presumably with other associated sites such as the British graves mentioned above.\(^{64}\) That the building now found on the site probably dates to the period of Japanese colonial administration, or that, in its more recent role, the site was used for such unromantic practises as processing marine products, does not matter. What is important is that it appears architecturally foreign, and can be connected to sites associated with a vaguely colonial experience in the area.

\(^{63}\) When I visited this site in early 2000, it was still inhabited by a group of retired employees from the Fisheries Research Institute.

A similar case can be found with the rather ambiguously-titled “South Seas-style architecture”, a privately-owned residence located a short distance from the local ferry wharf (fig. 62). The name given to the building in Government reports and tourist literature, by reference to its Nanyang (or rather, Nan'yo) style, links it unmistakeably with colonialism, and perhaps more specifically, with the Japanese colonial policy of the “southern advance”. Yet the fact that it was constructed during the Japanese colonial era by a Chinese merchant family in colonial, pseudo-European style (aesthetically reminiscent of the grandiose colonial architecture found in the Malayan Straits Settlements) does not necessarily mean that it is Japanese, Chinese or European. The building is simply colonial, exotic, and “southern”, and thus fits neatly with the architectural norm deemed appropriate for Hamaxing. Like the Fisheries Research Institute, it no longer matters when this house was built or by whom, provided that, in its role as a celebrated site within the area’s streetscape, it reinforces a uniform history of Hamaxing.
The Hamaxing Cultural Association is still in the process of rediscovering sites in the historic built environment of this district. When I visited Hamaxing in early 2002, what looked to be an abandoned commercial building opposite the former Coffee Can Ta Ta was draped in a banner stating: “Old buildings belong to [the category of] cultural property; they are priceless, let us protect them!” (fig. 63). Such banners suggest that the codification of sites in this district is still occurring, and that Hamaxing’s inventory of cultural property is likely to expand.
The claim that Hamaxing represents the modern side to Kaohsiung’s past is strengthened further through the association of this part of the city with items of moveable heritage. Foremost amongst these are those most common images of modernity—trains (i.e., those that frequent the harbour station linked to the railway line from whence the district’s name is derived). The process of incorporating the harbour station and the lines that emanate from it as an historic-touristic attraction is on-going, with plans afoot to convert part of the old hamanen, now known as the “harbourside railway” (lingang tielu 临港铁路), into a sightseeing line. It is no coincidence that this idea was discussed first in the mid-1990s, just as the concept of the Hamaxing historic district was being formulated. A number of local commentators have suggested that the coastal line could be incorporated into the overall Hamaxing landscape in the same way that light-rail routes have been employed in a number of historic European cities and towns. Such arguments appear to have since

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65 It was members of the National Chiao Tung University (Guoli Jiaotong Daxue 国立交通大學) Railway Research Club (Tiedao Yanjuhui 鐵道研究會) who first urged rehabilitation of lines linking the Kaohsiung Harbour Station with other parts of the city for tourist use. See Guo Junjie, “Renshi Gaoxiong lingang huanxian” [Get to know Kaohsiung’s harbour line ring route], Tiedao liuxing 3 (2001.12): 34-35.

66 Such as Istanbul. On the topic of Kaohsiung learning from Istanbul’s light-rail network, see Yu An, “Huafu xiu wei shenqi” [Making the ugly beautiful], Taiwan xinwen bao, 7 March 2001.
been accepted by the Kaohsiung City Government which, in partnership with the ROC
United Society for Railway Culture (Lianhe Zhonghua Minguo Tiedao Wenhua Xiehui
聯合中華民國鐵道文化協會), has organised a number of trial runs of rail services
de parting from the harbour station,\textsuperscript{67} and is, at the time of writing, drawing up plans to
transform sections of the old coastal line into a rail network for tourists.\textsuperscript{58}

Other movable heritage in the area includes the small fleet of ferries (and, indeed, their
wharf) that ply the waters between Hamaxing and Qijin on the harbour’s southern shore
(fig. 64). Though this ferry service pre-dates the recent demarcation of Hamaxing as an
historic district, and continues to function as a form of commuter transport, it has now
been elevated to become a major element in Hamaxing’s appeal. Photographic images of
ferries are common in Hamaxing promotional literature, and a visit to Hamaxing is today
deemed somehow incomplete without a ferry ride.\textsuperscript{69}

In his study of the place of ferries in the literature of nostalgia in Japan, the geographer
Paul Waley has explored how such items of movable heritage might be read into a
“vocabulary of landscape”. Waley has studied the ways in which Japanese authors have
written about now redundant ferry routes in descriptions of “old Tokyo”, and has
concluded that ferries have become symbols of pre-modern ways of life in the broader
topography of waterside cities. He suggests that ferries have been transformed into

\begin{footnotes}
\item[67] Xie Mingxun, “Gaoxiong xin, tiedao qing: zoufang lingangxian de qianshi jinsheng” [A Kaohsiung heart,
railway emotions: going to see the life of the harbourside line], \textit{Gaoxiong bshakan} 20.4 (1999.4): 4-9.
\item[68] Wang Shufen, “Lingga xian zhuangxing qinggui jieyun” [The harbourside line will be turned into a light
rail transport network], \textit{Taiwan xinwen wba}, 2 March 2001.
\item[69] Lin Meiru, “Qijin dulun de qudi sheng” [The sound of the Qijin ferry whistle], \textit{Gaoxiong bshakan zhuanbi
qibua tekan: ling yan xiangkan} [Kaohsiung Pictorial special issue series: Viewing Kaohsiung in a different light]
1 (2001.4): 71-73; see also Wang Zijian, “Dao Gaoxiong chixiang, hela, wanshui, leyou” [Go and enjoy
\end{footnotes}
symbols of lost maritime and riparian worlds since altered by industrialisation and urbanisation.\textsuperscript{70}

Figure 64. A ferry arrives at Hamaxing (photograph by the author, 1999).

Yet it remains the case that ferries and other moveable heritage have been used just as frequently to allude to the modernity of port cities rather than simply to pasts lost to technological progress. Ferries remain central to the “historic” landscapes of many colonial port cities around the world, from Hong Kong to Sydney. “Although it is not quite the same as the Star Ferry in Hong Kong,” states the Kaohsiung Harbour Bureau in on-line advertising, “this [ferry] nevertheless offers a rare experience by Taiwan’s standards”. The point is simple—the ferries that depart the Hamaxing wharf may not provide routes as scenic as those offered in that other “pearl of the Orient” (i.e., Hong Kong), yet they are at least vaguely comparable.\textsuperscript{71} In Hamaxing, the ferry is employed to promote pleasant and attractive histories of modernity and colonialism. Indeed, in a

\textsuperscript{70} Paul Waley, “To ferry to factory: crossing Tokyo’s great river into a new world”, in Nicholas Fieve and Paul Waley (eds), \textit{Japanese Capitals in Historical Perspective: Place, Power and Memory in Kyoto, Edo and Tokyo} (London: Curzon Press, forthcoming).

\textsuperscript{71} <http://topia.yam.com/users/takau/bawy.htm>. 
relevant sidenote, the Hamaxing ferry wharf was recently chosen as the backdrop to a series of television commercials for that most modern of products—the mobile phone.\textsuperscript{72}

**Mercantile histories for a maritime capital**

In Chapter 3, I traced the rediscovery of Japanese perceptions of “the South” in Kaohsiung in the 1990s. In examining the rise of slogans such as “the maritime capital” and “the New World of the South”, I demonstrated how many of the ideas behind such rhetoric could be traced directly to Japanese colonial discourse. This was also true of the economic policies which have had a direct impact on Kaohsiung’s development. The APROC plan and the \textit{Nan xiang} policy shared much with Japanese colonial ideologies, especially in terms of the ways in which they linked southern Taiwan (and especially Takao/Kaohsiung) with the ports of Southeast Asia in an imagined geography of “the South Seas”.

Since the Kaohsiung City Government’s appropriation of the Hamaxing project in the late 1990s, much of the vocabulary and imagery that developed during the rediscovery of the \textit{Nanshin} has surfaced here. Indeed, the APROC and \textit{Nan xiang} policies have provided the promoters of Hamaxing with an entire business-inspired vocabulary from which to draw. In other words, not only was the harbourside land that is now called Hamaxing linked directly to the ideology of the southern advance—so too was its re-creation as a \textit{shequ jingzao} project.

This is evident in the ways in which the Kaohsiung City Government and other groups have written about Hamaxing throughout the late 1990s. In one chapter of a report published in 1998 by the Kaohsiung City Cultural Centre, for example, it is claimed that

\textsuperscript{72} The company TransAsia Telecommunications (Fan Ya dianxin 泛亞電信) chose Hamaxing as the setting for a series of commercials produced in 2000. For details, see the TransAsia website at www.tat.com.tw/web/TATHistory.jsp>.
“Hamaxing was the crest of modernity’s wave in Taiwan.”

The same report goes on to quote directly from the pages of economic policy, as it claims “Hamaxing was once an Asia-Pacific Regional Operations Centre.”

In reference to the fashionable catchphrases of Taiwanese business circles, it then describes colonial land reclamation schemes that created Hamaxing in the early 1900s as an example of “Taiwan’s first BOT.”

This report is emblematic of many descriptions of Hamaxing to appear in recent years. In essence, the entire history of the district has been re-written from the point of view of modern-day economic policy. Prosperous and free-wheeling Hamaxing has been presented as an historic state to which Kaohsiung residents should aspire. Trade metaphors are used in abundance not only in government reports, but also in articles on Hamaxing appearing in the popular press: “Mountains, ocean and people”, writes one observer in the architectural magazine Jianshe 建設, “Hamaxing’s rich resources”.

References to trade in these histories of Hamaxing focus specifically on sweet products; tea and camphor in the case of the late nineteenth century; sugar and tropical fruit in the case of the early twentieth century. The role of sweet products that were so instrumental in driving imperial modernity in areas as diverse as Southeast Asia and the Caribbean, and indeed within the Japanese colonial empire, seem to still have a role in informing more

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73 Chen Wenshang and Zhang Shouzhen (eds), *Mirror Image of the Sea…*, p. 54.


75 *Ibid.*, p. 58. The phrase “Build Operate Transfer” (BOT) is immensely popular when referring to industry-government partnerships in the redevelopment of urban areas and infrastructure in Taiwan today. For further details of the nature and role of BOT projects, see Liu Yiru, Wang Wenyu and Huang Yuling, *BOT sangong chelian* [The win-win strategy of BOTs] (Taipei: Shandong Caijing Guwen, 1999).


77 One example is Zheng Shuiping, *Taiyang Ji: Qiaotou pian* [A Record of the Taiwan Sugar Corporation: Qiaotou edition] (Kaohsiung County: Gaoxiong Xianli Wenhua Zhongxin, 1996).
recent histories of Kaohsiung.\textsuperscript{78} The most conspicuous absence is opium despite the pivotal position that this product had in first opening Kaohsiung harbour to foreign trade—via the Opium Wars and the subsequent signing of the Treaty of Tientsin—or the role that the Japanese military and their associated industries played in determining the very shape of Kaohsiung harbour.

Furthermore, many such descriptions have drawn selectively from the work of earlier generations of scholars and intellectuals in an effort to find material that fits the mould of a modern, colonial and prosperous history for Hamaxing. Lin Shuguang, one of the most prolific of lay scholars to have worked on local history in Kaohsiung in the late twentieth century, wrote about the history of financial institutions in this area long before there were maps informing visitors how to reach “Finance Street”. Lin’s work on banks in the area is typically complex, and is sensitive to the question of how one should go about interpreting the commercial heritage of colonialism in Kaohsiung.\textsuperscript{79} Yet in mining Lin’s works for relevant data, the modern makers of Hamaxing have been all too ready to cut and paste from his works ad libitum, and with little concern for context.

Through the work of the Hamaxing Cultural Association and its academic and bureaucratic associates, Hamaxing is given not a series of heydays, but a permanent golden era that keeps repeating itself under British, Japanese and Democratic Progressive Party management; perhaps even an ahistoric state, to which contemporary visions of Hamaxing

\textsuperscript{78} For further discussion of the link between sweet products, modernity, and historiography, see Sidney M. Mintz, \textit{Sweetness and Power: the Place of Sugar in Modern History} (New York: Elisabeth Sifton Books, 1985). It should be noted that sugar did play a central role in Kaohsiung’s development and in Japanese imperialism more generally. For more details on this topic, see Ka Chih-ming, \textit{op cit.}; see also Samuel Pao-san Ho, “Colonialism and development: Korea, Taiwan, and Kwantung”, in Ramon H. Myers and Mark R. Peattie (eds), \textit{The Japanese Colonial Empire} (Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984), pp. 347-398.

as a commodified sight-seeing area are completely applicable. Hamaxing’s reinvention is presented as the natural return to entrepreneurialism in Kaohsiung. And rediscovering this latent mercantile spirit is as easy as walking from Finance Street to the Shinhama pier. Nineteenth- and early twentieth-century trade routes can be read into present day cabotage, just as colonial vocabulary can aid in the writing of mercantile histories for Taiwan’s maritime capital. The harbour can gaze southwards again, be confident in the prospect of “re-opening” itself to foreign trade, and commercialise its own past, all because Hamaxing proves there is a precedent to do so.

In this way, the same dynamic that shaped writing about “Old Shanghai” and its relation to that city’s recent economic revival during the Deng Xiaoping era is evident—modern trade liberalisation was justified in that city with the claim that Shanghainese culture was historically entrepreneurial, thanks to the residue that benevolent European firms and their compradors had left on the city’s bund in 1949. In an interesting connection, the French architectural firm arte charpentier et associés, which has worked with Shanghai authorities on the rehabilitation of the former French Concession quarter in that city (a project not far removed conceptually from efforts being undertaken in Hamaxing), has recently begun working with the Kaohsiung City Government on issues relating to Kaohsiung’s long term urban re-development.

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80 As Monroe Price suggests, “…the similarities between ancient trade routes and modern ones have the potential to instruct”. See Monroe E. Price, “Satellite broadcasting as trade routes in the sky”, Public Culture 11.2 (1999): 69.


83 Jean Marie Charpentier, “The experiences of a French architect in Asia”, paper presented at the Megacities 2000 Conference, Department of Architecture, University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong, 10 February 2000.
In turn, such writing has inspired tangible Nanshin-inflected imagery to emerge in the Hamaxing streetscape. For example, one can see many of the same symbols that typified colonial perceptions of Kaohsiung as the southern metropolis of empire re-emerging in the (postponed) plans to build in Hamaxing a “seaside palm-lined promenade” (yuanhai yelin budao 沿海椰林步道). Just as colonial authorities turned to the palm tree to make Kaohsiung’s streets appear more appropriately southern in the 1930s, so has the Kaohsiung City Government considered similar plans for Hamaxing in the 1990s. The same desire to replicate a colonial “South Seas” atmosphere can be identified in the inclusion of ASEAN exotica in and around other sites listed in the district. The South Seas-style architecture mentioned above is one example; and even the privately-owned Coffee Can Ta Ta (a renovated café also listed as a third-grade relic because it once housed Kaohsiung’s first bookshop) echoes Spanish Manila and Portuguese Macau in its internal design (fig. 65).
The idea that harbourside heritage sites can claim but one history—one in which modernity and trade are stressed, and in which colonialism is romanticised—reflects, I believe, wider trends in the Chinese-speaking world which go beyond Kaohsiung, or for that matter, Shanghai. Indeed, although such comparisons are seldom made in the historiography of Taiwan, one can learn a good deal about Hamaxing by examining the ways in which similar activities have been undertaken in historic waterfront districts a short distance to the West.

An area in Hong Kong known as “Western District” (Sai Wan 西環) has, for instance, been witness to a similar flurry of restoration and concurrent historiographical re-appraisal throughout the 1990s. As in Hamaxing, much of this has highlighted the area’s modernity and colonial history above all else, such themes being employed to manufacture a history determined by the precinct’s naam bak 南北, or “South-North”, entrepôt trade. Like their Taiwanese contemporaries, Hong Kong officials and scholars have sought to grade and renovate those elements of Western District’s streetscape which can best fit with these commercial narratives. The Edwardian Western Market building (Sheungwan gaai sih 上環街市), for example, was renovated from the late 1980s under the direction of Hong Kong’s Antiquities and Monuments Office, and subsequently re-opened as a tourist-oriented arts and craft shopping mall in 1991. Tram routes that run through the area have likewise been marketed as novel parts of the district’s topography (much as trains and

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86 The “South-North” trade refers to the business of distribution of products that were manufactured in the North (i.e., China) and sold to the South (i.e., Southeast Asia).

87 This also fell within the wider narrative of Hong Kong as the capitalist entrepôt that the historiographer Tak-wing Ngo has termed “the barren-rock-turned-capitalist-paradise legend”. See Tak-wing Ngo, “The legend of a colony: political rule and historiography in Hong Kong”, *China Information* 7.1-2 (Summer and Autumn, 1997): 135-156.

88 *Zhongxi qu wenwu jing [Historic trails in Central and Western districts]* (Hong Kong: Antiquities and Monuments Office, 1999), brochure.
ferries have been in Hamaxing). Meanwhile, in writing about Sai Wan, some theorists have described the area as “Hong Kong’s Wall Street”. In other descriptions, it is the shop-houses, markets and places of modern entertainment, such as cinemas, which are made central to the district’s history.

There are noticeable similarities between the re-writing of Kaohsiung history through the landscape of Hamaxing, and that which has occurred in Hong Kong’s Western District. In both cases, the historic built environment (and writing about this environment) has been called upon to produce a local history in which colonial trade and commerce are glorified. Even the vocabulary is striking in its resemblance. For instance, like the above-quoted essayist in Hong Kong, some Kaohsiung-based historians, such as Zhang Shouzhen, have taken to referring to sections of Hamaxing as “Kaohsiung’s Wall Street”.

For Hamaxing, the prevalence of the symbols of trade and commerce—shipping routes, “Wall Streets”, historic shops—has had intriguing consequences. For instance, despite numerous statements about the district embodying a specific maritime culture in associated literature, people—their stories and faces—are generally absent from the Hamaxing project. In the signage providing background details to attractions in the area, it is the architecture itself which takes centre stage, with people only present in vague references to “the Japanese” who built such structures, or in the form of figures caught in the corner of old photographs. As yet, there are very few examples of the usual human stories and oral

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80 For a typical example of nostalgic writing about the trams of “old Hong Kong”, see Zhang Shunguang, Xianggang dianche [Hong Kong trams] (Hong Kong: Sanlian Shudian, 1998).
80 Yao Hanliang, Moran hui shou hua Xianggang [Sudden thoughts about old Hong Kong] (Hong Kong: Kehua Tushu Chubanshe, 1997), p. 222.
histories that are so often found in waterfront heritage projects elsewhere. This appears not to have been forced upon Hamaxing through any lack of source material—there are indeed many residents of Hamaxing with stories to tell. Yet such stories may not necessarily fit with the dominant narratives favoured by the Kaohsiung City Government or the Hamaxing Cultural Association. Through renovation, the addition of explanatory signage, or inclusion in maps and guidebooks, buildings can be made to speak of particular histories according to one’s wishes; this may not always be the case with people.

There is no question that trade, commerce and a connection with the Nanshin philosophy of Japanese colonialism have all been central to Kaohsiung’s development. This is especially true of the area now known as Hamaxing, for it was here, around a train station, that Japanese planners first set about shaping the modern metropolis that evolved into Kaohsiung. And in highlighting how these elements of the past are stressed in Hamaxing’s historic built environment, I am not suggesting that Hamaxing is somehow “false”. I am, however, arguing that this is only one way in which the history of this area might be described. The Hamaxing Cultural Association, the Kaohsiung City Government, and other interested bodies, have chosen to interpret the genuine colonial streetscapes found in this part of the city in a specific way. Like so many other texts born of Taiwanese pro-colonial historiography, however, they have simultaneously created in Hamaxing an exotic façade that remains silent on the question of the violence and iniquities inherent in imperialism, and in which the colonial “development” of Taiwan is “beautified”.

I leave this argument in the hands of the photographer Chen Xiuli 陳秀琍. Writing about Hamaxing in 1998, Chen explored some of the more melancholic sides to the history of this colonial space. In doing so, she demonstrated that a Hamaxing history of modernity, trade and connection with the ideology of the Nanshin does not necessarily have to

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93 The above-mentioned case of Sai Wan seems to share Hamaxing’s disdain for people.
translate into a story of prosperous and aesthetically intriguing “firsts”. She writes of the “coastal line” thus:

Apart from being used to transport cargo, this railway track that now fades before one’s eyes once bore cargoes of separation, both before and after the end of the Second World War. How many Taiwanese were transported to the South Seas from this very spot? This would have been their last stop before departing Taiwanese soil. The fortunate amongst them managed to return at the end of the war; but the souls of the less fortunate were left stranded in foreign lands, and nothing was ever heard of them again. The Japanese finally abandoned their colonial ambitions and departed from Taiwan after losing the war. Then, as the Nationalist Government retreated to Taiwan, legion upon legion of mainland soldiers and civilians, having left their hometowns, came by sea to Taiwan. How hard it is to describe what they must have felt as they arrived here in Kaohsiung harbour. It was this same railway track that dispersed them to unfamiliar places in which they started new lives.94

What it most important here is that Chen is considering a very different history of Hamaxing, one which acknowledges elements such as the Nanshin policy, but concentrates on people and the effects that this waterside space has had on their lives, rather than the beauty and exotic nature of the architecture. Indeed, though conscious of the fact that the coastal line—the original hamasen—was laid to transport goods, Chen considers the (often neglected) social aspects of capital, transport and logistics in Hamaxing. This is a history populated by Taiwanese draftees, exiled Japanese settlers, and refugee soldiers.

Chen’s musings about Hamaxing as a site of departures and confused or reluctant arrivals is both moving and highly challenging to the histories that groups such as the Kaohsiung City Government and the Hamaxing Cultural Association have promoted through this district. And by re-appraising Hamaxing in this fashion, she (perhaps unwittingly) reminds us that sheqiu yingzao projects are just as apt at to omit and embellish elements of the past as are the remarkably different histories of Kaohsiung that one finds, for instance, in

94 Chen Xiuli, Chengshi de jiouchuo [Corners of the city] (Taipei County: Renren Yueli Gongs, 2001), pp. 73-74.
Zuoying's old city wall. The two represent a set of different interpretations of the local past, and neither is more "authentic" than the other.

Figure 66. Looking towards the T&C Tower from the *lingang tielu*—site of the original "coastal line", or "*hamasen*" (photograph by the author, 2002).
Conclusion

History and heritage in Taiwan

In recent literature on the historic built environment, a fundamental tension over the relationship between heritage and history has emerged. Is heritage merely a form of history? Or do the words “history” and “heritage” signify quite different methods of interpreting the past? The debate has become polarised. On the one hand, there is a belief that the words “heritage” and “history” represent two divergent, and even opposing views of the past. Scholars such as David Lowenthal have been vocal in distinguishing “heritage” from the presumably more scholarly pursuit of “history”. “History tells all who will listen what has happened and how things came to be as they are”, argues Lowenthal: “Heritage passes on exclusive myths of origin and continuance, endowing a select group with prestige and common purpose”.\(^1\)

This notional dichotomy has been augmented by a growing body of work on “memory”, particularly that originating in Francophone scholarship. There, “history” as an intellectual pursuit undertaken by academics is said to differ substantially from “memory” as a more plebeian or amateur understanding of the past.\(^2\) “Memory dictates and history writes…” is one distinction made by Pierre Nora, as is the claim that “…memory fastens upon sites, whereas history fastens upon events”\(^3\).

I did not design this thesis specifically as a contribution to the debate about heritage and history. And it is for this reason that my brief allusion to this debate comes late in this

\(^1\) David Lowenthal, *The Heritage Crusade and the Spoils of History*, p. 128.

\(^2\) A distinction which defines one of the classic studies in this field, Jacques Le Goff, *Histoire et mémoire* [History and memory] (Paris: Gallimard, 1988).

project. Yet the question as to whether “history” and “heritage” constitute distinct entities, or simply different terms for what is essentially the same thing, provides us with a starting point, of sorts, from which some of the key issues covered in this thesis can be reviewed.

In Australasia, Western Europe, and North America, the argument that history is a pseudo-scientific pursuit as opposed to a popular expression of interest in the past (the latter signified by “memory”, “heritage”, and a host of related terms) is not without its merits. It is evident, for instance, that there are distinctions of purpose and method in the work of academic historians compared to others who share an interest in interpreting the past. With a few exceptions, it is also true that most academic historians tend not to deliberately falsify the past, and support their claims with references to textual evidence. Some “heritage” projects cannot necessarily be credited with employing the same standards.

In practice, however, I believe that these distinctions are problematic. There are a number of reasons for this. In the first place, and as I hope to have shown throughout this thesis, the distinction between “professional” academics (historians, geographers, architectural or engineering professors) and amateur antiquarians or lay scholars, is an extremely difficult one to make. As we saw in Chapter 4, many of the most energetic promoters of “Kaohsiung history”, for example, fit uneasily into designations such as “professional historians”, “mass media historians” or “lay scholars”, or else are able to move across the arbitrary boundaries of these categories with consummate ease—Zheng Shuiping being but one example.

Moreover, the relationship between various groups and individuals who are responsible for preserving or renovating parts of the historic built environment, or for inscribing those elements with particular significance, is often more complimentary than confrontational.

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4 Though it is, admittedly, one of which I am guilty throughout this thesis.
Interest in Taiwan’s historic built environment has regularly emerged as collaborative in nature. It has involved academics as much as it has government bureaucrats and locals community groups. Furthermore, these groups have not necessarily disagreed when it comes to interpreting the past. Individuals such as Zeng Yukun have been as eager to promote the five (or six) thousand years of Chinese civilisation as have scholar-bureaucrats such as Lee Ch’ian-lang; the “pro-colonial” tendencies manifest in the signposted streets of Hamaxing are as frequent a feature of the literature produced by the area’s cultural association, with its local residents and volunteer workers, as in that published in Kaohsiung’s universities. In the archives room of the Kaohsiung Historiographical Commission, school teachers and local retirees brush shoulders with museum curators and professional academics (not to mention Australian PhD students).

Indeed, in the Taiwanese context, I believe that Raphael Samuel’s view of history as a “...social form of knowledge; the work, in any given instance, of a thousand different hands”, has a particularly relevant resonance. Samuel’s point is simple enough. He is exhorting us to consider that all kinds of people and institutions are engaged in the process of writing (or making) history, and that the work of the so-called “heritage industry” is as valid a form of history-production as is the work published by academics in peer-reviewed journals. History-making is an activity undertaken by many individuals, and any study of this topic must attempt to examine the world beyond the walls of academe.

Samuel’s argument is meaningful at other levels also, and has a relevance to the situation in Taiwan of which Samuel himself may not have been aware. For why should it be the case that the writings of an historian employed at any of Taiwan’s universities or research institutions be deemed more scientific or authentic than those produced elsewhere? Is it any more intellectually responsible or valid to call for a re-reading of the entire Taiwanese past along the lines of an ambiguous “island history”—as respected “professional

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historians" such as Cao Yonghe continually do—than for the Hamaxing Community Construction Workshop to refer to their chosen district as “Taiwan’s first BOT”? I would suggest that “professional historians” in Taiwan are just as likely to write their histories in the shadow of current political debates or catchphrases as are their pecuniarily less-well-endowed “lay” contemporaries.

This is more than apparent when we review some of the findings made in Chapters 1 and 2 of this thesis. As we have seen, guoshi, or “national (i.e., Republican Chinese) history”, and the more recently emergent field of Taiwan shi, are academic realms of inquiry based on a set of assumptions, omissions and cultural biases. For example, “national history”, by virtue of its origins, is intimately bound up with notions of Chinese patriotism. It is informed by narratives of civilizational antiquity, on the one hand, and stories of humiliation and invasion in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, on the other.

Taiwan shi, emerging in tandem with a series of socio-political phenomena known as “bentubah”, is likewise anchored to the notion that history should be written in the service of a nascent Taiwanese nation—the masters of which are Hokkien-speaking people of Sinic descent. Both “national history” and “Taiwan history” are built around a “chronology of periods” and immutable ethnic categories (e.g., “the Taiwanese”, “the Chinese”, “the Japanese”); both contain numerous lacunae regarding China and/or Taiwan’s past; and both are egregiously guilty of “air-brushing” places, people and events from their respective canons. Witness the denunciation in nationalist Chinese historiography of the treaty ports as being little more than a momentary aberration in what is otherwise a glorious five thousand years of civilisation.⁶ Note, similarly, the complete lack of recognition of the history of mainland émigrés, Aborigines, Southeast Asian

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Gastarbeiter and other “non-Taiwanese” groups on the part of numerous scholars who teach or conduct research on the “four hundred years of the Taiwanese people”.

**Pro-colonial historiography**

It is for these reasons that I believe the debates about history, heritage and memory are overshadowed by far more pressing issues in today’s Taiwan. This is not to say that the questions raised by the aforementioned history/heritage debates hold no relevance. Indeed, my exploration in Chapter 2 of the semantics of the Taiwanese historic built environment go some way in highlighting the fact that different modes of interpreting the past do exist in Taiwan, as elsewhere. Indeed, future research on this topic might go further in examining the parallels or discrepancies between Taiwan and other societies on this point.

Yet I believe there is another question that arises out of this debate—one that is arguably more important. It is this: instead of considering how the past is interpreted by historians as opposed to others, might we not also consider what sorts of pasts are being interpreted by all these different “hands” (to refer back to Samuel’s metaphor)? Instead of identifying truths or falsities in the history being made in a place such as Kaohsiung, should we not also attempt to trace the lineages of these interpretations of the past in their own right? This is the approach I have taken throughout this thesis. I have consciously examined the ways in which the built environment has been interpreted and codified with the aim of ascertaining what this can teach us about perceptions of the past in Taiwan. It has not been my intention to discredit the work of any particular group, individual or institution, but rather to consider the origins and wider ramifications of the histories that they have inscribed onto the landscape. In doing so, this thesis has raised a series of issues which, to my knowledge, have yet to be explored in depth elsewhere.
One of these issues concerns the revival of colonial discourses of geography and history in Taiwan during the 1990s. Though still a minor field of academic scholarship, the legacy of Japanese colonial rule in Taiwan remains a popular topic of informal discussion. Mention of the extent and nature of Japanese rule makes for the content of post-seminar and coffee-break conversation, in which talk of Taiwan as Japan’s “fifth island” (di wu dao 第五島), or the Japanese patois spoken by a grandparent or a neighbour, is so common as to border on cliché. I am surprised that this topic has not inspired greater academic interest. And I have been puzzled by the glib generalisations with which this issue is summarily dismissed in Taiwan—that the contemporary admiration for colonialism is the natural result of imperial Japanese beneficence, and that the topic is, in any case, of no intellectual import. Indeed, putting aside the demonising references to “the Japanese” that have filled the pages of Chinese national histories, and that are recycled each time the sovereignty of the Senkaku/Diaoyu Tai islands is disputed, there is but a handful of publications that seriously tackle the modern-day Taiwanese fascination with the colonial Japanese past. Leo Ching’s path-breaking book Becoming Japanese, and recent work by the cultural studies theorist Kuan-hsing Chen, are the only noteworthy examples of English-language scholarship that engage with these questions. Both these works, however, deal with literature and written texts.

In regards to how these recent re-assessments of the colonial past are played out in the historic built environment, I am not aware of any critical examinations appearing to date. This is, of itself, highly surprising. For it is in the historic built environment—its discovery, preservation, renovation, codification, and the meanings with which it has been

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8 Leo T. S. Ching, op cit.
9 Kuan-hsing Chen, “The imperialist eye….”
10 Marshall Johnson’s work (quoted throughout this thesis) was published only as this “pro-colonial” reading of the past was first emerging, and was based on research conducted before it was acceptable to question official ideology regarding the colonial past. Marshall Johnson, op cit.
inscribed—that we see the clearest manifestations of a general desire to recover, and in some cases re-create, Taiwan’s Japanese past. In this thesis, I chose to base Chapter 6 on the district of Hamaxing for precisely this purpose. Not only is Hamaxing the most successful of shequ yingzao projects in Kaohsiung. It is also paradigmatic as a place where the rediscovery of a colonial heritage, and an appropriation of colonial discourses about that heritage, is most thoroughly illustrated.

In Chapters 1 and 2 this thesis, I considered some reasons for the rediscovery and rehabilitation of the colonial landscape and the ideologies that shaped it in Taiwan. As I suggested, one might explain this trend as the natural response to the sinocentrism of national history as it was promoted under KMT authoritarianism; I also suggested that it is related to the commodification of history in Taiwan today, and the great marketability of the ephemera that Japanese imperialism left on the island—the maps, postcards and monuments that make for the intellectual side of contemporary Taiwanese Japanophilia (ha Ri).

I have termed this trend “pro-colonial historiography” because it is a school of thought in which the aesthetically appealing and functionally successful elements of Japanese colonial rule in Taiwan have been taken to represent the experience of colonialism in its entirety. This is a movement that praises the modernity brought to Taiwan by Japanese colonialism, and revels in stories of Japanese efficiency and benevolence. It has found some of its most cogent expression in restoration and preservation projects, in which residual elements within the built environment are rediscovered, sometimes refurbished, and eventually classified as evidence of an apparently better, or at any rate, more pleasant era. The former Takao shiyakusho becomes the Kaohsiung Museum of History—colonial rule, as history, is made to look as pleasant as the porticos and palmed gardens of this, and other, colonial-era buildings.
Admittedly, I have been attracted to the topic of pro-colonial interpretations of the past in Taiwan by the very aesthetics of the relics that are being restored or protected in places such as Hamaxing. And I still find it fascinating that Shinto shrines, butokuden, and similar sites, can still be, quite literally, stumbled upon in Taiwan. In this way, my interest finds parallels with that growing legion of historians intrigued by the built environment of post-communist Eastern Europe. As Duncan Light conjectures, historians may be fascinated, charmed or just disorientated by the ways in which European societies are now reinterpreting landscapes dominated by Soviet architecture and monuments, oftentimes more so than the people who live in such landscapes. Yet I would like to believe that it is the current Taiwanese interest in the remnants of the past which has formed one of themes of this thesis, rather than my own attraction to the remnants of Japanese colonialism per se.

Pro-colonial readings of the past have been accompanied by a widespread excavation not only of the tangible remnants of Japanese colonialism, but also of its ideologies. I documented this in Chapter 3, in which I explained how an entire city is rewriting, and rebuilding, its history according to the vocabulary and imagery of a colonial Japanese ideology. The 1990s re-orientation of Kaohsiung towards “the South” mirrors a process by which local officialdom employed the ideology of the Nanshin to claim that Takao represented the “base of the southern advance”. Yet Kaohsiung is not unique in its evocation of colonial doctrine. In the contemporary fascination with the figure of Koxinga and his “ancient city of culture”, or the calls for Taiwan to rediscover its “island history”, one can detect distinct traces of colonial Japanese interpretations of the Taiwanese past.

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Maritime history

In a thesis focused on the historiography of a city which has only recently been labeled Taiwan’s “maritime capital”, it should be apparent by now that pro-colonial readings of the past have fuelled a particular re-interpretation of Taiwan’s history in general. In Chapter 3, for instance, I noted that the recent resort to colonial geopolitical interpretations of “the South” were linked to maritime imagery: the “South seas”; ocean liners; trade routes. Given its prominence throughout this thesis, maritime history thus demands further comment here.

In the course of my research, I joined a multidisciplinary maritime history group at Academia Sinica. This group included scholars from a number of institutions around Taipei, and the range of topics covered at fortnightly sessions was wide and varied. Yet there were certain assumptions which underpinned the discussions undertaken by the group from its inception. These included the untouchable (yet equally indefinable) belief that Taiwan’s history was “maritime” in nature—Taiwan is girt by water; it therefore has a “maritime history”. Another assumption was that maritime history (and therefore Taiwan history) is always defined by technological progress and modernity, the laissez-faire movement of people and goods, and some vague sense of cosmopolitanism and multiculturalism.\textsuperscript{12}

As we saw in Chapters 3 and 4, these assumptions find their origins in colonial discourse, as well as in Cold War-era US thought. They represent historiographical attempts to promote Taiwan as a member of that prosperous family of nations included in the “Asia-

\textsuperscript{12} For an example of recent historiographical promotion of Taiwan as a “multicultural society”, see A-chin Hsiau, \textit{op cit.}, esp. pp. 186-187. The uncritical acceptance of this construct in work on Taiwanese culture and history is now common, a recent example being Nancy Guy, “How does ‘Made in Taiwan’ sound? Popular music and strategising the sounds of a multicultural nation”, \textit{Perfect Beat} 5.3 (2001.7): 1-17. Such studies fail to recognise the wider links between this concept of a “maritime Taiwan” and the recent Taiwanese discovery of the English word “multicultural” (translated into Mandarin Chinese as “duoyuan wenhua” 多元文化).
Pacific”. It requires only the most minimal effort in reading “between the lines” of contemporary Taiwanese haiyang lishi to find references to a land-bound, communist and homogeneous China (opposed to a maritime, capitalist and apparently “multicultural” Taiwan). Taiwan history is maritime and, therefore, (apparently) distinct from Chinese history.

In much of the literature on maritime history emerging in Taiwan, appeals to the free movement of people and goods are commonplace. And in liberal references to the “maritime world city”, such ideas appear to have also established a lively following in other parts of the world, and are certainly not unique to Taiwan. As some theorists have noted, the assumption that port and harbour history are by nature cosmopolitan, modern and trade-related, are seldom questioned. Indeed, so all-pervasive have these assumptions become that it now represents something of a challenge to visualise the history of any coastal community or society in terms other than trade, movement, and cosmopolitanism. The aesthetics of harbour heritage—Tall Ships, restored custom houses and consulates, and waterfront promenades—only help to fortify these interpretations.

Yet ports and harbours might just as readily lay claim to pasts which contradict free movement, trade, and cosmopolitanism. One need look no further than Zuoying to understand this. In the histories played out on the Zuoying landscape over the last two decades, the sea is always present. In references to Han migration from China during


14 Something that is accentuated in the field of area studies. For examples of some business-oriented maritime histories focusing on Asia, see Frank Broeze (ed), Brides of the Sea: Port Cities from the 16th – 20th Centuries (Sydney: New South Wales University Press, 1989); see also Karl Anton Sprengard and Roderich Ptak (eds), Maritime Asia: Profit Maximisation, Ethics and Trade Structure c.1300-1800 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 1994).

Koxinga’s reign, in the relics of a continuous naval presence, and in the Zuoying harbour itself, the area’s history is very much maritime. Yet the history being promoted there is far from multicultural; it is, rather, homogeneously *Chinese*. And its naval harbour is not a site of trade and exchange, but one of warfare, violence and exclusion.

The histories that individuals such as Lee Ch’ian-lang and Zeng Yukun, or more recently, *juancun* heritage groups, have promoted in Zuoying are no less maritime than those of Hamaxing. There may well be constant references to the central plains and a continental Chinese tradition of wall-building in the literature in and about Zuoying, yet even these are coloured by the fact that this a coastal district, for the fate of the old city wall and its surrounding landscape has always been subject to naval sensitivities.\(^{16}\) In examining Zuoying, then, I hope to have illustrated that the “maritime capital” represents only one method of understanding the influence of a coastal geography on Kaohsiung’s past. I am further suggesting that in its efforts to “use the past to serve the present,”\(^{17}\) the Kaohsiung City Government, at least since the Wu Dunyi years, has seen fit to shift focus away from the old wall in Zuoying and onto other districts which correlate with the now dominant narratives of *haiyang lishi*, such as trade, progress and relations with the exotic “South Seas”. As is the case not only in Taiwan, but also in many other societies, a historiographical focus on particular localities, and the practice of inscribing the landscapes of these localities with historical narratives, reflects wider cultural and political trends.

**Locality and nation**

The evolution of the term “maritime capital” in Kaohsiung augurs another theme that I have explored throughout this thesis—the relationship between local and national

\(^{16}\) It is not unreasonable to predict that, should military confrontation between Taiwan and the PRC ever evolve into war, access to Zuoying may again be restricted as it was in the past.

histories. For as we have seen, many elements of “maritime China” and “maritime Taiwan” have recently been appropriated and put into the service of local interpretations of the past (of the “the maritime capital”). Kaohsiung has only become the “maritime capital” because, at the national level, there is “maritime Taiwan”.

However, and as I have demonstrated at various points throughout this thesis, it would be misleading to suggest that history at the level of a city or a county merely represents some kind of crude refraction of national history. Nor is it the case that events played out in Kaohsiung and other localities across Taiwan are simply mimetic of trends occurring in Taipei. On the contrary, the relationship between the nation and the locality has been far more complicated. It is only when one looks beyond the universities and bookshops of Taipei, however, that this becomes apparent.

Local histories as they are being made in places such as Kaohsiung have been just as prolific in furnishing symbols and imagery for narratives of the nation as vice versa. And it has been the dedication to locality (rather than period or time)—a factor which, as we saw in Chapter 1, is typical of local history writing in Taiwan throughout the 1990s—that has enabled local cultural-historical workshops and minjian xueyuan to address questions that many Taipei-based historians have been unable or unwilling to approach.

I demonstrated some of these complexities in the relationship between nation and locality in Chapter 6. In Hamaxing, we find a local cultural-historical workshop, typical of those that have emerged together with the shequ yingzao model of history-production, whose interests in preserving the waterside remnants of colonial rule in Kaohsiung predated those of the municipal authorities. The work of this group was buoyed by wider academic interest in re-examining colonial history, with geographers, historians and other academic professionals based at local Kaohsiung universities taking an active role in promoting the district and preserving its streetscapes. Yet this was essentially a local project, one which
was concerned primarily with a single precinct in Kaohsiung, rather than with the history of the nation as a whole.

It was only a number of years later that Hamaxing was specifically appropriated by the Kaohsiung City Government, after it had been identified as a place in which a history congruent with the “maritime capital” slogan promoted by Frank Hsieh and his DPP affiliates was being formulated. Thus, this was the case of a locality-focused history—one which found pride in the area’s rich colonial and imperial heritage, and reinterpreted this according to the popular business vocabulary of the day (“APROC”, “Wall Street”, “BOT”)—that found favour with, and even influenced, nativist depictions of “maritime Taiwan”. In turn, the local histories being made in Hamaxing have been given a national significance, with events such as presidential visits, and public commendations from the Council for Cultural Affairs, all influencing the history that is being made there.

Zuoying offers another example of the relationship between the local and the national, although in this case we find a landscape inscribed with sites of national significance being reclaimed by local groups. A city wall that had been identified, renovated and protected as a site of national significance by the central government in 1980s was subsequently acquisitioned by local writers (such as Zeng Yukun and Ye Shitaol) who sought to inscribe their own “Kaohsiung histories” onto the site in the 1990s. The Zuoying jincheng, as a first-grade guji, provides Kaohsiung with a local history that is comparable in antiquity and cultural relevance to that of the “prefectural capital”, Tainan, or even the great cities of Chinese history, such as Xi’an. More recently, and inspired by events in other parts of Taiwan, Zuoying military dependants’ villages have sought to write themselves into this local Zuoying history. Indeed, it is relevant that, at the time of writing this thesis, Zuoying-
based naval groups have called publicly for an adoption of the “Hamaxing-model” in this part of Kaohsiung.\textsuperscript{18}

Herein lies one of the most intriguing points about the relationship between local histories in Kaohsiung, and indeed, in many other localities throughout Taiwan, and the Republic of China’s “national history”. National histories may well be monolithic, highly persuasive and better funded, but they are just as prone to appropriation as are local histories. Rather than shadowing the histories that are being made in localities beyond Taipei, the nation is selectively called upon as a reservoir of symbols, vocabulary and even relics when these are required by local scholars and workshops. The relics that once stood for the nation’s shame in the face of foreign oppression and infiltration—consulate buildings, Shinto shrines—are provided with new contexts in local readings of the past, such as those being undertaken in Hamaxing.

This interaction and constant borrowing has always been a mainstay of the history-making process in Taiwan. For example, one can interpret the Kaohsiung City Government’s recent appropriation of paradigms such as “maritime Taiwan”, and the geo-historical imaginings that define the APROC policy, as a recurrence of a much earlier appropriation—i.e., that of the Takao shiyakusho and its practice of borrowing the imagery and phraseology of the ideology of the Nanshin that was formulated in Taihoku and Tokyo. In changing contexts, the nation’s symbols, imagery and vocabulary become the standard fare of local interpretations of the past.

Yet the products of local history can also be just as easily fed back into national narratives. Indeed, one is tempted to view the array of postcolonial historiographies, for instance, as more than the domain of Taipei-based academics. The degree of intellectual creativity that

shequ yingzao groups in various localities throughout Taiwan have displayed has been a catalyst for such developments. It is the work of these groups—particularly those based in areas in which colonial streetscapes are plentiful—that has preempted reinterpretations of the guji category, and that has eventually persuaded city and county governments to overlook earlier restrictions that once defined the ways in which the historic built environment was codified. It will be intriguing to observe the extent to which, over the coming years, the work of cultural-historical workshops and other locally-based organisations are able to further influence national histories and the policies that enshrine them.

The politics of history

In an article published in the journal *The Contemporary Pacific*, the anthropologist Margaret Jolly ponders the perplexities faced by Western academics engaged in the deconstruction of “tradition” and “myth” in Pacific societies. Jolly suggests that the work of many Western scholars, educated in ideas such as “the invention of tradition”, is fraught with complications, especially in contexts where such “inventions” may act as ideological tools to combat colonialism or exploitation. Scholars are faced with a choice of having either to underline the contradictions inherent in the histories that nations emerging from colonialism are in the process of making, or defend these new “inventions” in the belief that they serve a higher purpose (such as liberation from colonialism and post-independence stability).¹⁹

Jolly’s observations are entirely relevant to Taiwan and the study of its history. For as we have seen throughout this thesis, historiographical debates in modern Taiwan are, in many ways, also competitions between “myths” about the past, each attached to its own three or

four-character catchphrase—“five thousand years”; “maritime Taiwan”; the “harbour city”.

More importantly, however, Jolly’s argument reminds us that the study of history can never be separated from broader political concerns, and that history-making is an intrinsically political process. This is as true for Taiwan as it is for any other society. For in Taiwan, the question of what constitutes “national history”, “Taiwan history”, or “Kaohsiung history”—and even more crucially, who has the right to write (or make) these histories—can still arouse intense debate.

In studying the ways in which the past is interpreted in Taiwan, there is an overwhelming precedent to take one of those paths alluded to in Jolly’s aforementioned paper. That is to say, observers of the Taiwanese past (and Taiwanese interpretations of the past) are virtually expected to suspend any doubts they may harbour regarding the omissions, inventions, or contradictions inherent in fields such as national history, Taiwan shi, or Taiwan studies, and to concentrate instead on the “larger issues” at stake. There is always a sense that scholars have a duty to serve the nation (be that the Republic of China, or a nascent “Republic of Taiwan”) through their work. If colonial ideologies can aid in the creation of a desirable history then they should be applied. As such, the study of history is assumed to be unimportant in itself. It is, rather, a means to an end—preservation of the “Republic of China” in the face of PRC aggression and the Taiwanese independence movement, or the eventual foundation of a “Republic of Taiwan”.

In much of the literature on Taiwan studies published in North America over recent years, this tendency to suspend criticism, and defend Taiwanese claims to nationhood, has increased. 20 Yet in choosing this path, I believe that scholars are blinded to the multi-

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20 This is especially true of the Taiwan in the Modern World series published by M. E. Sharpe. For an example, see Maysing H. Yang (ed), Taiwan’s Expanding Role in the International Arena (Armonk NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1997).
faceted complications inherent in the history-making process in Taiwan. And in trying to understand something of the ways in which the past is currently being interpreted in Taiwan, there is little to be gained in “taking sides”. Only by ignoring the nation—if only momentarily—can a better understanding of Taiwan historiography be attained.

In Chapter 4, I noted the work of scholars such as Lin Shuguang for precisely this purpose. Lin’s work on Kaohsiung history, despite being clearly nativist in its tenor, displays far more interest in questions that go beyond the boundaries of the nation. The gazetteer style which scholars such Lin have employed, and which has since found its way into various shequ yingzao projects, necessitates an ability to look at the history of any given place in as broad a context as possible. It hinders, rather than supports, the sorts of generalisations that are common to fields such as guo shi and Taiwan shi (that is to say, those histories that find underpinnings in constructs such as China’s five thousand years of continuous civilisation or Taiwan’s maritime history). And it has given rise to entirely new methods of thinking about Taiwan’s past.

Lin Shuguang is not exceptional. There are countless other scholars associated with local history throughout Taiwan, whose work far outweighs that produced by many of the most celebrated luminaries in fields such as Taiwan history or national history, be it in terms of historical insight, self reflection, or intellectual rigour. It is in the histories produced by these local scholars and antiquarians that we find some of the most challenging interpretations of the past in Taiwan. And it is in localities that we begin to realise that Taiwan’s past need not always be dichotomised into “pro-China” or “pro-Taiwan” camps. In viewing the history-making process in “regional Taiwan”, one also begins to understand that neither “Taiwan history” nor “national history” can claim a monopoly of historiographical legitimacy. “Maritime Taiwan” provides no more authentic a history than “maritime China”; Hamaxing offers a local past no more (or less) genuine than does the old city wall in Zuoying. Such histories, and the phrases by which they are represented, are artifacts of particular times and places, some of which will submerge into obscurity, and
others which may be recycled in some different form in the future.

**Closing remarks**

Looking out from the observation deck on the seventy-fifth floor of the T&C Tower in Kaohsiung today, one is struck by the immensity of the city stretched out below. In an era in which valid environmental concerns have seen concrete artifice more often frowned upon than admired, the sheer vastness of Kaohsiung, with its arteries of traffic and neon, tankers taxiing gracefully into harbour, and a concrete landscape punctuated with khaki hills and silver stretches of water, still inspires awe.

Many others have admired elevated views of this city, if not from the T&C Tower, then from more humble heights such as Mount Longevity. Gazing on the waters beyond the harbour mouth, Japanese residents of colonial Takao envisaged spots just over the horizon that marked exotic ports of call on the way to that nebulous web of sea-lanes and tropical islands, the “South Seas”. In the postwar years, homesick Chinese soldiers and sailors looked out longingly towards the Taiwan Strait, imagining beyond it the expanses of the Chinese motherland and its central plains that had been lost to communism—peering over the horizon as if it were an act of looking back in time. On more recent occasions, it has been municipal bureaucrats and their private-sector colleagues who have envisaged this city as a gateway to a world of trade and business, the site from which Taiwanese investment flows southwards as freely as the waters of the South China Sea.

Such journeys of the imagination—both mine and those of others that I have documented at points throughout this thesis—may elicit accusations of voyeurism. Nevertheless, they serve to remind us of just how pervasive the géographie imaginaire that various organisations and individuals have woven around Taiwan’s meridional metropolis for the better part of a century remains. And it is these same flights of imagination that have influenced not only
the ways in which the history of Kaohsiung has been chronicled, and its built environment renovated, signposted or graded, but also the composition of this thesis.

I hope that this study opens up new avenues for research in a number of fields. This thesis goes some way in filling the substantial gaps that the field of Taiwan studies has left in its wake, pre-occupied as much of it is with questions of elections, missile defence and national identity. The fate of the historic built environment surely helps to inform us about contemporary Taiwanese society—its fissures, its conflicts and its fraught past. Yet I would also like to think that the issues raised and explored in this thesis speak to a much wider audience. Questions of what the built environment means, and of what sorts of history it bespeaks, are relevant to the study of most societies, and Taiwan is no exception. Far from obscure, the debates being played out on Kaohsiung's landscape lie at the very heart of questions about the past and how it is interpreted.
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