

## Foreword: Popular Literature in Taiwan under Japanese Rule

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 Concerning Taiwan literature during the period of Japanese rule, this journal published two issues on the subject: Number 19 (July 2006) and Number 20 (January 2007), the former laying particular emphasis on fiction and poetry written by Taiwanese writers in colloquial Chinese, and the latter focusing from a complementary perspective on several particular features of Taiwan literature during Japanese rule, including 1) Colonial Literature and the Resistance and Submission of Taiwanese Writers; 2) Tradition, Native Land, and Modernization; 3) Imperial Subject Literature and War Collaboration; 4) Detective Stories and Popular Literature; 5) Aborigines, Folklore, and Exoticism; 6) Emergence of Women Writers; and 7) Construction of the Taiwan New Literature and Its Subjectivity. For this issue we go one step further to explore and translate popular fiction of Taiwan during the colonial period.

First of all, let's take a look of the concept of "fiction" as a category of literary creation when it first appeared. Whether in Taiwan, China, or Japan, "fiction" or "popular fiction" was gradually perceived under the influence of Western literary trends, and then the consciousness of being a "writer" gradually appeared. In China the concept of "fiction" (*xiaoshuo*) can be traced back to the "Waiwu pian" [Chapter on External Things] in the *Zhuangzi*, or the "Yiwenzhi" [Bibliographic Treatise] in the *Hanshu* [History of Han], where the historian Ban Gu describes the *xiaoshuo* as "street talk and alley gossip, made up by those who engage in conversations along the roads and walkways," which belong to unofficial history or anecdotes, together with the *zhiguai* (describing anomalies) of the Six Dynasties, *chuanqi* (unusual tales) of the Tang, and *huaben* (vernacular narratives) of the Song. After the Ming, following the tradition of *chuanqi* and *huaben*, there were famous collections of popular novels, such as *Sida qishu* (Four Great Vernacular Novels); *Sanyan* (Three Collections of Admonishment), compiled by Feng Menglong; and *Erpai* (Two Collections of Striking the Table in Wonder), compiled by Ling Mengchu; not to mention the novelistic masterpiece *Honglou-meng* [The Dream of the Red Chamber].

Chinese traditional literary theories take literary composition to be "a great undertaking in the management of the state, and a splendid affair of eternal standing," whereas those works of *xiaoshuo* serve only the daily conversation of the common people in the marketplace as a "small path" that cannot reach the heights of temple and court. However, when it came to the late Qing and early Republic, under the impact of Western intellectual trends, political and economic thought, as well as society and literature, all faced an unprecedented impact and transformation. Especially the creation and criticism of fiction exhibited a new spirit of vigorous development in response to the pulse of the times, and thus the intellectuals like Liang Qichao tried to use the influence of fiction to enlighten the common people for reform. In addition to providing entertainment, popular fiction responded to the changes of the times and turned to a new phase

to reflect modern society and the trend of the times, demonstrating a certain modernity in the course of modernization in China.

In their development and historical background, the new literatures in Taiwan and China have much in common, although in different time frames. Both went through the process from classical Chinese to the vernacular as a creative language. During that process, Taiwan was already a colony of Japan, and therefore received influences not only from Chinese traditional literature but also from the development of modern Japanese literature. In addition, since the modern literature of both China and Japan had been deeply influenced by Western literary trends, the development of modern literature in Taiwan also reflected elements of Western literature sufficient to have evidenced a complex background with China, Japan, and the West intertwined.

In the history of traditional Chinese literature, there is “folk literature” derived from the people. In his famous work *Zhongguo suwenxue shi* [A History of Chinese Popular Literature] published in 1938, Zheng Zhenduo maintained that the main characteristic of “popular literature” is “its mass appeal”: it comes from the common people, is written for the common people, exists for the common people, and is loved by the common people. It comprises folksongs, unusual tales, vernacular narratives, drama, playful literature, and entertainment in the form of story telling and ballad singing. The pioneering work of popular fiction in modern China is generally considered to be a novel written in the Wu dialect, *Haishang hualie zhuan* [Lives of Shanghai Flowers], written by Han Bangqing (1856-1894) and published in 1894, twenty-three years earlier than the New Literature Movement launched in 1917.

On the other hand, in the history of Japanese modern literature, the earliest literary criticism on the novel is generally taken to be the book *Shōsetsu Shinzui* [The Essence of the Novel] by Tsubouchi Shōyō (1859-1935), published in 1885-1886. The earliest newspaper published in Taiwan was the *Taiwan shinpō* [Taiwan News], launched in June 1896, which started to publish fiction in Japanese three months later in October 1896. The appearance of *taishū bungaku* (popular literature) in the history of Taiwan literature was also simply following the literary term used in modern Japanese literature. According to the *Shinchō Nihon bungaku jiten* [The Shinchō Encyclopedia of Japanese Literature], the term *taishō bungei* (popular literary art) first appeared in an advertisement in *Kōdan zasshi* [Story-Telling Magazine], published by Kōbunkan in 1924, and has been in use ever since. In Taiwan, scholars of Taiwan literature who first paid attention to this particular field were Shimomura Sakujiro and Huang Ying-che, who published the *Taiwan dazhong wenxue xilie* [Taiwan popular literature series], 10 volumes, in Taiwan in 1998, filling “the gap in the history of Taiwan literature” outside “orthodox” and “pure” literature. In the “Introduction,” the editors make the following observation:

Here the term “Taiwan dazhong wenxue” refers to the *taishū bungaku* used as a literary term in the field of modern Japanese literature. In other words, *dazhong wenxue* denotes popular literature in contrast to “pure literature.” It is a kind of entertainment written in response to the interest and understanding of a mass readership. It includes martial fiction, family fiction, folk fiction, humor fiction, and similar kinds of drama as a contrast to pure literature.

So we understand that *dazhong wenxue* (pronounced *taishū bungaku* in Japanese) is a synonym of *tongsu wenxue*, taken over from the *taishū bungaku* that appeared in the Japanese literary world during the Taishō period. However, Professor Nakajima Toshio challenged the existence of *taishū bungaku* in Taiwan during colonial rule mainly because there were no

“literary broad masses of people” to support *taishū bungaku* at that time. (See his article “Nihon tōchiki Taiwan no ‘taishū bungaku’” [*Taishū Bungaku* in Taiwan during Japanese Rule].

Popular literature, considered as a gap in the study of the history of Taiwan literature, has recently attracted a great deal of attention and research interest from scholars in Taiwan. Professor Huang Mei-e of the Institute of Taiwan Literature, National Taiwan University, who engaged in the study of classical literature and traditional literati of Taiwan for years, has paid special attention to the newly rising field of “popular Literature in Taiwan during Japanese Rule.” According to her syllabus, the discussion contents include popular fiction, jokes, popular songs, etc., and the topics discussed include popularization, consumption of entertainments, fashion, and modernity, focusing on literary and cultural studies combined and observed from an interdisciplinary perspective.

With the understanding of the historical background explained above, we would like to further explain the following special features of the popular literature of Taiwan as we have observed them.

A) The times, the world, and modernity as reflected in the popular fiction of Taiwan during Japanese colonial rule

The writing of popular literature in Taiwan followed a course particular to Taiwan. The main reason was that when this concept of writing started to be formulated, Taiwan was a colony of Japan and modern literatures in China and Japan were under Western influences at the same time. In the West, as well as in modern China and Japan, popular fiction was closely related to public media, especially the vigorous development of mass communication media and publication of newspapers and magazines brought about by the rise of printing technology and enterprises. In other words, the development of modern popular fiction in China was inseparable from the historical development of the times and social changes. In Taiwan under Japanese rule, as mass communication media were introduced, publishers of newspapers and magazines started to publish popular fiction to attract readers and increase the subscription rate, and thus the development of popular fiction was carried forward and flourished.

Popular fiction written in Chinese first appeared with the publication of *Kanbun Taiwan nichinichi shinpō* [Chinese Taiwan Daily News] in July 1905. At that time the main writers were the traditional literati, who were versed in classical Chinese literature, and most of them were reporters for newspapers, including Hsieh Hsüeh-yü, Li Yi-t’ao, and Li Han-ju. The first work of Chinese popular fiction was “Zhenzhong qiyuan” [Strange Karma on the Battlefield] written by Hsieh Hsüeh-yü and published in *Kanbun Taiwan nichinichi shinpō* in July 1905. This was seventeen years earlier than the first popular fiction written in Japanese by Hsieh Ch’un-mu (penname Chui Feng), “Kanojo wa doko ni?” [Where Is She?] or that written in vernacular Chinese by the penname Ou (Seagull), “Kefa de chenmo” [The Terrible Silence], both published in 1922. The development of the Taiwanese new literature written in vernacular Chinese is considered to have started in the early 1920s. After the mid-1930s, Japanese started to gradually replace Chinese, and during the Imperial Subject Movement of the 1940s, Chinese was prohibited and Japanese became the official language. However, in the meantime certain Chinese magazines kept publishing, including *Sanliujiu xiaobao* [Three-Six-Nine Tabloid], from September 1930 to October 1935, which mainly published historical writings, essays, Chinese poems, and serialized novels; *Fengyue* [Wind and Moon], from May 1935 to 1936; and *Fengyue*

*bao* [Wind and Moon Bulletin], from September 1937 to July 1941, later with the name changed to *Nanfang* [The South], published until October 1943. The main writers who wrote in classical Chinese were Cheng K'un-wu and Hsü Ping-ting, and those known for writing in vernacular Chinese were Hsu K'un-ch'uan, Wu Man-sha, and Lin Ching-nan, whose works were printed singly, indicating that Chinese popular fiction was well received by the public.

The language used in popular fiction in Taiwan shifted from classical Chinese to the vernacular, the writers were both Japanese and Taiwanese, and the subject matter of the works is varied and colorful, comprising detective stories, romance, tales of roving knights, science fiction, and novels about brothels and prostitutes. The geographic backgrounds described in the fiction include Taiwan, China, Japan and other places in the world, and the contents are full of exoticism and imagination of alien lands and peoples. The objects the writers of popular fiction tried to imitate include Chinese traditional supernatural fiction and Japanese classical battle stories and histories. In fact, in addition to the influences from China and Japan, contact with Western literature through translations was also a path for the creative writing of popular fiction in Taiwan. In the late Qing Dynasty and early Republic, translations of Western literary works occupied most of the space in magazines, and detective stories were most welcome among translations. The earliest magazine that introduced Western detective stories was the news medium *Shiwu bao* [Current Events], launched in Shanghai in 1896. The renowned translator Lin Shu (1852-1924) was the first to introduce Sherlock Holmes with his translation of *A Study in Scarlet*. During the two decades between 1896 and 1916, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (1859-1930) was the author most translated into Chinese and *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* (1891-1892) were the most popular detective stories received in China.

In this issue of the journal we have selected three detective stories written in classical Chinese by three representative authors: "Liuxue qiuyan" [Strange Coincidences of Studying Abroad] by Li Yi-t'ao, "Xiaoxuesheng Chun Xiaoyi" [The Elementary Pupil Tsubaki Kōichi] by Hsieh Hsüeh-yü, and "Chihen" [Tooth Marks] by Wei Ch'ing-te. This type of stories, with the language between classical and vernacular Chinese and the contents between East and West, tradition and modern, are good examples to show the manifold complexity of such literature, especially Wei Ch'ing-te's "Tooth Marks," which is an adaptation of "Les Dents du Tigre" by the French writer Maurice Leblanc (1864-1941), and could provide an interesting topic for the study of influence in comparative literature. Here we can see the development of popular fiction in Taiwan, between China, Japan and the West, suggesting permeating influences and particular features of the times, the world, and modernity in historical development.

## B) Detective Fiction of Popular Literature in Taiwan during Japanese Rule

Both China in the late Qing period and Japan during the Meiji period took identical action to introduce detective fiction from the West. This was of course closely related to the social national situations of the time in pursuit of Westernization and the positivism and rationalism of modern sciences. Whether it was "detective fiction," which was based on what happened to rouse the readers' interest, or "criminal fiction," which deals with police apprehending criminals and investigating committed crimes, the manners of investigation, prosecution and judgment were similar to those described in the traditional "*gong'an* story," that is to say, the inquisitive spirit is similar in terms of the process of gradually resolving the secret of crimes to uphold justice. "Criminal fiction" in colonial Taiwan in particular was published in the official

magazines of the Association of Police, revealing the mentality of the ruler to provide references for combating criminal offences and cracking a case to arrest criminals.

As far as the quality and quantity are concerned, the most outstanding work of detective fiction during the period of Japanese rule was *Senchū no satsujin* [Murder Aboard Ship] published in book form in the *Sō rōjin shirūzu* [Old Soh Series], authored by Kanaseki Takeo (1897-1983), a professor of medicine at Taihoku Imperial University, an anthropologist and an anatomist. He studied in Europe and was much influenced by the popular novelist Edgar Wallace (1875-1932) as he published detective short stories under the pseudo Chinese penname Rin Yūsei. In the series of *Ryūzan-ji no Sō rōjin* [Old Soh of Ryūzan Temple], written in 1943-1947, the protagonist Old Soh was an ordinary old man sitting in the Ryūzan Temple all day long, using his penetrating observation and keen insight to solve disputed criminal cases by analyzing them, very similar to “armchair detectives.” It was a stereotype of detective fiction, but the difference from other detective stories is that the detector in the armchair does not have to painstakingly dash about but only needs to listen and look for the clue of the case, depending on reasoning to investigate little by little like reeling silk from cocoons, and finally identify the actual criminals. The earliest writer of “armchair detectives” was Baroness Emma “Emmuska” Orczy (1865-1947), who wrote *The Old Man in the Corner*. The old man in the story sat in the corner of a restaurant, and, depending on the news in the newspaper, while laughing at the incapability of the police, analyzed the case and reasoned with the difficulties to solve it eventually. In this issue we selected two stories as examples from *Murder Aboard Ship* by Rin Yūsei: “Kyo fujin no kanawa” [Mrs. Kyo’s Gold Bracelets] and “Nyūsensō jiken” [The Nyūsen Villa Incident].

### C) Romantic Stories of Popular Literature in Taiwan during Japanese Rule

As mentioned above, whether in the West or in modern China and Japan, the rise of popular fiction was closely related to the mass media, especially the development of printing and wide circulation of newspapers and periodicals. Romantic stories, as a sub-genre of popular literature in Taiwan under colonial rule, started in the 1930s when the *Three-Six-Nine Tabloid* was founded, which published novels and short stories in both classical and vernacular Chinese and with chapters in the traditional format. As for the themes, they were marked with various headings, such as “social fiction,” “love-expressing fiction,” “love-describing fiction,” “amorous love fiction,” “fantasy love fiction,” “plaintive love fiction,” “allegorical fiction,” “satirical fiction,” and so on. The contents were similar to the works of the “Mandarin-Ducks and Butterflies School” published in the *Libailiu zhoukan* [Saturday Weekly] in the early Republic, or even the kind of stories about traditional literati visiting prostitutes, with the intention to entice the reader’s interest with fantastic plots or as a means to project the authors’ emotions and romantic fantasy in creative writing. In short, such works express a certain social atmosphere and cultural mentality, basically belonging to the popular literature that favors decadent taste and leisure time killing for a certain social stratum of readership.

Regarding popular literature in Taiwan during the period of Japanese rule, for recent publications in Japan we have: 1) *Taiwan tsūzoku bungaku shū* [Collected Works of Taiwan Popular Literature], two volumes, edited by Nakajima Toshio, published by Ryokuin Shobō, 2002; 2) *Taiwan teitan shōsetsu shū* [Collected Works of Taiwan Detective Fiction], 2002, by the same publisher, which includes an introductory article “Nihon tōchiki Taiwan no ‘taishū

bungaku” [“Taishū bungaku” in Taiwan during Japanese Rule]; and 3) *Taiwan Kanbun tsūzoku bungaku shū* [Collected Works of Taiwan Popular Literature in Chinese], ten volumes (1998), edited by Shimomura Sakujirō and Huang Ying-che, included in *Dazhong wenxue xilie* [Popular Literature Series], published by Qianwei Publishers.

*Dazhong wenxue xilie* belongs to the period under Japanese rule, and except for Lin Hui-k'un's *Arasoenu unmei* [Incontestable Fate], written in Japanese, all the others were written in Chinese, indicating that popular fiction written in the vernacular Chinese at that time in Taiwan enjoyed a large circulation and considerable readership. In this issue, we have selected the first few chapters from *Ke'ai de chouren* [Loveable Foes], 1936, by Ah Q's Brother; and *Jiucaihua* [Chive Flowers], 1939, by Wu Man-sha.

#### D) Historical and Romantic Tales of Popular Literature in Taiwan during Japanese Rule

As explained above, popular fiction in Taiwan during Japanese rule contains a variety of genres, and historical tales is one of the subgenres. In the long history of China, we have Tang tales, Song storytelling, traditional novels in the *zhanghui* chapters style of the Ming and Qing, and even the fiction about roving knights and palace chambers, all having a plot involving historical events as the background to interpret history as romance. The first story of this type, written in classical Chinese by Hsieh Hsüeh-yü, is “Strange Karma on the Battlefield,” published in 1905 in the traditional *zhanghui* chapters style. Although the battlefield described in the story reminds the reader of Chinese traditional novels, *The Romance of the Three Kingdoms* and *Heroes of the Marshes*, the scene was set to reflect the history of the Hundred Years' War (1337-1453) between England and France, indicating that the object of this imitation in creative writing came from remote Europe, not Taiwan or China. If we try to single out a writer who wrote romance with the historical and geographical background set in Taiwan, and was good at constructing a peculiar plot with imagination, indulging in fantasies and aesthetic tastes, Nishikawa Mitsuru (1908-1999) may turn out to be remarkable among the writers in Taiwan during the colonial period.

His collected works include *Nishikawa Taiwan shōsetsu shū—Kamigami no saiten* [Collected Works of Nishikawa Mitsuru's Taiwan Stories—The Festival of the Gods], *Nishikawa Chūgoku shōsetsu shū—Hinkei no asa* [Collected Works of Nishikawa Mitsuru's China Stories—The Morning of Hens], *Nishikawa Chūgoku shōsetsu shū—Sōchōki* [Collected Works of Nishikawa Mitsuru's China Stories—A Pair of Butterflyflies], *Nishikawa Ikoku shōsetsu shū—Teheran no shinpan* [Collected Works of Nishikawa Mitsuru's Exotic Stories—Trial of the Teheran Murder Case], *Chōhen denki—Shinjū hōtō* [Romance Novel—Jeweled Pagoda], all suggesting an inclination toward exotic fantasies and the aesthetic taste of literary imagination.

As far as historical romance is concerned, Nishikawa's historical stories, such as “Sekkan-rō” [Fort Provintia], “Shushi-ki” [Story of the Zhu Family], “Sairyū-ki” [The Sulfur Expedition], as well as the romance novels, such as “Rika fujin” [Madame Pear Blossom] and “Soso kōshu” [Lady Grace], all have obvious characteristics of popular fiction. As Professor Nakajima pointed out, “Unexpectedly, the popular literature of Taiwan reached its zenith, so to speak, in Nishikawa Mitsuru's works.” In this issue, we have selected two of his stories as examples: “Seikon-byō no enba” [The Temptress of the Seikon Temple] and “Soso kōshu” [Lady Grace]. Incidentally, this journal has published the following three pieces of Nishikawa's work in the past: “Sairyūki” [The Sulfur Expedition], in Numbers 7-9 (June 2000 to June 2001); “Eiren no

sensu” [Eiren’s Fan], in Number 13 (July 2003); and “Kamigami no saiten” [The Festival of the Gods], in Number 14 (January 2004).

Continuing from the previous issue on the works of Chang Wen-huan, we have published two more stories in this issue: “Ochitsubomi” [Fallen Bud], translated by Professor Bert Scroggs, and “Geidan no ie” [The *Geidan*’s House], translated by Dr. Lili Selden. We thank the translators for their continued effort. In translating the selected items, our principle is to try to translate from the original text; when it comes to translating original works in Japanese, it is more difficult, and hence the translators’ help and efforts are even more appreciated. Dr. Jon Reed and Dr. Hsin-chieh Li joined our translation team for this issue and herewith we express our appreciation and welcome. In addition to the translations by Professor Backus as our English editor, we would like to express our appreciation of the painstaking work contributed by Professor Patricia Welch and all the other translators of this issue. Accomplished and highly respected translators John Balcom and Yingtsih as a couple and Professor Jennifer Jay are long-term supporters of the journal, and their continued assistance deserves our heartfelt thanks.