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史明《回憶錄：追求理想不回頭》譯註：捕捉聲音、平衡勢力、保

存歷史

An Annotated Translation of *Su Beng's Memoirs: The Pursuit of Ideals*

without Turning Back: Capturing Voices, Balancing Forces, and

Preserving the Past

年麥可

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Abstract

Although there have been several books written about leaders important to Taiwan such as Chiang Kai-shek or Lee Teng-hui, there is a dearth of literature revolving around other significant figures such as Su Beng. Moreover, very few of Su Beng's works or works about Su Beng exist in English. Much of the English language literature surrounding this extraordinary figure is manifested in news articles or short summaries. Su Beng's colorful background, revolutionary ideals, and enduring legacy deserve the attention of anyone wishing to study Taiwanese history, especially in regards to the Taiwanese independence movement. Additionally, the translation of memoirs and autobiographies requires exceptional skill. A translator of a memoir will have to pay attention to several focal points: find ways to bridge linguistic and cultural gaps, maintain the voice of the author, balance the forces of domestication and foreignization, etc. Thus, the goal of this thesis is twofold: 1, produce and analyze a translation that balances Su Beng's intention with the contours of the English language; and 2, by virtue of producing an English translation, bring Su Beng to both the English-speaking general public and academia. The author hopes that by translating part of Su Beng's autobiography, Taiwan can be seen in a new light by highlighting its controversial past, present dilemmas, and hopeful future.

Keywords: Su Beng, Taiwanese history, annotated translation, memoirs

摘要

儘管有幾本關於台灣重要領導人如蔣介石或李登輝的書籍已經問世，但關於其他重要人物如史明的文獻卻相對匱乏。此外，史明的作品或關於史明的作品在英語世界中也極少。英語文獻中關於這位非凡人物的大部分體現在新聞文章或簡短的摘要中。史明豐富多彩的背景、革命理念與持久的遺產值得任何希望研究台灣歷史、尤其是研究台灣獨立運動的人關注。另外，回憶錄和自傳的翻譯需要卓越的技巧。回憶錄的譯者必須關注多個焦點：找到彌合語言和文化差距的方法，保持作者的聲音，平衡歸化與異化的勢力等。因此，本文有兩個目標：1. 製作並分析一個平衡史明意圖與英語語言特點的翻譯；2. 通過製作英語翻譯，將史明介紹給英語世界的大眾和學界。作者希望通過翻譯史明自傳的一部分，藉此以新的角度展示台灣，突顯其具有爭議的過去、當前的困境及充滿希望的未來。

關鍵詞：史明、台灣歷史、註釋翻譯、回憶錄

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements.....	i
Abstract.....	ii
摘要.....	iii
Table of Contents.....	iv
List of Figures.....	vi
Part 1: Introduction to Taiwanese History, Su Beng, and Translation Theories	1
Chapter 1: Introduction.....	1
1.1 Research Motivation and Purpose.....	1
1.2 A Brief History of Taiwan	4
1.3 A Brief History of Su Beng.....	23
1.4 Background to <i>Su Beng's Memoirs: The Pursuit of Ideals Without Looking Back</i>	27
1.5 Su Beng's Other Works in English.....	29
Chapter 2: Literature Review	32
2.1 Free vs. Literal Debate.....	32
2.2 Domestication and Foreignization	35
2.3 Thick Translation.....	37
2.4 Autobiography and Autobiography Translation	38
2.5 Select Translations of Autobiographies	39
Chapter 3: Application of Translation Theories.....	42
Chapter 4: Conclusion, Limitations, and Future Prospects.....	52
Part 2: Annotated Translation of <i>Su Beng's Memoirs: The Pursuit of Ideals Without Looking Back</i>	57
Chapter 1: My Unforgettable Grandmother, Sikhu Sikui (Shiqiu Shigui).....	57
Section 1: The Life of My Grandmother	58
Section 2: My Grandmother the Paragon.....	71
Section 3: The One Who Awoke My Taiwanese Consciousness	80
Chapter 2: My Hometown, Bazhilin (Shilin).....	89
Section 1: Bazhilin.....	89
Section 2: Bazhilin Old Street and Bazhilin New Street of the Old Days	91
Section 3: The Customs of Praying to the Gods and Worshipping One's Ancestors	98

Section 4: The Records of Shilin	101
Chapter 3: I Have Two Homes	130
Section 1: My Father, Lin Jichuan	131
Section 2: My Mother, Linshi Shixiu.....	156
Section 3: My Uncle, Shi Zhenxing (Foster Father)	164
Section 4: My Aunt, Linshi Yuying.....	170
Section 5: My Third Younger Sister, Lin Cuiyun, Who Died in an Attack by an American Submarine	175
References.....	177
Appendix.....	185



List of Figures

Figure 1. Su Beng as a child with his father and mother	23
Figure 2. Su Beng as a student at Waseda University	24
Figure 3. Su Beng as an intelligence agent in China	25
Figure 4. Su Beng working at New Gourmet in Ikebukuro	26
Figure 5. Su Beng with Tsai Ying-wen	27
Figure 6. The Japanese version of Taiwan's 400 Year History	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Figure 7. "Laozumu." Su Beng's grandmother, Shiqiu Shigui.....	57
Figure 8. Su Beng's father, Lin Jichuan	131
Figure 9. Su Beng's mother, Linshi Shixiu.....	156
Figure 10. Su Beng's Uncle, Shi Zhenxing	164
Figure 11. Su Beng's aunt, Lin Yuying	170
Figure 12. Su Beng's sister, Lin Cuiyun.....	175



Part 1: Introduction to Taiwanese History, Su Beng, and Translation Theories

Chapter 1: Introduction

He is sometimes referred to as “the father¹ of the Taiwanese independence movement” or “the Che Guevara of Taiwan².” His life spanned several eras, from the Japanese colonization of Taiwan, the fires of the Chinese Civil War, the lifting of martial law in Taiwan, and to the first election of President Tsai Ying-wen. He was an enemy to the Chinese Communist Party³ (CCP) and the Kuomintang⁴ (KMT) alike, surviving persecution from both. His failed assassination of Chiang Kai-shek forced him to live in exile in Japan, where he continued to support revolutionary activities for nearly 40 years. Even after his return to Taiwan, down to his final breaths, he never relinquished the cause of Taiwanese independence. He passed away in 2019, leaving this world at the ripe age of 100. This man is Su Beng.

1.1 Research Motivation and Purpose

During his life, Su Beng assumed many roles. He was part revolutionary, activist, guerilla, historian, and long-term advocate of Taiwanese independence. However, his name is rarely heard of in the West or the English-speaking world. While English language sources and literature on Su Beng exist, they are often fragmentary. They primarily reside in news articles, podcasts, or limited translations of his works. The overwhelming literature of this amazing figure exist in Chinese, thus preventing his story and works from reaching the world at large. His

¹ Su Beng is also sometimes referred to as “the grandfather of the Taiwanese independence movement.” See: <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/10/04/world/asia/su-beng-dead.html> and <https://international.thenewslens.com/article/126574>.

² See: https://booksfromtaiwan.tw/books_info.php?id=77.

³ Officially the “Communist Party of China” (中國共產黨), it is commonly referred to as the “Chinese Communist Party” or “CCP.”

⁴ Rendered as the “Nationalist Party of China” or “Chinese Nationalist Party” (國民黨) in English. It is often abbreviated to “KMT” or transliterated as “Kuomintang.”

magnum opus, *Taiwan's 400 Year History* (台灣人四百年史) was first translated into English in 1986 but is only an abridged version of the original three-volume work, making it impossible to be analyzed in earnest. Additionally, given the linguistic and cultural gap between Taiwanese culture and Western culture, a translator seeking to translate his works must be able to balance Su Beng's original phrasing and context with the uninitiated target audience. This especially rings true for his autobiography, *Su Beng's Memoirs: The Pursuit of Ideals Without Looking Back* (史明回憶錄：追求理想不回頭).

Furthermore, the choice to translate such a colorful figure can help provide more perspectives on modern Taiwanese history, the emergence of a Taiwanese national identity, and Cross Strait relations. The relationship between Taiwan and China is complex, mired in complicated history and opposing political stances. One must grasp the history of the Qing dynasty, Japan, Republic of China (ROC), and People's Republic of China (PRC) before truly understanding Taiwan's role. Perhaps more importantly, history must be viewed from all viewpoints, not just one. Although Su Beng's views may be deemed radical by some, he is nonetheless an important part of Taiwanese history, as his life highlights the conflict between the KMT government and the local Taiwanese during the 20th century. His story is essentially a counternarrative that runs against traditional nationalist histories. At the very least, by reading Su Beng, we will be able to analyze a figure who had existed "outside the system," thus enriching our understanding of Taiwanese history and preserving history.

The decision to translate the first three chapters was not an easy one. *Su Beng's Memoirs* is a massive book of approximately 1,000 pages. For the purposes of this thesis, I could only choose a handful of chapters. Furthermore, I would also need to choose which chapters would bear the most fruit. Do I focus on his early history or later history? What do I want to show to my

reader and future readers? As Su Beng has lived a long and rich life, my troubles were compounded. Not to mention, I would also need a great deal of background knowledge to grasp the historical context of the selected chapters. That would require tremendous amounts of research (as this thesis shall soon demonstrate). Ultimately, I chose the first three chapters primarily for the following reasons:

1. By starting at the beginning, we can examine his earliest influences, namely his grandmother, as she was the one who “awoke his Taiwanese consciousness.”
2. The first three chapters show another dimension of Su Beng, i.e., his humanness. The aforementioned chapters provide vignettes of his sorrow, guilt, regret as well as his convictions, sense of justice, and love for his family. The reader is thus able to view the kaleidoscope of emotions that Su Beng had experienced.
3. These chapters, especially chapter 2, are culturally dense. Su Beng employs many historical terms and discusses many religious and cultural concepts that are unique to Taiwanese culture. The selected chapters make for an excellent candidate for translation as they test the limits of translation. Consequently, this allows for annotations (“thick translation”) to bridge cultural and linguistic gaps.
4. On narrative-level, starting too close to the middle or end would mean writing pages upon pages of summaries and notes, as I would need to fill in the gaps of what happened in previous chapters. This would produce too jarring of an effect upon the reader.

In conclusion, using Su Beng’s memoir as the object of study, this thesis explores several areas in Translation Studies: the impact of foreignization and domesticating forces, the peculiarities of autobiography translation, and the application of the thick translation approach. The goal of this thesis is twofold: 1, to produce and analyze a translation that balances yet

captures Su Beng's intent and meaning while conforming to the contours of the target culture; and 2, by virtue of the production of said translation, bring Su Beng to the English-speaking general public and academia. Finally, translating Su Beng will also allow for the preservation of an arguably important yet lesser-known figure in Taiwanese history.

This thesis also raises several questions: What is the role of the translator? Should the translator seek to *become* their subject? Does knowing that a work is a translation have an impact on the interpretation of the text? I admit that these are all worthwhile questions to ponder. However, this thesis does not claim to produce any definitive answers, and only seeks to shed light on such questions.

1.2 A Brief History of Taiwan

Firstly, it is important to contextualize Su Beng within the greater field of Taiwanese history as his role can better be understood by first discussing events he had lived through and forces at play. Moreover, as historians have many different viewpoints and aims, the introduction here will be limited to general narratives in consideration of scope and length. This brief history will not only serve as a backdrop in which to understand Su Beng, but also as a basis for the annotated translation.

The start of Taiwanese history is tricky and debated. Chou Wan-yao (2020) traces Taiwanese history to the prehistoric era, attempting to insert the cultures and peoples that have lived on the island starting from roughly 30,000-50,000 years ago into the narrative of Taiwanese history.⁵ Europeans did not come into contact with Taiwan until Portuguese sailors “discovered”

⁵ From Chou Wan-yao's *A New Illustrated History of Taiwan*, published in 2020. This book is a relatively new and comprehensive overview of the history of Taiwan. Su Beng himself spends little time discussing the Taiwanese indigenous peoples, making Chou's work more complete. Michael Stainton in “The Politics of Taiwan Aboriginal Origins” in *Taiwan, a New History* (2007) also spends time to include the indigenous peoples as well.

the island in 1544 during the time of the Ming dynasty.⁶ They called the island “Ilha Formosa,” meaning “beautiful island.”

However, actual European settlement of Taiwan did not occur until the early 17th century. At this time, it must be stressed that Taiwan was “on the outer edge of Chinese conscious and activity, with little or no permanent Chinese settlement...” (Wills, 2007, p. 85). In fact, the island was the frontier of several competing powers, including the Spanish, Dutch, Ming dynasty, and later the Qing dynasty. The first real attempt at controlling and colonizing Taiwan starts with the Dutch. In 1602, the Dutch established the Dutch East India Company⁷ (VOC) to protect and expand their trade interests in Asia. Furthermore, the VOC was granted vast powers: they could raise an army, sign treaties, and establish their own colonies⁸.

In 1603, the first permanent Dutch trading post in Indonesia was established in Banten on the island of Java. Jayakarta (modern day Jakarta) was also established that same year. The Dutch sought trade with China but were unable to establish a trading port on the Chinese coast itself. Moreover, they were unable to oust the Portuguese from their port in Macao. Thus, in 1622, the Dutch resolved to establish a base at Penghu, a group of islands off the coast of Taiwan, but were driven out by Ming forces. Defeated, they turned to Taiwan. In southern Taiwan, they built a fort on the Tayuoan Peninsula⁹ just off the coast of modern-day Anping District, Tainan. Four years later, they rebuilt the fort and named it Fort Zeelandia. At this point, Taiwan was not part of Chinese territory, and was primarily inhabited by Taiwanese indigenous

⁶ The Ming dynasty ruled China from 1368-1644.

⁷ Officially the “Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie” in Dutch. Commonly referred to as the “Dutch East India Company” or its Dutch initials “VOC” in English. See Oscar Gelderblom et al.’s “The Formative Years of the Modern Corporation: The Dutch East India Company VOC, 1602-1623” (2013).

⁸ Dutch rule in Taiwan, or Dutch Formosa, lasted from 1624-1662 and then from 1664-1668. For a detailed account of the Dutch rule in Taiwan, refer to Chiu Hsin-hui’s *The Colonial ‘Civilizing Process’ in Dutch Formosa, 1624-1662* (2008).

⁹ According to Chou, the names “Tayuan, T’aiyuan, and T’aiwan” were all used to describe the settlement near the Tayuoan Peninsula. Ultimately, the latter was used and later became the name of the entire island.

peoples. Chou reports that, “There were indeed Chinese people living on the on Taiwan before the Dutch arrival, but most them were seasonal residents, and they weren’t particularly numerous” (p. 65).

However, as previously mentioned, Taiwan was the convergence point of several powers. Spain was already an advanced player in the great imperialist game, having already established several colonies in the North and South America in the early 16th century¹⁰. In Asia, Spain first arrived in the Philippines in 1521 with Ferdinand Magellan’s expedition, but full-scale colonization efforts did not come until 1564. In 1565, Cebu was conquered, and in the following year Manila fell as well. Spurred by the Dutch in southern Taiwan, the Spanish sought to expand their influence in Taiwan as well. They first settled in northern Taiwan in the natural harbor of Keelung in 1626. They then built their second settlement, Fort San Domingo, in Tamsui in 1628.

Spanish rule in Taiwan did not last long. The first expedition to oust the Spanish in 1641 failed, but the Dutch were victorious the following year. The remaining Spanish forces retreated back to Manila. Thus, after the Dutch conquered Keelung they became the sole European power in Taiwan, but one should not equate this as possessing absolute rule. The inland parts of the island, such as the central mountain range, remained inaccessible. More importantly, the Dutch now faced the threat of Zheng Chenggong, better known as Koxinga in the West.

Koxinga was a Ming loyalist who resisted the Qing dynasty in the 17th century. In the early 17th century, the Ming dynasty was embroiled with several issues¹¹. Low tax revenues led to troop desertions, which in turn led to increased activity from hostile tribes (Spence, 2012, p. 3). To the northeast, the Jurchens had united under Nurhachi’s banner in 1616. His eighth son,

¹⁰ Spanish rule in Taiwan, or Spanish Formosa, lasted from 1626-1642. For an expanded look at Spanish rule in Taiwan, refer to Jose Eugenio Borao Mateo’s *The Spanish Experience in Taiwan, 1626-1642* (2009).

¹¹ For a further look at the late Ming and Qing dynasties, refer to Jonathan Spence’s *The Search for Modern China* (2012).

Hong Taiji, was officially declared emperor of the Qing dynasty in 1636—the traditional start date of the dynasty. One year prior, he changed the name of the Jurchens to “Manchu” in 1635. The Ming, however, was in a poor state, as it was dealing with its fiscal woes and festering peasant rebellions. This gave the Qing an opening. A peasant soldier, Li Zicheng, mutinied against the Ming and proclaimed himself emperor in 1644. Wu Sangui, a Ming military official, then threw his lot with the invading Manchus. In 1644, Wu Sangui and the Manchus defeated Li Zicheng and conquered Beijing, thereby taking control of the government. The Ming dynasty officially collapsed.

It is within this backdrop that we return to Taiwan. The Qing had yet to make a claim on the island. In fact, Koxinga founded a short-lived pro-Ming state called the Kingdom of Tungning in 1661. Although he successfully defeated the Dutch in 1662 in the Siege of Fort Zeelandia, Koxinga died of malaria just a few months after the battle. The Dutch retook Keelung in 1664 and held on to it until 1668, but ultimately succumbed to defeat by Zheng Jing, Koxinga’s eldest son. The Kingdom of Tungning then became the sole power on the island, effectively becoming what Chou (2020) calls “a small scale model of the Ming court” (p. 68). During this time, just like with the Dutch period, waves of Han settlers arrived in Taiwan. Chou reports that during this period, the “Han population increased from about 35,000-50,000 to about 120,000” (2020, p. 68).

The Kangxi Emperor, the second emperor of the Qing dynasty, ordered the invasion of Taiwan in 1682. The Qing forces arrived in 1683 and defeated the Kingdom of Tungning’s forces at the Battle of Penghu in July. This officially began the period of Qing rule. Taiwan was

administered as a prefecture of Fujian province¹². New waves of Han settlers arrived and tamed the land (also inevitably clashing with the locals). Society slowly shifted from a pioneer society to a settled society as the gentry class grew. In the mid-19th century, Taiwan was allowed to open its ports (the Qing originally forbade foreigners from entering its territory, including Taiwan). This brought in new waves of foreign missionaries, merchants, diplomats, etc. But even greater changes for Taiwan were just upon the horizon.

Not far from Taiwan was another island that was undergoing a meteoric rise—Japan¹³. The island country had existed as a feudal, agrarian state for several centuries. The isolationist Tokugawa Shogunate ruled Japan ever since 1603 but showed signs of weakening in the 19th century. By mid-19th century, discontent with the government's handling of foreigners (such as the Perry Expedition¹⁴) boiled over into civil war, called the Boshin War, which saw a pro-emperor faction restore the Emperor of Japan—Emperor Meiji¹⁵—as the head of government. This marked the beginning of the Meiji Era¹⁶, which was characterized by far sweeping and rapid changes in Japan's politics, economy, and society. Conscription was enacted, education became compulsory, and the emperor was placed at the very center of the political order (Gordon, 2003). Eager to learn from the West, Japan demonstrated a remarked openness towards Western ideas and technology. By the late 19th century, Japan was poised to join the imperialist game.

¹² Taiwan was a prefecture (fu, 府) under Fujian province (sheng, 省) at the beginning of the Qing period. A province was the largest administrative unit in imperial China. It was not granted provincial status until 1887, when it was renamed "Taiwan-Fujian Province."

¹³ For a detailed account on modern Japanese history, refer to Andrew Gordon's *A Modern History of Japan: From Tokugawa Times to the Present* (2003).

¹⁴ The Perry Expedition (1853-1854) was a diplomatic and military expedition to Japan. The US sought greater maritime trade with Asia but also needed coaling stations to fuel this trade. The expedition occurred in two separate voyages. Perry's first negotiations with Japan in 1853 failed. He vowed to return the following year, which he did. Begrudgingly, Japan signed the Treaty of Kanagawa under threat of force, officially opening up Japan to the world. See: <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1830-1860/opening-to-japan>.

¹⁵ Emperor Meiji (1852-1912, 明治). He ruled Japan from 1867 to his death. Meiji's reign saw Japan transform from a largely agrarian, feudal country to a modern, industrial nation.

¹⁶ The Meiji era lasted from 1868 to 1912. The Meiji Restoration, which began the era, occurred 1868.

In contrast, the aging Qing dynasty, now fully in its “century of humiliation¹⁷,” was struggling to respond to repeated foreign incursions¹⁸, often losing wars to foreign powers and being forced to sign humiliating treaties (the unequal treaties¹⁹). The Qing was also struggling to maintain its tributary states, such as Korea. Much like Commodore Perry’s expedition to Japan, Japan forced Korea open in the Ganghwa Treaty in 1876. Japan now held a stake in control of Korea. Both the Chinese and Japanese attempted to assert their influence in the subsequent years. Rivalry then turned to armed confrontation. In Korea, the Donghak movement²⁰ blamed Korean officials and foreigners—including the Chinese and Japanese for their woes. Armed peasants were successful at besting government forces in several battles. The Korean government then requested China to send troops to help put down the rebellion which in turn gave Japan the pretext to send its own troops in the name of “protecting Japanese residents.” China responded by sending troops to help suppress the rebellion. Ultimately, Chinese forces, both on land and sea, were crushed.

In 1895, the Treaty of Shimonoseki was signed which concluded the war. China was forced to recognize the independence of Korea, cede Taiwan, the Penghu Islands, and the

¹⁷ The Century of Humiliation (百年國恥) is generally defined as the period from 1839-1949. 1839 marks the start of the First Opium War (1839-1842). 1949 marks the founding of the PRC. This period of 100 years saw China experience a slew of foreign incursions and internal rebellions as it struggled to stabilize and reform itself. Note that this period includes the Qing and ROC periods. See: <https://www.asianstudies.org/publications/ea/archives/the-national-humiliation-narrative-dealing-with-the-present-by-fixating-on-the-past/>.

¹⁸ The Qing fought several wars against foreign powers from 1839 to 1911. For reasons of scope, they cannot all be described in this brief history. The most notable ones are: The First Opium War (1839-1842), the Second Opium War (1856-1860), the Sino-French War (1884-1885), the First Sino Japanese War (1894-1895), and the Boxer Uprising (1899-1901). It also fought several internal rebellions, such as the Taiping Rebellion (1850-1864) and the Dungan Revolt (1862-1877).

¹⁹ “Unequal treaties” (Bupingdeng Tiaoyue, 不平等條約) was the name given by the Chinese to the largely one-sided and often humiliating agreements signed between China and foreign powers. The treaties often forced China to open up a treaty port, pay a large indemnity, or cede land. They were a defining feature of the Century of Humiliation.

²⁰ The Donghak Movement (1894-1895) or Donghak Rebellion was a peasant revolt that took place in Korea. “Donghak” itself means “Eastern Learning” (東學 in Chinese characters) and was a kind of syncretic religious-academic movement that rejected Christian thought.

Liaodong Peninsula²¹ to Japan, and pay an indemnity of 200 taels. To China, the war was yet another humiliating and disastrous defeat—no less from a “little brother”; to Japan, the war was a resounding success which filled the country with national pride; to the West, the shocking event was sobering proof that Japan had modernized and became a force to be reckoned with.

For Taiwan, Japanese rule²² brought with it the forces of modernization and industrialization. The colonizers improved the island in several aspects, such as transportation, education, and medical care. A new breed of rice crop was planted, furthering agricultural production. A modern, compulsory education system was implemented. Eventually, even the use of electricity became more common. The Japanese were determined to make Taiwan a “model colony” (Wees, 2020).

Yet colonization also brought change, conflict, and oppression. The Japanese military administered Taiwan for the first three years. No effort was spared to pacify the island. Uprisings such as the Beipu Uprising (1907) were swiftly put down. Furthermore, those living on the island experienced racism and exploitation and, at times, the experience was authoritarian. Lamley (2015) writes, “Not only were the Taiwanese exposed to oppressive colonial measure and police brutality, but they were assessed household fees and subjected to fines and corporal punishment for petty violations” (p. 214).

Even so, forces and voices within Taiwan continued to resist, albeit in different form. Armed protest gave way to more peaceful but equally vocal methods. For example, the

²¹ Other foreign powers such as Russia, Germany, and France intervened, called the Triple Intervention. This intervention prevented the cession of the Liaodong Peninsula. Japan was granted an additional indemnity of 30 million taels instead.

²² The Japanese colonial period in Taiwan lasted from 1895-1945. On October 25, 1945, Chen Yi, acting under the orders of Douglas MacArthur’s General Order No. 1, accepted Japan’s surrender of Taiwan to the ROC. It is important to note that this was controversial as no official peace treaty between the ROC and Japan had been signed at that point.

Taiwanese Cultural Association (TCA) was established in 1921 by Jiang Weishui²³ in Taipei (known as Taihoku at the time). Influenced by the tide of nationalism and self-determination after WWI, the organization's goal was to establish greater autonomy in Taiwan, namely, the establishment of a parliament. Later, the TCA split, with Jiang Weishui forming the Taiwanese People's Party, arguably Taiwan's first legal political party. The party's goals were to improve the overall wellbeing of the Taiwanese as well as push for more self-governance²⁴. Although both organizations were largely unsuccessful in achieving their goals, they nonetheless represent the kinds of non-violent resistance movements present in Taiwan at the time as well as the beginnings of Taiwanese self-determination.

Back in China, in wake of the defeat against Japan, revolutionary forces fomented as the government struggled with how to strengthen China and deal with the imperialist powers. The war with Japan was a spit to the face in the Self-Strengthening Movement²⁵ that began in the 1861, as the Qing's partially modernized fleet failed miserably against the Japanese navy. By late 19th century, Western influences continued to penetrate deeper into China, and with it, new ideas and new paths. Between June and September 1898, the Guangxu Emperor enacted a series of reforms called the "Hundred Days' Reforms." His reforms included the abolition of the "eight-legged essay"²⁶ as well as the conversion of academies into modern schools. Reformers like Kang Kouwei were put in positions of influence. Unfortunately, Guangxu's plans came to a halt

²³ Jiang Weishui (1890-1931, 蔣渭水). His name is also Romanized as "Chiang Wei-shui." He was a Taiwanese political activist known for founding the Taiwan Cultural Association and the Taiwanese People's Party. See: <https://nrch.culture.tw/twpedia.aspx?id=5876>.

²⁴ See: <https://nrch.culture.tw/twpedia.aspx?id=3736>.

²⁵ The Self Strengthening Movement (1861-1895) encompassed a series of military, industrial, educational, and reform policies. Defeat in the Second Opium War (1856-1860) was the initial catalyst. Officials such as Li Hongzhang supported the reforms, but they were limited in scope and were localized to only certain parts of China.

²⁶ The eight-legged essay (buguwen, 八股文) was a structurally rigid essay that was required in the imperial examination. Test takers were forced to write in an extremely formulaic way. The topic varied through the years but usually centered on Confucian thought.

as his aunt, the Empress Dowager Cixi, and other conservative supporters put Guangxu under house arrest in a coup.

As reform within the government looked bleak, others with more revolutionary ideas came to the fore. One such revolutionary was Sun Yat-sen²⁷. A native of Guangdong province, Sun was educated in Hawaii²⁸ where he studied English, history, mathematics, and science. This experience also gave him a taste of a republican form of government. He later escaped to Hong Kong where he studied medicine at the Guangzhou Boji Hospital and earned his medical license at Hong Kong College of Medicine for Chinese. However, Sun believed that his work as a doctor would not be enough to save China. Sun then offered his services to Li Hongzhang in 1894 as an adviser for defense reforms, but he was rejected by Li. Disappointed, Sun and other revolutionaries established the Xingzhonghui²⁹ in Hawaii in 1894. Following the aftermath of the First-Sino Japanese War, Sun firmly planted his feet on path of revolution while Qing officials like Kang Youwei and Liang Qichao still walked the path of reform.

After several failed armed uprisings, Sun exiled himself to Japan. There he cooperated with revolutionary students studying Tokyo and formed the Tongmenghui³⁰ in 1904. The organization's goal was to overthrow the Qing government, establish a republic, and deal with land reform. Sun's underground organization found eager and energetic recruits while Sun himself constantly sought to raise money for his revolutionary activities.

²⁷ Sun Yat-sen (1866-1925; 孫中山 in Mandarin; 孫逸仙 in Cantonese). In the West, he is often known by his Cantonese name, "Sun Yat-sen," as Cantonese was his native language. In China and Taiwan, he is known by one of his Mandarin names, "Sun Zhongshan."

²⁸ Sun made several trips to Hawaii in his life. His earliest experience was during the time of the Kingdom of Hawaii (1795-1893), but he also lived in Hawaii when it was the Republic of Hawaii (1894-1898), and Territory of Hawaii (1900-1959). See: <http://sunyatsenhawaii.org/2008/10/28/sun-yat-sen-and-hawaii/>.

²⁹ Xingzhonghui (興中會). Also translated as the "Revive China Society" or "Society for Regenerating China" in English.

³⁰ Tongmenghui (中國同盟會). Also translated as the "Chinese United League" or "Chinese Revolutionary Alliance." This was a secret society founded by Sun Yat-sen and Song Jiaoren, and was dedicated to overthrowing the Qing dynasty. It was later replaced by the KMT.

By the late 19th century, foreign influences, whether direct or indirect, could be felt in the Chinese hinterlands. Nearly all railways were built and operated by foreign powers³¹. However, in 1910, the Qing government recognize the need to control of the railways then sell the rights to foreign banks as a way to pay off debt from the Boxer Uprising³². This move faced stiffed resistance which culminated in the Railway Protection Movement. From August 11-13, more than 10,000 protestors gathered in Chengdu, Sichuan province, to resist the nationalization of the rail system which resulted in a bloody protest.

The Qing government requested troops stationed in Hubei to be deployed to Sichuan. Two revolutionary groups, the Literary Society and Progressive Association, were operating in Wuhan at that time. In 1911, they began talks with Sun's Tongmenghui on staging the next uprising. The original date was set for October 6 of that year but was postponed. Unexpectedly, on October 9, the person responsible for making the explosives, Sun Wu, was injured when one of the explosives accidentally detonated. The next day, on October 10³³, with the mutineers' identities revealed, the revolutionaries in the New Army³⁴ decided to launch their uprising. This was known as the Wuchang Uprising, the official start to the 1911 Revolution. They were

³¹ For further information regarding the railway situation during the Late Qing, see Mary Backus Rankin's "Nationalistic Contestation and Mobilization Politics: Practice and Rhetoric of Railway-Rights Recovery at the End of the Qing" (2002).

³² The Boxer Uprising (1899-1902) was an anti-foreign uprising originally supported by local martial arts partitioners ("boxers") that later gained Qing support. Disgruntled villages resented the special privileges possessed by Christian missionaries. The Boxers converged on Beijing, trapping foreign diplomats, missionaries, and soldiers. An Eight-Nation Alliance composed of the Great Britain, the US, France, Austria-Hungary, Germany, Italy, Russia, and Japan defeated the uprising and Qing forces and forced the Qing government to pay an indemnity of 450 million taels of silver. See Joseph W. Esherick's *The Origins of the Boxer Uprising* (1988) and Paul A. Cohen's *History in Three Keys: The Boxers as Event, Experience, and Myth* (1998).

³³ The ROC commemorates the Wuchang Uprising on October 10, 1911, as the National Day of the Republic of China, sometimes called "Double Ten Day" (Shuangshi Jie, 雙十節).

³⁴ The New Army (xinjun, 新軍) were the modernized forces of the Qing army created after the First Sino-Japanese War. They were armed with modern weapons and employed Western-style divisional organization. Yuan Shikai was originally given command of a brigade-size unit, but later took command of several divisions. His specific army was called the "Beiyang Army." For more information about the New Army, see Edward A. McCord's *The Power of the Gun, The Emergence of Modern Chinese Warlordism* (1993).

successful in taking the residence of the viceroy, Ruicheng, and on October 11 they established a military government in Hubei.

A slew of uprisings and rebellions across all of China unfolded shortly afterwards. However, it is important to note that Sun did not have a direct hand in them as he was abroad at the time. By the end of the year, 14 provinces had declared independence from the government. The government then pleaded and successfully persuaded Yuan Shikai³⁵, a military official who was in charge of the modernized Beiyang Army in the north, to assume the position of prime minister to quell the revolutionaries. However, Yuan sought to preserve his own power, and thus negotiated with the revolutionaries instead. On December 29, Sun became President of the Provisional Government and declared the establishment of the Republic of China on January 1, 1912, but his tenure was short-lived. Yuan Shikai, who was the intermediary between the revolutionaries and the government, was promised the presidency if he could force the young emperor Puyi³⁶ to abdicate, which he did on February 12, 1912.

Sun fulfilled his promise and Yuan was made the new Provisional President on March 10, 1912. The Provisional Constitution came into effect the next day and called for elections to be held. Thus, on August 25, Sun, with the help of one of his most capable subordinates, Song Jiaoren, reorganized the members of the Tongmenghui into the Kuomintang, or “Chinese Nationalist Party,” whose goal was to oppose Yuan and curb his power. This first election, held between December 1912 and January 1913, was considered a great success for the KMT as they

³⁵ Yuan Shikai (1859-1916, 袁世凱) was a Chinese official in service of the Qing, later President of the Republic of China. Yuan started his career in politics by first joining Li Hongzhang’s Huai Army. Yuan, like Li, advocated for the modernization of the army. During the Boxer Uprising, Yuan refused to obey orders to leave the Boxers be. After Li’s death in 1902, Yuan was promoted to Viceroy of Zhili and focused on strengthening his Beiyang Army. As such, by the time of the 1911 Revolution, his army was practically the most modernized and most powerful.

³⁶ Puyi (1906-1967, 溥儀), also known as the Xuantong Emperor (宣統), was the last emperor of the Qing dynasty. He was forced to abdicate when he was just six years old in response to the pressures of the 1911 Revolution.

had a won a plurality of seats both in the House of Representatives and Senate. Furthermore, Song was expected to become premier. Unfortunately, he was assassinated on March 20, most likely under orders from Yuan. Yuan subsequently banned the KMT and proclaimed himself as Emperor of China in 1915. Unexpectedly, Yuan died the next year which then gave way to the Warlord Era³⁷. This period oversaw the fracturing of China into various cliques while still nominally under the name of the Republic of China. Now in exile, Sun resurrected the KMT in 1919 with purpose of reuniting China.

But the KMT was not the only political body at this time. The CCP, officially established in 1921 by Chen Duxiu and Li Dazhao, entered the scene. Sun himself was not pro-communist, but he believed that allying with them would hasten his unification of China. In 1923, he cooperated with the Soviet Union³⁸ to supply and train the National Revolutionary Army (NRA³⁹), the military arm of the KMT. The following year, Sun officially allied himself with the CCP in what was known as the First United Front⁴⁰. Sadly, Sun would not see his dreams of unification come to fruition as he passed away on January 26, 1925, due to liver cancer. His young protégé, Chiang Kai-shek, then took control of the KMT after a brief power struggle. Chiang then became commander-in-chief of the NRA in 1926.

Yet Chiang did in fact succeed in unifying China. His Northern Expedition, launched in 1926 successfully reunified China in 1928. This was the start of the “Nanjing Decade,” named

³⁷ The Warlord Era lasted from 1916-1928. Although Yuan Shikai died in 1916, his Beiyang government based in the north still wielded great power. Additionally, other cliques and warlords began to fill the power vacuum and assert control in their respective regions.

³⁸ In 1923, the Sun-Joffe Manifesto was signed between Sun Yat-sen and Adolf Joffe, who represented the Soviet Union. The agreement confirmed the Soviet Union’s intention to cooperate with the KMT to unify China.

³⁹ The NRA (國民革命軍) was officially established in 1925. It was renamed to the “Republic of China Armed Forces” (ROCA, 中華民國國軍) in 1947.

⁴⁰ The First United Front required that the CCP join the KMT as individuals and could maintain their status as members of the CCP. However, the alliance was created on shaky grounds and was held together primarily through Sun Yat-sen’s prestige. See Bruce A. Elleman’s “Soviet Diplomacy and the First United Front in China” (1995).

after the capital, Nanjing, where Chiang relocated his seat of power. However, simultaneously, the KMT began their campaign to eliminate the CCP. In 1927, the KMT launched their first surprise attack on the CCP in what became known as the Shanghai Massacre, thus effectively ending their alliance marking the beginning of the Chinese Civil War.

The series of campaigns against the CCP was to be known as the Encirclement Campaigns, but the conflict grew less and less popular against the backdrop of an impending war with Japan and rising tide of Chinese nationalism. Battered but not completely wiped out, the CCP retreated to Jiangxi and Shaanxi provinces in their Long March in 1935. Additionally, Mao Zedong, one of the founding members of the CCP, demonstrated great leadership and charisma, leading him to obtain a strong position within the party. Unexpectedly, in on December 12, 1936, Chiang was kidnapped by his subordinates and was forced to change his policy towards the CCP and stop the conflict between the two factions. The CCP were then ordered to operate as a force under the NRA though control was nominal. The Second United Front was thus formed the following year in order to resist a future war against Japan.

The Nanjing Decade ended in 1937 when Japan invaded China in the Second Sino-Japanese War⁴¹. Japan, now a world-class power at this stage, had great imperialist desires in Asia. The Mukden Incident in 1931 gave Japan a pretext to invade and conquer Manchuria which was owned by China. However, full scale fighting did not break out between China and Japan until 1937 with the Marco Polo Bridge Incident. In short, Japan wanted resources from China but was also guided by their expansionist ideology.

The NRA suffered many initial setbacks but by 1940 they had fought the Japanese to a near stalemate. Yet it must be noted that the CCP, although smaller in force, they also resisted

⁴¹ In China, the war is referred to as the “War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression” or “Resist Japan War” (抗日戰爭).

the Japanese invasion, primarily through guerilla tactics in contrast to the NRA's pitched battles. The KMT was seen as cowardly, corrupt and incompetent, whereas the CCP was able to mobilize the masses of peasants and were overall better motivated to fight. Unfortunately, the Second United Front broke down in 1941 due to a KMT attack on the CCP in the New Fourth Army Incident⁴². That same year, Japan launched a surprise attack on Pearl Harbor, thus pulling the US into the war. The full military and industrial weight of the US was placed on Japan after the decisive American victory at the Battle of Midway in 1942. On August 6, 1945, an atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima; three days later, one was dropped on Nagasaki. Exhausted and beaten, the Japanese were forced to sign the Japanese Instrument of Surrender on September 2, 1945, officially ending hostilities. The KMT then took administrative control of Taiwan on October 25 that year.

However, the rivalry between the KMT and the CCP did not end there. Both sides resumed hostilities against each other in earnest in 1946. The Marshall Mission in 1945 failed in its objective to unify the two camps. Overall, the CCP had won the hearts and minds of the poor masses, specifically in regard to land reform, but Spence (2012) notes that "Violence was an integral part of this process..." (p. 440). Coupled with their hit and run tactics, they were able to outmaneuver and frustrate the NRA. Moreover, the NRA was by far much more corrupt. Much of the supplies they received from the US to fight the communists was either stockpiled or sold. Surely but slowly, the CCP pushed south and drove the NRA back. Ultimately, the KMT forces retreated to Taiwan in 1949. The PRC, led by Mao Zedong, was proclaimed that same year.

Officially, no peace treaty to date has ever been signed by the PRC and the ROC.

⁴² The New Fourth Army Incident (1941) marked the official breakdown of the cooperation between the KMT and CCP. The KMT had ordered the CCP's New Fourth Army to move north of the Huang River. They were reluctant to move and thus were surrounded and attacked by KMT forces. However, it is important to note that the incident did not effect the end of the Second United Front.

The Treaty of San Francisco was signed two years later in 1951. The treaty officially ended the state of war between Japan and the Allied Powers. Troublingly, the section about Taiwan reads, “Japan renounces all right, title and claim to Formosa and the Pescadores” (San Francisco Treaty, 1952). Manthorpe (2005) explains, “No attempt was made to settle the question of Taiwan’s status when the Japanese Peace Treaty was negotiated and signed in 1951” (p. 195). In fact, neither the ROC nor the PRC were invited. This was a compromise between the US and Britain as neither country could decide which entity was the legitimate government of China. The then ROC signed a separate treaty with Japan the following year called the Treaty of Taipei. This treaty, too, did not specifically state that Taiwan would be transferred to the ROC.

A host of problems awaited the KMT in Taiwan. Establishing political control, redistributing land, and linguistic integration all became points of contention. Overall, despite the ROC’s democratic heritage, Chiang and the KMT’s treatment of the Taiwanese was extremely brutal. One particularly gruesome episode was the 228 Incident⁴³, ultimately resulting in protests and an open rebellion that lasted several weeks. Order was not restored until reinforcements from the mainland arrived. Then, martial law was officially declared in Taiwan in 1949. This marked the beginning of the “White Terror⁴⁴.” During this period, the government carried out persecutions against supposed communist spies but greatly expanded its powers to eliminate any political enemies (Lin, 2016, 185). Manthorpe (2005) reports that about 10,000 were tried in military courts, but approximately 45,000 were executed (p. 204). The White Terror would not end until 1987.

⁴³ Also called the “February 28 Incident” or the “228 Massacre.” On February 27, 1947, government agents from the Tobacco Monopoly Bureau attempted to seize contraband cigarettes from a 40-year-old woman. She refused and was struck by the agents. The next day, people went to the Monopoly Bureau to protest against such mistreatment. Guards posted at the Bureau opened fire into the crowd, which ignited a chain reaction of protests, resulting in the deaths of tens of thousands. See: <https://oftaiwan.org/history/white-terror/228-massacre/>.

⁴⁴ It lasted from 1949-1992. See the National Human Rights Museum. https://www.nhrm.gov.tw/w/nhrmEN/White_Terror_Period.

Yet the ROC—now based in Taiwan—did not lose its importance in the greater game of international diplomacy. Diplomatic events and incidents surrounding Taiwan occurred under the backdrop of the Cold War. President Dwight D. Eisenhower signed the Sino-American Mutual Defense Treaty (SAMD⁴⁵) with the ROC in 1954. The treaty’s provisions called for US military assistance should the ROC be invaded, but only covered the main island of Taiwan and the Penghu Islands. The treaty was signed amidst the First Taiwan Strait Crisis⁴⁶ which saw the PRC bombard the islands of Kinmen (also called Quemoy) Matsu, just off the coast of mainland China. Although the PRC agreed to stand down in September, in August 1958, they resumed their shelling of the two islands in the Second Taiwan Strait Crisis. The US did not back down and in fact supported the ROC as per the defense treaty. The PRC ultimately announce a ceasefire on October 6.

But with the CCP seemingly victorious in the civil war, the status of the ROC was now in danger. As early as the 1950s, countries start to switch recognition from the ROC to the PRC. Shattuck (2021) writes, “The momentum crested in summer 1971 when Albania, along with 16 other countries, announced an agenda item for consideration in the upcoming October 1971 General Assembly.” Ultimately, the ROC was officially replaced by the PRC via United Nations General Assembly Resolution 2758⁴⁷, passed on October 25. On January 1, 1979, the US established formal diplomatic relations with the PRC, and in the following year terminated SAMDT. However, Congress passed the Taiwan Relations Act in August which, although was not a binding defensive pledge, did allow the US to “make available to Taiwan such defense

⁴⁵ For the full text, see: https://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/chin001.asp.

⁴⁶ See: <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1953-1960/taiwan-strait-crisis>.

⁴⁷ For the full text, see: <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/192054?ln=en>.

articles and defense services in such quantity as may be necessary to enable Taiwan to maintain a sufficient self-defense capability (Taiwan Relations Act, 1979)⁴⁸.

Even though the ROC had lost its seat in the UN, Chiang Kai-shek never relinquished the idea of reconquering China. However, his death in 1975 changed the course of Taiwan and planted the seeds of democracy. Chiang Ching-kuo⁴⁹, Chiang Kai-shek's son, was then elected president in 1978. Previously, Chiang Ching-kuo had worked as the director of his father's secret police. But Chiang Ching-kuo broke from the authoritarian mold. Rubinstein (2007) reports, "He was more the civilian leader than the quasi-warlord that his father had been... he also recognized that his nation could be torn apart by long suppressed ethnic tensions and worked to defuse this tension by 'Taiwanizing'⁵⁰ his party and government" (p. 437). Furthermore, he ended the ban on opposition parties in 1986 and lifted martial law in 1987 (Manthroe, 2005, p. 219). Here, it is important to stress that many Taiwanese were reluctant to accept rule by the KMT. Thus, the Taiwanization process is significant because it 1, clearly delineated a difference between the KMT and the local Taiwanese, and 2, allowed Taiwanese at chance at governance.

Although the democratic thaw started with Chiang Ching-kuo, it was his successor, Lee Teng-hui⁵¹, who enacted much more sweeping change. Lee was the first president of the ROC to be born in Taiwan. He had grown up during the more stable periods of Japanese rule, but always disliked how the Japanese treated Taiwanese as second-class citizens (Manthroe, 2005, p. 219-220). With Lee, the Taiwanization process partially nudged by Chiang Ching-kuo was now in full swing. Lee reshuffled the KMT leadership and named 31 members to the Central

⁴⁸ For the full act, see: <https://www.ait.org.tw/taiwan-relations-act-public-law-96-8-22-u-s-c-3301-et-seq/>.

⁴⁹ Chiang Ching-kuo (1910-1988, 蔣經國).

⁵⁰ Taiwanization is the idea of establishing a Taiwanese identity and consciousness. See J. Bruce Jacobs's "Whither Taiwanization? The Colonization, Democratization, and Taiwanization of Taiwan" (2013).

⁵¹ Lee Tenghui (1923-2020, 李登輝).

Committee, sixteen of whom were Taiwanese. Additionally, Lee had to contend with the new Democratic Progressive Party (DPP)⁵², which won 21 out of the total 101 seats in the 1989 legislative elections. In the 1996 presidential election—Taiwan’s first direct election—Lee won the majority of the votes at 54%. The PRC had publicly opposed the elections but they were still carried out.

The 1996 presidential election was significant in that it allowed for political challenge. Lee, despite being a member of the KMT, did not suppress the opposing DDP, thus formalizing the democratic process. As Clark (2007) puts it, “Politically, the first-ever direct election of the president represented the culmination of Taiwan’s democratic transition from the late 1980s through the early 1990s, which had been far more peaceful and consensual than almost anyone had foreseen” (p. 497). In his second term, Lee played the hand of adept statesman again, attempting to assume more moderate stances when suitable. Diplomatically, he still paid allegiance to an eventual goal with China for Taiwan’s indefinite future while still trying to protect Taiwan’s sovereignty (Clark, 2007, p. 508). Lee also continued with his Taiwanization policy and promoted infrastructure development as well as environmental protection policies. In 2000, Lee observed the two term constitutional limits and stepped down from the presidency.

The 2000 presidential election was another hallmark in that the very first DPP president, Chen Shui-bian⁵³, was elected with a plurality of the vote at 39%. However, Chen soon faced gridlock against the entrenched KMT in the Legislative Yuan. Additionally, he had to deal the with 1997 Asian financial crisis and grapple with growing calls for Taiwanese independence

⁵² The Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) has its origins in the Tangwai movement, which was a loose movement that opposed the KMT. The movement started in the mid-1970s and its members initially ran as “independents” for seats in the Legislative Yuan. The movement culminated in the formation of the DPP in 1986.

⁵³ Chen Shui-bian (陳水扁). Former president of the ROC. See: *China and Taiwan: Cross-Strait Relations Under Chen Shui-bian* (2002).

from the DPP. Chen was reelected in 2004 but later faced charges of corruption in his second term. On May 20, 2008, Chen stepped down as president but was shortly arrested afterwards as prosecutors accused him of corruption and abuse of authority.

Running on a platform of friendlier relations with the PRC, KMT member and mainland-born Ma Ying-jeou⁵⁴ won the 2008 election as well as the following 2012 election. However, the threat of closer collusion with China and the railroading of the Cross-Strait Service Trade Agreement (CSSTA) by Ma sparked the Sunflower Movement⁵⁵ in 2014. The movement severely weakened the Ma administration and was left “bruised, battered, and beaten” (Templeman et al., 2020).

Tsai Ing-wen⁵⁶, the current president, won victories for the DDP in the 2016 as well as the 2020 elections. She is the first female president in the history of Taiwan. Originally Ma’s opponent in 2012 now-turned president, her platform centered on fostering and strengthening a *Taiwanese* identity as opposed to an ROC identity while also fighting for LGBT rights. Of note, her handling of the COVID pandemic has garnered her much praise.

Taiwan has seen a great deal of transformation since its earliest prehistoric inhabitants. The Dutch and Spanish episodes, though faded, still linger in architecture. The Qing and Japanese periods, too, linger in culture and memory. The KMT’s retreat to Taiwan and the resulting White Terror are reminders of a bloody past. The rise of China, the problem of identity, and the struggle for international recognition have all become issues as of late. What waits for Taiwan’s future remains to be seen.

⁵⁴ Ma Ying-jeou (1950-, 馬英九). Former President of the ROC. For more information about his presidency, see Kharis Templeman et al.’s (Eds) *Dynamics of Democracy in Taiwan, The Ma Ying-jeou Years* (2020).

⁵⁵ The CSSTA was a free trade pact with China, but the ruling KMT did not perform a clause-by-clause review. See Ming-sho Ho’s *Occupy Congress in Taiwan: Political Opportunity, Threat, and the Sunflower Movement* (2015).

⁵⁶ Tsai Ing-wen (1956-, 蔡英文). Current President of the ROC. For more information about her presidency, see June Teufel Dreyer and Jacques deLisle’s (Eds) *Taiwan in the Era of Tsai Ing-wen, Changes and Challenges* (2021).

1.3 A Brief History of Su Beng



Figure 1. Su Beng as a child with his father and mother

If the goal of the previous section was to describe general narratives, then the goal of this section is to focus specifically on Su Beng. Su Beng's life straddled many eras, ranging from the Japanese colonial rule to the presidency of Tsai Ing-wen. Very few Taiwanese figures have lived to see so much history unfold before their eyes. Su Beng's life not only provides a counternarrative to the general narratives mentioned previously, but also allows us to peer into the life of a figure who existed "outside" the system.

The story of Su Beng starts from the period of Japanese rule. Su Beng was born in Shilin, Taipei on November 9, 1918 to a wealthy family. His birth name was Lin Chaohui (林朝暉), though at age 11 he began to use his maternal surname Shi (施) as he was adopted into the mother's side of his family. In 1937, against his mother's wishes, he left Taiwan for Japan, choosing to study political economy at Waseda University⁵⁷. It was there that he became steeped

⁵⁷ Waseda University (早稲田大学). Founded in 1882 during the Meiji Era by Prime Minister Okuma Shigenobu, Waseda University nowadays is considered one of Japan's top schools and shared a deep rivalry with Keio University (another top-ranked school in Japan).

in socialist and Marxist thought. He graduated in 1942 but did not reside in Japan for long. Inspired and emboldened by the works of Marx, Su Beng immediately went to Shanghai. Su Beng believed that theory without action was worthless, so he joined the CCP's efforts in resisting Japan. He primarily worked as an intelligence agent since he could speak fluent Japanese; it was also in Japan where he learned Mandarin Chinese, as Taiwanese was his mother tongue. Additionally, it must be noted that, despite pressure from the CCP, he resisted their attempts to formally recruit him.



Figure 2. Su Beng as a student at Waseda University

Su Beng later became disillusioned with the CCP. He witnessed firsthand the brutality of the CCP's land reform policy. The CCP had killed and beaten many landlords. Su Beng believed the CCP's methods were not in line with true Marxism. At the same time, when the 228 Incident

broke out in 1947, although he was still in China, he still learned about the incident. This fueled his hatred towards the KMT as well. He finally fled to Taiwan in 1949, now under the control of the KMT. Su Beng then became increasingly dissatisfied with Chiang Kai-shek and his authoritarian regime. By this point, he resented both factions. In 1950, he established the “Taiwan Independence Revolutionary Corps,” whose aim was to assassinate Chiang.



Figure 3. Su Beng as an intelligence agent in China

Unfortunately, his plot was found out and he fled to Japan in 1952. There, he opened a noodle shop called “New Gourmet” (新珍味)⁵⁸ in Ikebukuro, Tokyo, selling noodles and dumplings by day while penning his magnum opus *Taiwan’s 400 Year History* by night. As Su Beng was more fluent in Japanese than Mandarin, he wrote the book in the former which was published in 1962. The first Mandarin Chinese edition came out later in 1986. His history of Taiwan became one of the forbidden books banned by the KMT under the period of martial law. During his exile in Japan, Su Beng trained other activists in guerilla warfare and support underground revolutionary activities.



Figure 4. Su Beng working at New Gourmet in Ikebukuro

⁵⁸ As of this writing, the noodle stop still exists albeit under new management. The current owner, Jin Tianfeng, is a man from China and was one of Su Beng’s assistants. He took over the restaurant in 2012 and continues to cook Chinese cuisine, maintaining Su Beng’s recipes and their unique flavor.

He secretly returned to Taiwan in 1993, choosing to reside in Taipei. There, he continued to propagate his ideology. Unlike other independence activists, he never compromised on his stance. In addition to his writings, he also began the Taiwan Independence Motorcade, where he espoused his support for Taiwanese independence via loudspeaker, advocating for Taiwanese independence. Finally, on September 20, 2019, Su Beng died of multiple organ failure.



Figure 5. Su Beng with Tsai Ying-wen

1.4 Background to *Su Beng's Memoirs: The Pursuit of Ideals Without Looking Back*

In the process of writing this thesis, I interviewed the director of the Su Beng Education Foundation, Ms. Huang Minhung, who graciously answered my questions about the history of the book and its contents (H., Min Hung, personal communication, May 10, 2023). Ms. Huang served as Su Beng's assistant and is his legally adopted daughter. Or, in her own words, "Essentially, I am his [Su Beng's] student." She met Su Being in 1995 and served as his assistant all the way to his death. Her part in the writing of the memoirs is more of transcriber and editor.

On occasion, she would give suggestions to Su Beng on how to phrase certain ideas. As I am unable to interview Su Beng himself, most of the information of the book comes from the aforementioned interview⁵⁹.

Firstly, *Su Beng's Memoirs* is a massive tome. Strictly speaking, the book contains 1,038 pages if one were to add up the front matter, main body, and back matter (excluding the back matter, the book is 1,019 pages). The book is a staggering 30 chapters covering his life and his political philosophy. Categorically, the book can be divided into two "parts." Chapters 1-24 cover: his early childhood and schooling in Taiwan; records of the festivals celebrated and customs practiced in Shilin, his hometown; his study abroad in Japan; his experience in China as an underground agent; his short return to Taiwan and his plot to assassinate Chiang Kai-shek; his exile in Japan; and his eventual return to Taiwan in 1993. I consider this part to be is true autobiography. Chapters 25-30 cover: his definition of nationalism and Taiwanese nationalism; essays and speeches he delivered after this permanent return to Taiwan; his views on "true Marxism" and "fake Marxism"; and a brief history about the struggle between Stalin and Trotsky.

Ms. Huang informed me that the primary reason for Su Beng writing this book was that many people were insulting him, calling him a "communist." In fact, Su Beng was more of a Marxist and always avoided joining the CCP. His followers urged Su Beng to write his life story and his ideas, as a way to respond to such insults. Moreover, as he was engaged in many underground activities, not very many people knew what his actual intentions and actions were. By writing the book, Su Beng could clear such accusations, clarify his past, and enlighten people about his contributions to the Taiwanese independence movement.

⁵⁹ I sincerely thank Ms. Huang for accepting my interview. I have gained a deeper understanding about Su Beng's life through Ms. Huang.

I asked Ms. Huang why the book was not split into two, to which she replied even the publisher asked Su Beng the same question. It seems that Su Beng wished to produce a singular book that compiled and recorded his life and philosophy. Perhaps he deemed that it was important to not separate the two; perhaps both were inherently intertwined.

Interestingly, there is no introduction in this book. Su Beng does not begin his book with his name, his life, or where he is from, nor does he summarize his beliefs or achievements. Instead, he directly begins his book with chapter 1, which is primarily about his grandmother. This fact has always stuck to me. It demonstrates how important his grandmother was to him. Equally as interesting is that Su Beng does not end his book with a conclusion. He does not leave a final message to the reader or even sketch his ideas of a future Taiwan. Ms. Huang told me that Su Beng was most likely still wishing to fight for Taiwanese independence and did not find it necessary to “conclude” the book which would be tantamount to him giving up his ideas of an independent Taiwan.

1.5 Su Beng’s Other Works in English

Unfortunately, few of Su Beng’s works have been translated into English. One translation is an abridged translation of *Taiwan’s 400 Year History*. The English version was first published in 1986 and a second “anniversary edition” was published for Su Beng’s 100th anniversary in 2017. In the preface to this edition, the editor does not delve deep into the edition’s revisions, but it is clear that a few introductory articles were added and that Chinese characters were added to certain terms for clarity. Unfortunately, there are no sections dedicated to the translator or translators. Moreover, the English edition is a mere 183 pages, compared to the nearly 2,000 pages of the original Chinese version, making it a far cry from the original.

Another English translation of Su Beng's work is considered an incomplete translation. The title of the book in English is *Crossing the Red Tide: Su Beng's History of the Chinese Revolution and the Road to Taiwan's Independence*⁶⁰ (2010). In the preface, Chih Ping-eh provides a succinct yet rich bio of Su Beng's life as a sort of introduction to Su Beng. The contents of the book itself cover his eight years in China, his views on Taiwanese nationalism, and his argument for the necessity of Taiwanese independence. There are five chapters in total, but only chapter 1 is translated, making the book an incomplete work of translation. Furthermore, the translation still contains minor grammatical errors and the occasional oddly-worded English. At times, this creates a jarring reading experience. However, it must also be noted that chapter 13 of Su Beng's memoirs contains an edited version of *Crossing the Red Tide*. Albeit incomplete, *Crossing the Red Tide* can serve readers who are interested in Su Beng's experience in China, while *Su Beng's Memoirs* caters towards those who wish to gain a deeper understanding of Su Beng.

⁶⁰ No official English translation of the full title exists.

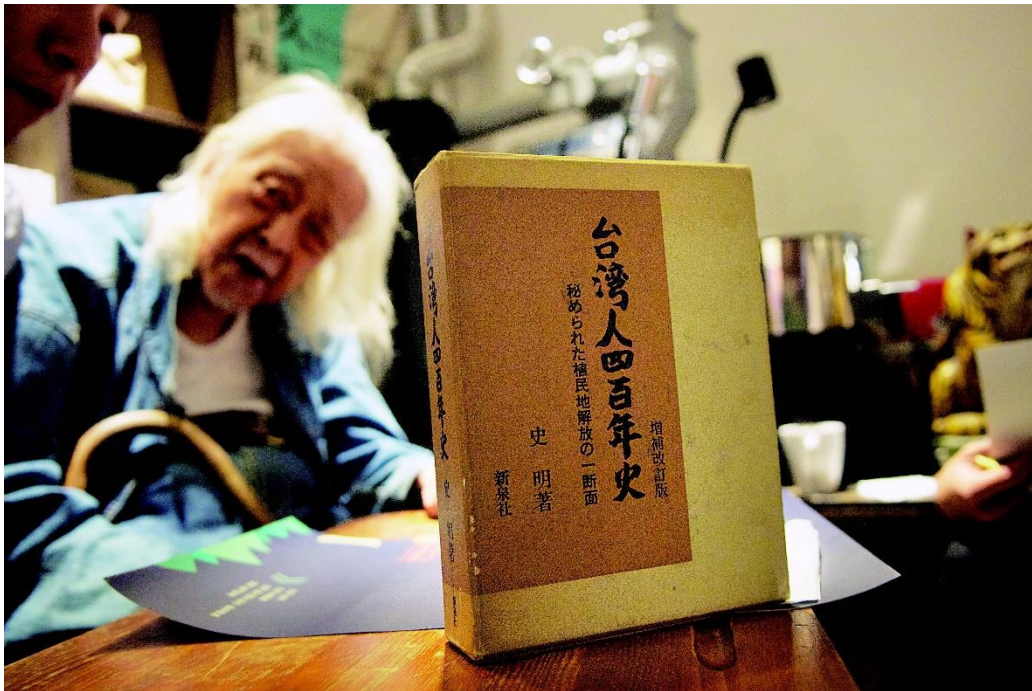


Figure 6. The Japanese version of Taiwan's 400 Year History

Finally, it is also worth mentioning that although Su Beng's name has appeared in the New York Times, Reuters, and other news outlets, there does not appear to be any real effort in translating his memoirs, his oral history (*Su Beng: An Oral History*), or his various other works. This could be due to several factors, such as a funding or interest, but perhaps the greatest challenge is finding a translator who is capable of grasping Su Beng's works, understanding his historical context, and translating his works into fluent English.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This thesis will analyze translation from a qualitative analysis approach. In a sense, it is a synthesis of different theories and the application thereof. Specifically, this thesis approaches translation with three primary concepts in mind: foreignizing and domesticating forces, a thick approach to translation, and viewing translation through the lens of autobiography translation. Rather than inventing a new theory or critiquing an existing one, this thesis aims to apply the aforementioned concepts to produce a partial translation of *Su Beng's Memoirs*. As such, this chapter will serve a twofold purpose: 1, discuss and summarize the theories that helped informed the annotated translation; and 2, discuss notable translations of other autobiographies.

2.1 Free vs. Literal Debate

The first concept that must be discussed is the “free vs. literal” debate, sometimes called “sense-for-sense” vs. “word-for-word.” It is an age-old dilemma that has vexed translators since the beginning of translation. Jeremy Munday (2016) traces this concept back to Cicero, writing that “In the west, where the status of Classical authors of ancient Greece and Rome remained pre-eminent, it formed the basis of key writings for nearly two thousand years” (p. 31). Munday then recounts St. Jerome, a famous Christian translator of the 4th century and the defense of his translation process. St. Jerome was inspired by the Greek poet Horace who had argued that it was more important to produce an “aesthetically pleasing and creative poetic text” in the translation (Munday, 2016, p. 31). For St. Jerome, it was more important to translate the sense of the text, as opposed to its literal meaning. Munday argues that this is one of the clearest examples of the origins of the free vs. literal debate.

Indeed, the free vs. literal debate is an old and yet much alive dilemma with perhaps no clear end. Munday (2016) says, “In these poles can be seen the origin of both the ‘literal vs.’ and

‘form vs. content’ debate that has continued until modern times” (p. 32). Simply put, the “literal” side of the debate suggests that the source text’s (ST) form, syntax, and/or wording be maintained in the translated text (TT); whereas the “free” side suggests that the TT need not be restricted by the precise wording of the text, and that the general sense and meaning of the ST ought to prevail. This is also not to say that one kind of translation is inherently “better” than the other.

The free vs. literal debate has seen several permutations and has produced many adjacent debates and concepts. In the 1950s and 60s, a number of scholars sought to escape the domineering influence of the free vs. literal debate. For example, Eugene Nida in his seminal *Toward a Science of Translating* (1964) coined the terms “formal equivalence” and “dynamic equivalent.” Nida (1964) defines formal equivalence as a kind of translation that “...focuses on the messages itself, in form and content” (p. 159). Formal equivalence can be thought as literal translation, but with the added feature that such translations follow the form as well as literal meaning. Nida (1964) then defines dynamic equivalence as “[aiming] at complete naturalness of expression, and tries to relate the receptor to modes of behavior relevant” (p. 159).

Nida’s approach was guided by linguistics, as evidence of the title of his book, which attempted to apply a more scientific approach to translation. Notably, linguist Noam Chomsky’s influence is the clearest. In simple terms, Chomsky posited that phase-structure rules generate an underlying deep structure, then gets transformed into another structure, to finally produce a surface structure (Munday, 2016, p. 62-63). Nida took this idea and applied it to his “science of translation. For Nida, translation was a three-step process: analysis of the ST, transformation, then restructuring the ST into the TT.

In the 70s and 80s, a functionalist approach to translation took its turn. Katharina Reiss (2000) proposed that each text possess its own “text-type” was defined by its function. Reiss suggested that a TT could be: informative, intending to inform using plain prose; expressive, emphasizing aesthetics and style; and operative, aiming to produce a specific response to the reader of the TC.

Later, together with Hans Vermeer, the two invented the term “Skopos theory⁶¹” in their *Towards a General Theory of Translation*, originally published in German in 1984, then translated to English in 2014. Skopos theory was created as an attempt to “dethrone” the ST, that is, to move away from linguistics-guided theories and to escape the free vs. literal debate. The six directives of Skopos theory are as follows:

1. A *translatum* is determined by its *skopos*.
2. A *translatum* is an offer of information in a target culture and language about an offer of information in a source culture and language
3. A *translatum* is a unique, irreversible mapping of a source-culture offer of information.
4. A *translatum* must be coherent in itself.
5. A *translatum* must be coherent with the source text.
6. These rules are interdependent and linked hierarchically in the order set out above.

(Reiss and Vermeer, 2014, p. 107)

In simple terms, Skopos theory posits that all actions have purposes. Translation is therefore guided by purpose of the ST. Does the ST seek to inform? Does it seek to entertain? However, it must be noted that the translation (*translatum*) must still be coherent itself.

⁶¹ The original German term is “Skopostheorie,” coined by Vermeer in 1978. Skopos means “purpose” in Greek. The term is often rendered as “Skopos theory” in English (note that “theory” is left uncapitalized).

Furthermore, while the translation must also be coherent (Vermeer calls this “intertextual coherence”) to the ST, it is still *subordinate* to the ST (Reiss and Vermeer, 2014, p. 107).

Although it has been hinted already, another concept worth discussing briefly is the concept of “fidelity,” which suggests that the translator should be “loyal” or “faithful” to the ST. Critics of free translation often cite fidelity as their primary opposition. This begs the question, when does a translation “go too far?” And how do then define translation, adaptation, and transcreation⁶²? Flora Ross Amos (1920) raises the point of “fidelity to what” succinctly:

To one writer fidelity may imply a reproduction of his original as nearly as possible word for word and line for line; to another it may mean an attempt to carry over into English the spirit of the original, at the sacrifice, where necessary, not only of the exact words but of the exact substance of his source. (p. xii)

Regardless of which definition is used, it is clear that translators have some notion of fidelity, that is, loyalty to the ST. How exactly one tackles loyalty will, of course, vary from translator to translator.

2.2 Domestication and Foreignization

The “cultural turn” of 1980s brought with it a shift in perspective with respect to culture, and with it, new ideas such as translation and gender and translation and colonization were injected into the field (Munday, 2016, 198). It is this context from which the concepts of foreignization and domestication emerged, however it must be emphasized that these ideas were not new. Foreignization methods aim to bring the reader to the source culture, while domesticating methods aim to bring the text closer to the reader’s target culture. Lawrence

⁶² For more information about transcreation, see David Katan’s “Translation at the Cross-road: Time for the Transcreational Turn?” (2015).

Venuti explores these two interrelated ideas in his *The Translator's Invisibility: A History of Translation*, first published in 1995, with the second edition published in 2008.

In his seminal work, Venuti traces the history of translation from the seventeenth century to the present. He argues that “A translated text, whether prose or poetry, fiction, or nonfiction, is judged acceptable by most publishers, reviewers and readers when it reads fluently...” (Venuti 2008, p. 14). For Venuti, translators have all too often hailed fluency as the primary mark of a good translation.

He then explores the idea of “invisibility,” that is, the method that translators take to “domesticate” texts in order to conform the ST to the target culture for the sake of fluency. Venuti (2008) argues that “An illusionism fostered by fluent translating, the translator’s invisibility at once enacts and masks an insidious domestication of foreign texts, rewriting them in the transparent discount that prevails in English” (p. 12-13). He contends that this emphasis on domestication, in regards to the English translations, have thereby supported the hegemonic powers of American and British cultures. Venuti’s conclusion is that translators ought to maintain the foreignness of texts and dethrone hegemonic tendencies of domestication.

Venuti’s next book, *The Scandals of Translation* published in 1998, furthers his critique on the hegemony of American and British culture. However, the subject of his book is much broader as he describes several “scandals” in translation, ranging from assimilating power of English to the issues of authorship and copyright with respect to translators. The book is an exploratory highlight of such themes. Perhaps the greatest contribution Venuti offers is his audacity to approach translation from a foreignization-centric perspective, and the willingness to speak out against hegemony.

2.3 Thick Translation

As this thesis employs the use of thick translation to the utmost degree, it is necessary to recount the origins of this term. Friedrich Schleiermacher, a late 18th century German theologian and philosopher, argued that understanding “begins with having the fullest available knowledge of the language being spoken” (Hermans, 2019, p. 589). However, Schleiermacher did concede that understanding utterances in another language or a different time period could be fragmentary. Later, in the early 20th century, I. A. Richards, an English educator and poet, posited that studying concepts in a different culture will force us to compare them to our own.

The two above-mentioned scholars laid the general framework, but the next major step towards thick translation was Gilbert Ryle who in 1971 coined the term “thick description,” that is, a “patient engagement with and contextualization of complex meaning” (Hermans, 2019, p. 590). In turn, Clifford Geertz took Ryle’s idea and expanded it. In *The Interpretation of Cultures* (1973), Geertz argued that thick description was a way to behavior by looking at the overall contexts. He also said that thick description was a way not to achieve a full account of a foreign culture, but rather obtain an appreciation of similarities and differences (Hermans, 2019, p. 590).

Guided by this notion of “thick description,” Appiah in his article “Thick Translation” (1993), defines titular term as the extensive use of annotations or parentheticals to explain the ST’s cultural-rich background. In his essay, Appiah tackles the issue of translatability and untranslatability, i.e., the notion whether or not translation is possible. Appiah posits that “literal intentions,” (the literal meanings of words and utterances) can be put into context so as to avoid confusion and misunderstanding. The ST might exist in a place that is different from the reader’s cultural milieu. Therefore, Appiah suggests, “...and here it seems to me that such ‘academic’

translation, translations and its accompanying glosses to locate the text in rich cultural and linguistic context, is eminently worth doing” (1993, p. 817).

2.4 Autobiography and Autobiography Translation

According to Charles Berryman (1991), “the word ‘autobiography’ was coined in 1797 by a linguist who perceived the need for a common term in English to cover the many different accounts that authors make of their own experience” (p. 72). This person was the British linguist and scholar William Taylor. In the Western world, the earliest usage of the word “autobiography” appeared in the 1832 edition of the book *The Autobiography of Thomas Shepherd*⁶³. Berryman then points out that, the word “autobiography” was not used by the either author to describe their own works, rather it was others who first applied such terms, thus giving birth to a new genre (1997, p. 73.)

Autobiography’s chief difference compared to biography is that autobiographies are written by the subject themselves, as opposed to a third party. This is evident in its etymology: “the description (*graphia*) of an individual human life (*bios*) by the individual himself (*auto-*) (Misch, 1998, para. 14). Additionally, Edward Seidensticker (1999) makes the distinction between autobiographies and diaries, emphasizing that the diary is far more detailed in its records (p. 47).

In regards to translations of autobiographies, Susan Xu Yun’s *Translation of Autobiography: Narrating Self, Translating the Other* (2017) is one of the majors works about the subject to date.⁶⁴ Yun’s work is cross-disciplinary in nature, as it straddles “autobiography, stylistics, narratology, and translation studies” (2017, p. 19). The aim of her work is to show that

⁶³ Thomas Shepherd (1605-1649) was an American Puritan who was born in colonial New England. His autobiography is available for free online. See: <http://digitalpuritan.net/thomas-shepard/>.

⁶⁴ I would like to especially thank Professor Yun for her efforts in this field. Indeed, her book provided a great deal of motivation for this thesis.

autobiography translation can stand as its own distinctive style. Furthermore, Yun's work explores the translator's role in manipulating such a text.

Yun looks at the late Prime Minister of Singapore Lee Kuan Yew's memoir (*Lee Kuan Yew, My Lifelong Challenge: Singapore Bilingual Journey*) as the object of her study. The memoir, as Yun contends, was first written in English with a Chinese translation appearing that same year. Yun argues that autobiographies are stylistically different from other forms of literature (e.g., novels) and that the translator's choice has a significant impact on the interpretation of the autobiographer. Therefore, conflicting opinions or meaning shifts could be present in such a translation.

Yun also explores the "other consciousness," that is, the implied translator and how they interpreted the ST. Yun says that "The translator's voice may contradict with the authorial attitude and influence of the reader's perception" (2017, p.20). In regards to Lee Kuan Yew's memoirs, Yun posits that the translator of the Chinese version failed to understand certain concepts, such as irony, which produced the unintended effect of giving the readers the impression that the narrator of the Chinese translation was fairly unreliable, thus altering the intention of the ST.

2.5 Select Translations of Autobiographies

Finally, this section will mention some notable translated autobiographies in world literature. Although autobiographies do not constitute the majority of literature in the world, they are still widely read and hold valuable information about their subjects. Two widely read and important memoirs immediately come to mind. The first is *The Diary of a Young Girl* also known as *The Diary of Anne Frank*. It was originally published in Dutch as *Het Achterhuis* in 1957 and has been translated in many languages since then (Cluff 2020). The first English

translation was published in 1952 and was translated by Barbara Mooyaart-Doubleday. Another translation, by Susan Massotty, was published in 1995.

Emily Cluff calls it “one of the best-known Holocaust texts in the world” (2020, p. 1). The book gives us insights into a young Jewish girl living in Nazi-occupied Netherlands. The diary itself was not written in a book but rather on several loose papers, a testament to its miraculous survivability. Cluff also mentions how such a text was also able to produce discussion and debate from critics and scholars alike. The book is considered an international hit and was even made a required reading in some US high schools.

The second memoir is *Night* by Elie Wiesel. *Night* originated from Elie’s writings about his time during the Holocaust. His writings were originally written in Yiddish. Elie then compiled and published them into a memoir called *Un di Velt Hot Geshvign* (“And the World Remained Silent.”) Later, the book was translated from Yiddish to French by Wiesel himself in 1958. The first English edition came out in 1960 and was translated by Stella Rodway. Later, in 2006, *Night* was republished with a new translation by Marion Wiesel, Elie’s wife.

Like *The Diary of a Young Girl*, *Night*, too, has produced much scholarly debate. Harold Bloom’s *Bloom’s Modern Critical Interpretations: Night, New Edition* (2010) looks at *Night* from the perspective of Holocaust literature overall. Additionally, Peter Manseau explicates the debates surrounding the interpretation of *Night*, explicating how Naomi Seidman was the first scholar to ever criticize *Night* and its translations, as well as how there were no traces of Elie’s rage in *And the World Remained Silent* in later translations of *Night*.

In contrast, Taiwanese memoirs and autobiographies have yet to have such an impact in academia or produce much scholarly debate. There are indeed autobiographical translations of Taiwanese leaders or important figures. For example, in 2021, former president Chen Shui-

bian's autobiography titled *The Son of Taiwan: The Life of Chen Shui-bian and his Dreams for Taiwan* was published, which is actually a reissue of his 2000 autobiography. The book is part autobiography and part manifesto, as Chen recounts his childhood but also explains his political thought. The autobiography was translated by David J. Toman, though the book is void of any translator's preface.

However, perhaps there is room for translations of Taiwanese works after all, especially for autobiography translation. Chi-pang Yuan, a professor, writer, and translator herself, published her autobiography titled *The Great Flowing River: A Memoir of China, from Manchuria, to Taiwan* in 2018. John Balcon provided the translation. In this autobiography, Chi Pang-yuan recounts her early life in war-torn China and her adulthood in Taiwan. Unlike in Chen Shui-bian's book, the subject of the autobiography (i.e., Chi Pang-yuan) acknowledged their translator – there is even the inclusion of a translator's preface.

In sum, this thesis will approach *Su Beng's Memoirs* from three primary foci: domestication and foreignization, thick translation, and autobiography translation. This thesis will seek to balance the forces of domestication and foreignization in attempt to walk and explore the median between. Additionally, in such cases where difficult to translate words or culturally rich concepts are encountered, annotations will be used to fill in the cultural gaps. And finally, drawing upon the above-mentioned concepts regarding autobiography and translations thereof, this thesis will attempt to capture Su Beng's voice and idiosyncrasy and maintain a consistent style.

Chapter 3: Application of Translation Theories

This chapter will analyze and review the application of the previously mentioned concepts as it pertains to the thesis. In total, five passages were selected to demonstrate the effects of foreignization and domestication, the implementation of thick translation, and attempts at capturing Su Beng’s voice and idiosyncrasies.

Table 1.

Sample Passage 1.

ST	TT
一個人的一生，除非有什麼特殊的機緣，大體上決定於他自己的個性。在我這個理直氣壯卻又曲折坎坷的一生中，最早影響我個性的人，就是我的「阿嬤」。我的阿媽事實上就是我的外媽，因為我從小就被過繼給我母親施家，所以對我來說，「外媽」遠比「內媽」來的親近。	One’s life, unless one would encounter extraordinary circumstances, is generally determined by their personality. In my own life of utmost conviction and hardships, the person who influenced my personality the earliest was my grandmother. I was adopted by my mother’s family, the Shi family, when I was child, so to me, my maternal grandmother was far closer to me than my paternal grandmother.

Note. Excerpt from Chapter 1.

This first passage demonstrates my use of domestication in regards to Chinese familial terms. Here, Su Beng briefly introduces his maternal grandmother. The word “A Ma” (阿嬤) is a Taiwanese word which means “grandmother” but typically refers to one’s paternal grandmother. Su Beng makes it clear here that the grandmother he is mentioning here is actually his maternal grandmother. He then mentions up two more Taiwanese terms: “waima” (外媽) which is another word which literally means “outside mother” (maternal grandmother); and “neima” (內媽) meaning “inside mother” (paternal grandmother).

Taiwanese culture is patriarchal, meaning that the father's family often holds more importance than the mother's family. This phenomenon is baked into the cultural and language. However, in English (and American culture), there is no concept of "inside/outside mother." This would also be too much of a literal translation. Instead, I choose to domesticate such familial terms of the sake of readability and to offload the cognitive work required to memorize such terms. The concept of inside/outside mother was lost, but that was something worth sacrificing. To me, it was more important to convey the idea that Su Beng's grandmother was important to him.

However, on a final note, I did choose to foreignize the syntax of the ST by making it closely match the TT. Su Beng's phrasing and use of the beginning comma is intentional by saying "One's life, unless one would encounter extraordinary circumstances, is generally determined by their personality." This could have been rendered as "Unless one would encounter extraordinary circumstances, one's life is generally determined by their personality" but I opted to try to maintain the syntax of the Chinese since it did not break English grammar conventions.

Table 2

Sample Passage 2.

ST	TT
<p>日本軍侵佔台灣後，以一八九七年五月八日為「國籍決定日」，日本政府規定留居台灣者皆為「日本籍民」，最後一批唐山人（在中國有家可歸的漢人官兵、大租戶、大商人等等）回中國後，留在台灣的原住民（約十八萬人）與本地人（約二百七十萬人），就成為日本籍民，也被稱為「台灣人」。後來從中國大陸重新來台灣作息的少數唐山人（主要是廚師、理髮師、裁縫師、皮靴修理匠等等），就是現在所謂的「中國人」，是外國人。但在當初，老一輩的台灣人還是叫自己為「本地人」，叫他們「唐山人」。</p>	<p>After the Japanese army occupied Taiwan, the Japanese promulgated “Nationality Decision Day” on May 8, 1897. The Japanese government proclaimed that those who chose to stay in Taiwan would become Japanese citizens. The last group of Tangshanren left (the Han Chinese officials, soldiers, wealthy landlords, and rich merchants who had homes they could return to in China). The remaining indigenous tribes (approximately 180,000 people) and Bendiren (approximately 2.7 million) became Japanese citizens and were also called “Taiwanese.” Later, the new but small wave of Tangshanren from mainland China who came to Taiwan to live and work (mainly chefs, barbers, tailors, shoe repairers, craftsmen, etc) are what we now call “Zhongguoren” who are foreigners. But, at that time, the older generation of Taiwanese would still call themselves “Bendiren” and call the Zhongguoren as “Tangshanren.”</p>

Note. Excerpt taken from Chapter 1.

This second passage demonstrates the usage of foreignization but also how thick translation can cover the gaps often left by such techniques. In this passage, I had to make the decision to domesticate or foreignize the words “Bendiren” (本地人), “Tangshanren” (唐山人), and “Zhongguoren” (中國人). In this context, Bendiren refers to a person who a Taiwanese person who was born in Taiwan, as opposed to mainland China. Tangshanren refers to a mainland Chinese person. Zhongguoren, in contrast, refers to a mainland Chinese person from the PRC. The biggest issue here was trying to distinguish Tangshanren and Zhongguoren as

English does not clearly make this distinction. Simply reducing these terms to “Chinese” would be wholly inaccurate. Therefore, I opted for foreignization as the best method here. In doing so, I was able to bring the reader to Su Beng and his world and how he viewed things. I opted to do so in most cases.

To supplement this foreignized translation, I decided to write a lengthy footnote on the distinction between these three terms. It is amazing how information could be lost without explaining the cultural context of the ST. Furthermore, I explained the implications of the Nationality Decision Day edict which would then deem all residents in Taiwan as “Taiwanese” (台灣人).



Table 3

Sample Passage 3.

ST	TT
<p>記憶中的「中秋節」(tiong-chhiu-cheh)，就是要拜月娘、吃「餡餅」(ān-piá或「中秋餅」)。台灣原來沒有「月餅」之稱呼。大家都在門口(我家是在二樓磚坪仔)點燈結彩，桌上排水果、清花、餡餅拜月娘，然後大家再坐在戶碇(hō-tēng門檻)上面「殺斗柚」(táu-iū柚子的一種)，老人家說：這是為了防小偷，殺柚仔就是殺賊頭(chh-at-thâu)的意思。我們囡仔和大人一起舉手拜月娘，眼睛卻老瞪著桌上的供品(如餡餅或紅柿)，迫不及待地想趕快分到手。因為那個圓丸丸且紅澄澄的紅柿，每年都是在八月節時才新上市的，又軟又甜，使囡仔真喜歡吃。</p>	<p>The Mid-Autumn Festival that I still remember was about praying to the moon and eating “an-pia” (or “Mid-Autumn cakes”). Taiwanese originally never used the word “yuebing” (mooncakes). People would decorate their doors with lanterns and other things (for us, we would decorate our balcony), and the tables would be lined with fruit, clean flowers, and an-pia to worship the moon. Then, we would sit on the doorstep and “kill” pomelos. The old folks say that this was to protect against thieves. Peeling the pomelos representing the killing of thieves. Together, we kids and the adults would raise our hands and clasp our palms, praying to the moon. In reality, we were just looking at the offerings on the table (like an-pia and red persimmons). We were always impatient as we waited for them to hand us our mooncakes. The permissions were so round and red. Every year, during the eighth month, they would finally be available at the markets. They were soft and sweet, and we kids loved to eat them.</p>

Note. Excerpt taken from Chapter 2.

This third passages highlights my consistent attitude towards culturally specific terms, specifically food terms. Chapter 2 records and recounts the festivals and customs observed in Shilin. Thus, it is a prime candidate for observing and analyzing domesticating and foreignizing forces. In this passage, once again, I brought the reader to Su Beng by using his original Taiwanese wording as opposed to Mandarin or English. Specifically, I choose to use “yuebing” as the translation for “mooncake” (strictly speaking, “yuebing” is the Mandarin transliteration of 月餅) as it shows that Su Beng is trying to tell the reader that the modern mooncake was

different from the “an-pia” he ate as a kid. An-pia can be thought of as a “Taiwanese mooncake.” It is typically rounder and flakier than Cantonese-style mooncakes with which most non-Chinese people would associate the term. This was also one of the few instances where I inserted a parenthetical that was not originally present in the text.

This passage also highlights the difficulty I faced in juggling three languages: Mandarin, Taiwanese, and English. In the end, I opted to use the Taiwanese name for Su Beng’s “an-pia” (餡餅) as this sounded much more authentic and using the Mandarin transliteration “xianbing” refers to meat-filled pastries. Additionally, I decided to maintain the wording and imagery from the ST with the phrase “kill pomelos.” The “kill” here is how the ST is worded; it obviously could be rendered as “cut” or “slice” but the intention was to maintain Su Beng’s wording.



Table 4

Sample Passage 4.

ST	TT
<p>因此，台灣社會不論是迎媽祖或七月普度等，大都由農民大眾為主體，年年地在各角落起彼落。好比說獅陣比武、歌仔戲，或者是迎聖王時的范、謝將軍、八家將，及迎媽祖時的千里眼、順風耳等，都是由農民自己精心扮演，而不假手他人。即使平日為著顧田水，各角頭（各庄頭）的農民都發生對立鬥爭（分類械鬥），但在迎媽祖、七月節時，卻不分你我，一起聯歡愉快，這種情況，對於台灣從未開發狀態到形成一個社會，是有決定性的重要意義。敬神祭祖逐年地興盛起來，並一代又一代的傳給後代子孫。</p>	<p>Therefore, Taiwanese festivals and customs, whether they be for worshipping Mazu or observing Pudu, usually are about farmers or other related topics. Every year, in every village and town, these festivals would be everywhere. For example, the lion dance competition, the gezaixi, Captains Xie and Fan, the Eight Generals, Qianliyan, and Shunfenger, are all played by farmers themselves, not by others. Even though they had to take care of the fields and water, every village also had fights with other groups (group conflict). However, when they would welcome Mazu or celebrate Ghost Month, they would unite, and the people would happily celebrate the festival. This kind of social environment was a deciding factor in transforming Taiwan from an undeveloped state to a real society. The worship of deities flourished over time, generation after generation.</p>

Note. Excerpt taken from Chapter 2.

Passage 4 is a great example of culturally rich terms that would require the need of annotations. It also demonstrates Su Beng's lack of explanation as he assumes his reader is Taiwanese. For example, one can see that he mentions many deities in this passage, such as Mazu, the Eight Generals, Qianliyan, etc, all of which are deities that exist in Chinese and Taiwanese culture, but are most likely unfamiliar to non-Taiwanese readers. I employed extremely thick translations to explain such concepts⁶⁵.

⁶⁵ For the sake of space, the annotations are not reproduced here. Please refer to the translation of the text in Part 2.

Additionally, as Taiwanese folk religion combines Daoism, Buddhism, and Confucianism, it was necessary to explain just the basic concepts of these religions in my annotations. In a domestication move, I translated the word shen (神) as “spirits,” “gods,” or “deities” depending on if the deity was considered a major or minor deity.



Table 5

Sample Passage 5.

ST	TT
<p>母親「出山」(chhut-soaⁿ 出殯)時所用的棺材，原本是阿嬤準備要留給自已用的，沒想到最後會變成白髮人送黑髮人，先給母親使用。母親享年僅僅五十三歲，回想起來，我做為人子，對為我傾注了那麼多親切母愛的阿母，沒有盡責任，沒有盡孝道，反而讓她不滿憤恨地過日子，此事自始至終都讓我傷痛不已。</p>	<p>The coffin used by my mother for her funeral was originally intended to be used by my grandma for herself. She did not expect that it would be her who would send off her daughter, and that the coffin would actually be used for her daughter. My mother died at just 53 years old. In retrospect, as a son, I failed to fulfill my responsibilities and pay filial piety to my mother who poured so much tender love into me. Instead, I made her live a dissatisfied and resentful life. From beginning to end, this has given me endless sorrow.</p>

Note. Excerpt taken from Chapter 3.

Returning to the balance of foreignization and domestication, this excerpt provides one final example. The very first sentence provides an aptly demonstrates the power of domestication (in this case, rearrangement of syntax) so that the sentence flows better. Rendered more literally, the sentence will read: “During my mother’s funeral, the coffin that was used, was originally for my grandmother herself. Unexpectedly, in the end, it was a ‘white-haired person sending off a black-haired person,’ and was actually given to her daughter to use first.” Perhaps the biggest omission in my translation—which I deem a domestication move—was to not literally translate the phrase “white-haired person sending off a black-haired person” as this was quite the mouthful. I also found the phrasing “during my mother’s funeral” to be too literal and unnatural. It is also worth noting that Chinese sentences can be quite lengthy. Phrases in Chinese can sometimes be connected by Chinese commas in a long string of thought. In contrast, in English there is a need to have a definite beginning and end to a sentence.

Admittedly, I opted to take more liberties with this translation and aimed for what Nida would call “dynamic equivalent” as opposed to maintaining the exact wording and structure of the text. Additionally, as I noted that Su Beng expressed much guilt in this passage (and similar ones), I tried to use more sorrowful expressions such as “poured so much tender love” and “endless sorrow.”



Chapter 4: Conclusion, Limitations, and Future Prospects

This chapter will draw conclusions from this thesis, discuss limitations, and provide prospects for future studies and translations.

First and foremost, while there are a plethora of translation theories, methods, and strategies that exist, due to scope limitations, I could only pick a handful to apply in this annotated translation. Even after a few years of studying translation, I myself often have trouble positioning myself within the free vs. literal debate. My general tendency is to lean free and take risks to make the text more natural or creative. I also believe that aiming for the intended meaning or “essence” of the text allows you break free from literal interpretations.

However, it is worth nothing that one need not position themselves at the poles of the spectrum. A TT does not always need to be completely free or completely literal. Perhaps a combination of the two ideas will produce a decent translation. I hold the same view with foreignization and domestication, hence, the balancing act of this thesis. The added fact that this was Su Beng’s personal words forced me to not “stray” too far from the ST. My ultimate goal here was to maintain Su Beng’s voice and wording while still creating a readable and comprehensible English translation.

The greatest challenge—perhaps to be expected—was trying to balance foreignization and domestication. I found myself using far more transliteration (foreignization) than I had expected. This, in turn, allowed me to achieve one of my objectives: to bring the reader closer to Su Beng, as opposed to bringing Su Beng to the reader. With a text culturally rich and dense as this memoir, I found that domestication techniques often made me view the text with a certain “lens” on; at other times, domestication “destroyed” Su Beng’s world and descriptions. For example, in chapter 1, Su Beng discusses “Tangshanren” and “Bendiren” (Chinese vs.

Taiwanese people) to which I kept the transliterated terms. Or, in another example, the discussion about “Huaren” and “Zhongguoren.” In English, both words mean “Chinese,” but in the Chinese language, these two words are distinct. In fact, the English word “Chinese” can refer to many things: a Han Chinese person, a person from the People’s Republic of China, and the Chinese language. Thus, transliteration gave me a way to distinguish these ideas and avoid issues of logic.

On a grammatical-level, as opposed to a word-level, I employed domestication far more. I often had to cut extremely long sentences into two or even three smaller sentences. I also conformed more to English syntax when possible. For example, in chapter 2, a passage from the ST reads “I always thought my own lumpia could not be compared to other people, the biggest lumpia.” I rendered this as, “I always thought I had the biggest lumpia that no one could beat.” I found it very difficult to maintain the ST’s syntax otherwise. Additionally, for Chinese familial terms like “A Ma” or “A Yi” I tended not to transliterate and instead translated these terms into English. I found that these terms would be extremely jarring as most English speakers are not familiar with them or the Chinese familial forms of address and the Chinese patriarchal system. However, I tended not to use domestication on food items, like “zongzi” and “kuih,” which are unique to Taiwanese and Chinese culture.

More importantly, I tried my best to maintain and be consistent about Su Beng’s voice. One way of doing this was actually by trying to keep his idiosyncratic use of language. This in turn lead me to lean foreignization. If Su Beng used extremely sorrowful language, I sought to find equivalents in English. If he spoke in a poetic or detailed way, I attempted to paint similar pictures, sometimes using colorful words that might not be present in the ST. Furthermore, in this particular text, I found that Su Beng seldom employed the use of sarcasm or humor. Su Beng

overall maintained a formal and solemn tone. I thus tried to create a more formal voice in English regardless if I choose to domesticate or foreignize the text. For me, this was perhaps my greatest success.

However, attempts to foreignize the text by maintaining the syntax and structure of the ST proved to be too difficult at times. Su Beng's mention about having the largest lumpia in chapter 2 had to be rearranged so that the sentence flowed better. In another example, in chapter 3, Su Beng's recounting of his mother's death was written in a very staccato-like syntax that would be rendered as broken English. Unexpectedly, attempts to "stick to the ST" would sometimes render the TT almost incomprehensible.

Additionally, I cannot understate the usage of annotations which are not often used in actual translation cases (save for academic texts). Much in the same way it was necessary to discuss Taiwanese history first to contextualize Su Beng, it was similarly necessary to write annotations to explain more about the context of the ST. The annotations not only provided necessary background information to bridge the gap between Chinese and English (with several Taiwanese and Japanese words), they also allowed me to describe my translation choices and other possible choices. Appiah uses the word "locate" whereas I would use "bridge." I did my utmost to apply Appiah's thick translation approach which I found to be enjoyable but tiring all at once.

Yet I could see no better candidate than Su Beng's memoirs to apply such a method. Not only is this text dense, it is also "distant" from English. Moreover, Su Beng makes several assumptions about the reader. He assumes the reader will know basic Taiwanese and Chinese history as well as Taiwanese cultural traditions and customs. The non-Taiwanese readers would feel lost without some kind of explanation to guide them through the text.

However, all theses, experiments, and translations suffer from certain limitations and issues. Firstly, this thesis is only a translation of the first three chapters. In a sense, it is an incomplete work that leaves the reader wanting to know more about Su Beng. However, perhaps a more important issue is the addition of Taiwanese and Japanese in this work. Su Beng primarily writes in Mandarin Chinese but mixes in several Taiwanese words and Japanese words. Although I the editor has written in the Taiwanese pronunciation of the Taiwanese words, I still had to refer to the *Dictionary of Frequently-Used Taiwan Minnan (Taiwanese Minnan Dictionary)* published by the Ministry of Education. If that failed, I simply asked Ms. Huang for assistance. Both Taiwanese and Mandarin Chinese are not by native tongue, meaning I had to be more detailed in my research and refer to several dictionaries and sources to understand difficult terms and concepts. Additionally, it was worth noting that, to date, not all Taiwanese words have been assigned an the “correct” Chinese characters, making written Taiwanese a great challenge.

On a more theoretical level, the issue of trying to create and preserve a voice raised concerns for me. As I have no relation to Su Beng nor have I ever once spoke to him, I found it difficult to find a basis for his “voice.” I have seen videos of him but this hardly helped me. In some situations, I had to make tough decisions on how to mold and present his tone of voice. How do I present Su Beng? Is he proud? Is he long winded? Does he employ metaphors or other types of idiosyncratic uses of language? Or perhaps we lose too much when we translate others’ words? As such, it can be said that the reader could be hearing me more than the Su Beng himself.

Yet, despite all of this, I remain hopeful. This translation serves not as an end, but as a beginning. It is my hope that this thesis can foster greater discussions in several fields. For example, historians of Taiwanese and Chinese history can look at Su Beng to see how life was

like for pro-Taiwanese independence figures in the 20th century. In the field of translation, this book can serve as a starting point for future translations of Su Beng's works. By extension, the English-speaking world will finally have access to Su Beng and learn about this incredible figure. This will allow English speakers to understand the complicated relationship between China and Taiwan and educate them on the history of the Taiwanese independence movement.

In sum, this thesis seeks to synthesize the aforementioned theories into a work that could, perhaps, become a great work of nonfiction. Additionally, I hope that future translations of autobiographies and memories can be produced from the insights gained from this thesis. At the very least, headway can be made. Finally, I hope that by translating part of Su Beng's autobiography, Su Beng can become more accessible to readers outside of Taiwan and that his legacy will be preserved.



Part 2: Annotated Translation of *Su Beng's Memoirs: The Pursuit of Ideals*

Without Looking Back

Chapter 1: My Unforgettable Grandmother, Sikhu Sikui (Shiqiu Shigui)



Figure 7. “Laozumu.” Su Beng’s grandmother, Sikhu Sikui (Shiqiu Shigui, 施邱氏桂)

*Swinging swinging, grandpa picks an eggplant,
How many eggplants do you have? Steal a ladle away,
Some you eat, some you sell,
And give us children a great first birthday!*

—A nursery rhyme (Swinging Swinging)⁶⁶

One's life, unless one would encounter extraordinary circumstances, is generally determined by their personality. In my own life of utmost conviction and hardships, the person who influenced my personality the earliest was my grandmother⁶⁷. I was adopted⁶⁸ by my mother's family, the Shi family, when I was child, so to me, my maternal grandmother⁶⁹ was far closer to me than my paternal grandmother⁷⁰.

Section 1: The Life of My Grandmother

My grandmother, Sikhu Sikui⁷¹, was born in 1879, on the seventh month of the twelfth day of the lunar calendar, on Bazhilin Street (also known as Shilin Street or Shilin New Street). Later, she was married to Shi Xixiang⁷² (also known as Mushu), who was the fourth generation

⁶⁶ It ought to be noted that Taiwanese nursery rhymes or folk songs do not always have a special meaning. Sometimes, the song is created because it is catchy or produces a rhyme. During the course of translating this autobiography, I came across several nursery rhymes, poems, and folk songs all of which all proved to be extremely challenging. I am far more accustomed to translating works of non-fiction or informative texts. My general strategy for these literary texts was to try to balance literal meanings with explicitation. I leaned towards explicitation so as to aid the reader in understanding the poem's true intentions. I could as easily see these poems being translated more literally, such as maintaining the original metaphors and sense of ambiguity from the original Chinese. In this case, there was no real meaning to this nursery rhyme. Additionally, for such texts, I was partly informed by Francis R. Jones's "The Translation of Poetry" in *The Oxford Handbook of Translation Studies* (2011).

⁶⁷ A Ma (阿嬤). Taiwanese. Grandma. Su Beng here uses the Taiwanese term for grandmother which does not explicitly indicate to which side of the family his grandmother belongs. He is purposefully ambiguous here given what he will say in the next sentence. The character 嬤 is sometimes written as 媽. Both are read as "ma."

⁶⁸ Guoji (過繼). To be adopted. However, the Chinese word, guoji, is slightly more nuanced. The meaning is more like adoption for the sake of having an heir. Additionally, the adopted individual is usually a male, often a relative of the adopter. The Shi family did not have a male heir; thus, Su Beng was adopted into the family to serve as such. Su Beng's original family name was Lin (林).

⁶⁹ Waima (外嬤). Taiwanese. Lit. "outside mother." This word indicates that this family member is the maternal grandmother. In traditional Taiwanese culture, the family unit is centered on the patrilineal family, i.e., the father's side of the family. Therefore, the "outside" here suggests that the mother's relatives are "outside" of the family.

⁷⁰ Neima (內嬤). Taiwanese. Lit. "inside mother." This word indicates that this family member is the paternal grandmother. Su Beng here employs a kind of parallelism that plays with the concepts of "in/out" that does not exist in English.

⁷¹ Sikhu Sikui in Taiwanese; Shiqiu Shigui in Mandarin (施邱氏桂). The shi (氏) here means "maiden name," as in Shiqiu's maiden name is Qiu (邱).

⁷² Shi Xixiang (施錫祥). Also known as Mushu (木樹).

that came from the family of the first son⁷³ of the Shi family in Nanya. At that time, Taiwan was ruled by the Qing dynasty. The father of my paternal grandfather, in other words, my great-paternal grandfather, Shi Zanlong was a juren⁷⁴ for nine years. In accordance with Qing law, two flags were posted in the front of the Shi family's yard, displaying the honor and glory of the juren rank. Thus, the Shi family was an extremely respected family by the people. However, my paternal grandfather, Xixiang, passed away when I was very young, so I never had the chance to meet him. My grandmother, when she was around 20 years old, became a widow. She endured many hardships throughout her life, lived a very devout Buddhist life, and focused on raising her daughter (my mother.)

My grandmother⁷⁵, before my mother married, moved to Shilin New Street, in a newly built lau-a tshu⁷⁶. Although my grandmother was a woman⁷⁷, she was selected by the entire Shi family as the first person in charge for the ancestral worship guild⁷⁸, which itself was responsible for the worship of Shi Zhengcheng⁷⁹ (from 1918-1924) and other Shi family ancestors. She was also in charge of the toa-kong⁸⁰ as well as matters related thereof. At that time, there were

⁷³ Compared to American culture, the Chinese kinship system and its related terms are extremely in depth and can be confusing at times. Here, there was a male member of the Shi family who had an unknown number of sons. However, he at least had one son. The first son would, by default, be the eldest son (diyifang, 第一房,). Su Beng is saying that Xixiang's lineage stems from the family of the first son.

⁷⁴ Juren (舉人). Lit. "recommended man." A rank imperial China, specifically, a person who passed the triennial provincial exam. This rank was the second highest rank, right below jinshi (進士).

⁷⁵ The ST here uses two words for grandmother, laozumu (老祖母) and A Ma (阿嬤). I chose to simplify my translation here. However, it should be noted that "laozumu" is sort of like a term of affection.

⁷⁶ Lâu-á-tshù (樓仔厝). Taiwanese. Refers to a two- or three-story house, usually owned by rich families.

⁷⁷ Tsa-bóo-lâng (查某人). Taiwanese. Woman.

⁷⁸ Jisi gonghui (祭祀公業). Ancestor worship guild. Defined as "A group of people aiming at providing services for ancestor worship or other worships based on the properties donated by the initiators." See <https://law.moj.gov.tw/ENG/LawClass/LawAll.aspx?pcode=D0020063>.

⁷⁹ Shi Zhengcheng (施正成). The first ancestor of the Shi family.

⁸⁰ Tōa-kong (大公). In this context, toa-kong here means a big family gathering meant for the worship of ancestors.

several land and rental disputes in Nanya⁸¹, Shuangxishan⁸², and Taoyuan⁸³, where the worship of Shi Zhengcheng was held. Whenever there was a dispute in the Shi family, my grandmother was called over to handle them. As such, our home on Shilin Street became the Shi family's place to settle such affairs. Several elderly men of the Shi family such as Granduncle A Cai, Granduncle Xiwen, Granduncle Xiyun, Granduncle Xijing, Granduncle Xifang, Granduncle Shizhen, Uncle Bingdong, Uncle Bingxun, etc would come to our house to hold meetings and discussions. It was quite a lively affair. Those old folks would always call me “A Hui-a”⁸⁴ or “Big Head”⁸⁵, always telling me to do this or to do that.

Every year the Shi family held its dagong, and all members of the family would worship their ancestors at their ancestral lands in Nanya. After the worshipping ceremony, we would gather tables and chairs and have a large meal (called tsia tua kong⁸⁶). After we feasted, we had to split the money that the Shi family earned⁸⁷. The adult men would always fight over this, even to the point of breaking bones and shedding blood. We would then call my grandmother over—with her little bound feet—to come and stop the fighting. Off to the side, I witnessed my grandmother's majestic yet stern presence. Me, being just a kid⁸⁸, could not help but feel proud.

⁸¹ Nanya Tiandi (浦雅田地). Nanya is a part of present day Shilin District, itself a part of Taipei City.

⁸² Shuangxi Shandi (雙溪山地). Shuangxi District in New Taipei City, located in the east.

⁸³ Taoyuan (桃園). A city in northern Taiwan, west of Taipei.

⁸⁴ A Hui-a (阿暉仔). Taiwanese. This is a nickname based on Su Beng's original name, Chaohui (朝暉).

⁸⁵ Tua thau-a (大頭仔). Taiwanese. Lit. “big head.” The name had a semantic component (as opposed to A Hui-a which is a purely phonetic name with no meaning), therefore it could be translated and better understood by the reader.

⁸⁶ Tsia tua kong in Taiwanese; chidagong in Mandarin (吃大公). This is a kind of banquet that occurs after a dagong. The character chi (吃) here means eat, hinting that the chidagong is a banquet. I deemed a domesticated version of the word too inelegant for translated text and perhaps too Western. Something like “post-worship dinner” or “post-worship banquet” might confuse the reader that this was a Christian or Western banquet. My strategy for extremely rich and culturally dense terms was to use transliteration, i.e., foreignization.

⁸⁷ The Shi family would split the earnings made by the family after the chidagong. For example, money earned from rent would be counted and divided. According to Su Beng, it was quite a lively and violent affair.

⁸⁸ Gín-á (囡仔). Taiwanese. Kid; child.

There is a saying that goes, “It is difficult for wealth to be passed down beyond the third generation.”⁸⁹ My maternal grandfather, Xixiang, was the fourth generation of the first wife’s family of the Shi family. Xixiang had six other siblings in total. His eldest brother, named Bingxun, had a son (the eldest). During the Japanese colonial period⁹⁰, he passed a high-level exam and became a lawyer.⁹¹ Bingxun’s second son, Shi Gongxing, was a prominent research mathematician. After WWII, he returned to Taiwan and established the Department of Mathematics at NTU⁹² and later became the dean of the College of Science (1962-72). But these two were the exceptions. For the other children of the family, if they were not consuming opium, then they were gambling⁹³, so much so that they became poor. The fifth son, Xiyuan, and the sixth son, Xiwu, were especially bad examples of this. Seeing that she was a widow⁹⁴, they went to my grandmother for money. They had no respect for social relationships at all. They would often ask for money from her, which made her life extremely hard.

⁸⁹ Sufengzhijia, Fuyuan hao buguo sandai (素封之家，富源好不過三代). The term sufeng (素封) comes from *Records of the Grand Historian* by Sima Qian. It refers to an ordinary person who is rich, but has not received territory from the emperor.

⁹⁰ The Japanese colonial period (Rizhi Shidai, 日治時代). This is a common term to refer to the period of Japanese rule in Taiwan, which is a more neutral term. However, in other cases, Su Beng specifically calls it “the Japanese occupation” or other such terms.

⁹¹ Here, Su Beng uses the Japanese word bengoshi (辯護士). This word was borrowed into Taiwanese as piān-hōo-sū. In contrast, the Mandarin word for lawyer is lushi (律師). When Japanese words are borrowed into Chinese in Taiwan, assuming they are entirely written in kanji, the Mandarin (or Taiwanese) pronunciation will be used but the kanji will remain the same or converted to traditional Chinese characters. For example, shuriken written in Japanese kanji is 手裏劍 but written in traditional Chinese characters is 手裏劍. Notice that 劍 and 劍 are different characters. Additionally, the pronunciation then changes to shoulijian instead of shuriken. This is called orthographic borrowing.

⁹² National Taiwan University (國立台灣大學). Officially National Taiwan University, but often abbreviated to NTU. This school was founded by the Japanese in 1928 and was established as “Taihoku Imperial University” (臺北帝國大學). The school was renamed to “National Taiwan University” in 1945 following the end of WWII. In contemporary times, it is a prestigious and famous university in Taiwan.

⁹³ Poah-kiáu (博傲). Taiwanese. Gambling.

⁹⁴ The implication is that, since Su Beng’s grandmother is a widow, it might have been easier to force her into giving them money without her husband’s protection.

My grandmother was a “Buddhist who was a vegetarian at home.”⁹⁵ She was a vegetarian so she did not eat meat. So, Aunt Lin (my grandmother’s child bride⁹⁶) would have to prepare food into different pots⁹⁷, one for vegetarian food and the other for meat. When vegetarian food was being made, peanut oil⁹⁸ was used, and for meat dishes it was lard. When we ate, we also had to set up two different tables for the two kinds of food. The soy sauce and fermented bean paste used by our family was made every year by my grandmother. She would ask me to help her make them, and would always say to me, since I’m the eldest grandson, I have to be able to do things like this and other kinds of housework. So, I not only learned how to make soy sauce, but also pickled cucumber, pickled winter melon, and fermented bean curd⁹⁹. I also learned how to make pickled white radish, too.

Every day, at four o’clock in the morning, when the sun has yet to rise, my grandmother would get up. She combed her hair, put on her clothes, then kneeled and prayed to the Buddha statue in the main hall of the house. She lit incense and recited Buddhist scriptures as well. She this did for a little over an hour. Sometimes, she would also wake me up to kneel and pray with her. But because we would kneel for a long time, after I got up, my legs would hurt to the point that I could not move them. At that time, the Buddhism (i.e., Zhaijiao, and its temple was called “Tang”) that Taiwanese people practiced could be divided into different sects: Xiantian, Jinhua,

⁹⁵ Zaijia chizhai de fojiatu (在家吃齋的佛教徒). A practicing Buddhist would usually become a monk or nun, live in a temple, and practice vegetarianism. However, Su Beng’s grandmother was not a nun, but still believed in Buddhism. Hence, the “at home” is a contrast to saying “at the temple.”

⁹⁶ Tongyangxi in Mandarin; shim-pua in Taiwanese (童養媳). A child bride was usually a girl who was adopted into a family as a future daughter-in-law. It was a form of arranged marriage in which the adopting family would raise said child. This kind of marriage was more common in poorer families, where the receiving household might need an extra hand with farming or chores. However, there was a stigma of the child bride being “abandoned” by her original family. See Bao Jiemin’s “The Gendered Biopolitics of Marriage and Immigration A Study of Pre-1949 Chinese Immigrants in Thailand” (2003).

⁹⁷ Tiánn (鼎). Taiwanese. A pot.

⁹⁸ Hôe-iû (火油). Taiwanese. Peanut oil.

⁹⁹ Fermented bean curd is essentially fermented tofu. This differs from fermented bean paste which is an actual paste made from ground soybeans.

and Longhua. My grandma belonged to the Xiantian sect. The temple she often went to was called Zhishan temple, in Dadaocheng, Taipingding¹⁰⁰ (now known as Yanping North Road), which was next to the Mazu¹⁰¹ temple. Every month, my grandmother would attend the regular group worship for the Buddha. Every time she went, she would ask me to come along.

When she was young, my grandmother had her feet bound¹⁰². She wore cloth shoes that she made herself. Later, she unbound her feet and wore custom made boots. She would always travel here and there, especially to temples to pray to the Buddha. I always had to go with her. There is a saying that goes like, “A woman pretending to go to the temple to pray.”¹⁰³ That is how I felt when I followed my grandmother to the temples. My grandmother and I would often go to Huiji Temple in Zhishanyan¹⁰⁴, Cixian Temple on Shilin Street, and Guandu Mazu Temple (now called Guandu Temple). Sometimes, we would also go to the Xiangong Temple in Muzha to pray to the barefoot Lu Dongbin¹⁰⁵. We have prayed at all the places in the outskirts of Shilin, but in my child mind, the most important thing to me was getting to visit so many places.

¹⁰⁰ Dadaocheng (大稻埕太平町). Dadaocheng is an area in modern day Datong District (大同區), Taipei. During the Japanese colonial period, it was known as Daitotei. Dadaocheng was specifically the riverside “port” area of Taipei, but it was not considered part of Taipei at the time. Taipingding was an administrative district that existed during the period, but is now called Datong District. Datong is known for its buildings which were built during the Qing and Japanese periods. It also known for Dihua Street (迪化街, Dihuajie), a street famous for its traditional Chinese medicine, fabrics, and tea.

¹⁰¹ Mazu in Mandarin; Ma-tsoo in Taiwanese (媽祖). Also transliterated as Matsu. This is a Chinese sea goddess from Chinese folk religion. She is a sort of protector god for fishermen. Su Beng will explain more about her in chapter 2. See: <https://www.roots.gov.sg/ich-landing/ich/practices-related-to-mazu>.

¹⁰² Chuanjiao (縛腳). This was a traditional Chinese practice meant for women. It called for a young girl to have their toes forcefully curled inwards and squeezed into the sole. It was viewed as a sign of beauty in imperial China, and was not officially ended until the early 20th century. See Xiaoya Gao’s *Women Existing for Men: Confucianism and Social Injustice against Women in China*.

¹⁰³ Danlantai jiashaojin (擔籃仔假燒金). Taiwanese. Lit. “Taking a basket to a temple to pretend to burn incense.” This was used to describe women who had a secret lover. They would stuff a basket with incense, candles, and paper money and head out, pretending to go to the temple to pray. However, their real intent was to meet their secret lover.

¹⁰⁴ Zhishanyan (芝山岩). An area in present day Shilin, named after its sandstone hill.

¹⁰⁵ Lu Dongbin (796 CE-1016 CE, 呂洞賓). Tang scholar. One of the Eight Immortals in Taoism.

Several times, my grandmother would go to Beigang¹⁰⁶ Chaotian Temple to light incense and pray to Mazu. For those occasions, my family and I would have to follow her on a big three-day, two-night trip. We would start our journey at 8 AM. We had to go to Taipei station to take the express train¹⁰⁷. By dusk, we would arrive in Chiayi¹⁰⁸, where we would stay for one night. The following day, we would ride the “five-minute train”¹⁰⁹ (a kind of train without a roof, mainly used for transporting sugar cane). After about an hour, we would arrive at Beigang Street¹¹⁰. Going from the north of Taiwan to the south (at this time, people from Taipei would say going down to Taichung was enough to say it was the “south”) on such a big journey was truly a delight. It truly¹¹¹ made me feel excited since I was just a kid at the time. On the train, as I was looking out the window, I could see a vast sea of green. There were rice paddies and huts¹¹² (homes where the tenant farmers would live) and bamboo fences. It was like a magic lantern¹¹³—the world flashed before my eyes at such a high speed. My eyes could not take it all in. I looked far off into the distance; I could enjoy the sights of unbroken mountains. When the train got close to the train station¹¹⁴, it was possible to see the damugong¹¹⁵ of the whole village. It was also possible to see crowds of people and how they mingled to and fro. It was such a dazzling

¹⁰⁶ Beigang (北港). A town in Yunlin County, which is in the south of Taiwan. Yunlin is next to Chiayi County.

¹⁰⁷ Tokubetsu kyuko in Japanese; tebie jinxing in Mandarin. 特別急行. Japanese. A kind of limited express train.

¹⁰⁸ Chiayi (嘉義). A county in southern Taiwan. It is also a city, but here it refers to the county.

¹⁰⁹ Wufen-a che in Mandarin; goo-hun-a tshia in Taiwanese (五分仔車). Taiwanese. A small train that services a local area, as opposed to an intercity train. Specifically, this train that Su Beng mentions is a train without a roof that is meant for transporting sugar cane.

¹¹⁰ Ke-á (街仔). Taiwanese. Street.

¹¹¹ Sim-kuann (心肝). Taiwanese. Truly.

¹¹² Tshân-liâu in Taiwanese; tianliao in Mandarin (田寮). Taiwanese. A tianliao was a sort of low cost, somewhat shoddy home that tenant farmers lived in. Since the land they worked on was not theirs, they would accurately be called tenant farmers.

¹¹³ Zoumadeng (走馬燈). In the West, this is known as a magic lantern or “laterna magica,” which was a kind of contraption that could project images from prepared (usually painted) slides. See: <https://www.magiclanternsociety.org/about-magic-lanterns/>.

¹¹⁴ Tshia-thâu (車頭). Taiwanese. Train station.

¹¹⁵ Damugong (大墓公). A cemetery. However, this word can refer to a cemetery for the unnamed who were simply buried out of respect, like in the Lin Shuangwen Rebellion.

spectacle. Additionally, I was able to sample various kinds of Taiwanese snacks, which really broadened my culinary horizons.

My grandmother truly was a devoted Buddhist. She often waited by the entrance of the house at dawn to buy turtle doves, bamboo partridges, and other small birds that the farmers would sell. She would then set them free¹¹⁶. She truly practiced her lifelong belief of never killing a living creature.

The only hobby my grandmother really had was watching plays. Whenever there was a play that was held in front of the Mazu Temple in Shilin, be it big plays, gezaixi¹¹⁷, baizixi¹¹⁸, Hakka plays, or puppet shows, she would always take me to go see them. My mom¹¹⁹ was a huge fan of Beijing operas. She would take me to Xinwutai¹²⁰, behind Taipei station, to watch Beijing operas¹²¹, which in turn cultivated my appreciation for Beijing operas. Every two to three years, it would be our family's turn to be the host¹²² of the deity worship group¹²³. When that time came, we would set up the stage underneath the verandas¹²⁴ of our house. We would then invite an acting troupe to perform glove puppetry. Sometimes, we would go to the end of Shilin market

¹¹⁶ Fangsheng (放生). To release an animal from captivity, sometimes for religious reasons. It is sometimes done as a Buddhist practice, as in this context.

¹¹⁷ Gezaixi in Mandarin; kua-á-hì in Taiwanese (歌仔戲). A kind of Taiwanese opera that uses both literary and colloquial Taiwanese. See: <https://nrch.culture.tw/twpedia.aspx?id=8148>.

¹¹⁸ Baizixi (白字戲). A kind of Taiwanese opera that primarily uses colloquial Taiwanese. The bai (白) here means colloquial, as opposed to literary or formal. See: <https://nrch.culture.tw/twpedia.aspx?id=20988>.

¹¹⁹ A Mu (阿母). Taiwanese. Mother.

¹²⁰ Xinwutai (新舞台). The first performing arts hall in Taipei. See: <https://nrch.culture.tw/twpedia.aspx?id=10789>. It was built by the Japanese, then later destroyed during the Raid on Taipei in 1945. After WWII, the honorary chairperson of CTBC, Koo Chen-Fu, and then chairman Jeffrey Koo, jointly funded the effort to rebuild the hall.

¹²¹ Tsiànn-im (正音). Taiwanese. Beijing operas.

¹²² Lōo-tsú (爐主). Taiwanese. The host of the deity worship group.

¹²³ Shenminghui (神明會). The deity worship group. The group is centered around the worship of a single deity. Funds are usually allocated from said believers. The word hui (會) has multiple translations, such as “group,” “association,” or “union.” However, “group” would be the closest in terms of accuracy.

¹²⁴ Tîng-á-kha (亭仔腳). Taiwanese. Veranda. An architecture term. See: <https://the.nmth.gov.tw/nmth/zh-tw/Item/Detail/77002572-2501-4b00-afdb-d3e5aeddc318>.

to see Japanese people act in animal plays involving lions¹²⁵ and tigers as well as magical circuses. I remember, one time, I even saw a play involving Guangong and Liubei from *Romance of the Three Kingdoms*¹²⁶. I also often saw several gezaixi like Catching the Frog¹²⁷, the Tale of the White Snake, and Tale of the Lychee Mirror. A really special one was The Burning of the Red Lotus Temple performed by Xiaoxiyuan¹²⁸. It is kind of wuxia¹²⁹ play, where one could see warriors clashing swords and leaping and running atop rooftops. These scenes would always bring my young mind to a world of wonder, and make me so excited that I could not sleep at night. However, in the 1990s, when I came back to Taiwan from abroad and saw these gezaixi and puppet shows again, the decorations, singing, and handiworks had, for the most part, lost their popularity and sense of fantasy as compared to the past. The passage of time and society's constant changes inevitably make a person feel like something valuable has been lost...¹³⁰

In regards to my grandmother's life, she always followed a life of "be frugal, work hard, and save money" all throughout her life. He lived quite a simple life. With one *qian*¹³¹, she could buy three meal's worth of vegetables. She even had an old handkerchief that she always used even when it was falling apart. She once said, "Whenever you buy a single piece of clothing, you

¹²⁵ Sai-á (獅仔). Lion.

¹²⁶ Sanguo Yanyi (三國演義). A fictional historical novel written by Luo Guanzhong (1330-1400, 羅貫中) in the 14th century. Luo Guanzhong was a writer who lived during the Ming dynasty. His book is primarily based on *Records of the Three Kingdoms* by Chen Shou (233-297, 陳壽). Chen Shou was a Chinese historian and writer who lived during the Three Kingdoms period. *Romance of the Three Kingdoms* is a fictionalized tale featuring Liubei as the protagonist against Caocao, the antagonist. It is considered a classic in Chinese literature.

¹²⁷ Tiò Tsuí-ke (釣水鷄). The word shuiji (水鷄) in Taiwanese means frog (lit. "water chicken.")

¹²⁸ Xiaoxituan (消西園). An acting troupe. Still active today.

¹²⁹ Wuxia (武俠). Wu (武) here means martial or armed, and xia (俠) means something like hero, knight-errant, or chivalrous. Wuxia is a kind historical fantasy genre, often featuring martial arts, action, and supernatural abilities.

¹³⁰ In very emotional passages like these, I took the liberty to produce freer translations. I used Su Beng's emotions as the guideline for my translation, aiming to produce something with a similar feeling of connotation in English. His wording is more like "...inevitably make a person not bear the changes in time." Note that Su Beng also used the onomatopoeia xixu (唏噓), which is a kind of like a sign or sob. I found that adding in ellipses, not words, would better capture his emotions. This could be considered an embellishment by some.

¹³¹ The ST specifically states yifengqian (一分錢). Here, a qian (錢) is a unit of currency. It takes ten fen (分) to make one jiao (角), and ten jiao to make one qian.

should wear it for the rest of your life¹³².” It was like this that she led her difficult, simple, yet unwavering life. Her whole life, she saved a lot of money. She took the inheritance from her late husband, which was approximately 20 *jia*¹³³ of land, and grew it to 80 something *jia* (these lands were located in Zhuwei and Dayuan, both in Taoyuan).

In 1950, after the Chiang family¹³⁴ occupied Taiwan, the KMT government attempted to rob Taiwan’s land, and carried out the “The 37.5% Arable Rent Reduction Act”¹³⁵ (1949). Furthermore, they also declared that, starting in 1953, they would implement their “land reform¹³⁶,” in which land was confiscated from landlords (approximately 620,000 *jia* were taken). In the end, of the approximately 900,000 *jia* of arable land that Taiwan possessed, the KMT stole an enormous 400,000 *jia*. My father anticipated the plundering by the Chiang family’s regime; thus, he sincerely urged my grandmother to quickly sell off her land, otherwise the land would be confiscated. But when my grandmother heard this, she said without hesitation “Even if the government comes to take my land, why would I ever sell my ancestor’s land!!”¹³⁷ From this, it could be seen that my grandmother had a sense of compassion and care for her land.

¹³² The ST was specific and stated “one article of clothing.” I found “article” too formal, so I went with “piece.”

¹³³ *Jia* (甲). A unit of measurement for land. One *jia* is 2,934 ping (坪, another Chinese unit of measurement). 1 ping is 3.3058 square meters. Therefore, 1 *jia* is 9,798.39 square meters.

¹³⁴ A famous mainland Chinese family. Its most famous member is perhaps Chiang Kai-shek (蔣介石, 1887-1975), Chinese KMT politician, military leader, and president of the ROC.

¹³⁵ The 37.5% Arable Rent Reduction Act (三七五減租). This was a land reform law officially enacted on June 7, 1951. The original intent was to redistribute land from large landowners in Taiwan. Its modern, amended form can be read here: <https://law.moj.gov.tw/ENG/LawClass/LawAll.aspx?pcode=D0060008>.

¹³⁶ In Taiwan post-WWII, land reform occurred in three stages: 1, farm rents were capped at 37.5% of the farmers yields via the 37.5% Arable Rent Reduction Act; 2, public land was sold to farmers starting in 1951; and 3, large landholdings were broken up and distributed to tenant farmers. Yet it must be noted that land reform is still a controversial topic in Taiwanese history and its impact is debated. In his article “Land Reform and Rural Development on Taiwan” (1961), Bowden concludes that, from an economic perspective, reform overall was successful in Taiwan. However, Chou (2020) argues that the grain to the government by the farmers was below market price, meaning farmers were still hurt economically. See also: <https://nrch.culture.tw/twpedia.aspx?id=3916>.

¹³⁷ Spoken in Taiwanese.

Although my grandmother was really strict with herself, she was always honest and open minded. She treated people with tremendous amounts of generosity and courtesy¹³⁸. She did her utmost to take care of people and guests. She would always spend a lot of money taking care of her family; she would treat her relatives and friends in an honest and straightforward way. For the tenant farmers¹³⁹ or people who worked on the house, like the carpenters or bricklayers¹⁴⁰, she would always prepare water, tea, and food for them in great quantities. She would say, “You should never let your workers¹⁴¹ leave work on an empty stomach¹⁴².” She was also warm and sincere towards her neighbors¹⁴³. She would offer to lend them some money or attend the hui¹⁴⁴ to help everyone with investing.

The Shi family’s maternal grandfather (Mushu) had two younger sisters. The third sister was married to the famous Jian family who were based near the foothills of Zhishanyan (Jian Wanchuan was the main member). The fifth sister was married in Banka¹⁴⁵. One of her sons, Zhang Huolu, was the owner of the famous Ruifeng¹⁴⁶ store on Dadaocheng Street (now Dihua

¹³⁸ Lishangwanglai (禮尚往來). This is an idiom in Chinese. In Taiwanese and Chinese culture, courtesy is often paid back in courtesy. For example, a person who gives someone a gift will probably receive one in return.

¹³⁹ Tshân-tiān (田佃). Taiwanese. Tenant farmers.

¹⁴⁰ Thô-chúi (土水). Taiwanese. Bricklayer.

¹⁴¹ Tai-chi (代誌). Taiwanese. Matter; affair; thing.

¹⁴² Spoken in Taiwanese.

¹⁴³ Chhu-pin (厝邊). Taiwanese. Neighbor.

¹⁴⁴ Iô-hōe-á (搖會仔). Taiwanese. In this situation, a hui (會) is a kind of informal loan group usually among well acquainted friends. The group would pool money together. This would be advantageous for paying for large items, like a down payment. Each member would have the chance to take the entire pool of money. An analogue in Latino culture would be the tanda.

¹⁴⁵ Banka (艋舺). This word refers to modern day Wanhua District (萬華區). “Wanhua” is the Mandarin pronunciation of the Japanese word “Banka” (萬華; another case of orthographic borrowing). The Japanese pronunciation of “banka” is in turn derived from the Taiwanese word “Banka” which uses the characters 艋舺. The name “Banka” is derived from a Taiwanese indigenous word, also pronounced “bangka,” meaning “outrigger canoe,” since Wanhua was once a flourishing trading port. The translation of this name as “Banka” here is intentional as Su Beng used the Taiwanese characters instead of the Mandarin Chinese characters.

¹⁴⁶ Ruifeng (瑞豐). Su Beng never explains what kind of store it was, only that it was famous

Street). It was I who had to receive the third and fifth sisters when they came back to the family (for Lunar New Year¹⁴⁷).

When I was young, my maternal great grandmother was still alive. My grandmother's younger brother (now deceased) had four sons. One of them was Uncle Kuntu¹⁴⁸. There was also Aunt Hanmei and Aunt Yufeng. My grandmother spared no effort to take care of her maternal family¹⁴⁹ both mentally and materially. Aunt A Cai was married to Huang Yunyuan who was from a famous family based in Miaoli. When they came to Taipei, they always stayed with us here in Shilin. Aunt Hanmei was married to Wang Shuilu, who was from the famous Wenshan Tea store in Shiqiaozaitou (in Taipingding, Dadaocheng). (Wang Shuilu was Wang Tiandeng's¹⁵⁰ brother, a man who was one of many who disappeared after the 228 Incident.) My grandmother was especially close to Aunt Hanmei, so when she came back for Lunar New Year, she often stayed for one or two months, and spent time with my grandmother. My grandmother really trusted Wang Shuilu. For example, because of my independence activities, I had to flee to Japan in 1952 and therefore cut off any contact with my family. Wang Shuilu, from the 1950s to the 1960s, went to Tokyo to sell tea. He was entrusted by my grandmother to see me and give me

¹⁴⁷ In Taiwanese and Chinese culture, it is tradition for the daughter of a family to return to her original home, usually on the second day of the Lunar New Year (Chueh, 初二). The verb for this in Taiwanese is chō-kheh (作客) or huiwaijia (回外家) in Mandarin.

¹⁴⁸ Kuntu Jiu (坤土舅). The word jiu (舅), meaning maternal uncle, is used as a title here. Essentially, this is rendered as "Uncle Kuntu" in English.

¹⁴⁹ Waijiacu. 外家厝. Taiwanese. Maternal family.

¹⁵⁰ Wang Tiandeng (王添灯, 1901-1947). Originally a government functionary based in Xindian (an area south of Taipei), Wang Tiandeng later became a tea merchant. In 1947, he served as the director of the "February 28 Settlement Committee" based in Taipei. These settlement committees were spread throughout Taiwan. In their respective local areas, they presented the government with their "32 Demands," which were proposals for governmental reform such as having local Taiwanese in the government and democratizing Taiwan. However, their proposals were rejected, and government troops were sent to suppress and kidnap those associated with the committee or protests. In March of that year, about a week or so after the incident, Wang Tiandeng was kidnapped by the military police. It is said that he was burned to death. See: https://228.org.tw/228_elites-view.php?ID=27, <https://nrch.culture.tw/twpedia.aspx?id=5203>, and <https://www.fpri.org/article/2017/02/taiwans-white-terror-remembering-228-incident/>.

messages from her. I remember, one time, my grandmother said, “A Hui-a, if things are too rough, then please come back home. Why do you want to sell noodles over there?? I had already settled things with your mother. You were adopted and became the eldest grandson. When it’s time to divide the inheritance, you will gain two pieces, but your other brothers will receive only one piece. However, it was decided that you and Chaohe¹⁵¹ will only receive one piece¹⁵². You’re not here, so your portion will go to Chenlin Huifang¹⁵³ who will take charge of it. You have to keep this in mind¹⁵⁴.” These things that my grandmother said were brought to me by Wang Shuilu. In 1993, after I ceased hiding in Japan and returned to Taiwan, Wang Shuilu had unfortunately already passed away. However, I am still in contact with Aunt Hanmei’s eldest daughter, Huizi (Wang Shuhui), who has always kept me in her heart. Now, she is engaged in the Australia coal mining industry and has become a successful entrepreneur.

Sometimes, my grandmother would go to the market at the crack of dawn to buy heaps of fish and meat and bring them back home. On the way back, friends who knew her would curiously ask her, “A Gui-a, you’re a vegetarian, why are you buying so much fish and meat?” My grandmother would respond, “Haha! It’s for my grandson to eat!” It can be seen from this that my grandmother was abundantly loving and caring. To be frank, she did influence me in this aspect, as I would sometimes spend money in large amounts, so much so that I would spend too much and even tell people not to repay me.

¹⁵¹ Chaohe (朝和). One of Su Beng’s brothers. One of his stories will be mentioned later in this chapter.

¹⁵² Su Beng uses fen (份) which is a kind of measure word meaning “portion.” However, it is not clear how large this portion of land is, therefore I decided to be equally ambiguous in the translation.

¹⁵³ Chenlin Huifang (陳林蕙芳). This is Su Beng’s second youngest sister from the Lin family (his original family).

¹⁵⁴ Taiwanese. Quoted speech from Su Beng’s grandmother.

Section 2: My Grandmother the Paragon

Ever since I was a little baby, my grandmother raised me. During the day, I would follow my grandmother closely, my steps always close to her, like a shadow trailing a person. At nighttime, I would sleep with my grandmother. I did so until I was 19, when I went to Japan to study abroad. When I was six or seven years old, if there was a night that I could not fall asleep, I would caress my grandmother and ask her, “After I die, where will I go? Can I still be with you?” My grandmother would always say to me, “Just get some rest. We’ll always be together. Children shouldn’t worry about stuff like this¹⁵⁵.” Thinking about it, it indeed sounds strange. Why would a child think about questions of life and death? This showed that my child heart already completely depended on my grandmother’s good care.

When my grandmother wanted me to quickly fall asleep, she would often sing lullabies to me. Even to this day, I still remember a couple of songs that my grandmother would often sing to me. Just like:

*Selling Bean Sprouts*¹⁵⁶

Selling bean sprouts, planting bean sprouts,

Selling lumpia, catching frogs

Red fa kuih

Tudii Gong is eating,

*Toss the jiaobei*¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁵ Taiwanese. Quoted speech from Su Beng’s grandmother.

¹⁵⁶ It should also be noted that these kinds of nursery rhymes do not always need to make sense. This particular nursery rhyme might have been created because it was catchy or because it taught rhymes. Equally important is that this song is intended to be read in Taiwanese, not Mandarin.

¹⁵⁷ Jiaobei (筊杯). Jiaobei are divination tools which are thrown in pairs. They are shaped like crescents, hence are sometimes called “moon blocks.” Each jiaobei will have a flat (yang) and curved (yin) side. The person will tell the

Car¹⁵⁸

Car¹⁵⁹,

The train carries sugar cane,

The scabies cat wears glasses,

Daddy is the village head,

Being hit by a smoke pipe doesn't hurt

When my grandmother got up in the morning, she would squeeze my nose and say “If you want to be a man¹⁶⁰, you need to have a straight nose, only then will you become a good adult.” She would call me “Big Head,” and shave my head bald and shiny. She would say, this way, I would have a generous heart. I would keep this Buddhist monk¹⁶¹-like hairstyle until I was 19.

My grandmother would repeatedly say to me, you have to be ambitious, courageous, and considerate. You must be polite¹⁶², be humble, and know what shame is¹⁶³. You must do things in earnest, be hardworking, and frugal. You must treasure your belongings...¹⁶⁴ and so on and so

gods very specific details, like their name and birthdate, then ask their question. The two jiaobei are thrown together as a pair. The gods answer depends on which sides are facing up. See: <https://religion.moi.gov.tw/Knowledge/Content?ci=2&cid=345>.

¹⁵⁸ Same with the previous song. The rhyme here is the ending vowel sound “-ia.” It must be noted that this song and the previous will only rhyme in Taiwanese.

¹⁵⁹ The original title of the nursery rhyme uses the characters 自動車 which is pronounced as ji-do-shia in Taiwanese. This is actually the Japanese word for automobile, which is pronounced jidosha in Japanese. The Taiwanese dialect, especially during the Japanese colonial period, acquired many Japanese loanwords.

¹⁶⁰ Nanzihan (男子漢). A term meaning a manly man.

¹⁶¹ Heshang (和尚). Buddhist monk. In Buddhism, monks often need to shave their heads.

¹⁶² Sè-jī (細膩). Taiwanese. Polite.

¹⁶³ Kian-kiàn-siàu (驚見笑). Taiwanese. This is an aspect of Taiwanese culture, meaning, to know what conduct is shameful and dishonorable (and therefore to not do them).

¹⁶⁴ Mih-kiān (物件). Taiwanese.

forth. She especially emphasized to me that I had to be strict with myself. To others, I should be generous. These were principles that she did not just preach, she actually forced me to practice them. For example, when I was little, I was often timid and cowardly (this is related to the feudal idea of “education through intimidation”¹⁶⁵). During Tomb Sweeping Festival¹⁶⁶, when I would go to the cemetery¹⁶⁷ for sweeping¹⁶⁸, I would be very afraid to go up the mountains¹⁶⁹. At that time, my grandmother would be behind me, hobbling along with her bound feet, sternly pushing me along. Only when it was clear that I could not continue climbing did she call for someone to carry me up the mountain.

Every time my grandmother would go to Daqiuyuan in Taoyuan (Dayuan Zhuang¹⁷⁰) to collect rent, she would most certainly ask me to go with her. In the morning, we¹⁷¹ would go to Taipei station and take the train to Taoyuan. Then, from Taoyuan train station, we would take the handcar¹⁷² to the intersection. However, we would still have to walk on foot for at least an hour. My poor, child feet would feel extremely tired and sore. But when I squatted on the ground, shouting that my feet were sore, all in an effort to play dumb, my grandmother would

¹⁶⁵ Weihe jiaoyu (威嚇教育). Also can be rendered as “learning by force” in the sense that manners and rules are taught by extremely severe means. For example, requiring children to first finish their homework or else they won’t be able to eat.

¹⁶⁶ Qingming Jie (清明節). Also called Tomb Sweeping Festival or Qingming Festival. It has its origins in the “Cold Food Festival” (寒食節) from ancient China. In modern times, Tomb Sweeping Day focuses on sweeping one’s ancestors’ tombs (hence the name in English). This is an important way to show respect for said ancestors. See: <https://studycli.org/chinese-holidays/qingming-festival/>.

¹⁶⁷ Bōng-á-po (墓仔埔). Taiwanese. Cemetery.

¹⁶⁸ Pōe-bōng (培墓). Taiwanese. To tomb sweep.

¹⁶⁹ Tombs in Taiwan are often located in the mountains. This is for several reasons. One belief is that the dead must be separate from the living. Another belief is that the spirits of one’s ancestors might enjoy the scenery of mountains. Another more practical reason is that land in Taiwan is limited so it is a better use of space to have cemeteries in the mountains.

¹⁷⁰ Dayuanzhuang in Mandarin; Osonosho in Japanese (大園庄). This was an administrative district of Taoyuan during the Japanese colonial period. This area later became today’s Dayuan District (大園區).

¹⁷¹ When collecting rent, it’s possible that Su Beng’s grandmother asked some other relatives to help her or perhaps we maids or servants, hence the use of “we.”

¹⁷² Qingbianche (輕便車). A kind of self-propelled tracked vehicle (like a train) that was used during the Japanese colonial period. As the name suggests, it was powered by hand as opposed to steam or diesel. See: https://memory.culture.tw/Home/Detail?Id=251345&IndexCode=Culture_Object.

immediately get angry and scold me. She would say, “You have no resolve!¹⁷³ Just squat over there and die, then.” After that, she would ignore me, minding her own business as she hobbled on. I had no choice but to rub my feet and get up from the ground. I would sob as I trailed my grandmother.

When I was a child, I ate my grandmother’s Chinese medicine¹⁷⁴ or herbal medicine when I got sick. Sometimes, she would take me to Wu Wenming Hospital or Li Yucong Hospital to see Western medicine doctors. During my early college years, I returned to Taiwan for summer break. But because I was suffering from hemorrhoids, even a big adult like myself would whine and groan for days whenever they flared up. I would always lie on the rattan sofa in the living room. My grandmother would take care of me, and I remember hearing her bound feet moving about with difficulty¹⁷⁵. I would hear the *thump thump thump* of her feet and in a moment she appeared with some medicine and later with water¹⁷⁶. Day and night she walked back and forth to take care of me. When I was young, I did not understand how social relationships worked. I only knew how to thank people. However, this illness stayed with me until I was fifty or sixty. Whenever the illness flared up, I would think of the days of my grandmother taking care of me. Scene by scene, those memories would flash in my head; My grandmother’s smiling face, my grandmother’s loving and caring heart, the sound of my grandmother’s *thump thump thump* all come back to me... I do not even have the words to

¹⁷³ Zhiqi (志氣). This word appears many times in the ST. It can mean ambition, resolve, drive, etc. However, in this particular case, “resolve” was used to better fit the context of the ST while also conforming to English collocation.

¹⁷⁴ Hanyao (漢藥). This term is important so as to differentiate it from Western medicine (xiyao, 西藥).

¹⁷⁵ Liû-kha (流腳). Taiwanese. A term to describe feet moving with difficulty. This makes sense since Su Beng’s grandmother at an earlier age had bound feet.

¹⁷⁶ The ST uses *tang tang tang* (蹠蹠蹠) in succession as an onomatopoeia to describe the sound of Su Beng’s grandmother’s feet. I was able to keep this idea in the TT, but overall, the rendering of this sentence is more contextual based rather than following the ST wording exactly. Here, I thought it was more important to paint the picture and arouse the emotions of the English reader rather than being too “literal” with the ST. This use of *tang* will occur later in the same paragraph. The usage of italicizing both “thumps” will help build imagery.

describe it all. This is how I remember my grandmother's deep love and care for me. It really makes me feel moved beyond words. It is like this that she taught me and loved me. She only wished for me to develop a hardened inner spirit. She also often said, "When conducting yourself, there will always be successes and failures. No matter the situation, you must always have strong ambition and courage. This way, you can catch up with others." It is through this kind of training from my grandmother that I was able to overcome any obstacle. I was able to stay on the path that I believed in and firmly stay on course, even up to my older years.

My family was a typical feudal family. We raised two maid girls¹⁷⁷. Every day, they would help my aunt¹⁷⁸ with sweeping, cooking, looking after the children, and other such domestic chores. This of course was a tradition of owning "slave servants"¹⁷⁹ that was passed down from earlier generations. Both servants came from a poor background and their social position was lower than our family's. My mother was very strict with them, but my grandmother was very generous. She often told them to eat until they were full and to sleep well. When they were of age to be married, she also prepared a small dowry for them as well as some of her personal money.¹⁸⁰ And, just as if they were her own daughters, she would send them off in a bridal sedan chair¹⁸¹. My grandmother would tell us to call them "aunt" and not let us view them with contempt. For a family that was so steeped in feudal tradition, this was unheard of, and was quite a remarkable thing.

¹⁷⁷ Tsa-bóo-kán (查某嫻). Taiwanese. Maid girl.

¹⁷⁸ A Koo in Taiwanese; A Gu in Mandarin (阿姑). In this chapter, Su Beng did not mention his aunt's name. He will explain her story in chapter 3. Hence, the translation choice of "my aunt" reflects Su Beng's choice as well. I did not want to embellish the text by writing her name.

¹⁷⁹ Nubi (奴婢). Slave servant. In ancient times, male servants were called nu (奴) and female servants were called bi (婢). The resulting combined word was a term that was used to describe servants or both genders.

¹⁸⁰ Sai-khia (私傢). Taiwanese. One's personal money stash.

¹⁸¹ Huajiao (花轎). A chair used in traditional Taiwanese weddings. The chair was hand carried by a team of people and was a great source of pride and honor.

My grandmother taught us children that, whenever we visit our relatives, we must always be polite¹⁸² and avoid being noisy. If it was time to eat, and we were not all present, we could not play with our tableware, otherwise it would appear as if we were uneducated. That would be quite a disgraceful thing.

During Lunar New Year¹⁸³, when the tenant farmers and laborers would come and help clean the rooms and prepare for work, my grandmother would always prepare food for them and invite them to have lunch at noontime. However, to my surprise, they were quite polite. They really wanted to go back home and eat.¹⁸⁴ When that would happen, I had to take the initiative to drag them to our house to have lunch. From this, it can be seen that workers¹⁸⁵ in the past were very polite¹⁸⁶.

My maternal uncle, Shi Zhenxing (who was also my adopted father; see chapter 3 for more information), was brought back as her son¹⁸⁷. In the months before he passed away¹⁸⁸, my grandmother asked a public notary to notarize that she was the official “person of custody¹⁸⁹”; if

¹⁸² The ST uses the Mandarin word for polite (limao, 禮貌) and the Taiwanese work for polite (sè-jī, 細膩). I choose not to translate the Taiwanese word for fear of being repetitive. I also believe that adding in a transliterated form of the word would provide too much foreignness to the text. Therefore, a domestication choice was made here.

¹⁸³ Guonian (過年). This term specifically refers to Lunar New Year (aka, Chinese New Year) as opposed to Western New Year (January 1). It was a difficult choice to make, to either simply say “new year” or “Lunar new year.” I did not feel that “Chinese new year” was appropriate given that this holiday is also celebrated in Taiwan, Vietnam, and South Korea. On the one hand, Su Beng himself literally did not say “Lunar new year,” but on the other hand, simply writing “new year” could mislead the reader into thinking the date was January 1. Ultimately, I decided to “embellish” the text and eliminate any ambiguities. Additionally, choosing a transliterated word, guonian, would have imparted too much of a foreignized flavor to the text.

¹⁸⁴ This is another aspect of politeness. The workers did not want to burden Su Beng’s grandmother, and so they were a bit stubborn and tried to go back home. However, Su Beng’s grandmother insisted that she cook for them.

¹⁸⁵ Chò-kang-lâng (工作人). Taiwanese. In this specific context, the Mandarin Chinese characters and the Taiwanese characters are the same. The editor wrote in the Taiwanese pronunciation (chò-kang-lâng) to emphasize that the word should be read with that specific pronunciation.

¹⁸⁶ Again, Su Beng here uses the Taiwanese word for polite along with the Mandarin word. I chose to simplify the TT and only use one instance of “polite” to avoid repetition.

¹⁸⁷ Su Beng is slightly ambiguous here. The implication is that Shi Zhenxing could have been an adopted son for the purposes of providing another family a male heir, akin to Su Beng.

¹⁸⁸ Kòe-sin (過身). Taiwanese. To pass away.

¹⁸⁹ Qinquanzhe (親權者). Person of custody. This refers to the person who would inherit the Shi family’s money and land.

we did not have this notarization, and my uncle passed away, the person of custody would be his wife¹⁹⁰, and she would then be able to do anything with the Shi family's inheritance. But, when my uncle died, my aunt stole my little brother from our wet nurse when he was still just an infant. Then, she took him back to her original home (which was in Dakekan¹⁹¹, which is now known as Daxi). She then immediately went to the Japanese court to accuse my grandmother of creating a fake seal¹⁹² and fabricated the person of custody document. She also accused her of planning to use my younger brother's name (Chaohe) to steal my Shi family's property. This ordeal proved to be quite sudden, but my grandmother predicted this would happen, and actually had measures in place long before the incident occurred.

As per the Japanese law in Taiwan at the time, the accused¹⁹³ in a criminal case would usually be detained in custody first. Later, they would be tried in court. However, my grandmother was not scared at all, and brought me to court with her. In the courtroom, the Japanese judge wore a very dignified robe¹⁹⁴. He sat at the highest level, and oversaw the case. In the next level was the Hakka court interpreter (this was required as per the Japanese policy of

¹⁹⁰ A-kīm (阿姮). Taiwanese. In Chinese, the word for “maternal uncle's wife” is jiuma (舅媽). However, English does not have a corresponding term, aside from saying “maternal uncle's wife” which can be somewhat awkward to say several times. Additionally, a more colloquial expression would be “the uncle on my mom's side's wife” which would still be quite lengthy. Another option would be “aunt” but this is ambiguous, as it does not indicate which aunt. I chose “wife” here since it's easier for the reader to understand and, although it is not what Su Beng literally said, the point is that Shi Zhenxing's wife would take the inheritance. In essence, I wanted to help the reader understand the core meaning of the sentence which sometimes requires a more “free” and/or domesticated translation.

¹⁹¹ Dakekan (大嵙崁). The original name of this region was Takoham, from the Pingpu language. Originally, it was called Daguxian (大姑陷) but pronounced in Taiwanese. Later, this changed to Dagukan (大姑崁), then Dakekan (大科崁). Finally, the name was changed to 大嵙崁 (dakekan). Note the difference in characters. This area now comprises modern day Daxi District in Taoyuan.

¹⁹² Yinzhang (印章). A seal in Taiwanese culture is what would be called “stamp” or “chop” in English. It is used in formal documents. To this day, it is still used in Taiwan and Japan.

¹⁹³ The ST mentions two words that essentially mean “the accused,” konggao (控告) and beigaoren (被告人). The decision here was just to use just one word to avoid repetition. Therefore, a simplification was made.

¹⁹⁴ Fafu (法服). Robes that judges would wear in court. Su Beng specifically points this out to indicate that these were Western court robes, as opposed to Taiwanese or other kinds of robes.

“Separation by Class¹⁹⁵“). The level after that¹⁹⁶ was my grandmother—the defendant. She stood there, waiting for the proceedings to start, while I sat in the benches in the back. I feel ashamed that, although my father could speak Japanese and therefore wanted to help my grandmother, he could not make it in time for the proceedings.

At the start of the proceedings, the Japanese judge used very warm and polite Japanese. Interspersed between his words was the interpreter’s translation. The interpreter used Taiwanese and swore and scolded with such great ferocity, even slamming the table. He furiously asked my grandmother “Why did you forge the seal??” in an attempt to force my grandmother into admitting she was guilty. At that time, every Taiwanese would address a Japanese official as “tai jin¹⁹⁷,” thus, the average person facing the ferocity of an interpreter would be utterly dazed. They usually found it difficult to withstand the pressure of such terrible scolding that they would be compelled to admit they were wrong even when they were not. But my grandmother stood firmly in the face of such terror. When greeted by his scolding, like thunder piercing the ears, she stood completely upright. Then, with her little shoes, she stomped on the ground, and in an even much louder voice, yelled¹⁹⁸, “Where’s your evidence?? Show me! I swear to the heavens, I never did

¹⁹⁵ Fenhua zhengce (分化政策). Lit. “Separation Policy.” This policy was first used during the short period of Dutch rule in the 17th century. The policy called for making the Han Chinese and the indigenous Taiwanese tribes antagonistic towards each other for the benefit of the Dutch. The Japanese also applied this policy during their colonization of Taiwan. See: <https://www.taiwanus.net/history/1/46.htm>.

¹⁹⁶ Su Beng’s description here is somewhat vague, as the ST says xiayiceng (下一層) which can mean “the next rank” or “the next level.” The court layout presented here does not seem to conform to the modern American or Japanese court layout. Thus, the TT is equally ambiguous.

¹⁹⁷ Tāi-jîn (大人). A respectful form of address. I transliterated the word with the Taiwanese pronunciation to maintain a sense of foreignness, demonstrating to the reader what people at the time would have actually said. Interestingly, although this word was borrowed into Taiwanese via Japanese, the word (i.e., the characters 大人) originally existed in Chinese. In Taiwan specifically, it was used to address police officers and government officials during the colonial period. There is no easy English translation here. A domestication attempt, such “sir,” would seem overly domesticated and would have disrupted the essence of ST.

¹⁹⁸ Fanwen (反問). To ask a question in reply; to ask a rhetorical question. The ST states that she asked a rhetorical question but this loses some of the vigor and intensity of the ST when translated into English. It seemed better to emphasize the might of her yelling. Plus, the quoted speech ends in a question mark, meaning it’s obvious to the English reader that she asked a question. In a sense, no loss of information occurs with this kind of translation.

it!!” At that very moment, everyone in the room suddenly froze. Even the ferocious interpreter was speechless for a while. I, sitting there in the back, was sweating all over, as if my soul was so spooked that it left my body. Then, I started to cry. My grandmother turned to me and said, “A Hui-a! Don’t be scared!”

After the judge’s examination, I felt like I received my grandmother’s unyielding sense of sincere justice. In this extremely nervous atmosphere, I suddenly heard the judge say, “Court is adjourned for today” (in Japanese). It was then that my nervousness was lifted off my shoulders. My grandmother was not held in custody. She slowly walked out, breathed a sigh of relief, and calmly returned home¹⁹⁹. As soon as the ordeal was over, I treated her out to sweet noodles to get rid of any back luck²⁰⁰. For those who lived on Shilin Street, this whole incident would later become a famous story to praised my grandmother.

For the entire duration of the lawsuit, we had to appear in court about ten times. It did not end until after six years. My grandmother told me, I am the eldest grandson of the Shi family, so I had to follow the proceedings of the court case with her, from beginning to end, and that I should ask leave from school whenever necessary, too. Every time she went to court, she would take me along with her. Again and again, I would see my grandmother’s unwavering determination through the whole struggle. I also felt that my own courage became stronger, passively, throughout the whole ordeal. I learned general principles in how to conduct myself. After six years, my grandmother finally won the case. My aunt exhausted her abilities and had no choice but to ask someone to send six-year-old Chaohe back to our home in Shilin. My aunt also completely severed off relations with the Shi family and later remarried. After Chaohe came

¹⁹⁹ The ST puts “to breathe a sigh of relief” (song le yikouqi, 鬆了一口氣) at the end of the sentence but this is awkward to maintain this order. I opted to put this before “calmly returned home” to fit English syntax.

²⁰⁰ It is a Taiwanese superstition that eating sweet noodles can get rid of bad luck.

back to us, he was often bullied because of the incident, because it brought a sort of “air of differentness” with him. This incident involving Chaohe also made me argue with the younger brothers of the Lin family (like Lin Chaoyang) and A Zhong.

Starting from when I was a kid, I would also ask my younger siblings to eat with me. My grandmother saw that I was really caring for my younger siblings, and would often say to me, “A Hui-a! You shouldn’t get too close to your relatives, so just stop while you’re ahead²⁰¹.”

Section 3: The One Who Awoke My Taiwanese Consciousness

My grandmother was born during late Qing dynasty²⁰². Additionally, her father-in-law²⁰³ was a famous Qing juren; thus, he knew everything there was to know about the Qing dynasty. She once told me²⁰⁴: Our Shi family ancestor (Tingzhang²⁰⁵) was unable to make a living in Tangshan²⁰⁶ (also known as bentu, zhongtu, or neidi, these are all terms for China²⁰⁷), so he took

²⁰¹ The meaning of this quote is something like “You are destined to be alone, so don’t get close to anyone.” Perhaps Su Beng inserted this quote as a way to foreshadow the several times of his life that required him to avoid being close to people, such as his spy work in China, his fleeing to Japan, etc.

²⁰² The term “late Qing dynasty” is rather ambiguous in Chinese historiography. Qing specialist Pamela Kyle Crossley positions the late Qing around 1800. See her article “The Late Qing Empire in Global History”: <https://www.asianstudies.org/publications/ea/archives/the-late-qing-empire-in-global-history/>.

²⁰³ Ta-koan (大官). Taiwanese. Husband’s father, aka, father-in-law.

²⁰⁴ The ST is more like “she, in the fashion of telling a story, told me” but this is extremely long and somewhat awkward in English. A simplification move was made here as the quote itself is more important than the lead in sentence.

²⁰⁵ Tingzhangong (廷章公). The name of the ancestor is Tingzhang (廷章). The gong (公) here was omitted because it serves as a title in Chinese, of which there is no direct English translation. This is akin to Japanese honorifics which have no direct English translation as well. In a sense, a domestication move was made here. I deemed the word gong too foreign and nonessential to the understanding of the ancestor’s name.

²⁰⁶ Tangshan (唐山). This word is another name for China used by Cantonese, Minnan, Hakka, and overseas Chinese. The tang (唐) here refers to the Tang dynasty. It is a sort of metonym (a term/phrase used to describe something closely related to said term/phrase) to mean “China” or “Chinese.” In Taiwan, this term specifically refers to the early Han Chinese who came to Taiwan before the Chinese Civil War.

²⁰⁷ I faced great difficulty with this passage. The terms mentioned here are bentu (本土), zhongtu (中土), neidi (內地), Zhongguo Dalu (中國大陸) which are all essentially terms for China. It is especially important to explain Zhongguo Dalu here as it is a term that recently has provoked controversy in Taiwan. Nowadays, the DPP (the pro-independence party of Taiwan) prefers not to use the term as it suggests that Taiwan is part of China. Hence, Su Beng’s usage here. In regards to rendering the text, on the one hand, a concise yet destructive domesticating move would be to simplify the TT and only write the word “China” to represent all the terms. In a reductionist sense, the reader only needs to know that these terms mean “China.” On the other hand, Su Beng specifically wrote these terms in a parenthetical, meaning it was important enough for him to explain to the reader that these terms mean China. This alone was a good enough reason to transliterate the names in English as it preserves more of his intention.

a risk and crossed the Heishuigou²⁰⁸ and arrived in bendi²⁰⁹ (Taiwan). At first, he settled in Daqiuyuan²¹⁰ (today's Dayuan) in Taojianbao²¹¹ (today's Taoyuan). At first, he lived a very poor life. But on some day, in the middle of the night, a beggar in ragged clothes came over to spend the night. The next day, the beggar suddenly vanished, and there was only a basket²¹² (the kind that was made out of bamboo and that could be placed on a shoulder pole) that was left. He opened the lid and took a peek, and found that it was full of gold. That Shi ancestor was both surprised and happy at the same time. He believed that it was a “blessing from the heavens.” After kneeling and praying to the heavens, he took the gold for himself. It was like this that the Shi family became rich and bought several tracts of land, thus becoming a large landowner. Later, he made the village on a hill at Zhilan²¹³ the palace where he would be buried, but he himself lived at Nanya Dexing (now known as Tianmu²¹⁴) and built a large house. So was the story of how he settled there.

²⁰⁸ Heishuigou (黑水溝). Lit. “black water ditch.” An ancient name for the Pescadores Channel. Penghu (澎湖), also known as the Pescadores Islands, is a collection of small islands west of Taiwan. Collectively, the archipelago forms Penghu County. The Heishuigou is a body of water that separates Penghu from the main island of Taiwan. A transliteration was made here to preserve the foreignness of the ST, as it sounds more “ancient” and foreign, whereas Pescadores Channel sounds modern and perhaps too geographic. The name “black water” comes from the fact that the tides around these waters are very turbulent. They are strong enough to carry sediment away so that light has nothing to bounce off of. As such, the water there appears darker.

²⁰⁹ Bendi (本地). Lit. “this land.” This is a term used in Taiwan to refer to Taiwan itself. As mentioned before, these transliterated names serve the purpose of bringing the reader close to the “foreign.” Specifically, it is my desire to bring the reader closer to Taiwan. But perhaps more importantly these words represent Su Beng and Su Beng’s grandmother’s original line of thinking and worldview. Section 3 contains several transliterated words in an effort to maintain the aforementioned thoughts.

²¹⁰ Daqiuyuan (大坵園). As Su Beng states, it is now modern day Dayuan District (大園區) which in Taoyuan. Daqiuyuan was its former name. See: https://www.dayuan-hro.tycg.gov.tw/home.jsp?id=135&parentpath=0,5,131&mcustomize=multimessages_view.jsp&dataserno=202004200001&aplistdn=ou=data,ou=FileApply,ou=HRO_model,ou=HRO,ou=ap_root,o=tycg,c=tw&toolsflag=Y.

²¹¹ Taojianbao (桃澗堡). This was an administrative district of Taoyuan during the Qing period and the early Japanese period.

²¹² Bǐ-luā-a (米籬仔). Taiwanese. A large basket mainly used to hold rice. I decided to include the parenthetical from the ST since it could still be translated and make sense for the reader. Although it might seem wordy, I still believe preserving Su Beng’s words was more important here.

²¹³ Zhilan is an abbreviation for “Bazhilan” which is another name for Shilin. This will be explained in chapter 2.

²¹⁴ Tiamu (天母). A neighborhood in Shilin District. During the Japanese colonial period, the Japanese built a temple for Amaterasu (written in Chinese characters/kanji as 天母; the Mandarin pronunciation is “tianmu”) in the area, thus, by association, the area was called Tianmu.

When I heard my grandmother tell these stories when I was little, I thought they were very interesting. However, I later studied historiography and sociology, and thus started to wonder and think, it is probable that since those were feudal times in Taiwan where the strong would prey on the weak, those who were strong would most likely steal or seize things. They could even steal the property of the weak. It is in this context in which my family's origin story is set. I wager that these kinds of stories were meant to cover up any acts of stealing and create a fictional myth!

My grandmother also said, in the early days, aside from the minority of the Pingpu and Gaoshan²¹⁵ indigenous people, most of the people's ancestors came from Tangshan. But there were two kinds of Han Chinese who came from Tangshan, one kind was the poor, barefoot farmers and the other kind was the government officials and soldiers, as well as those who could afford to wear boots²¹⁶. The Han Chinese who were officials and soldiers severely bullied the barefoot Han Chinese. Not only did they impose such heavy taxes in name of the Qing dynasty's yamen²¹⁷, they also committed all kinds of crime and evils. It is just as the saying goes, "The yamen door is always open, but if you don't have money, then leave."²¹⁸ Or, when there was a disaster, even if there were people dying, the tax was always bone-crushingly heavy. There is a saying that goes, "The fields are flooded and are covered with sand, the fields are gone but the taxes are still here." In addition to this, the Qing officer and soldiers would commit usury to

²¹⁵ Pingpu (平鋪) and Gaoshan (高山). During the Qing era, both Pingpu and Gaoshan were used, the former referred to those indigenous living on the plains (ping meaning "flat") and the latter to those living in the mountains (gaoshan meaning "high mountain").

²¹⁶ The use of boots here is an attempt to maintain Su Beng's idiosyncratic use of language. Here, he is contrasting barefoot Han Chinese settlers with those who have boots. In other words, the barefoot settlers were poor but those who had boots were fairly wealthy (or at least wealthy enough to afford boots).

²¹⁷ Yamen (衙門). The office or residents of an official in imperial China.

²¹⁸ Yamen bazikai, wuqian mo jinlai (衙門八字開，無錢莫進來). The ST is a play on the character ba (八) which looks like an open door. It can be explained as "The yamen's door is open like the character ba." This literary device is impossible to completely translate into English.

oppress the commoners. Just like the Wuhuli²¹⁹ (every 100 cash borrowed would require 5 cash paid daily as interest; if the interest cannot be paid, then the interest counter would be reset and must be paid again).

Therefore, the ordinary Han settlers and the Han officials gradually separated into two groups: the bendiren (Han Chinese living in Taiwan) and the Tangshanren (the mainland Han Chinese). Furthermore, their antagonism slowly grew over time, just like the popular saying “Every three years there is a small resistance, but every five years there is a big fight²²⁰.” For instance, the famous Lin Shuangwen²²¹. During his insurrection, corpses of those who gave their life to their cause were strewn everywhere²²². At that time, the villagers called these dead their “good brothers²²³.” They were buried at the damugong in Zhishanyan.

My grandmother also said that, in the old days, our ancestors were those barefoot farmers that immigrated here. They reclaimed and worked the land, and relied on the Jade Emperor²²⁴ for water. Thus, being a farmer²²⁵ from day to night required one to take care of the fields and water. It often was required to ask the leader of the land²²⁶ for help so that the water management would run smoothly; sometimes, in an effort to protect water supplies, leaders might fight each other to

²¹⁹ Wuhuli (五虎利). A kind of usury.

²²⁰ The implied meaning is that both groups fought a lot.

²²¹ Lin Shuangwen (1756-1788, 林爽文). Originally from Fujian, he immigrated to Taiwan in 1773 with his father. He later became a wealthy and powerful landowner. He later became the leader of an anti-Manchurian organization called the Tiandihui (Lit. “Heaven and Earth Society, 天地會). The magistrate at the time, Sun Jingsui (?-1787), attempted to suppress the organization which provoked Lin Shuangwen to launch an uprising. This was known as the Lin Shuangwen Rebellion. The rebellion lasted for several months. The Qing officially put down the rebellion on February 10, 1788, when Lin was captured. It is considered one of the largest civil uprisings in Taiwan. See: https://www.ee.nthu.edu.tw/~sdyang/BioInfo/Bio_Lin_SW.htm and <https://nrch.culture.tw/twpedia.aspx?id=3554>.

²²² The ST could have been simplified to “corpses were strewn across the fields” but Su Beng appears intentional with the usage of “sacrifices” (xishengzhe, 犧牲者) here. The connotation of “sacrifice” was thus preserved.

²²³ Hao xiondi (好兄弟). A euphemism for ghost or spirits (gui, 鬼), since it is impolite to directly say these words.

²²⁴ Jade Emperor (玉帝). The Jade Emperor. Also transliterated as “Yudi.” An extremely important figure in Taoism and Chinese folk religion. In a sense, he is a creator god of the universe.

²²⁵ Tsoh-tshân-lâng (做田人). Taiwanese. Farmer.

²²⁶ Tsng-thâu (庄頭). Taiwanese. Boss; leader.

the point that things got bloody, so much so that sometimes people would die. Later, I realized that this was the so-called “group fighting.” The dead would then be buried at the damugong. Thus, my grandmother’s knowledge of the old days was vast. It can be said that she memorized even the tiniest details.

My grandmother also told me, in former times, most people’s Han ancestors were unmarried²²⁷, so they had to go to other places to find a woman to live with. When the man had money, the woman was kind to him, but when he did not have any, the woman would be cold to him and force him to leave. In those days, the relationship between men and women was ridiculous. Just like (the first two songs are from my grandmother, but the third is from Inada Tadashi²²⁸, taken from his *Collection of Taiwanese Folk Songs*):

Woman: “‘Cuo’ does not mean ‘home,’ our home is not a temple. Tea is not urine. People are not straw mats. You should leave.”

Man: Money is not a broken tile, and people aren’t broken quilts that you throw away after using. Give me back my money, then talk to me.

Most people like to gossip about other people, saying that the two of us have a relationship. If there is only marriage and no real relationship, you and I will be unlucky together.

We sleep together, but our separation brings sadness to our hearts. Watching you leave is like tearing my heart apart with a knife.

²²⁷ Tshuā-bóo (娶某). Taiwanese. To find a wife.

²²⁸ Inada Osamu (稻田尹). A Japanese scholar who collected Taiwanese folk songs. See: https://tm.ncl.edu.tw/article?u=016_002_0000300575&lang=chn.

On June 7, 1895, the Japanese army occupied Taipei and also sent a detachment of troops to Bazhilin. Additionally, they also entered and occupied Tamsui²²⁹. According to what my grandmother said, the people living on Shilin Street in Bazhilin all fled to the hills at Shuangxi. This was known as the “Zoufanzaifan²³⁰” (zou meaning to flee, fanzai²³¹ meaning Japanese person, and fan meaning chaos). At that time, my grandmother was just a young girl, 15 or 16 years of age. She fled together with a group of her neighbors. As she was climbing up the mountains, trying to push her exhausted body up, she had a brief moment of carelessness and fell down the hillside, due to her tiny feet (her feet were bound²³²) and thus lacking in strength²³³. In the ongoing panic, she suddenly burst into tears. The sadness of this sight spread²³⁴ to the others

²²⁹ Tamsui (淡水). Tamsui District (淡水區), often simply shortened to “Tamsui” is a district of New Taipei City. The name comes from the Tamsui River which flows from the Pintian mountains (品田山), goes through Taipei, and then empties out into the Taiwan Strait. Tamsui is known for being the location of Spain’s non-aboriginal settlement during the brief period of Spanish rule of northern Taiwan. The settlement was named Santo Domingo, which also contained a mission. During the Qing period, Tamsui even hosted a British consulate.

²³⁰ This term really forced me to pause about domesticating and foreignizing forces, especially in regards to autobiography translation. Ultimately, I chose a foreignization strategy here in order to bring the audience to “Su Beng’s world.” The term could have simply been translated as “the chaotic escape from the Japanese” but this would have a mouthful. Pithy phrases like these in Chinese often do not have a likewise concise phrase in English. Alternatively, the phrase could have been omitted altogether but I deemed this to be overly destructive. What makes this term even more difficult to translate is the surrounding context—Su Beng inserts a parenthetical that explains each Chinese term that makes up the word “zoufanzifan.” Translating zoufanzifan into English would absolutely destroy Su Beng’s parenthetical. Admittedly, this may be necessary to create a readable or publishable text. Again, the choice I made here was for the sake of preserving Su Beng’s original wording as I felt that the translation of an autobiography ought not to obliterate or overly conceal the autobiographer’s wording, intention, and idiosyncrasies.

²³¹ The word fan (番) in fanzai (番仔) means “foreign.” However, fan specifically means foreign but from the perspective of Chinese or Taiwanese culture. Thus, Su Beng here is calling the Japanese invaders as foreigners. It is always important to understand the perspective and standpoint that the writer maintains which will in turn help reduce misunderstandings in reading the ST.

²³² Although Su Beng already mentioned this fact before, again, I deemed it too destructive to omit his parenthetical. Perhaps his intention was to remind the reader.

²³³ Chinese syntax sometimes establishes the cause first then states the consequence. However, instead of maintaining this syntax in English, I found it easier here to state the consequence first then the cause. This is a case where no true meaning is lost to the reader, rather, the information is simply rearranged in an orderly and understandable fashion. It fits the contours of the English language much better.

²³⁴ Su Beng uses the word for “infect” (chuanran, 傳染) which I was able to maintain here with “spread.” Slightly different word, but it still maintains his original imagery.

on the same path, thus making everyone else cry as well²³⁵. When the foreigners²³⁶ invaded, people were poor and homeless. After WWII, the people of Taiwan would once again experience this kind of sorrow. My grandmother said, “The first traitor²³⁷ was Li Hongzhang²³⁸, the second traitor was Gu Xianrong²³⁹.” “Taiwan is unlucky, all the officials we had were bad²⁴⁰.” (My grandmother’s anti-Japanese stance was more practical, whereas my father’s stance was more theoretical²⁴¹.)

After the Japanese army occupied Taiwan, the Japanese promulgated the “Nationality Decision Day²⁴²” on May 8, 1897. The Japanese government proclaimed that those who chose to stay in Taiwan would become Japanese citizens. The last round of Tangshanren left (the Han Chinese officials, soldiers, wealthy landlords, and rich merchants who had homes they could return to in China). The remaining indigenous tribes (approximately 180,000 people) and Bendiren (approximately 2.7 million) became Japanese citizens and were also called

²³⁵ The Chinese phrasing here is more like “everyone became a crying group” (ku cheng yi tuan, 哭成一團) but I found this to be too literal. In a metaphoric sense, I tried to paint the same picture but perhaps with different colors.

²³⁶ Waizu (外族). Foreign race, i.e., the Japanese. The wording here is intentional as explained.

²³⁷ Jianchen (奸臣). The specific Chinese word jianchen refers to a court official or servant that conspires against the state (usually in the context of the Chinese imperial court). Here, Su Beng’s grandmother is trying

²³⁸ Li Hongzhang (1823-1901, 李鴻章). Qing politician, general, and diplomat. He was Zeng Guofan’s (another famous Qing general) protege. He assisted Zeng in suppressing the Taiping Rebellion. Later, Li was promoted to Viceroy of Zhili, which was an extremely high ranking and influential position during the Qing dynasty. He was present at the signing of the Treaty of Shimonoseki in 1895 as well as the Boxer Protocol in 1901. In this context, Su Beng’s grandmother is blaming Li for “betraying” Taiwan, as he signed the Treaty of Shimonoseki which ceded Taiwan to Japan.

²³⁹ Gu Xianrong (1866-1937, 辜顯榮). Also transliterated as Koo Hsien-jung. Taiwanese businessman who had strong links with the Japanese colonial government. When the Japanese invaded Taiwan, Gu led them into Taipei. As with Li Hongzhang, Su Beng’s grandmother believes that Gu is a traitor for doing so. See: <https://www.taipeitimes.com/News/taiwan/archives/2002/04/15/132003>.

²⁴⁰ The literal translation of the phrase is “The court put the headdress on the wrong official.” The implication is that Taiwan’s officials were all corrupt or evil, the “court” here meaning the government.

²⁴¹ Su Beng’s father also disliked the Japanese but he preferred to resist through words. He established the newspaper Taiwan Youth (台灣年輕) which occasionally published articles about anti-colonialism.

²⁴² Nationality Decision Day (Guoji Juedingri, 國籍決定日). This is a colloquial name for the Japanese edict that allowed people living in Taiwan to either stay in Taiwan or leave. The edict originated from the Treaty of Shimonoseki. One of the stipulations was that the residents of Taiwan had a choice to either stay in Taiwan (and thus become legal Japanese citizens) or leave Taiwan. The formal Chinese name for the edict was “Resident Leaving/Staying Day” (住民去就決定日).

“Taiwanese.”²⁴³ Later, the new but small wave of Tangshanren from mainland China who came to Taiwan to live and work (mainly chefs, barbers, tailors, shoe repairers, craftsmen, etc) are what we now call “Zhongguoren²⁴⁴” who are foreigners. But, at that time, the older generation of Taiwanese would still call themselves “Bendiren” and call the Zhongguoren²⁴⁵ as “Tangshanren.”

When I was a kid, there was one day that a Tangshanren was carrying a shoulder pole and placed his pole in front of our house’s veranda. He started calling people over, saying that he could repair their shoes. As a kid, seeing such rare thing, I walked over to watch the Tangshanren repair²⁴⁶ shoes. My grandmother, who was standing at the entrance, saw me get close to the shoe repairer and immediately came over. She dragged me away and brought me back inside. She said, “You brat! I told you not to get too close to Tangshanren but you don’t listen!” From this, it can be seen that Taiwanese people during the Qing period resented Tangshanren. Even after being colonized by Japan for 20 years, the feeling was still profound.

Much time has passed. After diligently going through elementary school (six years), middle school (four years), and college (six years), I gained an understanding of the world and was successful at my studies—all for the sake of throwing myself into the revolutionary

²⁴³ The implication here is that the Japanese called any inhabitant living in Taiwan as “Taiwanese” (Taiwanren, 台灣人) even though they might not be ethnically Han Chinese (for example, the indigenous tribes were also called “Taiwanese”). The use of scare quotes is intentional here. Su Beng also highlighted this term with Chinese quotation marks.

²⁴⁴ Zhongguoren (中國人). Again, the decision to use the transliterated word for “Chinese” (Zhongguoren) was intentional. Although the word “Chinese” is more easily understandable to the English audience, I decided that “Zhongguoren” fit the context better as I had already used the transliterated names “Tangshanren” and “Bendiren.” If Tangshanren was translated as “Chinese,” then this would cause confusion for the reader if Zhongguoren was likewise translated as “Chinese.” To be specific, “Zhongguoren” refers to a Han Chinese person/people from the People’s Republic of China, as opposed to a Han Chinese person/people living in Taiwan. The general term for a Han Chinese person irrespective of nationality is Huaren (華人). However, in English, Zhongguoren and Huaren are often translated as “Chinese,” as English does not make this distinction that Chinese does.

²⁴⁵ The ST simply states “they” (tamen, 他們) here but for the sake of the reader I decided to clarify who exactly “they” are. Overall, I tried my best not to intrude on Su Beng’s wording, but in some cases, I felt that the reader would be rendered helpless without the translator’s assistance or guidance.

²⁴⁶ Tiam (粘). Taiwanese. To repair; to fix.

activities in which I firmly believe. It has been more than seventy long years. Justice gives no pause for second thoughts. With my heart and soul, I hold absolute conviction to my ideals. But I have been abroad, constantly on the move, for quite some time. I had completely neglected my grandmother. Not only was I unfilial²⁴⁷ to my grandmother, she had also been accused of things and received insults because of me. I really am an unfilial grandson. Yet, despite this, my grandmother never lost her deep love or faith in me. She still prayed, night and day, for my safe return. My grandmother's kindness to me was as far reaching as the heavens and as grand as the earth. However, I never repaid her, even a tiny shred, for her kindness, and I could not even be there for when it was her time to depart (she passed away at the ripe age of 92).



²⁴⁷ Xiaodao (孝道). Filial piety. An extremely important aspect of Chinese culture. Essentially, it is the belief that one should be respectful and good towards one's parents.

Chapter 2: My Hometown, Bazhilin (Shilin)

The whole street was filled with children who were sitting in groups. Everyone had in their hands homemade lumpia²⁴⁸ and we would compare them to see who had the biggest. At that time, in my mind, I always thought I had the biggest lumpia that could not be beat²⁴⁹.

Section 1: Bazhilin

Shilin (Bazhilin; most people from Shilin would call it “Bazhilin” or Pajjena²⁵⁰) is my unforgettable hometown. It is the eternal resting place of my ancestors whom I admire and respect. I was born in Bazhilin. In my childhood, I spent much time in Bazhilin, like at Zhishanyan, the Shilin Horticultural Experimental Station²⁵¹, Caoshan hot spring (Yangming Shan²⁵²). All these places, from the mountains and rivers, to the streets, have my footprints.²⁵³ All throughout my life, I have never forgotten these beautiful memories. How I miss them...²⁵⁴

²⁴⁸ Lūn-piánn in Taiwanese; runbing in Mandarin (潤餅). “Lumpia” is the Taiwanese pronunciation. It is a kind of unfried spring roll usually stuffed with vegetables and meat. However, this should not be confused with the Filipino or Indonesian “lumpia” which goes by the same name and is fried. Additionally, I did not want to use the word “spring roll” which might confuse the English reader into thinking that these were the fried spring rolls commonly sold in Chinese-American fast food restaurants.

²⁴⁹ Su Beng’s original wording is more like “At that time, in my mind, I always thought my own lumpia could not be compared to other people, the biggest lumpia” but maintaining the Chinese syntax here proved to be quite difficult. The Chinese sloped comma (、) is especially difficult to maintain. I was forced to make a domestication move and rearrange the syntax to improve the TT’s readability.

²⁵⁰ Bazhilin in Mandarin; Pajjena in Taiwanese (八芝林). The use of the Taiwanese pronunciation is intentional here (the editor himself indicates the Taiwanese pronunciation, not the Mandarin).

²⁵¹ The Shilin Horticultural Experimental Station was established by the Japanese during the period of Japanese rule. Later, after the KMT government retreated to Taiwan, it was seized by Soong Mei-ling and transformed into the residence for her and her husband, Chiang Kai-shek.

²⁵² Yangmingshan (陽明山). A mountain range and national park north of Taipei.

²⁵³ In other words, Su Beng has been to all of these places. The wording here is intentional.

²⁵⁴ Hunqianmengying (魂牽夢縈). Lit. “One’s spirit being twisted in dreams.” However, this was too literal, so I decided to go with the true meaning.

Our ancestral home (my household registration name²⁵⁵ is Shi Chaohui) is in Nayadexing (now known as Tianmu) in Zhishanyan, located near the foot of the mountains. I was born in the newly built home on Shilin New Street. The new home was on Dadong Road. Starting from the traffic circle, the new house was on the way to Shilin Elementary School. At that time, there were only lush fields all around and very few people that lived there. At the crack of dawn, standing from the upstairs balcony, to the west you could see Mount Guanyin²⁵⁶. The Keelung River²⁵⁷ (a tributary of the Tamsui River) serenely winds and flows around Mount Guanyin. You can see the sails of ships dotting the river (these were junk ships²⁵⁸). One by one, they would sail back and forth. (During the terrible reign of the “Jiang family’s ROC colonial government,” they caused the river to be filled up and blocked, which is how the river is today. The beautiful rivers of the past have simply disappeared.) To the right of my house, you could see Mount Miantian, Mount Datun, and Mount Qixing²⁵⁹. Since the air was not smoggy, you could see the purple summits²⁶⁰. With no people there, there was a sense of refreshment. It is a kind romantic feeling that is hard to explain. Looking at such picturesque scenes, even today, I still feel the same sense of happiness. However, in 1993, after I returned to Taiwan, my hometown had completely changed. The Mount Guanyin and Mount Datun that I could see from my balcony in the old days have disappeared. The Keelung River, which once provided the fish, shrimp, and clams to the

²⁵⁵ Huji (戶籍). Household registration. Household registration became more comprehensive during the Japanese colonial period and is an essential requirement for Taiwanese citizens. It tracks data such as birth, adoption, marriage, and address. See: <https://www.ris.gov.tw/app/en/18> and <https://law.moj.gov.tw/ENG/LawClass/LawAll.aspx?pcode=D0030006>.

²⁵⁶ Mount Yuanyin (觀音山). An inactive volcanic mountain in Wugu District (五股區). Wugu is in New Taipei City, on the west side of the Tamsui River. It flows to the west where it is joined with the Tamsui River.

²⁵⁷ Keelung River; or sometimes Jilong River (基隆河). This river originates from the mountainous Pingxi District, which is east of Taipei.

²⁵⁸ A junk was a kind of Chinese ship first used during the Han dynasty (206 BCE-220 CE).

²⁵⁹ These three mountains are all located north of Beitou (北投). Beitou is just north of Shilin.

²⁶⁰ Purple is a common color in Chinese to describe mountains. I brought the reader close to Su Beng’s eyes—quite literally—by foreignizing the choice of color here.

people of Shilin, has now been filled. The laboratory that was established during the Japanese occupation was seized by Song Meiling. People from Shilin, including myself, lack any ambition. How could we have let this place transform from paradise to hell? How do we explain this to our ancestors—who toiled with their sweat and blood—to make Shilin what it is?

Thinking about it, my unconditional love for Taiwan is the crystallization of all the memories of when I was young and the environment of where I grew up. I remember there were many stories and sayings that came from the older generation. Those stories, of ancestors who sacrificed their sweat and blood, makes me have a greater understanding of them, as well as a deeper connection with this land. My feelings are sincere, and even if they caused me to experience an immeasurable amount of pain and suffering, I absolutely have no regrets.

Section 2: Bazhilin Old Street and Bazhilin New Street of the Old Days

Bazhilin is located in the northern part of the Taipei Basin²⁶¹. It is bounded by Mount Datun to the north. You can gaze upon the silhouettes of Mount Guanyin to the west. To the southwest of Bazhilin, were the foothills. Compared to the Taipei Basin, it is like another small world.

In ancient times, Bazhilin was once home to the indigenous hunter tribes of the plains. The name of this tribe was “Maoshaoweng²⁶²” (from a Dutch document, in which “Masiaoun” was written). In 1679 (during the rule of the Kangxi Emperor²⁶³ during the Qing dynasty), a

²⁶¹ Taipei pendi (臺北盆地). The Taipei Basin, located in the northern part of the island, is the largest basin in Taiwan. It is bounded by Yangming Shan to the north, the Xueshan Range to the east, and the Linkou Plateau to the west.

²⁶² Maoshaoweng (毛少翁). This is the Mandarin rendering of the tribe’s name. Their name has also been transliterated as “Kimassouw” and “Massauw” by the Dutch.

²⁶³ The Kangxi Emperor (1654-1722, 康熙). Third emperor of the Qing dynasty and its longest reigning emperor. His reign, often combined with the Qianlong Emperor’s reign (1711-1799, 乾隆), is associated with a prosperous and flourishing time for the Qing dynasty. In traditional Chinese historiography, it was common to date the year with the reign of the emperor at that time.

merchant from Hangzhou, named Yu Yonge²⁶⁴, traveled to Taiwan to prospect for sulfur. Later, he wrote the *Small Sea Travel Diaries*²⁶⁵, where he once wrote, “There are three tribes, and one of them is called the Maoshaoweng. These three tribes reside near the river. Fourth month of Jiayu²⁶⁶ (1694). Earthquakes are incessant. The aboriginals are in such a fright. The land suddenly sank²⁶⁷.” At first, the Han Chinese were the minority, but later, after waves of immigration²⁶⁸, they intermarried with the indigenous tribes. The place names Bazhilan and Bazhilin originated from the pronunciations from the indigenous languages and later transliterated into Chinese names. The original meaning was “hot spring.” The earliest name was Bazhilanlin. In the sixth year of the Qianlong Emperor (1741), Liu Liangbi’s²⁶⁹ publication *The Chorography of Taiwan Prefecture*²⁷⁰ changed the name to “Bazhilan.” In the 29th year of the Qianlong Emperor (1764), Yu Wenyi’s²⁷¹ *Revision of the Choreography of Taiwan Prefecture*²⁷²

²⁶⁴ Yu Yonghe (1645-?). Traveler and scholar who lived in the early Qing dynasty. Not much is known about him, even within academic circles.

²⁶⁵ Pihai Jiyou (裨海紀遊). *Small Sea Travel Diaries*. These are Yu Yonghe’s records of his travels to Taiwan. The English version of his records was translated and annotated by Macabe Keliher. See: <https://catalogue.nla.gov.au/Record/3698984>.

²⁶⁶ Jiayu (甲戌). Part of the Chinese sexagenary cycle dating system, also known as “Stem-and-Branches” (ganzhi, 干支). This was a common dating system in ancient China as well as in Sinosphere countries such as Japan and Korea. For example, the Xinhai Revolution which overthrew the Qing dynasty in 1911 is called “xinhai” because it was the year of xinhai (辛亥) of the sexagenary cycle.

²⁶⁷ Classical Chinese is used here. These lines were quoted from *Small Sea Travel Diaries*.

²⁶⁸ Su Beng does not use the word “waves” but without this word the rendering would be “after immigration” which is somewhat unclear as it could mean immigration in general.

²⁶⁹ Liu Liangbi (Birth and death date unknown; 劉良璧). A juren from Hunan who lived during the Qing dynasty. He was assigned to work in Taiwan, specifically, “Zhuluo County” (諸羅縣) which was an administrative unit in Taiwan during the Qing era. See: <https://db.nmtl.gov.tw/site2/ikm?id=59>.

²⁷⁰ Taiwan Fuzhi (台灣府志). The character fu (府) here means “prefecture” which was an administrative unit during the Qing dynasty. At the time, Taiwan was a prefecture under the administration of Fujian province. In 1887, Taiwan was designated to provincial status, officially called “Fujian-Taiwan Province” (福建台灣省). The zhi (志) here means a record or chorography. Chorography, albeit somewhat domesticated, is quite fitting as it means “the art of describing or mapping a region or district.” See: <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/chorography> and <https://nrch.culture.tw/twopedia.aspx?id=3686>.

²⁷¹ Yu Wenyi (余文儀). Qing official who later became the prefect (zhifu, 知府) of Taiwan Prefecture in 1765. See: <https://nrch.culture.tw/twopedia.aspx?id=5348>.

²⁷² Xuxiu Taiwanfu Zhi (續修台灣府志). The Chinese title is the same as Liu Liangbi’s book (台灣府志) but with the two extra characters added, xu (續) and xiu (修), which mean “continued” and “revised” respectively. Here, I only translated “revised” as it already has the implied meaning of “continued.”

the name²⁷³ was again changed to “Bazhilin” (pattsen-na). It was not until 1850s, during the late Qing, that it was changed to “Shilin” because of the congregation of scholars²⁷⁴.

After the Zheng²⁷⁵ family seized Taiwan, the amount of Han immigrants coming over to reclaim the land²⁷⁶ steadily increased. “Koxinga came to Taiwan, and those from Zhangzhou and Quanzhou moved here” (*Appendix to The Private Laws of Taiwan*²⁷⁷, from the Japanese Government-General of Taiwan). I’ve heard old people say that rapid development that the area of Bazhiling experienced started from started from Qilian²⁷⁸ and extended to Nanya, Shipai, and Zhishangyan (Yuanshan), and Sanjiaopu (now the mountainside area of Tianmu). Later, it expanded to other places like Shijiaozai (Shijiaozai begins at the path near the foothills of Grass Mountain²⁷⁹), Shuangxi, Pingding, Jingque, Caoshan, Zhuzaihu, Shanzhuhu, and Shezi.

²⁷³ Adding “name” was a necessary addition as the Chinese was too concise (it lacked a subject).

²⁷⁴ This is another good example of the difficulty of trying to capture the pronunciation and meaning in a Chinese text that talks about Chinese. The name Shilin is comprised of two words, shi (士) meaning scholar and lin (林) meaning forest. However, lin in this case is more like “a group/collection of people.” During the late Qing, Shilin experienced a flourishing literary culture and many talented people (one could say, a huge group or huge collection) from there had passed the imperial examinations, thus, the name was renamed to Shilin. In modern times, the name is transliterated in English instead of using a meaning-based translation. The name “scholar’s forest” is almost unheard of, thus, a translation based on meaning here would have been very destructive to the ST. It makes perfect sense to talk about these words (shi and lin) in Chinese and the Chinese audience would immediately know what they mean. Unfortunately, the English reader would most likely be lost, and unfortunately there is a “logical gap” between Shilin and “congregation of scholars.” However, in the end, I still needed to change the wording slightly to preserve the coherency of the TT. The effect was virtually the same.

²⁷⁵ Zheng Chenggong (1624-1662, 鄭成功). Also known as Koxinga. He was a Ming loyalist who resisted the Qing conquest of China. He ousted the small Dutch colony in Taiwan and ruled over the Kingdom of Tungning (a state based in southern Taiwan). In 1683, his grandson, Zheng Keshuang, surrendered to the Qing on August 13, 1683.

²⁷⁶ Land reclamation commonly refers to the act of reclaiming land from the sea, but it is used in the general sense here to mean cutting down forests or jungles to make way for farms and habitable spaces.

²⁷⁷ The *Appendix to The Private Laws of Taiwan* is a database that is a compilation of *The Private Laws of Taiwan*, itself a report written by Santaro Okamastu (1871-1921), a professor of law at Kyoto University during the early 20th century. His report compiled the various documents and laws regarding real estate, personnel, property, etc in Taiwan. It was published from 1909-1911. The database can be reached here:

<https://huntenq.com/twplsc/twplskm?@@@0.42385632068677825>. See also:

<https://nrch.culture.tw/twpedia.aspx?id=5428>.

²⁷⁸ Qilian (唶哩岸). Also written as 唶里岸. It is a subdistrict of Beitou. Qilian and Beitou are also both station names on the Taipei MRT, roughly corresponding to their respective geographic locations.

²⁷⁹ Caoshan (草山). Lit. “grass mountain,” which is in fact a small valley.

Bazhilin is fairly flat which makes it suitable for farming. The mountains provided many resources²⁸⁰. The first generation of Han Chinese immigrants left their homeland and crossed the Heishuigou with great difficulty to come here. They endured starvation and built a foundation for everything that would fall. What was wilderness and woods then became vast farmlands. The descendants of the Han settlers²⁸¹ could thus enjoy a life of “working at sunrise, resting at sunset.” Every year, the harvests of rice, sweet potato, lotus root, water chestnuts, bamboo shoots, citrus fruits, raspberries, longan fruits²⁸², and all kinds of fruits and vegetables would be plentiful and delicious.

During the 1720s (the early years of the Yongzhen Emperor²⁸³), Bazhilin became an important gathering center for agriculture because of its well developed and vast infrastructure system. Even produce from far away agricultural lands like Taojian (Taoyuan), Zhuqian (Hsinchu), Jinbaoli (Jinshan), Huwei (Tamsui), and Keelung²⁸⁴ would go here. Fish, shrimp, and other kinds of seafood would be sold there. Then, peddlers²⁸⁵ would transport these goods from Shilin to Taipei Street. In the 1760s (during the middle period of the Qianlong Emperor’s reign), the Han Chinese who worked to reclaim the land burgeoned. Starting from the west side of Zhishanyan, all the way to Xiashulin and Zhouwei, which were on the bank of Keelung River, a street arose in which people naturally congregated. This later became Bazhilan’s “Old Street.”

²⁸⁰ Fushanchan (富山產). The ST’s wording is more like “the mountain was rich in mountain products” but I found that this was slightly too foreignized for the audience. I opted to rephrase the wording but still try to maintain the idea of the mountain being rich in resources.

²⁸¹ Su Beng simply writes “children” or “descendants” (zisun, 子孫) but without adding “Han settlers” the subject is unclear.

²⁸² Longyan (龍眼). The English name “longan” comes from the Cantonese pronunciation. The name literally means “dragon’s eye” because of its appearance. The seed is black and is surrounded by a white, slightly transparent jelly-like flesh.

²⁸³ Yongzheng Emperor (1678-1735, 雍正). Fourth Qing emperor. Reigned from 1722-1735.

²⁸⁴ Su Beng writes both the old and new name here which cannot be translated into English. This is because both the old name and new name for “Keelung” have the exact same pronunciation but different characters. The new and old names are written as 基隆 and 鷓籠 respectively.

²⁸⁵ Hòan-á (才由). Taiwanese. Merchants; middlemen.

In 1859 (the ninth year of the Xianfeng Emperor²⁸⁶), fighting broke out between the people from Zhangzhou²⁸⁷ living in Bazhilin and the Banka²⁸⁸ people and Dalongdong²⁸⁹ people from Tong'an²⁹⁰ (Quanzhou). Bazhilin Old Street was burned down by the Tong'an people,²⁹¹ and later, the residents hoped to rebuild the street to what it had looked like formally. Thus, the great landowning Cao family and other people gave donations to Xiashulin and the surrounding area. A wealthy²⁹² man, Pan Yongqing, was in charge of the reconstruction. He constructed the Mazu temple the center, and connected the surrounding areas with four main streets which acted as the main arteries for traffic. The names of these four roads were Dadong, Daxi, Danan, Dabei. The roads were very straight, so people in those days used to say “Shilin Street is elegant and organized.” Furthermore, a plaza was constructed in front of the temple, which served as a sort of marketplace for goods (this is today's Shilin day market and night market). There was a day market, an afternoon market, and a night market. Later, stores were built too. Since the streets were tidy and organized, it attracted a lot of rich merchants and families to come and build houses there and open shops. With its clean appearance, and completely new style, Bazhilin “New Street” was thus born²⁹³.

²⁸⁶ Xianfeng Emperor (1851-1861, 咸豐). Qing emperor. Reigned from 1850-1861. His reign oversaw the Taiping Rebellion, Nian Rebellion, and the Second Opium War, all of which were very tumultuous events.

²⁸⁷ Quanzhou (漳州). One of the major cities in Fujian province. Many Han immigrants who moved to Taiwan came from Zhangzhou and Quanzhou (another major city in Fujian).

²⁸⁸ Again, Su Beng used the word for “Banka” instead of “Wanhua,” thus, the usage of Banka here is intentional.

²⁸⁹ Dalongdong (大龍峒). An historic area located near the confluence of the Keelung and Tamsui Rivers. It later became part of Dadaocheng (which is now part of Datong District).

²⁹⁰ Tong'an (同安). A district in Xiamen, another major city in Fujian. Xiamen is also known as “Amoy” which is the Minnan pronunciation of its name. Minnan is a variety of Chinese. Linguistically, the Taiwanese dialect falls under the Minnan variety.

²⁹¹ It is important to remember that all these ethnicities are still considered Han Chinese. They all fall under the Han Chinese culture group.

²⁹² Jinshen (縉紳). An extremely prestigious and rich person.

²⁹³ Su Beng uses an extremely formal word here (yuyan, 於焉) which is similar to “whereupon” or “thus.” The rendering here was freer so as to capture the formality and grandness of his use of language.

In 1941 (the sixteenth year of Showa's²⁹⁴ reign), "Shilin Street" had a population of about 50,000 people. Its administrative jurisdiction included Shilin, Fudeyang, Lizikou, Zhouwei, Nanya, Shijiao, Sanjiaopu, next was Xiadongshi, Caoshan, Jinghu, Qiqu, Pingding, Shuangxi, Yongfu, Gongguan, Shezi, Xizhoudi, and Zhuzhoupu—eighteen regions in total. It was considered Taiwan's largest area (from *Minzoku Taiwan*, volume 1, issue 1²⁹⁵). The Shilin knife²⁹⁶ has always been Shilin's speciality since the old days. It's very heavy and thick. Its handle is made from water buffalo which gives it a nice, comfortable grip. The Shilin Street of today, that is, what people used to call "New Street," still maintains its former appearance and style, despite the passing of 140 years. It can be seen that our ancestors from those days were really diligent in developing and using this land.

The house that we²⁹⁷ lived on Shilin street was located between the Shilin traffic circle and Shilin Public School²⁹⁸. In front of our home was a big street, and we were quite close to the train station. It was really convenient.

²⁹⁴ Showa in Japanese; Zhaohé in Chinese (1901-1989, 昭和). Emperor Showa of Japan, better known as Hirohito in the West. He reigned from 1926-1989, making him the longest-reigning Japanese emperor to date. His reign oversaw the Japanese involvement in WWII as well as its surrender.

²⁹⁵ Minsu Taiwan (民俗台灣). *Minzoku Taiwan* was a monthly publication that compiled various aspects of Taiwanese culture and customs. Toshio Ikeda serves as the magazine's editor-in-chief. The official English translation uses Japanese, "minzoku" meaning "folklore" or "folk customs." A full English rendering might potentially be "Taiwan Folk Customs." It was discontinued in 1945. However, it had a great deal of influence on its spiritual successor, *The Taiwan Folkways* (台灣風物) which was a magazine that discussed Taiwanese culture in editorial fashion. See: https://across.archives.gov.tw/naahyint/intro_eng.jsp?id=DB3264&tabid=25.

²⁹⁶ Sū-lîm-to (士林刀). Lit. "Shilin knife." A special kind of knife produced in Shilin.

²⁹⁷ Guán (阮). Taiwanese. Here Su Beng uses the Taiwanese word for "we." The Mandarin word is women (我們).

²⁹⁸ Shilin Public School was the earliest modern institution of learning in Taiwan. It was first established as "Zhishanyan School" (芝山巖學務部學堂) in 1895, then "National Language School Affiliated with Zhishanyan School" (臺灣總督府國語學校附屬芝山巖學堂). In 1921, it was renamed to "Shilin Public School" (士林公學校) then "Shilin National School" (士林國民學校) in 1941. In 1974, the name was finally changed to its current name, "Taipei Municipal Shilin Elementary School" (臺北市士林區士林國民小學). See: <https://school.nmth.gov.tw/search/detail/R-12-000002-540342>.

In those days, our house was surrounded by rice paddies. When we harvested the crops²⁹⁹ or when the second season began³⁰⁰, we would have to bring out the water buffalo out to plow the fields. Then, we could plant the seeds. When it was time to reap the harvest, the farmers would thrush the rice stalks and then pick up the fallen rice husks. Then, the sparrows or swallows from Shilin Street would come and gobble down our rice. Also, the youngsters from Shilin Street would also go and steal the rice ears (the unhusked rice). So, when I saw them from the balcony, I really wanted to go with them to steal the rice ears too. But, my family would not let me. Later, when the paddies would dry out, I would be able to go and catch some horsehair crabs³⁰¹.

During the Japanese colonial period, Shilin Street was clean. In spring and autumn, the Japanese police officers came and urged us to sweep³⁰². They would come to the veranda every day, morning and evening, to make an inspection. We had to clean it well³⁰³. Even the gutter in front of the veranda had to be cleaned every day. Later, they built an asphalt road,³⁰⁴ and in the summer, would have a sprinkler truck that would come and clean the road spotless every day.

Japanese people stress etiquette and the way one speaks. They forbid gambling, and if you were caught, you would be sent to jail for 29 days. If you were seen without clothes on, you were punished five yuan³⁰⁵. The market had to be clean and organized. The police often came to inspect the scales to make sure everything was being done correctly. This kind of interference in

²⁹⁹ Khí-tang (起冬). Taiwanese. The start of harvesting.

³⁰⁰ Ē-tang (下冬). Taiwanese. This refers to the second harvest season for rice.

³⁰¹ Mōo-hē-a (毛蟹仔). Horsehair crab.

³⁰² Piàn-sàu (拚掃). Taiwanese. To sweep.

³⁰³ Chheng-khi (清氣). Taiwanese. Clean (as an ADJ). The Chinese reads “We had to sweep it clean” but the implied meaning here is closer to “We had to clean it well.” It was a minor change, but the implied meaning, to me, was more important.

³⁰⁴ Tiám-á-ka-lōo (點仔膠路). An asphalt road.

³⁰⁵ Yuan (圓). A unit of currency used in Taiwan at the time.

one's lifestyle actually made Taiwanese people very clean and orderly. Shilin Street during the Japanese occupation had several kinds of trees. When spring came, the sandalwood trees would bloom purple flowers. It was such a beautiful sight³⁰⁶. In the summer, the banyan trees were full of cicadas. The Taiwanese cicada is black and also fairly big³⁰⁷. The Japanese called them “bear cicadas” (kuma-zemy³⁰⁸). They chirped loudly, *mi mi mi*³⁰⁹, and they flew elegantly. At 3 or 4 in the afternoon³¹⁰, if a thundershower had just passed, their weeping would sound like they were singing a song. In the summer nights, the sounds would change to the ribbetting of frogs. In the winter, they would climb up the *Acacia confusa* trees³¹¹ to catch the scarab beetles.

Section 3: The Customs of Praying to the Gods and Worshipping One's Ancestors

During the Kangxi period of the Qing dynasty, the first wave of Han Chinese primarily originated from Zhangzhou and Quanzhou. They separately established their own villages and communities. In the 1750s (the Qianlong period), Bazhilin had already become a community composed for Zhangzhou people. For Quanzhou people, they gathered at Shezidao³¹².

For the sake of crossing the great ocean³¹³, finding a new life, and resisting foreign rulers, the Han settlers built temples everywhere to offer sacrifices to the gods so that the settlers would receive their blessings. For over two hundred years, the Zhangzhou immigrants constructed three

³⁰⁶ Chinese syntax and logic can sometimes connect related phrases that might seem long or even rambly at times. This is a good example of trying to split sentences in the TT despite the length of the ST.

³⁰⁷ It almost seemed a bit too illogical to maintain the original Chinese syntax which is “The Taiwanese cicada is bigger, black.” There is no “and” in the ST but it must be added in the TT for it to conform to English grammar.

³⁰⁸ Xiongchan in Chinese; kuma-zemi in Japanese (熊蟬). In situations where Mandarin Chinese and Japanese are used in the same sentence, it becomes difficult to explain these words and phrases especially in reference to

³⁰⁹ *Mi mi mi* (咪咪咪). The Chinese onomatopoeia for a chirping cicada.

³¹⁰ I felt that writing “PM” broke the immersion that this was a text written by a Taiwanese author. AM and PM are not found in the Chinese language. Functionally, I see no difference between “PM” and “in the afternoon,” but writing “in the afternoon” gave the text a more neutral and perhaps literary feel.

³¹¹ Xiangsizaishu (相思仔樹) Taiwanese. A kind of acacia tree native to Southeast Asia but also found in Taiwan.

³¹² Shezaidao (社仔島). Although dao (島) means island, it is in fact a sandbar. In the past, Shezaidao was part of an alluvial plain.

³¹³ The ST uses “big ocean” (dahui, 大海) which I felt was poetic and still understandable in this context.

temples in Bazhilin. The first temple, the Shennong Temple³¹⁴, was constructed in Bazhilin Old Street in 1709 (the 48th year of the Kangxi Emperor). The main god was Shennong, the god of the five crops³¹⁵. The second temple, Huiji Temple, was established in 1752 (the 17th year of the Qianlong Emperor) in Zhishanyan. It was constructed with the help of gentry like Wu Qingsan who organized a donation group. The temple was for Kaizhengshengwang (Chen Yuanguang³¹⁶). The third temple was built in 1862 (the first year³¹⁷ of the Tongzhi emperor³¹⁸) and was constructed in Bazhilin New Street as the street was being built. The temple was called Cixian Temple. It was built for the Heavenly Goddess (Mazu³¹⁹), the protector god of the Zhangzhou people. Additionally, in Zhishanyan, there was a damugong for Bazhilin, which was located next to Huiji temple. The damugong was created in 1786 (the fifty-first year of the Qianlong emperor). During the Lin Shuangwen rebellion, the people who sacrificed themselves in the incident used Zhishanyan as their base and bravely resisted the Qing army. In the end, all of them were slaughtered. Bodies and bones were strewn in piles. The locals could not bear to see this misery, and thus they donated their money to build a potter's field. They took the skeletons of those who had sacrificed their lives and buried them one by one. Later, they continued to bury the skeletons of those warriors who resisted against the Qing empire or engaged in group confrontations. For the most part, Taiwanese people called these people "good brothers." However, after more than 200 years, despite not forgetting these gods or damugongs, nowadays,

³¹⁴ Shennong Gong (神農宮). Also translated as the "Farmer God."

³¹⁵ Wugu (五穀). Lit. the "five crops." They are: millet, soybean, sesame, barley, and rice.

³¹⁶ Kaizhang Shengwang (657-711, 開漳聖王). "Kaizhang Shengwang" was his posthumous name, his real name was Chen Yuanguang, Tang general and politician. Also known as Sacred King.

³¹⁷ Yuannian (元年). The first year. Yuan meaning "first."

³¹⁸ Tongzhi (1856-1875, 同治). The Tongzhi Emperor; reigned 1861-1875. His reign oversaw the failed Tongzhi Restoration which was implemented to strengthen China during a time when China was facing the realities of the unequal treaties and the Taiping Rebellion. His reign was largely overshadowed by his mother, the Empress Dowager Cixi (1835-1908), who was famous for backing the Boxers during the Boxer Rebellion (1899-1901).

³¹⁹ Tianshang Shengmu (天上聖母). "The Heavenly Goddess." Another name for Mazu.

they are often unfrequented and unattended. But, despite all of this, they have always been the protector deities and spirits that the people of Bazhilin pray for peace and safety on a regular basis.

Later, the Taiwanese custom of praying to gods and ancestors suddenly became very popular³²⁰. The main reason for this, aside from the aforementioned historical conditions, stems from Taiwanese society as well as the period. As a result of farmers having to continuously and arduously work without any time to rest, praying to gods and ancestors was a sort of time for relaxation that was hard to come by. Whenever there was a festival involving deities, they treated it as a way to relax in those days. They were happily and cheerfully engaged in such festivities. Therefore, Taiwanese festivals and customs, whether they be for worshipping Mazu or observing Pudu, usually are about farmers or other related topics. Every year, in every village and town, these festivals would be everywhere. For example, the lion dance competition, the gezaixi, Captains Xie and Fan, the Eight Generals³²¹, Qianliyan³²², and Shunfenger³²³, are all played by farmers themselves, not by others. Even though they had to take care of the fields and water, every village also had fights with other groups (group conflict³²⁴). However, when they would welcome Mazu or celebrate Ghost Month³²⁵, they would unite, and the people would happily celebrate the festival. This kind of social environment was a deciding factor in transforming Taiwan from an undeveloped state to a real society. The worship of deities flourished over time, generation after generation.

³²⁰ Lāu-jiát (鬧熱). Taiwanese. Lively; noisy; popular.

³²¹ Ba Jia Jiang (八家將). Also called the Eight Generals. In Chinese traditional folk culture, they are responsible for exorcisms. See: <https://english.cw.com.tw/article/article.action?id=3313>.

³²² Qianliyan (千里眼). One of Mazu's subordinates.

³²³ Shunfenger (順風耳). Another one of Mazu's subordinates.

³²⁴ Group conflict (分類械鬥). This refers to conflict within groups (not necessarily limited to race).

³²⁵ Ghost Festival (七月節). Lit. "Festival of the Seventh Month," but better known as "Ghost Festival" in English.

Section 4: The Records of Shilin³²⁶

What exactly is “Taiwanese culture”? It is based on their daily thoughts, tools, and habits as well as the worship of gods and ancestors of the Taiwanese people. These are the basic elements that were formed and passed down to future generations.

The early Han settlers mainly grew up in the continental climate³²⁷ of China. However, after they immigrated to Taiwan, what they faced was an oceanic climate. The difference between these two climates, the Dutch colonial system of class separation, as well as the system of feudalism, made it difficult for them to adapt. This island³²⁸, which was not developed, was sparse of people, and was brimming with malaria, made these Han settlers who were accustomed to China’s continental climate suffer through suffocating heat, diseases, vipers, and other such harm. Furthermore, the oppression from foreign colonial rulers (this was different from China’s experience over a millennia) and the indigenous peoples’ retaliatory raids tormented the Han settlers. For a time, it was difficult to withstand this. Consequently, in the face of such difficulties, deities and the Buddha became their spiritual support. Therefore, the gods that the Han settler’s worshiped inevitably became a way to pray for protection as well as good harvests.

In regards to farming, which they relied on for their livelihood, the most important spirits were of the soil, weather, and irrigation. Thus, everyone worshiped the gods of the land, sky, and water. The god of the sky is also known as “Tian Gong”³²⁹; the god of the land was known as

³²⁶ This subsection title proved difficult because the word *suishiji* (歲時記) refers to all the events and customs that happen in a year. I went with “records” to show that Su Beng was recording his past and recounting his experiences. This was indeed a more free but contextually-based translation.

³²⁷ *Daluxing fengtu* (大陸性風土). Continental climate. *Fengtu* (風土) is a catch-all term for the environment and social customs of a place.

³²⁸ The ST specifically says “this island” as opposed to “Taiwan.” Obviously, Taiwan is implied here. However, I maintained Su Beng’s phrasing as it seems to carry with it a certain emotional connotation.

³²⁹ *Tian Gong* (天公). Another title for the Jade Emperor.

“Tudi Gong³³⁰,” also known as “Fudezhengshen”; and the gods of the water, “Mazu” and “Xiahaichenghuang” (Chenghuang). According to the survey that the Japanese conducted in 1934, the entire island of Taiwan at that time had 718 small temples dedicated to Tudi Gong and 335 large temples for Mazu.

Mazu is the central protector god for the Hoklo³³¹ Han settlers. The earliest stories from the settlers mention that Mazu was originally a native of Xinghua prefecture, Fujian province and her original name was Lin Moniang³³² (960-978). She studied the mystic arts at age 13, and at age 19 she died at sea while trying to save her father. According to various and varying myths, Lin Moniang, during the fourth year of the Yongxi emperor³³³ (987), clothed in splendid attire, ascended a mountain and went to heaven³³⁴, thus becoming a goddess. The Song, Yuan, Ming, and Qing dynasties all conferred her the title of goddess. In 1694 (the thirty-third year of the Kangxi emperor), the first temple dedicated to Mazu was built in Meizhou Island, Putian. She was called “Tongxianlingnu.” Later, she was dubbed the “Heavenly Goddess.”

The descendants of the Han settlers have all heard the old folks tell their “Tangshan coming over to Taiwan” story. When their ancestors came to Taiwan, the most difficult test was crossing the ocean. This ocean, which devoured countless lives, was known as the “Heishuigou” by their ancestors. In the process of crossing the ocean, on average, every six out of ten people died at sea, one out of ten gave up halfway, and only three out of ten safely made it across. These

³³⁰ Tudi Gong (土地公). Lit. the “lord of the land.” Tudi means “land” and “gong” is a sort of title or honorific, meaning “lord.”

³³¹ Hoklo in Taiwanese; Fulao in Mandarin (福佬). The word Hoklo/Fulao is used to describe people from Fujian province. It is important to remember that the “Han Chinese” ethnicity contains several subgroups, of which Holko is one.

³³² Lin Moniang (林默娘). The supposed original name for Mazu.

³³³ Song Yongxi (939-997, 宋雍熙). The second emperor of the Song dynasty.

³³⁴ Shengtian (升天). Lit. “ascend to heaven,” but also can mean to die.

then became the Han settler ancestors we know today³³⁵. The phrase “ten came, six died, three stayed, one looked back” can fully describe the determination and bitterness of our ancestors when they left the homeland of China and found another way to live, and they were willing to take such a great risk to cross the sea to Taiwan. It can be seen that, in their minds, Taiwan was the only path to survival.

Since the Heishuigou was cruel and unforgiving, the Goddess of the Sea, Mazu³³⁶, became the most important deity to those who crossed the waters. She also became an important and respected protector deity for those who landed. Therefore, as progress towards land reclamation was underway, belief in Mazu eventually spread to the entire island. As long as there was a place inhabited by Han Chinese, as long as there were villages and towns inhabited by the settlers, there would be a temple dedicated to Mazu. Additionally, every plaza of such Mazu temples would certainly have crowds of people. In the beginning of the reign of Jiaqing³³⁷, the phrase “First was Tainan, second was Lukang, and third was Banka” (Tainan prefecture opened its port in 1725, Lukang in 1784, and Banka in 1794). In these flourishing places that had talented people, their local Mazu temples were even grander.

Mazu has both a red-faced Mazu, a black-faced Mazu, as well as a Mazu that could be at several places at once. This was called “Yima, Erma, and Sanma³³⁸.” A small statue of the god could be taken home to prevent further damage from a calamity or problem, then the statue must

³³⁵ The ST is quite concise. It literally reads “became the ancestors of the Taiwanese” but the implication is that Su Beng is trying to say “that we know today.” Without this additional phrase—an embellishment—the TT would be slightly unclear.

³³⁶ Although the ST uses Chinese quotations (「」) it is not always required to maintain these quotation marks in the ST. If the quotes were not absolutely needed, I decided to omit them.

³³⁷ Jiaqing (1760-1820, 嘉慶). The seventh Qing emperor.

³³⁸ It was hard to find an appropriate translation of this phrase, thus, I opted for a transliteration here. Yi (一) means one, er (二) means two, and san (三) means three.

be returned back to the temple³³⁹. Mazu temples can also be divided into “official temples” and “people’s temples.” Official temples were all conferred the title “Tianhou Gong³⁴⁰” Every county government needed one Tianhou Gong. For example, there is Tainan Tianhou Gong, Changhua Tianhou Gong, and so forth (*Records of Emperor Dezong of the Qing Dynasty*: “In spring of the thirteenth year of the Guangxu emperor... as there is a sign from the gods... it is hereby promulgated that in Fujian-Taiwan Province, Chiayi county... the horizontal board shall say “Ciyunsarun³⁴¹” (from Li Xianzhang’s *Mazu, A Study on Faith*³⁴², published in 1987, Tokyo).

The “people’s temples” were present in every village that the Han settlers resided in. In Beigang, the Chaotian temple was headed by such settlers. Compared to official temples, peoples’ temples were far more popular. All around Taiwan were Mazu temples, and in the peoples’ temples were specifically the Mazu that could be present everywhere. (Cao Yonghe³⁴³ said “The primary reason as to why the Mazu temples flourished is because of the combination of folk beliefs...” Quoted from an independent evening newspaper, *Mazu and the Beigang Chaotian Temple Conference*, published in 1994.) During the Japanese occupation, in 1942 (during the seventeenth year of Emperor Showa’s³⁴⁴ reign), the Japanese were fighting in the Pacific War³⁴⁵.

³³⁹ At Mazu temples, one can use divination tools (jiaobei) in order to ask if one can take a figure of Mazu home. The requester can keep the figure of Mazu for the duration of the problem that they are having.

³⁴⁰ Tianhou (天后宮). Lit. “Empress of Heaven.” Another name for Mazu.

³⁴¹ This phrase does not seem to have any meaning.

³⁴² Maso shinko no kenkyu (媽祖信仰の研究). A paper written by Li Xianzhang (1904-1999, 李獻章), a Taiwanese researcher of Taiwanese folklore and linguist.

³⁴³ Cao Yonghe; or also Ts’ao Yung-ho (1920-2014, 曹永和). A Taiwanese historian known for his work on the early history of Taiwan. Cao Yonghe was a polyglot which allowed him to read and analyze many historical materials. He is also a native of Shilin. See: http://www.tsaoyungho.org.tw/about-en.php?DB_PagID=7.

³⁴⁴ Emperor Showa (1901-1989, 昭和). Also known as Hirohito in the West. He was the 124th emperor of Japan who officially ruled the country from 1926 to his death in 1989. Notably, his rule is marked by two major periods in Japanese history: the WWII and the post-WWII eras. By convention, Japanese emperors are usually addressed as “the Emperor” as it is generally disrespectful to use one’s given name in Japanese culture (this is especially true for the nobility). After the death of an emperor, their reign name is then assigned as their name of address. Thus, the name “Showa” was not used until after his death.

³⁴⁵ The “Pacific War” refers to the Pacific theater of WWII. Its scope encompasses the Pacific Ocean theater as well as its surrounding regions such as the Indian Ocean and Oceania.

At that time, Taiwan had a population of 6 million. The number of people who made the pilgrimage to Chaotian temple in Beigang reached 5 million. From these massive crowds, it can be seen that the power of the government was not strong enough to overcome traditional Taiwanese culture. In those days, in addition to flourishing temples like Chaotian in Beigang, there was also Feng temple in Xingang³⁴⁶ and Zhenlan temple in Dajia³⁴⁷, just one river over. There was also Gandou temple in the suburbs of northern Taipei (now known as Guandu temple, which is a center of worship for Yilan³⁴⁸ and Luodong³⁴⁹).

Bazhilin people are very devout to Mazu. When I was a child, I often accompanied my grandmother to Beigang and Guandu to worship Mazu. These are two large Mazu temples on the island (for south and north respectively). People often say “Beigang is for the south, Guandu is for the north³⁵⁰.” For Bazhilin people, Shilin’s new Cixian temple is the center of worship. Nearby is Jiantan temple and Longshan temple in Banka³⁵¹. Further still are temples dedicated to Lu Dongbin such as Xiangong temple in Yuanshankeng, Muzha District, as well as temples for Baosheng Dadi (also called Dadao) like Baoan temple in Dalongdong. These temples were places that people went to visit for Lunar New Year or festivals. The aforementioned temples were mainly visited by Zhangzhou people for worship.

³⁴⁶ Xingang (新港). A small city in Chiayi country in the south of Taiwan.

³⁴⁷ Dajia (大甲). A small city in Taichung, in the center of Taiwan.

³⁴⁸ Yilan (宜蘭). A county in northeastern Taiwan.

³⁴⁹ Luodong (羅東). A township in northeastern Taiwan, located in Yilan.

³⁵⁰ This phrase was slightly easier to translate. Although a completely transliterated move is certainly an option, the choice to translate part of the phrase while using transliterating names for the proper nouns (Beigang, Guandu) proved to be an adequate if not well-balanced move. The only omission was the word ma (媽) which here means Mazu (used as an abbreviated name). In a sense, this translation was more based on context as opposed to literal translation.

³⁵¹ Again, Su Beng here is intentional with the use of the Taiwanese pronunciation.

For Quanzhou people, the main protector gods were Qingshui³⁵², Baoyi³⁵³, and Guangze³⁵⁴. For Hakkas, it was the Lords of the Three Mountains³⁵⁵. These deities were all deities that Taiwanese worshiped for Lunar New Year. During the Japanese occupation, the Japanese were primarily interested in economic exploitation, thus, there was not much interference in Taiwanese culture and tradition until later stages of the Pacific War. Therefore, my experience in celebrating Lunar New Year was fairly okay.

Part 1: The Twelfth Month³⁵⁶: Everyone Loves Lunar New Year

One's life always moves forward. There is always a need for change, there is always a need for renewal.

Lunar New Year's Eve³⁵⁷ is the last night of the year. It is also the greatest holiday for every family. Starting from the end of the twelfth lunar month³⁵⁸, everyone would sweep both inside and outside their houses until the fourteenth day of the twelfth month of the lunar year, which was the day that people would “send off the gods³⁵⁹.” On that day, people would burn joss paper for the general gods and their mythical mounts. The feeling of Lunar New Year would start on this day, and eventually grow merrier and merrier.

³⁵² Qingshui (1045-1101, 清水). A Buddhist monk from Fujian who is revered in Taoism. See: <https://religion.moi.gov.tw/Knowledge/Content?ci=2&cid=285>.

³⁵³ Baoyi (709-757, 保儀). Also known as Revered King Baoyi. He was a government official during the An Lushan Rebellion who fought against the rebels.

³⁵⁴ Guangze (廣澤). A defied shepherd who lived during the Five Dynasties and Ten Kingdoms period (907-979). As with the other order gods in this list, he was from Fujian (specifically, Quanzhou).

³⁵⁵ Sanshan Guowang (三山國王). It is said that these people were divine humans who claimed to be the deities of Mount Jin, Mount Ming, and Mount Du in Guangdong.

<https://religion.moi.gov.tw/Knowledge/Content?ci=2&cid=231>.

³⁵⁶ Since this book was not exactly meant for foreigners (non-Taiwanese people), the use of “twelfth month” here does not refer to the Western twelfth month (i.e., December). It is important to always take into consideration the overall context of the author's background and their cultural environment.

³⁵⁷ Kòe-nî-àm (過年暗). Taiwanese. Lunar New Year's Eve; or Chuxi.

³⁵⁸ Layue (臘月). The twelfth month of the lunar calendar.

³⁵⁹ Songshen (送神). The custom of providing food to worship the gods, then after the worship is over, people would send them off.

Soon after, couplets hung on doors and door gods³⁶⁰ would be completely replaced. My grandmother's younger brother, Fanshuzai³⁶¹, was Shilin's renown calligrapher. The Lunar New Year couplets that he would write were especially carefully written and graceful as well. The couplets that were on my home had, "The whole house is overflowing with happiness, the parents are healthy, and the whole family is harmonious³⁶²" were all written by him. Behind the door, on both sides, would have sugar cane branches with long, lush leaves, which was known as "all year-round sugar cane³⁶³", so that we could pray for blessings for the family throughout the year.

In order to prepare the dishes for New Year's Eve, my whole family spent many days before eve in order to procure the ingredients. The New Year's goods in the kitchen were also piled up like what you would see at a market. Even my mom, who does not usually cook, made an exception and cooked in the kitchen to prepare delicious food and drinks. My aunt would cook all kinds of "New Year kuih³⁶⁴" such as "sweet kuih" which were praying for peace and safety, "radish kuih," which represented good luck, "fa kuih," which was for wishing for promotions every year, and also a large pot of long-rooted vegetables³⁶⁵ that represented longevity.

³⁶⁰ Menshen (門神). Lit. "door gods." These are deities that protect one's home by preventing evil spirits from entering. See: https://history.uwo.ca/nianhua/en/door_gods/index.html.

³⁶¹ A nickname for one of Su Beng's maternal uncles. (His name literally means "sweet potato.")

³⁶² Chinese couplets can be very hard to translate, so I tried my best to use a domesticated approach here. I could not match the conciseness of Chinese, therefore I opted to add in extra words that would allow me to create complete English sentences.

³⁶³ Tn^g-nî-chià (長年蔗). Taiwanese. A kind of sugarcane grown all year round.

³⁶⁴ Kuih (粿). Pronounced as "guay" in English. Kuih is a kind of small dessert made from glutinous rice. In Chinese-speaking areas, it is commonly referred to as kuih (the Minnan pronunciation, as opposed to Mandarin one). Kuih has several varieties and can come in many colors.

³⁶⁵ Changnianyicai (長年刈菜). This word refers to vegetables with long roots. Since they have long roots, they represent a long, prosperous year.

The red table for worship was in the main room of the house. In the center of the table was the Buddha and Guanyin. The right side was for the worship of the god of the sun, goddess of the moon, Tudi Gong, and his wife. The left side contained the spirit tablet for the Shi family's ancestors. The table for the gods would be cleaned several days prior, and also both sides would have offerings like daffodils, flower decorations, and tangerines.

Lunar New Year's Eve is the day that the whole family gathers for a family reunion. All members of the family, young and old, near and far, must gather for the "weilu³⁶⁶." "Weilu" refers to eating at a round table with a stove placed underneath. The result is everyone sitting in a circle while having their meal. Everyone sitting³⁶⁷ and eating together symbolizes the whole family, without one member missing, peacefully celebrating Lunar New Year. During the feast, the table would be brimming with fish and meat, as well as delicious food such as shark fin soup, clear broth, pork liver, Taiwanese sausage³⁶⁸, fish eggs, silver carp, and so forth. My grandmother was a vegetarian, so on another table would be a mish-mash of vegetarian dishes like soy chicken³⁶⁹, seitan³⁷⁰ in strip and round form, and winter bamboo shoots with shiitake mushrooms. There would also be matsutake mushrooms, kelp, and year-round vegetables. I would sit at the meat table but also sit at the vegetarian table to eat with my grandmother. This meal was very warm and grand, of course. Then comes the happiest moment of the day, the

³⁶⁶ Weilu (圍爐). This word refers to the family reunion that occurs on the Lunar New Year's Eve.

³⁶⁷ Chē-chò-hóe (坐做夥). To sit together.

³⁶⁸ Xiangchang (香腸). This word, meaning sausage, often refers to the Chinese or Taiwanese style of sausage that is sweeter than its Western counterpart. In a similar vein to differentiate "spring roll" (fried vs. unfried versions), I decided that adding "Taiwanese" was a necessary injection.

³⁶⁹ Douji (豆雞). This is a dish that is made of tofu and has a savory flavor. It is similar to dougan, which is dry but not completely dry tofu.

³⁷⁰ Mianzhi (麵炙) and mianjin (麵筋). These food names are extremely hard to translate as they are not common in Western cuisine. They are both essentially wheat gluten, in other words, wheat flour that has been cooked. They can be fried, steamed, or even baked. Seitan itself is a Japanese word made up of two characters, sei (生) meaning fresh and dan (蛋) meaning protein. Seitan is sometimes eaten as a vegetarian meat substitute and can also be made into different shapes. In this particular context, Su Beng mentions seitan in both strip and round forms.

elders handing out Lunar New Year money³⁷¹. This would show their appreciation for the children's efforts for the year, and also wish that the child could happily grow up. This was the happiest moment for us children.

Even to this day, I still remember my grandmother happily teaching us how to sing folk songs for the new year, like:

God above, today's weather is splendid,

The adults like making money,

*Yet us kids love Lunar New Year*³⁷²

Part 2: The First Month of the Lunar Year, Chuyi; The Crackling of Firecrackers; Welcoming the New Year; Worshiping Tudi Gong

After having Lunar New Year dinner and handing out red envelopes³⁷³, everyone would return to their rooms to rest up a bit. Soon after, when the clock struck at midnight, it would officially be Lunar New Year's Day³⁷⁴. Then, the crackling of the firecrackers would be heard in rapid succession. As soon as everyone heard the firecrackers, they would hurry to get out of bed. They would happily put on their new clothes, pray to the gods, and provide offerings to our

³⁷¹ Su Beng goes on to say that this is called yasuiqian (壓歲錢) but I decided to domesticate the text by deleting the second clause, thereby reducing redundancy.

³⁷² As previously mentioned, nursery rhymes and folk songs do not always have to have an underlying meaning. The main feature of this song, when read in Taiwanese, is the ending rhyme for the words "day," "money," and "year." There is no special meaning. This song is meant to be sung in Taiwanese.

³⁷³ Hongbao (紅包). Lit "red envelopes" or "red packets." These are small envelopes often given from adults to children on Lunar New Year. The receiver is usually someone who is still in school or unmarried. Generally speaking, amounts that contain the number "4" are not given because the Chinese word for four (si, 四) sounds like word for death (si, 死). The former uses the fourth tone while the latter uses the third tone.

³⁷⁴ Sin-chian (新正). Taiwanese. Su Beng is intentional with the use of the Taiwanese pronunciation, however, I opted to be consistent and help the reader understand that this was "Lunar New Year's Day" as opposed to simply saying "New Year's Day."

ancestors. We called this “start of the new year³⁷⁵.” Since the descendants of the Han settlers understood the sacrifices and hard work of their ancestors, the descendants were absolutely pious in the worship of their ancestors. During the Lunar New Year period or any other festivals, the descendants always did their utmost to offer the most sumptuous offerings and maintain a respectful etiquette.

After Lunar New Year’s Day, all members of the family, big and small, would congregate to the head of the household (my grandmother) to greet her. Then, we would greet each other. Afterwards, we would have a reunion again and eat any leftover food³⁷⁶ from yesterday. However, we would also eat sweet kuih, turnip cakes, fa kuih, and vegetables. For this dinner, we would eat vegetables with long stems. It is said that this custom originates from the Buddha’s merciful heart, as he said that all things must be happy. I always had a busy schedule during this time because I had to follow my grandmother to the temples to burn incense. We would go to temples such as the ones on Shilin Street, like Cixian temple, Shenneng Temple, or temples in Zhishanyan like Huiji temple or Jiantan temple (my grandmother would hold onto me as we would ride a rickshaw to those temples).

There was a truly unforgettable scene that happened one morning on Chuyi: “tsau-chiunn³⁷⁷.” Four to five poor fellows would form a group and enter the home of every home. They would strike gongs and beat drums as well as perform glove puppetry, all to drum up a

³⁷⁵ Khui-chian (開正). Although my goal for this text was to try to follow Su Beng’s words closely, I found myself juggling English, Mandarin Chinese, and Taiwanese all at once. The most literal and “faithful” option would be to choose Taiwanese pronunciation as this was Su Beng’s intention. However, I found this option to be too foreignized. I fear that my struggle in balancing these three languages would affect the reader too much. Another option would be to use Mandarin Chinese though this is somewhat “unfaithful” as Su Beng did not intend to use the Mandarin pronunciation here (the editor wrote in the Taiwanese transliteration).

³⁷⁶ Nianfan (年飯). A term for the meal on Lunar New Year’s Eve.

³⁷⁷ Tsáu-chiùnn in Taiwanese; zouchang in Mandarin (走唱). A style of folk dance involving walking and dancing while singing.

lively and noisy atmosphere and wish everyone a peaceful and happy life. Then, every head of the household would hand out red envelopes to the performers to thank them.

In the afternoon, friends and relatives would come one after another to gleefully greet my grandmother with new year's greetings³⁷⁸. At this time, my grandmother would hand out red envelopes to the young ones. This was called "ya nianqian"³⁷⁹. Then she would hand them a pair of tangerines and wish them a happy new year and for a peaceful and happy life. After that, she would bring out jujube tea, raspberry cakes³⁸⁰, winter melon candy³⁸¹, fried dough sticks³⁸², peanuts, and other such auspicious new year's snacks to entertain the guests. During the Japanese colonial period, the head of Shilin street, head of the police, and other such important people would go house to house and say "O me deto" (congratulations)." Every family would also pour them a drink as a show of gratitude.

On Chuer, the daughters of the household who have been married then come home to their original homes³⁸³. We could call this "returning back home." The daughters would take the train, car, handcar, rickshaw, or sedan chair and happily come back home to exchange new year's greetings to their parents and brothers. This was also the freest and merriest time for married women. Then, on Chusi³⁸⁴, we would burn paper money to "greet the gods"³⁸⁵,

³⁷⁸ Hō-chian (賀正). Greetings that are commonly exchanged on Lunar New Year's Day.

³⁷⁹ Teh-nî-chîn (壓年錢). This phrase refers to people giving people envelopes.

³⁸⁰ Shumeibing (樹莓餅). A kind of dessert made from raspberries.

³⁸¹ Donggua tang (冬瓜糖). A kind of candy made from winter melon and sugar. The winter melon is cut into rectangular strips, boiled, then rinsed. Then, the strips are added back to a pot, sprinkled with sugar, then stir fried.

³⁸² Cunzao (寸棗). A kind of snack made from frying sticky rice dough. The name means "jujube sticks" because of their resemblance to jujube branches.

³⁸³ Gōa-ke-chhù (外家厝). Taiwanese. The act of a married woman going back to her parents' home. As explained before, niangjia refers to the original home of a married woman.

³⁸⁴ Chusi (初四). The fourth day of the Lunar New Year. Chu (初) meaning "new" or "beginning," and si (四) meaning four.

³⁸⁵ Jieshen (接神). Jie (接) meaning "to receive" as in "to receive guests" and shen (神) meaning gods or deities (plural, in this case). Jieshen is the act of preparing offerings to receive the gods.

welcoming all gods and deities to the human world. On Chuwu³⁸⁶, we would “gekai³⁸⁷“. The shop owners would one by one open up shop and office workers as well. On Chujiu³⁸⁸, we would worship the Jade Emperor. Every family would set up two small, red tables in front of their doors (god tables) to serve as an altar. On them, people would place sumptuous fruits, and we would burn paper money, shoot firecrackers, and pray for peace and prosperity for the year.

On the fifteen day of the Lunar calendar was the Lantern Festival³⁸⁹. The old folks would call it “worshipping Tudi Gong³⁹⁰.” On this day, during the Lunar New Year celebrations, the moon would be at its fullest, and festivities would be the merriest at night. On the night of the Lantern Festival, children would continue with the merriment that the first month of the lunar year brought forth. Everyone would carry their lanterns³⁹¹ and happily stroll about the streets. The adults would also go about and beat their gongs and drums and merrily welcome in Tudi Gong. They would do this in order to pray for good luck for the year, plentiful harvests, and boundless prosperity. There is a saying that goes “From field to field, you can see temples for the Tudi Gong, from village to village, there will be a damugong.” It can be seen from this that Taiwanese people were zealous in their worship and reverence for Tudi Gong and the damugong. Tudi Gong was not only the protector god of the village, he was also the god of wealth, farming, and commerce. So, no matter if it was for farming, mining, work, business, etc, Tudi Gong was the god to worship for such things. In addition to the Lantern Festival, people would provide offerings for him on every first and fifteenth day of the lunar calendar.

³⁸⁶ Chuwu (初五). The fifth day of the Lunar New Year. Wu (五) meaning five.

³⁸⁷ Gekai (隔開). This word refers to the act of opening up shops, as it is taboo to open one’s shop before Chuwu.

³⁸⁸ Chujiu (初九). The ninth day of the Lunar New Year. Jiu (九) meaning nine.

³⁸⁹ Yuanxiao Jie (元宵節). This holiday typically falls in February or early March on the Gregorian calendar. In a sense, it is the “finale” to the Lunar New Year celebration period.

³⁹⁰ Lāng-thó-tī-kong (弄土地公). To worship Tudi Gong.

³⁹¹ Kóo-á-teng (鼓仔燈). Taiwanese. A lantern, but specifically the Chinese-style lanterns that have paper coverings, as opposed to glass. They are usually red in color.

The worship ceremony for Tudi Gong on the Lantern Festival is the grandest ceremony of the year. On the evening of the Lantern Festival, the young people of the village would transport Tudi Gong with a sedan chair and go along the verandas of the street. They would go from house to house, in the thick of the beating of gongs and drums, and dance to and fro. Every shopkeeper would light big and small firecrackers which would boom loudly. This was meant to show their fever in greeting Tudi Gong. Also, to show their appreciation to the youngsters who were carrying the sedan chair, shopkeepers would also pass out red envelopes to them. Apart from this, the scholars and gentry would gather and look at lanterns all night. The whole family would look at revolving lanterns and write poems and couplets. The second month of the lunar year was Tudi Gong's birthday, and so everyone would go to all parts of the land to worship Tudi Gong.

Part 3: The Third Month, Rainy Tomb Sweeping Day, and Sweeping Graves

Around the tenth day of the third month was Tomb Sweeping Day³⁹². Around this time, every day the weather would be very rainy. Every family in Bazhilin would leave Shilin and go to Linzaikou to visit their ancestors' graves (near the border of today's Ming Chuan University) and sweep them. On the day of the festival itself, the hilltops where the tombstones would be full of crowds. The nearby cow herders would come play the "guess tomb kuih" game³⁹³, asking the people who came for the tomb sweeping for something to eat. There was a folk song about Tomb

³⁹² Qingming Jie (清明節). Tomb Sweeping Day, also called Qingming Festival.

³⁹³ Ioh-bōng-kóe (猜墓糰). This was a kind of "game" that those providing offerings would play with poor children. People who play a "guess the kuih" game with the children, asking them to guess which one was salty and sweet, and if the children win, they would win the kuih. Culturally, it would be seen as charity if the people gave the poor children food for free, so the game was a way to make it seem like the children "earned" their food. See:

Sweeping Festival that went something like “On the third month, I carry the peaches and plums home...”³⁹⁴ Around this time would also be peach and plum seasons.

In the drizzling rain of the Qingming Festival,

Travelers on the road feel their souls broken.

*I ask, “Where can I find a tavern to drown in sorrow”*³⁹⁵

*The shepherd boy points from afar to Xinghua Village*³⁹⁶

This song was one that my maternal uncle, Uncle Fanshu, loved to recite. It describes scenes of the continuous rains during the period of the festival. It has a sort of “life is like a play” feeling to it.

Part 4: The Fourth Month, Welcoming Mazu with the Sound of Gongs and Drums

Mazu’s birthday is on the twenty-third day of the third month of the lunar calendar. However, in those days, Shilin people would “welcome Mazu” in the fourth month. It could be said that the liveliest day on Shilin New Street was the twenty-second day of the fourth month—the day of welcoming Mazu. Every village would have its own way of welcoming Mazu. I remember that for Shilin New Street, it was the twenty-second day of the month, but for Shilin Old Street it was the twenty-third day. For Nanya, it was the twenty-sixth day. For Shipai and Ruanqiao, it was the twenty-eighth day. Since the ancestors had the blessing of Mazu, they were

³⁹⁴ It is likely that Su Beng is trying to quote the children’s song First Month (正月正). He doesn’t specify the song or expound on it. It is a song with many verses. See: <https://tmrc.tiec.tp.edu.tw/HTML/RSR2008110511022891B/%E6%9C%89%E8%B6%A3%E7%9A%84%E9%84%89%E5%9C%9F%E7%AB%A5%E8%AC%A0/%E6%B0%91%E9%96%93%E6%AD%8C%E8%AC%A0/48%E6%AD%A3%E6%9C%88%E6%AD%A32.HTM>

³⁹⁵ While it was not stated, the speaker is implied to want to drink as he is sad. This was my explicitation move here.

³⁹⁶ The ST does not mention it, but this is a poem by Du Mu (803-852, 杜牧), a Tang dynasty politician and poet. The poem is called Qingming (清明). Just like Su Beng explains, heavy rains often accompany the period of Qingming Festival.

able to cross the ferocious waves of the Heishuigou. In order for the descendants of those ancestors to show their gratitude and reverence, the descendants would hold a grand ceremony to welcome Mazu³⁹⁷. This was no exception for Bazhilin people. During this time, people would put down the tools in their hands and take a break from their daily toils. They would reunite with relatives and friends that they have not seen in a long time. At the same time, since the welcoming Mazu ceremony was especially noisy and lively, us kids were always looking forward to it. Several days before the date, we would be brimming with excitement.

Inside the Mazu temple, an image of her sat in the center. On the side were images of Guan Yu, Wenchang, Zhusheng, Guanyin, Tudi Gong, the Jade Emperor, and Shennong. On both sides were images of Qianliyan and Shunfenger. Inside the temple was a curtain and a large table. On the large table was a stamp holder (wooden), a censer, jiaobei, lamps, and bamboo strips inscribed with poems. There was also a middle table and a lower table (“Objects Used in Temples,” by Shi Yangsui, in *Minzoku Taiwan*, issue 1, 1941).

In the early morning, the market would already be very lively. There would be crowds at every corner, coming to purchase offerings. When summer replaces spring, there would be an abundance of peaches and plums. Women would wear a flower on their head, like from the magnolia flower, jasmine flower, magnolia figo (speaking of magnolias, I recall that my grandmother would sing a song:

The magnolia blossoms smell nice,

Handsome boys will make the girls fall for them

If you have a good heart, you will have your wish,

³⁹⁷ In Chinese, the subject can often be omitted if it is clear from context. However, in order to clarify the sentence, I added in “the descendants of those ancestors.”

Similarly, the younglings would wear new clothes. In this fashion, everyone would rush to Cixian temple on Shilin Street to pray to Mazu and provide her with offerings like pork, chicken, duck, fish, and duck eggs, which were the five offerings (when worshiping ancestors, you would provide three offerings). Then, we would light gold joss paper (for those who have passed away, we would light silver joss paper). When Shilin people would welcome Mazu, the surrounding hilly areas of Zhouwei, Caoshan, Zhuzaihu and the like would be full of blooming lilies. At dawn, everyone would climb the mountains to pick lilies which still had dew on them. They would place these lilies in the vases of their living room for guests to admire.

In the afternoon, people would start the welcoming Mazu processions. The arrangement of people in welcoming Mazu was quite a sight. In the front people had lanterns, banners, parasols, a drum group, lion dancers (whose members were always farmers), clubs for young people (Shilin had several clubs, like the Jiyong, Shilin, and Lanyi clubs), a music band, art group, stilt walkers, and gongbeipo³⁹⁸. The yuefu³⁹⁹ band was there and even the Western style band too. When the gongs and drums started beating, the procession, which was in formation in front of the temple⁴⁰⁰, would start. The procession was led by this raucous group, while behind them was Qianliyan and Shufenger. Then, you could see the palm-leaf fans as well as eight people. A group of them was holding up the sedan chair of Mazu as she slowly and majestically

³⁹⁸ Kong-iāng-pô (公背婆). Lit. “husband carrying wife.” This is a kind of actor that wears a suit. The suit is special in that the actor “plays” the role of the woman, while the “suit” (the man) is in front of him. See: <https://acrobatic.ncfta.gov.tw/home/zh-tw/Husbandcarryingwifedance>.

³⁹⁹ Yuefu (樂府). A kind of Chinese poem composed in a folk song style.

⁴⁰⁰ I embellished the TT here to make it clearer. Instead of being literal to the ST and saying “the procession in front of the temple” I painted the picture just a touch more clearly with “the procession, which was in formation in front of the temple.” This rendering adds a bit more “color” to the picture without overly distorting the image. The use of “formation” here is not present in the ST but it provides a better image for the reader.

advanced forward. The sedan chair also had a large group of Mazu disciples behind it as well as Buddhists⁴⁰¹ accompanying Mazu. The whole formation was grand and truly a sight to see.

Words could not even describe the spectacle.

At night, every household would host a roadside banquet⁴⁰² and invite guests to come. They would invite relatives and friends from the countryside to eat and chat and overall have a good time. The more guests that would arrive, the more honor⁴⁰³ he would have. The entirety of Shilin Street would be full of people. It was such a bustling and lively scene. From morning to dawn of the next day, the annual welcoming Mazu spectacle would provide opportunities for the scattered farmers, who came to Taiwan from different lands in different periods, to meet and be cheerful. It would also allow the whole village to slowly connect with one another and form an intimate, interconnected Taiwanese people and Taiwanese society.

Part 5: The Fifth Month, Rowing the Dragon Boat, Eating Zongzi⁴⁰⁴ and Dipping Them in Sugar⁴⁰⁵

There is a saying about the fifth day of the fifth month: “Picking mugwort⁴⁰⁶ will make you healthy, and picking banyans will turn you into a brave dragon⁴⁰⁷.” Every family and

⁴⁰¹ Shannanxinu (善男信女). A term used to refer to lay Buddhist practitioners.

⁴⁰² Banzhuo (辦桌). Lit. “to set up tables.” The so-called “roadside banquets” are a kind of banquet held under large tents and on the side of roads (hence their name). Roadside banquets could be held for many occasions, such as weddings, birthdays, housewarming parties, etc. Many delicacies are served and are cooked on the spot.

⁴⁰³ Mianzi (面子). The literal word here is “face” as in the phrase “to lose face.” However, the concept used here is closer to losing honor or respect.

⁴⁰⁴ Zongzi in Mandarin; bacang in Taiwanese (粽子). Usually domesticated into English as “rice dumpling.” A kind of rice dish made out of glutinous rice. Zongzi have many variations not just in Taiwan and China but across Asia. For example, *chimaki* is a similar dish eaten in Japan, while in Vietnam they eat a variation called *bánh ú tro*. In Taiwan, zongzi are typically stuffed with pork, mushrooms, and fried scallions.

⁴⁰⁵ Some zongzi are eaten by dipping them in sugar. For this kind of zongzi, called “alkali zongzi” (鹼粽), there is generally no filling. This is the kind of zongzi Su Beng is referring to in this section title. Su Beng especially liked them.

⁴⁰⁶ The exact kind of mugwort mentioned here is Chinese mugwort (aicao, 艾草), but felt that adding in “Chinese” would harm the purity and immersion of the quote.

⁴⁰⁷ Chinese mugwort and banyan leaves are often collected during Dragon Boat Festival to ward off mosquito bites, which could cause illness. It is important to note that Su Beng’s historical period at this time was the Japanese

household would place sweet sedge, bayan, Asian mugwort, and a banyan branch on their door as a way to pray for peace for the whole family. Additionally, they would sprinkle realgar wine (they would spray it on the sides of the walls and ceilings and rub it on the heads of children to ward off evil auras and pests). At noon, they would drink “well water⁴⁰⁸” to remove evil auras. At the same time, they would take pine, Chinese mugwort, *Acorus calamus*, and beefsteak plant, and bathe in it in their bathtub. They would also make zongzi to venerate and thank the gods. The next day (the sixth day of the fifth month), in order to drive off the water ghosts and flooding, a dragon boat race was in the Keelung River, near Bazhilin, Zhouwei, and Xiashulin.

To this day, I still remember the old folks at that time telling me the meaning behind us kids rowing the dragon boat. It was for the sake of paying homage to a person from Tangshan. It is said that this person was Qu Yuan⁴⁰⁹ from the state of Chu, a figure from the Warring States period⁴¹⁰. Not only was he the earliest great poet in China, but also the author of famous poems such as “Encountering Sorrow⁴¹¹” and “the Nine Songs⁴¹²”. He also resisted the annexation of Qin⁴¹³ and protected Chu, safeguarding Chu’s independence and dignity. However, he was banished to faraway Yuanxiang by King Xiang of Chu because of slander from malicious

colonial rule. It is quite likely that modern medicine had yet to become fully developed or widespread in Taiwan at that time.

⁴⁰⁸ Gōo-sî-chúí (午時水). Taiwanese. The act of drinking well water on Dragon Boat Festival. This is said to be beneficial to one’s health.

⁴⁰⁹ Qu Yuan (340-278 BCE, 屈原). A famous politician and poet from the Warring States period. Author of the *Songs of Chu*. When the capital of his country, Ying, was conquered by Bai Qi of Qin, he committed suicide by drowning in the Miluo River. It is said that villagers carried zongzi to the river and tossed them in to prevent his body from being eaten by the fish.

⁴¹⁰ Zhanguo shidai (戰國時代). In Chinese historiography, the Warring States period is commonly dated from 475-221 BCE.

⁴¹¹ Lisao (離騷). Encountering Sorrow. A famous poem from *The Songs of Chu* that is generally attributed to Qu Yuan. The poem is an account of an official who has been driven out by malicious court officials.

⁴¹² Jiuge (九歌). The Nine Sounds. Another famous poem written by Qu Yuan.

⁴¹³ Qin (秦). Qin, or more formally, the “State of Qin.” This was one of the countries that fought in the Warring States period and eventually unified China.

people. Later, after Chu was destroyed by Qin, he drowned himself in the Miluo River⁴¹⁴. I studied Qu Yuan's story in detail when I was in college, and because the Japanese people admire Qu Yuan unyielding spirit, I also read his poems such as "Encountering Sorrow" and "Nine Songs" in my school classes.

The dragon boats themselves have a special meaning. In ancient times, people often said: "Xizai Betrayal" ("Xizai" refers to the French army during the Qing-French War⁴¹⁵, and "betrayal" refers to "attack"); before this war, there were dragon boats. Additionally, the specifications for dragon boats were very strict. The regulations stipulate that the boats must be five *zhang*⁴¹⁶ long, four *chi*⁴¹⁷ wide, and one chi and five *cun*⁴¹⁸ high. They must be made from camphor wood. A dragon head and tail should be painted on the bow and stern of the boat respectively, and dragon scales should be painted on both sides. A boat should have thirty people on board, one person who strikes the gong to drum up the rower's spirits, and one person who steers the helm (from Pan Naizhen, *Records of Shilin*⁴¹⁹, "Minzoku Taiwan" No. 6). The "Dragon Boat Song" that I liked to sing very much when I was young still rings clearly in my ears:

Rowing the dragon boat, rowing the dragon boat,

Eating sugar-dipped zongzi,

⁴¹⁴ Miluo Jiang (汨羅江). Miluo River. A river in Hunan province, southern China.

⁴¹⁵ Qingfa Zhanzheng (清法戰爭). The Sino-French War (1884-1885), also known as the Tonkin War.

⁴¹⁶ Zhang (丈). An ancient unit of measurement. Equal to ten chi. The exact measurement has varied over the years. Currently, it is roughly 3.3 m.

⁴¹⁷ Chi (尺). An ancient unit of measurement. Often called a "Chinese foot." Roughly equal to 1/3 of a meter.

⁴¹⁸ Cun (寸). An ancient unit of measurement. Often called a "Chinese inch." Roughly equal to 1/30 of a meter, or approximately 3.7 cm.

⁴¹⁹ Not to be confused with the *Records of Shilin* that Su Beng has written here.

Sugary sweet, zongzi mixed with geng⁴²⁰,
Bath and drink the well water,
Burn the incense, hang the perfumed sachets,
Everyone watches the dragon boat race

Dragon boats can be seen all over Taiwan. As the saying goes: “Dinggang (northern Taiwan) and Xiagang (central and southern Taiwan), all row boats.” However, the Keelung River has been filled by the corrupt and crooked Chiang family. The tradition of rowing dragon boats in Shilin has long disappeared.

Part 6: Qixi, the Heavenly Meeting of Lovers; Ghost Festival, the Time for Pudu

The sixth month is what is commonly called “ghost month.” On the first day of the seventh lunar month, the ghost gate is opened. All the lonely and hungry ghosts in the underworld come out to the world to beg for food, and the ghost gate is not closed until the 29th day of the month. The elders will take the opportunity to warn the younger generation not to go out at night and not to stay outside too late, so as to avoid harm.

However, in this inauspicious month, the first to appear is a legend of the most romantic day, “Qixi.” The seventh day of the seventh lunar month is also known as “Qiniangma’s birthday” (the god of childbirthing; the Taiwanese from Quanzhou in Shezai pay special attention to her worship). Additionally, it is also the annual meeting of the legendary couple Niulang and Zhinu⁴²¹. People in Bazhilin attach great importance to Qixi Festival offerings.

⁴²⁰ Geng (羹). A kind of thick soup that is usually thickened with cornstarch.

⁴²¹ Niulang (the Cowherd Boy, 牛郎) and Zhinu (the Weaving Girl, 織女) are two important figures from the legend of Qixi.

Every household has to make mugwort kuih⁴²², and prepare sacrifices and fruits to go to the temple to worship the heavenly Qiniangma, Niulang, and Zhinu, praying for safe childbirth and for the children in the family to grow up happily and healthily. In addition, they also lament the poor fate of Niulang and Zhinu. It is said that the Hakka will also regard Qiniangma as the guardian god of children, and make mugwort kuih to worship the Seven Fairies.

On the 14th and 15th day of the seventh lunar month, and until the end of the month, there is a grand ghost festival, “Zhongyuan.” Pudu⁴²³ means the spreading of the act of saving beings. Pudu, in the original Buddhist meaning, means to help all beings become Buddhas, but as Buddhism spread, it took on a different characteristic depending on the place or era. For example, “urabon⁴²⁴” in Japan only worships one’s own ancestors, while in Taiwan the observance is mainly for the “good brothers” Han settlers who died in the Heishuigou on their way to Taiwan, as well as the victims who resisted the brutality of the Manchu officials and sacrificed their lives for their own village⁴²⁵. From this, we can also see the unique nature of each society and each nation in terms of their cultural spirit.

The entirety of Pudu is divided into several steps. Firstly, on the 14th day, one should go to Zhishanyan’s damugong during the daytime to provide offerings to one’s ancestors. At night, one should set up “bamboo lamp poles⁴²⁶” in front of the Mazu Temple of Cixian temple, and

⁴²² O-chháu-á-kóe (烏草仔糰). A kind of kuih made from Chinese mugwort, a kind of fiber crop, giving it its signature green color. Wucaozai kuih can be savory or sweet.

⁴²³ The ST writes this part as “中元「普度」” but I had to make a domestication move here. If this part is translated as “Zhongyuan (Pudu),” then this would imply that Zhongyuan and Pudu are the same thing, which they are not. It should be emphasized that Zhongyuan is the festival, but Pudu is the ceremony during the festival.

⁴²⁴ Yulanpen in Chinese; Urabon in Japanese (盂蘭盆). A Buddhist observance in Japan focusing on the worship of ancestors.

⁴²⁵ Kak-thâu (角頭). Taiwanese. Village.

⁴²⁶ Teng-ko (燈篙). Taiwanese. A kind of lantern that is attached to a very high bamboo pole. See: <https://religion.moi.gov.tw/Knowledge/Content?ci=2&cid=444>.

then welcome “dou lanterns⁴²⁷.” Every village would gather their dou lanterns, and the procession went all the way to Xiashulin and the Keelung River at the end of the island to release water lanterns⁴²⁸ to guide the lonely souls. There were various children’s bands (composed of farmers’ children) in the ranks of water lamps. The *clang clang clang clang* from the gongs played by each team has repetitive and simple rhythms, loud sounds, and special shapes of gongs, which give people a very special feeling. These familiar sounds seem to forever ring in my ears.

From the 15th day until the end of the month, Pudu would be a lively affair. Firstly, an altar for the ghost king (called dashishan⁴²⁹) would be set up in front of the Mazu temple, and then hold the Buddhist form of Yulanpen⁴³⁰ (the night of giving offerings to the good brothers, lonely ghosts, and roadside corpses). Pudu in Bazhulin is divided into “Hejiapu”(Pudu for the whole village) and “Zhujiapu” (Pudu for the family); The former was a public celebration for the village on Shilin Street, while the latter was a private celebration for each family. Hejiapu divided Shilin Village into four areas, and each village took turns hosting the altar ceremony on Shilin Street every year. I remember that, in those years, it was divided into Shilin New Street and Shilin Old Street as one village, Nanya, Sanjiaopu, and Zhuzai Lake as one village, Shuangxi, Pingding, and Caoshan as one village, and Shipai, Ruanqiao, and Qilian as one village.

⁴²⁷ Doudeng (斗燈). A kind of lamp that is related to Taoism. The word “dou” refers to “beidou” (北斗) and “nandou,” (南斗) which refer to the Big Dipper and southern part of the Sagittarius constellation respectively. The origin of the word “dou” relates to Taoism, which itself relates to astrology. See: <https://religion.moi.gov.tw/Knowledge/Content?ci=2&cid=349>.

⁴²⁸ Pàng-chúi-teng (放水燈). Taiwanese. Lit. to “release water lanterns.”

⁴²⁹ Toā-sū-soan (大士山). Taiwanese. A special kind of altar with a figure that is made from paper (using the zhizha method).

⁴³⁰ Yulanpen (盂蘭盆). Yulanpen is for Buddhism. It is sometimes combined with Zhongyuan Jie (Ghost Festival) in Taiwan. The resulting mix is called Pudu. Here, Su Beng is referring to the Buddhist version of Yulanpen. See: <https://religion.moi.gov.tw/Knowledge/Content?ci=2&cid=180>.

When it was our turn (those living in Shilin New and Old Street) to host the ceremony, every household's veranda would connect their window boards and form one table. It would stretch nearly 100 meters. The table would be brimming with chicken, duck, and other such offerings. Additionally, there would be red tortoise kuih⁴³¹, mugwort kuih, and taro shrimp kuih⁴³². There would also be several beautiful handmade animal-shaped foods, like fish, shrimp, and other kinds of seafood. Furthermore, there would be paper dioramas of “The Eight Immortals Crossing the Sea⁴³³,” “Lu Tieguai Advises the People,” and other such famous scenes. Every family would slaughter pigs and sheep and stuff their mouths with a large tangerine, then put them on the offering rack as an offering. This was known as “zhugong⁴³⁴” which was one of the grandest and most luxurious offerings. In those days, the lives of the everyday farmer and merchant were difficult. These offerings were very ostentatious, which demonstrates the great faith and sincerity of the descendants of the Han settlers towards the good brothers.

The Hejiapu ceremony lasted until midnight and ended after the burning of a large amount of silver paper money. That night, Shilin Street would be crowded with people. They would carefully admire the sumptuous and exquisite offerings on the long table at the foot of the pavilion, while also looking at the size of the pigs offered by each family (each village would hold a pig size competition every year) game). In this lively manner they would spend this early autumn evening. Grandma was a vegetarian Buddhist, so he did not slaughter any pigs. Thus, my

⁴³¹ Ang ku kuih (紅龜粿). Red tortoise kuih. A special kind of kuih that is red and resembles a tortoise. Tortoises symbolize longevity and power in Chinese culture, and it is believed that eating a tortoise kuih could allow one to live a long life.

⁴³² Ōo-kué-khiau (芋粿曲). A kind of kuih made from steaming taro, shallots, dried shrimp, and glutinous rice all together.

⁴³³ Baxian Guohai (八仙過海). A scene depicting the Eight Immortals crossing the sea.

⁴³⁴ Ti-kong (豬公). The act of providing a pig as an offering. After the offering ceremony is complete, the pig is eaten.

mother would buy half a pig from one of our neighbors to serve as an offering, then share the meat from the pig.

Children, of course, like to be loud and lively. They are always excited when they can celebrate festivals. However, the old folks will say that Pudu in the seventh lunar month is a very solemn affair, because when the ancestors crossed the sea, many people died, became trapped, and became wandering ghosts. Therefore, water lanterns should be released to guide the way, and dharma should be used, so that they can reach the “other shore⁴³⁵” and escape from their suffering. In regards to the hardships of our ancestors who came to Taiwan, I still remember a Taiwanese proverb that goes: “Ninety-nine lives lost, all because of Lu Dongbin.” It is said that there was a boat carrying ninety-nine Han Chinese. They were going to cross the sea and immigrate to Taiwan. Lu Dongbin saw the boat in the sea on the coast of the mainland, and kindly waved the fan in his hand to express his farewell. Unexpectedly, this wave produced a strong sea wind, which immediately overturned the ship, and the ninety-nine immigrants sunk in the Heishuigou. These ninety-nine undead souls felt dissatisfied. They thought, if other people could land in Taiwan safely, why could not they? So they shouted their grievances loudly to Yama⁴³⁶ when they arrived at hell. Yama also found it strange, so he opened the “book of life and death⁴³⁷” to check, and found a note on a piece of paper that said: “Ninety-nine lives lost, all because of Lu Dongbin.” Yama had no choice but to tell them: “This is the fate of you, ninety-nine.” In one sentence, it describes the unpredictable situation and the uncertainty of life and death that the ancestors faced when they crossed the sea.

⁴³⁵ Bi'an (彼岸). Literally “the other shore.” Or known as “parmita” in Sanskrit.

⁴³⁶ Yanluo Wang (閻羅王). Yama, King of Hell.

⁴³⁷ Shengsibu (生死簿). The Book of Life and Death. A book present in Chinese folklore. The God of Death uses this book to record the birthdate and death date of living things. See: <https://dict.revised.moe.edu.tw/dictView.jsp?ID=132525&la=0&powerMode=0>.

On the day of Pudu, everyone will go to Zhishanyan to pray to the damugong (also known as “laodagong,” “youyinggong,” and “wanyinggong”). This is because the tomb is buried with unknown soldiers who died defending the villagers of Bazhilin, for example, during the Lin Shuangwen Rebellion (1786), good brothers such as Wu Weiren who led the people of Bazhilin to fight against the Qing dynasty and died. Additionally, those who died in the conflict between the Zhangzhou people and Quanzhou people (the conflict between the Zhangzhou people of Bazhilin and the Tong’an people of Bankga) were also good brothers as well. Through understanding of the origin of Pudu, everyone is able to obtain a basic understanding of their ancestors and the small history of their hometown. As for Pudu in Hakka villages such as Xinpu (Yimin temple) in Hsinchu county as well as Zhongli, it is also very grand and majestic. This is especially true for the “Sacred Pig Competition” hosted by Hakka people during Pudu, which is famous all over the island.

Part 7: The Fifteenth Day of the Eighth Month: The Moon Is Bright, Dashing Xiucui, Riding His White Horse, Going to Nantang!

The Mid-Autumn Festival that I still remember was about praying to the moon⁴³⁸ and eating “an-pia” or “Mid-Autumn cakes.” Taiwan originally never used the name “yuebing⁴³⁹” (mooncakes). People would decorate their doors with lanterns and other things (for us, we would decorate our balcony), and the tables would be lined with fruit, clean flowers, and mooncakes to worship the moon. Then, we would sit on the doorstep and “kill⁴⁴⁰” pomelos. The

⁴³⁸ Yueniag (月娘). Pr. Although this word literally means “moon woman,” the usage here simply refers to the moon.

⁴³⁹ Yuebing (月餅). In the past, Taiwan did not have what we traditionally think of moon cakes. The moon cakes that most people in America know are Cantonese style moon cakes. Instead, Taiwan had something similar to a baked pastry called xianbing (餡餅) in Mandarin or ān-piá in Taiwanese. They were often stuffed with red bean or mung bean paste.

⁴⁴⁰ The ST specifically says “kill,” but I inserted the quotations to emphasize that it was not literally killing, but rather a figurative use of language. “Kill” here refers to the act of cutting pomelos, which represents killing thieves.

old folks say that this was to protect against thieves. Peeling the pomelos representing the killing of thieves. Together, we kids and the adults would raise our hands and clasp our palms, praying to the moon. In reality, we were just looking at the offerings on the table (like mooncakes and red persimmons). We were always impatient as we waited for them to hand us our mooncakes. The permissions were so round and red. Every year, during the eighth month, they would finally be available at the markets. They were soft and sweet, and we kids loved to eat them.

On the same evening, all the way to midnight, when the moon is at its brightest, the Queen of the Night cactus that my grandmother had carefully and diligently cultivated would bloom. This would greatly add to the atmosphere of the Mid-Autumn Festival. However, just like the saying “the Queen of the Night cactus only blooms once,” so too would this precious flower wither when dawn arrived. On the night of the same day, the cool, late autumns winds would come forth from the trees. You could feel the essence of autumn through the cold air. Yet, my whole family did not sleep early. For them, it was better to sleep later and enjoy the autumn. The longer you stayed up would mean the more filial you were. When the scholars would enjoy the sight of the moon, they would feel deeply inspired to write and recite poetry. My father would, during the whole night, mumble to himself as he recited poems and ancient verses. It was not until later that I realized that he was reciting Tang poetry, specifical Du Fu’s Thoughts While Traveling at Night:

The grass on the shore is fluttering in the breeze, the boat with a tall mast is moored alone on the river in a moonlit night,

The vast wilderness extends, stars in the sky hanging low,

The bright moon surges in the water, revealing the rushing flow of the mighty river.

Is my reputation solely based on acclaimed writings? In old age and frailty, surely it is time for me to retire from official duties,

Alas, how can I, a wanderer of the rivers and lakes, compare to others? I resemble nothing more than a lonely and destitute seagull adrift in the world

As well as Li Bai's A Song of the Autumn Night:

In the city of Chang'an, moonlight blankets the land; countless households are busy pounding clothes by hand

Autumn wind carries the sound of pounding clothes; Every family cherishes the soldiers stationed at the border.

When will the border wars finally cease; And allow my husband to end his distant campaign?

My mother would recite Tang dynasty poet Liu Yuxi's The Autumn Wind:

From where does the autumn wind arrive, rustling and guiding the flock of geese?

As morning comes, it enters the courtyard and trees, and the lonely guest is the first to hear it

When I was a child, I heard my parents reciting poetry like this, but I had no idea what it was.

My grandmother taught me children's songs over and over, I still remember them even after I grew up:

The moon is bright, a young xiucai⁴⁴¹

⁴⁴¹ Xiucai (秀才). A kind of scholar that took the Imperial Examination in China. The definition has changed over time.

*He rides a white horse, going to Nantang,
But he can't make it, he snatches cat to get the goods,
But he couldn't even get the goods,
He beats the eagle with a bamboo stick*

During Mid-Autumn Festival, women usually go to the suburbs alone in the middle of the night to “tingxiang⁴⁴²” to predict their own fortunes (life during the Japanese era was safe, and going to remote suburbs at night would not be dangerous). For example, if all was quiet, and suddenly a pregnant woman suddenly hears a man calling to her at the door, “Auntie, open the door. I’m back!” then this would be a sign that she will give birth to a baby boy.

In addition, there is also the Double Ninth Festival on the ninth day of the ninth month, where we would eat “nine-layer kuih⁴⁴³.” The most vivid scene at this time is: “The ninth day of the ninth month, kites fill the sky,” which shows that children like to fly kites.

The tenth month was Lidong (“chibu⁴⁴⁴,” to eat eight treasure decoction and sweet rice cakes⁴⁴⁵). On Dongzhi⁴⁴⁶, we would make tangyuan to worship Tudi Gong, the door gods, and the god of the stove, and pray to our ancestors. Of course, I was always happy to eat tangyuan soup, but what was even more fun was that my grandmother would use raw glutinous rice to make animal figures⁴⁴⁷ and other animal shapes for me as toys.

⁴⁴² A Taiwanese custom. During the Lantern Festival or Mid-Autumn Festival, a person will go to a temple, burn incense, and silently pray to the gods. The person will ask for a literal direction of where the sound comes from, and depending on the source, it is judged as a good sign or an omen.

⁴⁴³ Káu-têng-chhoe-koé (九重炊糰). Nine-layer kuih, a kind of savory kuih. See: <https://travel.yam.com/article/78265>.

⁴⁴⁴ Chibu (吃補) Lit. “eat” and “replenish,” but here this term refers to absorbing nutrients.

⁴⁴⁵ Tianmigao (甜米糕). Lit. “sweet rice cake,” but this should not be confused with kuih (as such, it was not translated as “kuih”).

⁴⁴⁶ From “dong” (冬) meaning “winter” and “zhi” (至) meaning “extremity.” This word can also be translated as winter solstice.

⁴⁴⁷ A kind of figurine made from raw glutinous rice. See: <https://news.ltn.com.tw/news/life/breakingnews/3775278>.

Part 8: The Twelfth Month: Making Lumpia and Guabao⁴⁴⁸

In the twelfth month, we would have the *weiya*⁴⁴⁹. On this day, the boss or the person in charge of the family will hold a banquet, invite employees to dinner, and thank them for their hard work during the year, as well as pray for prosperity for the coming year. On this day, they would eat lumpia and guabao. In the evening, the whole street would be full of children sitting in groups, each with a lumpia that was made at home, and all of them would be comparing who had the biggest lumpia. At that time, in my mind, I always thought I had the biggest lumpia that could not be beat.

The customs and lifestyles I mentioned above can be said to be the memories of the years that the people of Bazhilan will never forget. In our time, people from Shilin (or rather, all Taiwanese), regardless of their family background or if they were poor or rich, would make kuih, hold festivals, worship gods, and make offerings to ancestors throughout the year. I remember that when I was a child, I always waited for the arrival of the holiday seasons. On the night before a festival, I was often too excited to sleep. On those nights of those festivals, the old folks would always tell their children the stories and heroic deeds of their ancestors that they have heard from their elders or experienced personally. It is precisely because of the lifestyle and culture of these Taiwanese people that Taiwan's settler society was formed and developed generation after generation. When I wrote this *Records of Shilin*, the past events in my childhood were as vivid as yesterday. I feel that I was actually the same as those ordinary Taiwanese people. Everything from my childhood—the things I did, the things I heard, the things I saw, all have gradually made me into the Taiwanese that I am.

⁴⁴⁸ Guabao (刈包). A popular Taiwanese snack. It is like a sandwich whose bread is a steam bun. Said bun is stuffed with pork, pickled vegetables, and cilantro.

⁴⁴⁹ *Weiya* (尾牙). Generally speaking, an end of year dinner for employees, usually hosted by the company. In this case, it is a feast on the 16th day of the lunar year.

Chapter 3: I Have Two Homes

All the world knows Lishe, poets come and go from Laiyuan

Liang Qichao has come to teach, the spirit of this poem is the spirit of the country

—My father, Lin Jichuan

When my father, Lin Jichuan, married my mother, my grandmother built a new house on Shilin New Street for the residence of our Shi family. After my grandmother moved into the new house, my parents also moved in to live with my grandmother. It is thus that the two families, Shi and Lin, lived together.

On November 9, 1918 (the fifth day of the tenth month of the lunar calendar), I was born in Block 75, Shilin village, Qixing District, Taipei Prefecture during the Japanese colonial period. When I was born, my grandmother was 40 years old, my father was 25 years old, my mother was 20 years old, my aunt was 19 years old, and my uncle was 16 years old.

Section 1: My Father, Lin Jichuan



Figure 8. Su Beng's father, Lin Jichuan (林濟川)

Part 1: My Diligent Father

My father's name was Lin Jichuan (Lin Chuan) and my mother's name was Linshi Shixiu. I have two surnames, Shi and Lin. When I was born, I was originally surnamed Lin, and my name was Lin Chaohui, but when I was eleven years old, according to the household register, the Shi family adopted me from the Lin family, and I became Shi Chaohui, which was also the name I have been using as my household registration since then.

My father was born in 1893 in Taiwan towards the end of Qing rule. His address was “Toujiacuo Block, Tanzi Village, Fengyuan District, Taichung Prefecture⁴⁵⁰” during the Japanese occupation era. Fengyuan was originally the territory of the Bazai people in Pingpu. The old name “Huludun” is a transliteration of the language of the Bazai people in Pingpu. Rice is produced in large quantities here, and the quality is also excellent, and it is called Huludun rice. In 1920, it was renamed Fengyuan by the Japanese Government-General of Taiwan, which means “fertile plain”; Tanzi was called Tanzaiqian in ancient times, and Toujiacuo was called the “home of the landowner” during the Qing dynasty.

The Lin family in Toujiacuo has cultivated land in central Taiwan since Lin Taihe, who was from the fifteenth generation of the Lin family; Lin Dexi, from the seventeenth generation, had five sons, and my father was the second of the five. My father studied at Tanzi Elementary School when he was young. Since he was a child, he was upright, kind, and studied hard. He could write great articles in Classical Chinese and Japanese, and was praised by the elders of the village. Therefore, after my father graduated from the elementary school, he was recommended by the principal of the public school, Mr. Fujishita Rishu. When he was a teenager, he left his hometown and went to the “National Language School⁴⁵¹” in Taipei for further studies. At that time, the Japanese occupation of Taiwan was not yet fully complete, and there was no direct railway from Taichung to Taipei. My father always took a boat from Tanzaikuang to Wuqi (now Taichung Port), and went north to Bangka. After a day or two by sea, he would then report to Taipei National Language School.

⁴⁵⁰ The difficulty here was trying to use commonly used English terms to describe an address. However, this address uses Japanese kanji, so I had to find the common translations for these Japanese words. For example, the Japanese ken (県) is often translated as prefecture. However, in Chinese, the same character, xian (縣), is often translated as county.

⁴⁵¹ It is important to note that “national language” (guoyu, 國語) here refers to the Japanese language. In modern times, the word “guoyu” refers to Mandarin Chinese (as opposed to other Chinese dialects, like Taiwanese).

In order to train the lower-level officials of the colonial government, the Japanese Government-General of Taiwan recruited young Taiwanese from all over the island and based their education on a modern education in the National Language School. It was the highest institution of modern education in Taiwan at that time. It only enrolled dozens of students a year, and the treatment was particularly generous. Not only did they not charge tuition and miscellaneous fees, they also provided free accommodation, provided clothes, and leather shoes, and even gave spending money every month. For my father who came from a poor background, this kind of treatment was like the most supreme treatment from the emperor.

My father later graduated first of his class in the teaching department of the National Language School, and the first place in the Japanese department was Chen Fengyuan from Tainan, who later became blood brothers⁴⁵² with my father. He was also a Taiwanese nationalist. In addition, the graduates who graduated at the same time as my father included the pro-Japanese faction Xu Bing (officially elected member of the House of Peers in the Japanese Diet), the wealthy Lin Mutu from Shilin, and so on.

After graduating from the National Language School, my father immediately became a teacher at the Laosong Elementary School in Bangka; but not long after, he was invited by the Lin Ben Yuan family⁴⁵³, who was from a wealthy family from Banqiao, to join their company Dayou as a manager. When my father was the head of Dayou Products Co., Ltd., he only received a monthly salary and did not earn extra money. At that time, my father was clean and upright. Perhaps he was the only one.

⁴⁵² The ST uses the phrase wenjingzhijiao (刎頸之交) which means something like “extremely close friend.”

⁴⁵³ A wealthy family composed not only of businesspeople but also politicians. They rose to power during the Qing colonial period and are still active in Taiwan today.

The Lin Ben Yuan family was a rich Taiwanese business family from Fujian province during the Qing dynasty. The family fled back to Xiamen in the early days of Taiwan's occupation. Later, they were persuaded by the Government-General to return to Taiwan and obtained many economic privileges. They became a privileged Japanese comprador. My father once accompanied Lin Xiongzhen, the eldest son of the Lin Ben Yuan family, on a business trip to Southeast Asia, and at the same time raised some funds from overseas Chinese. After returning to Taiwan, he opened the Taiwan Huanan Bank, which was like a half-Taiwanese half-Japanese run bank⁴⁵⁴. My father had a personal relationship with Lin Boshou who was the Lin Ben Yuan family's second son. After the end of WWII, Lin Boshou served as the founding chairman of the China Development Trust Company and the chairman of the Taiwan Cement Corporation under the Jiang family's KMT government.

At that time, apart from Hua Nan Bank, the only financial institutions that the Japanese government allowed Taiwanese to invest in were the Chang Hwa Bank under Lin Xiantang, and the Commercial and Industrial Bank (now the First Commercial Bank) jointly established by Li Yanxi and Lin Mutu. In 1921, shortly after my father got married, he was sent by the Lin Ben Yuan family to work in Tokyo, Japan. Taking advantage of this opportunity, he was admitted to "Meiji University⁴⁵⁵" in Tokyo, and studied business at the school for three years through a work-study program. In the graduation examination, my father was ranked fourth among many Japanese students (about 400 people), and, in the future, he would often be proud of this.

Part 2: My Father and the Era in Which He Lived

⁴⁵⁴ The ST and original wording are a bit misleading here, as it may not be likely that it was half run by Japanese, but rather partly run by Japanese and mainly run by Taiwanese.

⁴⁵⁵ Meiji University (明治大學). It is one of the oldest and prestigious private universities in Japan. Founded in 1881 by three lawyers during the Meiji Era, it was originally founded as "Meiji Law School" and later granted university status in 1920.

When my father was studying in Tokyo, it happened to be the end of WWI (1918). The so-called Taisho democracy was prevalent in Japanese society at that time, and the ideas of freedom, democracy, and social equality were everywhere; Russia Lenin's "Proletarian Revolution" (1917) had just succeeded; The national self-determination (1918) advocated by the twenty-eighth President of the United States, Woodrow Wilson, as well as the national independence and colonial liberation movements in various places were about to happen. In this turbulent atmosphere of fighting for freedom and liberation, the Taiwanese students studying abroad who were born in the colony surged forth, and plunged into the vortex of the trend of thought without hesitation. For example, Lin Xiantang (Wufeng), Lin Chenglu (Taoyuan), Cai Huiru (Dajia), Huang Chengcong (Taichung), Cai Shigu (Hsinchu), Cai Peihuo (Tainan), Luo Wanzhu (Puli), Cai Xianyu (Taichung), Wang Minchuan (Changhua) and Zheng Songjun (Fengyuan) were respectable people who became leaders, and founded the "New People Society" in Tokyo (1920), which then developed into the political group called the "Petition Movement for the Establishment of a Taiwanese Parliament" (1921).

Petition Song for the Establishment of the Taiwan Parliament (1921)

Lyricist: Xie Xinglou

Music: Unknown

Verse 1.

A new era of a peaceful world; Western customs and thoughts influences our thinking, freedom and equality, and the importance of human rights

The bell calls us to take action and overturn oppression, we should not harm each other

Look look look, at beautiful Taiwan, look look look, at majestic Mount Yu⁴⁵⁶

Verse 2.

We will remember the friendship between Japanese and Chinese⁴⁵⁷,

But the knowledge of the people is limited, and they do not understand anything, here or abroad,

We are lonely and helpless, and far away from the West,

We must place the will of the people as our foundation,

We ought to establish a parliament in Taiwan, for the good of the people

Hee hee hee, gentleman of the East⁴⁵⁸,

Hee hee hee, passionate man

Verse 3.

Our beloved, sacred homeland, our natural treasure,

Our fragrant rice, our talent people,

Our forefathers, with their sweat and blood, toiled so hard,

Populate, enrichen, teach, this is what we ought to do,

Rectify and arrange, we shall not hesitate,

Develop, develop, develop, clear the thorns and weeds,

Develop, develop, develop, our culture and talents

In Taiwan at that time, Lin Xiantang, Jiang Weishui (Yilan), Shi Huanchang (Yilan) and others founded the “Taiwanese Cultural Association⁴⁵⁹” in Taipei (1921). Afterwards, Taiwan’s

⁴⁵⁶ Yushan (玉山). The highest mountain in Taiwan.

⁴⁵⁷ The Chinese here refers to Chinese people overall. It does not mean people from the PRC. Refer to the footnote about “Huaren” (華人) in chapter 1.

⁴⁵⁸ This line and the subsequent line likely refer to Taiwan.

⁴⁵⁹ Taiwan Wenhua Xuehui (台灣文化協會). A Taiwanese organization founded by Jiang Weishui in 1921. The organization’s main goal was to achieve more autonomy for Taiwan. It should be noted that the organization did not

left-leaning international students who were deeply influenced by Russia's proletarian revolution
Fan Benliang (Chiayi), Xu Naichang (Changhua), Xie Lianqing (Changhua), Lian Wenqing
(Taipei), Xie Wenda (Taichung), Chen Laiwang (Wuqi) and others also established the "Taiwan
Youth Social Science Research Association" as a base for the dissemination of socialist or
anarchist revolutionary ideas.

Anthem of the Taiwanese Cultural Association (1921)

Lyricist: Jiang Weishui

Music: Ao Haoyi

Verse 1.

We are all Asian, the yellow race,

We are one of the Han people, people of the Far East,

Thus, the heavens have given us a duty, and urges us to make haste,

We must develop our culture and revitalize our morals, and hone our skills

Verse 2.

To seek eternal peace in East Asia, the Chinese and Japanese must be friends,

We must be linked together, like two good brothers,

Unite the races of East Asia, create a harmonious alliance,

We must enlighten our culture so that we can progress together

Verse 3

specifically fight for Taiwanese independence, so much as limited autonomy. Of note, they pushed for a parliament to be established in Taiwan. See: <https://nrch.culture.tw/twpedia.aspx?id=3734> and <https://nrch.culture.tw/twpedia.aspx?id=3733>.

*We must avoid war with East and West, to achieve a peaceful world,
We must act together to benefit the world, how could we give up on ourselves?
If only we could complete this mission, then we would be part of this world
Long live people around the world, let Taiwan flourish and bloom!*

In addition, Lin Chenglu, Cai Peihuo, Zheng Songyun and others also founded and published an anti-colonial organization magazine “Taiwan Youth”⁴⁶⁰ (1920) in Tokyo. From that moment, the ethnic national movement for the liberation of Taiwan’s colonies had spread like wildfire, involving young intellectuals inside and outside the island of Taiwan into the vigorous wave of anti-Japanese struggle.

When my father was studying at Meiji University, naturally, he also participated in the anti-Japanese movement of these Taiwanese students, but he was more passive. At most, he worked as an editor for Taiwan Youth or wrote anonymous articles, and did not directly participate in visible political activities. However, these activists for Taiwan’s were either from the same hometown as my father, or they were classmates and close friends, so he and Lin Xiantang, Cai Huiru, Lin Chenglu, Cai Shigu, Cai Peihuo, Cai Xianyu, Shi Huanchang, Huang Chaoqin (Tainan), Chen Xin (Taichung) and others also had close contacts.

In the winter of 1921, when I was four years old, my mother took me to Tokyo to visit my father. To this day, I still have some memories from that time⁴⁶¹. At that time, we took the

⁴⁶⁰ Taiwan Qingnian (台灣青年). Taiwan Youth. A magazine that was published during the Japanese colonial period. There have been at least three organizations that published a magazine called “Taiwan Youth.” The first Taiwan Youth was created in Japan in 1920. The second was established in 1943 by Captain Li Youbang of the Taiwan Volunteer Corps (a unit that fought against the Japanese in China). The third was published by an overseas Taiwanese independence organization. In this case, Su Beng is referring to the second. See: <https://db.nmtl.gov.tw/site4/s3/journalinfo?jno=030>.

⁴⁶¹ While the ST did not specifically mention “from that time,” I added this as an embellishment to reinforce the emotions conveyed in the passage.

latest steamship between Taiwan and Japan (I later found out that it was the “Mizuho Maru,” a magnificent and luxurious steamship that weighed more than 7,000 tons), and the living room in the boat was covered with vivid red carpets. Although more than 90 years have passed, the dazzling red of the carpet under the light still glistens before my eyes.

When my mother and I arrived in Tokyo, we lived in my father’s dormitory. One day it was snowing heavily in Tokyo. I was born in the tropics, and I had never seen such a vast expanse of snow. I was so ecstatic that I walked to the backyard from time to time, trying to imitate Japanese children, who would make snowballs and throw them here and there. Or, I would build a snowman⁴⁶² to play, and play to my heart’s content. Even if the weather was cold and my hands and feet were frozen, I did not want to go inside to warm up.

At that time, my mother and I lived in Tokyo for two or three months. When my parents visited relatives, friends, and people from their hometowns, they would take me to visit my uncles⁴⁶³ every time, especially a friend from his hometown in Taichung. The friendship that that friend had with my father was always strong. For example, my father had frequent exchanges with Uncle Xiantang and Uncle Cai Xianyu. In addition, in Tokyo, I visited people such as Aunt Lin Chenglu, Aunt Shi Huanchang, Uncle Cai Shigu, Ke Wenzhi (Shilin), and so forth.

After my father completed his studies and returned to Taiwan, these elders of the anti-Japanese movement also returned to Taiwan. They still maintained a close relationship with my parents when my father was studying in Tokyo. They would also still visit us in Taipei, and their friends and families as well as my friends and families established a friendship that lasted several

⁴⁶² Su Beng inserts the Japanese word for snowman here, but I did not find it necessary to include it in the English translation as it offered no real substance.

⁴⁶³ Su Beng is not referring to the literal definition of uncle, as in, father’s brother. Rather, he is using this as a term of endearment for his father’s friends. This is similar to some other Asian cultures where calling an older family friend “uncle” or “auntie” is culturally acceptable.

generations. For example, when Mr. Xiantang came to Taipei, he often stayed at the hotel “Gaoyige⁴⁶⁴” near Dadaocheng traffic circle (the place where progressives from the central and southern regions often stayed when they came to Taipei), and often had dinner at nearby Taiwanese restaurants, such as “Penglaige” or “Jiangshanlou.” Of course, my father would busily follow him around, too. For example, they all like to go to Beitou to bathe in the hot springs, and they often come to visit my house every time they pass by Shilin. My parents would entertain them and invite them for meals. Therefore, when I was young, I often had the opportunity to meet these famous anti-Japanese figures.

Almost all the famous people living in Taipei at that time had close friendships with my father. Uncle Chenglu and his wife were born in Taoyuan. When they were studying in Tokyo, they studied constitutional law at Meiji University. They were among the leading figures of the anti-Japanese movement. He was trustworthy, honest, and generous. He never faltered in his ambition of achieving Taiwanese independence throughout his life. After returning to Taiwan, he was the editor-in-chief of “New Taiwan People’s News⁴⁶⁵.” After WWII, he was a valuable Taiwan independence fighter who did fall into the hands of the KMT. He only changed the former “Nitakdao Bookstore⁴⁶⁶” to the “Eastern Publishing Co., Ltd.” From then on, he lived an upright life, and always supported Taiwan for the rest of his life.

Uncle Cai Shigu was from Hsinchu. After graduating from Meiji University, he opened a lawyer’s office in Shiqiaozaitou, Dadaocheng, Taipei (now the intersection of Yanping North

⁴⁶⁴ Although the ST writes the name of this hotel as “嘉義閣,” my research indicates that it is actually “高義閣.” See: https://tm.ncl.edu.tw/article?u=001_005_0000364583&lang=chn.

⁴⁶⁵ Taiwan Xinminbao (台灣新民報). I thought about transliterating the name of this newspaper, but I opted against it. My choice here, “New Taiwan’s People’s News,” attempts to capture the meaning of the title as well as connecting it with its predecessor, “Taiwan People’s News.” The “new” in front is to emphasize that it was a restructuring of the news company. See: <https://nrch.culture.tw/twpedia.aspx?id=3830>.

⁴⁶⁶ A famous Taiwanese bookstore. See: <https://www.gjtaiwan.com/new/?p=48805>.

Road and Nanjing West Road). Whenever we would be engaged in a legal dispute, my grandmother would always ask Uncle Shigu for help. Diagonally opposite his office was the office of the young lawyer Wu Hongqi⁴⁶⁷. I also visited him several times with my father. Uncle Jiang Weishui was from Yilan and was the leader of the anti-Japanese movement among intellectuals in Taipei. I used to play in his Da'an Hospital when I was a child. Uncle Chen Fengyuan and his wife were from Tainan. He was not only one of the leading figures of the Taiwanese national movement, but also an economist and poet, which was quite rare. Uncle Shi Huanchang and his wife are related to Jiang Weishui; Shi Huangchan is Jiang Weishui's brother-in-law. When Uncle Shi Huanchang and his wife came to Taipei from Yilan, they often came to stay at my house. Gan Dezhong (Changhua), Cai Xianyu and other anti-Japanese leaders in the central and southern regions also visited my house, and they were all my father's close friends. Uncle Chenglu, his wife, and Uncle Fengyuan and his wife, and Aunt A Cai (the daughter of the old grandmother's younger brother) and Huang Yunyuan (Miaoli; aunt's husband) and others had the closest relationship with my family, and we would all help each other no matter what.

After my father returned to Taiwan from Tokyo in 1924, he worked in the two big rice companies with capital from Taiwanese nationals, called "Ruitai Joint Venture Company" (represented by Xu Yuting) and "Quanhe Corporation" (represented by Liu Lanting). He studied in these rice-related business circles for four or five years, acquired some basic knowledge about the rice industry, and gradually became an analyst of rice production or export business. However, these Taiwanese two rice companies, which were among the best rice trading companies in Taiwan, were successively destroyed by Japanese imperialist capitals such as Mitsui & Co., Mitsubishi Corporation, etc. within a short period of time.

⁴⁶⁷ Wu Hongqi (1899-1974, 吳鴻麒). A famous Hakka lawyer who lived during the Japanese colonial period. He was a victim of the 288 Incident. See: https://228.org.tw/228_elites-view.php?ID=25.

During the Japanese colonial period, apart from the four major families of Taiwanese comprador capitalists (Koo Hsien-jung from Lugang, Lin Ben Yuan from Banqiao, Chen Zhonghe from Kaohsiung, Yan Guonian from Keelung), there were very few “kabushikigaisha⁴⁶⁸” (joint stock companies) owned by Taiwanese. You could even count them on one hand. In particular, from 1912 onwards, the Government-General prohibited Taiwanese from independently establishing modern “kabushiki gaisha.” In addition to the four major capitalist compradors in Taiwan, only the Xingao Bank and Chiayi Bank (later the “Commercial and Industrial Bank”), which were jointly operated by landowners and the Japanese, as well as the Huanan Bank and Chang Hwa Bank, were allowed to operate after the land reform. Other pure “Taiwanese companies” such as Ruitai, Quanhe Group, etc., could not continue to exist. After the major two Taiwanese rice companies closed down, my father also lost his job. However, because he was familiar with the production, consolidation, and circulation of rice in Taiwan as well as the fluctuation of rice prices, he was recommended by the president of the Kato Corporation, a Japanese rice grain exporter, and became the general manager of the Taiwan Rice Exporter Guild.

The so-called Taiwan Rice Exporter Guild was composed of the four major Japanese rice trading companies: Mitsui & Co., Mitsubishi Corporation, Kato Shokai, Sugihara Sangyo, etc. In order to achieve a monopoly of Taiwanese Penglai rice export⁴⁶⁹ to Japan, a half-Japanese, half-Taiwanese⁴⁷⁰ company was established in 1932 in Liuguanzai, Dadaocheng, Taipei (now the

⁴⁶⁸ The use of Japanese is intentional here as Su Beng refers to the Japanese word kabushiki geisha (株式會社) but then explains it using a parenthetical gufen gongsi (股份公司). I took this opportunity here to foreignize the text as it worked perfectly with the structure of the sentence without breaking or overly complicating the reading experience.

⁴⁶⁹ Su Beng uses the Japanese words (kanji) for import and export, but they do little to help the English reader. Thus, I made the difficult decision of removing the parenthetical explanation of the Japanese words for import and export.

⁴⁷⁰ Su Beng’s wording is specifically “half-official” (半官) and “half-people” (半民) but these literal translations do not quite convey his true meaning. “Official” here means Japanese, as they often were the government officials in Taiwan at that time, and “people” here is a stylistic usage of “Taiwanese.” Perhaps Su Beng is trying to draw a line

intersection of Guide Street and Nanjing West Road). In the 1930s, the amount of Taiwanese rice shipped to Japan reached more than 5 million dan (one dan is equal to 150 kilograms, or 250 Taiwanese catties⁴⁷¹) every year, all of which was handled by Japanese rice grain trading companies with large capital. This was the basic policy of Japan's colonial rule in Taiwan.

Due to his work, my father had frequent dealings with the managers of Japanese rice companies, especially with Yoshimi Kaiyama (a native of Miyagi Prefecture, Japan), the chairman of the "Taiwan Rice Market" (a rice exchange that engages in speculative trading based on the rise and fall of rice prices). This change in professional environment was one of the reasons why my father gradually changed from a weak anti-Japanese stance to a pro-Japanese one.

I still remember that at that time my father received a high salary of 250 yuan per month. The starting salary of middle school graduates was 25 yuan, and the starting salary of university graduates was 60 to 70 yuan. Obviously, it was a very enviable position. However, almost all of this large sum of money was spent by my father himself, and he rarely used it to support the family; he felt that my mother and grandmother were very rich, so he did not use much of his money for the family. The excessive luxury of my father's lifestyle also led to a decline of his moral values.

My mother often went to Dadaocheng Street (now Dihua Street) to buy cloth. Every time she took me with her, she put me in Uncle Jiang Weishui's Da'an Hospital (Taiheicho, Sanchomei, now the second section of Yanping North Road. The back hall of the hospital became the canteen for the staff of the Taiwanese Cultural Association, and there many people

between the two groups of people. However, "half-people" sounds like the subject is nonhuman, thus, I did not go with that translation.

⁴⁷¹ Taijin (台斤). Lit. "Taiwanese catty."

were coming and going there). I was asked to wait there for two or three hours by myself. At that time, it was Uncle Weishui's girlfriend, Aunt A Tian, who took good care of me. I was only seven or eight years old at the time, I think, and I saw that she had a pretty face, often wearing plain blue clothes or black gowns, and she was quite beautiful. Of course, every time, I would also see the famous Uncle Weishui. He had fair skin, deep eyes, and a particularly slender figure. When he wore a doctor's white coat, he looked even more attractive. He would always call me "A Hui-a," and he would pat my head, and sometimes he would get some Japanese caramel⁴⁷² from the drawer for me. To be honest, although I did not know much about the anti-Japanese activities that Uncle Weishui was engaged in at the time, he had nevertheless become a great hero in my mind.

Uncle Weishui's wife also has a close relationship with my mother. She lived in another house, and I went there several times with my mother. Uncle Weishui's eldest son, Jiang Songhui, still lives in Taipei and is already at the venerable age of one hundred years old. He was eager to praise his father Jiang Weishui's reputation, so he often had contacts with the Chiang's KMT⁴⁷³. The third son, Jiang Shiqin, worked as a reporter for Shanghai's "Tairiku Shinpo"⁴⁷⁴ (a daily Japanese newspaper). I had a close relationship with him when I was in Shanghai. He returned to Taiwan after the war and played a significant role in the 228 Revolution⁴⁷⁵ in the anti-Chiang movement of the Taiwanese youth; later he went to Hong Kong, helping develop

⁴⁷² Kiyarameru (キャラメル). Japanese. Su Beng uses the Japanese pronunciation (and writing) here which could possibly mean that it was something the Japanese brought over to Taiwan. Regardless, he is most likely referring to caramel candies.

⁴⁷³ The assumption here is that Jiang Songhui's goal here was to clear his father's name, so he had contact with the KMT in order to do so. The "contacts" here does not mean collude.

⁴⁷⁴ Tariku Shinpo (大陸新報) was a daily Japanese newspaper based in Shanghai. It was supported by the army, navy, and Ministry of Foreign Affairs. See: <https://hojishinbun.hoover.org/?a=cl&cl=CL1&sp=tas>.

⁴⁷⁵ Su Beng specifically chooses to phrase the "228 Revolution" and not "228 Incident." The wording here is idiosyncratic and is worthwhile to maintain.

Liao Wenyi's⁴⁷⁶ independent camp, then shifting to Xie Xuehong's socialism, and then finally to the liberated areas⁴⁷⁷. It is said that he died in Beijing due to depression. As for Uncle Weishui's brother-in-law, the nationalist Shi Huanchang, he was still in Taiwan and Hong Kong in the 1950's, fighting for Taiwanese independence.

After I entered middle school at the age of fifteen (in the 1930s), I often went to play at the home of Uncle Fengyuan, who was located in Shimokeifucho, Dazheng Street (behind the former site of the Taipei City Hall today). He was born in Tainan, but he lived in Taichung for a period of time when he was a director of "Dadong Trust Company," and later moved to Taipei to serve as the head of finance for New Taiwan People's News. Uncle Fengyuan's wife and my mother were very close, and had very close contacts with each other. Uncle Fengyuan's wife was also a girl from a famous family in Tainan. She went to Shilin Zhishanyan School when she was young. She was one of the rare, progressive married women in Taiwan at that time, and was highly educated and open-minded. Her daughter Biyue (my mother's adopted daughter) was one year older than me, and later married Dr. Guo Jinta⁴⁷⁸.

Uncle Fengyuan's⁴⁷⁹ wife was really good at cooking. She often made danzai noodles⁴⁸⁰ or other Tainan delicacies for us. I have met many famous progressive and intellectuals in Uncle

⁴⁷⁶ Liao Wenyi (1910-1986, 廖文毅). Also known as Thomas Liao. Liao was a Taiwanese independence figure primarily active after WWII. When he was in Japan, he was elected president of the Republic of Taiwan Provisional Government in 1956. See: https://digitaiwan.com/?page_id=5426.

⁴⁷⁷ Jiefangqu (解放區). Lit. "liberated area." This term refers to the areas occupied by the CCP during the Second-Sino Japanese war.

⁴⁷⁸ Guo Jinta (1912-2012, 郭金塔). A very famous medical doctor who passed away in 2012. See: <https://www.businesstoday.com.tw/article/category/80392/post/201212060034/>.

⁴⁷⁹ Fengyuanmu (逢源姆). Lit. "the wife of Fengyuan." There are several words for family members in Chinese. This is analogous to "titles" in English. The word mu (姆) here means "the wife of." In Chinese, it is not always necessary to explicitly state the person's name. Thus, in this paragraph, Su Beng is literally saying "the wife of Fengyuan."

⁴⁸⁰ Danzai mian in Mandarin; ta-a mi in Taiwanese (擔仔麵). Danzai noodles is a kind of noodle soup dish that uses a pork-shrimp based broth. It is said that Danzai noodles were invented during the "slack seasons," that is, the season when typhoons are more frequent in Taiwan, thereby making fishing fairly dangerous. Danzai noodles were invented as a way to still serve seafood albeit in lower quantities.

Fengyuan's house. For example, people like Uncle Lin Maosheng, his wife, and others were people I met for the first time at Uncle Fengyuan's home. Uncle Mao Shengbo⁴⁸¹ was one of the early students studying in Japan and the first batch of students studying in America. He studied at Columbia University in New York City and became the first Ph.D. holder in Taiwan. After he returned to Taiwan from the United States, he served as a professor of English and German at the Tainan Technical College (now National Cheng Kung University). (Taiwanese were the "senior officials" of the Japanese government, and there were only Du Congming and Lin Maosheng in the early days.) He was also a very devout Christian. However, he was assassinated by Chiang's KMT agents during the February 28th Incident after the war. No bones remained.

I also met Ruan Chaori and his wife at Uncle Fengyuan's house. He was a large landowner in Pingtung, and he worked as the sales director and advertising director of the New Taiwan's People's News at that time. After the war, New Taiwan's People's News was swallowed up by the Chiang family's Taiwan provincial government newspaper, Taiwan Shin Sheng Daily News. During the February 28th Incident, Uncle Ruan Chaori uncle was also killed by Chiang's secret service executioners and his body was not found. Ruan Meishu was his daughter.

Taiwan Youth was the mouthpiece publication of the colonial liberation movement at that time. It was published in Tokyo in 1920 and was later renamed "Taiwan," "Taiwan People's News," and "New Taiwan People's News" (1930); It was not until 1927 that it moved back to Taiwan and published weekly and daily news. The headquarters was located in Dadaocheng, Taipei. At that time, Luo Wanchu, the president and director of the news company (born to a prominent family in Puli, Taichung and a leading cadre of the anti-Japanese movement, the wife

⁴⁸¹ Lin Maosheng (1887-1947, 林茂生). Also called "Lin Mosei" in English. He was the first PhD holder in Taiwan and also a victim of the 228 Incident. See: https://www.228.org.tw/228_elites-view.php?ID=26.

of Wanju was the daughter of Xiantang's family), Lin Chenglu, chief writer and editor-in-chief, as well as young reporters like Chen Wan, Lin Foshu, Xu Yanting, Lin Dongxin and others, in the dangerous environment of the times, worked hard and traveled to and fro for Taiwan's freedom and democracy. They often went to my father's apartment⁴⁸² (near the Dadaocheng traffic circle) to discuss matters, complaining about the government's suppression of freedom of speech and other injustices. I had just entered No. 1 Taihoku High School at that time, at the age of fifteen or sixteen, when my knowledge was still gradually developing. I was very excited to hear the enthusiastic debates and opinions made by these figures. Young people's initial sense of justice also arises spontaneously from their hearts. My mother was also honored to be in contact with these young people who loved Taiwan.

I grew up in Shilin Village (later changed to Shilin Street) on the outskirts of Taipei, but I had a great longing for the simple rural life of my father's hometown, Toujiacuo, in Fengyuan, Taichung. When I was a child, sometimes I would go back to Toujiacuo with my parents during New Year and holidays. The farm life, which was different from the streets in Shilin, gave me fresh and interesting experiences every time. For example, I ate big, home-grown chickens and ducks, as well as turkeys, Muscovy ducks, frogs, eels, etc., which were not available in Shilin, but were especially delicious.

My paternal great-grandmother, grandfather, grandmother and the whole family all treated us children like guests. Granduncle A Zhong (Lin Chunmu), Granduncle A Fa (Lin Chunfa), Granduncle A Xiang (Lin Zhenxiang), who lived next door, and also Uncle A Huo (Lin Ruihuo) and others were also very close, and invited us over for dinner several times. Me and

⁴⁸² In Taiwan, companies sometimes offer their employees housing, which is called *sushe* (宿舍). This can mean "dorm," as in "a place where students live," but in Taiwan, it is possible to use *sushe* to mean company-sponsored housing. The choice of apartment here was a domestication move as simply saying "apartment" still approximates the meaning.

other kids of the Lin family, such as my eldest uncle's eldest son, A Cai, and my third uncle's son, A Zhang (A Zhang lost his mother (the wife of my third uncle) when he was young, and later went to live with my father in Xiamen. He was closest to us, and his eldest son Jian De was a devout Christian. He served as the chairman of Mackay Memorial Hospital in Taipei as well as a dentist. He is the only child of the Lin family I still have contact with), would all go fishing at the pond in front of the home in Toujiacuoto to fish for carp, crucian carp, etc.⁴⁸³ Also, we often went to the fields to catch loaches, walking catfish, small snakeheads, frogs, and snails, etc., and sometimes went to a Japanese sugar company's sugarcane plantation to steal sugarcane and secretly eat it there. Or, at night, I would chat and listen to some stories and goings about rural life with Uncle Ban (my father's youngest brother), and Great Uncle A Zhong's sons Uncle A Fen, Uncle Zhaoji, Uncle A Gou and all the members of the family in the courtyard.

Every time I stayed in Taichung, for about a week or for more than a month during summer vacation, there was another thing I liked and was happy about, that is, my parents would take me to visit Chen Fengyuan, Zhang Huangui and Chen Xin are their wives in Taichung. Uncle Chen Xin was from Dajia, studied in Japan and the United States, and is a famous banking expert in Taiwan. In Taichung, he founded the Daito Shintaku Company for landowners and property owners such as Mr. Lin Xiantang, operating a financial business exclusively for Taiwanese. It was later merged with the Bank of Taiwan. During the February 28th Incident, Uncle Chen Xin was assassinated by the Jiang family's KMT agents, and his body could not be found; Chen Xin's wife was a woman from a prominent family in Xuejia, Tainan, and she was the older sister of Xie Guocheng, a baseball teacher for kids. She was very close to my mother.

⁴⁸³ This specific passage definitely presented a problem of readability. I forwent the usual rule of thumb of trying to improve readability by maintaining Su Beng's idiosyncratic syntax. The usage of his parenthetical was difficult to maintain, and is a bit jarring, but I still sought to maintain this in the TT.

There are also Zhang Huangui and his wife (Uncle Huangui is a landowner from Daya, and she was a woman from Wufeng, and a daughter of the Lin Jietang family), and Cai Xianyu and his wife (friends of my father, who worked as lawyers in Taichung after returning from Tokyo). In particular, our whole family stayed at Uncle Fengyuan's house every time. He and his wife treated us with generous hospitality. His wife often bought famous meatballs from Taichung market for us, which were famous all around the island. Looking back, their taste still lingers in my mouth.

When I was in high school, I found a set of thick Chinese books in a paulownia wooden box in a bookshelf at home. Of course, I could not understand them at the time. My father said that this set of books was *The Complete Works of the Ice Drinking Room*⁴⁸⁴ by Liang Qichao, a famous “politician” from Beijing, China. Additionally, my father also told me the reason for “reforming laws and striving for strength” advocated by Liang Qichao and Kang Youwei. Of course, I did not understand his explanation. I just keep this phrase in my heart. I heard from my father that this set of books was given to Mr. Lin Xiantang by Liang Qichao (Lin Xiantang and Liang Qichao met in Yokohama, Japan, and had a deep friendship), but Mr. Lin Xiantang thought that my father's Classical Chinese proficiency⁴⁸⁵ was good, so he gave him this set of books to look after.

Later, in the first month of lunar year, in 1973, the year before his death, my father wrote a qilu⁴⁸⁶, which recalled the memories of those years:

⁴⁸⁴. Yinbingshi Heji (飲冰室合集). This is a collection of Liang Qichao's works, posthumously collected after his death by his friend Lin Zhijun.

⁴⁸⁵ Hanwen (漢文). The “hanwen” here does not refer to modern Mandarin, in fact, it refers to Classical Chinese. The specific phrase “hanwen” in Taiwan, Japan, South Korea, etc generally refers to Classical Chinese.

⁴⁸⁶ Qiyán lushi (七言律詩). Also known simply as qilu. A kind of poem based on seven characters (single character).

All the world knows Lishe, poets come and go from Laiyuan

Liang Qichao has come to teach, the spirit of this poem is the spirit of the country

(Lishe was a poetry club formed by Lin Xiantang, Ren Gong is another name for Liang Qichao)

As mentioned above, when I was young, because of my father's relationships with other people and ideological tendency in my early years, I heard and saw many specific facts about Taiwan's anti-colonial movement. In addition, I personally saw and met such famous figures of the early pioneers of the Taiwanese nationalist movement that I was influenced by their thoughts unconsciously. This gradually became the starting point of my life's thought process and the direction of my early life. Of course, phrases such as "anti-Japanese empire" that I understood at the beginning were still at the stage of so-called "feeling anti-Japanese," and I did not know much about the concepts or principles of being anti-Japanese.

Section 3: The Second Half of My Father's Life, Lonely and Melancholy

Beginning in 1931, the Taiwanese Communist Party (founded by Xie Xuehong and others in 1928) and the Taiwan Farmers' Association (founded by Jian Ji and others in 1926) were more radical in the anti-Japanese movement, and members of the left-leaning New Taiwanese Cultural Association, such as Wang Minchuan and Lian Wenqing, were all suppressed and arrested by the Governor's Office police. Following the death of Jiang Weishui, the leftist leader of the "Taiwan People's Party" (1931), other anti-Japanese activists were persecuted or scattered overseas, and the entire Taiwan national liberation struggle finally disappeared. However, during this destructive period, my father began to waver in his thinking, gradually bowed his head to the Governor-General, and got close to the Japanese reporters of "New Taiwan Daily Shinpo" (the official newspaper of the Government-General), especially the

pro-Taiwan newspaper. Pai's political minister Toshihiko Weito (a native of Oita Prefecture, Japan, Uncle Weito is a very humane person) and others have a particularly deep personal relationship.

One characteristic of Japanese colonial rule was that, on a personal level, the Japanese did not show a clear sense of superiority over the Taiwanese and were willing to interact with the Taiwanese (this is different from the British colonial rule in India, where the local British, always showed an arrogant sense of superiority); but at the political level, the Japanese were not relentless in their control and suppression of the Taiwanese. (The two-faced characteristics of the Japanese also led to Taiwanese people holding completely different views on the former colonial period after WWII, which led to the difference between pro-Japanese faction and anti-Japanese faction.) Therefore, my father had a personal relationship with the Japanese, but because of the relationship with the Cultural Association, he was still under continuous surveillance by the Japanese authorities. Over time, he thought about leaving Taiwan temporarily.

In 1935, my father fled from Taiwan to Shanghai, but he got acquainted again with a military officer of the Japanese navy stationed in Shanghai. However, at that time, there was a classmate of my father in the Mandarin school in Shanghai, Xi Zhiren, who was an officer of the Japanese navy stationed in Shanghai, and who suddenly went missing. My father was too afraid to get close to the intelligence-related issues (this was good luck, actually), so he had no job in Shanghai. He had to wait for my mother to send money from Taiwan in order to survive. After the Sino-Japanese incident broke out in 1937 and the Japanese navy occupied Xiamen in 1938, my father had an illusion that he wanted to be a bridge for "Sino-Japanese rapprochement." How could my father, who fled overseas because of the Anti-Japanese War, have such an illusion? Of course, my father's primary goal was to resist Japan, but after the failure of the war, my father

did not choose to stick to his original position, but had the lofty imagination that there was another second-best solution, that is, if it is possible to promote the harmony between China and Japan, then there would be room to live for the Taiwanese caught in the middle.⁴⁸⁷ Speaking of which, this illusion was a common problem among most intellectuals in Taiwan at that time. Compared with the delusion held by the people of Taiwan, there is a world of difference in Korea, which raised its independent flag immediately after WWI (1918). In any case, with this illusory goal in mind, my father went to Xiamen to serve as the councilor and director of the Monopoly Bureau⁴⁸⁸ in the puppet provisional government. I heard from the Chinese that the post of director of public sales was a lucrative job at that time, and the average person could spend their whole life without worrying about food and clothing after four months. My father strictly abided by his principle of incorruptibility, so he was highly valued by the Japanese.

After Japan surrendered in 1945, the Chiang Kai-shek's KMT Chongqing-based government appointed Lin, the chief of the general affairs section of the Fujian provincial government, to come to Xiamen to take over the puppet municipal government public sale bureau. Chief Lin said to my father: "You and I have the same surname⁴⁸⁹, and I can send someone to help send you to Hong Kong. Go and tamper with the account books of the Monopoly Bureau! Let's separate the opium in the stocks into two, and you and I can each take half." It is said that at that time my father was very surprised and said to him: "I have been under the domination of the Japanese Navy for eight years and I have not been greedy for anything, let

⁴⁸⁷ I shifted the order of clauses here to take the grammatical weight off of the reader. The clause about "for the Taiwanese caught in the middle" should go second, not last, but I found this structure to be too foreignized for the English reader.

⁴⁸⁸ Gongmaiju (公賣局). Officially established in 1901 as the Monopoly Bureau of the Governor-General's Office, it was responsible for handling all liquor and tobacco products. This later extended to opium, salt, and camphor. See: https://view.boch.gov.tw/NationalHistorical/itemspage_en.aspx?id=10.

⁴⁸⁹ The implication is that the person is telling Su Beng's father they both had the same last name, meaning, they are both in "the same family." This is meant slightly in jest, as obviously, in this situation, both men just so happen to be surnamed Lin, and are not related.

alone now!” He was detained and sentenced to 12 years in prison by the Chiang family’s secret agents on the charge of “treason,” and was immediately imprisoned in Heshan Prison in Xiamen.

In 1948, when the Jiang family’s KMT army was beaten in the KMT-CCP civil war, Lin Biao’s⁴⁹⁰ troops were about to cross the Yangtze River. The Jiang family’s KMT government in Nanjing was collapsing beyond recognition. Thus, my mother felt that my father’s life would be lost. It was dangerous, so she rushed to Xiamen with more than 20 bars of gold (each bar was 10 taels each) from Taiwan, “redeemed” my father from the secret agents of Heshan Prison, and returned to our home in Shilin. After my father returned to Taiwan, he lived leisurely under the protection of my grandmother. Later, my father worked at “Taiwan Cement Corporation” (because the chairman was Lin Boshou, who could help him), and spent the rest of his life depressed. He died in Taipei in 1974 at the ripe age⁴⁹¹ of eighty-three.

After I finally returned to Taiwan in 1993, I came across my father’s handwritten *Zifeng Poetry* manuscript among his belongings. In the book were several poems:

An Ode to Aspiration⁴⁹²

The purpose of studying is to understand; he who grows old and discusses theories without practice does so in vain,

When the clouds depart, and the moon shines; the purpose of life is to serve society

⁴⁹⁰ Lin Biao (1907-1971, 林彪). A Chinese politician and general of the People’s Liberation Army (PLA). He served in the Second-Sino Japanese War as well as the Chinese Civil War. In the civil war, he played an important role in defeating the KMT in Northeast China.

⁴⁹¹ The ST uses the word *xiangnian* (享年) to indicate that Su Beng’s father had lived a long life. In English, we often use the phrase “ripe age” to indicate a similar feeling.

⁴⁹² As mentioned before, I came across many poems and folk songs during the course of translating this autobiography. I had to balance literal meaning with intended meaning, while also trying to maintain a sense of gracefulness. Furthermore, I had to make a decision to explicitate the poem or maintain the metaphors and underlying meaning. For this poem specifically, the last line, “the purpose of life is to serve society,” is a good example of explicitation. A more literal rendering would be “life’s service always returns.” My choice was indeed a freer yet easily understandable rendering.

Guan Yuan⁴⁹³

*Horses and carts in the streets are noisy day by day; at sunset, I go back to serve Guan Yuan,
At age seventy, how many years do I have left? I continue to follow this path, what more can I
say?*

Autumn Thoughts⁴⁹⁴

*Withered flowers lonely reflect the light at dusk; and I see the autumn wind come through the
guest room's door
I dream about my home, a thousand miles away in the mountains; I envy the hurrying swallows
as they fly to the south*

Sunken Autumn⁴⁹⁵

*It is rare to see a traveler by the river; at sunset, the autumn wind carries the boats back home
from faraway
I drink to the utmost during festivals; Sitting alone in a tall tower, I send the sun home*

⁴⁹³ Guan Yuan (灌園) is another name for Lin Xiantang, one of Lin Jichuan's friends. This poem was likely written from Lin Jichuan's perspective about Guan Yuan.

⁴⁹⁴ In Chinese culture, autumn is often a symbol for loneliness.

⁴⁹⁵ As with the previous poem, Sunken Autumn centers around the concept of loneliness. However, a second, underlying meaning of this poem is Su Beng's father's feelings towards Su Beng. The last line, "I send the sun home," is a slight reference to Su Beng. Su Beng's original name is Lin Chaohui. The word for "sun" here is "hui." Although the connection is somewhat weak, Su Beng's father could be saying that he misses Su Beng, since he is sitting alone in a tower, and mentions part of Su Beng's name. It is likely this poem was written when Su Beng was exiled to Japan.

Remembering my Wife's Death After Ten Years and My Two Sons⁴⁹⁶

Such pain I feel, after you first departed; for ten years, it has been raining, and my tears have been pouring

I stand before your picture and pray; I think of all the things have happened, and shed my tears like the rain

(My two sons fled to Tokyo)

When I hold my father's poetry manuscript in my hand, I recall that my father had lived a smooth life, with no worries about food and clothing, and was a content scholar, except for some political mistakes. However, because of my determination to realize the dream of Taiwanese independence and my lifelong struggle, my father was implicated and became even more miserable and frustrated in his old age, and was even abused and persecuted by Chiang's secret service because of me (the secret service made my father urge me to return to Taiwan, and refused to let him go to Japan to find me, and he was persecuted for everything). As I recall this, I cannot help but feel the sorrow in my heart and shed my tears. As a son, I not only failed to fulfill my filial duty to let my father enjoy his later years, but also made him suffer because of me. I am ashamed of myself and guilty beyond words.

Although my father did not have any great ambition in his life, he was an upright and honest man who inspired me to develop my revolutionary ideas. This is what I miss the most about my father.

⁴⁹⁶ Again, this is most likely another poem whose speaker is Lin Jichuan. He is most likely remembering the death of his wife, Linshi Shixiu. Lin Jichuan is very emotional in this one, so I tried to use that as my basis for the translation, even if I had to make freer choices.

Section 2: My Mother, Linshi Shixiu



Figure 9. Su Beng's mother, Linshi Shixiu (林施氏秀)

Part 1: The Proud Daughter of Heaven

My mother was born in 1898 in the Shi family house in Nanya, Bazhilin, five years younger than my father. Since her mother was an only child, and her grandfather died young, she was raised by her grandmother, a so-called “girl from a wealthy family.” My grandmother regarded my mother as her pearl in her palm⁴⁹⁷ and loved her dearly. My maternal great-grandfather was a juren in the Qing dynasty. In the feudal era, he was a well-respected gentry in the city, and his family was wealthy. Therefore, since my mother was young, my grandmother would invite a Chinese teacher to teach her to read ancient Chinese texts such as the *Three*

⁴⁹⁷ The Chinese saying here is literally “a pearl in the palm” (zhangshangmingzhu, 掌上明珠) which would be something similar to “the apple of my eye” in English.

*Character Classic*⁴⁹⁸, *Thousand Character Classic*⁴⁹⁹, or *Poems by a Thousand Masters*⁵⁰⁰. In addition, there were also teachers who taught calligraphy, painting, embroidery, etc., and even after she got married and had children, the Chinese teacher continued to come to the house to teach her to read the *Analects*, the *Book of Songs* and other Confucian and Mencius works, as well as the family precepts of Zeng Wenzheng (Zeng Guofan). Apart from this, she also read *Historical Chronicles of the Kingdoms*, *Investiture of the Gods*, *Romance of the Three Kingdoms*, and *Interpretation of Tang Poems*.

In those days, boys usually went to old-fashioned private schools to study, and girls receiving education was very rare, so it was simply a case of my mother hiring a tutor to come to our house to teach her. She even continued to study after marriage. It can only be described as “the proud daughter of heaven.” However, in this kind of environment, it naturally made her thinking quite feudalistic, and she was full of traditional rules. At the same time, my mother like any other feudal woman at the time, also suffered from foot binding⁵⁰¹. It is said that, at that

⁴⁹⁸ 三字經 (Sanzijing), lit. “three character classic.” It is said to have been authored by Wang Yinglin (1223-1296, 王應麟) or his contemporary Ou Shizi (1234-1324, 區適子), both figures from the Song dynasty. The classic is often used to teach Confucian values to children. See:

<https://pages.ucsd.edu/~dkjordan/chin/chtxts/SanTzyh/SanTzyhJing.html>.

⁴⁹⁹ Qianziwen (千字文) Lit. “thousand character classic.” Just like the *Three Character Classic*, this piece was intended as a teaching material, but used mainly for teaching Chinese characters. It was intended to be sung, kind of like an “alphabet song” in English. The author is also debated, as some say that Emperor Wu (464-549, 梁武帝) of the Liang dynasty (502-557) commissioned Zhou Xingsi (469-521, 周興嗣) to compose this poem, while others say that Emperor Wu commanded Wang Xizhi (303-361 CE, 王羲之) to compose the characters and challenge Zhou Xingsi to make them comprehensible. See: <https://ctext.org/wiki.pl?if=en&res=386897>.

⁵⁰⁰ Qianjiashi (千家詩). Lit. “thousand masters poem.” The “jia” here refers to masters or writers, not family. This classic is an anthology of poems from the Tang and Song dynasties. The author is often credited to Song dynasty poet Liu Kezhuang (1187-1269, 劉克莊), who compiled the first version of the text. See:

<https://prabook.com/web/liu.kezhuang/2163668>.

⁵⁰¹ Pa-kkha (飽嚙). Taiwanese. Another term for foot binding.

time, she often held her bloody feet at night and cried endlessly. She was not freed⁵⁰² until she grew up and wore leather boots.

My mother had a beautiful face, a slim figure, and elegant manners. She had been a decent person all her life, with a clear sense of right and wrong, and a strong sense of justice. However, she had a stubborn and uncompromising personality, and liked to talk about the ethics from the old days (benevolence, righteousness, propriety, wisdom, and trustworthiness), and paid special attention to absolute obedience from the bottom up.

My mother married my father through the matchmaking of my father's classmate, who was also my grandmother's old friend, Uncle Lin Mutu. Their marriage was one of the most important events in Shilin at that time. This was because the bride was a young lady from a prominent family in Bazhilin, and was also the beloved daughter of her grandmother. Furthermore, the son-in-law was a new intellectual who came from Taichung and received a modern higher education. At that time, there were not many intellectuals in Shilin who had graduated from national language schools or specialized medical schools, so the marriage of the two caused a sensation in the entire Shilin village.

When her mother got married, my grandmother moved out from the Shi family's home in Nanya (near Zhishanyan) because she was unwilling to be separated from her, and built a two-story building on Shilin New Street (there were only two buildings on Shilin Street at that time). This became the new house of the Shi family. After their parents got married, they moved into the new home to live together, so the new home became the common home of Shi and Lin families. But my father did not live with his wife's family, rather, he simply lived with my

⁵⁰² Su Beng's use of the words "foot binding" and "freed" here seem to suggest the act of binding and later becoming free. The words are similar in thought, so I tried to be similarly poetic. A more natural way of rendering this sentence would be "she did not become relieved of this pain..."

grandmother. However, although it is said that the Shi and Lin families lived together, in fact it was the Shi family who raised the Lin family, and our brothers and sisters were all raised by my grandmother.

When my mother got married, my grandmother gave her 5,000 yuan (from her private stash), which was an enormous sum of money at the time. My grandmother spent less than one hundred qian to build the two-story building, and a liter of rice was only one or two qian (copper coins). Therefore, my mother was never short of money to spend all her life, and later, my father did not take much money home, and he hardly interfered in housework or cared about his children's education. The lives of the six or seven members of the Lin family were supported by the grandmother from the beginning to the end. Although my grandmother had no responsibility to support the Lin family, she was willing to do so, which shows that she was generous and loved her only daughter and her little grandchildren. I think it may be because my mother had such a wealthy and independent financial background at that time, which caused the relationship between my parents to become unusual. This greatly affected our life as children. My mother has always lived the life of a wealthy person in a traditional feudal family. She barely did any housework and did almost no cooking. Even after she got married and had children, she still studied Chinese books with her teacher. The daily housework of the Shi and Lin family was taken care of by my grandmother herself. As for our brothers and sisters' food, clothing, daily life, or bathing, it was all handled by Aunt Yuying.

In those days, my mother often went shopping in Dadaocheng, Taipei, and took me there every time. For example: we would buy clothing materials (silk, satin, wool, cloth, etc.) at Yuyuan Cloth Shop on the main street, Juyuan in Taiheicho, and the Qianyuan Chinese medicine

store for Chinese medicine, ginseng, white fungus, etc. For fruit pastries, we would go to Baoxiangzhai bakery.

Section 2: My Mother's Love and Expectations of Me

Since I was a child, what my mother was most passionate about was educating me. She firmly believed that she must “teach kids propriety,” so she was very strict and serious about my education. It can be said that it was a Spartan education⁵⁰³. My mother supervised my studies with extreme strictness and even used whipping. She also wanted to instill in me Confucian and Mencian ethics, requiring me to embody the principles of “minister of the state, the eldest son of the family” and “self-cultivation, govern one’s family, governance of the country, and bring peace to the world” (*Four Books*, *The Great Learning*). All actions must show the “spirit of an adult.” It is like saying: treat people in a good manner, no matter how big or small the thing, the eldest son should do it first; if he does not do well, he will be punished immediately and severely like thunder. Especially since I was a child, my mother paid close attention to the problems between men and women, and often used the saying “men and women should not touch hands when they give or receive things⁵⁰⁴” to train me. But later, when I was still studying at Waseda University (when I was 20-25 years old), when I returned to Taiwan for summer vacation, what my grandmother said to me was: “A Hui-a, if you have a little baby with a Japanese woman in Tokyo, bring it back, and I will raise it.” However, sometimes, my mother would say: “One should take their time in finding a sweet and virtuous lady.”

I still remember, when I was four years old, my mother taught me to count, that is, to learn to count one or two with ohajiki⁵⁰⁵ (small star-shaped toys). If you could not count once or

⁵⁰³ The Spartans were renowned for their military prowess. Education for males started at age seven and was rigorous and harsh. See: <https://www.worldhistory.org/article/342/agoge-the-spartan-education-program/>.

⁵⁰⁴ A quote from Mencius.

⁵⁰⁵ Ohajiki (オハジキ). Japanese. Marble-like stones meant to be used as toys.

twice, you would get a painful fist immediately. In fact, speaking of it, it was not my mother's punch on my head that gave me a headache, but the gold bracelet my mother wore on her wrist. When she hit my shaved head, it was always so painful that I almost shed tears. In addition, my mother has urged me to practice writing with a brush since I was a child. I had to write small characters on three sheets of paper in one morning. If I could not finish it, I would not be allowed to eat lunch. However, this strict requirement made me feel disgusted with writing with a brush. Over time, I could not write calligraphy well. Even so, my mother's love and expectations for me were very deep. Whenever she is free, she often takes me to a fortune teller to tell my fortune and make "horoscopes." She was very concerned about my future and luck.

My mother has a very strong personality, and she often lost her temper when something went wrong. If I was disobedient, I was often beaten and scolded by her, so I was very afraid of my mother when I was a child. When I saw her, on occasion, my face turned pale from shock. Therefore, since I was a child, I unconsciously developed a rebellious mentality towards my mother. When I entered middle school, I was enlightened by education and my wisdom was slightly deepened. Outwardly, I would agree with her, but inwardly, I would oppose her, so much so that I developed a rebellious heart. In particular, she most wanted me to go to medical school to be a doctor, and indeed saving lives is a noble profession, but because of my mother, I felt repulsed and resisted this profession.

At that time, young people in Taiwan, as long as they could go to middle school, wanted to study in "Taipei Professional Medical School" (founded in 1899)⁵⁰⁶ and later "Taihoku

⁵⁰⁶ The original name of this institution was the "Government-General of Taiwan Medical School" (台灣總督府醫學校) which was established in 1899, as Su Beng says. However, the name that Su Beng uses, "Taipei Professional Medical School," was another name that was used starting in 1919 following a reforming of the school. The school is considered the first modern medical school established in Taiwan. See: <https://nrch.culture.tw/twpedia.aspx?id=3815>.

Imperial University Department of Medicine,” so that they could open a hospital after graduation and help the world through medicine⁵⁰⁷. In Taiwan during the Japanese colonial rule, doctors had a particularly good income, their social status was also high, and their life was relatively free⁵⁰⁸. I was the eldest son, so my mother naturally asked me to be a doctor when I grow up, open a doctor’s clinic, and become a high-ranking person in the village to honor my ancestors and be filial to my parents.

My mother wanted to be superior in everything, and she was unwilling to be inferior, especially because she was a perfectionist. Everything had to be “absolute.” Children always love to play⁵⁰⁹, and I was the same as everyone else, but my mother forbade me to play with the neighbor’s children. Thus, I could only go to the balcony on the second floor. I was envious of the children from other people’s homes who were happily playing on the street.

Later, after I disobeyed my mother and left the house when I was nearly twenty years old, it was only then that I tasted the taste of running alone outside (the taste of being free; when I entered Waseda University, read some books, and made connections, I gradually realized my mother’s deep maternal love for me to be successful in life⁵¹⁰. In fact, it is precisely because of my mother’s care and earnest urging that I was able to overcome obstacles one after another and stand out from the crowd of competitors. For example, when the elementary school and Taipei No. 1 Middle School were built, among the more than 200 students enrolled each year, the vast majority were Japanese students, and there were only a small number of five or six Taiwanese

⁵⁰⁷ Xuanhujishi (懸壺濟世). This saying specifically refers to practicing medicine in order to help the world.

⁵⁰⁸ I slightly rephrased the TT here so that the subject (doctors) was clearer. Although I altered the syntax of the words, in general, I kept the essence of the ST.

⁵⁰⁹ Chhit-thô (迯迯). Taiwanese. To play.

⁵¹⁰ Wangzichenglong (望子成龍). Lit. “to hope one’s son becomes a dragon.”

students. Nearly 100 outstanding Taiwanese candidates competed together, and they could only enter the school after passing an exam.

Therefore, when I went to Tokyo to study and entered the Faculty of Political Economy of Waseda University, although I have come to realize her deep maternal love, it was already too late. When I was in Taiwan, I rebelled against my mother's expectations and refused to study medicine, which made her feel that I was unable to honor my ancestors and be filial to my parents, and she was greatly disappointed in me. Then, after graduating from college, when WWII was intensifying, in order to practice the ideals I believed in, instead of returning to Taiwan, I rushed to mainland China to participate in the anti-Japanese revolution, which made my mother completely give up all hope in me.

After WWII, the world situation changed drastically, which made my mother experience many hardships. In terms of social changes, Japan surrendered and Chiang Kai-shek's KMT troops occupied Taiwan (1945). This was followed by the outbreak of the 228 Incident, when Taiwanese were massacred (1947). Economically, the Jiang family's KMT government implemented the 37.5% Arable Rent Reduction Act (1949), which caused Taiwan to suffer from an unprecedented severe economic panic (compared to economic exploitation, severe economic plunder is more severe and terrifying⁵¹¹). Inflation was astronomical (from 1945 to 1950, the issuance of banknotes increased 60,000 times), and prices soared (the price of rice in Taipei soared hundreds of thousands of times, which had never happened before). This caused the quality of life of Taiwanese people to plummet⁵¹². In these circumstances, the Shi and Lin families (that is, my grandmother's family) fell into unprecedented decline and lived in hardship.

⁵¹¹ As stated in chapter 1, this law was part of the land reform policy enacted by the KMT. Here, Su Beng equates it to plunder.

⁵¹² Yiluoqianzhang (一落千丈). Lit. "to drop a thousand zhang in one fall." Zhang here is a unit of measurement as explained before. The meaning of this idiom is that something had fallen some great heights.

At that time, my father lost his ambition and returned home (1948), and I also returned to Shilin (1949) from North China, dejected. Coupled with the collapse of an underground bank invested by her mother, almost all of the private money lent by my mother was gone. Angered and frustrated, she died of colorectal cancer in the first month of 1950 (of the lunar year). As her final days approached, she still blamed me for being an “unfilial son.” I truly am an unfilial son. For her whole life, I truly made my mother worried, angry, and disappointed.

The coffin used by my mother for her funeral⁵¹³ was originally intended to be used by my grandma for herself. She did not expect that it would actually be used for her daughter. My mother died at just 53 years old. In retrospect, as a son, I failed to fulfill my responsibilities and pay filial piety to my mother who poured so much tender love into me. Instead, I made her live a dissatisfied and resentful life. From beginning to end, this has given me endless sorrow.

Section 3: My Uncle⁵¹⁴, Shi Zhenxing (Foster Father)



Figure 10. Su Beng's Uncle, Shi Zhenxing (施振興)

⁵¹³ Chhut-soan (出山). Taiwanese. To hold a funeral. Specifically, this word refers to one part of the funeral process.

⁵¹⁴ A Jiu (阿舅). Maternal uncle.

The uncle⁵¹⁵ (my foster father) I mentioned earlier, Shi Zhenxing, was born in 1903. When he was still a baby, my grandmother picked him up from the wife of Fanshu, who was from a poor family in Shilin, and carried him back. He was adopted by the Shi family and became the only son of my grandmother.

When my uncle was a young, he studied at the Taihoku Second Normal School⁵¹⁶ (now National Taipei University of Education⁵¹⁷). At that time, after graduating from the public school, the vast majority of young people had to work on farms or in factories. Among the people in Shilin, there were very few who were able to attend a normal school⁵¹⁸, which shows that it was my grandmother's desire, her whole heart and soul, to cultivate my uncle that enabled him to continue his education.

Taiwanese children who attend a normal school are not required to pay tuition and miscellaneous fees as per the usual practice. They can also live in the school dormitory, becoming "full dormitory students." In addition, they can receive clothing, shoes, and a monthly allowance. Students need to study for seven years and, after graduation, become teachers in public schools (the primary school curriculum that Taiwanese children enter). Public school teachers are well-paid, with an initial salary of 45 yuan per month, and can also receive housing (at that time, high school graduates usually earned a starting salary of 25 yuan per month, while

⁵¹⁵ This is like a term of endearment for Su Beng. Shi Zhenxing is really his adopted uncle (he was originally not surnamed Shi), but as a "title," Su Beng calls him his uncle.

⁵¹⁶ While there does not seem to be an official English translation for the name of this school, the use of "Taihoku" is intentional as it was the name used during the Japanese colonial period for Taipei. For example, as mentioned before, National Taiwan University was previously called "Taihoku Imperial University" in English. The word "normal" here refers to teacher's colleges, which historically taught students the "norms" of society.

⁵¹⁷ Today, National Taipei University of Education is based in Daan District in Taipei. It is now considered a standard university that focuses more than just education.

⁵¹⁸ Again, the "normal" here refers to teachers' colleges.

public school graduates working as a part time worker only earned seven or eight mao⁵¹⁹ per day). However, normal school graduates must serve as a teacher for five years before they can resign and find another job⁵²⁰. If they serve for more than fifteen years, they can receive an “enji⁵²¹” (a lifetime pension that anyone can receive), ensuring a comfortable life for the rest of their lives.

At that time, there was a public school in every village regardless of its size. People who served as public school teachers had a high social status in the village, so children from ordinary families hoped to enter a normal school and become a head teacher receiving the “appointed official⁵²²” salary and status after graduation.

My uncle graduated from a normal college and taught at public schools (in Nuannuan⁵²³, Shezi, Xizhi, etc.) for five years. Due to his special interest in music, he went to Tokyo in 1925 to study piano at the Kunitachi College of Music⁵²⁴. In Taiwan at that time, if one chose to study music and become a musician, they had to be prepared to live a hard life and might not even have a stable job for their entire life. In other words, my uncle might have had to rely on my grandmother for the rest of his life. However, even in this situation, my grandmother still allowed my uncle to study music abroad, which shows her sincerity, open-mindedness, and

⁵¹⁹ A mao (毛) is a unit of currency equal to 1/10 of a yuan (圓). From a domesticated sense, a mao can be thought of as a “cent.” However, as a way to bring the reader closer to Su Beng’s times, and maintain a sense of historicity, I decided to foreigner the text here.

⁵²⁰ During the Japanese colonial era, if one were to graduate from a normal college, one would usually need to serve as a teacher at a public school for a certain period of time. Once that period is up, the person would find work at another place, like a private school.

⁵²¹ Enji (恩給). A special kind of pension system for military service members, government officials, and educators for their dedication to the country. Their pension is fully paid by the government. See: https://www.exam.gov.tw/News_Content.aspx?n=3435&s=25621.

⁵²² Su Beng uses quotes here due to the uniqueness of the phrase. The exact phrase is panrenguan (判任官), meaning “appointed official.” This refers to the fact that teachers were told by the government (“appointed”) where they would teach.

⁵²³ Nuannuan (暖暖). A city in Keelung.

⁵²⁴ Originally called the “Tokyo Conservatory of Music,” (東京高等音楽学院) it was founded in 1926. It is a fairly prestigious music school in Japan.

generosity. In that semi-feudal and semi-modern era, it was really remarkable for our grandmother to have such a great mind and she was highly praised by the people in Shilin.

After going to Tokyo for school, my grandmother not only paid for his monthly tuition and living expenses but also sent him a large sum of money⁵²⁵ to buy a piano so that he could concentrate on practicing. It was said that even Japanese classmates rarely had pianos at that time. When my uncle fell ill and returned to Taiwan, he could not bring this precious piano back with him. It was not until after his death in Taiwan that his relatives in Tokyo, repeatedly urged by my grandmother, sent only the piano seat back to Taiwan. It was later revealed that the piano had already been sold by my grandmother's nephew Qiu Binghui in Tokyo, which was truly a big joke.

After being baptized in Western music education in Tokyo and becoming a rising musician, my uncle often showed his musical literacy and singing ability in his daily life. It is said that besides learning piano in Tokyo, my uncle also learned to sing as a boy soprano, which was very rare. My uncle had a gentle temperament and loved me very much. Every time he returned from Tokyo to Taiwan for vacation, he brought me news toys that could not be bought in Taiwan. After receiving the new toys, I would immediately run to the children in my neighborhood in the verandas to show off, proudly displaying the new Tokyo toys that my uncle had brought me, and being surrounded by everyone's admiring eyes.

He often taught me to sing Japanese nursery rhymes that were rarely sung in Taiwan at the time, which was undoubtedly a refreshing change in my dull life in a feudal family. So, I was always happy and serious about learning Japanese songs with my uncle. Through his teaching,

⁵²⁵ Here, Chinese is more particular with numbers. The phrase *ji bai kuai* (幾百塊) means something like “hundreds of yuan.” The range would be from 100-900. However, I choose to simplify the text and let the reader simply know that this was an extremely large sum of money.

subtly, I developed an interest in music and an ear for it. Being a kid is the time when children are most able to unleash their liveliness and natural disposition. During this stage, my uncle really enlightened me about music, and as I grew up, I naturally came to appreciate many Western classical music composers such as Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, and operas. Even now, whenever I listen to splendid music, I often recall my uncle's various old stories and, in my heart, I can fondly recall his tender love.

I still remember some of the Japanese nursery rhymes I learned:

Seven Baby Crows⁵²⁶

Crow, why do you cry? In the forest deep in the mountains?

Cute little crows, waiting for their mom to come back,

Cute, cute, calling their mom to come home,

Cute, cute, calling their mom to come home,

In the mountains, go and have a look,

Those cute children and their round eyes

Little Red Shoes

Little red shoes, worn by a young girl,

A foreigner took her by the hand and took her away to Yokohama Port,

They took the boat from the white port,

A foreigner took her by the hand and took her away,

Those little red shoes, if I saw them again, I would think of her,

⁵²⁶ For these two songs, the original Japanese versions were provided. However, I could only translate the Chinese versions. Furthermore, there would be no point in translating both the Japanese and Chinese versions.

Every time I see a foreigner, I would think of her

My uncle suffered from peritonitis less than three years after he went to Tokyo, which was a serious illness that had no cure at the time. However, my uncle did not want to come back to Taiwan for treatment. As a result, my grandmother traveled alone to Tokyo and brought my uncle back home even though he was seriously ill. At that time, to go to Tokyo, one had to take a ship from Keelung to Kobe and then take a train to Tokyo, which would take six days and five nights in total. This was not an easy task for ordinary people, not to mention my grandmother who did not know Japanese and was unfamiliar with the place. Furthermore, she was also a vegetarian and had bound feet, making it an almost impossible trip.

However, my grandmother was not afraid at all. She set out from her home in Shilin and arrived in Tokyo. My grandmother wore Taiwanese clothes and walked around the streets with her small bound feet, causing curious looks from the Japanese people. It was like she was in the limelight. When we asked my grandmother about this later, she simply replied, “They stared at me, so I just stared back at them. What’s more to say?” It is evident that my grandmother was such a confident, brave, and courageous heroine!

In March 1928 (when I was 11 years old), sadly, my uncle passed away due to illness, just one year after returning to Taiwan. He passed away at the young age of 26. My grandmother had already decided that I would inherit the family line, so she made me my uncle’s adopted son through the process of adoption and completed the household registration procedures (during the Japanese era, household registration was the most cumbersome in the world at that time but comprehensive population record). In front of my uncle, who was already lying on his sickbed, my grandmother established the so-called “personal custody document,” which placed all the

rights and interests related to the property of the descendants of the Shi family (before my uncle's death, my younger brother had not yet been born and was still in my aunt's womb) under her supervision. Fortunately, this legal measure was in place, which later won the lawsuit against my aunt's⁵²⁷ attempt to take over the property, and safeguarded all the property of the Shi family. Two or three months after my uncle passed away, my aunt gave birth to a child (that is, my younger brother of the Shi family).

Section 4: My Aunt, Linshi Yuying



Figure 11. Su Beng's aunt, Linshi Yuying (林氏玉英)

In our Shi family, had an unforgettable aunt, Linshi Yuying (because she shared the same surname as my father, we called her “A Gu⁵²⁸” from a young age). Her family was from Neishuangxi in Shilin, and my grandmother adopted her at a young age. Originally, my

⁵²⁷ Recall that this episode was recounted in chapter 1.

⁵²⁸ A-koo in Taiwanese; A Gu in Mandarin (阿姑). This is the Taiwanese word for aunt. In Mandarin, it is gugu (姑姑). The word A Gu specifically refers to one's paternal aunt. This is kind of a term of endearment since, as Su Beng says, his father and Aunt Lin both had the same last name, Lin.

grandmother planned to arrange her marriage with my uncle, Shi Zhenxing (i.e., sim-pu-a⁵²⁹). However, when Aunt Lin became an adult, she refused to marry my uncle because she was three years older than him and because he was slightly effeminate⁵³⁰. My uncle later married someone else. This, of course, made my grandmother extremely furious.

I still remember that this incident made Aunt Lin cry and weep, and she left the Shi family just like that. However, after Aunt Lin left, the affairs of the Shi and Lin families could not be handled smoothly. The trivial, daily matters were originally all taken care of by Aunt Lin, and neither grandmother nor my mother had the initiative to take over. So, one or two months later, my mother took me and we rode a sedan chair over several mountains to Neishuangxi⁵³¹. She persuaded Aunt Lin to return to the Shi family in Shilin and continue to take care of the housework of the Shi and Lin families.

My mother promised to take care of Aunt Lin for her whole life, saying, “I have food to eat, and you will have food to eat too, so don’t worry.” Since my mother was only one year older than Aunt Lin and they grew up together in the same household, they had a deep sisterly bond. Aunt Lin was grateful for my mother’s kindness and agreed to return to the Shi family’s home with my mother.

After returning to the Shi family, Aunt Lin, like my grandmother, became a vegetarian and a Buddhist. She never married and lived a life of hard work like a maid servant. However, because she refused to marry Uncle Shi Zhenxing and went against my grandmother’s wishes, my grandmother remained resentful and never forgave her for the rest of her life. Despite this, Aunt Lin continued to silently do household chores without complaint or regret, living honestly

⁵²⁹ Refer to “tongyangxi” or child marriage in chapter 1.

⁵³⁰ Cha-bóo-thé (查某體). Taiwanese. A kind of girly accent.

⁵³¹ Neishuangxi (內雙喜). is a river in the northeast corner of Shilin District. It is located at the foothills of Yangmingshan.

like a country person. Every morning, she got up early to clean the whole house. The whole day, she would spend time cooking and preparing vegetarian meals for my grandmother. She cooked meat dishes for my mother and us children. Even the tedious tasks of waking us children up, dressing us, feeding us, sending us to school, washing clothes, and bathing were all handled by Aunt Lin.

Aunt Lin's maternal family lived in the mountains and were mountain people. Her daily life was simple and frugal, and she had a humble and meticulous personality. She was easily embarrassed but had a kind and gentle demeanor towards others.

My aunt loved me very much. Even when my mother scolded and punished me, my aunt⁵³² would comfort me in secret and encourage me to be obedient and study hard, so that I could become a useful person when I grew up. Her love for me is something I will never forget, and for my whole life, I have been grateful for her kindness.

In 1936, I went to Tokyo. Every summer when I returned home, my aunt always treated me with extra care, comforting my homesickness and making many delicious Taiwanese dishes, such as black-boned chicken⁵³³. In 1942, the Pacific War escalated. As I was about to graduate from college and prepare to go to China, I returned to Taiwan to visit my grandmother. My grandmother and the aunt knew that once the war spread to Taiwan, it might not be easy to meet again in the future, so the two said to me very uneasily, "A Hui-a, once you leave, only us two old folks will be left. There will be no one to rely on from now on." At that time, my parents and younger sister were in Xiamen, and only my grandmother, aunt, and her adopted daughter were

⁵³² Su Beng simply says "she" (ta, 她) but, again, in order to improve readability, I restated the subject. For small changes like these, I found that it was acceptable to change the text if it improved readability and did not drastically change the meaning of the text.

⁵³³ Wuguji (烏骨雞). Lit. "black-boned chicken." Its skin is black or slightly purple, hence the name. Also called silkie chicken due to the appearance and texture of its features. It is considered a delicacy in Asian countries. In Chinese culture, it is a kind of curative food.

at home. I was surprised to hear these words. Frankly speaking, I had not thought about this before, so, calmly, I tried⁵³⁴ to reassure them: “Grandma, Aunt Lin, don’t worry. The war will end soon, and I will come back as soon as possible. I plan to build a family grave⁵³⁵ for you, where, after one hundred years, you can live in peace. I will do my best to take care of everything for you.” This promise was actually just a casual remark, but unexpectedly, it had a great calming effect on the two of them. They believed me and showed relieved expressions. However, I had already made up my mind to go to mainland China to participate in the war against Japan, and this promise became a lie to deceive them. Later, because I never had the chance to fulfill my promise, I often felt guilty for the rest of my life. I immediately left my grandmother and aunt and departed from Keelung, passing by Xiamen to see my parents, and returned to Tokyo. During the war, I never saw those two old ladies again.

I fled to the liberated area in 1942. I returned home in 1949, crestfallen due to my shattered ideals. The following year, my mother passed away. She did not fulfill her promise to Aunt Lin and did not give her even a penny. Aunt Lin, in her 50s at the time, was thus very poor and did not have any financial assistance in her old age, which caused her to feel very worried. Additionally, Aunt Lin had an adopted daughter from her third younger brother. In the past, my mother promised my aunt: “Your adopted daughter will be admitted to the third girls’ high school (female high school) just like my own daughter.” However, my mother did not fulfill this promise and treated Aunt Lin’s daughter like a servant, while all three of my sisters attended the same high school. This made Aunt Lin very unhappy. Therefore, Aunt Lin accumulated all kinds

⁵³⁴ The ST is more like “outwardly” or “superficially” but I found this to be too strange. This is where I would say choosing to foreignize the text is not a good option here. I think “tried” suffices.

⁵³⁵ In Taiwanese culture, especially at that time, it was an important matter for family members to be respected and prayed to after death. Su Beng here is trying to assure his grandmother and aunt that he will make sure these matters are attended to. In the end, Su Beng did successfully build a grave for his family when he returned to Taiwan in 1993.

of dissatisfaction and worry for a long time. My mother had many gold bars at the time, but she did not leave any for Aunt Lin, and they were all taken by my second sister, Huifang (I had no knowledge of this at the time). This made Aunt Lin feel unsupported in her remaining years. After my mother's passing, Aunt Lin's emotions finally erupted. Despite her gentle nature, perhaps due to losing her final source of support (my mother), she cried day and night to alleviate her pain. Seeing this, I felt very sad but powerless, and could only say a few heartfelt words to do my best to comfort her.

In 1952, due to political issues, I fled Taiwan for Japan. It wasn't until I returned to Taiwan in 1993 that I learned that Aunt Lin had suffered from dementia since 1986. She spent her entire life alone, without proper care, and passed away at the age of 88. She could not even stay at home during her last moments and was taken by my sister Huifang to a funeral home operated by Taipei Hospital. Such a lonely and tragic ending—there could not be anything more cruel in this world! However, upon deep reflection, the responsibility for such conduct falls entirely on me. When Aunt Lin, grandmother, and father passed away, I was not at home, and it was my absence that caused Aunt Lin to suffer such misfortune. I think about Aunt Lin's miserable life, and believe that I myself had not fulfilled the slightest shred of responsibility. In my entire life, I failed to give her the life she deserved. I always feel a great sense of guilt no matter what. The tragedies that happened to my grandmother and aunt have always troubled me for the latter half of my life. But at the time, I believed that the larger social issues in Taiwan were more important than personal relationships. For the sake of the greater good, I did not hesitate to sacrifice my feelings. Even today, I still think this way.

In 1993, after ending my life of exile and returning to Taiwan, I built a “Shi and Lin family cemetery” (about 50 ping) in a small alley in Bali Township, Taipei County, and placed

the ashes of both the Shi and Lin families together with Aunt Lin's ashes. Only then did I fulfill even the tiniest shred of duty as a son.

Section 5: My Third Younger Sister⁵³⁶, Lin Cuiyun, Who Died in an Attack by an American Submarine



Figure 12. Su Beng's sister, Lin Cuiyun (林翠雲)

My third sister, Cuiyun, was the one I got along with best among my siblings. After graduating from Taihoku Prefectural Taihoku Third Girls' High School, in March 1943, she took a Japanese passenger ship from Keelung to Xiamen to see my father and me. Unfortunately, the ship she was on was sunk by a US submarine off the shore of Xiamen. A Yun, just like the Japanese ship, sank to the bottom of the sea. She passed away at the young age of only twenty-three. Whenever I think of her early death, I still feel a deep sorrow in my heart. When I was in

⁵³⁶ Sanmei (三妹). Chinese uses its own naming conventions for siblings and they are relative to the speaker. The “mei” here means younger sister. The “san” here means three, as in, “the third sister who is younger than me.”

secondary school, she liked to sing When Will You Return? with me, and even now, whenever I think of A Yun, I think of that song.

When Will You Return?⁵³⁷

When will you return?

Good flowers don't always bloom, good times don't always come,

Sorrow tears away at your smile, the feeling of thinking about you is carried by my tears,

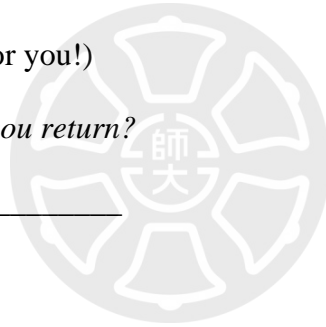
After you leave tonight, when will you return?

Finish your drink, order some food if you will

In life, it is difficult to drink so much, if you're not happy now, when will you be?

(Spoken: Come come! I'll cheers for you!)

After you leave tonight, when will you return?



⁵³⁷ He Ri Jun Zai Lai (何日君再來). Famous Chinese song written by Huang Jiamo (1916-2004, 黃嘉謨); lyrics by Liu Xue'an (1905-1985, 劉雪庵).

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Appendix

Table A1

Chronology of Su Beng's Life

Year	Event
1918	Su Beng (Lin Chaohui) born in Shilin, Taipei
1925	Enrolls in Shilin Public School (an elementary school in Taiwan)
1926	Transfers to Jiancheng Elementary School (Elementary school for Japanese students)
1932	Admitted to No. 1 Taihoku High School (today's Jianguo High School)
1936	Decides to study politics in Tokyo, ran away from home after completing the fourth grade at Jianguo High School
1937	Enrolls in First Waseda Preparatory School
1940	Admitted to Waseda University, Faculty of Political Science and Economics, Department of Political Science
1941	Joins the secret organization "Marxist Theory Study Group"
1942	Does not attend the graduation ceremony of Waseda University and leaves Japan to participate in the War of Resistance in China
1942	Works as an undercover agent for the CCP and held a job in the Economic Department of the Suzhou Provincial Government
1943	During the underground work, undergoes sterilization to avoid pregnancy, which could hinder future revolutionary work
November, 1945	Travels from Suzhou to Beijing and met his girlfriend, Kyoko Hiraga, at the Japanese embassy
March, 1946	Enters the communist liberated area together with Hiraga from Zhangjiakou
April, 1946	Enters the remedial class at the United University with Hiraga
1947	Proposes the establishment of a "Taiwanese Unit" and officially appointed as a political instructor in July
March, 1947	During a trip with Hiraga to the "Jin-Ji-Lu-Yu" military region headquarters in Fuping,

	they witnessed various struggles related to land reform, which inspires their desire to flee China
1949	Escapes from the liberated area through Qingdao after leaving Shijiazhuang and returned to Taiwan in May
February, 1950	Establishes the “Taiwan Independence Revolutionary Corps”
1951	Plots the assassination of Chiang Kai-shek
May, 1952	Flees Taiwan and stowed away on a banana boat to Kobe. Starts selling dumplings in front of Ikebukuro Nishiguchi Station by the end of the year
1955	Establishes New Gourmet
May, 1958	Co-founds the financial institution “Japan-China Chinese Credit Association” with Lin Yiqian and serves as its executive director
July, 1962	Publishes the Japanese version of <i>Taiwan’s 400 Year History</i> (Otawa Tsurumi, Co., Ltd.)
June, 1964	The Taiwan Independence Association (TIA), an underground organization in Taiwan, blows up a military train near Wangtian Station
April, 1967	Participates in the establishment of the TIA and became its president
June, 1967	The TIA becomes public and published the monthly magazine “Independent Taiwan”
August, 1967	The arrest of Lin Shuiquan and Yan Yinmo
August, 1968	First covert return to Taiwan. Delivered the <i>Guerrilla Warfare Manual</i> and various underground propaganda tools and funds to fellow comrades
1970	In the summer, began preparations to establish a broadcasting station on Yonaguni Island, Okinawa, but abandoned the plan in 1972 when Okinawa was returned to Japan by the US military
1971	Establishes the “Taiwan Independence Revolutionary Army” on the island, carried out actions such as burning police stations, bombing railways, and overturning military vehicles
February, 1972	The Wen Lianzhang Incident
October, 1973	The Zheng Ping Incident

1974	Publishes the revised and expanded edition of the Japanese version of <i>Taiwan's 400 Year History</i> (Shinsensha)
October, 1974	Ceases the publication of Independent Taiwan
February, 1975	Second covert return to Taiwan. Reorganizes underground organizations
August, 1975	Xu Mei Incident
December, 1975	In consideration of the development of democratic struggles in Taiwan, the TIA decides to suspend armed resistance on the island
1980	Publishes the Classical Chinese version of <i>Taiwan's 400 Year History</i> (Pengdao Culture) in the US
1981	Begins visiting Europe and the US to promote Taiwanese nationalism and Taiwanese socialism
1982	Published the irregular periodical "The Masses of Taiwan"
1983	The Lu Xiuyi, Ke Sibin, and Maeda Mitsue Incidents
1986	Publishes the English version of <i>Taiwan's 400 Year History</i> in the US
1991	The TIA Incident (Cheng Zhengran, Wang Xiuhui, Lin Yinfu, Liao Weicheng)
October, 1993	Caught ad in a covert return to Taiwan at the Xinying Interchange. Returned to Taiwan to reside permanently on the island
1995	Taiwan Independence Motorcade is established
November, 1996	Establishes the "Taiwan Masses Underground Radio Station" (1996-2001)
1998	Publishes the Chinese version of <i>Taiwan's 400 Year History</i> (three-volume set) for the first time in Taiwan at his own expense
March, 2005	Protested against the Anti-Secession Law by sitting quietly at the gate of NTU
April, 2005	The 426 Protest (Jiang Bingkun)
December, 2011	The TIA supports Tsai Ing-wen's election and launches the fourth round-the-island campaign
2012	The Su Beng Classics Reconstruction Project begins. It was carried out by students and young people including Lan Shibo, Lin Jiali, Jiang Binglun, and Hong Huiru, assisted in editing, revising, and publishing works such

	as Practical Philosophy: Reading Su Beng for Youth (2012), <i>Su Beng: An Oral History</i> (2013, 38th Golden Tripod Award for Books), <i>Left-Wing Nationalism</i> (2013), and <i>Taiwan's 400 Year History</i> (2014), laying the foundation for providing the new generation of Taiwan with an understanding of "Su Beng Studies."
2014	During the Sunflower Movement, Su Beng encourages students every day at the Legislative Yuan
August, 2014	The latest revised edition of the Chinese version of <i>Taiwan's 400 Year History</i> is published by SMC Publishing
2015	The documentary, <i>Su Beng, the Revolutionist</i> , is released. (Director: Chen Ligui; Producer: Yao Wenzhi)
2016	Appointed as a adviser to the Office of the President
June 30, 2019	"Su Beng the Revolutionary's Last Lecture" is held at NTU
September 20, 2019	Su Beng passes away

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