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Panel Title: 重層殖民下的文化交融和對應 反應在藝文中的台灣社會

### **Cultural Effect, Illusive text, and the “Popular”: Japanese crime fiction on (Post) Colonial Taiwan**

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#### **I. Introduction: Genre Fiction: Global, Local, or Colonial?**

During my recent trips back to Taiwan and my many outings to the bookstores, I observed a surging interest (and related increase in volume of publication) in Japanese mystery and detective genres. Even to a casual observer, the translation and consumption of Japanese literature in Taiwan have shifted away from the highbrow literature of Nobel Prize winners Kawaata Yasunari, Oe Kenzaburo, and modern classics by writers such as Mishima Yukio, Akutagawa Ryūnosuke, towards the popular genre fiction of mystery, crime, horror, and fantasies. This phenomenon not only reflects the taste of the Taiwanese readers of Japanese literature but also echoes the reality of the current Japanese reading market, in which the bulk of its publishing works belong to the “entertainment” category (エンターテインメント) including manga, light novels (ライトノベル), cell phone novels (携帯小説), and the above mentioned genre fictions.

The detective/mystery genre has been a forte in Japanese popular literature since the early 1920s. It has maintained its presence in mass literary production through the tumultuous period of the Pacific War and the chaotic postwar era. Although in comparison with the highbrow “pure

literature” (*junbungaku* 純文学), the genre was sometimes marginalized by critics and deemed unfit for scholarly pursuit, it nevertheless remains one of the most prolific literary genres in the last 100 years, and reaching its most dominant status in present day Japan.

The popularity of this genre in Taiwan reflects the heightened cross-cultural appeal the genre enjoyed in general, but more specifically Taiwan’s cultural affinity and its insatiable appetite for all things Japanese. In his “Translated Body: Corporeal Displacement and Textual Order in the New Generation of Taiwanese Mystery Fiction”, Chen Weiguo 陳偉國 points to the fact that the Taiwanese market for the detective/mystery genre (*suirishōsetsu* 推理小説)<sup>1</sup> was created through a transnational hybrid process of “strategic translation and transliteration” (*yixiecelei* 譯寫策略; *fanyigaixie* 翻譯改寫).<sup>2</sup> He further points to the fact that this transnational replication and appropriation did not happen just recently but rather was something begun as early as the Japanese colonial period.<sup>3</sup> Chen’s contention echoes that of Leo Ching’s studies on the transmission and dissemination of Japanese popular culture in Taiwan. Ching asserts that a seemingly novel and contemporary fascination with Japanese popular culture (i.e. *hari* 哈日) has its root in a displaced nostalgia 錯置的鄉愁 that can be traced back to the Japanese colonial period.<sup>4</sup>

In the following, I will use the popular genre of crime fiction, a genre that distinguishes itself as one of the early mass literary genres that easily transcends national and cultural boundaries, to explore how subversive criminality (disorder), the language of policing and law

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<sup>1</sup> In Japan, the term *suirishōsetsu* 推理小説 was most commonly used with other designations such as *tanteishōsetsu* 探偵小説, ミステリー小説, 犯罪小説 used interchangeably.

<sup>2</sup> Chen Guowei 2010: 41-42.

<sup>3</sup> Chen Guowei 2008: 53-60.

<sup>4</sup> Leo Ching 2006: 143-145.

(order), and the particular perspective on the colonial “other” intersect with each other in the context of colonial governance in Taiwan. The genre has the potential of embedding a highly moralizing ideology in the guise of entertainment. The intrigues of scientific methods and the seductiveness of solving a seemingly impenetrable puzzle gesture to the modernist aspect of the genre. The interactive feature and voyeuristic aspect (peeking into the darkness of human heart of those who committed deplorable crimes and living vicariously through the criminal act) is what makes this genre particular popular among mass readers.

The first part of this paper traces the development of the said genre in colonial and postcolonial Taiwan. It then proceeds to examine how the popularity of the genre facilitated and promoted the primary colonial interest, which is to maintain order and social stability of the colony, by looking at texts produced in the pre-war era and the immediate postwar era. The colonial texts look at two specific stories of dismemberment written in the 1930s and 40s, while the postwar era analysis focuses on the writer Hikage Jōkichi 日影丈吉, a popular postwar mystery writer who drew on his experiences as a soldier stationed in Taiwan and who blends a dreamy yet vivid local landscape into his Gothic tales, provide a non-imperial (if not anti-imperial) perspective. The former catered mainly for the colonial subjects readership in the colonial Taiwan while Hikage’s writings are geared toward the postwar Japanese reading market. The differences in readership and generic ontology reveal the roles that “realism” and “reality” played in these two types of narrative. In a sense, they tell of the generic development and transformation, with the first approaching the “truth” as clear cut and scientific as possible, whereas the latter presents itself as an abstract, moody ratiocination of postcolonial rendering of the colonial desire and critic for the whole imperial enterprise.

## II. Modernity and Coloniality: Historicizing Detective/Crime Genre

Among the popular genres, detective fiction has become one of the most frequently and most intensively analyzed genres in recent years. The genre suits the hermeneutic requirements of most forms of theoretical enquiry, ranging from deconstruction, narratology, psychoanalysis, and postcolonialism. The detective story as a distinct genre originated in the mid-nineteenth century. The crime and detective genre was a new genre that emerged in the mid to late 19<sup>th</sup> century Anglo-American literary scene. Edgar Allen Poe's three early short stories written in the 1840s, "The Murders in the Rue Morgue" (1841), "The Mystery of Marie Roget" (1842), and "The Purloined Letter" (1845) which share the protagonist French detective Auguste Dupin, are considered to be the genesis of the detective genre. They were soon followed by Sir Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes series.

The Industrial Revolution in the 18<sup>th</sup> century ushered in a new age of technology and rising production capability. As a consequence, a massive labor force moved from to urban areas in search of new jobs and opportunities. The formation of new urban centers compelled strangers of diverse social, economic, and educational background from regions to live together side by side in the confined spaces that are modern cities. Unlike the tightly knit and homogeneous agricultural communities where everyone know each other, the multifaceted cityscape, accelerated by increasing inequality and stratification between the now robust bourgeois class and the working class, became the site of much crime and violence. The modern police system was instituted in response to a heightened sense of criminality while the advancement of scientific methods aided in crime fighting. The nascent media, newspaper and magazines, tapped into their readers' tremendous curiosity by publishing many of the crime stories. In short,

the birth of the crime fiction and detective story as a specific genre arises as a result of industrialization and modernization.

The transmission of the genre quickly spread to Asia with Japan as the first Eastern nation to adopt the format. Complementing the earlier imports of fiction novels (*shōsetsu/xiaoshuo* 小説) which were generally considered as instruments for enlightening and educating the mass population and a source for Western knowledge, crime fiction set itself apart from the pure didactic and educational goals and sought to add a layer of suspense and (decadent) pleasure to the act of reading itself.

Nakajima Toshio 中島利郎 in his “Historical Survey of Taiwanese Detective Fiction during the Period of Japanese Rule”<sup>5</sup> pointed to the great varieties of the genre and sub-genre. Like Chen Guowei’s discussion of the development of the genre in Taiwan, Nakajima attributed Japanese adaptation of the genre also went through the “strategic translation and transliteration” process. The first Japanese detective narrative is now generally considered to be Kanda Kōhei’s (神田孝平 1830–1898) translation of a Dutch short story collection published in 1877.<sup>6</sup> Even within the confine of detective/crime fiction, some focus on psychological motivations and perversities of the criminals, and others blend in mysterious and fantastic elements that can be categorized into sub-genres such as horror (*kaiki shōsetsu* 怪奇小説) and fantasy (*gensō shōsetsu* 幻想小説). He also distinguishes between two usages of generic terms: detective fiction (*tantei shōsetsu* 探偵小説) and detective fiction based on a true story (*tantei jitsuwa* 探偵実話) in the early stage of the development of the genre. Later, a more literary oriented genre

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<sup>5</sup> 「日本統治期台湾探偵小説史稿」 Nakajima Toshio 2002: 351-399.

<sup>6</sup> 「和蘭美政録 楊牙兒 (よんげる) 奇談」 (Original title “Belangrijke Tafereelen uit de Geschiedenis der Lisftra ffelijke Regtsplegling” written by Jan Bastiann Christemeijer in 1821) in 『花月新誌』 (1877). See Nakajima 2002: 352 and 394.

emerged, often focusing less on socio-psychological components (such as motivations and pathology of the criminal) than on constructing a narrative purely fashioned on logical intricacies and technical and procedural activities. This type of fiction was and is referred to as “genuine, orthodox, standard” crime fiction (*honkaku shōsetsu* 本格探偵小説).<sup>7</sup> According to Kōga Saburō 甲賀三郎 (1893-1945), who appropriated the term *honkaku* 本格 from the highbrow *junbungaku* and coined terms such as authentic crime fiction 本格推理 and 本格ミステリ that still widely used today. Kōga insists that the “real and authentic” crime fiction does not dispense much ink on the motive of the crime or the characterization of the criminal. All it concerns is to provide a cleverly constructed riddle and solve it with scientific methodology. He specifically mentioned the Sherlock Holmes series by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle as one of the representative work of this sub-genre. According to Kōga, it is a unique genre because “while other literature attempts to move the heart, this genre appeals to the brain. It should be called literature that makes one think or literature of the puzzlement. In some ways, it is completely akin to the enjoyment of chess or geometry.”<sup>8</sup> Kōga’s contemporary and rival *honkaku* style crime fiction writer Edogawa Ranpo 江戸川乱歩 (1894-1965) further defines detective/crime fiction as a genre “mainly concerned with the gradual process of solving a difficult secret related to crime in

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<sup>7</sup> The term “*honkaku shōsetsu*” (authentic fiction) was coined by the writer Nakamura Murao 中村武羅夫 at the end of the Taishō period to distinguish itself from the ever popular I-novel and *shinkyō shōsetsu* 心境小説 genres which were based on authors’ real life experience. The *honkaku* narrative advocates engagement in social reality with a detached objectivity. It is said that the early crime fiction writer Kōga Saburō 甲賀三郎 (1893-1945) appropriated the term to the crime fiction genre to distinguish between those emphasize the motive and psychological composition of the criminal and those who are striving for a pure narrative mechanism in the scientific and logical resolution to the crime. See Koga Saburō: 1930.

<sup>8</sup> [文学としては非常に特種なもので他の小説が多く心臓〔ハート〕に訴える文学であるに反して、之は頭脳〔ブレイン〕に訴える文学であって、考え物或は、謎々の文学とも云うべく、或る点に於ては詰将棋或は、幾何学の解答の持つ面白さと全く一致するものである] . See Koga Saburō: 1930.

a logical way.”<sup>9</sup> Kōga and Ranpo’s definition, though generalized, serves as a good indicator for the most basic structure and essential elements of the genre: encountering the secret/puzzle, employment of logical reasoning, and scientific methods that lead to the final resolution and closure.

This type of crime fiction, commencing with Edgar Allen Poe’s Inspector Dupin, followed by Doyle’s Sherlock Holmes and G. K Chesterton’s Father Brown series, and reaching its golden age in the 1920s, produced some of its most talented writers such as Agatha Christie, Dorothy Sayers, John Dickson Carr, and Ellery Queen. Inoue Ken 井上健 summarizes various reasons as to why the genre thrived in the 1920s. The improvement of technology (telegraphic communication, telephone, automobiles etc.) and the advancement of colonialism (as a consequence of the circulation of material culture and human resources) transformed the temporal and spatial concepts into an ever more complex, asymmetrical multitudes. The new urban area and its surrounding areas provided a new topos/stage for different kinds of intrigue and mayhem. Kasai Kiyoshi 笠井潔, an expert on the genre and a crime fiction writer himself, approached the flourishing of the genre in the same period from a cultural and psychological angle. Kasai stipulates that the massive and indiscriminate killing occurring during the World War I created the impetus for writers to attempt to reclaim the nameless dead into one that is specific and pertinent to the readers’ imagination.<sup>10</sup>

As mentioned before, the Meiji and early Taishō translation and adaption of European and Anglo-American crime fiction in newspapers and magazines made it a popular genre. The popularity of this specific type of scientific (or methodological) crime fiction in the West in the 1920s soon reached Japan. In 1925, the aforementioned Edogawa Ranpo published the story

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<sup>9</sup> Edogawa Ranpō 2002: 5.

<sup>10</sup> Kasai Kiyoshi 1998.

“Two Cent Coin 二錢銅貨(1923) that introduces the famous recurring detective Akechi Shōgorō 明智小五郎. Rampo admitted to the influence of Poe’s 1843 short story “The Gold-Bug.”

In 1930s the detective genre had been firmly established in Japan as a popular genre. In fact, Kōga Saburō, in an article written in 1930, had already lamented the stagnation, if not decline, of the genre. It was also at this juncture, *honkaku* crime fiction was introduced to the colony Taiwan.

In the following I will use actual textual examples to explore the graduated iterations of crime fiction in colonial and postcolonial Taiwan by Japanese writers. These texts, mediated by the agency of Japanese subjectivities and the shifting views on literary genre reflect a diverse stratagems in their story telling and their ontological end.

### **III. Keeping it Real: Colonial Iterations of Crime Fiction**

Crime fiction was introduced to colonial Taiwan in the late Taisho Period (大正期 1911–1926). One immediately notices the difference in the venues for publishing between the metropole and the colony. In Japan, the crime fiction was published not only in regular popular magazines, but also in many specialized magazines such as *New Youth* (*Shinseinen* 新青年), *Profile* (*Purofuiru* ふろふいる), *Detective Monthly* (*Gekkan tantei* 月刊探偵), and *Detective Hobby* (*Tantei shumi* 探偵趣味), to name a few, to accommodate the mass appeal of the genre. One of the most prominent magazines for crime fiction was *The New Youth* (*Shinseinen* 新青年 1920–1945) which started out as a magazine exhorting young people to seek adventure and fortune (*kaigai yūhi* 海外雄飛) by emigrating to the Americas. It is a magazine that exhibited an international flavor since its creation and the imported genre suited its global outlook. Later, as the Pacific War intensified, spy stories became a mainstay for the magazine. On the other hand,



in the colony of Taiwan, not many popular magazines existed to accommodate the genre. Instead the great majority of crime fictions published in Taiwan during the colonial period (1895-1945) came out in police related publications. The three major venues for colonial crime fictions in Taiwan are: *Taiwan Law Monthly* (*Taihō gappō* 台法月報), *Journal for Taiwan Police Association* (*Taiwan keisatsu kyōkai zasshi* 台湾警察協会雑誌) and *Taiwan Police Times* (*Taiwan keisatsu jihō* 台湾警察時報). The official venue put the crime fictions in Taiwan in a different light.

Two crime tales of the sub-genre of “dismemberment crime” (*barabara jiken* バラバラ事件) will serve as example to illustrate the essential criteria of “realness” in the genre’s early stage in colonial Taiwan. Written in the 1930s and 1940s respectively, the two stories: “The Dismemberment Incident of A-gao” (*Agao no barabara jiken* 阿猴のばらばら事件, 1933) and (*Kiryū no barabara jiken* 基隆のばらばら事件, 1941) are two intriguing examples for deciphering colonial authority, the (problematic) positions of the narrative voice, and the fine, thin line between crime and fiction. The author Noda Bokusen 野田牧泉<sup>11</sup> was a retired policeman turned crime fiction writer and the stories he told emphasized gruesome details and the macabre.

“The Dismemberment Incident of A-gao” delineates a murder case that was rare for its time in that it explored the motif of mistaken racial identities, and the stage of the story was set across metropole and the colony. Narrated by an old retired detective, Handa, 半田老人 the story

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<sup>11</sup> If Zakō Tōhei 座光東平 was the most active crime fiction writer in Taiwan in the 1920s, Noda Bokusen’s *Secret Tales of Police Investigation* (*Sōsa hiwa* 捜査秘話) series in the *Taiwan Police Times* was the most popular writer in the 1930s. A retired detective himself, Noda was famous for his penchant for bizarre cases and gruesome details. The series yields seventeen tales of violent deviancy. See Nakajima Toshio et al. 2002: 377-378.

employed the convention of story within story structure as Handa relates to some of his friends one of the most strange case he ever solved in his law enforcement career. A drowned body without arms and legs was discovered with the skin on its face peeled off in the remote territory of the aboriginal tribes (banchi 蕃地).<sup>12</sup> At the same time, the shop owner at the Ogawa Imported Merchandise Store reported that his clerk Ōzawa had disappeared. Being a quintessential “Modern Boy,” Ōzawa always dressed fashionably. The clothes on the faceless body fit the clerk’s outfit. Handa and his Taiwanese sidekick Chen were able to disinter the hands and legs buried nearby and the fingerprint taken did not match that of Ōzawa (who happened to have stolen from his employer before). As the investigation proceeds, the readers learn that Ōzawa stole from his mother at age seventeen and escaped to Taiwan. The mother was so heartbroken that she fell ill and died. Falling in love with a prostitute, Ichinomaru (a.k.a Yamamura Tomoko), who also came from the Kumamoto Prefecture, Ōzawa cooked up a scheme to stage his own death and escape back to Japan. Ichinomaru was to collect the five thousand yen insurance payout for the death of Ōzawa, pay off her debt and join Ōzawa in Tokyo later. The police was able to track him down and arrest him in Tokyo. In his confession, Ōzawa professed that being an illegitimate child, he was bullied all his life and took out his anger at his own mother. The criminal shows great remorse and guilt for causing his mother’s aggrieved death.

In this way, the author tried to stipulate a social cause of Ōzawa’s anti-social behavior by providing a psychological profile of the criminal. The social conditions for Ōzawa’s flight to Taiwan were rather similar to the narrator Handa’s own experience. Being one of the earliest colonial settlers to the island, Handa arrived in Taiwan in 1904 at the tender age of twenty-four,

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<sup>12</sup> In the text the specific location is 枋山刺桐腳溪. Nakajima Toshio et al. eds. 2002: 182.

more than three decades earlier than the criminal Ōzawa. He recalled that as he decided to go to Taiwan to seek a livelihood, he was not able to find any women willing to marry him, since at that time Taiwan was considered a place so full of plagues and tropical diseases that it was designated as “a place one goes to die” (台湾は死にいくところ).<sup>13</sup> However, three days after his arrival, Handa was able to secured the title of policeman for Taipei Administrative Division 台北廳 and started his new life and career here on the colony, even though at that time, Handa was neither able to understand the local customs nor speak the language. The story presents two different phases of the colonial society. The opportunities bestowed to the two Japanese who sought to eke out a living on the margin of the empire apparently were getting tougher and tougher for low-skill workers like Ōzawa. Unlike Handa who easily assumed the colonial elite status of law and order, the prospects for the generation of Ōzawa and Ichinomaru were much more challenging. The reason that Ōzawa and Ichinomaru fell in love and conspired about a brutal crime resides in the fact that they are not only they identified with each other as they share the home region where they came from (and one presumes that they speak the same Kumamoto dialect that was much despised by Japanese from other regions, such as Tokyo); they also empathized with each other’s hard lives in the colony. Ichinomaru was sold into the brothel to this provincial town on the remote island while the meager wage Ōzawa earned as a store clerk did not allow him to redeem the woman he loved. The narrative irony was abundantly clear. Ōzawa and the old detective Handa who could not make it in Japanese society went to Taiwan to make something out of themselves. One was successful and the other resolved to murder and fraud. In the story, Taiwan is designated as a place where many risk their lives and die from illness, but in this case, Ōzawa faked his own death to collect the insurance payout.

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<sup>13</sup> Nakajima Toshio et al. eds. 2002: 181.

Another aspect that makes this story stand out is the scope of action that crosses the strait between Taiwan and Japan. After Ōzawa snuck back to Japan, he started a new life in Tokyo with a newly assumed identity. However, the Japanese society in the 1920s when this case was set in was a highly surveilled society with police stationed all over the country in the police box (kōban 交番) that watched over each neighborhood. On the day when Ōzawa was arrested, he was able to evade his neighborhood-patrolling policeman but several blocks down, he was stopped by a more persistent policeman and thus arrested. Ōzawa, away from his own country for years, had become a total stranger in his own country, eventually resulting in his downfall. The narrative shows that there is a vast crime fighting network that connecting *gaichi* 外地 and *naichi* 内地 that maintains the order of the empire. It also tells of the maturity of the empire and its firm control in matters of law and order. Unlike at the turn of the century when Taiwan served as a gateway place for outlaws and marginal figures to flight to, the colony three decades later is part of the total empire, highly regulated and policed. The tale demonstrated to its readers, both ethnic Japanese expatriates and native Taiwanese residents alike, that the dragnet of law would find you no matter where you are and the order would be restored no matter how heinous and cleaver the criminal worked.

Yet, amidst all these descriptions of brilliant detective work, one notices the absence (particular from the perspective of a postcolonial reader) of the victim in this case. The narrative pays scant attentions to the native man who was murdered to substitute for Ōzawa's own body. In his confession, Ōzawa mentioned that the victim was just a mere rootless vagrant so no one would be looking for him. The reason that he cut off his hands and feet is that "the island man has big feet" while "my own feet are thin and supple."<sup>14</sup> In order to mask the physical differences

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<sup>14</sup> Nakajima Toshio et al eds. 2002: 191.

between the native man (even though he wore the Japanese man's clothes) and the Japanese Ōzawa, more drastic procedures had to be done. To further blur the identity between the native and the Japanese, Ōzawa skinned off the man's face and pulled out his hair to further camouflage the ethnic identity of the victim. The frenetic effort on the part of Ōzawa to erase racial and class demarcations of the victim: removed facial skin so that he would not be identified as a native and cutting of feet and hands so not to reveal the body belongs to a lowly laborer, designated a racially-encoded crime that was totally silent in the telling of the crime. The crime can only be considered as partially solved since the identity of the native vagrant victim remains unknown and unimportant to the end of the tale. The fictional world suggests that this migrating violence is not a social aberration but a structural feature of empire and the transnational (and at time highly violent) encounters that it brought upon the native populations.<sup>15</sup>

Another as grisly crime tale of this subgenre is “The Dismemberment Incident of Keelung” (*Kiirun no barabara jiken* 基隆のばらばら事件, 1941) by Yamashita Keikō 山下景光.<sup>16</sup> The narrative structure of the story is much more straightforward compared to Noda Bokusen's previous story which use old detective Handa's current narrative voice to relate a case happened in the past, supplemented with the confession of the criminal Ōzawa that gave us background story of his life. If “The Dismemberment Incident of A-gao” emphasizes the social consequence of the desperation of the lower class (both in the settler community and the native circle) “The Dismemberment Incident of Keelung” employed a different mode in focusing on the thoughts and actions of one central protagonist, Detective M, and the scientific methods and

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<sup>15</sup> Here I concurred with Nels Pearson and Marc Singer in their discussion of migrant violence in Victorian crime fiction, mostly on Edgar Allan Poe's “The Murders in the Rue Morgue” (1841) and Author Conan Doyle's *A Study in Scarlet* (1887). See Nels Pearson and Marc Singer 2009: 3-4.

<sup>16</sup> Yamashita's works tend to feature marital problems, sexual scandals, and deviant sexual acts (*hentai seiyoku* 変態性欲). See such stories in Nakajima Toshio et. al. eds. 2002:291-314.

the tenacity of the colonial police force. While Detective M was having his hair cut, his barber confided to him that the couple next door had had a fierce fight last night, and that the wife might have run away after that, since he had not yet seen her since. This casual conversation planted a seed of suspicion in the detective's mind, and he started his investigation of the missing wife Miya. It turns out that the husband Yoshimura was an ex-policeman himself and since had become a successful high-ranking officer working for the custom office at the port of Keelung. The story unfolds with a cat and mouse game between Detective M and Yoshimura, whose official status and calm manner baffled the police. The detective was able to piece together evidence and tracked down Yoshimura and his mistress Shizu's whereabouts and eventually came to the conclusion that they both conspired to kill the wife. The second part of the narrative focused on finding the missing body. Yoshimura confessed to dismembering his wife's body and throwing the body in four gasoline drums into the ocean. Without the physical evidence of the dead body, Yoshimura could walk, and that motivated the detective to look hard for the body. Finally, with great labor and determination, and the help of local fishermen and divers, the body was retrieved from the sea and careful identification procedures, both scientific (i.e. dental record to identify the victim) and cultural (i.e. Yoshimura shaved the victim's hair in accordance with the funeral practice in his hometown in Mie Prefecture), were applied to determine the identity of the victim. The narrative ends with a high praise for the efficiency of the detective and his crew (decisive, enthusiasm, detail oriented, hard work, etc.) and a matter-of-fact statement of the punishment the suspects received.<sup>17</sup>

These two texts provide us with specific generic evidence of colonialism and empire. The investigation and solving of the crime served to reinstate order and discipline, the primary colonial interests, and social stability. To make these stories as "real" as possible, the narrative

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<sup>17</sup> Nakajima Toshio et. Al. eds. 2002: 321.

attached a photograph of Yoshimura and his mistress to underline the authenticity of the story. The conferment of the visual queue not only spawned voyeuristic pleasure and sensation for the readers that in turn created market ramification, it also produced certain desirable political and policy consequences. Evidently, many of the so-called crime fiction in the colonial period emphasized its relationship to reality. Considering the nature of the magazine that published these stories (*Journal for Taiwan Police Association* 台湾警察協會雜誌, keeping this narrative as real as possible heightened the polemical nature of the case and served as the morality tale for mass general readers.

## **VI. Riddle, Fauna, and Feminine Body: Hikage Jōkichi's Enigmatic Inner Journey and postcolonial reflections**

There are many reasons why people traveled from the metropole to the colonies. Unintentional seafarers; colonial administrators, bureaucrats, and soldiers; imperial outings; and the newly mobilized pleasure seeking middle class were all part of the human flow that shuttled between the metropole and the colonies. They came with official obligations, with a certain political agenda, for economic reasons or just pure enjoyment. Whether they were aware of it or not, most, if not all of them, seem to have undergone some sort of transformation over the course of the journey.

Hikage Jōkichi 日影丈吉 (1908-1991), a popular postwar suspense writer known for his detached style and cogent plots, spent four years as a soldier stationed in Taiwan from 1943 to 1946. Based on this experience he wrote two novels and many short stories using Taiwan as the stage for his dark and enigmatic murder mystery.<sup>18</sup> As a non-commissioned officer (*kashikan* 下

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<sup>18</sup> Hikage's writings on Taiwan, which are referred to by the critics as *Taiwan mono* (tales of Taiwan) include novels, novel *Internal Truth* (*Naibu no shinjitsu* 内部の真実, 1959), *The family*

士官) who served as an advance guard for the troupe and a liaison officer, Hikage was afforded the rare opportunity to travel all over the island. This unique experience contributed to his later writings about Taiwan. In the foreword to his short story collection Hikage talked about his relationship with Taiwan:

I was in Taiwan for three year during the war. At the time, I felt that the nature and the people were real entities that were constantly moving. I do not remember any other time I ever experienced the flow of time in such an intense way. But it was also a time I felt extremely calm and hollow as the impending danger of death faced me, my heart was nevertheless determined to see everything as long as I was alive and present in the place. I do not need to frame it in questions of death or love. Therefore, Taiwan does not seem to be just a place in my memory.<sup>19</sup>

As Kawamura Minato points out, Hikage wrote about his relationship with Taiwan with a certain urgency even though it was three decades ago when the author was in Taiwan.<sup>20</sup> Even though he was only in Taiwan for three years, it seems its psychological impact was much more profound than any casual travelers would have. As a mystery writer, Hikage is not particularly prolific, so the prominence of his writings on Taiwan stands out in the author's oeuvre. In the same article, Hikage jokes about after the war, a diplomat friend of his complained that the Taiwan Hikage wrote about does not exist anywhere in reality. Indeed, Hikage's stories would not serve as practical guides for those who travel there. The dark, moody, and atmospheric mode that permeates his tales cannot be readily discovered in reality. Hikage's Taiwan experience is not pure fabrication and yet it is a memory that reconstructed and represented filtering through

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of *Ō* (*Ōke nohitobito* 応家の人々, 1961) and short stories like “The nightmare demon” (*Miancenggui* 眠床鬼), “Judgment day in the Palace of the Heavenly Immortals” (*Tenshenkyū no shinpanjitsu* 天仙宮の審判日), “The family that disappeared” (*Kieta ie* 消えた家), and “The noisy corpse” (*Sawakgu shitai* 騒ぐ屍体) that are included in a collected volume under the title *Strange Tales From Formosa* (*Kareitō shiki* 華麗島志奇 1975).

<sup>19</sup> Kawamura Minato 2001: 97.

<sup>20</sup> Hikage was thirty-five years old when he was stationed on the colonial island. He was sixty-seven years old when he wrote the *Forward* for the Collection in 1975.



Hikage's literary mind. It is, as the title of the short story collection *Strange Tales From Formosa* suggested ("Formosa" literally means "beautiful island," a term Dutch shipmen coined when they first saw the lush island. It has since come to be used as the term of endearment for the island colony), a construct of imagination or oriental fantasy.

Compared to the crime fiction of the colonial era (as discussed in the above section) told in a straightforward, matter-of-fact documentary style, Hikage's crime fiction set in Taiwan employed a complicated narrative structure to create ambiguity and enigma. Even when the case is more or less solved, there is rarely a sense of catalectic closure or a real sense of cathartic resolution. In the novel *The Family of Ō*, the author uses a dualistic narrative structure to tell of two murder cases simultaneously, one set in the wartime Taiwan, the other in the postwar Japan. A old man who was a soldier in Taiwan during the old day was murdered in an erotic night club involving a beautiful Chinese singer Wu Xingfang 吳馨芳 whereas the murder in Taiwan implicates another beauty named Ō Shanxi 応珊希 who hailed from a rich and prestigious old family in Tainan. The narrator "I" is charged with solving the two murders separated by different geographical locations and historical times.

Similar dual narrative frames were also employed in another Hikage Jōkichi murder mystery novel *Internal Truth* (*Naibu no shinjitsu* 内部の真実, 1959), a novel about a love triangle between two Japanese soldiers and a Taiwanese woman. The story was set in the fictional town called Tōgen 桃原 (most likely modeled after the actual city Tōen 桃園 in the northern part of the island). A young woman Tsuneko 恒子 was a popular figure among the Japanese soldiers stationed in town. The narrative consists of two parts, the first part told from a journal kept by sergeant Otaka 小高 while in part II a new narrator delineates the bewildering mystery as we learn that the first narrator sergeant Otaka has died.

The narrative begins by immediately thrusting the reader in a crime scene where the First Sergeant of the brigade, a man called Toma, 苦 was shot to death, while Nakura 名倉, a low ranking soldier who was in charge of cooking lay nearby unconscious. Subsequently two pistols were found in the crime site (Tsuneko's family garden). We were informed that both the soldiers, though different in rank, were in love with the lovely Tsuneko, so on first sight, it seemed reasonable to assume that Nakura shot Toma out of jealousy. However, Nakura's pistol was not loaded and the pistol found beside Toma's dead body fired only one shot. Neither weapon has any fingerprints on them. It was unlikely that Nakura could be the murderer since his rank would not allow him to have access to any real bullet.

As the narrator Otaka tells of a bewildering mystery surrounding the death, the initially balanced and dispassionate tone gradually gives way to a more frantic, confused voice. The author takes a deliberately unhurried pace in approaching the truth of the case by sidetracking into Otaka's reminiscings on the social condition of Taiwan and the background information of the incident. With chapter titles like "The Conditions for Darkness and Time" (II) "A Mathematical Deliberation on the Pistol" (III), and "An Observation on Calculation of a Live Bullet" (IV), the author clearly wants to impart an aura of scientific impartiality to the entire investigation. Nevertheless, as the narrative progresses, instead of solving the puzzle, more and more characters become suspects and at the same time the suspicion grows that the dead soldier may have just committed suicide. All involved in the murder are somehow connected to the native women whom the narrator associates with a fragrant flower. In several essays Hikage discusses his travail in trying to figure out what is the exact equivalent of Yūlan in Japanese, English, and Latin. A self-proclaimed horticulture buff, he searched through many encyclopedias of plants and flowers and failed to identify the kind that he remember he saw in Taiwan. The

untranslatability of the native flora and fauna, rooted deeply in the soil of the indigenous landscape, comes to symbolize the epistemological and geographical gaps between the native and the colonizer, between the local and the metropole.

The case remains unsolved to the end, which is interrupted by the death of the initial narrator, Sergeant Otaka, in an American air raid. Obviously, the usual rules of deduction do not apply in this case. The more reasoning one applies to the case, the more fractured it becomes; rational deduction gives birth to more pieces of puzzle. Written either at the end of or right after the demise of the Japanese empire, these tales serve as counter-narrative to the high-spirited Meiji discourse of modern rationalism. The murder occurred on a moonless night, with only the heady scent of the magnolia to guide the investigators to the crime scene. The illusive fragrance of the magnolia flower (*yülanhua* 玉蘭花), a flora symbol of the colony, become the major trope for the crime story. The use of the image of magnolia provides a sense of romantic lure and softens the gruesomeness of the homicide.

Other than his novels, Hikage's short stories in *Strange Tales From Formosa* also focus on the trope of Taiwan. The short story "Rainbow" (*Niji* 虹) is a prime example of this category of stories. The narrator "I" was a soldier stationed in Taiwan and now has become a captive of the Chinese army, waiting for the day that he would be sent back to Japan. While the narrator worked as a guardsman at a factory, his colleagues, the ill-tempered and violent Corporal Akutsu 阿久津 and a lower rank private, Miyaji, 宮地 both were in love with a native women Caiyun 彩雲. Miyaji, in particular was taken to Caiyun's three year old daughter Zhuzi 珠子, even though there were abundant rumor circulating that Miyaji was sexually impotent. One day, the little girl was missing despite fervent searches by all that yielded no result. Ten days after the girl was missing, Caiyun and Akutsu's bodies were found. Caiyun was strangled to death while Akutsu

was hanged. The authority quickly determined that the case was a typical case of double suicide carried out by an ex-Japanese soldier and a native prostitute, a rather common occurrence at the time. Afterwards, Miyaji disappeared and later the narrator “I” received a lengthy letter from Miyaji confessing that he killed his superior Akutsu. The motivation was that Miyaji was a coerced accomplice in a previous criminal act when he witnessed Akutsu rape and killed a Taiwanese woman in the mountains in Taichung during the war. Miyaji had since vowed to take revenge for the woman.

“Rainbow” also employs the multiple perspective of narration, setting the temporal progression in postwar Japan. The narrator “I” met someone called Yang Gaoqiu 楊高秋 at an exhibition in Tokyo who turned out to be his old subordinator Miyaji. Miyaji was accompanied by his beautiful young wife Zhuzi who turned out to be the girl missing a long time ago. The narrative simultaneously revealed three events: the rape in the mountain by Corporal Akutsu during the war; the double suicide of Akutsu and Caiyun right after the war; and postwar Tokyo where Miyaji and the narrator reunited.

Desirable native women and multiple Japanese soldiers who fight over them were a repeating structural configuration in Hikage’s work. The multiple narrative frames aside, all these narratives involved a native woman (i.e. 吳馨芳, 宓珊希, 彩雲 etc.) who became the object of desire and focus of pursuit for several Japanese soldiers with different ranks. The narrator Sergeant Otaka in *Internal Truth* articulated his relationship with the female protagonist Tsuneko in the following:

Ever since I first met Tsuneko in Tōgen, the allure of the town that I love so much essentially boiled down to this young woman.... Some soldiers bemoan the fact that native girls tend not to be very well developed physically. But in the case of Tsuneko, even though she graduated from high school several years ago, her small built body and her unyieldingly cool, pale face, though showing some maturity,

still possesses a whiff of the sacredness that one found in prepubescent girl. And that was what fascinated me the most.<sup>21</sup>

Clearly, Hikage's characters have a tendency of mapping the topos of Taiwan onto delicate, preadolescent feminine bodies. As the colonial desire was transferred onto the bodies of these young women, violence was a direct result of the competitive jealousy and resentment among the various Japanese men. This is one intriguing aspect that fundamentally separates Hikage's (post) colonial crime narrative from other colonial crime tales. That is, the native female is not necessarily always the murder victim like many stories of the colonial crime fiction genre. Rather, frequently, the internal strife between the Japanese soldiers often caused the death of another soldier. In other words, Japanese soldiers often become the victim of the violence of their own supposed comrades. Hikage is particularly keen on highlighting the hierarchical differences resulting from the ranks embedded in the military apparatus. Kawamura Minato drew upon an 1946 serial rapist and murder case by a repatriate soldier Kotaira Yoshio 小平義雄 in his analysis of Hikage's works. Kotaira was a soldier fighting in China who committed many violent acts against Chinese women. Upon returning to Japan, amidst the chaotic postwar society, he continued to murder a series of Japanese women. Kawamura saw a continuation of the pre-war and postwar violence.<sup>22</sup> Hikage's experience in Taiwan made him keenly aware of the inherent violent nature the superior officers put on their subordinator.

Despite the dizzily disorienting vision and the seduction of the languorous tropics, the island remained a *terra incognita* for Hikage's stories. Though his narratives anchored themselves in the materiality of their loci, the unique native fauna, and the magnolia was an enigmatic gesture to the haunting ghost of colonialism. Taiwan became a discursive space

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<sup>21</sup> Kawamura Minato 2001: 105.

<sup>22</sup> Kawamura Minato 2001: 102.

through which these sojourners could roam, whether as an alluring nostalgic past or atoning for collective sin (like Otaka). By highlighting the structural deficiency of racial and class distinctions and providing a morally ambiguous closure, Hikage uses Taiwan not just as an exotic foreign setting, but dramatizes the challenges of getting a clear-eyed reckoning of the racial injustice and the imbalance of knowledge-production in the colonial Taiwan.

## V. Conclusion

As mentioned in the beginning of this paper, attitudes toward the crime fiction and detective novel have shifted considerably in recent years among literary scholars. The genre is no longer being viewed as “a paradigm and an implement of the hegemonic process of the nation-state” with a set of “conventions and formulas that reaffirm a culture’s dominant ideology, confirming existing definition of the world, and attempting to resolve their tensions of contradiction.”<sup>23</sup> Recent scholarship focuses on the potential of the genre to inform us of the “structures of knowledge” and view the genre as formally diverse, flourishing in multiple cultures, and engage in the production of knowledge and transformation of consciousness within and across societies.<sup>24</sup>

Many have pointed out that issue of race, nation, and empire have played important roles in the development of detective/crime fiction.<sup>25</sup> A new kind of anxiety about the nature of crime was brought about by the changing nature of society during the colonial period and these texts reflect the colonial authority’s concern about violent crime on its mixed population and its desire for social and epistemological order. As one can see from the above discussion, the colonial and

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<sup>23</sup> Nels Pearson and Marc Singer 2009: 1.

<sup>24</sup> Nels Pearson and Marc Singer 2009: 2-3.

<sup>25</sup> Ikeda Hiroshi 1997; Chritine Matzke and Susanne Muehleisen 2006; and Nels Perason 2009.

postcolonial crime fictions serve very different purposes. The famous colonial ethnographer and Professor of Anthropology at the Imperial University of Taipei Kanesekei Takeo (金関丈夫 1897–1983) who on top of his prolific academic writings on Southern culture (*nanpō bunka* 南方文化) of the Japanese empire uses different pen names to write non-scholarly works. He is now known for a series of crime fiction with a Taiwanese protagonist, the old man Cao 曹老人, published with the pen name Rin Yūsei 林熊生. The fact that Kanesekei felt the need to hide his true identity while writing crime fiction proves the popularity of the genre at one hand, but also the mass appeal and entertaining nature of the genre was not befitted a scholar in his time. In the postcolonial era, the boundaries of the genre have become fuzzier than ever and the genre is told through a wide range of registers, themes and styles, from pulp fiction to highly literary novels such as that by Hikage Jōkichi whose (re)imagined fragmented narratives focusing on racial tensions, gender conflicts, and the morals of violence is a far cry from cozy mysteries with a sense of comforting closure.

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