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Re-Writing Culture in Taiwan, edited by Fang-Long Shih, Stuart
Thompson and Paul-François Tremlett

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The only flaw in this study is of a theoretical nature. In the Introduction, Tian attempts to define the theoretical premises for his conception of the “poetics of displacement and difference,” which is referred to as an aesthetic and ideological construct. He then describes four modes of displacement common to intercultural theatre: displacement by interpretation, displacement by appropriation, displacement by parody (Linda Hutcheon) and displacement by translation (Walter Benjamin). However, he not only fails to define clearly how his study relates to these different modes, but also leaves behind the theoretical premises discussed in the introduction when he examines individual examples in the body of the book. In each chapter he describes every case merely as evidence that cultural exchange is always a generic act of displacement.

As a result, the conclusion of the book appears weakened and further simplifies the theoretical premises. Moreover, despite his attempt to deny the negative connotation of his argument, the judgment he passes upon these cultural practices diminishes the significance of intercultural theatre. This is because Tian does not account for the benefits that processes of intercultural exchanges have brought to both cultures in their attempt to renovate and create new theatrical languages.

Overall, this minor imperfection does not undermine the value of this study which provides useful insight into the mechanism of intercultural theatre and detailed research into the development process of new theatrical forms in both the West and China.

MARY MAZZILLI

Re-Writing Culture in Taiwan

Edited by FANG-LONG SHIH, STUART THOMPSON and
PAUL-FRANÇOIS TREMLETT

London and New York: Routledge, 2008

xiv + 218 pp. £75.00

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In his Introduction to this volume, Paul-François Tremlett suggests that Taiwan’s unique position in the world vis-à-vis its precarious nationhood and its contested “Chinese” and Taiwanese identities provides the perfect setting to explore the issues raised in the seminal text edited by James Clifford and George Marcus, *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography* (University of California Press, 1986).

The first chapter adheres most closely to this goal. In it, Fang-Long Shih explores the history of Western scholarship of Taiwan and its biases. She notes that most scholars in Taiwan are trained in the West and/or actively engage with Western scholarship. The result, she suggests, is a pervasive treatment of Taiwan’s religions as “Chinese” religions, which distorts our understanding of Taiwan’s religious practices and beliefs. She juxtaposes this by positioning herself as a Taiwanese feminist activist and explores the potential biases that this also poses for her research.

In the next chapter, Paul-François Tremlett also problematizes scholarship that treats Taiwan’s religions as Chinese. His main focus, however, is to outline the ways in which burial grounds are being pushed out of urban spaces to make room for parks and high-rise buildings. Tremlett asserts that because the government

plays an increasingly large role in regulating this, grave sites are transformed from an emblem of tradition to one of a global secularization of space. A bit more attention might have been given to distinguishing between the formal legal control of space and the symbolic uses of those same locals among religious practitioners, the grieving, and the populace at large. In doing so, one might question just how secularized these spaces really have become. Yet Tremlett provides a range of important insights into urbanization and its implications in Taipei, and his chapter is one of the strongest in the volume.

Edward Vickers and Felix Schoeber both write on museum culture. Edward Vickers examines the localization of museum exhibits from early KMT-era attempts to emphasize a shared Chinese history to later endeavours that highlight a distinctly Taiwanese history. Felix Schoeber provides a nice comparative point to Edward Vickers's chapter in that he examines modern art in Taiwan as both global and local culture.

Mark Harrison examines the experiences of Taiwanese people who visit Fujian province to find their ancestral homes. This leads to emotional ambivalence and often contradictory conceptualizations of this experience in terms of personal, ethnic and national identities.

Three chapters address the issue of language and identity. Scott Simon's chapter explores the somewhat Orwellian language wars one must engage in to write about Taiwan. He provides specific examples ranging from presenting on Taiwan's indigenous people in a conference in the PRC, to the politics of appropriating the Canadian term "First Nations" in Taiwan, to the necessity of presenting oneself as a "China Scholar" if one hopes to thrive in Western Academia.

Henning Klöter examines a different linguistic paradigm as he traces the history of Taiwan's governmental policies concerning Mandarin and Hokkien dialects of Chinese. Chris Berry examines the shifts in Taiwan's cinema from KMT-endorsed Mandarin productions that proclaimed a Chinese state to the paradox that Taiwan's cinema is gradually admitting localized dialects and culture at the same moment that it is increasingly becoming part of a transnational cooperative production.

Spring-boarding off from Klöter and Berry's chapters, Stuart Thompson examines a range of cultural implications of Taiwan's educational system that includes modernization, state building, Confucian ideologies, worker discipline, conceptualization of children, and a range of other cultural implications.

Stephan Feuchtwang's afterword provides an important re-examination of the earlier chapters in the context of religious change, class analysis, and issues of cultural and political identity. Feuchtwang helps the reader to review the individual chapters' strengths and weaknesses as well as highlighting the many ways that they hold together as a unit.

Although each of the chapters in this volume addresses the issue of national identity, representation (and misrepresentation) in some way, the ideas of (re)writing culture and writing about cultural change tend to be conflated. Less than half of the chapters deal with reflexivity or the implications and pitfalls of academic writing on culture as might have been expected from the title and introduction. Several of the chapters do not even mention Clifford and Marcus's work.

Yet if the volume as a whole is not consistently concerned with the problems of academic writing on culture, each of the chapters does explore discourses or representations of culture. Themes of state building, modernization and ethnic identity unify the chapters even further to create a text that hangs together extremely well. Each chapter is exceptionally well articulated, full of important insights, and presents a

profoundly interesting range of issues relating to Taiwan's historical and cultural change. For these reasons, the volume stands out as an important contribution to Taiwan Studies.

MARC L. MOSKOWITZ

Storm under the Sun (Hong ri fengbao)

A film by PENG XIAOLIAN and S. LOUISA WEI (2009, 137 minutes, DVD available with English or Chinese subtitles) *Storm under the Sun. Introduction, Script and Reviews* (Bilingual English and Chinese)

Edited and translated by S. LOUISA WEI
Hong Kong: Blue Queen Cultural Communication, 2009
246 pp. doi:10.1017/S0305741009000599

Storm under the Sun is a remarkable historical document on the anti-Hu Feng campaign. Accompanied by a book, this documentary film undertakes to reevaluate the events of 1955 as the first among a series of cultural campaigns defining Maoist politics and paving the way for the Cultural Revolution. Its outstanding feature is without doubt the significant amount of first-hand material here gathered. "Fifth generation" director Peng Xiaolian, as the daughter of Hu Feng's friend Peng Boshan (arrested in 1955 and intermittently imprisoned until he was beaten to death in 1968), gained unequalled access to almost all of her father's contemporaries who were arrested with Hu Feng, and interviewed many of them in the very last years of their lives (most of them have since died). The film effectively uses first-person narration and Peng Xiaolian's own family story as a framework and a recurring point of reference to structure the narrative, which uses interviews, analyses by scholars, and original writings by members of the Hu Feng group, as well as family photographs, woodcuts and political cartoons.

Although Hu Feng's case is well known, it is not often given prominence in discussions of Chinese politics in the 1950s, a field currently at the centre of new historiographic interest (e.g. Jeremy Brown and Paul Pickowicz [eds.], *Dilemmas of Victory*, Harvard University Press, 2008; Mechthild Leutner [ed.], *Rethinking China in the 1950s*, LIT Verlag, 2007). In China, several of the persecuted Hu Feng "elements" have published their memoirs, but public discussion of the movement remains limited. The film vividly underlines the scope of the campaign, in which 92 people were arrested (mostly writers and "cultural workers") and over 2000 people were persecuted in some manner. While there is no decisive revelation about the sequence of events, the interviews give a striking sense of how the cultural institutions of the Maoist state dealt with ordinary intellectuals in the 1950s: the anti-Hu Feng campaign no longer appears as Mao or Zhou Yang's individual revenge, but rather as an example of the "routinization" of bureaucratic dictatorship in the cultural field. Many of the incriminated writers – Ah Long, He Manzi, Lü Yuan, Jia Zhifang, and, the most well known, Lu Ling – are discussed individually, and their poems and other writings are quoted at length, providing a rare opportunity to rediscover a forgotten generation of writers (also recently studied by Kirk Denton, who is interviewed in the film). It is unfortunate that the literary critic Shu Wu, who probably sparked the campaign by submitting personal letters from Hu Feng to the authorities, refuses to grant an interview; however, literary historian Zhu Zheng provides Shu