

The Colonial Palimpsest in Taiwan Indigenous Literature:

An Example of Syaman Rapongan's Writing

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Abstract

Syaman Rapongan's ethnographic and decolonial writing style, along with the palimpsestic displacement of his geographic space and national identity, generates peculiar oceanic characteristics in his works. The elements of national essentialism, creole language strategy, a repetitive narrative, Tao mythological capital, and primitive habitus embedded in his writing, not only weaken but also challenge the long-established aesthetic convention in Han literary field in Taiwan. In this essay, through Rapongan's writing, the colonial palimpsest of Taiwan literature is investigated. The essay also discusses how the first-narrative (rather than the third-narrative) of the indigenes is achieved from the transitions of the Qing governance, Japanese Rule, and the KMT Rule. Rapongan's layered profile and his palimpsestic decolonial strategies are demonstrated. After returning to the Tao Island, his mobilization of Tao habitus and various Tao capital is also discussed. Finally, in terms of Taiwan's special context, the essay finds out that his Tao strategy in the pursuit of national glory even reverses the concept of Bourdieu's theory of Hysteresis.

Keywords: Syaman Rapongan, Colonial Palimpsest, Postcolonialism, Pierre Bourdieu,
Taiwan Indigenous Literature

台灣原住民文學裡的殖民重層

——以夏曼·藍波安的書寫為例*

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摘要

夏曼·藍波安的民族誌暨抵殖書寫風格，以及他重層的地理空間與身份認同的移動與回歸，塑造出一種特異的海洋文學特色。其民族本質主義（**national essentialism**）色彩、克里奧式（**creole**）的語言策略、達悟族神話資本與原初慣習，以及重複式的敘事風格，削弱並挑戰台灣漢語文學場域的美學典範。本文藉由夏曼·藍波安的書寫討論台灣原住民文學的殖民重層。首先討論台灣原住民論述自清領、日治、戰後國民黨統治，如何從第三人稱敘事，轉變成第一人稱敘事。接著討論夏曼·藍波安的重層背景以及他對重層殖民的抵抗敘事及其差異。並觀察夏曼·藍波安自台灣返回蘭嶼後，達悟慣習（**habitus**）暨傳統達悟民族的各種資本如何成為藍波安的生命與書寫主軸。而此追索達悟族民族榮光的策略，如何反轉並修正布爾迪厄的滯後現象（**hysteresis**）理論，與台灣文學脈絡產生連結。

關鍵詞：夏曼·藍波安、殖民重層、後殖民、布爾迪厄、台灣原住民文學

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Fanon argued...Children, both black and white, will have been taught to see history, culture and progress as beginning with the arrival of the Europeans. If the first step towards a postcolonial perspective is to reclaim one's own past, then the second is to begin to erode the colonialist ideology by which that past had been devalued.¹

For the hearts of the young people of various tribes and villages, which are intoxicated with modernity, moving to the metropolises became a new trend in 1970s and 1980s society of Taiwan...The different understanding between two generations [of the Taos] resulted in the chemical reaction of body and mind, which devastated the basis of the primal society of the Taos. The emerging new [Tao] generation became another kind of "diaspora" – the women workers moving in different factories and moldboard workers circulating in various construction sites – whose youth and trauma were not experienced by their [Tao] grandfathers and grandmothers...²

1 In assessing the palimpsestic development of indigenous literary discourse in Taiwan, the dominant "Euro-centric prospect" described by Fanon, can be easily replaced by the dominant "Han-centric prospect" in Taiwan's literary history. *Beginning Theory: An Introduction to Literary and Cultural Theory* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002), p.193.

2 夏曼·藍波安，〈天空的眼睛〉（台北：聯經出版公司，2012.08），頁187。In this essay, the translations into English are my own unless otherwise noted. In addition, "[]" is used to indicate that the words within the square brackets are added by me, not from the original text.

The [Tao] tribe where I live, from Japanese rule to the KMT government, has been the place where the foreign nations anchored.³

I. The Indigenous Diaspora and the Layered Term of Native from the Perspective of the Colonial Palimpsest

Syaman Rapongan (1957-) was a student in Taiwan's higher educational institution, the chief commander of Tao's Anti-nuclear-waste Movement, a traditional Tao man (fisher), and an intellectual and writer (an occupation that is unprecedented in Tao culture). In this way he resembles other indigenous intellectuals who have received a higher education in Taiwan and have then had to translate cultural hegemony in relation to their eroded indigenous culture. At the same time, their learned intellectual distance might often cause them to feel *alienated* in their own residential relocations in everyday life (geographically and intellectually speaking, this could be seen as their colonised homeland, the starting point for decolonial discourses against Taiwan/KMT-Chinese nationalism). There is, however, an important geographical difference in Rapongan's case, since Rapongan's location⁴ is miles away from the colonial Motherland, Taiwan, while the other indigenous intellectuals' residential locations are located in Taiwan. Thus his relocation at an early age from Orchid Island to Taiwan, and then later, from the colonial motherland, where he received his higher education, back to his origins where Tao tradition has been dominated by what he calls the "Han" culture, involves a number of distinct experiences of dislocation. The problematic homecoming does not only bother him when he is, or was, in Taiwan, but also

3 夏曼·藍波安，《海浪的記憶》（台北：聯合文學出版公司，2010.04），頁152。

4 Although Rapongan is mostly based on Orchid Island, his position-taking as a writer makes him a modern Tao with enhanced mobility, who travels very often in Taiwan and occasionally in the wider world to give speeches.

haunts him when he is back on Orchid Island. This poses several questions. To present a big picture, is “indigenous” resistance found among these indigenous intellectuals generally, or simply in Rapongan himself, and is it distinct from the Han-based resistance found within the *Han* Taiwanese writers, who also deal with palimpsestic colonialism? What’s Rapongan’s attitude towards Japanese and Han culture (by using the term Han he refers to “Taiwanese Sinocisation” mostly)? How has his adopted *position-taking* changed (such as the fact that he made the decision to *go back* to the Tao fishing life-style), and how is it reflected in the trajectory of his writing? And how can this be dealt with in terms of Bourdieu’s concept of Field and Habitus? These questions will be raised and answered in the text analysis section of this essay.⁵

To probe into these questions of the style and the development of Syaman Rapongan’s writing in relation to the palimpsestic epistemology of “Taiwan indigenous literature” (or Indigenous Literature in Taiwan) in which different forms and levels of politics have been greatly involved (such as the formation of cultural nationalism on national, tribal, or individual level), my research tools should be explicated first. Two kinds of State Apparatuses, repressive state apparatus (RSA) and ideological state apparatus (ISA), which were originally developed by Louis Althusser to delineate a top-down control of the state. The RSA involves the military and prisons, while the ISA consists of education, media, and literature controlled and influenced by political propaganda.⁶ We can easily find the two forms of state apparatuses appearing in Rapongan’s everyday life on Orchid Island, such as KMT soldiers, veterans, prisoners (RSA), Chinese schooling, patriotic slogans, and civilising agenda (ISA). However, Althusserian state-control paradigm cannot satisfactorily

5 Unfortunately, the answer to the first question requires further study into other indigenous writers, so it is not covered in this essay. Still, some other indigenous writers’ works are compared. The answers to the other questions will be presented fully.

6 Louis Althusser, *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays* (London: NLB, 1971), pp. 136-7, 104, 141.

explain an agent's unexpected actions (even though they are somehow regulated). Therefore, Pierre Bourdieu's habitus is used. Bourdieu first used habitus to explain the people's economic decisions in a pre-capitalist society. Later it was used to count for cultural practices as well. By habitus, Bourdieu refers to a collective mind-set tendency on an agent, which is internalised through everyday practice and interactions between the agent and the world. The internalised tendency as habitus (or structure) makes perceived actions naturalised, and, in return, naturalises the agent's actions.⁷ Habitus is very useful in observing how Rapongan adapted to the two distinctive "structuring structures"; that is, the Han habitus and the Tao habitus. While in terms of macro agents with generational difference of habitus, it is useful to consider Bourdieu's idea of Hysteresis effect (滯後現象). In Bourdieu's original definition, hysteresis effect, as a negative term, refers to the generational difference of habitus—when the habitus of the older generation can no longer adapt to the new ethos. As argued by Swartz, Bourdieu uses the "hysteresis effect" to explain a "structural lag"—as why "Algerian peasants did not rapidly adapt their notions of time and labor to the new values of economic rationality." Also, as Swartz shows, it is also used by Bourdieu to demonstrate the educational lag between working-class youth and their older families.⁸ Next, Bourdieu's Field refers to "a social arena within which struggles or manoeuvres take place over specific resources or stakes and access to them."⁹ Agents can accumulate and exchange the "resources" which comprises of economic, cultural, social, and symbolic capital in the field.¹⁰ In the following sections, we can find how Rapongan deployed his particular

7 Patrice Bonnewitz, 孫智琦譯, 《布赫迪厄社會學的第一課》(台北: 麥田出版社, 2002.03), 頁100。

8 David Swartz, *Culture & Power: The Sociology of Pierre Bourdieu* (London: The University of Chicago Press, 1997), p. 112.

9 同註8, 頁84。

10 Pierre Bourdieu, *The Social Structures of the Economy* (Cambridge: Polity, 1993), p.2.

Tao capital to engage in the Taiwan literary field. Last but not least, Fredric Jameson's concept of "national allegories" offers another way to read "third-world" literature. As Jameson argues: "all third-world texts are necessarily... allegorical, and in a specific way: they are to be read as what I will call national allegories."¹¹ In the following sections, Rapongan's writing will be seen as an attempt to demonstrate (and to some extent even go beyond) the Tao's own national/ethnic allegory within the Taiwan-Orchid Island politics.

According to Liou Wei-ting, the idea of the colonial palimpsest, in which each colonial (and post-colonial) layer is produced through both erosion and absorption, fits the layered colonial historical contexts of Taiwan. It offers the theoretical frame that the position-taking of the coloniser(s) and the colonised can be switched, and therefore the literary production within these colonial/de-colonial/post-colonial epistemology should be seen through both diachronical and synchronic ways. In terms of layered national allegories in 1980s Taiwan, different national narratives had also gone through the process of erosion and absorption (as in the ethnic politics and various national imaginations within the *Bentu* discourse).¹² In this sense, the dialectic discourse for "We" and "Others" not only applies for the "Han" people, but also for the indigenous people. The indigenes in Taiwan, whose oral tradition has long prevented them from forming a national narrative by criteria such as language and historiography controlled by the Dutch, the Ming-Zheng Kingdom, the Qing Empire, the Japanese Empire, and the KMT regime, are usually narrated rather than self-narrating. They were often treated as *savage* objects to be studied by *civilised* Han, Japanese, Taiwanese researchers, and were to be taught to internalise discipline such as to see history, culture, and

11 Fredric Jameson, "Third-World Literature in the Era of Multinational Capitalism", *Social Text*, no.15 (1986), p. 69.

12 Wei-ting Liou. "The Colonial Palimpsest in Taiwanese Literature" (PhD Thesis, Royal Holloway, University of London, 2015), pp. 9-10, 422.

progress as beginning with the arrival of the Japanese or Chinese. The foreign Japanese and Chinese nations had “anchored” Orchid Island through state violence in the name of civilisation. From the perspective of the colonial palimpsest, they are the most native of the nativists in Taiwan, but they are also the most diasporic of the diasporic in Taiwan. Even in contemporary Taiwan, their trauma is often less mentioned than the trauma of the Chinese diaspora whose Nostalgia Literature and Chinese culture were supported by the KMT State power, or than the 2-28 Incident, from which a more legitimate Taiwanese nationalism is extracted after the lifting of martial law in 1987. The glory and trauma seem to belong to Chinese and Taiwanese discourse, rather than the discourse of the indigenous people.

In the literary history of Taiwan, the chronological scope (from the period of Japanese Rule to the postmodern phenomenon) and the various geographical aspects (China, Japan, and Taiwan) of the colonial palimpsest can be detected in Taiwanese literary texts. However, the definition and re-definition of the native¹³ voice (be it by Japanese, Chinese, or Taiwanese) consistently appear, especially when the terms such as nation and state are brought up in discussion with modernity. The position-taking of *being native*, “returning to the past,” and relative *native* discourses, which are inevitably a kind of cultural essentialism,¹⁴ have been the usual slogans advocated by cultural intellectuals, whether they are in a dominant or dominated position, with the state power or against it. To Wu Zhuoliu, being *native* refers to an anti-Japanese position-taking, whilst it also implies a return to Han-identification and Han culture. To some intellectuals involved in the

13 In this essay, the term native normally refers to *Xiangtu* or *Bentu* in Chinese, which means local rather than indigenous.

14 By cultural essentialism, I mean the purity pursuits of the native discourses in extreme forms, such as that in the Nativist (Taiwanese) Literary Debate in the 1920s, the *Kōminka* (Japanese-becoming) movement in the 1930-40s, the Chinese Cultural Renaissance Movement (being “pure” Chinese) in the 1960s and the Nativist Literary Debate in the 1970s.

Taiwanese Literary Debate in the 1920-30s, being native could refer to the choice between taking a Taiwan-leaning decolonising position and becoming-Japanese (especially in the high peak of the Kōminka movement). However, to post-war writers such as Bai Xianyong, being native means a slow process of relocation given his diasporic Chinese background. To the older Taiwanese generation, being native means a return to a pre-war Japanese ethos. While in the Nativist Literary Debate in the late 1970s, being native offers two opposing routes—being a Chinese native or being a Taiwanese native. In 1980s Taiwan, where indigenous intellectuals gathered, indigenous magazines were published, and many literary awards were presented to emerging indigenous writers such as Walis Norgan; being-native in this social context, to both indigenous intellectuals and *Han* intellectuals, not only suggests a *native* position-taking of being-Taiwanese within or independent of the Chinese-Taiwanese (*Han*) duality, but also reflexively suggests a layered *being native* meaning. This reflexive aspect of the meaning of native also reciprocally redefines the border of being Chinese and being Taiwanese in the post-martial-law period of Taiwan; that is to say, whether indigenous nativeness should be included in the cultural/political Chinese and Taiwanese nationalism, or whether it should be independent of them. As Chiu Kuei-fen points out, in the late 1990s, the Taiwanese nativist movement “turned to indigenous culture for its quest for ‘genuine’ Taiwanese identity”.¹⁵ This reflection, at the same time, invites the re-thinking of the layered suppression suffered by the indigenes—the double-suffering situation dating from the Qing-rule period, Ming-Zheng period, Japanese rule, through post-war KMT rule, to post-martial-law Taiwan, in which the indigenes were the suppressed as the subaltern of the subaltern.

Although the idea of indigenous literature and its related discourses

15 Kuei-fen Chiu, “The Production of Indigeneity: Contemporary Indigenous Literature in Taiwan and Trans-cultural Inheritance” *The China Quarterly*, Vol. 200 (2009), p. 1073.

is quite *modern* in world literature, it developed and matured alongside nationalism. However, in Taiwan's palimpsestic colonial context, it has long been absent, or more precisely, it has long been a deliberately dismissed and suppressed literary genre. What is worse, indigenous literature and its relative discourses were treated as something more marginal than the *Han* people's decolonial discourses either under the Japanese rule or under the KMT regime, and failed to gain a legitimate status in the Han/Chinese-dominated or Japanese-dominated literary field. Yet, among the decolonising discourses in the period of Japanese Rule, many of the decolonising Han discourses claimed their subjectivity and semi-legitimate position through claiming to be "native" (*Bentu*, or *Xiangtu*) or "Taiwanese" so as to go against the *alien* Japanese (as in the Taiwan Language Debate in the 1930s). Or later, in the late 1970s Nativist (*Xiangtu*) Literary Debate, the literary nativists claimed their *native status* so as to go against the dominant immigrant Chinese KMT ideology. In both cases the most native indigenous voice was neglected. Therefore, from the indigenous perspective, although both these literary debates contained much that was anticolonial, they were primarily a Han propagandists' game played by the Han nativists. Under martial-law, the study of indigenous culture and its genetic links with the Taiwanese people were remarkably neglected. (Even if they existed, they were put under the name of "Chinese study.") This greatly reduces the chances of border-crossing between defined "Taiwanese" and indigenous identity, and between "Chinese" identity and indigenous identity. During the post-martial-law period, the purity of Chineseness, Taiwanessness, and even indigeness (such as the wider acceptance of the Pinpu identity among Taiwanese people) were challenged, and, as a result, these terms have increasingly converged.

Indigenous literature has a formal and semi-legitimate appearance until 1980s Taiwan, in which decade the game of defining "indigenous writing"

and “indigenoussness” was finally played mostly by indigenes, rather than by the *Han* people, or, (as I have explained) the Taiwanese people who internalised Han cultural nationalism and then identified themselves as Han people. Carrying a border-defining nature—refusing the easy inclusion of typical classical Chinese literature, Japanese literature and post-war Chinese literature—the emergence of this Native 1980s indigenous literature allowed a whole new consideration of the (once KMT-dominant) *Taiwanese* (or Chinese) literary history which gradually gained legitimacy in the 1980s *Taiwanese* literary field. This re-examination of Taiwanese literary subjectivity revealed that the subjectivity of the indigenous population was inevitably assimilated to mainstream post-war Sinicised Taiwanese culture, consciously or unconsciously, especially when the representation and performance of the original culture has long been at the disposal of the so-called Han people, the Taiwanese, whose political and cultural hegemony defined what kind of legitimate culture was to be learned through the KMT state power. Accordingly, the collective Chinese habitus (produced and controlled by the KMT) was shaped and has been self-reproduced on the marginalised “mountainous” people (a KMT term); the capitalist economic capital and Chinese-dominated cultural capital (such as Chinese writing via the national Mandarin-speaking language policy) are disseminated through national education and have invaded the indigenous society. Thus many indigenous elites (just like the post-war Taiwanese generation) are in a sense the products of the KMT’s Chinese hegemonic education, since they have learned Chinese fluently in order to occupy a place in the literary field. (This could be seen as a form of *mimicry* from a postcolonial perspective of Homi Bhabha.) For example, Yubas Naogih (Tien Minzhong, 1943-2003) admits that a “deep-Han” character has manifested in his “mountainous” writing through the delicate choice of Chinese words. This deep-Han elite style reflects the Chinese

literary college “training” (or, disposition, in Bourdieu’s term) he received from the Department of Chinese at National Taiwan Normal University.¹⁶ To indigenous people, the Chinese language acts as both a barrier and a discipline. For indigenous writers, to make their voice heard in the Taiwanese literary field, especially before the lifting of martial law, it was hard to bypass the process of *mimicry* of the Chinese language, and the Chinese ideology underneath.

From the perspective of the colonial palimpsest, with regard to the historiography of indigenous-writing, or the historiography of writing-about-“aborigines” (either by the indigenous writers, Han, or Japanese), the layered indigenous-writing in Taiwanese literary history, such as the Qing traditional literati’s travel Han poetry with its accounts of the “Formosan savages,” the Japanese anthropologists’ categorisation and ethnographies of the “Formosan savages,” and Han writers’ references to the “mountainous writing” of the “mountainous fellows” under the rule of the KMT regime (not to mention the Dutch and English documents of the “Formosan savages” before the 17th century), have generally conformed with the perspectives of the colonisers. Apart from the issues which problematise the purity of the indigenous subjectivity and indigenous writing, however, the emergence and the construction of the belated legitimate indigenous writing still announced that the long-suppressed indigenes finally gained a collective voice to claim an independent subjectivity—whether within or outside the Taiwanese literary field. (As some Indigenous scholars argue that the indigenous discourse should be independent of Taiwanese discourse).¹⁷ The contradictory characters of

16 Yubas Naogih strategically demonstrates an indigenous elite’s struggle in the autobiographical story, “Yubas and His Son”, in which the indigenous teacher’s attempt of returning to a tribal lifestyle becomes something awkward in the eyes of the sinicised policemen and his own son. See 游霸士·撓給赫 (田敏忠), 〈游霸斯與他的兒子〉, 《赤裸山脈》(台北: 晨星出版社, 1999.04), 頁70-76。

17 Such as Pu Zhongcheng, see the following discussion for more detail.

indigenous-writing in relation to its acceptance and resistance of Han cultural hegemony (such as issues related to Han-centred historiography and Chinese language writing in creating indigenous literature) will be explored in this essay mainly through the critical analysis of the works of the indigenous Tao writer Syaman Rapongan (1957-).

The newly-emerged ethnic and national issues within the *Bentuhua* movement returned during the 1980s, in a different fashion from that in the 1970s. In the 1970s, the division between the Chinese complex and the Taiwanese complex was the main topic to be dealt with, first culturally and then politically (as seen in the Nativist Literary Debate). The Nativist discussions in the 1970s mainly argued for the awakening of a “Taiwanese” identity away from the Chinese complex, which was a debate mostly restricted to the so-called Han writers, while the indigenous perspectives were not included. However, these discussions came with a more detailed and anxious search for a *native* subjectivity in the 1980s; who makes up the Taiwanese nation? Similar questions were asked after the Chinese complex was partly questioned¹⁸ with the lifting of martial law. In Liu Liang-ya's words:

Since the 1980s...Democracy, progress, and prosperity, along with the military threat of the People's Republic of China towards Taiwan, resulted in the “Shared Life Community” [*Shengming gongtongti*]. *Bentuhua* (Nativist process) brought the suppressed *native history and*

18 The anxiety of the “Chinese complex” is still present in the post-martial-law Taiwanese culture. The Chinese cultural layer has been treated as a treasure, a burden, or neutrally as simply a cultural heritage. Politics are also involved in this. The resumption of power by the KMT since 2008 has revived the Chinese layer with more positive aspects compared with the DPP's less Chinese-centric cultural policy from 2000-2008. These differences can be seen clearly in their quite different nationalistic policies in relation to editing historical textbooks.

native culture to the surface, as well as the ethnic contradiction...¹⁹

As Liu points out, ethnicity became an inevitable issue when dealing with the newly popular Taiwanese nationalism. However, from an indigenous perspective, the works of authors like Wu Zhuoliu, Bai Ju, Bai Xianyong are more or less foreign and alien with regard to Taiwanese indigenes who have been the *natives* of this country for thousands of years—that is, the works mentioned are more or less Chinese, Japanese, or Han-Taiwanese (they contain versions of Chinese-centred, Japanese-centred, and Han-Taiwanese-centred ideology), and especially after the martial law institution, they are mostly appreciated among scholars who internalised Chinese literary disciplines. Accordingly, the long-neglected ethnic indigenes and their literary writing act as a unique symbolic production in Taiwan—the most Nativist of native. They became the ultimate icon for the solution of the reconstruction of Taiwanese subjectivity at a time when the Taiwanese were seeking cultural (and to some extent, political) independence, especially in the 1980-90s.²⁰ At this stage, the (re)construction of an independent Taiwanese identity, either in culture or in politics, could not avoid repositioning the indigenes, though this is a belated reflection—a late de-colonisation within/outside the seemingly righteous de-colonial (Taiwanese) discourses.

In the light of these reflections on Taiwanese nationalism and ethnicity after the 1980s, a Hoklo Chauvinism (*Fulao shawen zhuyi*), to take one example, was named and strongly criticised (particularly by Chinese nationalists) because of its emphasis specifically on the Hoklo ethnic group as the

19 The terms “native history” and “native culture” here refer to the history and culture of local Han Taiwanese, rather than those of the indigenous people. See 劉亮雅，〈解嚴以來的台灣小說：回顧與展望〉，《思想》8期（2008.01），頁125。My italics.

20 This indigenous quality, the most Nativist of native, is also appropriated politically by the KMT ROC, and the PRC, who both treat the Taiwanese indigenes as one of the minority tribes of China.

representative ethnic group for all the Taiwanese, at the cost of other ethnic groups in Taiwan. This attack on “chauvinism” may partly have resulted from the ethnic anxiety that the Chinese nationalists (mainly made up of Chinese non-provincial ethnic group) experienced, since they were worried that the interpretation of national discourse would no longer be possessed by them as part of Chinese nationalism, but instead, in post-martial-law Taiwan, would fall into the hands of *native* Taiwanese people (mainly made up of the Hoklo ethnic group). Amongst this fighting for the interpretation of Taiwanese discourse, in which “being native” was the motif, the indigenous voice was again dismissed by both Chinese and Taiwanese sides. This was one example of the ways that indigenous discourse has been neglected in Taiwanese Nativist (*Bentuhua*) discourse, or, in other words, was “structurally” and “habitually” absent from the dominant discourse of Han ethnic groups (Hoklo, Hakka, and Chinese non-provincial ethnic groups) in the Han-dominant cultural field in Taiwan. This shows that the *Bentuhua* Han discourses since the 1970s have not advanced their scope to converse with the most native natives—the indigenous people.

In reviewing the *Bentuhua* movement, Liao Hsien-hao argues that political liberation is not enough: “the overthrow of the KMT and the hegemony behind it is not the ultimate goal of Han-centred decolonisation/*Bentuhua* [Nativist] discourse.” Instead, apart from the political liberation of “the Taiwanese” from “the Chinese” (through actions such as the lifting of Martial Law), a complete cultural and ethnic reflection of the colonial nature of the Han/Chinese dominance over the indigenes should be the ultimate goal:

in the end though the *Bentuhua* movement claimed to represent all the Taiwanese, what it was concerned with was only issues among the Han people...this nativist discourse more or less appropriated the position

of “the colonised” [the Han Taiwanese nativists], and never mentioned the fact that they [the Han nativists] had long been the colonisers [of the indigenes].²¹

The deconstruction of the layered Han/Chinese dominant aspect of cultural discourse in Taiwan, as well as the Han/Chinese-centred literary discourse discussed here, became the necessary step in making Taiwan a real multi-ethnic nation. This reconsideration of the Han-defined *Nativist* discourse gradually became a widely accepted concept in the 1990s, either through internal reflection on Chinese/Han discourse or through the rise of the (external) challenging indigenous discourse (this was also encouraged by the external stimulation of an increase in South-East Asian workers and immigrants to Taiwan.) However, multi-ethnicity remains an ideal concept rather than an everyday life practice in terms of Taiwanese culture, as Yu Sheng-kuan argues:

Even though the Taiwanese stance—each ethnicity is part of the [Taiwanese] subjectivity—was proposed in the 1990s, a “Chinese stance” was still adopted by Chinese-literary-discourse supporters as a way against the “multi-subjectivity Taiwanese stance.”²²

Although the development of the indigenous literary discourse in the field of Taiwanese literature was/is a struggle, as seen above, the terms “indigenous literature,” along with “indigenes” did finally gain their legitimate status in the late 1980s. For example, Pu Zhongcheng, an indigenous scholar of the Zou people, in the Preface to his *Taiwan yuanzhuminzu wenxue shigang* *The*

21 廖咸浩，〈「漢」夜未可懼，何不持炬遊——原住民的新文化論述〉，孫大川主編，《台灣原住民族漢語文學選集—評論卷》上（台北：印刻文學出版公司，2003.03），頁249-278。

22 游勝冠，《台灣文學本土論的興起與發展》（台北：群學出版公司，2009.05），頁375。

Historical Outline of Literature of the Aborigines in Taiwan, insists that indigenous literature should be independent from Taiwanese literature, rather than being included in it. He argues that “Taiwanese literature” is mainly a Han/Chinese-constructed literary discourse, as discussed above, and that the state power of Japanese Rule and that of the Republic of China (KMT) in Taiwan have played crucial roles (colonial in this context) in positioning the literature of the indigenous population in the Taiwanese literary field.²³ These indigene-based perspectives not only provide a reflection on Han/Chinese-constructed Taiwanese nationalism, but also a reflection on Han-based post-colonial discourse in Taiwan. These views could be further discussed in respect of how to see so-called Chinese Literature in Taiwan, and the emerging Taiwanese Literary discourses in the world, as they are in general based on either Chinese or Han-Taiwanese perspectives, which almost always neglect the existence of the (Taiwanese) indigenous voice. Returning to the discussions above, it is not until the 1990s, after the rise of indigenous discourse in Taiwan that the issues of the suppression of indigenous peoples and cultures were formally attended to within the Han/Chinese or Taiwanese dominant cultural field. Also, it is only through the efforts of the indigenous elite in the Indigenous Awakening Movement (since the 1980s), that post-colonial discourse from an indigenous perspective on Taiwanese literature, culture and history has finally begun to emerge.

From Third Person to First Person Narrative

Since the introduction and population of postcolonial theories in Taiwan in the late 1980s, literary texts and historical contexts of Taiwan started to gain the possibility to be viewed and treated as products of colonial powers.

23 巴蘇亞·博伊哲努，〈台灣原住民族文學史綱〉（台北：里仁書局，2009.10），頁1-35。

With the help of the lifting of martial law, identity politics, national glories and trauma were to be viewed with postcolonial perspectives. In other words, it is necessary to take a native Taiwanese position—to embrace the peculiar “colonial palimpsest” situation—just like the native position that Fanon took, in order to think beyond the limits of the duality within the coloniser and the colonised.

In fact, these indigenous terms have gone through a palimpsestic progress in its development, which is closely related to the changes in the social context of 1970s and 1980s Taiwan. As shown in Taiwan’s history, each colonial power ruling Taiwan used its historiographical method to justify the legitimacy of its rule over the island and its subjects. When it comes to Taiwanese indigenes, the Zou tribal indigenous scholar Pu Zhongcheng points out, in both Qing-Chinese and Japanese travel notes, there were ethno-centric narratives which gave exaggerated accounts of Taiwanese indigenes, in which ethnic discrimination was embedded.²⁴ According to Chen Long-ting, in the period of Japanese Rule, the field researches into Taiwanese indigenes conducted by Japanese scholars (such as Inō Kanori, Torii Ryūzō, Mori Ushinosuke, and Kano Tadao) provided more reliable information than the official and semi-official materials produced in the Qing governance period.²⁵ As Chiu Kuei-fen points out, “In anthropological works, indigenous people often play the role of interviewee of native informant.”²⁶

In the period of Qing governance, Taiwanese indigenes were narrated by Qing officials travelling to Taiwan, in works such as Yu Yonghe’s *Bihai jiyou Small Sea Travel Diaries* (1833). On the other hand, indigenous oral literature,

24 See note 23.

25 陳龍廷，〈相似性、差異性與再現的複製：清代書寫台灣原住民形象之論述〉，《博物館學季刊》17卷3期（2003.07），頁91-111。

26 Kuei-fen Chiu. “The Production of Indigeneity: Contemporary Indigenous Literature in Taiwan and Trans-cultural Inheritance” *The China Quarterly*. Vol. 200, p. 1072.

since it was not written in the Han language, was neglected in the Han literary field—it only appeared in anthropological records in the period of Japanese Rule. In post-war Taiwan, there was some of what was called “Mountainous Writing” published during the KMT Martial Law period, such as Chen Yingxiong’s *Xuanfeng qiuzhang—yuanzhumín de gushi* *The Whirling Chief: Stories of the Aboriginal People* (2003, reprint), which was originally published in 1971 under the title *Yuwai menghen* *Traces of Dreams in Foreign Lands*. However, the narrative lacked indigenous subjectivity, and was full of the Chinese national discipline and pro-Chinese nationalistic assimilating complex. Therefore, according to Chiu Kui-fen, a first person narrative was stressed by the indigenous scholar Sun Dachuan. Chiu explains Sun’s first person narrative that “writing in the form of the autobiographical ‘I’ was a gesture to reclaim the subject position which was denied to aborigines in mainstream discourse.”²⁷

A Palimpsestic Colonisation and Becoming Indigenous

Liao Hsien-hao argues that the Taiwanese indigenes’ have suffered from a “double-dominance” situation from the period of Japanese Rule to the period of the KMT regime (by both the Japanese and by the Han people).²⁸ The indigenous population had historically faced foreign powers such as Han immigrants since the Ming-Zheng Kingdom, Qing dynasty’s rule, Japanese colonisation, KMT regime, and most of all, at present, internalised dominance by the collective Han/Chinese habitus.²⁹ In fact, what the indigenes face is a palimpsestic colonial past.

As we have seen, with regard to the issue of the subjectivity of

27 Kuei-fen Chiu. “The Production of Indigeneity: Contemporary Indigenous Literature in Taiwan and Trans-cultural Inheritance” *The China Quarterly*. Vol. 200, p.1072.

28 See note 21, pp. 253-257 °

29 The term Han is no longer the “Sinicised culture,” but “Taiwan-ised” Han culture from the perspective of the indigenes.

indigenous writing, especially focusing on the period of post-1980s Taiwan when indigenous intellectuals have been consciously mobilised, indigenous magazines have been published, and many literary awards have been awarded to indigenous writers (such as Walis Norgan)³⁰, the production of the quite new category of “indigenous writing” has brought new form and content to the Han/Chinese-dominant literary field, as well as new problems. Nevertheless, according to Chiu Kui-fen, the year 1984 is seen as a “landmark in the history of indigenous literature in Taiwan.” The first special issue of indigenous literature in a poetry journal called *Chunfeng Spring Breeze* was published. The Association for the Promotion of the Rights of the Indigenous People in Taiwan was also established in 1984.³¹ However, in terms of readership, Wei Yijun argues that many of these elite indigenous writers in fact targeted the large Han/Chinese readership instead of the more limited indigenous readership.³² This demonstrates that the external sinicised cultural layer, as well as the internal Han cultural habitus embedded in the indigenous elite, was an inevitable colonial situation that the indigenous elite had to negotiate.

The legitimate term Indigenous Literature (*Yuanzhumin wenxue*) has gone through a palimpsestic development, finally becoming what it is. As we have seen, it was named as Mountainous Literature (*Shandi wenxue*) in the 1980s, a name which was first proposed by Wu Jinfa when he edited *Beiqing de shanlin: taiwan shandi xiaoshuoxuan The Sad Forests: The Collection of Taiwanese Mountainous Fiction* (1987). This naming inevitably carried a discriminatory meaning inherited from the Chinese-centred KMT ideology. In the 1990s, the term

30 魏貽君，〈找尋認同的戰鬥位置——以瓦歷斯·諾幹的故事為例〉，孫大川主編，《台灣原住民族漢語文學選集 評論卷》下（台北：印刻文學出版公司，2003.03），頁97-98。

31 Kuei-fen Chiu. “The Production of Indigeneity: Contemporary Indigenous Literature in Taiwan and Trans-cultural Inheritance” *The China Quarterly*. Vol. 200, p. 1073.

32 同註30，頁97-100。

Indigenous Literature *Yuanzhumín wénxué* finally gave this writing a neutral existence. The definition of Indigenous Literature has also gone through successive stages from ethnic essentialism to a multi-ethnicism. According to Chen Chi-Fan's review, the successive stages of Indigenous Literature have run from whether the writer has an indigenous identity (a genetic perspective, argued by Wu Jinfa in 1989, Tian Yage and Ye Shitao in 1992, and by Sun Dachuan in 1993), through whether the writer uses indigenous languages to write (as a transitional strategy, argued by Walis Norgan in 1992), to whether the topic is simply about indigenous issues (argued by Pu Zhongcheng in 1996 as a strategy to promote writing about indigenous issues, which was also supported by Shimomura Sakujirō in 2002).³³ The expansion of this indigenous genre through time, from a definition by form (identity, language) to that by content (topic), shows some of the dilemma that indigenous writers have to face. That is, given their various indigenous languages with quite limited readership, they have to write back to the dominant culture using Chinese language. Using Romanisation is an option, but limited readership is also the problem.³⁴ However, to maintain their indigenous subjectivity and to write back without being assimilated, this transitional writing strategy based on de-colonial thinking, also developed various compromised writing-back strategies. These de-colonial strategies include: imbedded indigenous syntax (through a distinctively creolised dialogue), the deliberate omission of citations of indigenous myths (to make writing look *natural* in the way that Han writers use popular Han allusions in their writing without citations), rearrangement of the presentation of indigenous and Chinese language (such as to place indigenous language before its Chinese translation, or to

33 陳芷凡，〈台灣原住民文學之定義〉（來源：http://iel.cass.cn/yjtz/nfmzwx/twyzmxw/200811/t20081127_2760389.shtml）。

34 See the following section for the discussion of Rapongan's writing back strategy. Romanised Tao is used in *The Myth of Badai Bay*.

place the Chinese language in brackets), the replacement of linear time order with circular time narrative (without a specific time in the narrative). These strategies of promoting indigenous subjectivity will be discussed in the following analysis of Syaman Rapongan's writing.

Island Writing: The Small Island Writes Back

In the Preface to *Islands in History and Representation*, Rod Edmond says

Islands were often seen as natural colonies or settings for ideal communities, but they were also used as *dumping grounds for the unwanted*, a practice which has continued into the twentieth century and remains evident in recent policy towards refugees.³⁵

In the eyes of Rapongan, as well as in the collective tribal memory of the Taos, it is hard to deny that, during the modern period, Orchid Island has been a “dumping ground for the unwanted”—in this case, in the form of piles of nuclear waste from Taiwan which was dumped on Orchid Island without the inhabitants' agreement. The Taos have been acculturated by both the Japanese and the Chinese/Taiwanese Han culture. It was not until the 1980s that the Tao intellectuals started to *write back*—mostly through Chinese writing learned from their education in Taiwan. To the Taos, the cultural, political, and economical hegemony imposed on modern Taiwan by China and Japan, could be comparable to those imposed on Ireland by the United Kingdom. Furthermore, the dominant Han/Chinese culture among the ethnic groups, Chinese propaganda (especially under martial law), the capitalist mass-production economy, and the state institutions in Taiwan, all contributed to

35 Rod Edmond and Vanessa Smith. (Eds.) Preface. *Islands in History and Representation* (London: Routledge, 2003). My italics.

situating the big island, Taiwan, as a colonial power in relation to the Taos (and of course to the other indigenes in Taiwan as well). The unbalanced power structure between the big and the small islands (Taiwan and Orchid Island) seems to mirror that between the continental China and Taiwan. Intriguingly, the once-colonised Taiwan (by China) now plays the part of the coloniser over another island—Orchid Island.

Palimpsestic Colonialism in Orchid Island

According to Daxiwulawan Bima, the early history of the development of the Taos was never influenced by Han culture from China or by that of Taiwan Island. Instead, the Taos have shared more similarities and interacted more frequently with the Ivatan indigenes of the Batan islands of the Philippines.³⁶ Due to their oceanic culture, continental (Han Chinese and Han Taiwan) knowledge was not to be introduced to them until the Qing dynasty.

The name of Orchid Island reflects how it was looked upon, and how it was treated, by its name-givers. In Tao language, Orchid Island is called *Ponso no Tao*, which means “island of Humans.”³⁷ The island was called “Botel Tabacco” by European travellers.³⁸ By the Han people in Taiwan, Orchid Island was named *Hongtouyu* (Red-head islet),³⁹ and the Taos were named as *Hongtoufan* (Red-headed savages) in the Investigating Census of Taiwan Huang Shujing's (a Qing officer) *Taihai shichalu* (*Records of a Tour of Duty in the*

36 達西烏拉彎·畢馬，《達悟族神話與傳說》（台北：晨星出版社，2003.09），頁136-7。

37 “Tao” means “human” in Tao language.

38 See note 36, pp. 20-21. Orchid Island was called as “t Eyl Groot Tabacco” by Dutch missionary Francois Valenly in 1726, and was called as “Botel” or “Botel Tabacco Sima” by French voyager Laperuz.

39 See note 36, p.13. This is probably because at sunrise, the hilltop of the island reflects the red sunlight over the sea, or because the island's soil contains large amounts of ferric oxide, which makes the hilltop red.

Taiwan Strait) (1722).⁴⁰ Orchid Island was formally assimilated into the Qing dynasty's domains in 1877.⁴¹ During the period of Japanese Rule, it was still named *Hongtouyu* (Red-head islet). The Taos were named Yami (by a Japanese anthropologist, Torii Ryūzō). Under the rule of the KMT regime, after 1947, it was renamed Orchid Island *lanyu* after the local *Phalaenopsis* orchids.⁴²

In the Treaty of Shimonoseki in 1895, Taiwan, the Penghu Islands, and Orchid Island were ceded to the Japanese Empire from the Qing Empire. Civil registration and village names were then set up over the “Red-headed Islet” by the Japanese colonial government. Orchid Island was categorised by the Japanese colonial government as a specific zone for the “research of anthropological samples,” and all except researchers were forbidden from entering the island. As a result, Tao customs were preserved for the research for sociologists and anthropologists.⁴³ This meant that this island was deliberately secluded from civilisation and modernity and most Tao customs remained intact during the period of Japanese Rule.

Under the period of KMT Rule, a “Mountainous Restriction” was implemented over Orchid Island until 1967. In 1952, under KMT governance, a Commanding Department of Orchid Island (*Lanyu zhihuibu*) was set up to rule the Taos. According to Syaman Rapongan's description of these officers, they “brought the value system transferred from the big island [Taiwan]—the ultimate value, and thus the primal traditional thoughts withdrew from the classrooms in the school.” Rapongan gives a vivid description of the dissemination of this “ultimate” value and how it was internalised by the successive county magistrates:

40 This historical anthology offers Huang's observation of Taiwan under Qing Rule—though it is filled with Han-centred historical perspectives and civilising attempts towards the “savages.”

41 See note 36, pp. 18-19.

42 楊政賢，「南島文化專欄」，〈「蘭嶼」地名與「雅美族」族稱的由來〉（來源：http://beta.nmp.gov.tw/enews/no225/page_02.html）。

43 See note 34, pp. 14, 21-23。

The native-assigned Tao county magistrate then wore T-shaped trousers [the traditional male Tao clothes] under Western-style clothing trousers, while the tightening of the allocated leather shoes made him panic, the struggle to take them off or not was written on his helpless face. The landing craft finally reached the sand beach, where emerged the low-ranking officer from the big island [Taiwan], who was seen as a high-ranking officer. The county magistrate said: "How are you, Sir?" The officer replied: "Hmmm……"……the Taos cried with same voice: "How are you, Commander?"……when the welcoming lining-up ceremony was finished, the history of colonisation had begun, which was recorded in the big island's contemporary history. The process from "uncultivated barbarians" to "assimilated barbarians."⁴⁴

This internalisation of the "big island" values by successive magistrates could also imply the social reproduction of the values of the dominant sinicised society of Taiwan. This was not only reproduced in the dominant class but also in the dominated class of the Taos. For example, capitalist values have been accepted in Tao everyday life. As Rapongan observes, "The grocery store [ran by a Han couple] introduced convenient working crafts, and a consuming desire for foreign goods……Finally a few of our tribespeople have learned to open groceries, and their minds have turned complicated."⁴⁵ As a result, he argues that "……the transformation of daily necessities symbolises the change of values."⁴⁶ The discussion of the imbalanced power structure of the theme of "the big and small islands" can be clearly seen in Rapongan's "Dadao yu xiaodao" (The Big Island and the Small Island).⁴⁷

44 夏曼·藍波安，《航海家的臉》(台北：印刻文學出版公司，2007.07)，頁137。

45 See note44, p.153.

46 See note44, p. 81.

47 See note44, pp. 133-135.

As a result of the state power introduced by the KMT, military policemen were also sent to Orchid Island to inspect potential communists—who were within the members of the retired soldiers sent to this island. Syaman observes “We seem to know the reason why the young military policemen came to this island when two or three shots broke the silence of the serene ocean which were the sounds terminating the life of those who had exposed their own identity of ‘standing on the wrong side.’” These pro-communist old soldiers were executed after they expressed their regret at coming to the poor Orchid island, and their resentment at the defeated KMT party who turned them into a reluctant diaspora.⁴⁸ Here we can find not only the invasion of capitalism and Han culture (ISA), but also the invasion of the political field into the fields of the pre-modern Tao island. The KMT’s construction of political legitimacy through state violence (RSA) – such as the fact that Veterans Affairs Commission under Executive Yuan imported prisoners from Taiwan to Orchid island from 1958—also demonstrates the government’s appropriation of native land, where the “land” and “woods” become the primal property of the country.⁴⁹

Through the legitimising process, administrative institutions from Taiwan obtained whatever land they needed, without the consent of the Taos. These appropriations were in the name of the “mountainous preservative territory,” the “farming land of Orchid Island,” and “the land of national defense.”⁵⁰ The situation in which that traditional tribal territory suddenly became national territory was also faced by other indigenous tribes of Taiwan, where the hunting of animals was forbidden and trees could not be cut for tribal use because they were now regulated by the Forestry Bureau. This is the

48 See note44, p.155. In some cases, some Chinese young people were forced to join the KMT troops. They became diaspora after retreating to Taiwan with the KMT.

49 See note44, p. 158.

50 See note44, p. 157.

situation described in the short story “Zuihou de lieren” (The Last Hunter) (1986) by another indigenous writer Tuobosi Tamapima (1960-), whose Han name is Tian Yage, in which the indigenous hunter's game is confiscated by a Taiwanese policeman, since it is now illegal to hunt and the animals and the forest all belong to the nation instead of to the indigenes. Therefore, ironically, the law (and the authority behind it), which originally is designed to maintain the welfare of the people, results in the extinction of the hunters in the tribes. As shown above, Orchid Island became Taiwan's Wasteland, metaphorically, where the Han Taiwanese people dumped their nuclear waste, prisoners, veterans, disqualified teachers, policemen, and low-grade public servants. The Taos endured “the discrimination of Han-centrism and their treatment as secondary citizens.”⁵¹

At the same time, the civilising project directed towards the Taos by the KMT Han state was seen as a colonising project in the eyes of the Taos. According to Syaman:

I am like Taos who were born post-war, “tortured” by education which was injected forcibly deep into our heart: Han symbolises everything bright, while Tao is the root of everything “evil;” it is a lifelong “guilty sense” of not being Sinicised. We must kowtow to the portrait of the deceased Chiang Kai-Shek in school every morning, symbolising “gratitude” and total subjugation to his dominance. More ridiculously, the corridors of all the elementary schools were hung fully with the portraits of “Han national heroes,” educating us to follow them as lifetime models. In fact, is there any relationship between the Han “national heroes” and us Taos? At the same time, fear was deliberately

51 See note44, p. 197.

imposed on us, whether spiritually or physically, by soldiers and serious prisoners, growing up since our childhood, which still made me shell-shocked to recall it.⁵²

In the recollection by Syaman, the KMT's claimed Han-civilising schooling in fact contains much embedded symbolic violence, which itself contains many KMT-produced national symbols of the Republic of China. When these embedded national symbols are internalised and naturalised into the Tao students through schooling and a "modernisation infrastructure" (such as the Han-naming of Tao people in the household registry system), the mixed Han cultural ideology and the KMT national ideology become the dominant habitus, and the Tao habitus becomes the subjugatory one. As a result, the dominant Han habitus could be legitimately produced and reproduced among the Tao society.

The *Pre-modern* Tao Field

Rapongan's literary representation of the Tao's "pre-modern" organic cultural network can be seen as his observation of the collective field of the Taos, which could be treated as a primordial model of the Tao field (in which the Tao habitus operates as the dominant habitus), compared to the ways in which the more "modern" Taiwanese (Han) field intruded on this island:

"The primal and fertile society" means the complete social organisations and the well-regulated production network which have been constructed in one thousand years, responding to all the fluctuations of the solar terms in nature. Nature is the object of the labouring and production of "the primitive," and the resource of knowledge and

52 See note44.

economics. The Taos have the belief that all beings have “soul,” which sustains the ecology in the land and in the ocean, generating “mystic” reverence for them.⁵³

The rules of the field of “pre-modern” Taos are largely different from the ones in the civilised “Han” field of Taiwan. In the latter KMT-dominated Han field, economic, political, and cultural capital are exchangeable, and nature and labouring production are no longer the primary resources for accumulating social capital. With regards to the Tao people’s production, it is mainly dependent on nature, in terms of the exchange between labouring and cultural and social capital. For example, fishing, farming, and house-building in Tao tradition involve various kinds of Tao traditions. Ceremonies in these activities (such as singing) are often held through the efforts of all the tribal people, rather than counted by capitalist exchange. Fish are caught by themselves in the ocean (as an honour) rather than to be bought in the market. “Uncivilised” as it was, their production doesn’t often involve corresponding capital (whether political or economic capital) in the context of *modern* and capitalist Taiwanese society.

To write back at the modern centre Taiwan and the political, cultural, and economic hegemony behind it was the aim of Syaman,⁵⁴ a Tao intellectual who received his higher education in Taiwan, as such he had long imbibed the Chinese/Han habitus (such as the Chinese-centric ideology, capitalist values, etc.). Rapongan grew up on the post-war Orchid Island, and inevitably

53 See note44, pp. 163-164.

54 It should be noted that the term “native,” other than its local and rooted reference, also bears an inevitable negotiated elite and intellectual meaning in the experience of Rapongan, as the term refers to the experience of the intellectuals in the Nativist Literary Debate in the 1920s-1930s and in the Nativist Literary Movement in the 1977/1978 debate. Enlightening through colonial schooling and the use of the colonial modern device to “write back” contribute to the negotiated characteristics of these native nativists.

and necessarily adopted the colonial weapon he had acquired against the colonial motherland Taiwan—namely the Chinese language, postcolonial and indigenous discourses of being an intellectual in Taiwan, and also being a nativist intellectual in the context of globalisation. What Rapongan has to address is the marginality of his Tao homeland, constructed in a postcolonial situation mostly in relation to Taiwan. In the light of the over-stated capitalist habitus in Taiwan (which also has long intruded into the field of Orchid Island) that he has observed, he stresses the importance of the Tao habitus as a way to counter the collective ideologies which first originated in Han society in Taiwan and were then disseminated among Tao society.

In the introduction to *Islands in History and Representation*, characteristics of oceanic tribes such as “migrancy, liminality, and indeterminacy” are celebrated through both a form of postcolonial theory and by reference to the Tongan writer Epeli Hau’ofa.⁵⁵ Both Epeli Hau’ofa and Saint Lucian writer Derek Walcott offer an island-based sense “of the contiguity of island and sea, of blurred margins rather than structured oppositions,” and as a result “they open up ways of reintegrating islands back into history from which they have frequently been excluded.” These native island-born intellectuals’ ideas of islands are quite different from the conception of the relationship of islands and sea produced by continent-based western cultures, in which islands (especially oriental and unexplored islands) are often seen as ‘isolated outcrops of meaning in an immense oceanic void.’⁵⁶

As in the ideas expressed in *Islands in History and Representation*, Rapongan also shows a return to island-focused literary writing based on his (later-reached) Tao-based historiographical perspective. In Rapongan’s writing, the potential liminality of the Taos does not just refer to the Han-dominant

55 Rod Edmond and Vanessa Smith. (Eds.) Preface. *Islands in History and Representation*, pp. 10-11.

56 Rod Edmond and Vanessa Smith. (Eds.) Preface. *Islands in History and Representation*, p. 2.

Taiwan, or the Han-dominant continental China, but refers to Tao culture in relation to the wider Pacific Ocean. In this Tao-based conception, the Han-ideology-dominant Taiwan Island is treated as a continent-based hegemony toward Orchid Island in this postcolonial context. This liminality of a “multiplicity of identities,” an “island-oriented” rather than a “continent-based” philosophy, is best embodied in the protagonist Gigimit of *Black Wings*.⁵⁷

To native writers in Taiwan, when using Chinese cultural capital to write back to the Chinese-dominant literary field, very often the adoption of the coloniser's tools (such as Chinese-writing and inevitably some transplanting of the Chinese ideologies behind it) to represent indigenous *terroir* becomes necessary. This demonstrates the awkward postcolonial situation that Taiwanese (or Chinese, as they are forcefully included in Han national discourses) indigenous writers have faced in everyday life. It was also hard to break the rules of the literary field. Take the *consecration* system of the institution of literary awards for example: it was almost impossible to present indigenous literary awards to works written in indigenous language since both the readership/awardship and the (supposedly indigenous) writers had long been using Chinese writing as the legitimate language.⁵⁸ However, since the 1990s, the ministry of Education has tried to propose a standardised writing system for the indigenous languages, and there have been officially-run indigenous-language proficiency tests. Over the past few years, the Ministry of Education has been hosting the Indigenous-language Literary Awards. In some cases, as the result of the forcefully imposed Han habitus during the

57 See subsequent discussion of this novel of Gigimit. In the following discussion, I directly take Rapongan's Romanised spelling of the Tao characters in his works, rather than transcribing their names from Chinese.

58 Like the regular literary-awards-winner Tian Yage's works, whose most famous work “*Zuihou de lieren*” *The Last Hunter* (1986) and other works are mostly written in Chinese.

period of Martial Law, even some indigenous writers might have felt it *natural* to accept it and thus naturalised this institutionalised discipline. As mentioned above, some indigenous writers might not have been aware of the embedded Chinese-centric ideology in it, such as the case of Chen Yingxiong's *Yuwai menghen Traces of Dreams in Foreign Lands* (1971), which was entitled *Xuanfeng qiuzhan The Whirling Chief* in 2003, in which embedded Chinese-centric ideology and Chen's mimicry of Chinese-centric writing acted as something *natural* and were politically correct and necessary in producing a (negotiated) indigenous *terroir* in that strictly-controlled literary field, especially under Martial Law.⁵⁹ Even after Martial Law, in Syaman Rapongan's (and in other indigenous writers') trajectory of writing, his adoption of Chinese writing, either in form or in content (such as using Chinese writing to represent Tao *terroir*, and applying linear narrative in re-telling Tao stories) was difficult to be avoided. At the same time, his deliberate "writing-back" could also be easily observed both in form and in content, especially in his first work *The Myths of Badai Bay* (1992). In it, an ethnographical selection of Tao oral myths and his own autobiographical reflections are collected.⁶⁰ In the earlier section, the Tao myths are written in both Romanised Tao (which comes first) and in Chinese on the facing page (which comes later). Regarding the form of this work, this kind of deliberate array of Tao-Chinese writing, or simply the gesture of the demonstration of the Tao spoken language (Tao, or other indigenous languages, was rarely seen in print in the 1990s), is strategically speaking, an

59 In the "mountainous" writer Chen Yingxiong's writing, probably due to the fact that he served as a policeman for decades, the narrator in *The Whirling Chief* lacks indigenous subjectivity, while in contrast it reproduces Chinese nationalistic ideology and attempts to create scenes of harmony between the "mountainous people" and low-land Sinicised Taiwanese people. This "mountainous" literary text, published before the lifting of martial law, demonstrates the fact that the interpretation of indigenous culture in the literary field was controlled and reproduced in the hands of Chinese cultural elites or "mountainous" elites (such as Chen himself) who identified with Chinese habitus.

60 This work includes Tao myths (written in Romanised Tao and in Chinese) and some of Rapongan's reflections (in Chinese), rather than a literary fiction.

emphasis on form rather than its content. However, since this is Syaman's first work, and this is not exactly a literary work (the collection of the myths and his rational observations of current Tao society make it more like an ethnographic work in form), his de-colonial attempts through the form, rather than through the literary content can be understood. This array of Tao-Chinese presentation in form also denotes the fact that a total detachment from Chinese writing (either in form or in content) is impossible at that stage (and judging the market-law and readership of publishing, a literary work totally written in a native language is also impossible now). In the later stage of Syaman Rapongan's writing, in works starting from *The Memory of the Waves* (2002), a transformed attachment, and a more flexible writing strategy in both form and in content away from the Chinese/Han cultural habitus can be observed through his adoption of creolised or purely Tao oral language, and through the adoption of a Tao-style oral story-telling narrative (in which it is very common for no specific date or year to be given for the stories) rather than the linear narrative which is often seen in Chinese/Han writing. However, Syaman's combination of creolised language (Chinese writing with partial Tao syntax) and non-linear oral narrative in his writing strategy also suggests that it seems impossible to remain, or to return to, a *pure* Tao cultural field, as the spatial and temporal fields of the Taos have been deeply influenced by the foreign and dominant Chinese cultures.

II. Syaman Rapongan's Palimpsestic Profile and His Narration of the Palimpsestic Colonialism

Syaman Rapongan was born in 1957. He is of Tao origin—the only oceanic indigenous tribe in Taiwan—and he has grown up in Orchid Island. He left Orchid Island for Taiwan for a high school education, and he finished his BA in the Department of French in Tamkang University. While

later doing part-time jobs in Taipei, he was gradually influenced by the Indigenous Movement in the 1980s. He then completed his masters degree in Anthropology (1999-2003?) in the National Tsing Hua University, and is now doing a PhD in the Department of Taiwanese Literature at the National Cheng Kung University. His Han name, Shi Nulai (施努來), was no longer used after he returned to Orchid Island, except in his first work, *Badaiwan de shenhua The Myths of Badai Bay* (1992).⁶¹

Following *The Myths of Badai Bay*, he has published *Lenghai qingshen Deep Affection of the Cold Sea* (1997), *Heise de chibang Black Wings* (1999) (which received the Wu Zhuoliu Literary Award in 1999), *Hailang de jiyi The Memory of the Waves* (2002), *Hanghaijia de lian The Face of the Navigator* (2007), *Laohairen The Old Seaman* (2009), *Tiankong de yanjing The Eyes of the Sky* (2012), and *Dahai fumeng Floating Dreams on the Sea* (2014). His most recent works is *Anluomien zhi si The Death of Ngalumiren* (2015). (The last two works will not be discussed in this essay.) *The Face of the Navigator* is his first prose narrative, and reflects on the Tao tribe and their historical interaction with foreign powers. His perspectives on this will be used to accompany my account of the history and the palimpsestic colonial situation of the Taos in Orchid Island.

Rapongan's Return to Orchid Island, and Return to Tao Culture

In fact, the palimpsestic colonial situation could be easily found when the awakened and Rapongan returned to Orchid island. Being shell-shocked seemed to be an everyday practice to him. There were at least two anecdotes of him which can be viewed from the colonial palimpsest in terms of the period of cultural and geographic relocation of Rapongan. First, Guan Xiaorong denotes the internal transformation behind Syaman's change of name in

61 His book titles that follow are translated from Chinese to English by myself except *Heise de chibang Black Wings*.

Guan's Preface to 《冷海情深》 (“From Shi Nulai to Syaman Rapongan”)—from his Han name Shi Nulai to his Tao name Syaman Rapongan.⁶² At this stage, his insistence of retaining his indigenous name from his “state given” (or, state mediated) Han name “Shi”⁶³ not only suggests Rapongan's resistance to the logocentrism forcefully imparted by the Han state power, the retaining of the Tao translated “夏曼 Syaman” of his identity registry also suggests a proclamation of Tao epistemology in the Han official field that both the Tao habitus (such as the Tao teknonymy) and its societal reference of tribal position-taking behind.⁶⁴ In addition, since 1988, Rapongan has been involved in the Tao political movement, against nuclear waste, the Expel the *Hanito* (Evil Spirit) Movement, and has acted as the chief commander of this movement in 1988.⁶⁵ Compared with the treatment of the colonial Japanese governance, during which Orchid island was at most an exclusion and was only reserved for Japanese anthropologists' study, the disposal of nuclear waste on Orchid island commissioned by the KMT government since 1978 blatantly marked an intrusion of colonial power. Both the name-changing and his political activism based on the local appear in his writing. The intertextuality between politics and his literary writing will be shown more in the following sections.

III. Rapongan's Palimpsestic Writing

As mentioned above, Rapongan has produced seven works in total from

62 關曉榮，〈從施努來到夏曼·藍波安〉，夏曼·藍波安，《冷海情深：海洋朝聖者》（台北：聯合文學出版公司，1997.05），頁5-9。

63 The Household Registry Office took the liberty of registering Syaman Rapongan's Han name as 施努來 (Shi Nulai) in 1957 when he was born. It took Rapongan years to correct it.

64 In Tao society, a single man is called “Shi”. After being a father, he is called “Syaman”. After being a grandfather, he is called “Syaban”. Take Syaman Rapongan for example, it means he is the father of Rapongan. When he turns to a grandfather, he will be called Syaban X, which means the grandfather of X. In this sense, neither Syaman or Rapongan should be expediently translated into Han naming system.

65 夏曼·藍波安，《冷海情深：海洋朝聖者》，頁5-9。

1992 to 2012. Song Zelai has divided Syaman Rapongan's writing into two stages of rhetoric: Tragic rhetoric and Romantic rhetoric. The Tragic period includes early works like *The Myths of Badai Bay* and *Deep Affection of the Cold Sea* (1997). The later Romantic period includes *The Memory of the Waves* (2002).⁶⁶

According to my analysis, Rapongan's transitions of style can be divided into the following three stages. Firstly, there is the stage of ethnographical writing, as exemplified in *The Myths of Badai Bay* (1992). Secondly, there is the phase of protesting reflection, which can be typically found in *Deep Affection of the Cold Sea* (1997). Finally, there is the stage of Tao-style fictional writing. This can be seen in *Black Wings* (1999), *The Face of the Navigator* (2007), and *The Old Seaman* (2009), and his later works. If we treat Rapongan's works together, the Tao philosophy and the embedded tribalism and Tao nationalism reflected in his first work *Badaiwan de shenhua The Myths of Badai Bay* can be seen as the foundation of his subsequent writing. Many themes in this work, such as de-colonial enlightenment, reappear in his subsequent works. The reappearance of themes can be seen as a palimpsestic narrative, in which similar de-colonial themes are renarrated through different characters in different works. In "Wo de tongnian" (My Childhood), Rapongan, the narrator, recalls that his tribal people are seen as savages and needed to be "saved" and "civilised" by the *Pinpu* (the Plain indigenes) teacher from Taiwan. The teacher's ethnic discrimination mirrors that of a Christian Father who comes to Orchid Island with a missionary agenda, and their disciplinary tools for civilisation are alike: in Rapongan's narrative, the teacher's textbooks and whip function in the same way as the Father's Bible and cross.⁶⁷ His own childhood experiences of

66 宋澤萊，〈夏曼·藍波安小說《海浪的記憶》中的奇異修辭及其族群指導〉，《台灣文學研究》3期（2007.06），頁24-29。

67 夏曼·藍波安，〈八代灣的神話〉（台北：晨星出版社，1992.09），頁151-3。

discrimination like this reappear in his subsequent works.⁶⁸ In “Buyuan bei baosong” (Unwilling to be Recommended for College), Rapongan reflects on the lure of the motorboats from Taiwan, which symbolise a materialistic civilisation, which visits Orchid Island every two or three months. This theme reappears in his later works.⁶⁹ Also in “*Buyuan bei baosong*” (Unwilling to be Recommended for College),⁷⁰ the young narrator, Rapongan, refuses to be recommended for college, because he wants to go to college by his own efforts through examination rather than through recommendation as a “mountainous student.” The educational privilege that mountainous students enjoy is seen as another “civilising tool” in Rapongan’s view. This reflection on how Han civilisation deploys its civilising agenda is elaborated in his later *Deep Affection of the Cold Sea*.⁷¹ From the “national” perspective, these repetitions of themes, either through the narration of the author himself or the narrators (not yet including the parts in his recent two works) can be seen as a traditional Tao way of telling stories, and an ethnographic portrayal of the everyday life racial trauma, discrimination, and economic exploitation. However, in terms of literary aesthetics based on Han literary field, these repetitive themes in different works (even though adding new elements in some parts) cannot avoid the criticism of being self-indulgent in the past memory. Or even worse, as Song Zelai warns, Rapongan may put himself in the danger of “national guidance”.⁷²

Rapongan’s opposition against the palimpsestic and dominant Sinicising, and “modernising” invasion from Taiwan can be seen as a national/tribal war

68 夏曼·藍波安，《黑色的翅膀》（台北：聯經出版公司，2009.08），頁101、107；《冷海情深》，頁79-87；《航海家的臉》，頁128-132；《海浪的記憶》，頁196-206；《老海人》，頁51-57、230。

69 夏曼·藍波安，《冷海情深》，頁185-192 and 《航海家的臉》，頁133-135。

70 夏曼·藍波安，《八代灣的神話》，頁163-165。

71 夏曼·藍波安，《冷海情深》，頁45-6。

72 宋澤萊，〈夏曼·藍波安小說《海浪的記憶》中的奇異修辭及其族群指導〉，《台灣學研究》3期，頁24-29。

of production between the collective Han habitus and Tao habitus over the field of the everyday life of the Taos. The successful invasion of the foreign Han habitus can be readily observed among the common Tao people, who have internalised these imported dominant values. This generates social problems such as alcoholism and poverty as a result of a collective psychological inferiority complex, as the sociologist Tsai You-yue analyses.⁷³ This is similar to the psychological complex which happened after the colonisation of Algeria, as observed by Frantz Fanon. The Algerians, had a habitus which was “bleached” as the values of the White colonisers were successfully embedded and internalised through the colonial apparatus.

The object, Han culture, or the culture of the Han people in Taiwan, that Rapongan opposes is in fact itself, as we have seen, an embodiment of palimpsestic cultures, and through redefinition of the later State Apparatus. The more he engages in defense against multiple objects—such as modernity and Han/Japanese/Chinese/Taiwanese colonisation—the more he needs to make his stance clearer, that is, to clarify what his Tao culture is. In this respect, we find he gradually portrays an ideal Tao culture that could derive its roots from all kinds of Tao production in order to counter the complex of Sinicisation, capitalisation, and modernisation, though not without resistance since he is also, to some extent, a sinicised intellectual. In the early days of his return to Orchid Island, he was ashamed that he could not provide fresh fish for his old father, who only eats fish from his own catch, not fish from the exchange or market. This is the Tao tradition.⁷⁴ To (re)gain his social status in Tao society, he practiced his fishing skills and in particular tried to

73 蔡友月，《達悟族的精神失序：現代性、變遷與受苦的社會根源》（台北：聯經出版公司，2009.07），頁104-144，204-248，349-355。

74 夏曼·藍波安，《冷海情深》，頁99-100。In Tao tradition, a mature Tao man should be able to catch fish for himself and his family. Fish are not for sale or seen as commercial commodities as in Han capitalist society in Taiwan.

catch fish that are difficult to catch. To fit in once again and to be qualified to play the social game in Tao society, and to accumulate *consecration* in the Tao field in Bourdieu's term, Rapongan was drawn to specific fish like arayo, flying fish, and cilat as the *cultural symbols* he had to *catch* to be a respected Tao man. Catching a cilat thus becoming a symbol of abandoning the stigma of sinicisation.⁷⁵

In *Deep Affection of the Cold Sea*, he depicts precisely his own process of social consecration in Tao culture, though the Tao values are corroded by the palimpsestic foreign cultures—Sinicisation, capitalism, and modernisation. From September 1990 to January 1993, he not only gained *consecration* in the game (if we see his re-socialisation of being a Tao as a game in Bourdieu's sense) that he has failed to play for 16 years (having stayed in Taiwan for 16 years), but he also re-internalised and then re-identified with the Tao rules of the game, such as the traditional Tao way of production (based on the forms of labouring such as fishing or farming), animism, and Tao customs.⁷⁶ However, owing to his previous layer of Sinicisation in Taiwan, his re-location from Han field (Taiwan) to Tao field (Orchid Island) is often riddled with conflicts. Take *Deep Affection of the Cold Sea* for example, which consists of a collection of proses and short stories. Most of the prose narratives and short stories are about Rapongan's reflection on his experiences of returning to Tao life. According to the narrator in *Deep Affection of the Cold Sea*, before diving alone into the silent sea, despite "being an atheist and a naturalist," because of his acculturation in Tao tradition and the re-culturalisation in Tao experience after his return, the narrator resorts to praying to God as well as the animistic spirits of Tao tradition to dispel the unknown fear: "The spirits that I pray

75 夏曼·藍波安，〈黑色的翅膀〉，頁216。

76 夏曼·藍波安，〈冷海情深〉，頁99-129。

to include God, Jesus, ancestors, and sea god.”⁷⁷ With regard to the colonial palimpsest, we may find a seemingly polytheistic condition in Rapongan’s religious belief; however, this polytheistic appearance is in fact the result of (at the very least) the Tao cultural layer and the subsequent Han, Japanese, and Chinese-KMT cultural layers. In Rapongan’s reflection, the Tao layer is the utopian and ultimate cultural model to which he wishes to return, and the Tao nation is the lost subjectivity to be completed, though under the influence of discourses of colonial modernity there does not seem to exist a genuine Tao culture to return to. In this collection, the later Japanese and KMT-Chinese layers are treated as invading colonial powers in Rapongan’s historical reflection.

In “Taiwan lai de huolun” *The Freighter from Taiwan*, Rapongan observes the successful result of the KMT’s colonial disciplining in the conception of the Taos in the 1950s—that Taiwan was the cultural and economic centre while Orchid Island becomes the periphery. The story observes, “For Tao children born in the 50s, Taiwan was like heaven, while Orchid Island was like a prison.”⁷⁸ The cargo ship from Taiwan brought material supplies which were not available on Orchid Island itself. Although the cargo ship frightened the flying fish, the goods that constituted the cargo, which could be seen as symbols of modernity and modernisation, were desired by the Tao people lining up at the bank. Syaman recalls the Tao people, “whose puzzled faces were filled with contradictory complex which were both welcoming and resisting.”

In the last article “Wuyuan ye wuhui No Regrets and No Repentance”, Rapongan reflects on his experience of re-becoming Tao. One of his indigenous friends, a hunter of the Tsou tribe, bitterly complains to

77 夏曼·藍波安，〈冷海情深〉，頁133-4，151。

78 夏曼·藍波安，〈冷海情深〉，頁189。

Rapongan that the once glorious title of a “hunter” is no longer respected as before because the animals he hunts are listed as “Protected Animals” by law. Rapongan, luckily, would not be charged under Taiwanese law since the fish that he hunts are not “protected.” Syaman’s friend sighs, “now in the mind of indigenous children, hunter is a blurred symbol instead of a living hero.”⁷⁹

In the early days of his return to Tao life, Rapongan fishes everyday to gain identification from his tribal people, to prove himself as “a Tao whose production is through his bare hands.”⁸⁰ Rapongan’s Tao-re-becoming project aims to “accumulate his social status through labouring (traditional labouring like fishing and farming),” to “discuss the civilising progress of his own culture through labouring,” and to “share food from nature with tribal people.” Through these traditional Tao production, he can “abolish the stigma of being a Sinicised Tao,” and “to regain the suppressed pride [of being a Tao].” However, despite this role-play, Rapongan was often categorised as “a Sinicised Tao” by his parents and his wife (before he fully became a “real” Tao after his return.)⁸¹ According to his parents, this is due to the fact that Rapongan spent “16 strange years in Han Taiwan,” which has left him an indelible “Han/non-Tao imprint.”⁸² As a result, he wonders what the fundamental definition of being a Tao is since apparently his Tao parents and his wife do not appreciate his purely primitive Tao way of living (by fishing rather than writing or teaching, which would give Rapongan more economic income), while at the same time they still want Rapongan to remain a real Tao in culture. There seems to exist a “hybrid” balance between Sinicisation and

79 夏曼·藍波安，〈冷海情深〉，頁208。

80 夏曼·藍波安，〈冷海情深〉，頁209。

81 夏曼·藍波安，〈冷海情深〉，頁148。

82 夏曼·藍波安，〈冷海情深〉，頁55，100。According to Rapongan's mother, the Han/non-Tao imprint found in Rapongan himself and many of his young Tao people refer to “people with Han craftiness instead of Tao muscles, and people who are away from trees and without the smell of the soil.”

the Tao tradition. Or, in other words, a sinicised Tao habitus has already been internalised and practiced by Rapongan's Tao people. It seems it is Syaman himself, who would rather take a polarised view on Sinicisation and the Tao tradition. As Song Zelai states, Rapongan's promotion of a Tao traditionalism (fishing is glorified) and a return to a unpolluted-Tao world, and his deliberate ignorance of modern economic issues would risk over-romanticisation and would lead to dangerous "ethnic guidance".⁸³ It is true that Rapongan carries romantic imaginations of his "imagined Tao communities", and this unpolluted-Tao presumption is quite similar to the nationalist claims in Chinese (and Taiwanese) nationalism that there exists a perfectly pure Chinese model. Accordingly, historical narrative is manipulated for this essentialist conception.⁸⁴ Craig A. Smith argues, "despite its sometimes ugly side effects, nationalism (and possibly a pan-ethnic aboriginal consciousness) has been an important defensive strategy for Taiwan aboriginals in resisting Han hegemony."⁸⁵ Indeed, when facing irresistible Han hegemony (with its immense structure behind), the combination of cultural and social capital (writing and Tao tribal consciousness), became the limited resource that Rapongan can resort to. In addition, in terms of the effect of national allegory, the difference between Rapongan's essentialist presumption of an original Tao imagination and Chinese imagination is the former lacks the top-down state power to mobilise institutions to enhance or reinvent traditions (as previously discussed through Hobsbawm's idea in the Introduction). On these grounds, to some extent, Song's accusation of Rapongan (Song even considers that the Tao tribe need to give up Tao belief and to believe in Christianity) seems to

83 宋澤萊，〈夏曼·藍波安小說《海浪的記憶》中的奇異修辭及其族群指導〉，《台灣學研究》3期，頁24-29。

84 This thought can be found in Homi Bhabha's idea of mimicry.

85 Craig A. Smith, "Aboriginal Autonomy and Its Place in Taiwan's National Trauma Narrative" in *Modern Chinese Literature and Culture*, Vol. 24, No. 2 (2012), p. 217.

be a form of Han-centred ethnic guidance—asking people who lack capital to play an unfamiliar game, and to play fair according to the rules.

Ironically, in terms of the colonial palimpsest, when Rapongan attempted to remove the Han/Taiwanese layer, it was his family members who urged him not to do so. Both Rapongan's geographical return to Orchid Island and his cultural return to Tao customs turn out to be questioned by his family, mainly because his way of living is way too Tao, or in other words, too pre-modern in the eyes of his family. This highlights the difficult issue of finding balance between modernity and subjectivity that Rapongan, his family, and his tribal fellows face. Rapongan's methods of Tao "production"—supplying his family with fresh fish he catches—are seen as "un-productive" in comparison with the "modern" Han/Chinese capitalist system.⁸⁶ His immersion in diving and fishing in the sea, which would allow him to be seen highly as a Tao hero in traditional Tao society in the past, is now seen as an avoidance of the economic responsibility of a modern man.⁸⁷ He faces the dilemma of whether to be a traditional Tao who obeys "Tao habitus" through traditional wageless production, or to be a *modern* Tao who follows Taiwanese/Han-KMT habitus in which capitalist rules (such as the alienation between his labouring and his reward, as well as the Han-Tao cultural contradiction he faces in his writing career), and this difficult situation he encounters can be further observed in the subsequent analysis of his writings.

Tao Hysteresis and Modernity

The never-ending struggle between modern and traditional discourses is embodied in Rapongan himself. He is placed between two value systems,

86 Ibid., p. 216.

87 The phase of extremely deep-Tao experience can best be seen in some of the articles in *The Deep Affection of the Cold Sea* and in the fiction *The Old Seaman*.

represented in his writings by the values of his parents and those of his modern wife:

The grandfather and grandmother of the children were born in the Neolithic Age, so it is natural for them to judge my existence with their own values. However, the mother of the children, and I, were both born in the postwar nuclear age, while she judges me with the measurement of the productivity of a Tao man of the 'Neolithic age.' I am crashed by their words in the disordered 'space-time,' while unable to find some phrases to justify my existence, and unable to console myself that I had 'escaped' the chance of being steeled by traditional way of production – labouring. The future of the children is an age aiming for monetary production, while the past of [my] parents is for the production of basic commodities.⁸⁸

In Rapongan's family, after his return to Orchid Island, there is a generationally layered difference of attitude towards Rapongan's return to an (economically) *un-productive* Tao lifestyle. Both his Tao parents and his wife encourage Rapongan to earn "real" money by working in Taiwan rather than to fish locally. While Rapongan's parents are still highly respectful of Tao culture, Rapongan's wife, who is the second generation in Rapongan's family, thinks more highly of monetary rewards. For her, money comes before non-economical Tao values such as skill in fishing. On one occasion Rapongan's wife says to him:

"What's wrong with you? You have nothing but the vast sea in your head. Such bullshit nonsense like national identity, national

88 夏曼·藍波安，《海浪的記憶》，頁213-214。

consciousness, Taos-should-be-strong are shallow and useless. Tomorrow I will give you money to go to Taiwan.”⁸⁹

In *The Face of the Navigator*, the narrator is again tortured by this dilemma of problematic colonial modernity. He sighs: “It is hard to be an all-round man, especially in the period when modernity is mingled with tradition.” He continues: “When traditional collective values are unprecedentedly challenged, the focus between right and wrong has been lost, as the younger grandfather said before his death in 1978: ‘It has been very murky—the breath of the island of we Taos.’”⁹⁰ As Rapongan recalls, after his return to Orchid Island, he spent some lonely years diving and fishing, (re)learning the necessary skills of being a real Tao man. Syaman recalls, “This way of production is like the way his father raised him when he was young. Is his way wrong?”

As discussed previously, an idealised Tao habitus is proposed by Rapongan to solve this generational dilemma. Take the story in *Heise de chibang Black Wings* for example, when Jyavehai, who returns to Orchid Island to learn fishing from his childhood friend Ngalolog and is trying to catch an Arayo to prove his regained Tao skills, the latter acts as a mentor: “He [Jyavehai] nods his head, as tame as being scolded by the teacher from Taiwan in his youth.”⁹¹ Both Jyavehai and Ngalolog catch Arayos in their fishing; however, their heroic return using the Mivaci paddling style (announcing an abundant gain by a dramatic paddling back-and forth) is faced with the “anxiety that fears the culture of passing down the traditional craft of production—Mataw (catching Arayo)—will be no longer possible.” In the past, children skipped class to welcome Mivaci by the beach, but now Tao children are more

89 夏曼·藍波安，《冷海情深》，頁212。

90 夏曼·藍波安，《航海家的臉》，頁44。

91 夏曼·藍波安，《黑色的翅膀》，頁221。

attracted to video games in the grocery stores.⁹² The stories related to the Xinglong grocery store⁹³ (which is run by a Han couple, is the gathering place of some KMT veterans) can be read as symbolic accounts of the KMT process of modernisation, transporting the dominant Han habitus from Taiwan to Orchid Island. This involves a change from the Tao favour-exchange/goods-exchange customs to capitalist economics in the economic field, and from a loose tribe-based paternal society to organisational party-politics (established by the KMT) in the political field.

This demonstrates the generational differences of the Taos under the influence of modernity. The modern habitus is gradually replacing the traditional Tao habitus; Rapongan's characters represent a generation for whom a return to Tao values was still imaginable. Bourdieu's idea of Hysteresis, a kind of cultural and economic lag of habitus of an older generation, should be concerned here, even though Rapongan tends to appropriate it reversely. According to Bourdieu, in explaining "generation conflicts", hysteresis effect may "cause one group to experience as natural or reasonable practices or aspirations which another group finds unthinkable or scandalous, and vice versa".⁹⁴ The hysteresis effect is obviously a negative term in Bourdieu's original conception, which refers to the habitus of an outdated generation. However, as previously discussed, Rapongan presumes and promotes an idealised meta-Tao layer to return to. In other words, this Tao hysteresis becomes a source for Rapongan to mobilise national glory. His following everyday life practices (i.e. fishing in traditional Tao ways) are driven by this purified and idealised Tao habitus. While younger generation, such as Rapongan's wife, identifies with capitalist values and has internalised *modern* discourses from Taiwan, the older generation of the Taos still maintain

92 夏曼·藍波安，〈黑色的翅膀〉，頁229。

93 夏曼·藍波安，〈航海家的臉〉，頁81-92。

94 Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 78.

traditional ways of life. Nevertheless, Rapongan offers an alternative (a positive) meaning of hysteresis of identification. This kind of hysteresis of identification, which originally signifies a negative meaning in Bourdieu's analysis, becomes the positive source of Tao subjectivity for Rapongan to reconstruct. As Rapongan reflects, "spirit belief...everyone at the beachhead is conditioned by traditional belief...which comforts me when the world is abused by modernisation, my [Tao] nation still maintains the primal life style of our ancestors."⁹⁵ The reversed version of hysteresis offered by Rapongan, that what in the past is better and should be maintained, is in fact strategically made of through Rapongan's selection of elements of Tao traditions and Rapongan's own imagination. For example, fishing, which is only one of the Tao traditions for Tao adult males, is greatly highlighted by Syaman as an essential step to become a real Tao man. However, it is also through writing and the anthropological knowledge he learned and received in Taiwan, the *modern* tools that never exist in his "idealised and purified Tao traditions" before, that these heroic descriptions of fishing could be reserved and promoted through his fictional narrative. This reversed hysteresis, as a re-civilising agenda, is inevitably involved a mutual process of mimicry. Inevitably, this to some extent echoes Song Zelai's criticism of "ethnic guidance", because Rapongan's ethnic (or national) imaginations involve a selective process of narrative—to pick up (rather than to mobilise) an idealised layer among those layered national/ethnic allegories. In terms of the colonial palimpsest, through his constant "dialogue" with the suppressed Tao layer and other suppressing discourses, the (idealised) Tao habitus, rather than a degraded form in the eyes of *modern* discourses, creates a solid ground for Rapongan behind his writing-back project.

95 夏曼·藍波安·《航海家的臉》·頁50-51。My underline.

Heise de chibang *Black Wings* (1999)

The narrator in *Black Wings* (1999) demonstrates a more confident Tao-centred perspective, which is different from that of the sentimental and self-questioning narrator in *Deep Affection of the Cold Sea* in which strong de-colonial characteristics and a “protesting style” can be found. This work embodies a modernised Tao’s (Rapongan’s) palimpsestic trajectory through Tao and Taiwanese habitus. As Hao Yuxiang observes, the story of *Black Wings* seems simple, “but it keeps on presenting comparisons: the comparison between two islands—Taiwan and Orchid Island, the comparison between Tao names and Han names, and between the black Tao kids and the ‘white’ bodies of Taiwanese females, and that between oceanic legends and the textbooks in Han school, and even the comparison of two philosophies of life, and of two world views.” Through this contrast, as Hau notes, “Taiwan…seems more like a mainland.” She continues, “Rapongan sets off from Orchid Island, with his perspective from the periphery [compared to Taiwan as the centre], to expose the stubbornness, xenophobia, and limitation of Han thinking.”⁹⁶

However, the position-taking of Rapongan as a writer is unprecedented in the traditional Tao field. According to Rapongan, “‘literary writing’ is not a traditional profession, the ‘intellectual’ is redundant…in my island and in the collective imagination of my nation.”⁹⁷ As a result, Rapongan returned to Taiwan to study in the Institute of Anthropology at NTHU, and was doing a Taiwanese Literature PhD at NCKU. The aim of these educational undertakings, according to Rapongan, “is definitely not to take off the infamy of ‘the Sinicised Tao,’ or to pursue the mantle of ‘the noble savage.’” Instead, he observes, between “the innocent bringing-up and the complex postmodern

96 夏曼·藍波安，〈黑色的翅膀〉，頁ix。

97 夏曼·藍波安，〈黑色的翅膀〉，頁xvi。

society nowadays, the modern flesh and the traditional mind of me is floating back and forth.” Rapongan recalled that, “I have been cursed by my granduncle in my youth: ‘Since the moment I [you] study in Taiwan, you are both a marginalised savage and a civilised person, which is truth.”⁹⁸

Instead of being caught up in the contradictions between modernity and traditional Tao subjectivity, or by the accusation of the invasion of capitalist values and Han civilisation, as demonstrated in previous works, in this work the narrator positively and assertively promotes the traditional values of the Taos. As the narrator announces, “Men are useless if they cannot build a ship!”⁹⁹ The Tao values and customs such as fishing, ship-building, house-building, oral poetry, the oral historiography of the families and tribes, fishing rituals, animism, and its labouring values, become the focus of the narrator’s attention. This fiction presents a world mainly narrated by a Tao narrative and valued by Tao values.

The Language Strategy of Rapongan

As I have mentioned in section one, in the ethnographic work, *The Myths of Badai Bay*, the deliberate array of Romanised Tao language and Chinese, demonstrated Rapongan’s attempt at *writing-back* at the linguistic level. In later works such as *Black Wings* (1999), *The Face of the Navigator* (2007), and *The Old Seaman* (2009), the non-linear Tao oral narrative, the juxtaposition of Tao and Chinese conversations (where the Romanised Tao language always come first), the embedded Tao myths, all show Rapongan’s advanced strategy of writing back through both the use of linguistic level and the content level.

The juxtaposition of the Tao and Chinese languages in conversations in *Black Wings* can be seen as the author’s linguistic strategy to present a

98 夏曼·藍波安，〈黑色的翅膀〉，頁xviii.

99 夏曼·藍波安，〈黑色的翅膀〉，頁22.

Tao-centric narrative (as a way of replacing Han-centric narrative), which ranges from traditional myths to Tao culture in everyday life. Rapongan also infiltrates the Han-written system with Tao syntax and Tao expressions. For example, in early spring, the narrator uses the traditional Tao phrase “every piece of muscle of people is evaporating” to describe the shared joy among all the Taos in the flying-fish season between February and June; this is a repeated joy, which has been passed down for many generations.¹⁰⁰ In terms of time, the narrator counts time by natural objects rather than by the scientific 24-hour measurement: “during the time when the setting sun is about two sweet-potato farms to the sea (around 4 o’clock in the afternoon).” Notice how the traditional measuring of time is followed by the Chinese explanation in brackets.¹⁰¹ In another scene, when counting the time period of singing, the narrator uses the phrase, “singing for ten to twenty boat-paddlings of time,”¹⁰² to describe how long the singing lasts. This Tao-based rhetoric renders this work creolised from the perspective of a Han-centred literary criticism, because this kind of description of time is rarely seen in Chinese writing. But in fact, this naturalised Tao rhetoric reflects how objects relate to each other—measured through a familiar Tao system rather than through an alien scientific system. Similarly, in *The Old Seaman*, in conversations, the Tao and Chinese language are no longer in juxtaposition; instead, the Tao language comes first followed by Chinese in brackets. This deliberate arrangement of the “Tao (Chinese)” presentation demonstrates the advanced Tao-centred approach of the author.

Pedagogy in Schooling and Religion

After Rapongan’s return to Tao traditions, he has to face the

100 夏曼·藍波安，〈黑色的翅膀〉，頁27。

101 夏曼·藍波安，〈黑色的翅膀〉，頁27。

102 夏曼·藍波安，〈黑色的翅膀〉，頁37。

contradiction between animism and Christianity, both the products of habitus and pedagogy, where the latter embodies distinct colonial characteristics underneath the advance of economic capitalism. As the Taiwanese indigenous writer, Ahronglong Sakinu [亞榮隆·撒可努], notes, “even God replaces our myths.”¹⁰³ It is hard to ignore the fact that indigenous myths are gradually being replaced by Christian belief as a result of missionaries. Rapongan's attack on Christianity is similar to the accusations made by Ngugi Wa Thiong'o against Christian missionaries in Africa: that they destroyed indigenous culture as a part of a European “civilising” agenda. According to Ngugi, “while in Kenya the European settler robbed the people of their land and the products of their sweats, the missionaries robbed them of their soul.” He continues, “Thus was the African body and soul bartered for thirty pieces of silver and the promise of a European heaven.” (*Ngugi Wa Thiong'o: An Exploration of His Writings* 20)¹⁰⁴ The narrator in *Black Wings* suggests that the untamed joy of Tao fishing-singing exceeds the pleasure offered by the tamed chorus in the church: “the pleasant atmosphere of singing chorus together in land and on the sea surpasses greatly the singing hymns in church.”¹⁰⁵

The diachronical story of the four fictional characters—Ngalolog, Gigimit, Jyavehai, and Kaswal, each of whom seems to be the partial incarnation of Syaman Rapongan, presents the struggle between sinicisation, modernity, capitalism, and Tao tradition. Ngalolog epitomises the later phase of Rapongan, who returns to Orchid Island to pass down the Tao tradition. Ngalolog says, “Orchid Island is my heaven, white Taiwan is my hell.”¹⁰⁶ His muscles, manhood, knowledge of nature, the products of “long-

103 亞榮隆·撒可努，《山豬·飛鼠·撒可努》（台北：耶魯國際文化，2010.09），頁177。

104 David Cook and Michael Okenimkpe, *Ngugi Wa Thiong'o: An Exploration of His Writings* (Oxford: James Currey, 1997), p. 20.

105 夏曼·藍波安，《黑色的翅膀》，頁33。

106 夏曼·藍波安，《黑色的翅膀》，頁194。

term labouring” are envied by Jyavehai. Through this character, the novel demonstrates a highly-praised Tao tradition.¹⁰⁷ Gigimit, who joins the Navy in Taiwan and later becomes a sailor travelling around the world, seems to transform the natural craving for the sea of the Taos into a modern form. He doesn't like “white flesh” (women from Taiwan) but things black and people who are black.¹⁰⁸ This character also incarnates Rapongan's mobility in real life—as a famous indigenous writer travelling around the world to give speeches. The character Jyavehai portrays the young Rapongan's intellectual desire to study in Taiwan. Like Rapongan in real life, the intellectual, Jyavehai, shows his talent in sinicised schooling in his youth, but returns to Orchid Island from *modern* Taiwan to study fishing and traditional Tao skills from his friend, Ngalolog. This reversed power exchange of modernity and tribalism after twenty years seem to justify Jyavehai's re-acceptance of Tao habitus, and also the theme of this fiction: “to become a brave Tao man.”¹⁰⁹ While Kaswal, who is acculturated to Han habitus and marries a “white” Taiwanese girl, acts as the incarnation of the younger generation of the Taos, and derives from the early stage of Rapongan's life.

In *Black Wings*, Rapongan foregrounds traditional Tao values. Thus, the protagonist Kaswal's is gloomy because his father is not good at fishing. Under the influence of Tao values, to regain the glory that his father lacks, Kaswal's dream is to be good at fishing in the future. As a result, he dreams of joining the navy in Taiwan (though this dream was destroyed by his Tao father, who thinks spirits would cause misfortune if Kaswal leaves Orchid Island). However, it is made clear that this dream of becoming a “floating sailor” is not influenced by the “[KMT-Chinese] patriotism to kill evil communists”

107 夏曼·藍波安，〈黑色的翅膀〉，頁177-8。

108 夏曼·藍波安，〈黑色的翅膀〉，頁193。

109 夏曼·藍波安，〈黑色的翅膀〉，頁178。

instilled by a Chinese-diasporic teacher, but rather by his “genetic craving for sea.” Indeed, we are told that all his schooling “means nothing to him, having no functions at all.”¹¹⁰ This demonstrates a crack in the dominant KMT Chinese nationalism. Although the “civilising” agenda within the Chinese education is powerful, it can not fully intrude into every corner of the Tao habitus in Orchid Island.

When Kaswal is punished in school, he is made to face the world atlas in office. The teacher from China deliberately orders him to look at the mainland map carefully, to let him understand, that the Island of Human (Orchid Island is so small that it) doesn't exist in this world atlas.¹¹¹ Schooling demonstrates both the roles of pedagogy and enlightenment within a colonial-structure. Structurally, schooling constructs and transplants the dominant Han/KMT habitus in Taiwan that Rapongan and his tribal people have no power to resist. However, the fictional young student Kaswal, as the incarnation of the young intellectual Rapongan himself, when facing the atlas, the measurement of both geography and power-mapping by Han people, with the help of their “civilising project” realises his people's discriminated-against situation. Nevertheless, this “civilising project” of schooling, also gives him the intellectual foundation to go beyond the boundaries of his tribe, culturally and geographically. The gesture of adding a point—Orchid Island—by Kaswal in pencil seems to symbolise that he acknowledges his position-taking in the educational system endowed to him—the petty situation of his tribe which is confined by the conception of mapping of Taiwan. But when Kaswal points his pencil on the map from Orchid Island to Taiwan, Philippines, Polynesia, and South America,¹¹² this gesture suggests an oceanic conception/mapping

110 夏曼·藍波安，〈黑色的翅膀〉，頁67-69，108-109。

111 夏曼·藍波安，〈黑色的翅膀〉，頁70。

112 夏曼·藍波安，〈黑色的翅膀〉，頁79-80。

that is far beyond a China-centred or Taiwan-centred civilisation. Instead, this is a return to the conception of Tao-centred world mapping—the tradition, in Tao history, that the ancient Taos travelled freely across the Pacific Ocean and made their own oral literature through their own “first person narrative”. In fact, some Taiwanese historians (e.g. Cao Yonghe and Chou Wan-yao) offer an oceanic historiography (in which Taiwan is viewed as an important commercial point) vis-à-vis the China-centred continent-based one (in which Taiwan’s significance is usually minimised).

The latest layer of Chinese colonisation imposed by the KMT regime invades more extensively into the Tao field than the Japanese colonisation (which preserved Orchid Island as a place for Japanese anthropological researches). However, between Japanese and Chinese colonisation, the Taos (especially the older generations) tend to have a better impression of Japanese colonisation. This is indicated, for example, by Ngalolog’s grandmother’s slip of the tongue, “why should the Japanese leave?” She has a negative view towards the Chinese teachers in school. While she was beaten up occasionally during the period of Japanese Rule, she thinks “the Japanese are more reasonable than the Chinese, and sometimes it is honorable to be beaten up [by Japanese teachers].” Later Ngalolog’s grandmother thinks, “If Ngalolog read Chinese books now, would he become a Chinese when he grows up? And what about the Taos? [I] So wish Ngalolog can stay with his grandfather, to learn how to build a ship and to catch flying fish…to do what men of this island are required to do.”¹¹³ The younger generation also displays a negative attitude towards the Chinese ideology embedded in schooling. For example, Kaswal says:

113 夏曼·藍波安，〈黑色的翅膀〉，頁101-102。

I hate the teacher from China who call us Taos “the lid of the pot”... “the laziest nation in the world”... “silly and dirty”...I hate more when he teaches us to kill the communist bandits when we grow up. If it is necessary to kill, let Chinese themselves kill Chinese, why ask us to kill Chinese? We are not Chinese...While the teachers from Taiwan, either ask us to catch frogs and eels for them, or gather wood for them to cook...¹¹⁴

The Chinese teacher injects China-centric nationalism into the Taos, while the Taiwanese teachers exploit them economically. In terms of national allegory, the teacher from China and the teachers from Taiwan respectively invade the political and economic fields of Orchid Island.

The desire of Kaswal and his friends for the “white flesh” of his Taiwanese teacher’s wife (the skin of Taiwanese is whiter than that of the Taos) demonstrates a shared sexual fantasy directed towards Taiwanese women:¹¹⁵

They are thinking about the future – either “white flesh” or “black wings.” The former is in the [Taiwanese] land while the latter is in the sea...The annual visit of the flying fish with black wings inspires their will to survive...In terms of “white bodies,” will there be Taiwanese women marrying them in the future?¹¹⁶

“White flesh” represents Taiwanese women and the capitalist economic production in Taiwan, while “black wings” represent flying fish and traditional Tao production. The sinicised Kaswal, who can not forget “the lure of

114 夏曼·藍波安，〈黑色的翅膀〉，頁107。

115 夏曼·藍波安，〈黑色的翅膀〉，頁137-146。

116 夏曼·藍波安，〈黑色的翅膀〉，頁169-170。

white flesh,” finally marries a Taiwanese girl.¹¹⁷ This mirrors the black-white psychological complex observed in Frantz Fanon’s *Black Skin, White Masks*. However, Fanon argues, “this sexual myth—the quest for white flesh—perpetuated by alienated psyches must no longer be allowed to impede active understanding.” Fanon suggests that “a restructuring of the world” is possible.¹¹⁸ Through Rapongan’s “restructuring,” the “active understanding” of these grown-up Tao characters witnesses a reversed black-white complex which displays a reflection of the *colonial palimpsest*. At the end of this fiction, they have come to the realisation: “White skins are not necessarily beautiful! Ai! ‘white flesh’ buys our friend’s [Kaswal] ocean and the soul of black wings, and his stars…” On the contrary, Gigimit marries a girl from Western Samoa with pretty “brown-dark skin,” while Ngalolog asserts, “black is the most beautiful colour,” and “Black is like the deepest layer in the vast ocean, which stores the secrets of nature. Black is the fairest colour in the world. Without dark nights, the world would be very dull and boring…”¹¹⁹ Even though these idealised and Tao-nationalist narratives could easily invoke criticism of “ethnic guidance” by Song Zelai, it seems to be a necessary defensive and decolonising step to the reconstruction of Tao subjectivity (against Han hegemony).

Conclusion: a reversed re-evaluation of hysteresis by Syaman Rapongan’s writing

As mentioned above, these stories show how the Tao habitus is gradually replaced by Han/Taiwanese habitus through education, and how traditional Tao values become abnormal ones after the invasion and the internalisation of “modern” discourses in the younger Tao generations. Various features of the

117 夏曼·藍波安，〈黑色的翅膀〉，頁184-236。

118 Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin White Masks* trans. Lam Markmann (London: Pluto press, 2008), pp. 59-60.

119 夏曼·藍波安，〈黑色的翅膀〉，頁237-8。

Tao habitus, such as marrying a Tao girl after growing up or building a two-men ship, are the expectation of Kaswal's father. However, "nowadays, such healthy and normal thoughts, or such a life, are no longer the dreams of the [Tao] youngsters."¹²⁰ The traditional Taos are alienated in their own island, while the young Taos become part of the diaspora in Taiwan.

However, as mentioned above, Bourdieu's concept of hysteresis effect is strategically reversed by Rapongan¹²¹ through his writing-back works (and his own everyday practice). In response to the invasion of *modern* discourses from Taiwan, Rapongan's way to decolonise Tao culture and to resist Sinicisation is similar to the decolonising projects adopted by Taiwanese (or Han Taiwanese) against Chinese/Japanese hegemony—mostly through the reconstruction of We and the deconstruction of Others. The recurring theme of relearning the traditional (Tao) lifestyle often contains an idealised Tao national allegory. If Taiwan is seen as "the first nation" in Fredric Jameson's term, the stories of Rapongan's characters work like "national allegories of the embattled situation of the public third-world culture or society."¹²² As a result of this contradictory position-taking between Tao tradition and (Han/Chinese/Taiwanese) modernity, Rapongan reflects that, "ocean has no periphery or centre, what she has is simply the temper (tides) that the moon gives to her".¹²³ This suggests an idealised return to Tao philosophy, where Manichean binaries of colonial/decolonial, central/peripheral differentiations do not exist. National allegories may even not be needed. However, in everyday life practice of postcolonialism on Orchid Island, in terms of the colonial palimpsest, under the influence of the layers of hegemony of Japanese and KMT

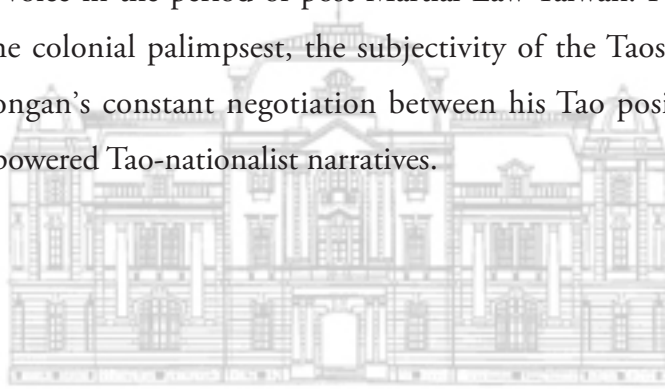
120 夏曼·藍波安，〈黑色的翅膀〉，頁203。

121 See especially 〈黑色的翅膀〉，pp. 46-48.

122 Fredric Jameson, "Third-World Literature in the Era of Multinational Capitalism", *Social Text*, No.15 (1986), p. 69.

123 夏曼·藍波安，〈老海人〉（台北：印刻文學出版公司，2009.09），頁21。

Chinese (and Taiwanese) colonisation—and of modernity, capitalism, and the “civilisation” agendas within Christianity—Rapongan’s writings enact an inevitable return to the Tao habitus, or, the euphemised Tao hysteresis effect. Through Rapongan’s language strategy, the reversed power structure between Tao values and elite Chinese pedagogy, and through reversed aesthetic and sexual conceptions, a Tao-based Occidentalism is constructed to go against the Orientalist narratives, which used to look the Taos through asserting a dominant position. From this perspective, Rapongan’s writings, with their distinctive narration of Tao oral myths, represent one of the most Nativist and diasporic voice in the period of post Martial Law Taiwan. Furthermore, in terms of the colonial palimpsest, the subjectivity of the Taos is regained through Rapongan’s constant negotiation between his Tao position-taking and other empowered Tao-nationalist narratives.



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