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**The Fantasies of the Colonized: A Lacanian Perspective on Anti-colonial Cultural Movements
in Taiwan (1921-1945)**

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The Fantasies of the Colonized: A Lacanian Perspective on Anti-colonial Cultural Movements in Taiwan (1921-1945)

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Abstract

This paper considers the responses of the colonised Taiwanese who were violently ‘inserted’ into the symbolic order of modern civilisation by the Japanese coloniser between 1921 and 1945. This paper argues that the pre-condition for the native Taiwanese’s construction of their own anti-colonial movements was to participate in the order imposed by Japan through culture. As the main theme of the anti-colonial movements in Taiwan, culture served to encourage native intellectuals to embrace modern western civilisation to build their own identity within a global perspective, while, at the same time, to provide them with a theoretical framework to resist assimilation into Japanese culture. With the breakup between the right-wing and left-wing camps in 1927, another group of intellectuals began to introduce socialist thought to explain the concept of culture. As a result, culture, as a signifier within the symbolic order of modern civilisation, was given various ideologies within the society. Through the Lacanian concept of castration, this paper attempts to understand the process of colonial modernisation as a process of castration, forcing Taiwanese to abandon forms of enjoyment associated with China and then refining these via forking the original meaning of the signifier of culture within the modern symbolic order. Such framework allows for an examination of the evolution of anti-colonial cultural discourses in the history of Taiwan.

Key Words: Anti-colonial Movements of Taiwan, Castration, Lacanian Psychoanalysis, Concept of Culture

Through the Lacanian concept of castration, a re-reading of historical documents on anti-colonial movements in Taiwan between 1921 and 1945 is made possible. Within the structure of anti-colonial discourses in Taiwan, culture plays a role like Lacanian concept of *objet petit* and guarantees the possibility of resistance for the colonised Taiwanese against the Japanese coloniser. By highlighting the role of this ‘signifier of culture’, one can articulate the process of how the colonised Taiwanese became involved in the symbolic order of modernity brought to Taiwan by Japan and, more importantly, understand the development of different approaches of anti-colonial discourse.

1. Methodology: The Anamorphic Reading Approach to Anti-colonial Discourses

The psychoanalytic approach is always related with the ideas of 'gaze' and 'desire'. Here, the so-called 'gaze' is not only a visual experience that involves something in the subject's knowledge or sense, but also refers to 'something [*desire, anxiety...etc*] slips, passes, is transmitted, from stage to stage, and is always to some degree eluded' when the subject tries to establish a relationship with the gazed, represented object (Lacan 2004: 73). That is to say, the structure of the repressive relationship between the subject and the object is 'no longer at the level of demand... but of the desire of the Other' (Ibid: 104).

Once we have recognised the process through which the colonised natives became integrated into the modern symbolic order as a Lacanian castration, it is then important to establish an *episteme*, a right position where it is possible to find knowledge (Lacan 2007: 22), to articulate how such 'gaze' and 'desire' were practiced within historical documents and anti-colonial discourses during the Japanese-colonised period in Taiwan.

This is what I will call/mean/understand by psychoanalytic reading methodology: by allowing the concept of gaze and desire to construct a priori interdisciplinary platform on the top of historical documents, we can stand on a right position to examine how different ideologies interacted with each other within a particular discursive arena. In order to reach this goal, practically, it is necessary to grasp the so-called '*objet petit a*' within the discourses and to articulate its various definitions given by different subjects involved in. In this way, unlike previous bottom-up psychoanalytic research which attempts to articulate individuals' personal repressed experience under power relations, we can establish another top-down methodology/reading approach to examine how different experiences and ideologies circulate within the symbolic order and interact with each other.

Under this methodological practice, it is essential to not regard these historical documents as objective discourses. It is necessary to notice that it is the desire that drives the subject into the Other and forces him/her to weave different discourses in order to represent his/her experience/self-identity within the symbolic order. That is to say, if we want to demonstrate the practice of such desire in historical documents, we need to articulate how a particular signifier was empowered and became inserted into the symbolic order by the subject's desire. This cannot be reached if we read these discourses directly without considering the interaction between the subject and the Other.

This is what Žižek (1991: 11-12) proposed as 'looking awry' or 'anamorphic gaze'. As he asserted, if we look at a phenomena or material objectively, we see nothing but the reality of what it is. However, if we could look at it from an 'anamorphic angle', we will observe a particular signifier, an *objet petit a*, an

object-cause of desire, that is excavated, distorted, and contaminated by the subject in order to project his/her desire onto the Other. That is to say, when we read a particular discourse and

articulate its internal meanings/relations among signifiers, we cannot only deposit it within the symbolic order of the Other. Instead, we have to articulate how the subject's desire mediates the practice between subject and the Other.

This process of 'looking awry' can be illustrated as shown in diagram 2-1. Via the projection of the subject's desire onto the symbolic order, the *objet petit a* inscribes a gap/void within the symbolic order in order to allow the subject's desire be 'taken off'. It is also in this way that the desire is embodied into a signifier and takes its substantial form. Following this logic, when we read a discourse or historical document, we should not assume a signifier is necessarily as it appears. Instead, we have to bend our gaze to an 'anamorphic angle' in order to relate this signifier to the subject's desire. It is only through this perspective of articulation that we can understand the reason why this discourse/document is shaped in the way it is.

To go a step further and understand this 'anamorphic gaze' in detail, we have to go back to Lacan (2007: 13-15). As he discussed in the seminar between 1969 and 1970, the formula of a master discourse provides us with a formula to understand this process of the 'anamorphic reading approach' :

$$\begin{array}{ccc} S_1 & \rightarrow & S_2 \\ \text{---} & & \text{---} \\ \$ & & a \end{array}$$

This formula indicates the way how a particular signifier (S_1) masters the practice of knowledge, the symbolic order where the other signifiers are connected in a relational system, the Other (S_2). If we examine this relation directly without the so-called 'anamorphic gaze', what we see is only the process in which S_1 is inserted into the Other as part of the knowledge. However, if we can 'look awry' from an anamorphic angle, we can see the practice behind this insertion. Behind the scenery, it is the barred subject (\$) hidden behind the signifier of S_1 . In order to introduce his/her desire into the Other, the subject launches the process of insertion and reincarnates his/her desire in the substantial form of S_1 .

However, during the process of insertion, there must be some remainder, *objet petit a* (a), that cannot be recognised by the narrative of the Other. This phenomenon can be explained on two levels: First, within the symbolic order, the signifier of S_1 is no longer recognised as the original meaning by the Other. It represents nothing but the desire of the barred subject; Secondly, from the perspective of the subject's imagination, the signifier of S_1 cannot fully represent the desire of the subject. Once the desire was inserted into the Other via the substantial form of S_1 , he/she has to sacrifice some of his/her *jouissance* in order to

fit him/herself within the Other. Therefore, this process of insertion is what Lacan called 'castration'. It is not only about a particular signifier being inserted into the knowledge/the Other, but also about the 'loss of *jouissance*' (Ibid: 19). As Lacan indicated, this gap/void

‘opened up to something, and we don’t know whether or not this something is the representation of the lack in jouissance, which is situated by means of knowledge process’ (Ibid).

In addition, as we have seen from the example of post-colonial studies, once the subject’s desire, carried by the signifier of S_1 , is projected onto the Other, it also has to fit him/herself into a recognisable position within. As a result, so-called ‘in-structural-remainder’/objet petit a/gap/void is veiled and smoothed in different ways to become a universal and objective system of knowledge, which cannot be seen if we do not look awry. This type of knowledge is called the ‘discourse of the university’ by Lacan:

$$\begin{array}{ccc} S_2 & \rightarrow & a \\ \text{---} & & \text{---} \\ S_1 & & \$ \end{array}$$

As the formula above indicates, the inserted signifier S_1 is veiled under a universal knowledge, S_2 . This process is achieved when this universal knowledge, the Other, tries to dominate the inserted remainder (a) and the subject’s desire ($\$$). Therefore, if we read the discourses directly without looking awry, we will only observe the universal and objective ‘knowledge’ within which the subject’s desire is veiled.

In this way, in order to allow the gap/void/objet petit a emerged from the Other, when we read a discourse/document, it is important to articulate how the meaning of S_1 is transgressed by the subject’s desire. As Lacan asserts:

If there is one thing that psychoanalysis should force us to maintain obstinately, it’s that the desire for knowledge bears no relation to knowledge - unless, of course, we wheel out the lubricious word “transgression.” (Ibid: 23)

Here, Lacan proposed the so-called ‘discourse of the analyst’ to allow us to articulate the relationship between transgression and the formation of knowledge, from an anamorphic angle (Ibid: 98-101):

$$\begin{array}{ccc} a & \rightarrow & \$ \\ \text{---} & & \text{---} \\ S_1 & & S_2 \end{array}$$

As we can observe from the formula of the analyst's discourse, the focus is no longer on the relationship between a particular signifier, S_1 , and the Other, S_2 . Instead, the most important thing is to recognise the existence of *objet petit a* (a) and to articulate how this remainder is imagined by the subject in order to allow his/her desire to be projected onto the Other. Therefore, to understand such imagination, in addition to realise the fact that it is the subject's desire, instead of the signifier S_1 , being deposited within the Other, it is also necessary to articulate how subject transgresses the signifier S_1 into *objet petit a*.

In other words, as Lacan indicates, this process of articulation reveals to us the Oedipus complex, the practical principle of the process of castration, to understand the scenery hidden behind the insertion of S_1 into the Other. By revealing the transgressed signifier, *objet petit a*, and its relationship with the subject's desire to the surface, we can understand 'the role of knowledge' and desire's claim to truth within the Other (Ibid: 99). Arguably, this is what Žižek (1991) refers to as the 'anamorphic gaze': to change the angle of looking to focus on the *objet petit a*, instead of the inserted S_1 , in order to know how the subject's desire was able to be inserted into the symbolic order. As a result, we will be able to 'return toward the invisible, a refusal, and displacement' (Kristeva 2000: 10) in order to articulate how social taboo was established to exclude those hidden experiences and desires. Taking anti-Japanese colonial discourses in Taiwan as an example, in this thesis, I will adopt this 'anamorphic gaze' as an approach to re-read historical documents on anti-colonial discourses. I will argue that the content of culture plays the role of the Lacanian concept of *objet petit a* and guarantees the possibility of resistance for the colonised Taiwanese against the Japanese coloniser. Therefore, via highlighting the role of this 'signifier of culture', we can articulate the process of how colonised Taiwanese were integrated into the modern symbolic order and understand why they could develop different approaches of anti-colonial discourses simultaneously in history.

The reason why I will relate the signifier of culture with *objet petit a* is due to the fact that if we articulate the content of 'culture' via different approaches to anti-Japanese colonial discourses in Taiwan, we will find that they referred to completely different meanings and represented different ideologies, which cannot merely be explained by the framework of nationalism. While the Japanese coloniser introduced modern western civilisation and scientific knowledge to Taiwan, in order to justify their colonisation they also gave culture a modern, progressive, and reasonable meaning within the dominating symbolic order of Taiwanese society. Then, based on the distinction between Taiwanese and Japanese culture, native right-wing intellectuals empowered the signifier of culture with another meaning: cultural distinction. It allowed native intellectuals to weave anti-colonial discourses without losing the opportunity to learn modern western civilisation from Japan. Moreover, while communism and left-wing thought were introduced to Taiwan, left-wing intellectuals soon forked the content of 'promoting

the development of Taiwanese culture' into an understanding of 'industrial culture based on the benefit of the Taiwanese proletariat and peasants in order to realise their economic life.' (Lien 1926a) From this perspective, it is no exaggeration to assert that anti-Japanese colonial discourses in Taiwan were established on the argument of 'culture'.

If we apply this phenomenon into the Lacanian concept of castration mentioned above, we will realise that 'culture' was the vital concept in understanding the organisation of anti-Japanese colonial movements in Taiwan. It does not contain any original meaning but merely a 'signifier' within the symbolic order introduced to Taiwan by Japanese coloniser. This 'signifier of culture' provided different groups of colonised natives with the means to develop their own ideologies against the Japanese coloniser. However, their ultimate purpose was not to articulate what culture was. Rather, it was only a signifier that provided natives with substantial material to embody their desire and enable it to be recognised within the dominant symbolic order. In this vein, if we cannot identify different realisations of 'culture' and relate them to the desire of different groups of subjects within the symbolic order, then we will not understand how different ideologies were imagined within a society at the same time.

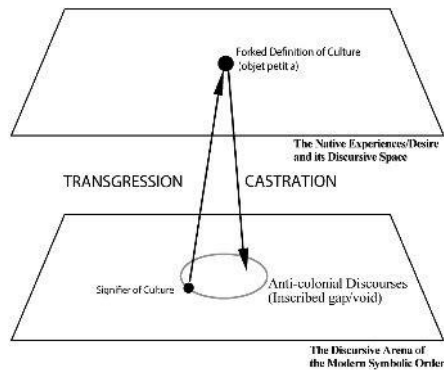
2. Becoming Immersed in a Modern Symbolic Order: The Concept of Culture within the Anti-Colonial Movements in Taiwan, 1921-1931

Once the content of 'culture' in the different approaches of anti-Japanese colonial discourses in Taiwan is articulated, one will find that these discourses refer to completely different meanings and represent different ideologies. While the Japanese introduced modern western civilisation to Taiwan as colonial justification, they also gave culture a modern, progressive meaning within Taiwanese society. Then, based on the difference between Taiwanese and Japanese culture, the native right-wing intellectuals empowered the signifier of culture with another meaning: cultural difference. It allowed the native intellectuals to engage in anti-colonial discourse without losing the opportunity to learn about modern western civilisation introduced by Japan. Moreover, after communism was introduced to Taiwan, left-wing intellectuals also created a meaning of material culture 'based on the benefit of the Taiwanese proletariat' (Chen 1927). It appears that anti-Japanese colonial discourses in Taiwan were established on the arguments concerning 'culture'.

Thus, as Diagram 1 shows, this paper attempts to adopt Lacanian idea of castration to argue that 'culture' is a vital concept to understand the organisation of anti-Japanese colonial movements in Taiwan. The 'signifier of culture' provided different groups of colonised natives to develop their own ideologies against the Japanese. However, their ultimate purpose was not to articulate what culture was. Rather, culture became a signifier that provided natives a substantial material to

embody and enable their desire to be recognised within the dominating symbolic order.

Diagram 1 - The Psychoanalytic Reading Approach on Anti-Colonial Discourses in Taiwan



2-1. The Birth of Culture in Taiwan: Self-Governance under the Pre- Condition of Assimilation

In some of his essays, Nishigawa Nagao mentions the difference between civilisation and culture in modern Japan. He indicates that although both civilisation and culture were born from Europe between the 18th and 19th century, their meanings and contexts were varied. The concept of civilisation comes as a result of the Enlightenment, representing collective human progress. On the other hand, culture emphasises the individual, representing a particular lifestyle in a region. These two kinds of realisations were evident in the development of modern Japanese history. That is to say, when Japan began to become westernised, it was also aware of the necessity to protect its traditional culture and national spirit at the same time (Chen 2006). Therefore, it was also necessary for Japan to distinguish the difference between civilisation and culture.

When the Japanese coloniser projected such Japanese-realised concepts of civilisation and culture onto their first colony, Taiwan, however, a gap was created. The distinction between civilisation and culture was not clear for the Taiwanese natives because, at the same time Japan, as an agency, introduced the modern scientific knowledge to Taiwan under the structure of a capitalist economic system (Ibid.), the discourses of Japanese nationalism were contained in the idea of civilisation as well. As a result, when the natives tried to adopt the concept of culture to distinguish the different cultural characteristics between Japan and Taiwan, they faced a symbolic dilemma where civilisation and culture could not be separated.

In order to articulate this phenomenon, it is important to understand first the meanings of 'culture'. In western context, the original meaning of culture refers to the process of tending crops or animals. From 16th century onwards, it was extended as a metaphor to indicate a process of human development (Williams 1983:87-88). However, although culture is translated as 'wen-hwa/bunka/文化' in Chinese and Japanese, it developed from a different context. The word wen-hwa is composed of two different Chinese characters: wen, which in ancient Chinese means written words, and is always in contrast with weapons and military (later, its meaning also became a metaphor referring to the world of social customs, literary taste, and legal/ceremonial systems); and hwa, a verb referring to a process of transformation or education. Unlike the western context of culture, which indicates a process of tending crops, animals, or nations in order to raise its characteristics, the word wen-hwa in Chinese or Japanese context refers to a process of transformation and assimilation into the world of social order.

The translation of culture into *wen-hwa* in Chinese and Japanese represents the influence of western scientific knowledge and civilisation in Asia. In order to compete with the industrialised western countries, the Chinese and Japanese intellectuals had to assimilate themselves into the modern symbolic order. For the right-wing anti-colonial movements in Taiwan, culture was, in its western context, a tool to distinguish the particularity of Taiwan to Japan and, in its Chinese/Japanese context, an attempt to assimilate the society into modern civilisation.

(1) Culture as a Tool of Distinction

Therefore, in the first layer of the concept of culture in Taiwan, it was used as a tool to separate Taiwan from other nations or races. 'To promote the development of Taiwanese culture', the slogan of the main anti-Japanese colonial organisation, Taiwan Cultural Association, aimed to cultivate the identity of the Taiwanese people/Han ethnic groups in order to resist assimilation into Japanese nationalism. For instance, Huang Cheng-tsung's article on the *Taiwanese People's Newspaper* exemplified this definition of culture. Huang explains that although Taiwanese culture was inherited from China, it has grown into a culture of its own. After Taiwan was ceded to Japan, the Japanese spirit mixed with Taiwanese culture and became more complex as a result of natural development rather than violence (Huang 1925).

Huang also provides an example by mentioning one of his Taiwanese friends who was selected as the District Governor and, therefore, had to attend formal banquets held by the Japanese from time to time. Under the policy of assimilation, his friend had to wear the official outfit of a Japanese ceremonial robe; however, underneath it, he wore traditional Taiwanese clothing. One day, when the arm sleeve of his Taiwanese clothing was accidentally exposed, guests laughed at his inaptness. His friend responded: 'Taiwanese cloth is really convenient.

Because I am the District Governor, I have no other choice but to follow the policy of assimilation made by the Governor-General's Office. If I am not the District Governor, I will not wear this inconvenient cloth'. As a result, the Japanese officers cannot say anything but to agree with him (Ibid.). Huang uses this example to explain that culture is a lifestyle adapted to a particular natural and social environment within a region. It displays its own characteristics and, therefore, cannot be replaced immediately. If anyone attempts to replace the culture through violence, the culture being introduced will be viewed as awkward, just like the Japanese robe worn by that District Governor.

Moreover, the particularity of Taiwanese culture inspired the native right-wing intellectuals to propose the concept of 'self-governance' as their main anti-colonial strategy. As Jiang Wei-shui declares in a public speech in 1925:

Every creature has its own personality... Han ethnicity has its own personality as a Han ethnicity. Therefore, in order to elaborate the ability of each person, we have to study culture... To elaborate the personality of the individual and the characteristic of every race is the core of culture... It is impossible to use a compulsive model of assimilation to rule a person... The personality of each race cannot be developed without the policy of self-governance. Therefore, we have to return the rights [of self-governance] to every race.

As one of the main founders of the Taiwan Cultural Association, Jiang's opinion on culture reveals how the definition of culture is inseparable with the concept of self-governance. For Jiang, culture needs to be developed and preserved in order to develop its own characteristics. Through the full development of Taiwanese culture, the right-wing intellectuals' main anti-colonial strategy of self-governance could be justified.

(2) Culture as a Symbolic Order of Modern Universal Civilisation

The second definition of culture concerns the Taiwanese's assimilation into modern civilisation. In addition to self-governance, the right-wing intellectuals were also aware that it is precisely scientific knowledge and modern civilisation that could empower them against the Japanese-style colonial discourses of assimilation.

In the manifesto of the Taiwan Cultural Association, culture also struggles with traditional and superstitious Taiwanese customs and western scientific knowledge. Huang Cheng-tsung (1924) writes:

...However, what is culture? It is an embodiment of the spirit of the times... It is the representation of different perspectives of the public social life in an era... The spirit of the times is the

representation of human thoughts and these thoughts are a phenomenon of consciousness resulting from experience and thinking. Therefore, when the experience is sufficient or... under...the stimulation of environment, [the thought] can be changed. From this perspective, the spirit of the times will be renewed. It is not fixed... Therefore, every era has its own task [to renew its culture].... This task is to reconstruct the waste trash left from the old era. What is called waste trash is something noxious and has no benefit [to the new era]. It is not suitable for human life and therefore needs to be eliminated in order to... promote the development of society and to raise the [quality of] human life. The exchange between new and old [thoughts] shares the same principle with cell metabolism. Every era have to follow this principle to make the progress.

Here, we can observe a different concept of culture. It is not a tool to distinguish the particularity of Taiwan from Japan. In order to promote the development of Taiwanese culture, one must follow the ‘spirit of time’ (modernity) in order to ‘reconstruct the waste trash left from the old era’. The right-wing intellectuals believed, like the evolution of human body, that the society also has to experience the struggle between the traditional and the modern in order to abandon those outmoded ‘culture’ and embrace a progressive ‘culture’.

2-2. The Birth of Culture: An ‘*objet petit a*’ within the Symbolic Order of Japanese Assimilation

It is not a coincidence that culture became the main theme of anti-colonial discourses in the early 1920s in Taiwan. The definition of culture in terms of self-governance and assimilation reveals a ‘forked, but not false’ understanding toward the symbolic order imposed by the Japanese coloniser.

On the one hand, both right-wing intellectuals and the Japanese Governor-General of Taiwan agreed on the idea of self-governance because Taiwanese culture cannot immediately be assimilated into the Japanese nationalism. However, they discussed this phenomenon in different contexts. For the native intellectuals, the idea of self-governance was built under the ethnic distinction between the Taiwanese and the Japanese. Therefore, self-governance was proposed as a tool to oppose the policy of assimilation made by the central government of Japan. However, the Governor-General’s understanding of self-governance was based on the progressive level of civilisation. For him, Taiwan is incapable of manipulating the practice of constitutionalism and democracy. Therefore, it is necessary for the central government of Japan to trust the Governor-General to rule Taiwan under the system of ‘special self-governance’.

On the other hand, the concept of culture also reveals the other meaning of the relationship between the Japanese coloniser and the colonised Taiwanese: assimilation. During the 1920s, the Japanese coloniser attempted to assimilate the Taiwanese, transforming them to behave like a Japanese. But what interested the native intellectuals was their assimilation into the modern symbolic order of civilisation, which was inserted to Taiwan together with the discourse of assimilation. Therefore, for the colonised natives, culture was no longer a tool of difference, but a universal value, such as the French idea of liberty, equality, and fraternity, based on modern civilisation. Thus, the right-wing intellectuals embraced modern civilisation in order to criticise the outmoded customs within Taiwanese culture and to enlighten ordinary people. They believed that only through the promotion of this universal part of Taiwanese culture that the 'special self-governance' of the Governor-General could be eliminated.

Here, the Lacanian concept of castration is demonstrated successfully. For the native intellectuals, participating in the symbolic order imposed violently by the coloniser is the only way to organise their resistance. By forking the definition of culture, they could transgress the original meaning of 'culture' within the symbolic order. This forked meaning of culture plays the role of the Lacanian concept of '*objet petit a*', helping the colonised Taiwanese project their desires onto the order. Through this process, the colonised Taiwan could develop their own identity within the order. It is under this context that the native intellectuals manipulated culture as the main signifier to organise their anti-colonialism movements in the early 1920s.

2-3. Inheriting and Transforming the Signifier of Culture within Left-Wing Camp

With the introduction of socialist thoughts to Taiwan from the early 1920s, another definition of culture began to emerge. For the leftists, the emotion of belonging within a particular nation was related to its unique economic lifestyle. The formation of such economic status produces the so-called 'culture' within a nation. Therefore, the national conflict between coloniser and the colonised are determined by their different economic conditions. It was under this narrative that the concept of culture was re-deposited within the modern symbolic order by the left-wing intellectuals.

Under this context, the left-wing realisation of 'culture' emphasised its material definition. As Lien Wen-ching proposes at the first meeting after the breakup between the left and the right wings of the Taiwan Cultural Association on 4 January 1927:

...Two thirds... [of the Taiwanese people] are peasants. Plus with those who work in industries, coal mining, and fishing industry, they occupy four fifths of the population. These people do not

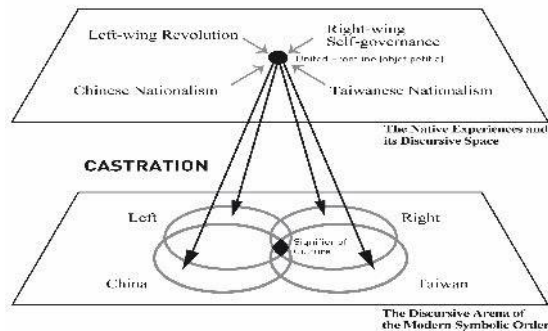
have any means of production and therefore have to rely on the existing industrial organisations... In this way, if the cultural movements in Taiwan do not target those ordinary people... it is not only meaningless but also obstructs the progress of culture... Culture is their life. It is the embodiment of the clothing, food, and housing. [Therefore,] to search for the target of this embodiment of the basic necessities of life is to empower the cultural movements with a foundation and make it meaningful.

Through Lien's assertion, one understands how the concept of culture was transformed from a nationalist combination among the particularity of Taiwan and the universal civilisation into a socialist realisation. 'To promote the development of Taiwanese culture', according to the guidelines set up by the right-wing intellectuals of the Taiwan Cultural Association in 1921, new definitions were made. The aim was not only to encourage the ordinary Taiwanese people to embrace modern civilisation and be aware of their particularity as a Taiwanese. Rather, it aimed to promote the industrial culture to benefit the Taiwanese proletariat.

While left-wing intellectuals tried to introduce their socialist perspective into the symbolic order shaped by the Japanese coloniser and the right-wing intellectuals in early 1920s, they also had to inject their material perspective into the signifier of culture in order to 'fork' its original meanings. Hence, their socialist concept could be conveyed under the basis of national antagonism. Indeed, they produced a new meaning of the signifier of culture and, by holding this new meaning, re-illustrated the original nationalist anti-colonial narratives into the socialist perspective. As a result, the 'united frontline' was shaped within the anti-colonial movements in Taiwan in the late 1920s to allow the left-wing intellectuals to create a gap of the meaning of culture within the modern symbolic order.

As a result, while the left-wing thoughts were mature enough to challenge the nationalist approaches within the anti-colonial camp in Taiwan, the breakup happened due to the forked definitions of culture. As diagram 2 shows, after 1927, although different approaches of anti-colonialism discourses in Taiwan shared the same signifier of culture, that is, to transgress the symbolic order they were in, they still projected their desires separately with their unique participation and developed different ideologies to inform the modern symbolic order. Therefore, each of the projections represents a desire to involve its own socioeconomic interests and native experience into the symbolic order. It is through these projections that anti-colonial movements in Taiwan were shaped as the way it was.

Diagram 2 - The Process of Castration within the Anti-Colonialism Camp in Late 1920s Taiwan



3. The Castrated Royal Citizens of Japan and Their Resistance

With the involvement into the World War Two, the project of the ‘Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere’ was launched in December, 1938. After this, in order to promote the new order of East Asia, the ‘Imperial Rule Assistance Association’ (Taisei Yokusankai) was established under the direction of Fumimaro Konoe on 12 October, 1940 in Japan. It was a para-fascist organisation aimed at removing the conflicts among bureaucrats, politicians, and military within the Japanese Empire. By creating a totalitarian single-party politics, the organisation hoped to support the ongoing wars in East Asia and maintain public order in the Japanese occupied regions. To reach this goal, the organisation also began to promote some movements to revitalise local culture in order to produce a new culture that could mobilise ‘Japanese royal citizens’ living in different regions. As the Cultural Department of the Taisei Yokusankai declared in January, 1941, the task for producing a new ‘citizen culture’ included the following aspects:

1. *To respect the native tradition and the particularity of [local] regions. To allow the native culture to perform its maximum characteristics. No longer satisfied with the distribution of central [modern, civilised, and metropolitan] culture to local regions. [Instead, to] set a goal of the whole nation being renewed, created, and developed [under the revitalisation local cultures.]*

2. *To correct the individualism culture. To reinforce and maintain the connectivity of relations among social groups in suburban farming villages. To encourage the love toward hometown and the public spirit. To spread the culture of collectivism. To establish a living collaboration structure based on the unit of the family within our country.*

3. *To correct the imbalance of culture, industry, and administrative politics in different regions. To develop central culture healthily and enrich local cultures [at the same time.] To allow them to exchange with each other in order to reach a balanced cultural development. (Wu 2008: 66)*

From the description above, we can observe a trend within the Japanese Empire for mobilising local resources together in a new form of ‘citizen culture’ during wartime. The idea of the so-called ‘citizen culture’ was not political propaganda that attempted to adjust the moral behaviour of Japanese citizens in order to fit them to the wartime situation. On the contrary, it was to encourage its citizens living in different regions to develop its own characteristics and, under the instruction of politics, to exchange with each other. By doing so, it hoped to establish a new system to which different cultures in different regions within the Japanese occupied areas could contribute their effort to the empire. As Kishida Kunio, Minister of the Cultural Department in Taisie Yokusankai, emphasised, the development of folk culture was essential to enforce the moral life of citizens during wartime. ‘It was a huge up-side-down mistake to expect that moral power could change folk cultures’ (Ibid).

Such cultural policies established by the Taisie Yokusankai were soon practiced in Taiwan as well. In January, 1941, a propaganda newspaper published by the colonial government, *Taiwan Times*, issued a special volume to examine the content of *kominka* movements in Taiwan. Within this volume, Nakamura Satoru (1941), the associate professor of the Imperial Taipei University, wrote an article to discuss the relative problem:

... [To set up a] cultural policy does not mean that politics will instruct [native] culture. [On the contrary,] it means that a [Japanese] culture will instruct the others to the direction of politics... The politics that can instruct culture is not the politics itself. It is the politics with a cultural characteristic...

The kominka problem in Taiwan is to change Han culture into a Japanese style and to integrate it into the community of Japanese citizens... The kominka problem is to recognise that Han culture exists in some parts of the Japanese territory. It is a problem about how to integrate... Even though the assimilation policy can change the cultural content within a race, it is difficult to change the way of thinking and the expressive formation of feelings... If you are going to abolish [native] ancestral temples, you have to confirm the religious psyche expected by indigenous people and provide some emotional compensations for them... If you do not provide the compensation but abolish the existing religious ceremony, you cannot satisfy the psychological [demand] of indigenous people... The [cultural] policy will then definitely become a useless

policy... To preserve the unique [native] dance and music in the island [of Taiwan] is necessary to comfort indigenous people. Otherwise, if the politics interrupt [native culture] in this way, [native Taiwanese] will lose their beloved faith in politics...

... The convenient things will be used naturally. Although [native Taiwanese] were enforced to use inconvenient Japanese old things under the name of kominka, its result will not have any effort. Kominka, as a cultural policy, is to popularise Japanese citizens' lifestyle. Therefore, this [Japanese] lifestyle should become more convenient and reasonable than the Taiwanese one.

Nakamura's assertion represented how the movement for revitalising local culture within mainland Japan was transplanted to the colonial context of Taiwan (Wu 2008: 70-71). Assimilation to Japanese culture, as the main purpose of *kominka* policy in the first stage of the *kominka* period, was no longer the ultimate goal of cultural policies. Instead, under the flag of the 'Greater East Asia Co- Prosperity Sphere', it was important for the Japanese Empire to coordinate the practice of native Taiwanese Han culture in the direction of a 'convenient and reasonable' lifestyle that was common and could be shared across East Asia. In other words, for Nakamura, the *kominka* movement was not a political issue in a cultural aspect. It was merely a political platform led by Japanese culture to allow different cultures around East Asia to share their particular cultural forms with each other in order to pursue a 'convenient and reasonable' life together. Under this context, native Taiwanese culture should be preserved and the Japanese culture acquire the responsibility to understand the reason why it was essential to comfort indigenous people.

In order to put this concept into practice, the Kominshokokai was established in April, 1941 as the Taiwanese Taisie Yokusankai in charge of cultural policies during the *kominka* period (Ibid: 68). A number of Japanese intellectuals and writers also came to Taiwan. They explored and recorded native Taiwanese folk culture in order to 'grasp the spirit of local culture' and 'find a key to open the soul of the colonised [Taiwanese]' (Chen 2011: 161). For instance, a Japanese-founded magazine, *Folk Taiwan*, was published from July, 1941 in order to explore and introduce Taiwanese folk culture to the public. As its manifesto asserted, understanding native Taiwanese culture was essential for the Japanese Empire to create a map of folklore around East Asia:

... The civilised citizens who have the ability to record and research should take the responsibility to record and research every phenomenon. To take those outdated conventions as outdated convention and take those accumulated malpractices as malpractice to record and research. It is not only the responsibility of our citizens. And, during the time when our nation begin to expand its power to the southern area... it is necessary to [cooperate with]

Chinese people. In order to understand them, it is necessary and convenient to understand native Taiwanese in advance. This is the advantage of our citizens... (Wu 1996: 57).

This manifesto revealed the relationship between the *kominka* movement and the revitalisation of local culture from the viewpoint of the Japanese coloniser. The idea of local culture was deposited under the entire territory of the Japanese Empire. Under the recording and research of Japanese civilised intellectuals, its revitalisation could help the empire to establish a cultural politics that would instruct and establish the new order across East Asia.

It was in this context that Shimada Sanji, a Japanese writer who lived in Taiwan between 1929 and 1944, proposed the idea of ‘colonial literature’ at the beginning of the 1940s. He sought to combine realism and exoticism into a new form of literature for Japanese writers to describe their experience in Taiwan. He believed that the experience of Taiwan represented a new exotic lifestyle that could never be imagined by mainland Japanese writers. Although such experience had been neglected by mainland Japanese writers for a long time, it was still an important part of culture within the whole empire. Therefore, by including Taiwanese living experience with Japanese literature, Shimada hoped to reveal how important Taiwanese culture was for the Japanese Empire in constructing its southern occupied area (Chen 2011: 165).

As a result, under the effort of Japanese writers, the movement for revitalising local culture was practiced in Taiwan, as part of the *kominka* policy, which opened the new arena, of literature production for native Taiwanese intellectuals to organise their anti-colonial discourses during the *kominka* period.

For example, native intellectuals organised together to establish the *Association of Enlightening Literature* and published *Taiwanese Literature* in May 1942 (Ozaki: 2004: 169). They proposed realism as the method to reflect the real Taiwanese lifestyle under war conditions (Yu 2009: 65). More importantly, through describing the suffering of native Taiwanese during wartime, it was hoped to seek for a solution for native Taiwanese intellectuals to project their experience of suffering onto the wartime order. It is in this context that literature production and related literary theory became the main arena of cultural struggle between Japan and Taiwan.

3-1 The Signifier of Culture within the Production of Literature

As discussed previously, the content of culture was deposited in a new framework by the Japanese coloniser during the *kominka* period. As part of the cultural policy, literature production, no matter whether through the approach of exotic realism or aesthetic romanticism, was regarded as a practice to compile a map of folklore around East Asia in order to help the Japanese Empire build a new political order within its occupied area. Under this backdrop, native experience and

lifestyle was no longer regarded as an 'in-structural remainder' or controversy that could not be completely included in the symbolic order of Japanese-style modern civilisation. Instead, by cultivating 'local cultures' around the Japanese occupied area, these cultures were bundled together as a great 'co-prosperity sphere' by the Japanese. As a result, these cultures were recognised officially as part of the symbolic order of the 'East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere'.

The connection between the idea of culture and literature was first developed within the left-wing camp, especially affected by the development of communism in Japan. On 25 March, 1928, the National Alliance of Proletarian Arts (NAP) was established by Japanese left-wing writers in Tokyo. Then, under the instruction of the Japanese Communist Party, the Federation of Japanese Proletarian Culture (COP) was also founded on 27 November, 1931 (Police Bureau [1939] 2006a: 401). These two groups attempted to introduce class struggles into the cultural arena and developed left-wing literary theories.

Affected by the *Battle Flag*, a literary magazine published by NAP, Ite Kaoru gathered twenty-nine Japanese writers and ten Taiwanese writers to found the Association of Taiwanese Literary Writers in Taipei in June, 1931 (Police Bureau [1939] 2006a: 409). Although most of them recognised themselves as being primarily Marxists rather than literature writers, by popularising works of literature in order to establish a new left-wing literary theory in Taiwan, they still hoped to relate the idea of culture to the production of literature. As the action plan of the association declared:

The culture movements in Taiwan are left behind Japan and foreign countries. This is a fact that everyone knows. In order to get rid of such a pessimistic situation as soon as possible, in order to construct the new culture positively, our Association of Taiwanese Literary Writers decides to take some of the responsibility of the art movement, as one of the branches of new cultural movements... (Ibid: 411)

Here, as we can be aware, the same logic as right-wing cultural movements was applied within the left-wing camp. The progress of Taiwanese culture was lagging behind Japan and western countries. Therefore, by introducing the art movement to Taiwanese society, it was hoped that Taiwanese 'new culture' could catch up with the global trend and be involved in modern society.

In addition to engaging with modern civilisation, the association also hoped to retain the particularity of Taiwanese culture and, via literary production, applied this idea to native socialist movements. As stated within a report written by the association in order to connect to the Japanese proletarian cultural groups.

There are two facts that should be remembered in order to grasp the problem of culture in Taiwan: the uniqueness of Taiwanese culture and the

hybridity of heterogeneous races. It is impossible to adopt cultural policies from the proletarian position if you do not recognise these two facts.

...we have to organise literary groups in accordance to the class distinction and then dismiss the Association of Taiwanese Literary Writers. We have to develop the alliance of Taiwanese writers instead of being a branch of Japanese groups (because Taiwanese culture has its own uniqueness)... (Ibid: 417-425)

In addition to establishing a new modern culture, literature was also regarded by the association as a weapon to establish proletarian culture in Taiwan. As Ite Kaoru described at the inaugural meeting of the association, some members expected that the association could ‘contact practical action organisations... in order to take Taiwanese literature as a weapon to... allow the construction of proletarian culture... [and] class struggle’ (Ibid: 413). In this vein, the association not only contacted the NAP and other Japanese left-wing organisations but also involved the communist movements in Taiwan. As the congratulation letter sent by the Japanese Communist Party expected, by proposing proletarian literature in Taiwan, the association would be an organisation that could establish a revolutionary literature that combined new left-wing literary theories and revolutionary action in the colony:

...a real colonial literature has to be subjected on the powerful struggle practiced by the [native] art organisations within the colony itself. It [the real colonial literature] can be achieved only when it [the struggle practiced by native art organisations] was connected to the common struggles with the domestic [Japanese] art organisations...

...Nowadays, the material productivity in Taiwanese society has reached the international level and represents [various] complicated dimensions gradually. The demand of race in the colony has reached a level that cannot be separated from the demand of the labour class. This relationship is the motivation that decides the relationship between proletarian art and colonial art. If the art tries to systematise the psyche, thoughts, and feelings of a race under a conservative nationalism or bourgeoisie, then, the art will not only be opposing to the interests of the labour class but also conflicts with the interests of the whole race and national struggle itself...

....[Therefore,] the proletarian class does not declare wars on the formation of national arts, but combats with the content its bourgeoisie. Why? That is because although the formation of national arts proposed by the bourgeoisie is national, what its content wants to achieve is to eliminate the resistance within the nation...

...If you could cooperate with the colonised public exactly and plan to systematise the thoughts and feelings of the colonised public by arts, then you

have to participate in all national and class movements. That is because we must always grasp the content of arts with a progressive eyesight. If the progressive eyesight is separated from the public struggle, then it is impossible to make proletarian realism alive... (Secretariat of the Central Committee 1931: 413-415)

It was under this context that the signifier of culture inherited previous left- and right-wing anti-colonial movements and was transplanted into the discussion of literary production during the *kominka* period. On the one hand, as part of the cultural enlightenment movement, the production of literature established an approach to involve Taiwan in modern western civilisation by revising its old classic Chinese language into various modern forms. On the other hand, inherited from the socialist movements developed in the late 1920s, by forking the definition of culture to material culture, the left-wing proletarian art movement was related to right-wing nationalist cultural movement established in the early 1920s. As a result, although all political and social anti-colonial movements were abolished by the colonial government after 1937, through the discussion of literature and literary theories, the signifier of culture still provided native intellectuals a space in which they could transgress the dominant order introduced by the Japanese coloniser during the *kominka* period.

More importantly, through the discussion of literary production, a relationship of dual recognition between Japanese coloniser and colonised Taiwanese was established during the *kominka* period. For the Japanese coloniser, by proposing the concept of the 'East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere', they tried to bundle different local cultures together into the One in order to allow Japanese culture to be recognised by its colonies during wartime. For the native Taiwanese, by transplanting previous anti-colonial movements into the discussion of literary production, native experience and interests was officially recognised by the Japanese coloniser for the first time. As a result, the symbolic gap/void inscribed through native anti-colonial movements, as discussed in previous chapters, was taken as a recognisable element within the symbolic of the East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere.

3-2 Kominka Literature as a Recognised Form of Resistance

Under the circumstances outlined above, during the *kominka* period, 'Japanisation under the structure of local culture' was grasped as an *objet petit a* for the colonised Taiwanese to transgress the symbolic order of *kominka* in order to express their own native experience within it. In particular, in addition to 'Taiwan's New Literature', a literature based on Taiwanese *pai-hwa-wen* and realism, so-called '*kominka* literature' also attempted to describe how Taiwanese people suffered from the colonised experience.

Chen Huo-chuan's novel, *The Way*, provides us with a good example for considering this phenomenon further. In this story, the main character, Chen Huo-chuan, who has the same name as the author, is a native technician working in a Japanese camphor company. In order to put the so-called 'Japanese spirit' into practice, he works very hard with his scientific brain and lives a Japanese lifestyle within his soul. He believes that a Japanese is not only 'a person who inherited the blood of Japanese', but is also 'trained by the Japanese spirit when he was a child and was able to display his Japanese spirit at any time' (Chen 1943). However, the reality is not as smooth as he imagines. Although his scientific knowledge helps him create a revolutionary instrument to increase the production of camphor oil, and although he follows all Japanese customs and makes Japanese seasonal poems from time to time, his 'Japanese soul' is still doubted by his Japanese director and he cannot gain promotion.

In order to ease the frustrated experience in reality, Chen believes that to join the Imperial Army and sacrifice his life for the emperor is the only way for the colonised Taiwanese to be saved:

In the belief to the emperor, I can find the way to salvation through shouting the slogan, "Long Live His Majesty". When a person has no way out, his pain cannot be described even you used up all words in the world to do it. However, when he shouts "Long Live His Majesty" as his last words before death, I think, there must be a salvation, enjoyment, and relief within it (Ibid).

For Chen, although the main character in the novel performed the same as mainland Japanese, he was not treated as a real Japanese in reality. Therefore, there was no other way but to sacrifice his life to the emperor in order to release his pain. It was through such controversy that native Taiwanese found the solution to orient themselves within the contradictory colonial symbolic order of *kominka*.

Although Chen's work was criticised as being typical '*kominka* literature' by contemporary scholars, through the above paragraph, we cannot merely regard *kominka* as a consequence of cooperation with the Japanese coloniser and criticise this situation as a betrayal of anti-colonial movements. Instead, from my viewpoint, it created another route for the native writers to project their own native experience into the *kominka* society of Taiwan. As a Japanese writer, Hamada Hayao, judges, Chen's story is an example of a special *kominka* literature in Taiwan that describes how colonised Taiwanese struggled with Japanese and Taiwanese identity (Chen 2011: 204). As a colonised Taiwanese, the only means that could transform them into Japanese was to die, no matter how much effort they made in their daily life. Therefore, to join the Imperial Army had become the solution to release this pain.

In addition, as discussed previously, under the *kominka* policy, Taiwanese culture was recognised by the Japanese coloniser as part of its 'local culture'. Therefore, it is also through transforming themselves into the royal citizen of Japan that allowed colonised Taiwanese to

embrace their Taiwanese identity. In this context, within the *kominka* literature, native Taiwanese identity cannot be separated from Japanese identity.

This phenomenon can be observed in Wang Chang-hsiung's story, *The Flowing Stream*. In this story, the main character, I, is a Taiwanese dentist who has just completed his medical education in Japan and returned to Taiwan. Initially, he is fascinated with Japanese culture and therefore becomes a good friend to Ito Haruo, a Taiwanese teacher who also studied in Japan and lives a complete Japanese lifestyle, including marrying a Japanese wife, after returning to Taiwan. From Ito's viewpoint, Taiwanese people have to abandon their own connection with their Taiwanese identity in order to become a Japanese. However, compared to Ito, Lin Ponnien, the main character's cousin, has a different opinion. Lin believes Taiwanese identity does not conflict with Japanese identity; therefore, there is no need to exclude Taiwan outside Japan. As Lin's letter from Tokyo indicated:

You have to be an imposing Taiwanese if you recognised yourself as an imposing Japanese. I will never feel inferior just because I was born in the south. To be involved in the lifestyle here [Tokyo] does not need the degrading of my hometown to the obscene. No matter how disgraceful my mother is, I still feel attached to her. I will not feel shamed even if my mother comes here looking disgraceful. That is because, I can be a little child to do what I want to do, no matter I am happy or sad... (Wang 1943)

Throughout the whole story, the main character struggles between these two opinions. He admires Ito's Japanese lifestyle but also agrees with Lin's opinion that Taiwanese identity can exist alongside Japanese identity. This attitude of co-existence, on the one hand, corresponds to the cultural policy of the *kominka* movement during wartime, and on the other hand, allows native Taiwanese people to express their own suffering and native experience under the framework of local culture through literature. By identifying themselves as Japanese, local culture could be recognised as a legal position within the symbolic order of *kominka*. As a result, another formation of resistance emerged during the *kominka* period: resistance through transforming native Taiwanese into the royal citizens of Japan.

4. Conclusion

One of the key concerns of this paper is to establish a top-down psychoanalytic reading approach that could adopt Lacanian psychoanalysis to observe, within the historical documents, the way in which individuals' desires interact within a colonial symbolic order introduced to the colony by the coloniser. In doing so, as I have demonstrated in this paper, unlike previous bottom-up researches that could not theorise the interaction of various anti-colonial ideologies during the Japanese-colonised period, we are able to examine the process through which different

identities are entangled and, as a result, shape various ideologies to embody different desires within the order.

As I have stated in this paper, it is important not to regard 'culture' as a whole way of lifestyle within a particular region. Instead, we first have to take 'culture' as a signifier within a particular symbolic order. Illuminated by this signifier, we are able to observe how different subjects give this 'signifier of culture' different meanings in order to allow their desire to be recognised by others. Secondly, it is also necessary to understand the fact that articulating the relations among different signifiers/signs within the symbolic order is insufficient to articulate the interaction among desires. More importantly, to understand how they were embodied in a particular signifier helps us to realise how humans allocate materials in reality to interact with others.

With this idea in mind, the 'signifier of culture' was grasped by different groups of native Taiwanese to illustrate their own desire toward the colonised society of Taiwan. For the right-wing intellectuals, culture, which presents the universal modern civilisation and the particularity of Taiwanese lifestyle at the same time, leads them to the road of 'semi self-governance' in order to interfere with the continuity of the Japanese-style modern symbolic order, *Douka*.

On the other side, for the left-wing intellectuals, the idea of culture was to be defined under class consciousness. By giving culture a meaning of material culture, they were able to transform national antagonism between Japan and Taiwan/China into the capitalist coloniser and colonised proletarians. By doing so, it was able to grasp a symbolic gap in order to allow left-wing intellectuals to introduce their socialist thought to Taiwan.

Moreover, after 1937, a realisation of 'local culture within the Japanese Empire' emerged when Japan became involved in the second Sino-Japanese War. Within this framework, native Taiwanese were able to express their 'local experience and interests' to the public via works of literature. It was also through the production of these literary works that anti-colonial discourses could be continued during wartime.

In other words, by describing the genealogy of such a 'signifier of culture' in Taiwan, we are able to understand how western modernity was rearranged by the Japanese coloniser into the symbolic order of *Douka*, within which a 'rupture and difference' (Bhabra 2007: 1) was produced through the resistance of native Taiwanese. This provides us with an opportunity to introduce Taiwan's colonised experience to contemporary postcolonial studies, from which we could reconsider the issue of how European modernity was reproduced in contemporary Asia.

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