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Constructing a Trauma
Writing Taiwan's 228 Incident

by

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Abstract:

This thesis examines narratives of Taiwan's 228 Incident, the uprising and subsequent massacres that began on February 28, 1947, and considers their contribution to the social and political construction of a cultural trauma. I argue that representations of personal trauma, as evinced by politicians and artists acting as cultural agents, construct a symbolic and mythologized 228 Incident in the imagination of the people of Taiwan, as they battle to attribute ownership of the event to different victim groups. In order to analyse this construction, I consider the historical and political understandings of the events before reviewing short stories by Taiwanese authors, Tzeng Ching-wen, Ch'en Ying-chen and Li Ang.

Note on Romanization

The Romanization of Chinese characters is always a frustrating and complicated issue. I have primarily adhered to the popular *pinyin* system with some important exceptions. The names of writers and artists from Taiwan are written in the Wade-Giles system, which is still commonly used for publications of works from Taiwan. For the names of people and places that are already established in English-language publications, I have tried to adhere to their preferred or most popular spellings. These include politicians, such as Chiang Kai-shek and Ma Ying-jeou, as well as scholars and writers, such as Jack Jenn-Shann Lin and Tzeng Ching-wen. In an attempt to alleviate some of the confusion, the initial occurrence of all Chinese names and terms is followed by the original Chinese characters in traditional script. A glossary of Chinese names and terms is also appended on page 117.

Introduction

For the people of Taiwan in 1945, the end of World War II signified the end of Japanese colonial rule and the return to the motherland of China. However, the initial jubilance at the arrival of the Kuomintang (國民黨 KMT) on Taiwan faded quickly. A worsening economic situation and considerable cultural differences were leading to disaster. In February and March of 1947, in order to quell an uprising, the army of the Kuomintang brutally massacred thousands, and perhaps tens of thousands, of people on Taiwan. This event is now known as the 228 Incident.[1] Although the forty years of Martial Law that followed the 228 Incident from May 19, 1949 to July 15, 1987, are commonly referred to as the White Terror, in reference to the Kuomintang's goal in suppressing and destroying communism, it is the 228 Incident that has come to symbolize the political repression and violence that marked much of Taiwan's twentieth century history. During this period tight controls on publications forbid the production of any literature related to these events. Although a few writers living abroad were able to create a small number of works related to the 228 Incident and the White Terror, very little was written until the lifting of Martial Law and the liberalization of Taiwan in the 1980s. What followed was an explosion of film and fiction in order to dispute the official history and recapture the events, returning ownership of this trauma to the people of Taiwan.[2]

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[1] In academic writing the 228 Incident (read as two-two-eight) is also often knows as the February 28 Incident or the Formosa Uprising. I choose to use the 228 Incident as this English name has become more popular in recent years and is a direct translation of the Chinese name *Er er ba Shijian* 二二八事件.

[2] The politics of ethnic signifiers in Taiwan is complicated. For the purposes of this thesis, 'the people of Taiwan' refers to all people of Taiwan, including Hakka, Hoklo, aboriginal, and mainlander groups. Taiwanese refers to the Hoklo majority. And 'mainlander' refers to those who arrived on the island after World War II or their descendents.

In *Trauma: Explorations in Memory*, Cathy Caruth famously says, "to be traumatized is precisely to be possessed by an image or event."[3] A traumatized nation too is a possessed nation. This is Taiwan, a nation possessed by the tragic events of sixty years ago. As time goes on, the 228 Incident becomes larger and larger, regularly occupying television, film, literature, political speeches, academic conferences and a continually widening stream of newspaper, magazine and periodical articles. This possession of the people of Taiwan imparts a great deal of power into the 228 Incident, necessarily creating conflict in the battle to control this power. Therefore, and turning things around, the possession of the 228 Incident, the possession of this trauma, becomes our focus.

This thesis concerns the many voices that have added to symbolism of the 228 Incident, writing and rewriting the event as it has been remembered or imagined. All of these texts expand this symbolism, some supporting popular or political renderings of the history, some of them denying. But all texts, as they provide counter discourse to the Kuomintang's historical revisionism of the White Terror period, fight for possession of the events in their mythologization of them. The literary texts chosen here provide three different perspectives on Taiwan's trauma, as each writer attempts to rewrite the events from his or her understanding, adding to this ever-expanding symbolic incident. In "Let's Go to New Park to Feed the Fish" (來去新公園飼魚 1990) and "To Redeem a Painting" (贖畫記 1991), Tzeng Ching-wen 鄭清文, maintaining the events as being about the

[3] Cathy Caruth, *Trauma: Explorations in Memory* (Baltimore and London: The John Hopkins University Press, 1995), 4.

victims, shows the stories of those who have had their lives ruined and been pushed to the margins of society. In "Mountain Path" (山路 1983) and "Zhao Nandong" (趙南棟 1987) Ch'en Ying-chen 陳映真, much in line with the Chinese Communist Party's understanding of events, portrays the 228 Incident and White Terror as the crushing of a greater Chinese socialist movement by the forces of global capitalism. And finally Li Ang 李昂, in her story, "Rouged Sacrifice" (彩妝血祭 1997), disputes the male possession of the 228 Incident, and connects the political repression to various forms of social repression, while questioning the representation of history and the process of mythologization of trauma that she is a part of. In addition to these short stories, I have considered the events as viewed by historians and politicians in order to show the evolution from historical event to an ethnic and political symbol shrouded in popular myth. I argue that the trauma of the 228 Incident is a socially and politically constructed cultural trauma, or, in other words, a symbolic myth, resulting from the battle for ownership waged by groups of agents, primarily composed of politicians and artists, such as those mentioned here.

In using the terms myth and mythologization, I am borrowing from Paul A. Cohen, who, in *History in Three Keys: the Boxers as Event, Experience, and Myth*, states:

> "On the level of intentionality, the past treated as myth is fundamentally different from the past treated as history. When good historians write history, their primary objective is to construct, on the basis of the evidence available, as accurate and truthful an understanding of the past as possible. Mythologizers, in a sense, do the reverse. Certainly, mythologizers start out with *an* understanding of the past, which in many (though not all) cases they may sincerely believe to be "correct." Their purpose, however is not to enlarge upon or deepen this understanding.

> Rather, it is to draw on it to serve the political, ideological, rhetorical, and/or emotional needs of the present."[4]

This mythologizing process is the creation of symbolic meaning for events. By 'myth,' I do not specifically refer to untruth, but to a symbolic meaning that is greater than the event itself. The 228 Incident is a historic event that is often accepted as a symbol of the trauma Taiwan experienced in the twentieth century. It is this symbol of trauma, this myth, which is of interest here. Its significance has expanded beyond the historical event and continues to expand as the importance of this trauma to the Taiwanese people is used in pursuing the ideological goals of writers, politicians and other mythologizers. The social construction of the myth of nation is concurrent with the construction of the myth of the 228 Incident, both relying on the use of trauma fiction. The 228 Incident *must* be a social construct. The effective repression of the White Terror succeeded in obliterating its existence from the memory of the majority of the Taiwanese people. The imagined event is what remains, constructed primarily upon the words of politicians and community leaders, as well as trauma film and fiction.

Reading trauma fiction from Taiwan involves a number of questions. Taiwan is a complicated concept and situating the nation and its constructs through the means of prevalent academic theory is not a simple task. However, the identity of Taiwan is a central feature of the texts to be discussed in the following chapters, as the re-construction of the 228 Incident is also the re-construction of Taiwan, and to analyze these narratives, it is important to consider some of the contemporary issues and debates concerning perspectives on Taiwan. Trauma in the postcolonial also needs to be

[4] Paul A. Cohen, *History in Three Keys: the Boxers as Event, Experience, and Myth* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), 213.

identified for the purposes of this thesis. In recent years trauma fiction has been a popular topic in the Western academic world. Although previous inquiries have concentrated on the Holocaust, the experiences of American soldiers in the Vietnam War and especially the sufferings of women through domestic violence and incest, there has been a lack of attention paid to trauma's relation to nationalism in the postcolonial.[5] National trauma is closely related to the imagining of the nation, especially in the case of Taiwan.

Taiwan

Identifying Taiwan is a difficult task. The nation's conflicting historical narratives, ever elusive political position and fluid cultural spheres forbid any static and concise answer to questions of identity. Taiwan's identity is poised between a centre it often tries to differentiate itself from, foreign powers it is culturally, politically and economically tied to, and an invaded indigenous population. These difficulties have made the pursuit of identity a national hobby, as well as a recurring theme for artists and scholars. The Taike 台客 phenomenon is an excellent example of this. What is commonly perceived as a derogatory term for Taiwanese, has sometimes been appropriated and become a symbol of pride, largely in part to a popular song by rock star Wu Bai 伍佰, "Call me Taike." In the essay "We Are All Like Taiwanese," (sic) (我們都似台灣人) Chang Hsiao-hung 張小虹 states that "The 'Taike phenomenon' has been in recent years one of the hottest and

[5] See Karyn Ball, "Trauma and Its Institutional Destinies," *Cultural Critique* 46 (Fall 2000): 1-44, for a detailed analysis of the history of the field of trauma studies.

controversial cultural issues in Taiwan."[6] Concurrently, understandings of Taiwan have drifted further and further from a Sinocentric paradigm, as scholars have turned to globalization, in order to re/situate Taiwan in a more global setting. Shih Shu-mei 史書美, in "Globalization and the (in)significance of Taiwan," illustrates the necessity of globalization, as it can "displace Sinocentric influence and invent new forms of trans-culture" for a nation that is "too small, too marginal, too ambiguous, and thus too insignificant."[7] Chiu Kuei-fen 邱貴芬 also encourages the use of globalization theory as it allows us to consider Taiwan's history in terms of the forces of capitalism and colonialism acting as agents of globalization.[8] Following David Harvey's theories on globalization and postmodern societies, Chiu insists that Taiwan will be pressed to find its specialty, its Taiwan-ness 台灣性, in order to survive.[9] This Taiwan-ness must necessarily escape the "Cultural China" expounded upon by Tu Wei-ming 杜維明 and delve into the questions of ethnicity, oppression and colonialism more central to Taiwan's history. This also calls for a rejection of the supremacy of classical Chinese literature as the primary well-spring for Taiwan modern literature in favour of global alternatives. Taiwan's eminent author Yeh Shih-tao 葉石濤 has identified such an

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[6] Chang Hsiao-hung 張小虹, "Women Dou Si Taiwanren" 我們都似台灣人 (We Are All Like Taiwanese), *Zhongwai Wenxue* 中外文學 (Chung Wai Literary Monthly) 35.6 (Nov. 2006): 86.

[7] Shih Shu-mei, "Globalisation and the (in)significance of Taiwan," *Postcolonial Studies* 6.2 (2003): 146 and 144.

[8] Chiu Kuei-fen 邱貴芬, *Houzhimin ji Qiwai* 後殖民及其外 (Rethinking postcolonial literary criticism in Taiwan), (Taipei: Rye Field Publishing麥田出版, 2003), 122.

[9] Ibid. 129-130.

alternative history in "World Literature Realism and Taiwan Literature Realism" (世界文學的寫實主義與台灣文學的寫實主義). Yeh examines early twentieth century Taiwan authors to explain the importance of mainland China's vernacular revolution in the 1920s of Taiwan.[10] The influence of Russian, European and Japanese writers on China's literature, as traced by Yeh, is also easily discernible in many of Taiwan's late-twentieth century authors. This is well-supported by considering some of the authors of texts analyzed in this thesis: Making use of Japanese texts left behind after World War II, Tzeng Ching-wen was heavily influenced by Chekhov, from whom he claims to have learned the meaning of fiction and the importance of compassion.[11] Writers such as Pushkin, Tolstoy and Dostoyevsky, which he managed to find in English or Japanese versions during his university days, had a remarkable influence on his work, and some of his early fiction was even modeled on theirs.[12] Ch'en Ying-chen lauds Chekhov's ability as well, and considers similarities in the "pallid and melancholy coloring" of his own early work with that of the great Russian artist.[13] Li Ang, of a later generation than Ch'en

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[10] Yeh Shih-tao 葉石濤, "Shijie Wenxue de Xieshizhuyi yu Taiwan Wenxue de Xieshizhuyi" 世界文學的寫實主義與台灣文學的寫實主義 (World Literature Realism and Taiwan Literature Realism), *Wenxue Taiwan* 文學台灣 (Literary Taiwan) 34 (Spring 2000): 59.

[11] Tzeng Ching-wen 鄭清文, "Shu de Jianzheng- Xie Zai Zheng Chingwen Guoji Xueshu Yantaohui" 樹的見證-寫在鄭清文國際學術研討會 (The Tree as Witness - Written Before the Tzeng Ching-wen International Academic Conference) In , *Shu de Jianzheng: Zheng Chingwen Wenxue Lun Ji* 樹的見證：鄭清文文學論集 (The Tree as Witness: A Collection of Literary Criticism on Tzeng Ching-wen's Writings), Edited by Chiang Bao-chai 江寶釵and Jack Jenn-Shann Lin 林鎮山 (Taipei: Maitian Chuban 麥田出版, 2007), II.

[12] Tzeng Ching-wen 鄭清文, "Wo yu Eluosi Wenxue" 我與俄羅斯文學 (Russian Literature and I), *Wenxue Taiwan* 文學台灣 (Literary Taiwan) 61 (Spring 2007):33-38.

[13] Ch'en Ying-chen, "Against Taiwan's 'Orphan Mentality,'" trans. Beata Grant, in *Modern Chinese Writers: Self-Portrayals,* ed. Helmut Martin and Jeffrey Kinkley, 219 (London and New York: M.E. Sharpe,

and Tzeng, was heavily influenced by many postmodern Western writers and her time of study in America in the 1970s at University of Oregon.

These discussions of Taiwan's relationship to China are important in determining Taiwan's identity in a global perspective, yet still retain China as *the* question. Of course Taiwan does inherit much from China, and all of these writers received some education from mainland Chinese. However, as Chiu Kuei-fen argues, so does Japan. But when Japan borrows from China or Europe, these things become Japanese.[14] Comments such as these reveal frustrations with Taiwan's global position that add to the sense of victimization related to Kuomintang rule. Efforts by these scholars and authors to differentiate Taiwan from China are part of an ongoing struggle to identify or deny a national character. Such an identity is contingent on regaining the ownership of Taiwan's history, for which the trauma of the 228 Incident is a symbolic key. This is where Ch'en Ying-chen differentiates himself from other writers. Although he is Taiwanese, like Li and Tzeng, Ch'en strongly believes in a unified Chinese nation. However, his attitude now seems a memory of past times as David Der-wei Wang 王德威 rhetorically posits:

"Hasn't Ch'en Ying-chen himself become a ghostlike chronicler of the glory of revolutionism?"[15] Ch'en Ying-chen's voice, although outdated, is still of extreme importance in representing the diversity of opinion that has survived through the vicissitudes of twentieth century Taiwan. His discourse of a united socialist China is an important component in the construction of Taiwan's imagined community.

1992).

[14] Chiu 2003, 141.

[15] David Der-wei Wang, "Three Hungry Women," *Boundary 2* 25.3, Modern Chinese Literary and Cultural Studies in the Age of Theory: Reimagining a Field, (Autumn, 1998): 73.

Illustrating the identity of Taiwan through literature relies on the relationship between the narrative and, to use Benedict Anderson's term for nation, the 'imagined community.' This imagined community is an ever-shifting discourse, continually constructed and reconstructed by those both inside and outside of it. Timothy Brennan further deconstructs the grand narrative of nation in "The National Longing for Form": "The 'nation' is precisely what Foucault has called a 'discursive formation' – not simply an allegory or imaginative vision, but a gestative political structure which the Third World artist is consciously building or suffering the lack of."[16] Therefore, literature takes up a primary role in the paradigm-building process of nation-making, not merely reflecting, but also creating. The 'form' limned in Brennan's essay is a discursive structure consisting of, and continually altered by narratives and myths and therefore forever becoming a myth itself. Just as foreigners or outsiders read a national literature to gain some understanding of a community, that community too consumes and becomes those myths. The myth of Taiwan is constructed by the island's authors. Trauma plays a particularly important role in this mythologizing process, as limit events such as the 228 Incident have a tendency to become central to a people's consciousness as awareness of a shared victimization becomes a basis for their imagined community. This community, the majority of whose members never have and never will come into any form of contact, turn to 'shared' events such as this to find their common bond.[17] The study of trauma then finds further legitimacy for itself as an inquiry into the nation-building of traumatic

[16] Timothy Brennan, "The National Longing for Form," in *Nation and Narration*, ed. Homi Bhabha (New York: Routledge, 1990), 46-47.
[17] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (New York: Verso, 1991), 5-7.

memory. Trauma studies have long been concentrated on the Holocaust, the model of the traumatic event for western democracies. The 228 Incident has often been called Taiwan's holocaust. The event is clearly not on the same scale, yet the construction of identity that resulted from each can be compared, an identity that is spread and reinforced through literature and film. When dominating or colonizing forces perpetrate such destructive acts, the dominated are left to reconstruct an identity which conceives of the dominating force as the other. This was particularly true of Taiwan as Kuomintang aggression became the impetus for Taiwan Consciousness and a symbol for the reasoning of the Taiwan independence movement, with the 228 Incident as the nadir of a newly constructed history of Taiwan, a history which conceives Taiwan as a victim of KMT colonialism.

Postcolonialism

If postcolonial literature is literature that writes back to the centre, then what is/was the centre for Taiwan? The centre clearly refers to different things at different times to different people on Taiwan. Discussing the difficulties associated with affixing the term postcolonial to Taiwan, Liao Ping-hui 廖炳惠 considers the many different perspectives possible by different ethnic groups on Taiwan:[18] Taiwan was once a colony of the Dutch empire. However, apart from a few collections of land agreements and treaties, no texts remain from that era to tell the tale of European domination on Taiwan. Japanese imperialism lies far closer to recent memory. However, the trauma caused by

[18] Liao Ping-hui, "Postcolonial Studies in Taiwan: Issues in Critical Debates," *Postcolonial Studies* 2.2 (1999): 200.

Kuomintang misrule and violence pushed anger over previous domination to the sidelines and has become the focus of much of what may be considered postcolonial writings in modern and contemporary Taiwan literature.

Considering Kuomintang forces as a colonizing power provides two perspectives: One may view the Kuomintang as an agent of China, colonizing the separate nation of Taiwan; or one may view the Kuomintang as an agent of the United States, and providing a conduit for economic, cultural and political hegemony from the West. This positions the Kuomintang as a powerful and opportunistic group, capitalizing on Taiwan's position, and extending the hegemony of the West as a tool of global forces. In contemporary Taiwan, and therefore contemporary Taiwan literature, these two perspectives have been alternately blurred or defined, as history has been written and rewritten, and the meaning of Taiwan, China and the West have been continually revised. However, for different writers, at different times, in different texts, writing about the violence and oppression of the Kuomintang can have very different meanings. The three writers analyzed in this thesis are all ethnic Taiwanese. However, their opinions on colonialism and what they choose to emphasize in these texts is very different. Tzeng is heavily critical of the government repression, identifying it as a colonial or pseudo-colonial force in "Let's Go to New Park to Feed the Fish." Ch'en Ying-chen consciously strives to expose Taiwan's modern existence as a continuum of foreign aggression and imperialism, which China has suffered under since the Opium Wars[19]. However, Li Ang, writing ten years later, while assailing the injustices of colonial violence, prefers to emphasize the continued repression of women and marginalized groups in society.

[19] Ch'en Ying-chen 1992, 219.

There are advantages to using postcolonial theory to examine these authors. However, one must pick and choose which strategies to employ in which circumstances. The complexity of Taiwan's history, combined with the complexity and ambiguities of postcolonial theory make any form of general analysis unsuitable. However, all of these texts are related to the repression and violence that consumed Taiwan during the second half of the twentieth century and inflicted trauma on so many of its people.

Trauma

The 'trauma' endured by victims during this period refers to the suffering caused by terrible acts of violence, suffering that persistently endures and yet cannot be fully expressed. This trauma remains with its victims throughout their lives, forcing them to remember and relive the events over and over again. This repetition and inability to move on is the core of trauma. Cathy Caruth's understanding of trauma expresses this well: "(T)he event is not assimilated or experienced fully at the time, but only belatedly, in its repeated possession of the one who experiences it. To be traumatized is precisely to be possessed by an image or event."[20] In her writing on trauma, Caruth draws heavily on Freud, whose work on hysteria and shell-shocked World War I veterans can be considered the root of early trauma studies. Freud's concept of Nachträglichkeit (deferred action or afterwardsness) provides important conceptual background to the concept of trauma. Anne Whitehead explains that Nachträglichkeit "refers to the ways in which

[20] Caruth 1995, 4-5.

certain experiences, impressions and memory traces are revised at a later date in order to correspond with fresh experiences or with the attainment of a new stage of development."[21] After Freud, studies on trauma all but ground to a halt. Efforts in examining Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) that began in 1980 were the next major step and the beginnings of modern studies.[22] Trauma Studies then exploded into literature in the 1990s, growing quickly as a popular new field.

Trauma fiction, or trauma narratives, are represented by a variety of themes and inhabit numerous modes, but all can be defined as "fictional narratives that help readers to access traumatic experience."[23] Trauma fiction is not to be merely understood as therapeutic or cathartic texts, but as reminders of atrocities and suffering that should never occur again. Although trauma cannot be fully expressed, such fiction offers readers the opportunity to view and empathize with victims. Another aspiration of trauma fiction is to "reshape cultural memory through personal contexts."[24] This provides a clear link with postcolonial writings, which also serve to rewrite and rethink a cultural memory that has been dominated or controlled through violence or hegemony. Anne Whitehead identifies this relationship to postcolonialism, also identifying postmodernism and a postwar legacy or consciousness as the roots of trauma fiction.[25] Clearly, trauma fiction has existed long before all three of these, and Whitehead's explanations are best suited to contemporary Western writers, such as Toni Morrison. However, her three roots of trauma fiction are

[21] Anne Whitehead, *Trauma Fiction* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2004), 6.
[22] Whitehead 2004, 4 and Vickroy 2002, 17.
[23] Laurie Vickroy, *Trauma and Survival in Contemporary Fiction* (Charlottesville and London: University of Virginia Press, 2002), 1.
[24] Ibid., 5.
[25] Whitehead 2004, 81.

valuable in studying some of Taiwan's recent fiction, such as Li Ang's works. Also of use in such analysis are Whitehead's three key features of trauma narratives: "Intertextuality, repetition, and a dispensed or fragmented narrative voice... literary techniques that mirror at a formal level the effects of trauma."[26]

The effects of trauma upon an individual, although obviously different for each person, have many similarities. The violence of the event itself is made worse by the experience of the victim, which defies temporal restrictions, allowing the event to be replayed over and over again throughout the victim's life. Laurie Vickroy articulately expresses the long-lasting effects of trauma on the individual:

> "Traumatic experience can produce a sometimes indelible effect on the human psyche that can change the nature of an individual's memory, self-recognition, and relational life. Despite the human capacity to survive and adapt, traumatic experiences can alter people's psychological, biological, and social equilibrium to such a degree that the memory of one particular event comes to taint all other experiences, spoiling appreciation of the present. This tyranny of the past interferes with the ability to pay attention to both new and familiar situations. When people come to concentrate selectively on reminders of their past, life tends to become colorless, and contemporary experience ceases to be a teacher."[27]

This persistence and interference of trauma in the lives of victims can be clearly seen in the texts examined in this thesis. The suffering stays with the victims decades after the events, and, whether spoken or not, it often remains a central focus of their lives. These texts do not hope for the reader to fully identify with these characters, but seek to allow readers to view their experience and the enduring suffering that it has caused. Viewing trauma fiction as a window to this experience, rather than as narrative to be understood or related to, maintains the sanctity of unimaginable suffering. For characters in each of

[26] Ibid., 84.
[27] Vickroy 2002, 11-12.

these texts, this suffering is clear. Their suffering and obsession with the past often only end with their deaths.

Observing the trauma of the characters of these stories relies on the psychoanalytic theories of trauma. However, this thesis also hopes to deal with the concept of a national or cultural trauma as it is constructed through literature. In the very insightful "Toward a Theory of Cultural Trauma," Jeffrey C. Alexander defines cultural trauma: "Cultural trauma occurs when members of a collectivity feel they have been subjected to a horrendous event that leaves indelible marks upon their group consciousness, marking their memories forever and changing their future identity in fundamental and irrevocable ways."[28] This marking and identity change occurred in Taiwan in conjunction with the construction of the 228 Incident and the rise of Taiwan Consciousness that stemmed from the Nativist dialogue. Alexander and the coauthors of *Cultural Trauma and Collective Identity* differ in their theoretical approach to trauma by disputing what they term the 'naturalistic fallacy,' that events cause trauma. Alexander argues that trauma is a "socially mediated attribution."[29] This is not, of course, denying the existence of such an event, but arguing that the 'trauma' itself is a construct that occurs after the event through discourse.

Alexander explains this discourse by construing it as a speech act composed of a speaker (carrier groups), audience and situation. Utilizing Max Weber's term, he finds 'carrier groups' "are situated in particular places in the social structure, and they have particular

[28] Jeffrey C. Alexander, "Toward a Theory of Cultural Trauma," in *Cultural Trauma and Collective Identity*, Jeffrey C. Alexander et al. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), 1.
[29] Ibid., 8.

discursive talents for articulating their claims."[30] This is an apt description of the politicians and artists that have constructed the myths of the 228 Incident and are to be considered in this thesis. The audience refers to the people of Taiwan that will hear the speech act, but also the world community, who may have first heard of the 228 Incident when Hou Hsiao-hsien 侯孝賢 captured top honours at the Venice Film Festival, where he deliberately entered *City of Sadness* (悲情城市 Beiqing Chengshi, 1989), in the political film category.[31] Finally, Alexander defines 'situation' as "the historical, cultural, and institutional environment within which the speech act occurs."[32] For these texts this is the highly charged liberalization of the nation which surged through Taiwan in the 1980s and 1990s. This speech act is a process based on the social construction of language. Through such a process the trauma of the 228 Incident is produced as a discourse. It is through deliberate acts such as the writing of trauma narratives that the myth is created.

However, there is another feature of the trauma text that must be acknowledged: Fiction and film that deal with highly contentious or emotional material immediately draws attention and gathers a large readership. These three writers, all of whom were critically acclaimed long before writing these texts, would certainly be aware of this potential for such subject material. This is not to say that any of these writers has used these events for commercial reasons, although many others may, but in order to convey their message to a

[30] Ibid., 11.
[31] Ping-hui Liao, "Rewriting Taiwanese National History: The February 28 Incident as Spectacle," *Public Culture* 5 (1993): 291.
[32] Ibid., 12.

large number of people, a primary goal for political writers. Although the commercialization of 228 fiction and film has received some criticism, it is of course nothing like that of the Holocaust.

The Holocaust and the Nanjing Massacre in Fiction

Holocaust fiction has been as contentious as it has been popular since the end of World War II and the publishing of *The Diary of Anne Frank.* Highly acclaimed novels such as Elie Wiesel's *The Night,* and Imre Kertész's *Fateless* have led to Nobel prizes, while films such as *Schindler's List* and *Life is Beautiful* have captured Oscars. However, due to the highly emotional nature of such works, Holocaust fiction inevitably draws both criticism and praise.[33] Some critics have questioned the genre altogether, such as in Theodor Arno's oft-quoted remark: "After Auschwitz... to write a poem is barbaric." Critics of Holocaust fiction have repeatedly considered these questions of ethics and literature. George Steiner takes the question further and pontificates on the language itself: "The world of Auschwitz lies outside speech as it lies outside reason. To speak of the unspeakable. To risk the survivance of language as creator and bearer of humane, rational truth. Words that are saturated with lies and atrocity do not easily resume life."[34] These questions have bearing for the memory of the 228 Incident, especially its literature. How can these events be presented? Is it possible, or necessary? In "Rouged Sacrifice" Li Ang considers such questions and displays the difficulty of such representations.

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[33] Sue Vice, *Holocaust Fiction* (London and New York: Routledge, 2000), 1.
[34] George Steiner, *Language and Silenc,* (London and Boston: Faber and Faber, 1985), 146.

There are some marked differences between the events in Taiwan and the Holocaust. One of the most important elements of the injustice of the 228 Incident and the White Terror, is the silence that followed the violence. Although memory of the Holocaust slowly built over the decades that followed World War II, there was none of the institutionalized silence that existed on Taiwan. This is an important part of 228 fiction. Another important difference of the fictional representations of these events is the debates over the supremacy of witness and testimony that accompany Holocaust fiction.[35] Although this certainly exists in criticism of 228 fiction, it is not as central to the debates as it is with Holocaust fiction. However, Sigrid Löffler's thoughts on this issue are helpful, especially in considering the social construction of trauma through literature: "If memory experienced should not be lost or disappear from collective memory, it must be transformed from biological reminiscence into cultural memory: personal memory must be conveyed from the experiences of eyewitnesses into the enduring form of literary construction."[36] The decades of silence under the White Terror have had a hand in bypassing such discussion, as possession of memory has necessarily passed to the next generation for representation as it is constructed in the collective memory. Due to the emphasis placed on 'authenticity,' analysis on Holocaust fiction stresses the relationship between the author and the narrator. Sue Vice finds this relationship, as well as intertextuality and the relationship between story and plot time as the three common features of Holocaust fiction.[37] Of the three authors of works analyzed in this thesis,

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[35] James E. Young, *Writing and Rewriting the Holocaust: Narrative and the Consequences of Interpretation* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1988).
[36] Sigrid Löffler, "Holocaust Literature Shifts Paradigms," *Deutsche Welle*, January 25, 2005. http://www.dw-world.de/dw/article/0,1564,1468841,00.html.
[37] Sue Vice 2000, 2-3. These last two features correspond well with the first and third of Whitehead's three key features of trauma narratives: intertextuality, repetition, and fragmented narrative.

Tzeng and Ch'en were both old enough to experience the trauma of the 228 Incident and the White Terror first-hand. In "The Tree as Witness" (2007), Tzeng clarifies the impact and pressure of this repression and terror in his work, recalling federal agents coming to his office to pressure him to give up his writing.[38] However, Ch'en Ying-chen was a true victim of the era, imprisoned for seven years, most of which he spent in the notorious political prison on Green Island.

Fictional representations of the 228 Incident have much more in common with those of the Nanjing Massacre than they do with Holocaust fiction. Long silence prevented public consciousness of the massacre, and therefore representation, from reaching a critical level until the mid-1980s,[39] approximately the same time that the end of martial law allowed for representation of the 228 Incident. This prolonged silence, followed by a new political agenda, concluded in a surge of both fictional and non-fictional works, stretching into the West with Iris Chang's well-known *Rape of Nanking* in 1997. However, the silence over the Nanjing Massacre was not imposed by the Japanese, the perpetrators of the massacre, but by PRC policy. Therefore, the injustice suffered is decidedly different, represented by the difference in the focus of fictional accounts. Silence remains the primary focus of much of 228 fiction (especially the texts analyzed here), while denial and apology are the foci of most Nanjing Massacre fiction and film, in a clear declaration of frustration and anger towards continued historical revisionism in Japan.[40]

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[38] Tzeng 2007, I.
[39] Michael Berry, "Cinematic Representations of the Rape of Nanking," *East Asia* (Winter 2001): 85.
[40] Ibid., 105.

The 1989 Tiananmen Square Massacre has yet more in common with the 228 Incident. It too was a massacre initialized by a political party. The repressive silence that followed the Tiananmen Square Massacre is very reminiscent of that which followed the 228 Incident. However, the silence continues on the mainland, and no great works of fiction or film have yet to be written. Perhaps current constructions of the 228 Incident will shed light on future representations of the Tiananmen Square Massacre, foretelling an explosion of literature similar to that of 228 fiction.

228 Fiction

What has become known as 228 Fiction is the massive and still quickly growing body of writing that is related to the 228 Incident and, sometimes, the White Terror. The majority of this literature was written and published during and after the liberalization of Taiwan that occurred in the 1980s and 1990s. However, a few key pieces were published in the decades before. These works, although only published in Japan or America and banned in Taiwan, most notably Wu Cho-liu's 吳濁流 (recently published as Wu Zhuoliu) *The Fig Tree* (無花果 Wuhuaguo 1970), were instrumental in keeping the memory alive and influenced the understanding of the events in Taiwan and abroad. Indeed, in *228: A Selection of Taiwan Short Stories* 二二八台灣小說選, Lin Shuang-pu 林雙不 even selects three pieces that were in fact published before February 28th, 1947, the tragic day on which the massacres began. The list of both long and short works is far too long to be

compiled here.[41] These works have varied drastically in form and content, with many only briefly alluding to the events of the 228 Incident or the White Terror. However, they are all instrumental in adding to the construction of the trauma and the nation. Trauma narratives are particularly strong in the construction of Taiwan's imagined community, with many canonical texts, such as Wu Chu-liu's *Orphan of Asia* (亞細亞的孤兒 Yaxiya de Gu'er 1945) exuding trauma consciousness and having enormous symbolism as representations of Taiwan.

To date there have only been two collections of short fiction to concentrate specifically on 228 Fiction: *228: A Collection of Taiwan Short Stories*, edited by Lin Shuang-pu and *Silent Spring: A Selection of 228 Fiction* (無語的春天: 二二八小說選), edited by Hsu Chun-ya 許俊雅. In the former, Lin selects a variety of stories, including seven from the 1980s and three from 1947 to show the background leading up to the events of the massacres. Perhaps the most compelling of these is Lin's own "A Short Biography of Huangsu" (黃素的小編年 Huangsu de xiao Biannian), in which he tells of the tragic inspiration for his story and his discovery of the 228 Incident when his English teacher accidentally lets it slip in class. In Hsu Chun-ya's collection of fourteen years later, she follows Lin's lead, includes five of the stories which appeared in his collection, and also selects five new stories, including a Yeh Shih-tao story different from the one which Lin

[41] For an incomplete, but fairly thorough list of fiction related to the 228 Incident, especially Martial Law era works, see Hsu Chun-ya 許俊雅, *Wu Yu de Chuntian – Ererba Xiaoshuo Xuan* 無語的春天——二二八小說選 (Silent Spring: Selected 228 Fiction), (Taipei: Yushan She 玉山社, 2003), 327-338.

had chosen. Hsu has also added an extensive introduction, commenting on the history of 228 studies and the importance of the event as a symbol of protest against the autocratic and dictatorial politics of post-war Taiwan, and not merely the confrontation of Taiwanese and mainlander relations.[42] However, perhaps Hsu's most significant addition to Lin's assembly of 228 short fiction is the recognition of women's voices and female writers. It is not really any surprise that these had not been included in Lin's collection, as, according to Hsu, "it was not until the mid-1990s that women's subjectivity began to gradually appear."[43] Hsu explains that writing on women and 228 has changed from mere depictions of sacrifice and national victimization to active and subjectified women. Also, of the four new writers featured in her collection, Hsu has chosen three female writers.[44]

Women and 228 Fiction

Women have always featured prominently in fiction related to the 228 Incident or the White Terror. An apparent and simple reason for this is that the men were either executed or imprisoned. Their stories were brought to an end. The women in early 228 fiction have invariably been presented as uninvolved in the politics, but victims by association, generally naïve and often incapable. This is likely due to stereotyping and common misconceptions of the time. Women were actively involved in the uprising. In fact, Hsieh Hsueh-hung 謝雪紅, a female communist leader from Taichung, was one of its most

[42] Hsu 2003, 5-6.
[43] Ibid., 28.
[44] Li Yu 李渝, Hsiao Ya 蕭颯 and Li Ang 李昂. The fourth new addition is by Wu Fengchiu 吳豐秋, a diaspora writer based in Toronto.

well-known figures. There have, of course, been exceptions. The lead character of Tungfang Po's 東方白 epic *Waves Washing over Sand* (浪淘沙 Lang Tao Sha 1983-1990), Qiu Yaxin 丘雅信, although not political, played an active role in saving the lives of both mainlanders and Taiwanese.[45] Of the texts analyzed here, the character Song Rongxuan 宋蓉萱, of Ch'en Ying-chen's "Zhao Nandong" is the only female to be politically involved with leftist revolutionaries. However, although she is said to be involved in the revolution for many years and seems to have played a more important part in the struggle than her husband, she plays little part in the plot and is executed before the beginning of story time. All of the five texts analyzed here have female characters that are victims of Kuomintang violence due to the loss of a husband, a son, or a lover. However, in Li Ang's "Rouged Sacrifice," women have much more agency. Wang Mama 王媽媽 in particular is a community leader and involved in very political activities, such as assisting in the returning of black-listed compatriots to Taiwan.

228 Fiction and Literary Analysis in English

Excluding a number of early texts written in Japanese, such as works by Wu Chu-liu and Tsai Tehpen, 228 Fiction has been written in Chinese, often with Taiwanese dialogue. The popularity of many of these works in Taiwan has led to their translation into English, making them available to an international readership. There are currently dozens of short

[45] Tungfang Po 東方白,*Lang Tao Sha* 浪淘沙 (Waves Washing over Sand), (Taipei: Avant-Garde Press 前衛, 1990), chapter nine. *Lang Tao Sha* was based on the life of Taiwan's first female physician, Cai A-Xin.

and long narratives related to the 228 Incident available in English. Although there exists countless pieces of critique related to this fiction in Chinese, to date there has been little critical analysis in English. The majority of analysis on 228 fiction and film has been restricted to *City of Sadness*, the critically acclaimed and award winning film by Taiwanese director Hou Hsiao-hsien. Due to the film's accessibility, its popularity and its astounding influence in Taiwan society and on global perceptions of Taiwan, *City of Sadness* has received much attention.[46] However, English language analysis of 228 fiction is limited to a few key articles.

Sylvia Li-chun Lin's 2004 article, "Two Texts to a Story: Representing White Terror in Taiwan," contrasts Lan Bo-chou's 藍博洲 "Song of the Covered Wagon" (幌馬車之歌 Huang Ma Che zhi Ge 1984) and another of Hou Hsiao-hsien's films, *Good Men Good Women* (好男好女 1995), two texts based on the same story. Lin examines the different ways of representing such history, finding that Lan conducts extensive interviews and studies to rediscover the past, but Hou "explores the fragile link between past and present to simultaneously recreate and question the representations of the past."[47] Lin's analysis is important when examining 228 fiction. The representation of this history will always be disputed. Whether it is based upon intense research, such as Lan Bo-chou's text, or personal experience, such as Ch'en Ying-chen's stories, it will always be a representation to be questioned. Postmodern representations of the events, such as *Good Men Good*

[46] Michael Berry, "Screening 2/28: From a *City of Sadness* to a *March of Happiness*," in *The Proceedings of Taiwan Imagined and Its Reality –An Exploration of Literature, History, and Culture*, (Santa Barbara: Center for Taiwan Studies, 2005b).
[47] Sylvia Li-chun Lin, "Two Texts to a Story: White Terror in Taiwan," *Modern Chinese Literature and Culture* 16, no. 1 (Spring 2004): 59.

Women and Li Ang's "Rouged Sacrifice" provide an important perspective on this issue by questioning the very representations that they offer, indeed, questioning defined and problematic concepts of history.

Margaret Hillenbrand, in her 2005 article, "Trauma and the Politics of Identity: Form and Function in Fictional Narratives of the February 28th Incident," analyzes Song Tse-lai's 宋澤萊 novella *The City of Damao in Revolt* (抗暴的打貓市 1987) and Li Chiao's 李喬 short story "The Tale of Mount Taimu" (泰母山記 1984) in order to show that 228 fiction "are hybrid texts that fuse genres and disciplines in their search for an open-ended form that can do the ineffability of trauma justice." Hillenbrand continues, rather simply: "While their form may be fluid, however, the function of February 28th fiction is typically far more fixed. Indeed, I move on to argue that stories about the incident share a unifying common cause: the project of memory – its recovery, restitution, and reinstatement in the public sphere."[48] Hillenbrand's consideration of the hybridity of form in 228 fiction is a valid and important point. As historical texts, the narratives must necessarily cross boundaries of fiction, testimonial and history. However, to say that the function of 228 fiction is fixed is a gross oversimplification. Hillenbrand is correct to argue that these texts are about countermemory, but it is whose memory and whose public sphere that is represented and (re)instated? In this thesis I will argue that 228 fiction can have different functions as the memory of these events is not possessed by a simple, unified, or static group, but by a diverse and dynamic Taiwanese people.

[48] Ibid., 50.

These critiques, although limited in size and confined in scope, consider topics that are very relevant to this thesis. Naturally, these scholars have followed different approaches and selected different texts in order to convey their intent. My selection of narratives likewise has its purpose.

The Selection of Texts

There clearly exists a wide variety of exemplary texts related to the 228 Incident and the White Terror, so choosing which texts to include in an analysis such as this is difficult. However, the texts that I have chosen were specifically selected for achieving my goal of presenting three very different and important perspectives on this crucial subject.

Tzeng Ching-wen, true to his strong respect for life and deep belief in the human race, presents a representation of the trauma inflicted by the period's executions and imprisonments that concentrates almost entirely on the human tragedy, the lives of the victims and their families, and the ongoing repression that exists in Taiwan. Although in "Let's Go to New Park to Feed the Fish," Tzeng shows the anger of the Taiwanese towards the Kuomintang over the injustice and inhumanity of their crimes, he presents Aunt Fu-shou's hatred as a part of the trauma she has endured with the decades of her son's imprisonment. Tzeng also shows the terrible effects of the government violence in Taiwan in "To Redeem a Painting," but instead of representing the all too familiar Taiwanese victims, he instead limns a family of mainlanders who have suffered terribly

due to government policy. These two texts together display Tzeng's deep social consciousness and respect for all life.

Ch'en Ying-chen's perspective is quite different. He instead views the events as the suppression of leftist revolutionaries and their (his) dream of a united and socialist China. His representations of these events lament the destruction of lives and the systematic slaughter of national heroes, but also heavily criticize what he sees as a bourgeois contemporary Taiwan, gorged on both the decadence and the denial of global capitalism. Both "Mountain Path" and "Zhao Nandong" reflect Ch'en's view of a single Chinese ethnicity that has suffered under long oppression in the forms of colonialism and imperialistic global capitalism.

The third writer to be discussed here, Li Ang, represents a generation younger than Tzeng and Ch'en. Her perspective and intent in her representations of the 228 Incident and White Terror are also quite different. Long known for her feminist writings and dramatic narration, Li enlists the emotional impact of the 228 Incident in "Rouged Sacrifice" to protest the continued repression, ignorance, and intolerance of women and marginalized groups in Taiwan society. She also questions the possibility of justly representing such events in a society where the people, as well as the history, are disguised behind layers of makeup and lies.

These texts provide three different arguments for ownership of the 228 Incident: One argues for the victims; one for the revolutionaries that fought for China; and the third

argues to de-centre possession and extend it right to the periphery. Of course, the memory of the incident is constructed in the collective memory of the Taiwanese people by narratives such as these. However, all of these texts present a fair position that adds to the myth that is the 228 Incident and the myth of nation. Before continuing on to an analysis of the stories, some background information on the historical event and the extent of popular and political mythologization in contemporary society will provide a context for the literary works. What follows is a description of the event and its myth as constructed by leading politicians in Taiwan.

Chapter One

The Perpetrators: The 228 Incident as Event and Myth

2007 marks the sixtieth anniversary of the 228 Incident. The academic world commemorated the event with the hosting of conferences on the subject, most of which were in Taiwan, but even as far away as Sweden, where a conference was hosted by London University's School of Oriental and African Studies. In Taiwan, where the day is a national holiday, numerous commemorative events were held across the island, most of them by the Democratic Progressive Party (民進黨 DPP). The DPP has taken possession of "Peace Memorial Day" (和平紀念日) as a day to remember the violence caused by the Kuomintang (KMT). The KMT have no choice but to be on the defensive at such commemorations. In 2007 responsibility has been the foremost topic with the DPP pinning the responsibility on Chiang Kai-shek 蔣介石 and pulling down his statues across the island. The KMT have refuted this perspective, but will likely be unable to stop the continued denouncements of Chiang, which have even led to the Executive Yuan's renaming of Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Hall (中正紀念堂) as Taiwan Democracy Memorial Hall (台灣民主紀念館).[1] Why is the quest to determine

[1] However, at the time of writing, this change had not carried out and was still being fought over with Taipei City officials.

responsibility such an important and controversial debate? How is it that there are still so many opposing perspectives on an event that took place more than sixty years ago?

This chapter will consider the events and circumstances surrounding the 228 Incident and determine how the incident has been mythologized by later generations, especially through Taiwan's politics, due to its symbolic status in the history of the so-called Republic of China on Taiwan. The construction of the symbolic mythology of the 228 Incident has made the uprising an important historical event and a divisive tool in the political and ethnic turmoil of contemporary Taiwan.

By examining the incident as it is seen, first by historians, and then by politicians, I will show how the mythologization process has centred, in this arena, on the charging of responsibility. As Jeffrey C. Alexander states, "[I]n creating a compelling trauma narrative, it is critical to establish the identity of the perpetrator, the 'antagonist.'"[2] In capturing the ownership of the 228 Incident, a critical move in their political aspirations, the DPP have constructed an effective trauma narrative with the perfect antagonist.

The 'Incident'

Since the establishment of Nationalist rule on October 25th, 1945, the economic and social situation on Taiwan had worsened considerably. Despite early efforts by the

[2] Jeffrey C. Alexander, "Toward a Theory of Cultural Trauma," in *Cultural Trauma and Collective Identity*, Jeffrey C. Alexander et al. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), 15.

Kuomintang to prepare for the retrocession of Taiwan,[3] the Nationalists had neither the experience, nor the personnel resources to govern Taiwan with the success of the Japanese.[4] Furthermore, the deterioration of the situation on the mainland as the civil war deepened, consumed all the attention of top KMT officials, and drained resources from Taiwan.

The incident that triggered the riots is a relatively minor, but now very famous event. On the evening of Thursday, February 27, 1947, an old woman was found selling illegal cigarettes by officers of the Monopoly Bureau outside of the Tianma Tea Store on Taiping Street (now Yanping Street) in Taipei City. The officers were acting on a tip to a larger seizure, but failing in that, turned to this fairly insignificant vendor, Lin Jiangmai 林江邁. The woman argued and tussled with the officers, trying to stop them from confiscating her little money and cigarettes. The officer being grabbed responded by hitting the woman in the head with the butt of his gun. Blood streamed out of the wound, the woman's daughter began to cry and a crowd quickly gathered to curse the officers and demand that they release the cigarette vendor. In the ensuing confusion, as they tried to escape the crowd, one of the officers discharged his weapon, shooting one of the crowd members. The victim, Chen Wenxi, soon died from the wound and became a symbol of KMT aggression on Taiwan. Although the officers were able to escape from

[3] The Kuomintang began serious preparations for the rule of Taiwan after the Cairo Declaration of 1943. Lai, Myers, Wou, *A Tragic Beginning: The Taiwan Uprising of February 28, 1947* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1991), 56-57.

[4] Early ROC bureaucracy on Taiwan was only half that of Japan's of two years earlier. The military and police forces on Taiwan were only 6.4% of what Japan had stationed on Taiwan. Ibid., 65.

the scene, the enraged crowd marched to the local police office to demand the execution of the shooter.[5]

Word of the incident spread quickly and deliberately. The protesters demanded that newspapers publish the event, even thought the Propaganda Commission had already ordered them not to do so. By the next day, February 28th, it was already clear that public anger was due to more than just this incident of brutality by the Monopoly Bureau. Protesters occupied a Taiwan radio station and broadcast information about the event across Northern Taiwan, inciting violence towards mainlanders and calling for people to gather in Taipei's New Park to march on the Provincial Administration Executive Office. This march terrified the few police left to defend the office. The officers fired into the crowd, killing two and wounding others. Known as the *Guangchang Shijian* (廣場事件 The Incident at the Square), this was a pivotal point in the protests, confirming the beliefs of many that the mainlanders did not value Taiwanese life.

Violence against mainlanders spread across the island. Although there had been an incident on February 27th in which a mob stormed a branch office of the Monopoly Bureau and beat two officials to death, the violence was now directed at all mainlanders. As demonstrated in Hou Hsiao-hsien's iconic film, *City of Sadness* (悲情城市 Beiqing Chengshi 1989), Taiwanese would speak to strangers in Japanese, Taiwanese or Hakka to determine whether or not they were mainlanders. If they could not respond, the victims were beaten, often fatally. Many mainlanders were caught unaware and had no idea why

[5] Ibid., 102-103.

they were being attacked, while others quickly fled the cities. In total, more than one thousand mainlanders were killed in violent attacks.[6]

Although the rioting began in confusion, as calm returned to the cities, the Resolution Committee that was established in Taipei City began to set up organizations across the country in the hopes of maintaining safety and order. As these were impromptu committees, membership varied considerably from city to city. However, the majority of those involved in Resolution Committee work were Taiwanese elite and local officials. The involvement of communists in these groups was very limited, although Taichung in particular had a well-known communist, Hsieh Hsueh-hung, leading the dissidents. The central Resolution Committee in Taipei then began issuing demands to governor Chen Yi. The demands changed as the movement evolved from street protests towards rebellion. In the days after February 28th, the committee merely requested compensation for victims, dismantling of the Monopoly Bureau and promises of no military action. However, as the committee's confidence increased, the demands requested more and more political autonomy, until the troops arrived and ended all talk of resolution.

After the trigger incident on February 27th and the Incident at the Square on February 28th, the brunt of the violence was directed towards mainlanders, except in Kaohsiung, where General Peng Mengqi's 彭孟緝 massacre of 'dissidents' began on March 6th in order to regain control of the city.[7] However, after Nationalist troops began arriving in Keelung on March 9th and Kaohsiung on March 10th, the situation changed dramatically. Even

[6] Ibid., 141.
[7] Ibid., 130-131.

before the troops reached the shore they began shooting. Once in the cities, the soldiers shot indiscriminately at anyone on the street. This was especially true in Keelung, Taipei, Chiayi, and Kaohsiung, where fighting was at its worst. This terrifying method of controlling rebellions was standardized for the Kuomintang, who had been desperate in their fights on the mainland for many years; however, the policy went to a new extreme in Taiwan, as the battle-hardened troops were facing the frustration of a language barrier in their attempts to control the Taiwanese. The worst of the violence lasted from March 12 to May 15. The extent of this terror in terms of lives has been a debated number ranging from Pai Ch'ung-hsi's 白崇禧 low estimate of under 2000 to the high estimates by Taiwanese organizations in Japan and the United States with numbers as high as 100,000, Lai Myers and Wou, taking into account a variety of sources, believe the number may be under 10,000, mostly, but not entirely consisting of Taiwanese urban elite.[8] As with any massacre in history, the estimates of the number killed is an emotional subject that is often a fast and easy way to capture newspaper headlines. Li Ao 李敖, the writer and politician who frequently uses sensational means to get in the news (including in 2006, the brave act of bringing a life-size nude photo of himself to the Legislative Yuan and the ridiculous act of spraying tear gas in the same building months later), made use of the highly emotional number game to gain headlines this year, claiming that only 800 people had actually been killed during the 228 Incident. News media in Taiwan tend to choose either 20,000 or 30,000 as the acceptable figure (sometimes both these numbers appear in the same newspaper on the same day).

[8] Ibid., 157-159.

Reasoning the Massacre

The clash between the Nationalists and the Taiwanese can be attributed to various reasons, but perhaps of most significance are their opposing perspectives, which resulted in a disastrous occurrence of othering. Both parties brought with them a specific history, which exacerbated the othering of each side, and both acted under preconceptions about the other which were amplified with the events of the 1940s.

When the Kuomintang arrived on Taiwan in 1945, they had been fighting against the Japanese for eight years. This war had drained their resources and their spirits. In their eyes, the Taiwanese had been corroborating with the enemy, were tainted and not to be trusted. The other great enemy for the Kuomintang was the communists. Chiang Kai-shek was intent on destroying the communist strongholds on the mainland at that time, and could not afford for any organization of them on Taiwan. The involvement of Hsieh Hsueh-hung in the leadership of the Taichung faction unfortunately brought strong emotions against the rebellion. Although the involvement of the communists was clearly very limited, Chen Yi had advised Chiang that they were to blame, perhaps in order to draw attention away from other reasons for the rebellion which may have easily been associated with his mismanagement of the colony. As far as the military was concerned, the presence of communist threat made Taiwan not unlike areas on the mainland where they had been fighting the civil war. The Kuomintang army then attacked with swift ferocity in order to secure the island quickly and enable the troops to continue the war on the mainland. March 1947 was a crucial month in the campaign: The Kuomintang had seized Yenan, and, in a burst of optimism, Chiang Kai-shek told American ambassador,

Leighton Stuart, that the Communists would be totally defeated or at the least driven far back by August or September.[9] So the Kuomintang forces fighting on Taiwan were operating under fear, a sense of urgency, hatred for the Japanese, hatred for the Communists, and, for at least some, revenge. The forces stationed on Taiwan at the time of the uprising may have had friends or even family members attacked by the Taiwanese mobs, and even those who didn't would have felt frustrated by their impotence to stop the violence. Although Chiang Kai-shek had clearly warned Chen Yi to instruct the soldiers not to act in revenge, it remains apparent that some still did so.[10]

On their part, the Taiwanese had also entered this situation with enmity towards the mainlanders. The jubilation with which they had first met the boats of the Kuomintang in 1945 had fast disappeared as the people became aware of the corruption and inexperience of the bureaucracy. The Taiwanese viewed the mainlanders as ignorant and were frustrated with the weak bureaucracy that was operating at a bare minimum in order to keep human resources at work in the mainland. The Taiwanese also saw their social services, such as health care, deteriorate, as diseases spread across the island. Mainlanders were of course to blame for any epidemic the Taiwanese became aware of. As both public and private buildings were stripped to support the war efforts, the Taiwanese were made completely aware of the depletion of their island's resources. And the rising cost of rice was felt by everyone, as food was shipped across the straits. Politically, the Taiwanese were also frustrated as mainlanders were awarded all the higher government positions and Taiwanese were given a lower pay scale than their

[9] Immanuel C.Y. Hsu, *The Rise of Modern China* (Fourth Edition), (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 630.
[10] Lai, Myers, Wou 1991, 152.

mainland counterparts. All of these pressures were enough to convince the Taiwanese to act when the situation arose. However, there was no initial organization to the uprising. The majority of the people involved were venting their fury at the Kuomintang and the mainlanders, but had not agreed to any concepts of rebellion. Perhaps the rioting represented the anger of the people, but it is not as easy to determine whether or not the Resolution Committee's demands for greater self-governance represented the will of the people.

The Political Parties

The events surrounding the 228 Incident were terrible, yet complicated, leaving plenty of room for interpretation. Furthermore, the Kuomintang's efforts to suppress dialogue or commemoration of the massacre resulted in a lack of definitive information on the circumstances surrounding the incident, but also served to ensure that there would be an emotional outpouring when the period of White Terror came to an end and the victims and their families were free to speak. the political parties involved have all had to find ways to interpret this event: the KMT have had to find ways to capture the people's trust more than fifty years after the event; the Democratic Progressive Party has moved to take political advantage of the incident; and the Chinese Communist Party has heralded the incident as an exclamation of the will of the people. Paul Cohen remarks that, "Experiencers of the past are incapable of knowing the past that historians know, and mythologizers of the past, although sharing with historians the advantage of

afterknowledge, are uninterested in knowing the past as its makers have experienced it."[11] This is indeed true to some extent, but in situations such as this, the mythologizer can pick and choose which experiencer she chooses to acknowledge.

In the case of the Chinese Communist Party, the 228 Incident has not been as important to their continued success; therefore, there has been little if any divergence from their initial interpretation of the event. On the 28th anniversary of the uprising, they released a statement linking the incident to the many pro-communist uprisings that occurred on the mainland during the 1940s and stated that the Taiwanese people found their inspiration in Chairman Mao.[12] Such an outlook is useful for the CCP in reaffirming their claim on Taiwan, as well as the continued propagation of the grand narrative of the people's united march towards a socialist utopia. The CCP has had little reason to make continued remarks on the 228 Incident or to change the stance it established in 1975. Supporters of communism from Taiwan have, however, continued with this myth, or at least indirectly supported it. The well-known socialist writer, Ch'en Ying-chen, was brave enough to write about the White Terror before the lifting of martial law. In what may be his best-known and most anthologized work in the West, "Mountain Path," although avoiding any dangerously explicit remarks, Ch'en indicates the victims of the Kuomintang's purging campaigns were socialists, fighting for the Taiwanese working class and hoping for the success of the revolution on the mainland.

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[11] Paul A. Cohen, *History in Three Keys: the Boxers as Event, Experience, and Myth* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), xiv.
[12] Lai, Myers Wou 1991, 3.

The KMT have had more reason to pay close attention to the 228 Incident and alter the myths surrounding it to suit the present. The official position on the incident was established by Pai Ch'ung-hsi's report to Chiang Kai-shek made after his visit in March of 1947. Pai concluded that the people were easily misled due to their "evil education from the Japanese," and were duped by communist organizers.[13] This analysis justified the use of extreme violence during the uprising and throughout the period of White Terror. However, once martial law was lifted, the 228 Incident became a political thorn for the KMT, and an important piece of propaganda for the DPP. In damage control the KMT had to alter their view on the tragedy and find a more apologetic stance that displaced the blame from the party itself to a few individuals. Chen Yi, long since executed as a traitor,[14] became a plausible scapegoat. Kuomintang official policy on the incident has since been that the uprising was a result of corruption among officials, and unruly soldiers and local officials were to blame for the ensuing violence. Historians have long accepted Chen Yi as the one deserving blame for the incident.[15] This of course indicates some KMT responsibility, and, as tension between the DPP and the KMT intensified, an apology was necessary. Lee Teng-hui 李登輝, the ethnic Taiwanese leader of the KMT and president of the Republic of China from 1988 to 2000, made a public apology for the 228 Incident in 1995. Lee was a very popular leader who managed to find supporters among both the mainlanders and the Taiwanese. He was very apologetic for what he called "a case of the severe oppression of Taiwanese by the KMT

[13] Ibid., 5.
[14] Chen Yi was executed on June 18, 1950, after Chiang discovered he was making arrangements to hand over territory to the communists. Fred W. Riggs, *Formosa Under Chinese Nationalist Rule* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1952), 44.
[15] Although Jonathan Spence never mentions the incident by name, he does make reference to "the riots and massacres sparked by Chen Yi in 1947." Jonathan D. Spence, *The Search for Modern China* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1999), 500. Hsü, *The Rise of Modern China*, 750.

government."[16] This differs from Ma Ying-jeou 馬英九, who, although currently plagued in controversy and being sued for corruption, is still the KMT's strongest hope for the 2008 presidential elections. Ma still follows the party understanding, stating that the guilt should fall on local leaders and not on Chiang, but has decided not to continue with public apologies.[17] Speaking on February 28th 2007, Ma stressed that the 228 Incident was a political uprising and definitely not, as the Democratic Progressive Party claim, an ethnic conflict.

The DPP has clearly gained the most from the use of the 228 Incident. The Taiwanese Independence Movement (TIM) has captured the symbolic power of the incident in their struggle for independence, and it is from this movement that the DPP was born. Although there had been calls for an independent Taiwan throughout the Japanese occupation period and even before, many people consider its real birth to be the formalization of the Alliance for the Re-liberation of Taiwan (台灣再解放同盟 *Taiwan Zaijiefang Tongmeng*), an association started by the Liao brothers, Thomas and Joshua, in 1948 after they escaped from the post-February 28 crackdowns, and found refuge in Japan.[18] The TIM consider the 228 Incident as a part of a history of struggle towards independence, as explained in *Taiwan Seinen's* (Taiwan Youth) February 20, 1961 issue: "The flowing tide for an independent Taiwan began with the National People's Movement in 1920, and continued with the efforts to abrogate the June 3, 1896, law, the movement to establish a

[16] Lee Teng-hui. *The Road to Democracy: Taiwan's Pursuit of Identity* (Tokyo: PHP Institute, 1999), 35.
[17] Mo, Yan-chih. "No Apologies at KMT's 228 Ceremony," *Taipei Times*, February 26th, 2006, www.taipeitimes.com/News/ front/archives/2006/02/26/2003294695.
[18] Lai, Myers, Wou 1991, 189.

Taiwan Parliament, and the awakening of the masses of farmers and workers. Therefore, the Uprising of the Taiwanese people on February 28, 1947, [is] merely a continuation of that great tide... Naturally, this Uprising was a *sacred* struggle based upon the people's just demands for their fundamental rights"[19] Although the DPP is certainly not the TIM, the organizations share common ground. Views of the current ROC president and leader of the DPP, Chen Shui-bian 陳水扁, have not differed from this interpretation, but his emphasis has centred more upon laying blame squarely on the KMT. Chen has managed to strongly associate the DPP with the incident, particularly with his renaming of Taipei's New Park to 228 Peace Park in 1996, when he was the mayor of Taipei City. His recent comments on the incident have been aggressive attacks on the KMT. Speaking at the 2006 commemoration in 228 Peace Park, he said, "Over the past 20 years, some have tried to simplify, twist or even falsify the historical meaning of the incident, saying that it was a social uprising caused by government corruption, but that is not true. It is a false history fabricated for political purposes." Refuting the KMT interpretation of February 28th, Chen argues that it was "a systematic slaughter and organized suppression of Taiwanese people," carried out by "a foreign administration and authoritarian regime to consolidate its power."[20] With statements such as this, Chen captures the symbolic power of the incident for political purposes.

Conclusion

[19] Translated from the Japanese language journal by Lai, Myers, Wou 1991, 4. My emphasis.
[20] Shui-ling Ko, "Chen urges truth of 228 Incident to be remembered," *Taipei Times*, March 1st, 2006, www.taipeitimes.com/News/ front/archives/2006/03/01/2003295137.

In 2006 the 59th anniversary of the 228 Incident was accompanied by the latest and most heavily researched volume on the uprising. Newly declassified documents and a wide range of personal accounts allowed for researchers from Academia Sinica to detail the events like never before, and, more importantly for many of those mired in the chaotic world of Taiwan's politics, determine who among the high-ranking Kuomintang officials could be found responsible for the deaths of thousands of Taiwanese. The report was called "Research Report for Responsibility on the 228 Massacre" (二二八事件責任歸屬研究報告 *Ererba Shijian Zeren Guishu Yanjiu Baogao*) and was commissioned by the government on Taiwan. The publication of this highly contentious report captured a large audience as it made use of newly released classified correspondence to pin the blame on Chiang Kai-shek. The report was immediately heralded by the DPP and denounced by the KMT as one KMT legislator, John Chiang 蔣孝嚴, the grandson of Chiang Kai-shek, announced plans to sue the publishers and researchers for slander.[21] In 2007 John Chiang is now threatening to sue Chen Shui-bian over his many defaming comments on Chiang Kai-shek. In the year that followed the publication of the "Research Report for Responsibility on the 228 Massacre," the public have become even more accepting of Chiang being responsible. In a February 2007 survey by Taiwan Thinktank, 61 percent of those surveyed support blaming Chiang for the incident, while 28 percent disagree.[22] The DPP government has been quick to remove Chiang's statues from public and military institutions. However, the removal of Chiang also serves to further distance Taiwan from

[21] Erik Mobrand, "Taiwan Remembers Feb. 28 Incident," *World Press.org*, March 1st, 2006, http://www.worldpress.org/Asia/2277.cfm.
22 Shu-ling Ko, "Survey suggests Chiang should take blame for 228," *Taipei Times*, 8.257, February 26th, 2007.

China, an important effort in the dream of an independent Taiwan. Although Sun Yat-sen had nothing to do with the 228 Incident, his bronze bust was quietly removed from the main hall of the Presidential Palace on March 14th and replaced with a potted plant.[23]

The importance of the 228 Incident cannot be underestimated by politicians in Taiwan. In the divisive politics of the island, the symbolism of a massacre perpetrated by mainlanders against Taiwanese is of crucial importance. And the use of this massacre in Taiwanese politics and nationalism as a sacred and sensitive event that binds Taiwanese together and divides them from the mainlanders makes the incident an important topic for historians. It is strange then to see that it has been ignored by so many. In Immanuel Hsü's lengthy *The Rise of Modern China*, it only receives one paragraph,[24] the same allotted the incident in Jonathan Spence's *The Search for Modern China.*[25] However, both of these books include a chapter on Taiwan, focusing instead on the economic miracle of modern Taiwan. In John F. Copper's widely-read political science text, *Taiwan: Nation-State or Province?*, one would imagine the incident would find more importance; however, it is only briefly mentioned on three pages and incorrectly states that the incident that triggered the uprising was "when plainclothes police officers killed a Taiwanese woman who had been selling black-market cigarettes."[26] Of course it was bystander Chen Wenxi, not cigarette seller Lin Jiangmai who was killed. It seems that

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23 Shu-ling Ko, "Presidential Office replaces statue of Sun with pot plant," *Taipei Times*, March 15, 2007, www.taipeitimes.com/News/taiwan/archives/2007/03/15/2003352338.

[24] Hsü 1990, 749.
[25] Spence 1999, 485.
[26] John F. Copper, *Taiwan: Nation-State of Province* (Fourth Edition), (Boulder: Westview Press, 2003), 44. Mention is made of the 228 Incident on pages 44-46.

these eminent authors of Taiwan's past have not kept up with the 228 Incident's importance in the present.

The very idea of searching for whom to apply responsibility to for the tragedy has a strong political intent. On an issue such as the 228 Incident, perspective is everything. In one of this year's conference on the matter, scholar Chu Hung-yuan 朱泓源 concluded that "the Japanese government is the true culprit," due to their workings of colonial Taiwan's economy.[27] Adding another perspective allows the mythology to grow in different directions. Paul Cohen writes that "the past is continually being reshaped, consciously or unconsciously, in accordance with the diverse and shifting preoccupations of people in the present."[28] In the case of the 228 Incident, the past will continue to be reshaped for some time to come.

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27 Chen Shunxie 陳舜協, "Chu Hung-yuan: Ererba Shijian Yuanxiong shi Riben Zhengfu" 朱泓源：二二八事件元兇是日本政府 (Chu Hung-yuan: The Original Culprits of the 228 Incident were the Japanese Government), accessed March 5th, 2007 at: http://news.yam.com/cna/politics/200702/20070227981082.html.

28 Cohen 1997, xiv.

Chapter Two

The Victims: Trauma and Suffering in Tzeng Ching-wen's "Let's Go to New Park to Feed the Fish" and "To Redeem a Painting"

Tzeng Ching-wen[1] (1932~) is one of the most important and prolific living writers in Taiwan. Beginning in 1958, Tzeng has consistently released short or long works. He has been awarded the Wu San-lien Award in Literature, the *China Times* Award in Creative Writing, the Wu Yung-fu Award in Literary Criticism and the Kiriyama Pacific Rim Book Prize.[2] In addition to numerous short stories and articles translated into English for various publications, in recent years Tzeng has had two anthologies of short fiction translated into English: *Three Legged* Horse, 1999, edited by Pang-yuan Chi and *Magnolia: Stories of Taiwanese Women,* 2005, translated and edited by Jenn-Shann Jack Lin and Lois Stanford. These publications have brought Tzeng's stories to a much wider audience in the English-speaking world. Due to the volume and span of his fiction alone, Tzeng has been an extremely influential writer and very worthy of study, yet it is his consistent artistic achievement and the strong presence of humanistic values in his work that make him a great writer.

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[1] 鄭清文 has also been Romanized as Cheng Ch'ing-wen and Zheng Qingwen in different publications. Here I follow the author's Romanization preference.

[2] Jenn-Shann Jack Lin and Lois Stanford, "Introduction" to *Magnolia: Stories of Taiwanese Women* by Tzeng Ching-wen (Santa Barbara: Center for Taiwan Studies, University of California, 2005), xi.

Naturally, with such an oeuvre as Tzeng's, the content of his work has varied drastically, yet he has often returned to the subject of the plight of the disadvantaged in Taiwan. The collection of fiction *Magnolia: Stories of Taiwanese Women* is an example of his dedication to this issue, especially in regard to the suffering of women in modern society. From these stories we can see evidence of Tzeng's humanistic sympathy toward women, and his disgust with the injustices of an unequal society. In the introduction to *Magnolia*, Lin and Stanford state: "One of the essential features of Tzeng Ching-wen's literature, as the stories in this book most persuasively demonstrate, is his deep sympathy toward the disadvantaged, the innocent, the unfortunate, and the marginalized."[3] This belief in equality and justice is related to his position as an anti-traditionalist and his long-advocated "respect for life."[4]

The two stories to be analyzed here, "Let's Go to New Park to Feed the Fish" (1990) and "To Redeem a Painting" (1991), can be viewed as a part of a movement that occurred in the late 1980s and early 1990s, remembering the 228 Incident and White Terror through art, film, literature, memorials, etc.. This was an important memorialisation of the 228 Incident and an identity reforming cultural movement that served a therapeutic purpose,

[3] Lin and Stanford 2005, xiv.

[4] Jenn-Shann Jack Lin 林鎮山, "Shengyin yu Jingpa- 'Ye de Shengyin' yu 'Lai Qu Xin Gongyuan Si Yu'" 聲音與驚怕 - 〈夜的聲音〉與〈來去新公園飼魚〉中的等待和牽掛 (Sound and Fear: Waiting and Worrying in 'Sounds at Night' and 'Let's Go to New Park to Feed the Fish'") in , *Shu de Jianzheng: Zheng Chingwen Wenxue Lun Ji* 樹的見證：鄭清文文學論集. Edited by Jiang Baochai 江寶釵and Jack Jenn-Shann Lin 林鎮山 (The Tree as Witness: A Collection of Literary Criticism on Tzeng Ching-wen's Writings), (Taipei: 麥田出版 Mai Tian Publishing, 2007), 5.

allowing the victims of the martial law period to step out of the shadow of history.[5] Margaret Hillenbrand views this movement as a massive counter-discourse initialized in order to overthrow the silence and rewrite the distorted version of history presented by the Kuomintang.[6] This remembrance was also a part of the tremendous liberalization of Taiwan, during which time the nation was emerging from forty years of Martial Law and shaking off the effects of extreme oppression under the White Terror. During the period of oppression, thousands were victims of the ruthless Kuomintang regime. Although the majority of victims in the early years of the regime were native Taiwanese, those deemed undesirable were not invalid because of their ethnic background, but because their political leanings were incongruous with those of the government of the Republic of China on Taiwan. Being an undesirable could have disastrous consequences for the individual and his or her family in this period. However, things could be even worse for a woman, who, due to societal restraints, may not have the recourse available to her that is available to a man. Such people may easily be thrust into a new level of victimization, becoming the victims of victims, unable to exert any control over their own lives, utterly dependent on others. This is then a question of agency. Do the female victims of the White Terror have agency? Or, to ask a question closer to that which Tzeng addresses in "To Redeem a Painting:" Do these women have any form of representation or avenue of expression? Can they speak?

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[5] Hsu Chun-ya 許俊雅, *Wu Yu de Chuntian* 無語的春天——二二八小說選 (Silent Spring: Selected 228 Fiction), (Taipei: Yushan She 玉山社, 2003), 5.

[6] Margaret Hillenbrand, "Trauma and the Politics of Identity: Form and Function in Narratives of the February 28th Incident," *Modern Chinese Literature and Culture* 17.2. (Fall 2005): 52.

In 1988 Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak published the seminal article "Can the Subaltern Speak?" This was a scathing attack on Western academic discourse that unwittingly attempted to preserve its place as the Subject, and continued to contrast itself by the examination of a homogenized 'Other.' Spivak believes that the intellectual theorists that dominate academic discourse are incapable of imagining the power and desire of the subaltern, those on the margins of society for whatever reason. She then asks the question: 'Can the Subaltern speak?' In other words, do those on the margins of society have any power to represent themselves? Spivak questions whether they even have the consciousness requisite for such representation. Considering the impotence of these sub-societies, Spivak then details how women in such situations must have even less possibility of agency: "If, in the context of colonial production, the subaltern has no history and cannot speak, the subaltern as female is even more deeply in shadow."[7] The female characters in Tzeng's stories are those in the shadow. However, the 'colonial' context of these women's trauma is not quite the same. The complexity of the post/colonial in Taiwan is revealed in these two stories.

Postcolonial Taiwan

There are important issues to consider when employing postcolonial theory in Taiwan Studies. Postcolonial Studies have traditionally examined those societies in Africa and Asia colonized by European imperial forces. Spivak too is considering the subaltern of British India. The term postcolonial has been used to refer to a variety of societies,

[7] Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak?" in *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, eds. Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Macmillan Education, 1988), 287.

ranging from the imperialized colonies of South Asia to the settler colonies of North America. This broad usage of the term thins out direct implications, yet still maintains the original dichotomy upon which postcolonial studies relies, that of dominator and dominated.[8] In this context, Taiwan finds itself spread out across different areas of postcolonial studies. Taiwan is caught between its existence as a settler colony that infringed upon the native lands of the aboriginals, a brief stint as a part of a European empire under the Dutch colonial administration, a part of an Asian empire under the Japanese, and most recently as an oppressed people under the 'invading' forces of the Kuomintang (also known as the KMT). The Kuomintang is not necessarily another ethnic group, and their rule over Taiwan had a short term goal of integration (as did the Japanese colonial administration – although over a much longer period of time). However, many Taiwanese, specifically in the academic world, consider the Kuomintang's rule a colonial government.[9]

The following analysis of two short stories by Tzeng Ching-wen examines these narratives in terms of how they give voice to victims in twentieth century Taiwan. These victims are invariably displaced to the colonial periphery. In "Let's Go to New Park to Feed the Fish," Tzeng enlists elderly parents, especially the image of an aging mother, who exist on Taiwan's social margins and are unable to fully communicate with the metropolis centre, to examine the trauma that has ravaged a generation living under the oppression of the Kuomintang. The second story, "To Redeem a Painting," contests the

[8] I am basing this understanding of postcolonialism on B. Ashcroft, G. Griffiths, and H. Tiffin, *The Empire Writes Back* (London and New York: Routledge, 1989), 23-37.
[9] Liao Ping-hui examines the different perspectives on defining the (post)colonial period on Taiwan in "Postcolonial Studies in Taiwan: Issues in Critical Debates," *Postcolonial Studies* 2.2 (1999): 200.

merits of traditional society, exposing the lamentable plight of women in Taiwan's modern traumatic history, especially society's stifling of their expression. From these two stories it is clear that Tzeng Ching-wen's intent in adding to the writings on Taiwan's trauma is to create empathy for the victims of this violence and their families, whether Taiwanese or Mainlanders, men or women, and to vehemently oppose the repression that exists in Taiwan, whether it be from the government or from within society. By speaking for these victims, Tzeng acts as a representative attempting to grasp ownership of the incident for the victims, and thus contributes to the construction of national trauma.

"Let's Go to New Park to Feed the Fish" 來去新公園飼魚

Thirty years before the contemporary setting of this story, Ah Ho, the son of Aunt and Uncle Fu-shou, was dragged from his home half-naked in the middle of the night. Tzeng utilizes the conversations of the elderly parents to consider the trauma that these people must continue to suffer through decades after the events. The fear and the despair of the White Terror are well displayed in this couple's wait for news of their son:

> "In that period, every time I heard the creak of the mailman's bike or a doorbell, and later on, even a telephone ringing would frighten me, fearing that someone was bringing the news of his death. And for a very long time, I dared not open them mailbox. That's what I've lived through for the last thirty-some years."[10]

The mother in Tzeng's story is a strong character, who finds herself at the end of her days after spending half of her life waiting for her son to be released from prison. A mother's love for her child is a natural and universal bond. The reader easily imagines the torment

[10] Tzeng Ching-wen, *Magnolia: Stories of Taiwanese Women*, trans. Jenn-Shann Jack Lin and Lois Stanford (Santa Barbara: Center for Taiwan Studies, University of California, 2005), 191.

that this mother endures as her son is wrenched from her. Aunt Fu-shou is inconsolable, unable to stop obsessing over her son even thirty years after his imprisonment: "I'm not alive unless I can see him and cry for him. As long as I'm alive, I want to see him every day, and I want to see him several times."[11] Tzeng devotes the majority of the text to Aunt Fu-shou's lamentations, recollections and unanswerable questions. The final scene of the story is the feeding of the fish. This celebration of life is the only uplifting moment in the short story, as the image brings a smile to Aunt Fu-shou's face. This rare event is quickly crushed as a dead fish floating on the surface of the pond reminds her of death's inevitability and her son still held in captivity. Although hope exists in this story, the final message is one of rage, despondency and frustration as Aunt Fu-shou says:

> "I don't know whether I can live till Ah Ho comes back!"
> "Yes, you can, you can. You certainly will." Uncle Fu-shou held her hand tightly.
> "Don't lie to me, and don't lie to yourself."[12]

These powerful words remind the reader of the story's position as a counter-discourse against the lies and violence of the White Terror and serve as a strong protest against the continued holding of political prisoners. The mother figure of Aunt Fu-shou is an effective example of the great injustices borne by the people of Taiwan during this time of oppression. We are also reminded that this trauma has continued to disrupt the lives of the families of the victims of the 228 Incident and White Terror long after the victims themselves disappeared from Taiwan's society. The self-silencing of these voices, a necessity in order to escape the harsh reprisal of the administration, has resulted in a generation that has been excommunicated from Taiwan society. Decades of stifling their

[11] Ibid. 182-3.
[12] Ibid. 206.

speech have resulted in a group of people existing on the periphery, as they slowly fade away, taking their stories and witness of oppression with them.

In "Let's Go to New Park to Feed the Fish," Aunt and Uncle Fu-shou's ability to communicate with the society that they live within, and their ability to communicate with each other has been degraded as the injustice done them has been destructive. The inability of Uncle Fu-shou, the focalizer of the narrative, to properly express his emotions to his wife, or to those of the younger generation, is not merely a matter of the generation's culture, but also due to his having to play a role in comforting her about Ah Ho, rather than enjoying their lives and feeling secure about their children's fate. This distance between generations is demonstrated through their simple interactions as they proceed towards the park:

> "He slowed the speed at which he was pushing the wheelchair. There were more and more pedestrians, and many of them still turned back to look at them. What did they see? Two old people? Two old people who relied on each other for living? Could they understand the meaning of what they heard? Could they understand their unique hardship?"[13]

The ease and affection of young people enjoying themselves in the park[14] is further contrasted by the distance of those of the older generation who "sat very close together, but seemed far apart."[15] This generation of victims' connection to modern society has been irreparably damaged, and the scars even disrupt communication between themselves. How then, can these victims find voice to speak as witnesses of the tragedy of their time and the trauma? Even if these victims were able to find an avenue to express themselves, would others listen or make sense of this trauma? "Could they understand the meaning of

[13] Ibid. 192.
[14] Ibid. 198.
[15] Ibid. 197.

what they heard?"[16] This alienation endured by Uncle and Aunt Fu-shou was a misery that many Taiwanese lived with, especially during the repressive silence of the White Terror. The trauma that they obsess over, that possesses their lives, keeps them and many others isolated from their own society. The glimpse into these lives offered by Tzeng's work shows the life-long ruination inflicted upon family members. Laurie Vickroy explains: "Trauma texts' depictions of the devastating effects of isolation, the necessity for connections, and the cultural influences on private relations and behavior all serve to challenge cultural and often class-based attitudes that define the individual as essentially agential and self-determining."[17] This trauma and the relevant isolation prevents these people from living the lives that they should be enjoying.

This silence and trauma that has endured through decades on Taiwan, has paraded unseen, or at least unspoken, alongside the island's economic miracle, but also alongside great societal change. Crime and security issues have altered the face of the city Aunt and Uncle Fu-shou have known throughout their lives. Perhaps the best example of this is New Park. A park is a public space. This is even more readily apparent in Chinese, as the direct translation of the term used for park, *gong yuan* (公園), is "public garden." The park has symbolic importance as an area of public space, and any intervention into its use by the public is interference with the people's right to what is their own. In "Let's Go to New Park to Feed the Fish" the caging in and securing of the park not only reflects the

[16] Ibid. 192.
[17] Laurie Vickroy, *Trauma and Survival in Contemporary Fiction* (Charlottesville and London: University of Virginia Press, 2002), 23.

couple's further distancing from the societal centre, but also the imprisoning of Taiwan's people and oppression imposed upon society by the Kuomintang administration:

> "Uncle Fu-shou pushed the wheelchair along Park Road. He knew that the park was completely enclosed with railings and that all the gates were turnstiles. Wheelchairs could not get in.
> He also remembered that in the old New Park the entrance gate had just been the intersection. Quickset hedges had been planted all around the park to make it an entire world of its own while still keeping it part of the external world. Now the park was blocked with iron gates and iron railings. Was that like equipping apartment buildings with iron gratings?"[18]

This fairly explicit lamentation despairs the imprisoning of Taiwan society, shown from the perspective of an aging citizen. Try as he might, Uncle Fu-shou is unable to find a way into the park. "(H)e still could not find a way in. All the entrances were blocked by one or another kind of iron gate. Why should such strict precautions be taken in the park, as if against thieves?"[19] Repetition of their failed efforts to gain entrance into the park, the public space and societal centre of Taipei, underlines the generation's displacement to the periphery, due to their age and the trauma they have endured. The containment of the public space, and therefore of the people, is a symbol of the colonization and oppression by the Kuomintang regime from the mainland. The history of this park is brimming with representation of the vicissitudes of Taiwan's modern history, and its symbolic meaning is as multifaceted as it is powerful.

New Park, one of the first Western style parks in East Asia, was established by the Japanese in 1907 shortly after colonization of Taiwan.[20] In order to build such a large park in downtown Taipei, they razed the city's popular Matsu Temple, a temple to the

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[18] Tzeng 2005, 194.
[19] Ibid., 196.
[20] Joseph R. Allen, "Reading Taipei: Cultural Traces in a Cityscape," *Harvard Studies on Taiwan: Papers of the Taiwan Studies Workshop* 3. (2000).

goddess of the sea, one of the most important deities in local belief systems. The park continued to be a contentious arena. As a cruising area for Taipei's homosexual community, it has long been a symbol of society's periphery, and has featured prominently in many works of fiction from Taiwan.[21] During the 228 Incident, the park played a central role as the site of the Min-hsiung Broadcasting Station, which was seized by a mob and used to spread the uprising island-wide with calls to gather in the park to march.[22] Efforts to capture the significance of this public space as a memorial to the incident and rename the park as 228 Peace Park in 1995 were met with futile resistance and anger, as a marginalized segment of Taipei society, the homosexual and transgender community, was frustrated with attempts to gain public recognition.[23] The park now contains images and references to all of these associations of Taiwan's past.

The principal addition offered by the Kuomintang is "the construction of a Beijing style pavilion and four gazebos at the corners of the Lotus pond memorializing heroes of the 1911 Revolution and the Sino-Japanese War."[24] This martyrs' memorial is disparaged in "Let's Go to New Park to Feed the Fish" as "four dishes and one soup bowl."[25] This deceptively simple comment reveals the frustrations of a people under colonial control, with the addition to the park signifying the passing of dominance over Taiwan from the Japanese to the Kuomintang. Writing about these same gazebos, Fran Martin explains:

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[21] Most notably Pai Hsien-yung's *Crystal Boys* (San Francisco: Gay Sunshine Press, 1990).
[22] Lai Tse-han, Ramon H. Myers and Wei Wou, *A Tragic Beginning: The Taiwan Uprising of February 28, 1947* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1991), 106.
[23] Fran Martin, *Situating Sexualities: Queer Representations in Traumatic Fiction, Film and Public Culture* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2003), 85-86. In the short story, "Cai Zhuang Xie Ji"〈彩妝血祭〉, analyzed later in this essay, Li Ang 李昂connects these two peripheries, the marginalized queer society and the forgotten victims.
[24] Martin 2003, 51.
[25] Tzeng 2005, 195.

"The style relates a sense of the cultural continuity of 'Chinese tradition' in the Republic of China, and in doing so encodes the ideology of the 'continuing' rule of the Kuomintang over the Chinese territory."[26]

If there is any question of the perception of the Kuomintang as colonizers, Aunt Fu-shou makes her position clear. As they walk towards the park, her husband points out the Presidential Palace, which at that time was already the office of Li Teng-hui, the Taiwanese born Kuomintang president:

> "Look, that's the President's Office."
> "Do you think I don't know it's the President's Office? In the time of the Japanese occupation, it was called the Government General's Office – *different only in one word.*"[27]

The arrival of the soldiers from the mainland, an event that had been originally welcomed by the Taiwanese people, has concluded, from the perspective of this old woman, with a simple transfer of power to an even more oppressive government, a dominating power that has further taken freedom from the Taiwanese people and reduced Taiwan to an imprisoned state, symbolized by the park. This government has even taken the trees from the people's park and replanted them in the memorial hall to revere the patriarch of their party, Chiang Kai-shek.[28] Aunt Fu-shou will never forgive these people. "They're all the same"[29] she says as she curses all the police or MPs, servants of the regime, as *yao siu a* (夭壽仔) a Taiwanese insult, cursing the recipient with a short life. This is in contrast with Fu-shou (福壽), which ironically signifies being fortunate to live a long life.

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[26] Martin 2003, 51.
[27] Ibid., 193, emphasis added.
[28] Ibid., 198.
[29] Ibid., 188.

Occidentalism

Aunt Fu-shou's view of the Kuomintang administration certainly lends to the use of postcolonial theory in analyzing "Let's Go to New Park to Feed the Fish." The Occidentalizing of the United States is just as strong an indication of Taiwan's position, and a clear example of the epistemic violence unleashed upon the island as part of the neo-imperialism of the twentieth century. Although America is rarely mentioned in the story, when it is, it is as a bastion of freedom and an immigration paradise. This corresponds to what Xiaomei Chen considers to be 'official Occidentalism,' images of the other intended to support the official and accepted version of West.[30] Such use of contrasting images clearly place Taiwan in a subordinate position, looking up to an America representing what Taiwan is not. Jenn-Shann Jack Lin uses Robert Leddell's narratology theories on 'background, character and plot' to consider the symbolic background of America as a 'promised land,' contrasted with the prison of Taiwan society during the White Terror.[31] Considering that one of the sons has immigrated to America, while one is imprisoned in Taiwan, this analogy of America as the promised land is very revealing. There is a clear contrast between Taiwan and America, stated quite clearly at the beginning of the story by the photographs on the wall. The photograph of Ah P'ing, the son living in America, is different: "Its color was somewhat brighter than

[30] Xiaomei Chen, *Occidentalism: A Theory of Counter-Discourse in Post-Mao China* (New York: Oxford, 1995). Occidentalism is reversed in Taiwan, due to the reversal of the official position and understanding of the West in comparison with that of the People's Republic of China. This will be discussed in further detail in the chapter on Ch'en Ying-chen.
[31] Lin, Jenn-Shann Jack 2007, 30.

the photo printed locally."[32] Meanwhile, the thirty-year old photo of Ah Ho has yellowed and faded. This places one son in the paradise of America and one in the hell of prison. Aunt and Uncle Fu-shou are left squandering in the purgatory of White Terror Taiwan, waiting to die or see Ah Ho released. This waiting prohibits them from escaping to the promised land: "Aunt Fu-shou just would not agree. She had been waiting for more than thirty years and she still had to keep on waiting."[33]

A postcolonial perspective on this use of America as a symbolic paradise reveals a distorted episteme favoring the (neo)colonizer. However, Tzeng's use of America here can be read as a "metaphor for political liberation against indigenous forms of ideologized oppression."[34] The United States is certainly the most powerful influence in contemporary Taiwan, a nation Chen Fang-ming 陳芳明 considers to be an American cultural and economic colony.[35] This becomes further complicated when viewing the Kuomintang as an agent by which the United States is able to thrust its economic and cultural dominance onto the people of Taiwan. The colonizer is then returned to as a symbol of freedom to empower the colonized in the negation of the authority of the oppressive pseudo-native regime.

Despite the intrigue brought about by the complication of this layering of colonial frameworks, the victims in society are the focus of this story, and Tzeng's art is well-

[32] Tzeng 2005, 182.
[33] Ibid., 196.
[34] Chen, Xiaomei 1995, 9. Again, this is accepting a reversal of Chen's concept of Occidentalism.
[35] Chen Fang-ming 陳芳明. *Houzhimin Taiwan: Wenxue Shilun ji Qi Zhoubian* 後殖民台灣：文學史論及其周邊 (Postcolonial Taiwan), (Taipei: Maitian Chuban 麥田出版, 2002), 253.

demonstrated as he tunes the reader in to the perspective of Aunt and Uncle Fu-shou on a colonized and severely oppressed Taiwan. Tzeng shows that, until this issue is resolved, Taiwan can never loose the shackles of this repression's terrible influence on society and find peace. The separation of any family is a tragedy. However, Tzeng makes the implications of this family's separation clear in his naming of the two sons Ah Ho and Ah P'ing. Put together the two names mean peace (*Heping* 和平). As long as Taiwan's political repression continues to divide, the nation will not have peace, just as Aunt and Uncle Fu-shou cannot have peace. This narrative is focalizing through Uncle Fu-shou, yet it is Aunt Fu-shou's values and trauma that dominate the text. Tzeng captures this conversation of a dying couple, giving voice to the slowly disappearing victims of the White Terror on Taiwan, and demanding that they be given peace and the time of terror and repression be brought to an end.

"To Redeem a Painting" 贖畫記

"To Redeem a Painting" is another excellent example of the complicated colonial history of Taiwan in literary representation. Unlike in "Let's Go to New Park to Feed the Fish," where Tzeng portrays ethnic Taiwanese to show the trauma of this period of violence and oppression, Tzeng chooses to depict the misery of characters coming from the mainland, showing that the trauma on Taiwan was endured by all those who, for whatever reason, were undesirables to the government. This forces us to consider the skewing of the postcolonial binary to fit a non-ethnic dichotomy of dominator and dominated. Although postcolonial theory is of assistance in considering works like this, the term itself loses

much of its meaning as it is applied to relations of oppression beyond the colonial realm.[36]

As in "Let's Go to New Park to Feed the Fish," the mother that Tzeng gives voice to is a victim of the White Terror. As a victim of the White Terror *and* as a woman in twentieth century Taiwan, the painter is left struggling to survive with her son. However, despite enduring decades of suffering after her arrival on Taiwan, she still attempts to express herself through her paintings. The delivery (or lack of delivery) of the painter's message is interesting to examine with Spivak's subaltern theory, but first we should have a look at the message itself.

In Tzeng's story the painter displays the trauma of the victims of the White Terror through her paintings – "What she wanted to depict was misery, helplessness and despair – the deepest feelings and the saddest fate of human beings."[37] Contrasting sharply with other artists of traditional Chinese painting, she has not lived a life of ease and leisure. The painter paints human life of misery and pain, representing a side of society that rarely or even never finds voice in this genre:

> "Every picture she had painted, no matter whether it was of a human or an animal, was imbued with a sense of gloom and helplessness. The expressions and postures of her subjects were full of pain and misery. No message of leisure, comfort, calm, or transcendence found in a traditional Chinese painting was to be seen here. The humans she had painted were not only full of pain, but sometimes also showed grief or anger."[38]

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[36] Kuei-fen Chiu 邱貴芬considers this problem in relation to Taiwan literature in *Houzhimin ji Qiwai* 後殖民及其外 (Rethinking postcolonial literary criticism in Taiwan), (Taipei: Maitian Chuban 麥田出版, 2003), 119.
[37] Tzeng 2005, 217.
[38] Ibid., 215.

The subjects of her paintings are meant to convey the misery and suffering of people on Taiwan, both Taiwanese and Mainlanders. In a clear reference to violence to ethnic Taiwanese she paints a bloody scene with a native bird: "she had depicted a pair of pheasants – Taiwan's native species, the vanishing Mikado pheasant. They were lying limp on the ground, in a puddle of blood."[39] Her image of Mainlanders, and then of her own family, is naturally a more complicated and contradicting piece:

> "There was a pair of shrikes perched on the tip of a bamboo branch, their mouths wide open and crying towards the sky. Trickles of blood came from the corners of their mouths. When I looked closely, I saw that the birds' feet were caught by bamboo sticks – the 'bird trample' snare used to catch the black-headed shrike by people in the south. Although they were flapping their wings furiously, they could not get away. On the painting, a sentence of five Chinese characters read: 'The miserable fate of migrating birds.'"[40]

These 'migrating birds' that clearly represent the victimized couple and the other 'miserable' mainlanders who have encountered difficulties in Taiwan, are shrikes. That this woman, who clearly feels victimized and has to live through the unjust execution of her husband, and then terrible hardship herself, would portray herself as a predator is of interest. The common understanding of the shrike, also known in English as a 'butcher bird,' is of a violent and merciless bird that tears other birds to shreds. The first line of Wikipedia's description of a shrike is: "A shrike... is known for its habit of catching insects, small birds or mammals and impaling their bodies on thorns."[41] From this painting it appears that this mainlander woman painter is also admitting the violence and terror caused by her people on KMT-led Taiwan. It seems unreasonable to assume that any mainlander, victimized to such an extent would have the depth of consciousness and

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[39] Ibid., 216.
[40] Ibid., 215-216.
[41] *Wikipedia: The Free Encyclopedia*, "Shrike," http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shrike (Accessed Nov 28 2006).

compassion to paint herself in such an image. However, we are reminded here that the subaltern cannot speak for herself and must rely on authors like Tzeng to speak for her.

The painter expresses herself through traditional Chinese painting, but for the successful transmission of a message there must be a sender and a receiver. Although the painter seems to have done an excellent job of expressing herself in her artwork, she encounters difficulties in selling her work. Being on the margins, an artist far from the centre working in a very traditional art form, the painter's work is not suitable: "Her paintings had really deviated very far from convention. She was even beyond the description of 'guilty of heterodoxy.'"[42] The enforced silence of this victim is compounded by the restrictions of traditional society. She is left unable to find an outlet for expression until her death. However, despite her efforts to annihilate her past, to burn her husband clothes, and destroy her paintings, her son keeps the memories alive and retains the paintings as witnesses to the trauma his family has endured. In the final paragraph of the story, we are reminded that the silence continues, and his family's trauma must remain a secret as the art dealer says, "I won't tell them what happened to your parents. I'll ask them to appraise the paintings from a purely artistic point of view."[43] However, being published in 1991, this story represents that transitory period of Taiwan's history in which the island was changing to a more open and free society. There is hope that with change her misery will find an audience: "The main question was whether or not, *at this time*, the conservative circle around traditional Chinese painting would accept her."[44] Although the art world may not be ready for these paintings at this time, as a form of expression,

[42] Tzeng 2005, 217.
[43] Ibid., 228.
[44] Ibid., 217, emphasis added.

paintings excel, for they can span ages and tell the story long after the artists have gone:[45] "In the lifespan of a painting, twenty years can be considered just a short time. In my gallery, there were works that were several hundred years old. No matter whether a painting was good or not, we would never throw one away."[46]

Conclusion

Both of the stories examined above are attempts by the author to bring voice to victims of Taiwan's White Terror, to represent them and their interests in the power-struggle for possession of these events. The stories are so different from each other in the perspectives that they display, that one might consider the existence of different implied authors. However, the central focus of both stories remains the lasting trauma that has consumed this generation. Tzeng's efforts in these stories broadcast two female voices: That of Aunt Fu-shou and the artist Chi Mei of "To Redeem a Painting."

These women are important representations of a generation of traumatized female figures on Taiwan that are disappearing before their voices have been heard. Aunt Fu-shou represents the Taiwanese mother who witnessed the trauma of an incarcerated child; suffering that must have been felt across the nation. The artist of "To Redeem a Painting"

[45] The perseverance of artwork as a lasting form of expression recalls the popularity of Huang Jung-tsan's (黃榮燦) famous work "The Terror Inspection" (Kongbu de Jiancha〈恐怖的檢查-台灣二二八事件〉). Although the artist himself remains virtually unknown in Taiwan, his wood carving of events he personally witnessed during the 228 Incident is immediately recognized across the island. Carved in 1947 and now displayed at the Kanagawa Museum of Modern Art in Kamakura, Japan, the piece did not become prominent in Taiwan until after the end of Martial Law. It is now a popular and enduring representation of the 228 Incident, seen on the cover of many books and adorning the walls of both the 228 Memorial Museum in Taipei and the Human Rights Museum on Green Island.
[46] Tzeng 2005, 210.

represents a wife and mother who has suffered through terrible trauma that even today cannot be expressed, as her victimization appears too close to the centre, and yet at the periphery of a periphery, or at least far from the contemporary centre. These victims have done no wrong and are victimized, in the eyes of the reader, as suffering unjustly.

It is important to note that both of these stories are focalized through a male character. The limited narrators that Tzeng has enlisted display the thoughts and emotions of the male characters, often directly interpreting the speech or the artwork/expression of the women that dominate these narratives. Of course Tzeng Ching-wen is a male author, and his voicing of this suffering must be understood as a male intellectual rendering of female subaltern suffering. This reading certainly provides a negative answer to Spivak's question: "Can the Subaltern Speak?" However, the importance of these texts is still strongly connected to their position as a voice for those without a voice. Just as the paintings in "To Redeem a Painting" provide expression for that which cannot be expressed, from she who cannot express, both "Let's Go to New Park to Feed the Fish" and "To Redeem a Painting" transmit a message that must be expressed, for those who cannot express.

A comparison of these stories also shows the pitfalls of using postcolonial theory as a blanket theory in analyzing Taiwan fiction, due to the complexity of Taiwanese society and the diversity of perspective and experience that exist on the island. The unique experience of Taiwan's colonial era renders postcolonial theory ineffectual in analyzing the trauma of many of Taiwan's peoples and much of Taiwan's literature. As Ping-hui

Liao explains, "To describe more adequately the postcolonial condition in Taiwan, we will have to take into account the multiple and mutually contesting communalities and temporalities."[47] Taiwan is a complicated mix of identities, making postcolonial theory unsuitable for the study of all texts. Kuei-fen Chiu states: "The application of postcolonial discourse assists in analyzing a portion of Taiwan's literary works and in understanding the situation of Taiwan's literature in the past few decades. However, it is incapable of fully explicating some works of Taiwan literature and some situational issues."[48] This statement is important to consider when reading literature from Taiwan, although the advantage of using postcolonial theory still has many benefits in analyzing Taiwan's history and literature in a global context.

In "Let's Go to New Park to Feed the Fish" and "To Redeem a Painting," the victims of the colonial era are nearing the end of their lives or have already passed away. This signifies the end of an era and the nation's entrance into a new stage. Tzeng's texts serve as redemption, remembering the trauma of the generation and providing voices for those who are now disappearing, and may never have had a voice to begin with. In representing these victims, Tzeng fights for their right to ownership of the memory of Taiwan's terror, and provides a vital contribution to the construction of Taiwan's cultural trauma. The importance of Tzeng's work lies in its embrace of all those affected by the terror of the period, regardless of their ethnicity or gender. This is what Jenn-Shann Jack Lin refers to as Tzeng's 'respect for life.'[49] Tzeng Ching-wen's repudiation of political agendas in favour of trauma fiction that is about the victims is a praiseworthy achievement. It would

[47] Liao 1999, 200.
[48] Chiu 2003, 120.
[49] Lin Jenn-Shann Jack, 2007, 5.

be difficult to find an example of 228 fiction that is not about the victims. However, in Tzeng Ching-wen's writings the victims are *the* focus, *the* intent of the story, unlike Ch'en Ying-chen, for whom the victims are an important tool in his ideological aspirations.

Chapter Three

The Nation: Trauma, Repression and Ruination in Ch'en Ying-chen's 228 Fiction

The period of White Terror was a time of silence for Taiwan. Voices of dissent were muted to the extent that people were often afraid to speak to one another. This was particularly true of those who espoused socialist or communist ideologies and opposed the Kuomintang's (KMT) official line. In "Mountain Path" and "Zhao Nandong" Ch'en Ying-chen (1937~) writes about these 'heroes' of postwar Taiwan. These two stories, both striving to provide remembrance for the socialist victims of the White Terror, represent a later stage in Ch'en Ying-chen's fiction. The idealism of his earlier days, in which he wrote Nativist fiction and opposed the effects of capitalism, remain in these narrations. However, they differ from his earlier work by showing the heroes' tragic realization that their dreams will not come true, as they too have become a part of the system they fought against. In this essay I will examine the repressive silencing in "Mountain Path" and "Zhao Nandong," two trauma narratives that remember Taiwan's period of White Terror, and show how it operates as part of the greater capitalist system, responsible for what Ch'en understands to be both the decadence and ruination of Taiwan, destroying history and damaging the nation's link with its past. In these highly ideological texts, Ch'en captures the victims' suffering, utilizing the emotional power of the trauma narrative to repossess the 228 Incident and the White Terror as events in the socialist struggle for the greater Chinese nation.

The Nativist Element

Ch'en Ying-chen's concepts of socialism were strongly related to the discourses of Nativism which he helped to establish in the 1960s and 1970s. His later works, including "Mountain Path" and "Zhao Nandong," are still Nativist works, mournfully lamenting the loss of ideals embodied in the native land due to the repression by the Kuomintang and global capitalism. The philosophy of these works is a result of the evolution of Ch'en's ideology through his response to, and participation in, Taiwan's political literary discussions.

In the 1960s Ch'en rejected the Taiwan Modernist literature that was prevalent among the mainlander writers of Taiwan, and embraced Nativism. *Xiangtu Wenxue* 鄉土文學 or Nativist Literature began as a counter-hegemonic confrontation with the dominant socio-political discourses of the Modernist writers and the American-backed mainlander government. Venting their discontent over issues of power distribution, the native Taiwanese denounced bourgeois capitalist social values that were propagated by the ruling mainlanders. The Nativist writers instead concerned themselves with matters facing the common man. They wrote about the farmers, factory workers and soldiers. Finding the philosophies and form of the Modernists to be borrowed horizontally through western hegemonic culture, rather than inherited vertically from Taiwanese or Chinese traditions, they rejected all such practices and began searching for a truly 'native' form of expression in their literature and substance in their philosophy.

Ch'en Ying-chen was one of the first of these authors to engage in such writing. The author himself has noted that his writing style took a deliberate turn in 1966 when, "cold, realistic analysis takes the place of agitated, romantic expression."[1] This did not yet mean that Ch'en could begin to freely express himself though, as the sensitivity of the Kuomintang government would not allow for any talk of dissent in the 1960s, a fact that Ch'en Ying-chen became all too aware of when he was imprisoned in 1968 for so-called 'subversive activities.' The details surrounded Ch'en's secret trial still remain a mystery; however, the author himself surmises that the reason for his imprisonment is related to his participation in Marxist study groups.[2] Regardless, the author's writing was brought to a screeching halt just as it had begun to develop. Ch'en remained cut off from society until the death of Chiang Kaishek in 1975.[3] These seven years in prison provided Ch'en with much of the material used in the writing of the two texts discussed below. When he did finally come out from prison, Nativism was coming to the forefront of Taiwan's literature and Ch'en was soon to become one of the principal figures in a fierce debate over China Consciousness and Taiwan Consciousness that would prove to be a watershed in Taiwan's political, social and especially literary history. During the early 1970s the Republic of China on Taiwan suffered numerous setbacks that plunged its people into a crisis of identity. Beginning with the American decision to hand the Diaoyutai Islands over to Japan in 1971, the government found itself suffering disgraces at the hands of foreign powers. These disgraces, which included the 1971 loss of the United Nations seat

[1] Ch'en 1992, 219.
[2] Jeffrey C.Kinkley, "From Oppression to Dependency," *Modern China* 16.3 (1990): 244.
[3] A number of sources state that Chen was imprisoned from 1968 to 1975 (see Lucien Miller, *Exiles at Home: Stories by Ch'en Ying-chen* (Ann Arbour: University of Michigan Press, 2002), 1-2). However, David Der-wei Wang records the dates as 1967 to 1973 (See David Der-wei Wang, "Three Hungry Women" *Boundary 2*, 25.3, Modern Chinese Literary and Cultural Studies in the Age of Theory: Reimagining a Field. (Autumn, 1998), 67). However, this would indicate Chen was in fact released before the amnesty preceded by Chiang's death.

to the People's Republic and Japan's 1972 decision to switch recognition from Taipei to Beijing, allowed for many people to recall with anguish China's history of humiliation at the hands of foreign aggressors.[4] This was the beginning of the Nativism movement. This movement was clearly nationalist in nature, and, on an island with a heterogeneous population like Taiwan, nationalism necessarily took on different faces. There was a clear break between those who identified themselves with Taiwan (Taiwan Consciousness), and those who identified themselves with China (China Consciousness). In 1977 and 1978 this divergence was clearly conceptualized by the debate between two camps led by Yeh Shih-tao and Ch'en Ying-chen. While Ch'en and his followers refuted the legitimacy of the ruling powers in favour of a united Chinese people, Yeh Shi-tao and his group of writers denied the Kuomintang because of a firm belief in the Taiwanese people as a separate identity.

By the 1980s Ch'en Ying-chen and the China Consciousness camp were clearly no longer popular. Ch'en's dreams of a united and socialist China were becoming more and more unlikely as even the mainland began initializing capitalist policies. The native land and rural Taiwan that he often wrote about was giving way more and more to the urbanized chaos of contemporary Taiwan. It was under these circumstances that he wrote "Mountain Path" (1983) and "Zhao Nandong" (1987). The idealism and beliefs that had propelled Ch'en through earlier decades were still with him. However, he had to contest with the reality around him. These two stories do just that, examining the silencing of voices through the White Terror, how this silencing bears some responsibility for the

[4] Lin Yaofu, "Language as Politics. The Metamorphosis of Nationalism in Recent Taiwan Literature," *Modern Chinese Literature* 6, 7-22, (1992): 8.

problems Taiwan faces, and the importance of breaking the silence for the sake of the many victims of the White Terror and the citizens of Taiwan that live on after it.

"Mountain Path" 山路

"Mountain Path" is one of Ch'en Ying-chen's best known works, both in Taiwan and abroad. It has been translated into English twice: once by Rosemary Haddon as "Mountain Road" in *Worlds of Modern Chinese Fiction*, 1991; and by Nicholas Koss as "Mountain Path" in *Stories from Contemporary Taiwan*, 1994.[5] It is a short story of only twenty pages, but is a complex work, representing many of the problems of late twentieth century Taiwan. In Ch'en's view of modern Taiwan the people are all "compromised and living on the products of capitalism like a tamed animal."[6] The silence that has been imposed upon the people of Taiwan by the Kuomintang has created a rift between the past and the present, not allowing those of the younger generation to know what happened, and stifling voices of dissent. Without the mountain path, a meaningful life of struggle towards a socialist utopia, one too easily falls into the bourgeois life of wealth and denial provided by the capitalist system on Taiwan. This is exactly what has happened to Cai Qianhui 蔡千惠. Realizing this, she loses the will to live. However, her life of bitter struggle and the sacrifices of others who worked for a better world are being forgotten because of the terrible silence of White Terror Taiwan.

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[5] In this essay I will be using Koss's translation for all quotations. Hence, character names from "Mountain Path" will retain his use of Wade-Giles Romanization.

[6] Ch'en Ying-chen, "Mountain Path," trans. Nicholas Koss in *Death in a Cornfield and Other Stories from Contemporary Taiwan*, eds. Ching-Hsi Perng and Chiu-kuei Wang, 21 (Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 1994).

Nation and Sacrifice

"Mountain Path" is not about the violent and traumatic events in the early days of Taiwan's White Terror, but about those who remain long after, how they live their lives and how they remember – or do not remember - what others had gone through for the sake of the nation. Ch'en Ying-chen bravely - considering the time he published the story – writes about the execution of the young socialist Li Guokun 李國坤, and the imprisonment of his friend, Cai Qianhui's lover, Huang Zhenbo 黃貞柏. These events are extremely destructive for the families involved. Cai Qianhui rejects her own family over her brother's implication of the others. And, Li Guokun's mother is completely unable to cope with her son's death. She soon dies in grief.

In 1983 Taiwan was already a booming economy. One of Asia's 'little dragons,' the so-called 'economic miracle' had drastically changed the standard of living for many people. Cai Qianhui lives in a home with "rugs, air-conditioners, sofa, colour television, stereo, and car."[7] Her private hospital room has "a carpet, a telephone, a refrigerator, a small kitchen, a television, and a bath." Her doctor wears "a gold watch; obviously a very expensive one."[8] All the advantages of capitalism have fallen on Cai Qianhui. However, she has lost her sense of purpose of life, her sense of suffering for the betterment of others. Slowly she has slipped into a life of ease and refinement and even in sickness she

[7] Ibid., 21.
[8] Ibid., 2.

cannot find equality with the working-class poor she once wanted to rescue: "What's different, however, is that now Sister-in-law is in a private room in the hospital; Mother had to lie in a damp, dark room, full of the smell of urine from the toilet bucket."[9] Cai was a woman married to the socialist revolution and had sacrificed her life to suffer. Without suffering along on her 'mountain road' she can no longer go on living:

> "'I came to your house to suffer.' She said. The heater cast faint rays of red on her thin face. She pulled the blanket tucked under her chin down to her breast, saying, 'I came to your house to...'
>
> [Yuexiang] straightened out the blanket.
>
> 'I came to your house to suffer,' Sister-in-law repeated and then added, 'Now that our life is so much better...'
>
> [Li Guomu] and [Yuexiang] listened quietly but without comprehension.
>
> 'Like this, our life like this, is all right, isn't it?' the elderly patient worried. Tears gradually welled up in her eyes."[10]

Forgetting about her own intended life of suffering, she has forgotten about those who died or were imprisoned as they fought for the people. However, it was she who chose not to teach the children about politics. Living in fear of the Kuomintang, she hid the true past from the Li family and maintained the silence that allowed Taiwan and herself to fall into a bourgeois life.

Silence and Repression

Silence is an important subject in "Mountain Path." The strict silencing of the people by the Kuomintang is the harsh reality that existed across Taiwan during the White Terror. However, by the work of people like Cai Qianhui, this silence was turned into prosperity at the cost of the memory of the sacrifices of the people who suffered through it. In the

[9] Ibid., 10.
[10] Ibid., 94, 13.

closing paragraphs of "Mountain Path," Ch'en Ying-chen specifically reminds the reader that this silence continues if the people of Taiwan do not stand up and bring an end to it.

The terror that existed around Taiwan in the years after the 228 Incident is clearly indicated by the silence that Cai lived through in her youth, as people "would simply go out and walk the streets making contact with no-one."[11] The societal segregation of the victims is particularly disturbing. When Cai goes looking for the Li family she is afraid to even ask directions to his home. "Who would dare tell her? The Li family had had a son taken away and shot."[12] It is also clear who the Kuomintang was specifically trying to silence. Anyone who opposed capitalism, or supported its enemies in any way was silenced to the extent that even songs that touched on socialism were not allowed. When the child Li Guomu asks Cai about a song she absent-mindedly sings, she replies: "You can't sing it. Not allowed to sing it. Not now."[13] This silence, largely aimed at supporters of socialist revolution, but affecting all of Taiwan in general, had a strong effect on the society of the island.

By denying the past and deliberately forgetting about all the dissidents and revolutionaries who had been executed or imprisoned on Green Island, Taiwan is able to pursue capitalism and move forward into a world of prosperity, but harbouring a deep dark scar that will not disappear easily. The Li family members are an example of this denial and the terrible silence that covered Taiwan:

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[11] Ibid., 6.
[12] Ibid., 6.
[13] Ibid., 17.

> "For over twenty years now, his father, his sister-in-law, and he, had yearned for Elder Brother, feared him and avoided the topic. He had become the untouchable wound for his entire family; indeed, for all of society. And yet, this hidden wound, imperceptibly, through the selfless sacrifice of his sister-in-law for his poor broken family, had been turned into an overriding power that forced [Li Guomu] to 'stay away from politics' and to 'forge ahead.' His power had transformed him from the child of a poverty-stricken family into a college-educated adult."[14]

Ending this silence may then seem to be a way to heal this wound and to remember the past. However, the cost of doing so may be too much. Considering that in 1983 the political environment was still far from free, it is no surprise that Li Guomu, the man who has received all the financial benefits of such silence, is compelled to remain silent, even when it may help his sister-in-law: "'But, how can I talk about that morning in front of those doctors and nurses:' he thought painfully. 'How can I tell them about my brother and Huang Zhenbo?'" However, when Li discovers the truth about Cai Qianhui, about how she sacrificed everything for him and his family, he does not even talk to his wife about it. It is this silence that Ch'en Ying-chen is warning about, the tragedy of forgetting the sacrifices of these heroes and sinking into the ease of modern life in blissful naivety.

What makes "Mountain Path" an excellent work is Ch'en's open struggle with ideology and politics in the confusing world of modern Taiwan. Cai fears, "if the revolution fails on the Mainland, does that mean [Guokun]'s death and your [Huang Zhenbo] long-term imprisonment have turned into meaningless punishments more cruel than death or life in prison?"[15] This must have been one of Ch'en's own fears. Seeing the Taiwan of the 1980s as an affluent, but bourgeois society, disconnected from its history and tradition, Ch'en still holds to his ideals, his love for his native land and its people, and his belief in

[14] Ibid., 18.
[15] Ibid., 20.

the struggle for a united and equal society. However, he openly displays his inner struggle with these issues on the pages of "Mountain Path," detailing the devastation of losing one's dreams. Through Cai's letter, Ch'en still rejects modern society as "a world so completely 'full of tamed animals,'"[16] but his own fear and dismay with the present situation are clear, especially with Li Guomu's final silence, a silence that preserves the government's 'taming' and neutering of Taiwan's people.

"Zhao Nandong" 趙南棟

"Zhao Nandong" continues with the symbolism of "Mountain Path" to such an extent that one may wonder if Ch'en Ying-chen was unhappy with earlier results and decided to rewrite his story. However, "Zhao Nandong" goes further than "Mountain Path," delving into issues that concern all of Taiwan, drawing heavily from Ch'en's "Washington Building Series" about the imperialism of foreign multinationals, and more directly placing blame for the collapse of traditional society and Taiwan's fall into decadence. Like "Mountain Path," "Zhao Nandong" examines the tragedy of the changes in Taiwan on the individual, as well as the loss of one's dreams for the nation. However, the repressive silencing by the Kuomintang throughout the White Terror remains a central theme in the story, and the absence this creates in Taiwan's youth is more clearly expressed.

[16] Ibid., 94, 21.

"Zhao Nandong" is a short novella divided into four chapters. At the beginning of every chapter there is a doctor's report written in medical jargon, providing an indifferent tone and enforcing the cold setting of the hospital room, while also clearly indicating Zhao Qingyun's 趙慶雲 worsening condition and finally death. Although the story takes place over a few days in Taipei, September 1984, the majority of the text in all chapters but the last is spent on flashbacks. Each chapter is focalized through a different character, Ye Chunmei 葉春美, Zhao Erping 趙爾平, Zhao Qingyun and Zhao Nandong.[17] However, the narration of the final chapter is markedly different, providing much less insight into the mind of Zhao Nandong than it had for other characters in previous chapters. This reduces Zhao Nandong to a simplified, flat character, a second generation victim in need of assistance. As the title indicates, the objective of the story lies with Zhao Nandong, although he is rarely the focus of the text. Zhao Nandong, the child of two victims of Taiwan's White Terror, Zhao Qingyun and Song Rongxuan 宋蓉萱, is born in prison. He is a representation of the decadence and ruination of contemporary Taiwan due to the vicissitudes of modern Taiwan history: the trauma inflicted on his parents generation and passed on by their absence; the terrible silence that weighed down on all Taiwan; and the forces of globalization and neocolonialism that rocked Taiwan through the power of multinational corporations and economic imperialism.

[17] Only the first chapter has been translated into English: Ch'en Ying-chen, "Zhao Nandong: Part One – Ye Chunmei," trans. Duncan Hewitt, *Renditions* 35/36 (1991): 65-86.

The story ends with the characters in a dismaying state of affairs. Nandong is addicted to drugs. He sniffs glue, perhaps the most pitiful and probably the cheapest addiction. Zhao Qingyun has passed away without telling his stories. The ghosts that surrounded him at his bedside die with him, their stories untold. Erping has gained impressive financial success, especially considering his background. However, it has been at a cost, as he has sunk into a meaningless life of excess and moral abandon, becoming an agent of a foreign pharmaceutical corporation, a representative of the multinational organizations that dominate Taiwan's economy. The Zhao family has been destroyed by their impact with modern Taiwan's history. The older generation is crippled by Kuomintang violence and oppression and the younger generation is reduced to a wasted vulgar and soulless people. There still remains hope for the future, however. As in so many of his stories, Ch'en has painted a disturbing picture of contemporary Taiwan, with a light of opportunity at the end, a chance to reach towards redemption, to remember the efforts of those who have fallen and to work towards a better future. On the final page of the story, Ye Chunmei finally finds Zhao Nandong and takes him back to Shiding 石碇, a country township, away from the vice and ruination of the city. She calls him Little Guava (*Bale* 芭樂), the name she called him when he was born, providing an opportunity for him to begin again, and wipe away the evils of the past thirty years. Nandong was named after the wing of the prison in which he was born, signifying that, like his name, the trauma of his family will remain with him throughout his life. Ye Chunmei, her own name meaning Beautiful Spring, can offer Nandong this new beginning and take the place of the mother that was so unfairly torn from him at the very beginning of his life.

Trauma

Throughout "Zhao Nandong" Ch'en Ying-chen relates the trauma that the people of Taiwan endured, reaching a climax with "Zhao Qingyun," the second to last chapter, before the stark transition to the final chapter, in which the reader realizes that the effects of this trauma have been passed on to Nandong's generation, and is a feature of Taiwan society. Each chapter is a piece of Nandong's family: Zhao Erping is his brother, Zhao Qingyun is his father, and Ye Chunmei represents his mother.

The first chapter, "Ye Chunmei" almost immediately opens into trauma by presenting the chaos and fear of the White Terror from this woman's perspective. The earliest days of Zhao Nandong's life are related, as he is born in the prison and briefly cared for by the inmates. His birth mother, Song Rongxuan is soon executed and he is then taken away from his surrogate mother Ye Chunmei in a flood of tears. Through the eyes of Ye Chunmei the reader is given a glimpse of the horror of the women's prison in the 1950s. The indignities suffered under male warders, who "stared covetously"[18] at the inmates initially seems terrible, but it is nothing compared to the shock of the torture of the pregnant Song Rongxuan: "When they yanked out her fingernails, she kept reminding herself to scream from her chest rather than from her abdomen; when she was strung up

[18] Ch'en Ying-chen, "Zhao Nandong: Part One – Ye Chunmei," trans. Duncan Hewitt, *Renditions* 35/36 (1991), 68.

by the thumbs, she held her belly in with all her might."[19] Song endures her own pain by concentrating on her baby, but her pain will inevitably be inherited.

Just as the first chapter relates the trauma endured by Zhao Nandong's mother(s), the third chapter, "Zhao Qingyun," delves into the trauma that Nandong's father faced in the prison. Ch'en Ying-chen was himself imprisoned on the Green Island penitentiary in which both Ye Chunmei and Zhao Qingyun are held for periods of their confinement, and likely drew on his experiences there for much of this chapter. What is particularly noteworthy about this chapter is that Ch'en has focalized it through the consciousness of the dying patient, Zhao Qingyun. While the previous two chapters relied on straight forward flashbacks to relate the story, this chapter mixes past and present together in the muddled and fading mind of the dying father. His friends that were executed in the 1950s sit on the floor of his hospital room, "hot tears hanging on their cheeks that had turned cold more than thirty years before."[20] Although he remains relatively unconscious throughout the chapter, he is sometimes aware of the nurse's presence and cannot understand why she is startled by his sudden comment on the weather. He believes he has been talking out loud all along.[21] This narrative closely resembles what Anne Whitehead calls a 'dispersed or fragmented narrative,'[22] as it imitates the effects of trauma, in which the rules of time are set aside while the event is continued to be experienced. In his mind Zhao chats with his deceased friends and remembers how these great people are taken out

[19] Ibid., 72.

[20] Ch'en Ying-chen, 陳映真, "Zhao Nandong" 趙南棟 (Zhao Nandong), in *ZhaoNandong ji Ch'en Ying-chen Duan Wen Xuan* 趙南棟及陳映真短文選 (Zhao Nandong and Ch'en Ying-chen's Selected Short Stories), (台北 Taipei: Renjian Chuban She 人間出版社, 1987), 84.

[21] Ibid., 84.

[22] Anne Whitehead, *Trauma Fiction* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2004), 84

to be executed one at a time. With Zhao dying, their stories disappear with him. Ch'en uses this chapter to remind the reader amid contemporary Taiwan's easy and prosperous society not to forget those victims who disappeared so long ago. This message would clearly have personal implications for Ch'en who was held as a political prisoner from 1968 to 1975. Although his suffering would not have been the same as Zhao Qingyun's, he undoubtedly endured unjust treatment and would have encountered many prisoners like those in "Zhao Nandong." One aspect of oppression that both Ch'en Ying-chen and Zhao Qingyun suffered under was the silence that was enforced upon them and all of Taiwan. This silence was also an important theme in Ch'en's story.

Silence and Repression

> "Yet surely that silence, oh the silence of the military prison on the corner of Chingtao Street East in Taipei in the early 1950s, the silence of the century – hadn't it screamed clamorously of the most turbulent history, of the most ardent dreams and the harshest youth, of a life and death more tempestuous that a million books could ever describe?"[23]

In this sentence Ch'en Ying-chen frankly admits the futility of trying to describe such trauma in words. By nature trauma cannot be fully expressed as it lies beyond normal human experience. The silence is bursting with symbolic meaning, representing so much of Taiwan's suffering. And so much of Taiwan's suffering is due to silence. The silence imposed on the nation during the White Terror prevents the victims from searching for release, even from singing their songs of redemption. The silence also ensures that some of the effects of this trauma will be passed on to the next generation, with the absence of the Zhao family's parents and the impossibility of articulating and explaining the trauma

[23] Ch'en 1991, 72.

they endured or the reasons for why they did what did, and why they suffered as they did. The children were told almost nothing about their parents. They only knew that their mother had "died in a way that cannot be spoken out loud in this society, and their father was locked up on a distant island east of Taiwan."[24] Zhao Erping repeatedly pressures his father to tell of what happened, but Zhao Qingyun is unable to express himself: "I will tell you, I want to tell you... when I'm better I want to tell you about it... the fact is, it's not that I won't talk about it, it's just that... that the whole world has changed. If you talk about the things that happened in those days, who's going to listen to you – and how many people would understand?"[25] Subsequent efforts to explain things to Erping just leave Qingyun frustrated.[26] This inability to explain things to the younger generation and the related frustration is remarkably familiar to the thoughts of Uncle Fu-shou in Tzeng Ching-wen's "Let's Go to New Park to Feed the Fish." Like Tzeng, Ch'en searches for a way to overcome the silence. And stories such as this have that as a central purpose: to educate Taiwan's youth on the history of the island, on the trauma which that generation suffered, and the reasons behind their suffering. Inability to express this to Taiwan's youth may result in a generation unable to understand the sacrifices of their parents. The effects of trauma can be inherited and passed on to children through silence. In "Zhao Nandong" this leads to the children suffering from an absence that possesses them just as trauma possesses any victim. Esther Rashkin, using psychoanalysis in her literary criticism, explains:

> "Should the child have parents 'with secrets' [...] he will receive from them a gap in the unconscious, an unknown, unrecognized knowledge. [...] The buried speech of the parent becomes a dead gap, without a burial place, in the child. This

[24] Ch'en 1987, 34-35.
[25] Ch'en 1991, 74.
[26] Ibid., 79.

> unknown phantom comes back from the unconscious to haunt and leads to phobias, madness and obsession. Its effects can persist through several generations and determine the fate of an entire family line."[27]

Zhao Qingyun and Song Rongxuan's two children deal with the silence and void that it creates in different ways. Battling this "loneliness that has accompanied him since childhood,"[28] Erping pursues success, devoting himself entirely to his studies, then to his work. Despite his troubled background and unfortunate political situation, through complete dedication to his work, he manages to attain a high degree of financial success, yet remains incomplete, never filling the void and escaping his loneliness. Although he manages to find a wife and marry, his commitment to work eventually leads to their separation. It also leads to greed. After Erping's rise in the company's ranks, he "slips into a rich, avaricious and corrupt world."[29] Following his friend Ken Cai's 蔡景暉 lead, Erping begins embezzling company profits, his own greed and corruption representative of the greed and corruption of the Kuomintang, both agents of Western capitalism.

Nandong has the opposite reaction. He cares absolutely nothing for the opportunities given him, nor the sacrifices of others for his benefit. He devotes himself to the pursuit of personal pleasure. People like Zhao Nandong "let their bodies dictate the course of their lives."[30] However, such pursuit finally ends in disaster as, after years of pleasure and ecstasy, he ends up pitifully addicted to glue. Nandong represents the younger generation on Taiwan. This is captured best by his brother's realization: "But who isn't like this? We are all the same. Sometimes I think this entire generation, this entire society has lost its

[27] Anne Whitehead quoting E. Rashkin in Whitehead 2004, 14.
[28] Ch'en 1987, 35.
[29] Ibid., 53.
[30] Ibid., 69.

soul. People are just being led along through their lives by their overactive senses. Ha... It's just that people like my brother don't hide it at all. They don't feel the least bit of shame as they bare themselves and say: I want, I want!"[31] Nandong is just one of many that share in Taiwan's fall to degradation. However, as a bisexual, Zhao Nandong represents the extreme of indulgence.

Bisexuality as a representation of decadence is an unfortunate analogy used by Ch'en in "Zhao Nandong." Zhao Erping unhappily tolerates all of his brother's vices, his drinking, his late nights, his promiscuity, his selfish indifference to others' sacrifice, his aversion to work and his disdain for study. However, when Erping comes home and finds Nandong sound asleep with another naked man, he bursts into the room in a fury, calls the two men scum and beasts and demands that they leave his home.[32] This incident is the final straw, a terrible act that Erping cannot tolerate. This installs bisexuality as the ultimate in decadence, a selfish existence in disregard of societal norms and morals. This is confirmed by Mowei as she discusses her sister's bisexuality with extreme difficulty: "Moli is... she's bisexual. You know? Moli is not like other girls..."[33] Mowei repeats such things numerous times in their conversation, emphasizing her sister's sexuality and promiscuousness over and over again.[34] Also, Ch'en plays into popular stereotypes on the appearance of homosexual and bisexual figures. Nandong is an impossibly beautiful boy, with feminine eyes and soft black hair, who captures everyone's attention.[35] "He's just

[31] Ibid., 70.
[32] Ibid., 48.
[33] Ibid., 69.
[34] Ibid., 69, 70, 71.
[35] Ibid., 42.

like a girl," says one admirer.[36] Moli too, Nandong's counterpart, is an undeniable beauty who entices both women and men.[37] The use of stereotypical bisexuals to symbolize the decadence of Taiwan's contemporary society may be effective in achieving Ch'en's goals for certain audiences. Ch'en is essentially utilizing a stereotypical image of bisexuality to elicit disgust and turn this disgust towards capitalism and colonialism.[38] However, it reinforces negative misconceptions of alternative lifestyles and encourages traditional forms of discrimination. Just as he employs the victims of the 228 Incident and the White Terror to forward his ideological intent, Ch'en victimizes an already marginalized people to symbolize a decadent nation.

Nation and Decadence

The central theme of Zhao Nandong is the ruination of contemporary Taiwan, the nation's quiet, meek fall into the trappings of the modern capitalist society. This is achieved through the use of a complicated web of symbolism: through the use of the medical and healthcare industry as a paradigm for capitalism in its modern forms, often further represented by overtly Occidentalized images of corporate control; and also through the use of a symbolic, and often rural, idyllic past, in opposition to the chaotic concrete jungles of the present.

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[36] Ibid., 41.
[37] Ibid., 70-71.
[38] Chu Wei-ch'eng 朱偉誠 provides a detailed study of this in the unpublished "Dangdai Taiwan Wenxue zhong de Tongxinglian yu Guojia" 當代台灣文學中的同性戀與國家：國族寓言抑或同志國 (The Homosexual Intrigue in Post-War Taiwanese Literature: Queer Nation under the Shadow of National Allegory), presented at the conference *Taiwan Literature and Transcultural Flow* 台灣文學與跨文化流動, October 26, 2006.

The medical industry is an effective analogy for modern capitalism. It is a massive network of highly internationalized conglomerates that feeds off the sick. It cures only those who can pay for its services and is extremely adept at maintaining its power. In "Zhao Nandong" it is a consistently present force. Zhao Nandong's early years were spent initially in the care of the nurse, Ye Chunmei, but mostly in the family of Doctor Lin. However, these figures of a respectable and caring medical system, give way to the powerful medical industry of modern Taiwan that dominates the text, especially as Zhao Qingyun lies in a hospital bed throughout the novella. The introduction to every chapter provides a cold, indifferent report at odds with the warm and very human character of Zhao Qingyun. This medical report represents the indifference of the system that controls the fate of the people. Because his son Erping is so entrenched in this system, Qingyun is able to receive treatment at a cost of 84,000NT$ per week.[39] The average person in Taiwan in 1984, based on the GNP, earned an annual salary of 125,496NT$,[40] would clearly have no means of paying such expensive bills and would remain outside of the system with no access to its benefits.[41] Zhao Erping is able to afford such treatment for his father because of his tremendous financial success. He is more than just a participant in this system as he is a manager for Deissmann Pharmaceuticals, a German medical company that is expanding through Asia. As an agent of Deissmann, Erping is an agent of Western capitalism. He is especially proficient at introducing a new drug to the

[39] Ch'en 1987, 35.
[40] "Statistical Abstract of National Income in Taiwan Area," Directorate-General of Budget, Accounting and Statistics (DGBAS), Executive Yuan, Chinese Taipei (Acquired from http://www.angrin.tlri.gov.tw/apec2003/Chapter6Ap3.pdf on Feb 22, 2007).
[41] This story was written long before Universal National Healthcare was introduced to Taiwan in 1995. Today almost 100% of people on Taiwan are covered by this insurance. Perhaps Ch'en Ying-chen would have to rethink both his arguments and his analogies in present day Taiwan.

Taiwanese market and his success is largely due to this work. The drug "is said to be effective and safe, although has not yet been passed by the American F.D.A."[42] The drug is introduced in 1971, a historic year for Taiwan. In 1971 the Republic of China suffered major blows as Japan shifted official recognition from Taipei to Beijing, the nation lost its UN seat to the People's Republic and the American government supported the handing of the Diaoyutai Islands to Japan. 1971 was also the year in which Erping discovered Nandong sleeping with another man.

As a German company, the Deissmann Pharmaceutical Company represents Western capitalization. A clear distinction is made as Ch'en strives to maintain this force as a foreign, invading power. Foreignization is achieved partially through the confusing corporate structure and stream of foreign names that accompany the introduction of Erping's business.[43] Also, Erping and his colleagues prefer to drink Chivas Regal and celebrate success with tins of imported Canadian bacon.[44] The Westerners are established as the enemy, and Erping as their accomplice and agent through Erping's own actions, as "he pretends not to see Mr. Finegan's knowing and mischievous glances at Nancy,"[45] the local secretary and lover of his friend Ken Cai.[46] This use of the West as a simple metaphor occurs in numerous short stories written by Ch'en Ying-chen and corresponds well with what Chen Xiaomei calls official Occidentalism, images of the West propagated by the communist government and its supporters in order to influence

[42] Ibid., 44.
[43] Ibid., 38.
[44] Ibid., 36, 39.
[45] Ibid., 37.
[46] The role of the agent for Western capitalism and this scenario of the foreign manager and local secretary in particular are highly reminiscent of the plot of "Night Freight" from Chen's 1970s' "Washington Building" series.

and control the Chinese people.[47] However, as Ch'en Ying-chen is writing from Taiwan, his work operates as a counter-discourse to the 'official Occidentalism' of the government of the Republic of China. His efforts are intended to dispute the image of a liberating West in favour of his understanding of the dangerous enemy of a capitalist West. This image of the West, this enemy and corrupting power, is well-linked to the character of Zhao Nandong with the flow of Erping's thoughts:

> "Zhao Erping casually switched the television channel and began eating his dinner. On the screen was the broadcast of an American television program. A tall, handsome American man, wearing a dark black suit, a snow white shirt, a deep red bowtie...
>
> He thought of his little brother, Zhao Nandong."[48]

This seemingly random train of thought expresses a cause and effect relationship between the dominating Western powers and the ruination of contemporary Taiwanese society, represented by the American and Zhao Nandong respectively. This mirrors Zhao Qingyun's own realization about America. During the early stages of the Korean War, as the United States Seventh Fleet prepared to enter the war, Zhao considered that "Because America is after all a nation nobly approaching democracy, perhaps they will force the lightening of, or even removal of harsh penalties towards political crimes."[49] However, years later, as he lies in the hospital bed in Taipei, he says to his dead friend who plays chess by his bedside: "It wasn't until ten years later that I could see the matter clearly. All of those massacres and imprisonments had everything to do with the so-respected America and the forty years of post-war freedom and democracy that it has enjoyed."[50] This strong, contentious statement clearly displays the character's hatred of America,

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[47] Xiaomei Chen, *Occidentalism: A Theory of Counter-Discourse in Post-Mao China* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 3-26.
[48] Ch'en 1987, 55.
[49] Ibid., 79.
[50] Ibid., 80.

squarely places the blame for many of Taiwan's troubles and essentially relegates the Kuomintang to the mere position of America's agent in suppressing communism.

The enemy that Ch'en Ying-chen has limned in "Zhao Nandong," the great powers of capitalism that have held such strong influence over Taiwan, are also clearly apparent in the imagery of the story. The conflict of traditional society, often represented by the rural areas or in images of the past, in opposition with the commercialized urban centres that dominated contemporary Taiwan is a dichotomy that exists in many of Ch'en's works. Escaping from the soulless decadence of the city is an important lesson that his characters often learn, and symbolizes hope for the future in a rejection of the modern realities. This is a persistent symbol in Ch'en's fiction that strongly ties his work to the discourses of Nativism that provided one of the dominating ideologies of Taiwan fiction in the 1960s and 1970s, and of which Ch'en Ying-chen was a prominent figure. The drastic changes that occur in Taiwan while the characters are in prison are strongly emphasized, as they must have been radical transformations in the eyes of those in prison, while they appeared as a gradual evolution to most people in Taiwan. Naturally this would have mirrored Ch'en's own experiences when he was released from prison in 1975. During these years Taiwan's cities were thrown together hastily and have created a never-ending chain of cement boxes that stretch right across the island. For Zhao Qingyun, released under the general amnesty after Chiang Kai-shek's death in 1975, "Througout the city of Taipei, the only things he had recognized immediately were the red-brick presidential palace, seemingly ever-lasting, and New Park, which he had crossed alone on the crisp

cold morning of the day following the 28 February Incident in 1947."[51] All that remains of the city he had known are the presidential palace, a symbol of the long-lasting dominance and oppression that has been inflicted upon the people of Taiwan from various regimes, and New Park, the symbolic setting of the 228 Incident and itself a symbol of the inequalities and injustices on the island. Ye Chunmei's own experiences mirror those of Zhao Qingyun. However, Ye does not return to Taipei, she returns to the rural township of Shiding, and the force behind the changes to the society are better revealed:

> "After she returned to [Shiding] in 1975 whenever she walked along the little street where the Japanese-style wood-frame post office had once stood so prominently, Ye Chunmei would feel dispirited, as though someone had played a cruel trick on her. In the twenty-five years she had been away, the whole of the mountain town of Shiding had changed: it was as though some malevolent sorcerer had changed the face of each road, each tree, each little lane which the people held dear, all the while putting on a show of nonchalance and innocence."[52]

This 'malevolent sorcerer,' the capitalism of the West and the Kuomintang, changed every aspect of the lives of the people. It was able to have such an uncontested run in Taiwan because of its effective silencing of the people.

Other settings in the story support this control over Taiwan. The hospital, as explained above, is a part of the medical industry and capitalist system. The airport with its regular announcements sounding out over Zhao Erping and Mowei's conversations about Zhao Nandong, is another cold, indifferent setting and an important gate for the influx of globalization. The hotel rooms that Zhao Erping stays in are further symbols of the foreignization of Taiwan. And finally there are the prisons, and especially Green Island,

[51] Ch'en 1991, 74.
[52] Ibid., 78.

the notorious home of Taiwan's many political prisoners silenced during the White Terror for their beliefs, which were often in opposition to capitalist systems, or the governments that represented them. Green Island is mentioned many times throughout the text, sometimes using its current name, Green Island, sometimes using its former name, Fire-Burned Island, and sometimes simply as 'a distant island East of Taiwan."[53] Green Island is an important symbol of the White Terror, and it is where Ch'en Ying-chen spent seven years imprisoned because of his involvement in a Marxist study group. Today, part of the prison has been transformed into an excellent human rights museum, and remains an important reminder of Taiwan's White Terror and the silencing of thousands of voices.

Conclusion

The texts differ in scope and complexity. One of the main reasons "Zhao Nandong" failed to find the success that "Mountain Path" received was the time in which it was published. There was considerably more freedom in 1987 than in 1984 to write about subjects such as this, so Ch'en has lost the brave and pioneering edge that he had with "Mountain Path." The emphasis of communism is so much stronger in "Zhao Nandong" that one may worry that Ch'en is rewriting Taiwan's history with just another gross exaggeration. The problems with communism on the mainland, all too obvious by 1987 with Deng's introduction of "socialism with Chinese characteristics," would surely have left most Taiwanese uninterested in Ch'en's ideology. Also, the successes of the DPP and the open rise of Taiwanese nationalism left little sentiment for unification. When the rest

[53] Ch'en 1987, 35.

of Taiwan was looking forward, critics would have found Ch'en looking backward. Furthermore, both the symbolism and the message in "Zhao Nandong" *seem* to be regurgitated from Ch'en's previous fiction, especially "Mountain Path" and the "Washington Building Series," although "Zhao Nandong" is a more complex and far-reaching work, concentrating more on the generation that is inheriting Taiwan amidst this silence. Ch'en's frustration and confusion with modern Taiwan seem all too familiar to those in the postmodern or postcolonial setting, and his dreams of a unified China in particular did not help him to retain the respect he once received in Taiwan. However, Ch'en Ying-chen is still highly respected for his involvement in the Nativism movement, and is widely considered to be one of the most influential writers from Taiwan. David Der-wei Wang calls Ch'en Ying-chen "one of the most important political fiction writers from Taiwan."[54] Whether one agrees with his politics or not, the influence of his work and his brave efforts to break the silence of Taiwan's White Terror must be admired.

The silence in "Mountain Path" and "Zhao Nandong" is a dangerous weapon of capitalism and globalization, actuated by the Kuomintang to quell the heroic voices of Taiwan and threatening to destroy all memory of their sacrifices, as it denies history and impels the people towards a bourgeois existence of consumption. These texts also provide an important counter-discourse to the prevalent history provided by the Kuomintang in an effort to disrupt the silence of the White Terror. This silence, and the need to bring an end to it, is a strong theme throughout the texts. However, Ch'en also explains the complexity of this. Even without the oppression of the government, it is

[54] David Der-wei Wang, "Three Hungry Women" *Boundary 2* 25.3, Modern Chinese Literary and Cultural Studies in the Age of Theory: Reimagining a Field. (Autumn, 1998): 66.

difficult to talk about the past. Such trauma can never be fully expressed by its victims, and, with decades of silence compounding and extending these difficulties, there is a tremendous loss and absence present in Taiwan's society. This wound, coupled with the forces of capitalism, propels people like Li Guomu and Zhao Erping to devote themselves to profit and 'progress' in a denial of the past. This silence and denial leads to tragedy, the tragedy that the victims will be forgotten and the trauma and suffering of those like Li Guokun and Zhao Qingyun will be in vain. However, in Ch'en's ideological attack on capitalism and his glorification of socialist revolutionaries, Ch'en marginalizes the thousands of other victims their place in history and their possession of the 228 Incident and the White Terror. Ch'en's quest for nation mythologizes these events in just the sort of defined representation that Li Ang questions the validity of in "Rouged Sacrifice."

Chapter Four

The Other: Disputing Possession of the 228 Incident in Li Ang's "Rouged Sacrifice"

Of the authors examined in this thesis, Li Ang (李昂 1952~) is certainly the best known in the West. Although she has been active in the world of Taiwan literature for nearly four decades, it was her short novel, *The Butcher's Wife* (殺夫 *Sha Fu* 1983), that brought her critical acclaim and a wide reading audience in its English version, translated by Howard Goldblatt. Due to its sensational style, and especially its graphic portrayal of sex, Li Ang became probably the most controversial woman writing in Chinese.[1] The text to be analyzed in this chapter "Rouged Sacrifice" (彩妝血祭 "Cai Zhuang Xie Ji")[2], first published in the collection *Everybody Puts Their Joss Sticks in the Beigang Incense Burner* (北港香爐人人插 *Beigang Xiang Lu Ren Ren Cha* 1997), continues with the aggressive style and message that Li Ang has established in her writing. In "Rouged Sacrifice" Li Ang utilizes the gravity of the trauma related to Taiwan's 228 Incident to examine the repression of marginalized groups in Taiwan. Through the employment of postmodernist narrative techniques, specifically in relation to Bertolt Brecht, Li presents this repression in a dialectical form, enabling the reader to critically consider the themes

[1] Sheung-Yuen Daisy Ng, "Feminism in the Chinese Context: Li Ang's *The Butcher's Wife*," in *Gender Politics in Modern China: Writing and Feminism* ed. Tani E. Barlow, 266 (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1993).

[2] Liou Liang-ya 劉亮雅 has translated the title as "Rouged Sacrifice," while Yang Tsui 楊翠 has chosen to use "Colorful Makeup of Bloody Ceremony" for the English titles of their Chinese works on the story. There is not yet any published English translation of the text.

presented in the text, as well as postulate on the process of representing an event such as the 228 Incident amid the distortions that continue to cloud our understanding of the past.

"Rouged Sacrifice" is about the trauma and suffering that have extended from the time of the 228 Incident to the present day. Li Ang sets her story in 1997, on the fiftieth anniversary of the 228 Incident, examines the memory of trauma and questions how the incident is represented through the two central characters of Wang Mama (王媽媽) and 'the female writer'(女作家). Wang Mama is a victim of the 228 Incident. On her wedding night, fifty years ago, military police arrived at her home and took away her new groom to be executed. However, on the day of this special commemoration for the victims of 228, Wang Mama is coming to terms with her son's homosexuality and the remorse she feels for causing him suffering, as she has not spoken to him from the day she discovered that he was a transvestite. The conflict experienced by 'the female writer' is quite different. Her seemingly reluctant cooperation in the creation of a documentary about the 228 Incident is connected to her fear of being 'marked' for victimization, and reveals questions in the representation of and need for commemoration of this trauma in modern society.

Commemoration of the 228 Incident

In "Rouged Sacrifice," Li Ang stresses the importance of the 228 Incident as an event that has left its mark on all of Taiwan, and something that must be publicly

commemorated in order to deal with the pain in the nation's collective memory and mark an end to the lies and repression of the past fifty years. At the same time, she questions the effectiveness of doing so. "Lin Jiangmai, the lady selling cigarettes at the beginning of the Incident, exists in everyone's heart."[3] The event touched everybody in Taiwan, even if they were not at all involved. Li Ang expresses this at the beginning of the story through the priest's recitation of a line out of the bible: "And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member is honoured, all the members rejoice with it."[4] This trauma was never dealt with. The suffering has gone on in silence for fifty years. Li Ang repeats "fifty years" over and over through the story, emphasizing the absurdness of this continued suffering, and the importance of finally bringing an end to this period and beginning the process of spiritual healing. These ghosts have been wandering for fifty years, and the ceremonies of the day represent an important step in laying them to rest and marking an end to the repression that began with those massacres. The master of ceremonies explains this in his speech:

> "In the last fifty years, this is the first time that we have been able to publicly pay our respects to the victims of 228, those tens of thousands of wronged souls will never again have to bear all manner of unfounded accusations. We will confront the true face of history, wash away the injustices and bear witness to the unavoidable misery of a Taiwan controlled by outsiders. We, acting as the family of the victims, can finally publicly and formally speak out about this misery that was hidden for fifty years. There is no more need to pretend again, no more need to speak lies and act as though this never happened, as though our family were not murdered and imprisoned; no more need to say that our hearts are not broken, that we are not aggrieved, that we are not in pain. Tonight, we can finally loudly cry out our misery and our tears of blood. Tonight represents an end to the lies and

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[3] Li Ang 李昂, "Cai Zhuang Xie ji" 彩妝血祭 (Rouged Sacrifice), in *Wu Yu de Chuntian: Ererba Xiaoshuo Xuan* 無語的春天——二二八小說選 (Silent Spring: Selected 228 Fiction), ed. Hsu Chun-ya 許俊雅, 248 (Taipei: Yushan She 玉山社, 2003). All translations from this story are my own.

[4] Li Ang 2003, 238-239, quoting Corinthians 12:26.

> the beginning of openness. We must persevere in establishing a new era, an era in which the Taiwanese are the masters and never again suffer under oppression..."[5]

This return to truth and redemption for the victims of 228 is symbolized through the releasing of lanterns onto the river that once ran red with blood. From the religious perspective, this symbolic event is necessary to release the ghosts from the corporeal world. However, it is the end of the lies and repression that bring an end to the continued suffering of victims, and to the marking and making of new victims. Although Wang Mama has already given her son this release in her own way just moments before, she joins the others at the ceremony for this symbolic event. However, in addition to the names of her husband and brother-in-law, Wang writes her own name and that of her son, clearly indicating that they too were victims. Only with the end of these fifty years of silence and repression can their souls be free. After setting the lantern on the water, Wang jumps into the river herself. When she is pulled from the water, she is not breathing. However, "her eyes were closed serenely and, in the corners of her mouth, barely discernable, was the hint of a smile,"[6] indicating that her death was an act of long-awaited release. With this final release she is freed from her suffering, just as the ghosts of the 228 Incident may finally find freedom with their vindication and the end of the era of injustice. Wang Mama and the other victims of Kuomintang repression can finally rest in peace.

Making up History

[5] Ibid., 276-277.
[6] Ibid., 280.

History is made up. Or covered up. Throughout "Rouged Sacrifice," makeup is the dominant symbolism. This is evident in the title itself: Cai Zhuang means 'bright makeup;' while Xie Ji means 'offering of blood.' "Cai Zhuang Xie Ji" may then be fully translated as "A Blood Offering in Beautiful Makeup." The makeup in "Rouged Sacrifice" symbolizes the ineffectual covering up of history that persists in obscuring the truth of the past. It is the silencing of the people and the past, and especially the silencing and repression of women and other subaltern in Taiwan. The oppressive history of Kuomintang rule of Taiwan, particularly the 228 Incident and the period of White Terror, were covered up by this dominating force. The prohibition of any talk or acknowledgement of these events, the oppressive silence administered by the Kuomintang, is here presented as a cover-up, just as makeup covers the true face of any person. Li Ang's use of makeup as symbolism creates a complicated web connecting the central characters of the text.

Near both the beginning and the end of the story, Li Ang uses the strong image of a woman sewing up her husband's face, riddled with bullets in the violence of the 228 Incident. Li goes into horrific detail describing the process of sewing the face, creating a false eye from ground rice, applying the woman's own makeup to cover up the stitches and then taking photographs from many different angles. This powerful image shows the trauma experienced by women during this time, reminding the reader that the victims were not only male, that the wives and mothers of many men went on with their suffering long after the incident. The image also introduces makeup as a symbol, showing its power to deny and alter. This symbolism continues throughout the text.

The female writer, who has come to take part in a documentary on the commemoration of the 228 Incident, rejects the application of makeup for the filming. She feels uncomfortable with the makeup, but in the end she has no choice. The makeup artist is aggressive and firm in her demand to paint the writer's face. As a writer, and as a part of the documentary, the female writer is a medium between the victims and the people. She is responsible for conveying the victims' trauma, educating Taiwan on this history and reflecting the past. She is always referred to as the 'female writer,' making her position clear, but also allowing for Li Ang to question her own representation of history within the work itself. The application of this makeup creates distance between the reality and the representation. The female writer must represent this trauma in a covered or distorted face, with painted red lips, as though she had been drinking blood. Efforts to remove the makeup are wasted as the job has been done well and the makeup will not come off easily. When the female writer realizes she cannot remove the makeup, even after the makeup artist's death, she becomes horror stricken. The effects of such a cover-up are apparently long-lasting and will even colour representations long after the oppressors have gone. This is an effective approach that Li Ang uses to question her own ability to properly represent the facts of Taiwan's history, while also criticizing the long-lasting repression by the Kuomintang.

As the distorter, the one who hides the true face, the makeup artist symbolizes the Kuomintang efforts to do away with the true face of history. Her aggression and dominating character lead to terrible remarks about the victims of Kuomintang

oppression: "Wow! Are you ever stubborn. Just like those characters in the photos!"[7] She refers to the photos of the deceased that are being presented at the commemoration ceremony. Her sudden death does not mean an end to the rewriting of history, as her distorting effects are difficult to erase and remain after her death, just as the effects of the doctoring of history has remained after the lifting of martial law in 1987. The makeup, the lies, and the repression of the period of White Terror continue to distort history and must be brought to an end. Realizing this, the writer struggles to remove her makeup, lest she be dragged down by the souls of the victims: "Goosebumps rose on her skin as the female writer rubbed at her face, hoping to wipe away the makeup. If those who had their makeup done by that dead makeup artist have died, such as the bride, waiting for death with finished makeup, the rouged Lin Jiangmai and Chen Wenxi, shot dead while surrounded by a group of watching people, then she too, with her face painted, is an image of death?"[8]

Another person to wear the makeup artist's rouge is the actress hired to play the part of Lin Jiangmai, the poor old woman who was selling contraband cigarettes on Yanping Road and suffered the first blow of the 228 Incident when a monopoly investigation officer hit her in the head with his pistol. The actress is a perfect representation of Lin Jiangmai. She is dressed in the clothes, conical hat, wooden shoes and even the 'Japanese flag'-like rouged cheeks that were popular at the time, "yet she is not at all Lin Jiangmai... Lin Jiangmai, that woman who sold cigarettes at dusk fifty years before, and had her head cracked by that Mainlander investigator from China, is in everyone's

[7] Ibid., 239.
[8] Ibid., 272.

heart."[9] Hoping to represent Lin by applying makeup to an actress in an anachronistic effort as Lin's influence is much larger than that woman selling cigarettes on the street in 1947. Her symbolic power has expanded to larger-than-life status. The makeup is still very revealing though. Li's description of the rouge as a "Japanese flag" reminds the reader of the mark of colonialism still then silently present on the faces of that generation. Japan did have its part in the make up of Taiwan's history.

In the story that is running parallel to the female writer's narrative, Wang Mama, whose husband was executed in relation to the 228 Incident, becomes the one to apply the makeup in a fascinating story that reveals the complexity of Li Ang's work and of the symbolism of makeup. On the evening of the fiftieth anniversary of the 228 Incident, as the sound of the marching people floats into her room, Wang Mama comes to terms with her recently deceased son's homosexuality, and offers him release from oppression, by opening up his coffin and methodically changing his appearance to that of a woman. The descriptions of her actions are macabre and sensational as she works with the stiff corpse to apply layers of makeup and remove his suit to replace it with the *yakuda* (traditional Japanese nightgown) she wore on her wedding night. This application of makeup is important for Wang Mama as she struggles with the makeup she herself wears: She is made up as "love and caring... brave, persevering and selfless Wang Mama. Wherever she goes, there is the loving, tolerant, supportive and patient Wang Mama."[10] However, she herself knows the suffering her hatred and homophobia have caused her own son.

[9] Ibid., 248.
[10] Ibid., 262.

In contrast with the symbolism of makeup earlier in "Rouged Sacrifice," in this section the makeup serves to redeem Wang Mama by indicating her acceptance of her son's homosexuality. The makeup symbolizes, not the repression and the censorship of the Kuomintang, but the opposite: tolerance, acceptance and opposition to suffering. With her son's death, Wang Mama has clearly realized that her actions have caused him terrible suffering, and this is the last opportunity she has to make some sort of amends. This application of the makeup is intended to liberate her son. After completing the transformation, she hammers the final nails into the coffin as she shouts: "Go in peace! You don't need to pretend anymore."[11] The action of applying the makeup is actually its symbolic opposite; it is the removal of the deception and lies her son has been living with all his life. This act gives her son freedom of expression and it denies the societal repression that has pressured her son to hide his life in hidden gay bars and the shadows of New Park. Without his makeup, he is unable to fully represent himself. When Wang Mama first discovered him putting on makeup, he was only halfway through the application: "With his lipstick only on the top lip, and his efforts to smear it outwards clearly lacking, the upper lip was made to protrude unevenly. Without lipstick applied to his lower lip, it was as if his mouth was hanging open, forever searching for its missing half, unable to utter any words or project any voice."[12] Her son's freedom of expression is clearly important to her. Although she personally does not like the way he wears makeup, even finding his "Japanese flag"-like rouge to be disgusting, she still strives to allow him to appear as he wanted himself. This is a strong statement about tolerance and expression, fighting for a person's freedom in disregard of one's own preference. As

[11] Ibid., 268.
[12] Ibid., 259.

Wang Mama covers her son in makeup, she alters his physical appearance to suit the gender that she believes he wants.

In "Rouged Sacrifice" Li Ang enlists the relationship between Wang Mama's son and a former Kuomintang federal agent (情治人員) to symbolize the violent breaking of trust between the Kuomintang and the Taiwanese people. Many writers have sexualized Taiwan's international relations, and some have even used homosexual relationships, most famously in Pai Hsien-yung's 白先勇 *Crystal Boys* (孽子 1983). However, Li goes far beyond this by using the sexual abuse of a child to portray the violence inflicted by the Kuomintang upon the innocent victims of Taiwan. This is an effective and shocking metaphor, limning the victims of the 228 Incident as completely innocent and the Kuomintang perpetrators as despicable perverts.

Through the use of symbolism and narrative, Li Ang has managed to associate the victims of Kuomintang violence and victims of child sexual abuse. This is an interesting attack on the oppression and repression that exists in contemporary society. However, the implications raised and stereotypes followed in this text are quite possibly destructive. Li Ang's description of the partners of Wang Mama's grown son as "stout and strong middle-aged or older men,"[13] the same words used to describe the former federal agent,[14] distinctly implies a connection to the abuse in his childhood. This insinuates that homosexuality is a result of sexual abuse. Although Li Ang's sensational style benefits

[13] Ibid., 261.
[14] Ibid., 243.

from the image of an aging mother dressing the corpse of her transvestite son, her story runs the danger of reinforcing stereotypes about homosexual binaries of masculine and feminine that are still common in Taiwan. That Wang Mama's son dies from a sexually transmitted disease that he has contracted is also an unfortunate stereotype in a society where the homosexual community has long been more vigilante than the rest of the masses about the importance of safe sex. Chu Wei-ch'eng 朱偉誠, in his as yet unpublished paper "The Homosexual Intrigue in Post-War Taiwanese Literature," argues that Li Ang presents homosexuality as the 'unspeakable,' and a secret that Wang Mama must take to her grave in shame. [15] This argument does have foundation. However, there is a contradiction apparent here. Although it is easy to see the side of "Rouged Sacrifice" that is detrimental to conceptions of homosexuality, Li Ang is clearly making an effort to attack the repression faced by many homosexual and transgendered people in Taiwan. This contradiction is an important component in Li Ang's dialectical form. By presenting opposing sides, ambiguous symbolism, and contradictions within her work, Li Ang inspires debate on her fiction, and encourages critical thought, much the same as Bertolt Brecht did with his dialectical style in Epic Theatre.

The Dialectics of "Rouged Sacrifice"

[15] Chu Wei-ch'eng 朱偉誠 "Dangdai Taiwan Wenxue zhong de Tongxinglian yu Guojia" 當代台灣文學中的同性戀與國家：國族寓言抑或同志國 (The Homosexual Intrigue in Post-War Taiwanese Literature: Queer Nation under the Shadow of National Allegory), presented at the conference *Taiwan Literature and Transcultural Flow* 台灣文學與跨文化流動, October 26, 2006.

The text "Rouged Sacrifice" is echoed internally with the filming of a documentary on the 228 Incident that tries to instigate dialogue. The narrator's comments on this documentary reveal questions on efforts to reflect such an event, but also hint at Li Ang's purpose and form in "Rouged Sacrifice." "The director responsible for making the film was clearly an admirer or Brecht's well-known 'Epic Theatre,' (He had once conducted research in Germany's School of Dramatology)"[16] comments the narrator. However, it is Li Ang that is using mid-twentieth century German writer/director Bertolt Brecht's 'epic' form throughout "Rouged Sacrifice." She surely would have been very familiar with Brecht's work when she was an MA student in the Department of Drama at University of Oregon in the late 1970s. Li Ang uses elements of "Epic Theatre," especially Brecht's concept of 'Verfremdungseffekt' in order to remove the reader from the emotional immersion of realism and to confront and provoke the reader to question and consider the issues present in her work.

In opposing the naturalism that had long dominated European drama in the twentieth century, Brecht developed the device of Verfremdungseffekt (V-effect), often translated as "estrangement, alienation or disillusion."[17] As John Willett, the foremost Brecht translator and scholar, explains:

> "'Verfremdung,' in fact, is not simply the breaking of illusion (though that is one means to the end); and it does not mean 'alienating' the spectator in the sense of making him hostile to the play. It is a matter of detachment, of reorientation... The value of this conception for Brecht was that it offered a new way of judging and explaining those means of achieving critical detachment which he had hitherto called 'epic.'"[18]

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[16] Li Ang 2003, 245.
[17] John Willet, *The Theatre of Bertolt Brecht: A Study from Eight Aspects* (London: Methuen Drama, 1977) 177.
[18] Ibid.

Li achieves this effect through her sensational, almost absurd, plot and through her disorienting technique of narrative interjection. Scenes such as the woman's stitching of her husband's face, and the dressing and make up of Wang Mama's dead son are macabre images of intensely moving subject matter. However, both the intensity of the images and the interruptions in narrative push the reader to greater alienation. Throughout "Rouged Sacrifice" there are interjections by a second or 'meta'-narrator who appears to be above or outside the text. This narrator indirectly reminds the reader that this is a text to be considered critically, while also directly reminding the reader of the importance of the events and providing background of the 'real' historical events. As Peter Brooker explains, in Epic Theatre "the narrator or narrative function was made explicit and narrative progressed, not in a continuous linear direction, but in a montage of 'curves and jumps' –dialectically, in other words."[19] This is just the explicit nature of the meta-narrator in Li's work. By guiding and commentating, the narrator creates distance between the reader and the plot to encourage a critical approach.

The establishment of a dialectical relationship within the narration(s) of the text and between the text and the reader produces the critical approach Li aims for towards her intended agenda of dialogue on the repression of women and homosexual/transgendered people in Taiwan. The former of these is made clear early in the text with the meta-narrator's insertion of the character 她 (*ta* - the pronoun she) into the base level narration. The repeated insertion of this character corrects all instances of male/neutral third person

[19] Peter Brooker, "Key Words in Brecht's Theory and Practice of Theatre," in *The Cambridge Companion to Brecht*, eds. Peter Thomson and Glendyr Sacks (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 190.

plural pronouns to the feminine third person plural. The frequent repetition of this correction unequivocally asserts that this is to be read as a feminist text; that the victims in question are the forgotten female victims of the Kuomintang violence symbolized and concentrated in the massacres of the 228 Incident that left the country with tens of thousands of mourning widows and mothers. The reader cannot then fail to notice that all of the important characters in this text are female, with the sole arguable exception of Wang Mama's transvestite son. This form and its effect are highly reminiscent of Brecht's 'Epic Theatre.' Epic Theatre "sought to produce a knowledge of the 'causal laws of development,' to divide rather than unify its audience, to intervene in and so transform ideas and attitudes."[20] Li used Epic Theatre's Verfremdungseffekt to 'transform ideas and attitudes' by her narrative idiosyncrasies, but also through the establishment of symbolic and ideological contradictions within the text. By providing contradicting perspectives on dominant theories within the text, the author initiates dialogue and provokes debate between reader and text, and reader and reader. Li Ang intends for "Rouged Sacrifice" as a work of social criticism to bring the matter of the repression and marginalization of women and homosexuals/transgendered to the forefront. In order to do this she utilizes the symbolism of makeup as both repression and liberation. Also, she pursues an end of repression to homosexuals/transgendered within her text, while blatantly promoting common and detrimental absurd stereotypes of homosexual and transgendered people in Taiwan. As Brooker explains, "the task of the V-effect... is to reveal a suppressed or unconsidered alternative; to show the possibilities for change implicit in difference and contradiction."[21] Li uses these contradictions as instances of dialectical opposition, in

[20] Ibid., 189.
[21] Ibid., 194.

which the reader is prompted, through a critical examination of the text, to reach a conclusion or possibility within the dialogue.

"Rouged Sacrifice" as Postcolonial Trauma?

Li Ang's approach of establishing a dialectical narrative to allow the reader to critically examine the issues presented is an effective method of writing against the hegemonic centre of power. However, in "Rouged Sacrifice" the appropriateness of the term postcolonial is questionable, as it may detract from the intent of the story to call into question existing and continued social repression, not just that of the White Terror/colonial period. Chiu Kuei-fen explains that, "The indiscriminate and inappropriate use of this narrative will often lead to the sacrifice of a work's originality and richness."[22] Li Ang has written this text with the unmistakable ambition of recognizing the female victims of colonial violence, indicating a response to a male-centered postcolonial, in which the victims are immediately men, and the female victims are marginalized to the point where they are forgotten. This is a recognition of voices that have gone unheard before as they are a subaltern group who found themselves having neither a place in the centre, nor its opposition. These women had no power, no agency, and were generally discounted in the colonial dichotomy. Again, Chiu Kuei-fen's words best describe the situation of colonialism in Taiwan: "We often say that Taiwan literature's specialty (which is also Taiwan literature's Taiwan-ness) is 'anti-colonialism,' 'anti-feudalism,' or 'anti-authoritarianism,' often emphasizing the colonized or oppressed

[22] Chiu Kuei-fen 邱貴芬, *Houzhimin ji Qiwai* 後殖民及其外 (Rethinking postcolonial literary criticism in Taiwan), (Taipei: Maitian Chuban 麥田出版, 2003), 120.

situation. However, occupying this 'colonized' position is often 'native' (no matter Fujianese, Hakka or Aboriginal) men."[23] However, "Rouged Sacrifice" gives a voice to these victims, thereby including them within postcolonialism. Although the label postcolonialism can plausibly be affixed to Li Ang's work, and the use of postcolonial theory may help in some readings, such as subaltern studies, it does not at all represent the complexity concealed in "Rouged Sacrifice."

As a work of trauma fiction, "Rouged Sacrifice" is clearly more suitable. The text is intended as one of the "fictional narratives that help readers to access traumatic experience,"[24] albeit seen from the perspective of, and laden with the agenda of, Li Ang's social consciousness. "Rouged Sacrifice" deliberately exposes the reader to the trauma of Kuomintang violence on Taiwan through female survivors such as Wang Mama and the woman who must stitch up her husband's face. This is in order to help readers access these traumatic experiences and critically consider them. "Rouged Sacrifice" also fits within Anne Whitehead's three key features of trauma narratives: "Intertextuality, repetition, and a dispersed or fragmented narrative voice."[25] 'Intertextuality,'[26] is evident in "Rouged Sacrifice" with the presence of the nostalgic Taiwanese folk song, "Homeland at Dusk" (黃昏的故鄉), that appears throughout the text, marking the story with an ethnic tag and establishing an emotional atmosphere, and also with the filming of the Brecht-inspired documentary of the 228 Incident. Through this Li Ang comments on

[23] Ibid., 136.
[24] Laurie Vickroy, *Trauma and Survival in Contemporary Fiction* (Charlottesville and London: University of Virginia Press, 2002), 1.
[25] Anne Whitehead, *Trauma Fiction* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2004), 84.
[26] What Whitehead calls 'intertextuality' is often merely intertextual referencing.

all representations of the 228 Incident and the makeup they wear. Repetition is also present in "Rouged Sacrifice." The repetition of the woman's stitching of her husband's face,[27] the repetition of the insertion of the pronoun 'she' (她),[28] and the repetition of the words 'fifty years,'[29] reinforce the central message of the text, but also suggest the workings of the traumatized mind, still possessed and suffering with the memory of these events, and the marginalization of these women, after fifty years of repression, just as Wang Mama is possessed and suffers until her release. However, perhaps the most persistent repetition in the text is the symbolism of makeup. This clearly indicates an obsession, as the makeup, the repression of these fifty years, stretches out to mark all characters. Whitehead's final element of trauma fiction, "a dispensed or fragmented narrative voice," is also clear in Li's work as the layers of narrative provide the Verfremdungseffekt. Li Ang uses this narrative technique to achieve results similar to Brecht's Epic Theatre, yet it also conveys the disjointed thought processes caused by such trauma.

That "Rouged Sacrifice" contains all three of Whitehead's elements of fiction trauma, while the other texts analyzed in this thesis do not, does not indicate that they are any less narratives on trauma. In addition to gender, an important difference between Li Ang and the two male writers analyzed here is her education abroad. Li Ang was educated in the United States at University of Oregon. She states herself that, "My life changed tremendously when I went to the United States. My 'eyes were opened' for the first

[27] Repeated on pages 233-234 and 273-274.
[28] Repeated eight times on pages 236-237.
[29] Repeated on pages 233, 234, 235, 236, 238, 24, 248, 250, 252, 261, 271, 275, 276, 278.

time."[30] Of course Li is speaking primarily of her introduction to feminism, but her eyes were also opened to the currents of postmodernism that were beginning to take form at that time. As a professor at Chinese Culture University in Taipei, she has kept up with current trends in world literature and shown the influence of an elusive postmodern narrative style, postmodernism, according to Whitehead, being one of the precursors of trauma fiction.[31] Not surprisingly Whitehead's (and others') framework of trauma fiction is established upon English and American writers, such as Pat Barker and Toni Morrison.

Conclusion

"Rouged Sacrifice" is about the postcolonial trauma that Taiwan has suffered under as a result of the 228 Incident and the White Terror. However, while establishing the importance of the memory and commemoration of this violence fifty years later, Li Ang also draws connections between this ethnic and political repression, the repression of women and the ongoing repression of homosexual and transgendered people. This is achieved primarily through the symbolism of makeup, which represents both repression and liberation. Like other 228 fiction, "Rouged Sacrifice" is about the victims and their suffering. However, Li Ang utilizes the symbolic power of the 228 Incident to consider the repression of victims across all of Taiwan society who continue to wear makeup and hide their true selves. Such an effort democratizes ownership of the incident, elicits empathy and spreads possession of the trauma to everyone.

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[30] Li Ang, "Protest of a Woman Author against Reckless Accusations: Another Self-Interview, This Time from Taibei," translated by Pu-mei Leng in *Modern Chinese Writers: Self-Portrayals*, eds.Helmut Martin and Jeffrey Kinkley, 256 (London and New York: M.E. Sharpe, 1992).
[31] Whitehead 2004, 81.

What makes "Rouged Sacrifice" exemplary as a work of 228 fiction, is its promotion of dialogue, which is achieved through the use of Brecht's Epic Theatre device, Verfremdungseffekt, and through the use of a text within a text. By breaking the illusion of realism, Verfremdungseffekt encourages the reader to view the text critically and to consider the possibilities presented by the complex and sometimes contradicting theme, the victimization of marginalized groups. Li Ang's use of the documentary as a text within a text and the character of the female writer also encourage the reader to consider the actual creation of the representations of 228, how it is constructed, who is dressing it up and why. In the final scene of the story, as Wang Mama's lantern floats away on the river of life, the cameraman realizes that the light of this lantern, this individual life, does not shine brightly enough to be captured on film. The questions put forth by such a presentation are important to ask during the politicization and continued mythologization of these events, as Brecht explains: "Thinking above the flow of the play is more important than thinking from within the flow of the play."[32]

[32] Bertolt Brecht, quoted in Williams 1952, 281.

Conclusion

The symbolic significance of the 228 Incident lies in its ability to make known the terrible human tragedy that we can inflict upon each other: Thousands of people died unjust deaths during the 228 Incident and the White Terror; Hundreds of thousands lived on as victims burdened with the memory, the silence and the pain; and an entire nation must now try to understand, soothe and find resolution on the conflict that still persists over this trauma. For the mythologizers that vie for political power in Taipei, the incident is largely about fixing responsibility. Although there surely exists 228 fiction that emphasizes this as well, most of these texts, and all of the stories analyzed here, concentrate more on the victims than the perpetrators. Differences in the author's intent necessarily create a different emphasis and many texts move this away from the victims. The concentration of such texts is still the victims, but other ideological agendas may remove them from the centre or limit them. This is part of a continuing dialogue over the possession of the 228 Incident.

Possessing the 228 Incident

Ownership of the 228 Incident is an important battle for power, and part of the debate over how it is used or abused by different factions with certain ambitions. In the political spheres of Taiwan, where it is most critical to the carrier groups' continued success, the Democratic Progressive Party has fought hard to control the mythology, most recently pinning responsibility squarely on Chiang Kai-shek, constructing a trauma narrative that views the incident as an ethnic massacre. The Kuomintang have had to counter this,

describing it as a political conflict. Neither of these simplifications can fully explain the massacres, but both are important in their ability to construct the trauma in the minds of the people. Literature has the same power in the construction of this trauma. However, Tzeng Ching-wen's narratives maintain the victims as the central focus of his work. This is a part of the 'respect for life' that is a central theme throughout his literature. Ch'en Ying-chen, although still keeping the victims as a primary focus of his work, and importantly extending them to the next generation on Taiwan, has diluted their supremacy as owners of the 228 Incident by describing the incident as a part of the communist revolution and inserting his ideological beliefs into the texts. The victims of these events then become heroes of his socialist cause that were executed or imprisoned by the Kuomintang. Li Ang does the opposite to Ch'en. Disputing the patriarchal control of the 228 Incident, she extends victimhood to the periphery, helping all Taiwanese to repossess the 228 Incident as a symbol of terrible repression.

These three voices are all different in their demands, yet they are united in their denouncement of the silence and repression of the White Terror. All five texts attack this repression and serve as warning that it has seeped beyond the political oppression and into the social fabric of Taiwan. As such, the texts serve as a strong counter discourse to the official Kuomintang history that disputed the very existence of the 228 Incident. Through their contribution to this dialogue, they engage in the nation-making process, adding to the myths of the trauma of the 228 Incident and the nation of Taiwan.

Trauma and Its Construction

Although the 228 Incident is a momentous historical event, the cultural trauma that surrounds it is a socially constructed experience that has pervaded Taiwan through the expression of the personal trauma of victims through the work of carrier groups. As Jeffrey C. Alexander explains, "Trauma is a socially mediated attribution. The attribution may be made in real time, as an event unfolds;[1] it may also be made before the event occurs, as an adumbration, or after the event has concluded, as a post-hoc reconstruction." For the 228 Incident this was primarily a post-hoc reconstruction as politicians, such as Chen Shui-bian and Ma Ying-jeou, and writers, such as Tzeng Ching-wen, Ch'en Ying-chen and Li Ang, hold a special discursive power that has played a heavy hand in the construction of this trauma. Michael Berry describes *City of Sadness* as "unquestionably *the* cultural event in Taiwan during the late 1980s."[2] This strong statement shows the importance of the 228 Incident to the culture of Taiwan during the identity forming years after Martial Law. However, for many Taiwanese, this film would be all they would ever read or see of the terror. The trauma construction offered by this widely viewed film was tremendous. However, it was earlier 228 fiction that provided an impetus for such a work. Director Hou Hsiao-hsien was heavily influenced by the efforts of writers such as Ch'en Ying-chen before the end of the period of White Terror, as he stated in an interview: "Even before martial law was lifted, I heard all kinds of stories about the past and read an assortment of political novels, like those of Ch'en Ying-chen.

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[1] Jeffrey C. Alexander, "Toward a Theory of Cultural Trauma," in *Cultural Trauma and Collective Identity*, ed. Jeffrey C. Alexander et al. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), 8.
[2] Michael Berry, "Screening 2/28: From a *City of Sadness* to a *March of Happiness*," in *The Proceedings of Taiwan Imagined and Its Reality –An Exploration of Literature, History, and Culture* (Santa Barbara: Center for Taiwan Studies, 2005), 51.

That perked my interest to start digging up all kinds of materials about the White Terror and the February 28th Incident."[3] Lin Shuang-pu, an important writer of 228 fiction and editor of *228: A Collection of Taiwan Short Stories*, had never even heard of the 228 Incident until his English teacher accidentally let it slip in class one day.[4] These narratives have served to construct a trauma that stretches throughout Taiwan where before there was often no knowledge of the events, yet this has forever altered the identity of the people of Taiwan, becoming a symbol that can either unite or divide. Cultural trauma has an indeterminable ability to provide bonds and understanding. As Kai Erikson, one of the earliest writers on cultural trauma explains, "trauma shared can serve as a source of communality in the same way that common language and common cultural backgrounds can."[5] The trauma of the 228 Incident holds this power.

The 228 Incident and Taiwan

The 228 Incident and its application to nation in literature and society remains a complicated matter. Generally, the incident serves as a unifying bond in the collective memory of the Taiwanese. Therefore, it is a key to the Taiwan Independence Movement and has long been used in this manner. Artists like Ch'en Ying-chen, who view the incident as another stumbling block that persists in preventing Chinese unity, are a small

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[3] Michael Berry, *Speaking in Images: Interviews with Contemporary Chinese Filmmakers* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), 254.

[4] Lin Shuang-pu 林雙不, *Ererba Taiwan Xiaoshuo Xuan*二二八台灣小說選 (228: A Selection of Taiwan Short Stories), (Taipei City: Zili Wanbao Wenhua Chubanbu 自立晚報文化出版部, 1989), third page (no pagination).

[5] Kai Erikson, *A New Species of Trouble: Explorations in Disaster, Trauma, and Community* (New York and London: W.W. Norton and Company, 1994), 231. However, in his research on disasters, Erikson finds that communities are also often torn apart by such events.

and dwindling minority that are now seldom heard. However, most artists, like Tzeng Ching-wen, prefer to see the incidents from a human point of view, denouncing the despicable practices of early Kuomintang rule, yet highlighting humanity over nation. The indiscriminate use of postcolonial theory in reading these texts has the danger of diverting the concentration of the symbolism of these events as well, simplifying the incident to a colonial binary. The texts analyzed here, especially considered as a whole, show the unsuitability of postcolonial theory for Taiwan studies. Although many of its concepts have much to offer, Taiwan's situation is too complex to allow such a simple reading of its history and literature.

Post-228

Very different from the political representations of the 228 Incident, which are clear attempts to gain power and privilege, these literary representations of the violence and repression all share the goal of exposing the horror of such events and strive to inform society in the hope that such terror will never happen again. Writing on national trauma, Arthur Neal finds that trauma is followed by great change, citing post-War policies in the Americas. Alexander finds that this change is related to the community taking on the suffering of others and therefore taking responsibility for it.[6] This is the positive discursive power of trauma fiction. One of the primary functions of trauma fiction is to help prevent such terror from occurring again. By constructing this cultural trauma in the imaginations of the people of Taiwan, everyone can share in the suffering of the victims

[6] Alexander 2004, 1.

of the 228 Incident and the White Terror. Through these continued efforts, the people can reject the violence and repression of past days in favour of a future of peace and understanding.

Chinese Character Glossary of Names and Terms

228 Incident	二二八事件
Cai, Ken	蔡景暉
Cai Qianhui	蔡千惠
Ch'en Ying-chen	陳映真
Chen Shui-bian	陳水扁
Chang Hsiao-hung	張小虹
Chen Fang-ming	陳芳明
Chi Pang-yuan	齊邦媛
Chiang, John	蔣孝嚴
Chiang Kai-shek	蔣介石
Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Hall	中正紀念堂
Chiu Kuei-fen	邱貴芬
Chu Hung-yuan	朱泓源
Chu Wei-ch'eng	朱偉誠
Democratic Progressive Party	民進黨
Diaoyutai Islands	釣魚台
Fu-shou	福壽
Hou Hsiao-hsien	侯孝賢
Hsiao Ya	蕭颯
Hsieh Hsueh-hong	謝雪紅
Hsu Chun-ya	許俊雅
Huang Jung-tsan's	黃榮燦
Kuomintang	國民黨
Lan Bo-chou	藍博洲
Lee Teng-hui	李登輝
Li Ang	李昂
Li Ao	李敖
Li Chiao	李喬
Li Guokun	李國坤
Li Yu	李渝
Lin Jenn-Shann Jack	林鎮山
Liao Ping-hui	廖炳惠
Lin Jiangmai	林江邁
Lin Shuang-pu	林雙不
Ma Ying-jeou	馬英九
Moli	莫莉
Mowei	莫葳
Nativist Literature	鄉土文學
Pai Ch'ung-hsi	白崇禧
Peace Memorial Day	和平紀念日
Peng Mengqi	彭孟緝
Qiu Yaxin	丘雅信
Shiding	石碇
Shih Shu-mei	史書美
Song Rongxuan	宋蓉萱
Song Tse-lai	宋澤萊
Taike	台客
Taiwan Democracy Memorial Hall	台灣民主紀念館
Tu Wei-ming	杜維明
Tungfang Po	東方白
Tzeng Ching-wen	鄭清文
Wang, David Der-wei	王德威
Wang Mama	王媽媽

White Terror	白色恐怖
Wu Cho-liu	吳濁流
Wu Bai	伍佰
Wu Feng-chiu	吳豐秋
Ye Chunmei	葉春美
Yeh Shih-tao	葉石濤
Zhao Erping	趙爾平
Zhao Nandong	趙南棟
Zhao Qingyun	趙慶雲

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