Romancing the Formosan Aborigine: Colonial Interethnic Romance and its Democratic Revision in Postwar Film and Fiction

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Introduction: The Settler Society as a New Perspective on Taiwan's Cultural Production

Given that scholars, notably Benedict Anderson (2001) and John Shepherd (1993), have compared Taiwan 台灣 as a settler society to other settler societies, it makes sense for local literary critics to contrast Taiwan's cultural production with, for instance, that of the United States. In my doctoral dissertation (Sterk 2009), I compared Chinese representations of the Formosan Aborigines with American representations of Amerindians, as studied by scholars like Leslie Fiedler (1969). Most studies of settler society literature, however, are national, because an understanding of the local particularity of one case can demand all of a scholar's time and energy. Some scholarship has already been done for Taiwan, most impressively by Emma Teng. In *Taiwan's Imagined Geography* (2004), Teng covers textual and graphic representations of the Formosan Aborigines during the Qing 清 dynasty in a comparative framework of "colonial discourse." Teng's work is relevant to the present discussion because a settler society is a kind of colony, a colony of settlement in contrast to a colony of exploitation. The focus of the present chapter is on how Chinese settlers on Taiwan have represented their relationship to Taiwan's Aborigines. In a previous article (Sterk 2008), I proposed that there are three ways in which this relationship has been represented. Chinese settlers on Taiwan have represented themselves as teachers (as in the 1962 film *Wu Feng* (*Wu Feng* 吳鳳)), as spiritual brothers (as in Li Qiao's 李喬 1979 novel *Wintry Night* (*Hanye* 寒夜)), and as lovers. In this chapter I concentrate on works after 1945 in which a Chinese man romances an aboriginal woman. Such works can be termed foundational.

In her book on 19th century nationalist novels from Latin America, Doris Sommer (1993) described as foundational fictions works in which conflicts between social blocs dissolve in the illusions of love. While homosocial works offer epic action, the foundational fictions have action of another kind. Foundational fictions channel individual desires into a domestic situation in which differences of class and ethnicity disappear, if not immediately then at least in the next generation. In this way, the nation seems to form. In general, there are many milestones in a romance—love at first sight, hand-holding, first kiss, consummation, and marriage, though not necessarily in that order—which can be associated allegorically with historical events, such as the

founding of the nation. States usually like to promote the domesticity that results from romance, because getting young men properly married is conducive to social stability. There have been foundational fictions in postwar Taiwan, for instance, the first big interethnic romance, *Children of the Yellow Emperor* (*Huangdi zisun* 黃帝子孫, 1955), made with Chinese and Taiwanese dialogue at the request of Chiang Kai-shek 蔣介石 (1887-1975) himself (Li 1998: 9). The film is about a pair of school teachers, a Chinese girl and a Taiwanese boy, who fall in love and tour Tainan 台南. Eight years after the 2.28 Incident of 1947, the state was promoting interethnic harmony as well as domestic tourism. A similar formula was used to represent the Sinification of the Formosan Aborigines and the appropriation of aboriginal resources in the 1950s and 1960s.

In the first section of the present chapter, I examine the Chinese nationalist romance of the Formosan Aborigine in the 1950s and 1960s and, then again, after a decade's absence, in the 1980s. In the second and third sections, I look at deconstructions of the nationalist romance paradigm in the 1990s written by a critically-minded Chinese writer and by aboriginal writers. I describe the earlier period as colonial and the latter as democratic. But Taiwan may be both democratizing and still in some sense colonial. In the conclusion, I will speculate on what democratization means to an aboriginal woman writer, a girl who declines to be romanced.

As discussions of cultural production often float rather high above the historical ground, a few remarks about the historical specificity of the Taiwanese context are in order. Why is Taiwan a settler society? Chinese farmers intermarried with Siraya 西拉雅 Aborigines from the 1640s on. The rate of intermarriage declined in the 18th century, mainly because, for the sake of stability, the state maintained ethnic divisions between the Han 漢 and the unassimilated Aborigines, with the acculturated Aborigines in between as a buffer. At the beginning of the Japanese period, the category of assimilated or Plains Aborigines (also known as Pingpu, *Pingpuzu* 平埔族) disappeared, only to reemerge in the context of Taiwanese nationalism in the late 1980s. An initial policy of marrying subalterns to the daughters of elite Aborigines in the mountains was reversed in the mid-1910s after the alpine guardline was fortified. In 1949, Chiang Kai-shek brought approximately a million refugees, mostly men, to an island with a population of about six million. It was a major wave of settlement. Too socially marginal to be successful in the marriage market, many of these men remained single, but some of them married marginal women, including aboriginal women. There were half-hearted but ineffectual attempts at regulating these relations. Some of the marriages were love matches, while others, especially by the 1970s and 1980s, were transactions. During the economic miracle, as Taiwanese women were gradually able to opt out of DDD (dirty, degrading and dangerous) jobs like prostitution, aboriginal women took up the slack, until the late 1990s, when international labor migration changed the socioeconomic predicament of the Formosan Aborigines.

As to the use of the concept in scholarship, some scholars, notably Marshall Johnson, have used the idea of the settler society to discuss relations between

Taiwanese "natives" and Chinese "settlers" in the postwar period. Johnson's (1992) article deals with the different positions of Chinese and Taiwanese in the "marriage market." I have no problem with his approach, except that the relativity of terms should at least be acknowledged: to the Aborigines the Chinese are settlers, and historically one group of Aborigines might seem like settlers to another group, as has been pointed out by Roger Chan (2008).

The Colonial Romance of the Formosan Aboriginal Maiden

The 1950s and 1960s was the golden age of colonial interethnic romance in Taiwanese film and fiction. In the colonial romances, aboriginal maidens fall in love with Chinese men. In this period, there were two contrasting representational tendencies, assimilatory and exoticizing.[1] Below I contrast two assimilatory films separated by a quarter century.

The first film, *On Mount Hehuan* (*Hehuanshan shang* 合歡山上), was made in 1958. It begins with a short documentary. Soldiers trudge up a snow-covered road. For some members of the audience, even the sight of snow was new; the film is a travelogue. A panorama of the alpine area is shot from a helicopter. Chiang Kai-shek and Soong May-ling 宋美齡 (1897-2003) survey the work. The protagonist of the film appears in the documentary and describes the building of the highway past Mount Hehuan as a great national achievement. The film itself was a major production about the mastery of the environment; the Hehuan Highway (*Hehuan gonglu* 合歡公路) is the highest in Taiwan.

Then the film proper begins. A helicopter flies over a field. The protagonist, a man of about thirty-five years old, looks up. A woman about a decade younger dressed in a *cheongsam* (also called a *qipao* 旗袍) comes out of a shack to see what is going on. We see the man's face again; the rest of the film is a flashback. The man is Liang Jinhao 梁錦浩, an explosives engineer working on the Hehuan Highway. He is committed to self-improvement; he lifts weights and reads the writings of the National Father Dr. Sun Yat-sen 孫逸仙 (1866-1925). He also goes hunting, and on his day off he discovers a sleepy vale in which there is a lively village, with a saloon, a school, and a church. It is in church that Jinhao falls in love at first sight with Ailan 愛蘭, an aboriginal school teacher and his future wife, the woman in the *cheongsam* at the beginning. Ailan lives with her friend and fellow aboriginal school teacher Aiwei 愛薇.

The rest of the film is divided between romance and intrigue. Ailan and Jinhao sing duets while strolling on the grassy knolls. As they enjoy the view, Jinhao teaches her, "If there is an empty piece of land it should be developed." But there are problems with the aboriginal men, particularly with the supposedly "submissive" (*fu* 服) Afu 阿服, Aiwei's boyfriend. Aiwei asks Jinhao to get Afu a job on the road crew, and all

1 This is a contrast I hope to treat in a future publication. State films tended to be assimilatory, while private films tended to be exoticizing.

seems well. Afu has discarded his traditional skirt (not to say that the director bothered to represent aboriginal attire faithfully); now he wears a proper working man's shirt. He no longer hangs out at the saloon; now he does an honest day's work. But a misunderstanding misleads Afu into thinking that Jinhao loves Aiwei. Whether by accident or design, the jealous Afu falls upon the detonator while Jinhao is setting up an explosion. Everyone runs to the worksite where Jinhao lies unconscious. Jinhao wakes up, sees Ailan by his side and smiles. Overhead a helicopter appears. A doctor arrives and treats Jinhao's fortunately minor injuries. Next we return to the scene at the beginning. Ailan walks over to stand by her man.

The TNT and road building in Taiwan in 1958 seemed impressive enough. Jinhao's profession suggests the creative destruction of modernity. There was even a helicopter, a prop no private film company could afford. The film unites opposites, epic and romance, boy and girl, Chinese mainlander and Formosan maiden, and it does so by domesticating the boy and assimilating the girl. The assimilatory messages in the film today seem blatant and offensive: native belief yields to Christianity, shamanism to modern medicine, Austronesian languages to Chinese, idleness to the work ethic, drunkenness to continence, hunting to agriculture, polyamory to monogamy, and the natural lay of the land to the straight line of the road or of the fenced field. Of course, the mountains had to yield to the plains in the official policy lingo of the time, according to which the mountains were to be plainified (*shandi pingdi hua* 山地平地化), the idea being "raising" living standards in the mountains.

Characters and landscapes in the film take on allegorical significance. Reading the film as a nationalist allegory, we can see Ailan as Taiwan. The KMT was blasting the island into productive form, while Ailan's psyche has already been made over in the Chinese image. Ailan speaks impeccable Mandarin Chinese and teaches her students to do so as well. In this way, she becomes a conduit of Chinese identity. Yet she is still willing to learn. She listens placidly as Jinhao inculcates the value of high mountain agricultural development. Her body is also a field of development. She wears a *cheongsam*. Perhaps out of place in the classroom or on a high mountain farm, the *cheongsam* was at the time promoted by the state as "Taiwan's national costume." Like Taiwan, Ailan is shapely and attractive. The protagonist Liang Jinhao, the heroic explosives engineer, is the KMT or the Chinese people in relation to Taiwan or the Aborigines. For most of the film Jinhao assumes that he will leave once this stretch of the highway is done – no doubt off to blast across some other part of Taiwan. There may be an element of developmental mania in the mystique attached to the TNT, which almost kills the film's hero. But, after a rebirth in the wilderness, he settles down. It is the prospect of the love of Ailan and the vision of the transformation of the land that leads him to decide to stay and plant his seeds. Both parties in the romance desire its consummation, and in the end there seems to be no impediment to the formation of a new ethical and ethnic national order.

On Mount Hehuan is only one of many works of nationalist interethnic romance from this period. A newspaper editorial from the late 1960s complained about the number of lowbrow interethnic love stories on TV, many of which were probably exoticizing. But in the 1970s, interethnic romance suddenly dropped out of local cultural production. After the oil shock, in a period of industrial deepening, camphor and apples, and all other fruits of the mountains, seemed somehow less attractive than before. The winsome aboriginal maiden would not reappear in Chinese film and fiction until the 1980s. No longer a symbol of the success of the national project of modernization, she was now a sign of its inequalities. As Daria Berg (2001) pointed out in her article on the writer Wu Jinfa 吳錦發, many of the stories and films about the Formosan Aborigines from the 1980s were about prostitution. But there are also stories about marriages in which aging mainlander soldiers purchased nubile aboriginal brides. The most famous treatment of this phenomenon was *The Second Spring of Old Man Mo* (*Lao Mo de di erge chuntian* 老莫的第二個春天). As this film won the Golden Horse for Best Picture at the 1984 Taipei 台北 Film Festival, it deserves consideration as an event of interethnic filmic romance. Though made a quarter century after *On Mount Hehuan*, *Old Mo* is every bit as assimilatory.

Old Mr. Mo 老莫 is a trash man in his fifties. His friend from the army has purchased an aboriginal bride named Mana 瑪娜, and Mr. Mo wants a son. He decides to buy himself a wife. The bride is a Bunun 布農 maiden with the Chinese name of Yumei 玉梅. He pays only a 100,000 NT dollars. The whole process, from the oily middleman and the mother coldly counting the cash to the tacky wedding ceremony, is realistically presented. But thereafter the film becomes explicitly didactic. Yumei is industrious; she sets up an aboriginal delicacies stand and is very successful economically. She is chaste; she rejects the advances of her handsome young business partner, a man called Jinshu 金樹 (meaning "money tree") who speaks a bit of Bunun and rides a motorcycle. She is also strong; she socks the bad guys in the smoky movie theatre. In this marriage, the wife is both provider and protector. But Lao Mo is no women's or aboriginal liberation film. Instead, it is a nationalist film. It is socially conservative, hence the scenes in which Yumei salutes a dominant man, her husband's former commanding officer and later Mr. Mo himself, as he leaves by train. The film is also nationalist in the sense that Yumei is totally Sinified; she speaks flawless Mandarin (and Taiwanese!), listens to brainless Mandopop, dresses like a Chinese matron after she gets married, and cooks Chinese food for her husband, though she turns aboriginal treats into profitable commodities. She was portrayed by a Chinese actress. In contrast, Old Mo's friend's wife Mana, who was played by an aboriginal actress and who retains her native name, consorts with hoodlums, infects her husband with syphilis, becomes a drug addict, and jumps off a bridge with a baby in her belly. In other words, according to the film, the secret of success for aboriginal women purchased as brides by much older, socially marginal Chinese men is to assimilate into Chinese

society and uphold "petty bourgeois virtue."[2] At the end of the film, Yumei is pregnant with a child who will grow up Chinese. Mr. Mo is planning for everyone to visit Shandong 山東 Province. Flights to China would start half a decade later, and, one imagines, Mr. Mo would go on to do what Chiang Kai-shek had only dreamed of.[3]

The Democratic Revision of the Colonial Romance

A decade later, Wu He 舞鶴 (1999) interrogated the assimilatory settler nationalism of *On Mount Hehuan* and *Old Mo* in his prize-winning novel *Remains of Life* (*Yusheng* 餘生). The novel is ostensibly about the meaning of the Wushe Incident (*Wushe shijian* 務社事件).[4] On 27 November 1930, Atayal 泰雅 Aborigines led by chief Mona Rudao 莫那魯道 "headhunted" 134 Japanese citizens in the schoolyard of the mountain village Wushe 霧社. To the KMT, Wushe was an instance of "anticolonial (or antioccupation)" resistance (Berry 2008: 57). The historical is indeed an essential dimension of the novel, and all its critics have considered how Wu He places the contemporary Aborigines in the shadow of the Incident. But I want to change the focus. Critics have noticed that "legitimacy," especially the legitimacy of the Wushe Incident (Wu 1999: 251), is a keyword for Wu He in the novel (Wang 2004: 37-39); but "possibility" is also important (Wu 1999: 84 *et passim*) because, unlike most past treatments of the Incident (Berry 2008: 53-107), Wu He sets his novel in the present. The relationship between the narrator and the character called Maiden can be seen as allegorically national, as in the colonial romances discussed above. However, in *Remains of Life*, the treatment of the maiden is no longer so "romantic." The narrator does describe Maiden in extra-historical terms, as a figure out of myth; she is Dream Maiden 夢姑娘 (Wu 1999: 78), the Maiden of Mountains and Streams 山水姑娘 (Wu 1999: 239). But he only does so because Maiden describes herself in this way. It is as if she wishes to awaken from the nightmare of history but cannot.

A haunted figure, Maiden is a prostitute in the process of retirement. Though now living on the reservation of Chuanzhongdao 川中島, where the survivors of the

2 In Hill Gates' (1996) theory of the petty capitalist sphere in postwar Taiwan, family-based SMEs resisted state and capitalist extraction. To the extent the theory is valid historically, the Taiwanese petty capitalist sphere was unkind to Aborigines. The Aborigines were not family and therefore tended to be exploited in the capitalist economy. In *Lao Mo*, Yumei becomes a member of the family. Both sexually loyal and economically productive, she is virtuous in several senses. In petty capitalism, the private sector and private life are not rigorously separated. Thus, in *Lao Mo*, the home becomes a petty capitalist space, both where they live and where Yumei prepares her wares.

3 For a discussion of a Taiwanese settler nationalist appropriation of the Formosan Aborigines for the purpose of nation building, see Sterk (2008), in which I contrast Chinese assimilatory settler nationalism with Taiwanese indigenizing settler nationalism. The work in question is Ye Shitao's 葉石濤 *Last of the Siraya* (*Xilaya zu de moyi* 西拉雅族的末裔), a series of stories originally printed separately in 1989 and 1990 and published in one volume by Qianwei (前衛). The work is still remembered as an event by Taiwan nationalists who follow the literary scene, but it is not enough of an event for inclusion in this chapter.

4 Other terms used are massacre (*tusha* 屠殺), Wu (1999: 55) or traditional "headhunt" (*chucao* 出草), Wu (1999: 47).

Wushe Incident were exiled in 1931, Maiden has not quite retired, even though she is now in her mid-thirties. Early in the novel, Maiden borrows money from the narrator and goes to Taizhong 台中 to find what she describes as "temporary employment" (*linshi zhiye* 臨時職業) (Wu 1999: 56). Several weeks later, she returns battered and bruised, claiming that she was abducted at a night club, where she was no doubt innocently looking for temp work, and taken to a brothel, where she was raped by a pimp named Turtle Lord 龜公 then forced to work as a prostitute. When, breathlessly, Maiden finishes telling her story, the narrator says, "Aiya, what a trashy tale about a nice girl falling into the pit of fire" (Wu 1999: 78). The narrator's reaction is politically incorrect to say the least. How can a settler male react in this outrageously disrespectful way to an aboriginal woman's story of victimization? But Maiden is not offended. She laughs and wonders how she "got written into the plot of such a vulgar novel" (Wu 1999: 78)? On one level, the narrator's response yanks Maiden out of the extra-historical realm of myth in which she had placed herself. On another level, it asserts realism over romanticism. Wu He refuses to reduce the lives of the "Chuanzhongdao residents"[5] to plots of abjection out of a work of pulp fiction.

Similarly, Wu He refuses to imagine interethnic relations in Taiwan in terms of romantic stories with happy endings. In this regard, the relation between Maiden and the narrator in the novel is symbolic of relations between the settlers and the Aborigines of Taiwan. In the past interethnic relations were violent or characterized by competition and compulsion. In the present, as Maiden's experience shows, they are often based on the desire of the settler male, who determines the market value of the aboriginal woman. But at least in this novel, the story of the relation between settler male and Formosan female has a different kind of ending; Wu He re-imagines interethnic relations on a narrative level. As a result of Maiden's trip to Taizhong, Turtle Lord appears on the reservation, hollering that she had gypped him after living the easy life on his tab. Turtle Lord is quickly dispelled by the local policeman (Wu 1999: 88). But his departure is not the end of the story. The policeman accuses Maiden of shaming the community (Wu 1999: 89), and to make amends Maiden agrees to sleep with the men of the community every Sunday after church in a bizarre, ad hoc ritual of restitution. If Maiden represents the mountains and streams of Taiwan, she is giving herself back to the men of Chuanzhongdao. Maiden brings the regular ritual to an end at Christmas. Right after the New Year, she embarks on a quest with the narrator to the mysterious vale (*shenmigu* 神秘谷) (Wu 1999: 43) at Mahebo 馬赫坡, into which her ancestors threw their children and then themselves after the Wushe Incident. For the narrator, it is a quasi-sexual consummation, as the "secret grove" (*milin* 密林) at the secret vale is associated with Maiden's body, with her armpits in

5 The narrator and characters in the novel refer to the residents of Chuanzhongdao as both Atayal and Seediq (*Saidekezu* 賽德克族). Today, Seediq is to be preferred, especially since 23 April 2008, when the Seediq became officially recognized. Kawanakashima 川中島 is the Japanese pronunciation for the place name. It is also called Qingliu or "pure flow" (清流) in Chinese.

particular (Wu 1999: 234), and with the island of Taiwan as a female form out of which the source of life flows. For Maiden, the quest is to reunite with the trans-temporal Atayal community. But it is also important that she makes the trek with the narrator, who claims to be a Siraya Plains Aborigine-Great Han Mestizo (*pingpu xilaya dahanren* 平埔西拉雅大漢人) (Wu 1999: 133). En route, the narrator and Maiden sleep in the same bed two nights in a row. But it is implied they do not sleep together. In his account of the second night, which dissolves into euphemisms about being immersed in the flow of river water, the narrator sees in her eyes "a long accumulated sense of life's desolation, of confusion and desperation about the future, a sense of life no act could even temporarily console" (Wu 1999: 245). In other words, settler man and aboriginal woman do not come together in a nationally significant romantic union. And yet there does seem to be some consolation in their friendship. When they are en route to Mahebo, Maiden offers the narrator a helping hand,

> …I was not ashamed that the smile in her eyes warmed me, though in my struggle-free middle age I had never needed a helping hand or this kind of human warmth, self-contained and self-sufficient had I been in my solitude, but now this pair of woman's hands was so very insistent and real…(Wu 1999: 240)

Symbolically, it is important that she is helping him. The ending of *Remains of Life* is in a way as vulgar as Maiden's yarn about a nice girl ending up in a brothel. When the narrator tells Maiden he is leaving, she wraps her arms around his legs and tells him, "I don't want you to go," and when she sends him off at the bridge she asks him to, "think of me when you smile" (Wu 1999: 247). These are like lines from a soap opera (Wu 1999: 161), the sort of thing of which a realist author is suspicious. But Wu He uses these romantic clichés effectively. If Wu He had simply written a wandering meditation on the contemporary meaning of Wushe, the novel would not have been as poignant as it is. Readers who find the novel overly discursive will be rewarded by a sympathetic re-reading.

Unlike earlier works of colonial romance from the 1950s to the 1980s, *Remains of Life* does not tie up identity tidily. Maiden's own identity is representative of the predicaments and possibilities of the contemporary Formosan Aborigine. Maiden is cosmopolitan in her taste. She listens to Mozart, Chopin, Tchaikovsky and Debussy on her ghetto blaster. The motif of Chopin on the reservation is eloquent of the banality of cultural globalization as a result of individual taste. Maiden's taste has a sociological, pretentious aspect—Chopin was played at the high class restaurant where she used to work (Wu 1999: 149). But she also localizes Chopin. When she plays the nocturnes, the Atayal ancestors come and listen (Wu 1999: 243). And Maiden is hardly assimilated to either a Chinese or a global cultural norm. She speaks Atayal and tells the narrator a myth of her people (Wu 1999: 120). The socioeconomic context of the community of Chuanzhongdao is liberal, and in this sense at least some of the Aborigines have compromised. Neither the narrator nor Maiden rejects capitalism. While Maiden's little brother is adamantly against his sister's idea of turning the bit of

land they co-own into a tourist orchard, the narrator does not see why tourist development is a problem (Wu 1999: 177). Compromise is the ideological baseline of the novel, but a compromise with capitalism is not a capitulation, nor is it without creative possibilities (Simon 2004). As for the narrator, he considers marrying an Atayal girl and settling down on the reservation (Wu 1999: 170). He even dreams of opening a café in Mahebo called *Mona Coffee* (Wu 1999: 201), an extraordinarily impudent example of cultural appropriation for a capitalist purpose. He claims to feel the joy of assimilation—from Chinese to Atayal (Wu 1999: 126). But ultimately, he knows it is just not that easy to "go native," unless he were to lower the bar of intercultural understanding. The narrator learns nothing of the local language during his stay. Understanding the Chuanzhongdao Seediq would have required a commitment he was not prepared to make. Allegorically, he leaves the reservation because the repetition of the same old settler nation-building trope of interracial marriage would have been an inauthentic, vulgar narrative resolution of the individual quest for identity, whether of the aboriginal maiden or the Mestizo man, in a democratizing settler nation.

Aboriginal Revisions of the National Interethnic Romance

The appearance of aboriginal writers maintaining distinct ethnic identities is a sign of a settler society's democratization. Scholars of democratization like Habermas emphasize the right to participate in public debate. In a settler society, the right of aboriginal authors to participate in what Habermas (1989) would call the literary and political public spheres must be defended. Below, I discuss several works by aboriginal authors who have joined the literary debate. In these works, the colonial national romance of the Formosan Aborigine is revised.

In the following pair of stories by male aboriginal authors, a Han Chinese man appears as an interloper implicated in the sexual exploitation of a Formosan aboriginal maiden.

"A Lover and a Whore" (*Qingren yu jinü* 情人與妓女, 1992) (Sun 2003: 5.67-87) is written by Topas Tamapima 拓拔斯・塔瑪匹瑪, the author of "The Last Hunter" (*Zuihou de lieren* 最後的獵人, 1987) (Balcom 2005: 3-20). The most famous story by a local aboriginal author, "The Last Hunter" deals with the predicament of the aboriginal man, a hunter whose skill set has no place in the modern world in which hunting is a pastime or a livelihood not a way of life. In "A Lover and a Whore," the narrator is a young Bunun doctor working at a temporary clinic in a Taroko 太魯閣 village in Hualian 花蓮. He falls in love with a young substitute teacher from the village. They part as pen pals, but after he goes into the army and her father dies, they lose touch. Several years pass. One day, on leave from the army, the doctor sees the girl again in Taipei in the area around Longshan Temple 龍山寺 where she works as a prostitute. She justifies her choice of employment: her mother enjoys a comfortable life and her brothers can go to school; she makes more money than she ever could as a substitute teacher. He thinks she is crazy and wants to save her from herself by committing her

to a mental hospital. She refuses his appeal, which she interprets as national not personal. She insists that they are no longer co-nationals, no longer part of the same moral community,

> Whores have no country. Whoreland is not to be found on any map…if I could choose where to live I would go to America. (Sun 2003: 5.86)

Ideologically, perhaps, she is insane, because in the account she gives of her life in the sex industry, she identifies herself as a member of an exploited working class in the Marxist sense. The exploited proletarian longs to live in the land of the free, the most powerful liberal nation in the world. At any rate, whether or not Topas Tamapima is a liberal, he has no faith in an aboriginal woman's capacity to take care of herself, to make meaning out of the worst living and working conditions – even prostitution. This position might seem a little patronizing, as if an aboriginal woman needs an aboriginal man to defend her from corruption.

"Naked Range" (*Chiluo shanmai* 赤裸山脈, 1999) (Sun 2003: 4.111-153) was written by Yubas Naogih 游霸士・撓給赫, an Atayal man. The title of the story is the most explicit instance imaginable of the symbolic identification of woman and landscape. It suggests aboriginal womanhood and landscape both bared to and possessed by Han Chinese men. A young man takes one of the village elders to find his daughter in Taizhong. The father imagines she is a glamorous film star. But along the way he sees a poster in a bus shelter with her image on it. The poster advertises a seedy sideshow. They get to Taizhong but never do manage to find her. The young man, who lives in Taizhong, lies to the old fellow, telling him his daughter is touring southern Taiwan. The father had brought a rope to tie her up and force her to return to the hills. It would probably not have been a rescue from the perspective of the daughter, who may be enjoying the perquisites of her independent lifestyle; but we never do learn about her actual situation. Though she makes a living off her appearance, performing in a low class show is a cut above prostitution. Elders are supposed to represent wisdom and tradition, but in this story the elder is sadly shown to be unable either to command authority or to even understand what is going on in the symbolic social landscape of modern urban Taiwan.

In neither of these stories about the settler use of the aboriginal maiden does one get a clear idea of a woman's perspective. The male aboriginal writers treat the prostitution of aboriginal women as a matter of national shame. It stands to reason that aboriginal women writers might portray aboriginal women less figuratively, by which I mean less allegorically and more realistically. But the only aboriginal female writer of fiction included in the collection edited by Sun Dachuan 孫大川 is Rimui Aki 里慕伊・阿紀, an Atayal woman and a Montessori school teacher. In this chapter, Rimui Aki will have to serve as the representative female aboriginal voice.

Prostitution is not a motif or theme of either story I discuss by Rimui Aki, in which the nature of a woman's choice is connubial: whether to marry a man from the

plains or a fellow Aborigine. First, "Little Princess" (*Xiao gongzhu* 小公主, 2000) (Sun 2003: 5.127-148) is the story of a well-off young Atayal woman narrated by her friend, who initially seems less fortunate in the material sense. The story has a "coat of many colors" moral, that being poor and being happy are not mutually exclusive and that being rich does not guarantee a happy family life. The little princess marries exogamously. Her husband is Hakka (*Kejia* 客家). They have several children and live in a traditional three-wing house but end up getting a divorce. Socially, the story traces the modernization of Atayal social mores, though the author seems rather traditional—or conservative—in her outlook. Divorce is no longer impossible. It is even common. But she frowns upon it. The narrator's own marriage is to an Atayal man. In foundational fictions in general, a woman's choice in marriage is nationally significant. In "Little Princess," the implication is a commitment to maintaining the aboriginal community.

Another story by Rimui Aki, "Huaixiang" (*Huaixiang* 懷湘, 2001) (Sun 2003: 5.149-166) can also be interpreted as a foundational fiction. "Huaixiang" is about the modernization of Atayal mores. The two Atayal tribes represented by the hero and heroine are ancestral enemies, but after the girl gets pregnant in junior high school she has to marry her boyfriend (Sun 2003: 5.151). The most interesting aspect of the story is its critique of Gaga, the foundation of the Atayal social order. Gaga is the reason the youngsters have to get married, but in one scene Gaga is simply a discursive tool of patriarchy. Her husband has given her a venereal disease contracted while he was in the army, and yet he still expects her to sleep with him (Sun 2003: 5.162). Her father-in-law says her refusal is against Gaga. She goes home and her father agrees to represent her to her father-in-law. Everyone ends up agreeing that the husband's behavior was unGaga. The wife Huaixiang does not so much deconstruct Gaga as she subverts illegitimate appeals by her husband's family.

The national significance of Huaixiang's marriage is in her name. Both Huaixiang's parents are Atayal, but her name is not. Her father Wadan 瓦旦 was a career soldier, and it was his commanding officer, a national authority figure, who chose the name. The commanding officer was from Hunan 湖南 Province in China, as *xiang* 湘 means either the River Xiang (*Xiangjiang* 湘江), which empties into Lake Dongting (*Dongtinghu* 洞庭湖), or Hunan Province itself. Huaixiang means "homesick for Hunan." Letting one's commanding officer name one's children honors him. However, the name ends up seeming an ironic honor, because it is also a homophone for a phrase meaning "to be homesick" (*huaixiang* 懷鄉). In other words, an aboriginal character carries a Chinese name that paradoxically reinforces the aboriginality of the story. This story is about the transcendence of homesickness for a natal aboriginal village by a girl who after marriage moves to another aboriginal village. After seven long years, either reading of her name becomes irrelevant, because finally she is happily married, without regret. An industrious woman, she engages in high altitude mushroom cultivation and also helps build her local community.

Huaixiang's marriage is interesting in the context of Taiwan's democratization because she does not have any choice about it. In a liberal democracy the individual decides for herself. Huaixiang cannot decide for herself because she is a minor and a member of a traditional community. She gets pregnant in junior high school and Gaga dictates that she has to marry her boyfriend. Yet there is no purely liberal society. The ideal of radical individual freedom is everywhere complemented more or less by communitarian tradition. Huaixiang can certainly be said to have made the best of her situation, as must we all as citizens of a modern democracy. By the end of the story, she is making an honest living—supplying the national economy with mushrooms—as she participates in Atayal community building in a village at the edge of settler society but relatively close to the geographical center of the island of Taiwan.

Conclusion: Aboriginal Domesticity and National Identity in a Settler Society

For much of the postwar period, aboriginal Sinification was used in works of film and fiction from Taiwan to symbolize the success of KMT governance. In *On Mount Hehuan* (1958) the representative of national progress was a Chinese explosives engineer in his mid-thirties, and the aboriginal heroine was an elementary school teacher who had conformed to Chinese normality and was helping the younger generation do so as well. By the time of *The Second Spring of Old Man Mo* (1984), in contrast, the Chinese hero was a quarter-century older, while the heroine had not aged a bit. Mr. Mo works on a garbage pickup team; now the representative of national progress is an aboriginal heroine who symbolizes the economic vitality of petty capitalism. Of course, as the title indicates, it is still Mr. Mo's film, not his wife's. Yumei's aboriginal name is never mentioned, and it is hardly important. All that is important is that she play the model Chinese wife. Yet around 1984, a reassessment of values in Taiwan began. Since then, as a result of Taiwan's democratization, a unitary idea of national identity has become more and more objectionable. Thus, the settler-narrator in Wu He's novel *Remains of Life* (1999) is no longer trying to assimilate the Aborigines. Indeed, he laments their suffering under a series of assimilatory regimes. Moreover, he ends his novel without the consummation of a nationally significant interethnic union, perhaps because he thinks romance interferes with authentic intercultural understanding. Finally, in Rimui Aki's stories we have aboriginal women who choose to marry within the aboriginal community and remain in residence in the mountains. In other words, since the 1980s there seems to have been a turn away from foundational fictions in which two ethnicities are united in love for the sake of settler nation building.

This observation suggests two lines of future research, one retrospective, the other prospective. First, there are several related stories from before 1945 that have received scholarly attention. Emma Teng (2004: 188-189) has discussed the story of *Lady Baozhu* in which a Chinese lady chief of an aboriginal tribe is superior both in ethnicity, because she is Chinese, and in gender, because in the Chinese imagination aboriginal women ruled over aboriginal men. But there does not seem to be any assimilatory

message in the story. Faye Yuan Kleeman (2003: 23-26) has studied post-Wushe stories evincing an anxiety about Japanese men going native after taking aboriginal lovers. Now there seemed to be dangerous pull towards aboriginality. There is a renewed confidence in the power of civilization in the novella by a Japanese woman author discussed by Kimberly Kono (2006). The novella details a Japanese woman and a mixed-race Japanese-aboriginal man's decision to marry in preparation for a mission of civilization in the mountains of Taiwan. In the postwar period, at least in cultural production, Chinese men have been much surer of their cultural identity, and in most works the pairing has been a Chinese man and an aboriginal woman in the process of becoming Chinese. His very presence fulfills the mission of Sinification. Research of greater historical depth could be done on permutations and combinations of gender and ethnicity in interethnic foundational fictions, and on changing attitudes towards the mission of civilization.[6]

In a time when aboriginality is valorized in Taiwan, the very idea of a mission of civilization, associated as it is with colonialism, is now suspect. Times have certainly changed, but perhaps they have not changed enough. Taiwan is democratizing, but from an aboriginal perspective it is still in some sense colonial. Taiwan is still a settler state and seems likely to continue to be a settler state. So what does democratization mean to a girl who, like Rimui Aki, declines to be romanced? At present, and I realize I have hardly in this chapter done justice to aboriginal writing, let alone to aboriginal sociopolitical movements, it seems to mean active participation in the national economy and creative reinterpretation of aboriginal tradition. One might say that, in a cultural milieu in which diversity is a value, Taiwan's Aborigine may now begin exploring "alternative aboriginal modernities" on their own terms. In doing so, they are discovering their own ways to self-domesticate—to make themselves at home—in contemporary Taiwan. In this way, they may write their own aboriginal foundational fictions within the frame of a democratic settler state.

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6 In the present chapter, there is not space to trace, let alone account for, the evolution or the complexity of the settler representation of the Taiwanese Aborigines. My dissertation (2009) gives an exhaustive treatment of works from after 1945.

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